

## **Bird Bash Report August 2021**

*By Dick Tafel, Compiler*

Lots of interesting birds were discovered by 16 participants during a cloudy, though only minimally rainy and windy, weekend! A bit disappointing, your recorder must say, that we were missing a number of usually active participants! Nevertheless, 110 species were found, somewhat below average, though seven other of the now 18 consecutive Bird Bash years were even lower in number. Last year was especially numerous at 120.

Starting as usual with new birds for the Bird Bash year in the order of the *Seasonal Checklist of North Bay and Area*, we begin with the Common Gallinule. Six of them, including 4 juveniles, were delightfully discovered at Cache Bay by Renee Levesque and yours truly.

Then there was the Sanderling found by Fred Pinto at Sunset Park. More shore-birds were arriving from their northern nesting habitats, including Baird's and Stilt Sandpipers, found at Powassan Lagoon by Grant and Shirley McKercher, June and Kevin Telford, and the Levesque duo who also saw them at Warren Lagoon. Gary and Connie Sturge also found the Baird's Sandpiper at Powassan Lagoon.

Five Red-necked Phalaropes were enjoyed at Warren Lagoon by the Levesque pair.

A rare Bay-breasted Warbler was noticed by the Telfords amidst a "cloud" of warblers they came upon within the Kate Pace way on Saturday. (Last August, it was Brent Turcotte who spotted the Bay-breasted for the first time on a Bird Bash.)

Now we will get to other birds seen within the district during previous Bird Bashes this year, again following the district checklist order. And that starts with the Common Loon, noted surprisingly only by the Levesque duo who saw five in Cache Bay.

Double-crested Cormorants were spotted by the McKerchers and the Levesque duo.

An adult Green Heron was watched by the Levesque duo at Cache Bay. They and the Telfords also saw a Great Blue Heron.

A few soaring Turkey Vultures were spotted by the McKerchers, the Telfords, the Levesque duo, the Sturges, and Fred.

As usual, Canada Geese were noted in large numbers by many.

Lots of ducks were still around, noticed best in the lagoons. Among the puddle ducks, most in their non-breeding plumages, that were seen included Wood Ducks, Gadwall, American Widgeon, Mallards, and Blue and Green-winged Teal. As well, American Black Ducks, seemingly in few numbers, were spotted by the Levesque duo and the McKerchers, while the Telfords came upon a Northern Pintail, last noticed in our area back in April.

Among the diving ducks, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, and Hooded Mergansers were spotted by the McKerchers and the Levesque pair, while Ring-necked Ducks, Common Mergansers, and Hooded Mergansers were found by the Sturges.

Many of the Osprey have seemingly departed, but a few were seen by the Sturges and the McKerchers.

As to hawks and similar, the Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, and Merlin were spotted by the McKerchers and the Levesque duo, who also saw a Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Broad-winged Hawk. Rose McClelland saw American Kestrel, as did the Sturges. They and the Telfords also found the Bald Eagle.

Ruffed Grouse were noted by Peter and Pam Handley and the Telfords.

Wild Turkeys were discovered only by the Sturges.

A Sora Rail was heard well by the Levesque pair within Laurier Woods.

Sandhill Cranes, at least 80 of them, were spotted by the Levesque pair and the McKerchers in West Nipissing. They were also spotted in various locales by the Sturges, Therez Violette, Donna Demarco, and Rose McClelland.

Now as to more shorebirds: Killdeer were spotted by the Levesque duo who also saw Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, as did the Sturges; the Sturges also found Least Sandpipers; the Telfords saw Lesser Yellowlegs; the McKerchers saw Greater Yellowlegs, and also, along with the Levesque duo, identified Solitary and

Least Sandpipers; the McKerchers also located the Spotted and the Pectoral Sandpipers; and the Levesque duo found the Pectoral Sandpiper, the Wilson's Snipe and the Semipalmated Sandpiper; Fred noted the Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers. Many such shorebirds were found within Powassan and Warren Lagoons, all presumably well on their way south for the winter.

Now as to gulls and terns, most saw the Ring-billed Gull, but only Fred found Bonaparte's Gulls at Sunset Park. Just the Sturges and the Levesque duo were able to identify Herring Gulls. (Where are most of them?) Caspian Terns were located at Cache Bay by the Levesque duo. Common Terns were not seen by anyone, but Renee spotted two Black Terns at Cache Bay.

