

Bird Bash Report June 20-21, 2020

By Dick Tafel, Compiler

During the hot weekend of June's Bird Bash, 23 participants saw 118 species. And that is just about average for the past 17 months of Junes, during which we have continued to check numbers for birds within the 50-mile (80.5 km) radius of North Bay. (Last year the number was only 110.)

So let's get started following in rough taxonomic order as set out within our "seasonal check list".

We always begin with "new" birds for the year, and so that gets us to a Ruddy Duck, spotted by Chris Sukha within Warren Lagoon. He also saw an American Coot there.

An Eastern Whip-poor-will was heard by yours truly by Dreany Lake late on Saturday night.

The Sedge Wren was spotted by Sheldon and Spencer McGregor. Swainson's Thrush was on the lists of Mary Young and Chris.

A Black-throated Blue Warbler was found by Gary and Connie Sturge, while Mourning Warblers were noted by Chris, yours truly, and Renee Levesque.

Renee and yours truly also discovered a Scarlet Tanager off Lavigne Road.

The above covers the eight new species of this year's Bird Bashes. We will now follow a similar order for those birds previously recognized, starting with the Common Loon. That iconic bird of our northern area was noted by Gary and Luanne Chowns, Lloyd and Janet Sparks, Elsa Tafel, Grant and Shirley McKercher, Chris, the McGregors, Renee, and yours truly. The latter 7 also spotted Double-crested Cormorants.

The American Bittern was noted by the Sturges and the McGregors. Great Blue Herons were seen by those who spotted the cormorants, and also by Fred Pinto, the Sparks, and the Chowns.

Soaring Turkey Vultures were seen by many, as were lots of Canada Geese. No swans were noted this month.

The lagoons held many dabbling ducks, including the Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teals, and Northern Shoveler. As to the divers, yours truly and Renee noted a family of Common Goldeneye and Hooded Mergansers, the latter of which were also spotted by Chris and the McGregors. Renee, yours truly, the McGregors, and the Chowns also saw Common Mergansers.

Now to predators: the Osprey was widely observed, but the Broad-winged Hawk was seen only

by yours truly, Renee, Chris, and the McGregors. The McGregors also saw a Northern Harrier, as did Lori Anderson and Ken Gowing. Bald Eagles were seen only by the Sturges, Renee, and yours truly. American Kestrel were on the lists of Chris, the Sturges, Renee, and yours truly. The Chowns, the McGregors, Renee, and yours truly also saw a Merlin.

Ruffed Grouse were spotted by the McGregors, Chris, and the Sparks. A Sora was identified by Luanne Chowns and Laura Turcotte while they were canoeing in Callander Bay.

Sandhill Cranes were spotted by Rose McClelland and the McGregors.

Killdeer were seen by the Sturges, Chris, Renee, and yours truly, the latter three also spotting Spotted Sandpipers. Wilson's Snipe were noted only by the McGregors.

Ring-billed Gulls were in large numbers in many places, but Herring Gulls were identified only by yours truly, Renee, Chris, the Sparks, the Sturges, the McKerchers, and the McGregors. Caspian Terns were on the lists of Chris, Renee, yours truly, and Fred who also saw Common Terns, as did the McGregors. No Black Terns were spotted this weekend.

Rock Pigeons were ubiquitous as usual, while Mourning Doves were noted only by the Chowns, Renee, the Sturges, Chris, yours truly, and Mary, who also observed a Black-billed Cuckoo.

The Sturges spotted a Barred Owl.

Chimney Swifts were watched by the Chowns and Fred.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were upon many lists, especially those with feeders.

The Belted Kingfisher was spotted only by the Sturges.

Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found by Chris, Mary, the Sturges, Fred, and the McGregors.

Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, as well as Northern Flickers, were not especially common, but observed by many. Pileated Woodpeckers were spotted by Fred and Chris.

Now to the songbirds, more properly called the passerines, starting with the flycatchers: Eastern Wood Pewees were identified by the Sturges, who also saw the Eastern Phoebe, noted as well as by the Sparks and the McGregors who also saw the Great Crested Flycatcher and the Eastern Kingbird. The McKerchers saw Eastern Phoebes, Least Flycatchers and Great Crested, as did Mary. Chris spotted the Eastern Phoebe, plus the Least and Alder Flycatchers. Renee and yours truly noted all but the Eastern Wood Pewee and the Least.

