

### Sept.12-13 '15 Nipissing Area "bird bash"

We were down to 85 birds for the week-end, the lowest Sept. number since 83 in 2004, but lots of interesting ones were observed by 18 birders.

Among the most interesting was the first Snow Goose for the year, found by Therez Violette near Sturgeon Falls. We could add Mute Swans along the Powassan Road east, noted by yours truly and Renee Levesque, but many would disclaim that, since it is likely they are resident at a nearby farm haven. The only other first of the year bird was the Palm Warbler identified by John Levesque right in town.

Now, going in rough taxonomic order, the normally reliable Common Loon was spotted by only two groups, Chris Suhka near Field and Grant and Shirley McKercher in Callander Bay. Double-crested Cormorants are still a relatively easy discovery, at least out in Lake Nipissing, as with the great Blue Heron. But, an American Bittern discovered by Matt Walter, out on Lake Nosbonsing was an exciting find. Indeed its sudden appearance caused Matt, in his enthusiasm to photograph it, to lose his fishing rod.

Turkey Vultures are still quite abundant, as are Canada Geese. But, we all found only 8 ducks or duck-like birds, with Matt being the only finder of Common Mergansers, and Marc Buchanan noting the only Northern Shoveler. The Levesque duo observed the only Lesser Scaup – up at Cache Bay, and Chris the only Ring-necked Ducks, near Field.

Among the predators, some 8 were found. Ospreys are still about, seen by many, as were Kestrel and Merlin. But, only Chris managed to find Northern Harrier, Broad-winged Hawk and Sharp-shinned. The Levesque pair enjoyed the sight of three adult Bald Eagles, appearing wonderously upon an island just south-west of Sunset Park.

Ruffed Grouse were upon a few lists, as were the amazingly common these years – Sandhill Cranes. Just 6 shore-birds were located, two plovers, along with Lesser Yellow-legs, and Least and Pectoral Sandpipers, being seen by the Levesque duo in the

Powassan lagoon, with Spotted Sandpipers seen only by the Mckerchers and by John, along the Lake Nipissing shoreline.

Three gull species were around, including the migrating non-breeder in this vicinity, Bonaparte Gulls, being noted by several groups. Caspian and Common Terns were still at Cache Bay. Mourning Doves were seen by quite a few groups, including Linda Stoner and Rose McClelland.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were seen by many , including, Therez, – the last likely week–end for their presence in our area this year. The Belted Kingfisher was noted by a few groups, as was the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and our four other, main woodpeckers, (including in which family is the Northern Flicker), and of course the great Pileated observed by Peter and Pam Handley.

The Least Flycatcher was observed by Matt, the Eastern Phoebe by Greg and Pat Boxwell, and the Stoner pair. No vireos , nor swallows were noted, but the first since April – Gray Jay was on Chris's list. Both nuthatches were seen this month, the White-breasted not having been noted here since April, being found by Marc, and Matt. Chris found Golden-crowned Kinglets, the Levesque pair – the Ruby-crowned, with both groups also enjoying Eastern Bluebirds. American Robins are still about in good numbers, but the Swainson's Thrush was the only other thrush found, that by Matt.

Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers were still in the vicinity, though only Mary Ann Kenrick included the thrasher in her list. She also had Cedar Waxwings.

Ten fall warblers were discovered., the Nashville by Kaye, and by the Levesque combo who also found a Northern Waterthrush in Laurier Woods, the Chestnut-sided by the McKerchers and Kaye, the Pine by Marc and Chris, the American Redstart, Yellow-rumped and Common Yellow-throat by several, the Ovenbird by yours truly and by Chris, and the always pretty Wilson's by Matt.

The Scarlet Tanager (in its bland, fall colours) was observed by the Levesque duo, in Laurier Woods.

Now as to sparrows, the five likely species were all noted, by several, but the Dark-eyed Junco was only on Chris's list. Red-wings and Common Grackles were still around – in lessening numbers, while American Goldfinches were still fairly ubiquitous.

And so, that is it for the September list. Be ready for the October “bird bash” during the week-end of October 3-4.

You should be able to view the details of this month's effort soon, and that of other months in the Nipissing Naturalist web-page - [www.nipnats.com](http://www.nipnats.com) <<http://www.nipnats.com/>

Congratulations to all participants!

Dick Tafel, compiler