Rock Pigeons remained numerous, while Mourning Doves were located only by the Levesque duo, the Sturges, Fred, the McKerchers, and the Telfords.

No owls were found.

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird was noted by virtually everyone, mostly at feeders but also away from feeder areas.

Belted Kingfishers were discovered by Fred, the McKerchers, and the Levesque duo who watched one at Cache Bay repeatedly harass a Sharp-shinned Hawk.

As to woodpeckers: The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was noted by the Telfords, the McKerchers, Fred, the Sturges, the Levesque duo, and John Levesque; Northern Flickers were noted by many; Pileated Woodpeckers were spotted solely by John and the Levesque pair, who also saw the Downy and Hairy, as did Pam and Peter Handley; the Downy was seen by the McKerchers and the Telfords.

Flycatchers were still about, with the Least noted by Fred and the Levesque duo, who also came upon the Alder Flycatcher and the Eastern Phoebe. The latter two flycatchers were also found by the Sturges who also noted the Eastern Kingbird. The Levesque duo were the only ones to find the Great Crested Flycatcher, still making its presence known at Cache Bay. Rose also saw the Eastern Phoebe.

The Warbling Vireo was found only by the Levesque duo, and the Blue-headed Vireo solely by the Sturges and John. Red-eyed Vireos were recognized by the Levesque duo, the Sturges, the Telfords, the McKerchers, John, and Fred.

No Canada Jays were seen again, but Blue Jays were all over, as were American

Crows. Common Ravens were spotted by the Sturges, the Telfords, the McKerchers, Fred, and the Levesque duo.

A few swallows were still about. Tree and Barn were spotted by the Sturges, the McKerchers, and the Levesque duo who also saw the Bank; the Barn was noticed by the Telfords.

Black-capped Chickadees remained a major species of wide discovery.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were noticed by the Telfords, the Sturges, Donna, and the Handleys. The White-breasted Nuthatch was spotted only by Renee.

The Golden-crowned Kinglet was noted only by the Telfords, with the Ruby-crowned just too elusive to be discovered.

As to thrushes, the Sturges alone discovered the Eastern Bluebird – for their first time this year! Veerys were noted by Fred, the Telfords, the Sturges, and the Levesque duo. American Robins were still ubiquitous.

Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers were noted by the Sturges, the Levesque duo, and Fred, while the Telfords were limited to the Gray Catbird, and Therez and the Handleys to the Brown Thrasher.

European Starlings were seemingly everywhere.

Cedar Waxwings were found by the Telfords, Fred, the Sturges, and the Levesque duo.

And now to the wonderful fall warblers of which 17 species were discovered! Besides the one previously noted for the first time, we will check all the discovered specie names before referring to the participants. That starts with the Tennessee last noted in May and then the Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Pine, Black and White, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat and Canada. Such a great list! Most were enjoyed by the Telfords, including the always special Blackburnian, during a fallout that occurred on their walk along Kate Pace Way. The McKerchers also had a good fallout near their home in Callander seeing the lovely Northern Parula and Canada Warbler. Fred was the only one to notice the Ovenbird among his seven species observed. The Levesque pair also saw seven species, including the Magnolia. The Sturges

observed four, including the Pine. John and Rick Tripp saw two, including the Black and White, while the Handleys saw one, the Yellow. Such great treats are the warblers, even if, during the non-breeding fall season, they do not have quite the bright colours carried during their springtime visits.

Now we get to the sparrows: The Chipping was noted by the Levesques, the Telfords, Fred, and the Sturges. The Savannah and Song Sparrows were seen by the Levesque duo and the McKerchers, while the Sturges, along with the Levesque duo, also saw the Swamp and White-throated Sparrows. The Telfords and Fred observed the Song and White-throated Sparrows, plus, for the Telfords, the White-crowned Sparrow – the first reporting during this “fall” season. Fred was the only one to note the Dark-eyed Junco.

Rick was privileged to have in his neighbourhood a pair of Northern Cardinals.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were spotted by the Sturges.

Red-winged Blackbirds were in the hundreds in many marshy areas, while Common Grackles seemed almost as numerous in varied habitats.

Purple Finches were spotted by Donna, the Levesque duo, and the Sturges.

American Goldfinches were noted by Fred, the Sturges, and the Levesque pair.

No one this month, it seems, found any House Sparrows?

And so that ends the busy August Bird Bash. Congrats to all participants!

September's Bird Bash will take place over the **weekend of September 11**. Prepare for it! Sometimes it is more prolific than August's!