Now to vireos: The Red-eyed was surely heard, if not seen, by just about everybody! Warbling Vireos were noted by yours truly, Renee, the Chowns, the McKerchers, Chris, and the Sturges, who also observed the Blue-headed Vireo. Philadelphia Vireos were identified by Fred, John Levesque, Renee, and yours truly.

Blue Jays were widely noted, as were, of course, American Crows and less so, Common Ravens. Once again the Canada Jay was not observed.

All five swallow species were spotted, with just the Anderson pair and Chris seeing the Cliff; Renee, Chris, and yours truly seeing the Bank and the Barn, the latter also noted by the Sturges, Chris and Fred; Tree Swallows were watched by all mentioned, as well as by the Chowns, Mary Ann Kenrick, Rose, and the McGregors; and finally the Northern Rough-winged was seen well sitting on a wire over the Veuve River Bridge by Renee and yours truly.

Black-capped Chickadees were as ever widely enjoyed; but only the Sturges, the McGregors, Chris, Mary, and Peter and Pam Handley seemed to come upon the Red-breasted Nuthatch, while the White-breasted was seen only by Corinne Urrutia. Again, no Brown Creepers were spotted.

As to wrens, the three previously seen species were found again: the Winter Wren by the Chowns, Chris, the McGregors, and the Sturges; the House Wren by yours truly, Renee, the Sturges, Chris, and the Chowns, who also observed the Marsh Wren.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets were noted only by the McGregors.

As to thrushes: Veery were seen or heard by the Handleys, Chris, Fred, the Chowns, the McGregors, the McKerchers, the Sturges, Mary, Renee, and yours truly. Hermit Thrush were noted by the Sturges, McGregors, Fred, and Chris. The Wood Thrush was observed by the Sturges. Eastern Bluebirds were enjoyed by Rose, Chris, Renee, and yours truly. American Robins seemed to be just about everywhere!

Gray Catbirds were spotted by the Chowns, Mary Ann, Renee, and yours truly, while Brown Thrashers were discovered by the latter three, plus Chris, the Sturges, the Sparks, and Mary.

European Starlings seemed to be even more numerous than in previous months.

Cedar Waxwings were pretty widely dispersed, noted by Mary, Renee, yours truly, Mary Ann, the Sturges, Chris, the Chowns, the McGregors, and the McKerchers.

Now as to our wood warblers, 15 species were observed: Nashville, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Black and White, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Canada. Mary was the sole observer of the lovely Canada Warbler. All others were seen by more than one group. The McGregors and Chris saw eleven; Fred, five; the Chowns and Mary, six; the Sturges, seven; Renee, yours truly, and the McKerchers, five; and Janet, the Handleys, Mary Ann, and John, one each.

Six sparrow species were noted by many: Chipping, Song, Swamp, White-throat, Savannah, and Swamp. Chris was the only one to also see the Lincoln's.

The Rose-breasted Grosbeak was noted solely by Chris; the Indigo Bunting by Renee and yours truly; the Bobolink by the Sturges, Renee, and yours truly

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Red-winged Blackbirds were very common, but the Eastern Meadowlark, perhaps surprisingly, was noted only by the Sturges. They also noted the Brown-headed Cowbird, as did Renee and yours truly. The Anderson pair, Renee, and yours truly also saw the Baltimore Oriole.

Common Grackles were seen by most participants.

Purple Finches were spotted by Mary Ann, the Sturges, Chris, and the McGregors. American Goldfinches were widely spread, but the Evening Grosbeak was spotted solely by the McKerchers.

Last always to be mentioned is the House Sparrow, watched by the Sturges, the Anderson pair, and Chris.

And so that concludes the report for the June 2020 Bird Bash. Congrats to all participants! It was a hot weekend, but the birds did cooperate pretty well.

The July Bird Bash is not until its last weekend, **July 25-26**, when some southern migrants already starting their journey south should be found. Time does go by quickly these days!