

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, July 19, 2014

Hello to All,

It was a great summer's day to be on Wooded Island – lots to see.

We noticed a dozen *Canada Geese with white neck collars*. Paul Clyne sent word during the week that there were people in boats rounding up the geese. We met Paul on Wooded Island. He said that a *hundred adult geese* had been captured earlier in the week. White hard plastic cylinders were slipped onto their necks. Most bands have three digit numbers beginning with “C”. Even our favorite Mother Goose with white wash on her head and neck was banded. Paul was prepared. He had her number: C126. Her mate's number is C136. The two offspring, bandless, were with their parents.

Reasons given on the internet for banding Canada Geese are migration patterns and population control. Personally, I think it is crap science and justification for someone's job or grant money. All of us are known by numbers: social security, credit card, library card, etc. Now the geese that happened to be in Jackson Park this week have a number just like us. But unlike us, they do not have a wallet or purse to keep the number. They have to wear it around their necks.

Erica spotted an *adult Green Heron*, well hidden, on a Maple branch where a nest was built in the Japanese Garden. Like the adult eagles in Decorah Iowa, adults sometimes return to near the nest even after the young have fledged.

Caroline was first to see a gorgeous *Great Egret* along Wooded Island's eastern shore. This is always a wonderful treat to see this great white bird in our lagoons.

In the Rose Garden we saw a huge flying insect working on a Bergamot flower. It was two inches long and colored yellow and a deep brown. We guessed that it was a *sphinx moth*. I sent some photos to Randy Shonkwiler and asked for help with the identification. He wrote back the following: “It's a *Snowberry Clearwing moth (Hemaris diffinis)*. It is probably the most *common diurnal sphinx moth* in the park. I see them quite often in the park during the summer. It's sometimes called the “bumble bee moth,” because of its yellow color. It is closely related to the Hummingbird Clearwing (*Hemaris thysbe*).”

BIRDERS: 13. Leo, Caroline, Jennie, Sally, Wylie and Erica, who were in the south of France yesterday, Tom S. a Sand Ridge Audubon regular, Rick, Jennette, Karin C., Karin D., Tracy W. a new birder, and Pat.

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

PLACES: Wooded Island and Bobolink Meadow

WEATHER: Sunny. Temperature was in the low 70's F with light variable breeze.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 32

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

1. Double-crested Cormorant – 2.
2. Great Blue Heron – 4.
3. GREAT EGRET – 1.
4. Green Heron – 1. Adult.
5. Black-crowned Night Heron – 2. A photo was taken of one perched over the water southwest of the North Bridge. (attached)
6. Canada Goose – X.
7. Wood Duck – 2. Female. East Lagoon.
8. Mallard – X. A female was guiding a new brood of six ducklings near the Music Bridge.
9. Ring-billed Gull – X. Occasional fly overs.
10. Caspian Tern – 1.
11. Chimney Swift – X.
12. Downy Woodpecker – X. Heard on Wooded Island.
13. Eastern Kingbird – 2. Feisty youngsters chasing each other.
14. Warbling Vireo – 1. Near Music Bridge. Reported by the Sextons from Florida.
15. Purple Martin – X. Jennie spotted a couple of youngsters poking their heads out from the nest boxes.
16. Barn Swallow – X.
17. Black-capped Chickadee – X.
18. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – X.
19. American Robin – X.
20. Gray Catbird - X
21. BROWN THRASHER – 1. Seen along the west path just south of the grassy eclipse.
22. European Starling – X
23. Cedar Waxwing – 1.
24. Yellow Warbler – X. Seen and heard on Wooded Island.
25. Song Sparrow – X. Heard near Turtle Island.

26. Northern Cardinal – 1. Male.
27. INDIGO BUNTING – 1. Male. Bare tree in southwest corner of the Rose Garden.
28. Red-winged Blackbird – X. On Wooded Island and in the Meadow.
29. Brown-headed Cowbird – X. Wooded Island.
30. House Finch – 1.
31. American Goldfinch – 3. Males are wearing their finest breeding feathers.
32. House Sparrow – X. Near Darrow Bridge.

Other creatures of note:

1 Bullfrog -- Big fine looking frog with a pale green throat. Called attention to itself as we stood on the South Bridge. Karin D. caught sight of him and got us all on him. Eventually he plopped back into the water.

3 Turtles on logs in the water.

1 Snowberry Clearwing Moth (*Hemaris diffinis*), a diurnal sphinx moth. (photos attached)

This is a group report, with many birders contributing to the list. Most of the birds were seen by a least several or all the birders.

Corrections, additions and comments are welcome.

Recordings are not used to attract birds.

This report will be recorded on eBird as a group report for the Wooded Island Bird Walks.

The Walks are free and open to one and all. They are held year round. Birders always show up near Darrow Bridge at the start times. Newcomers are warmly welcomed.

Note: Darrow Bridge has been barricaded by the Department of Transportation but there are openings at each end that allows for foot traffic. The Bridge has been deemed unsafe. Birders continue to meet on Darrow Bridge and scan the lagoons and trees while the group comes together.

The Walks start at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, and at 7:15 a.m. on Wednesday.

Birders gather on Darrow Bridge, which is located south of the Museum of Science and Industry. Ample parking is available east of Darrow Bridge and is accessible from South Lake Shore Drive at 57th Street (labeled Science Drive on a small blue street sign). There is a Stop Light at 57th Street. Make a turn at the Stop Light towards the Museum. Turn Left (south) at the

intersection of Science Drive and Columbia Drive. Go through the parking lot to the west end near Darrow Bridge.

Best of Birding to All,

Patricia Durkin

Chicago Audubon Society Representative

Wooded Island Bird Walks