

Bird Bash Report – July 25-26, 2015

What a lovely bird-watching week-end! And, seventeen of you found altogether 119 species of birds within our area! That is much more than any other month this year – except for May, and is 4 above the average for July for the past 12 years. Pretty good!

Starting first with new birds for the year, we must mention the Peregrine Falcon observed by Lori Anderson and her son, Graham in the Verner lagoon vicinity. Then, two Common Gallinules were unearthed with the aid of modern bird-speaker equipment, by yours truly and Renee Levesque while they were canoeing through the Cache Bay marshes. Both groups also found active Marsh Wrens there. As well, the Levesque duo came upon a Brewer's Blackbird, along Stewart's Road, north-west of Sturgeon Falls. Then there were the Semi-palmated Plovers, plus Solitary Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher, found by Marc Buchanan in the two cells of the Callander lagoon. Our shorebirds are already heading south! Finally, there was a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher which caught the attention of Chris Suhka, near Field.

Now going back to other birds, in roughly taxonomic order, a few Pied-billed Grebes called out in Cache Bay to the Levesque group. Common Loons and cormorants were evident there, also. An American Bittern, and the Great Blue Heron put in an exciting appearance, in this very interesting, birding area, along with Ospreys, and three species of terns. The Black Terns, about 20 of them, were, of course, the most entertaining. The Anderson duo also found many of these birds during their similar canoe venture in the bay. Marc enjoyed a close inspection of three Green Herons at the Callander lagoon. Fred Pinto, and Kaye Edmunds also found the Green Heron.

Some thirteen duck – or duck-like species were located, with Marc having a surprising Bufflehead, with Common Goldeneye at the Callander lagoon, and both Hooded and Common Mergansers. Renee noticed Redhead Ducks, and a Northern Harrier at Verner.

Seven predators, plus Turkey Vultures were found. Ospreys were seen by several groups. The only Bald Eagle was spotted by Kaye Edmunds, who also observed the Sandhill Crane, as did the Anderson duo. Lots of Kestrel were about, but Gary and Connie Sturge near Powassan, and Chris, near Field, and John Levesque north of the city, were the only ones to spot a Merlin. A Broadwing Hawk was noticed by the Levesque duo along hwy 64.

No Red-tailed Hawk, made an appearance. Nor did any rail. But, the Anderson pair had good looks at American Coot, with their fluffy young – at Warren; the Sturges and Kaye found the only Ruffed Grouse .

Some 9 shorebirds altogether came into view of our observers, with Greater Yellow-legs being identified by Lori, Lesser by many, and Spotted by Fred Pinto, at Powassan, and it, along with Semi-palmated and Least Sandpipers by the various observers at Verner lagoon.

The only gulls spotted were the common Ring-billed and Herring. Mourning Doves were seen by many. As to owls the sole one found was the Barred, observed again by Doug Paterson near Mattawa. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were on many lists, but Belted Kingfishers only upon those of the Cache Bay participants.

The five main woodpeckers all put in appearances at various places throughout the area. As to flycatchers, six species were identified, the Alder by Marc and Chris, who also found Least, Eastern Wood Pewee , Phoebe and Kingbird. The latter two and Great Crested Flycatcher were also all noted by the Levesque group.

Warbling Vireo was identified by John Levesque near Marsh Drive, the Blue-headed by Chris, and the Red-eye was observed by many. Blue Jays, crows and ravens were, of course, on very many lists. The only swallow missed was the Bank, with the normally rare, Rough-winged identified only by Chris and Renee, and the Cliff just by Lori's duo. Barn and Tree were seen by many. And so seen was the ubiquitous Black-capped Chickadee. But, only a few found Red-breasted Nuthatch – and no one observed the

White-breasted. Where is it? It has been missing the last 3 months. Brown Creepers, likewise.

Normally talkative Winter Wrens were found only by Chris. He also noted both kinglets. But, Sedge Wrens are still missing for the year. As to thrushes, the American Robin seemed to be everywhere, and the Veery and Hermit almost as common, while the Wood Thrush was located only by Greg and Pat Boxwell, near Bonfield, and John at Marsh Drive; and the Eastern Bluebird only by the Anderson pair near Powassan.

Gray Catbirds were noted by the Levesque, and Anderson combos, but the Brown Thrasher was seen only by Kaye. Cedar Waxwings were on the list of many observers.

As to warblers, fourteen species were identified. Nashville was identified by Fred, Chris, and John; who also identified the Parula, and, along with Lori's group, the Mourning and four others. Chris found Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, and Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Black & White, and Canadas, among 12 seen altogether by him. Mind you, Chris was out from 4:15 AM until 9:15 PM, with only a short time off for church. How many of you can top that endeavor? Yellows, American Redstart and Common Yellowthroats were also seen by several of you.

A female Scarlet Tanager was photographed by Pam Handley (to assure its identification).

As to sparrows, only 5 fairly common ones, were identified, but Dark-eyed Juncos were found solely by Chris, first ones since April. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak found itself also on Chris's list., as did the Brown-headed Cowbird. Most of his song-birds were found within the Field area.

The Boxwells located the only Indigo Buntings of the weekend, by their home near Bonfield. Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks were seen by the Anderson pair east of Powassan. Common Grackles and Red-wings were, of course very common, but no none discovered a Baltimore Oriole. Purple Finches were on the Handley list, among many others, while Evening Grosbeaks

were noted by Donna Demarco, and by Doug, in the east end. American Goldfinches were very common. Pine Siskins were at the Levesque feeder. House Sparrows were noted both by the Levesque and the Anderson duos, in the west area. .

All in all it was a pretty successful birding outing, one must agree. Congrats to all participants!

Details of this and other months can be noted by clicking onto -

- www.nipnats.com <<http://www.nipnats.com/>
- Next month's "Bird Bash" will be on the week-end of August 29-30. Prepare for it!

Dick Tafel, Compiler.