

## Nipissing Area “Bird Bash” June 20-21, 2015

Very interesting “bird bash conducted by 26 birders within our 50 mile Nipissing zone this past week-end. One-hundred and one species were observed, second lowest in twelve years of reporting, because many common birds were missed. That is due to the fact that no one seemed to have visited any lagoons, nor even Cache Bay. Thus, several duck species were overlooked, and even a couple of terns and swallows.

But, let’s get to the great birds which were found. Starting with species not previously seen during a “bird bash” this year, we begin taxonomically with the Hooded Merganser discovered by Sheldon McGregor near Lavigne. This was during his first involvement in the adventure in - as he says – “a long time”. Great to have you aboard again, Sheldon!

Among but 7 predators (no eagle?) the Broad-winged Hawk was finally observed, by a number of you, and a Cooper’s Hawk was noted by Paul Smylie and Kevan Cowcill in the annual, local “breeding bird survey”. They also observed our first of the year – Black-billed Cuckoo, along their survey route (an extension of Trout Pond Road, through East Ferris township, to Callander).

The Eastern Wood Pewee was found by Gary and Connie Sturge along Alsace Road, west of Powassan. Beautiful Eastern Blue Birds were at last discovered, by Linda Stoner and Rose McClelland, and by the Sturges, - west of Powssan, by Lori Anderson and Ken Gooding, east of Powassan, and by Renee Levesque and your compiler along highway 63. Wood Thrush were noted by Greg and Pat Boxwell, not far from Bonfield, and by Renee, beside Cook’s Mills Road.

Seventeen warblers were discovered, with the Northern Parula for the first time, being on the Smylie duo list, and the Mourning being enjoyed by Mary Young near Corbeil, Renee on White Pine Road, and your compiler along Centennial Cresc. The exotic Scarlet Tanager finally made our monthly list, being spotted by the Sturges west of Powassan.

Your compiler managed to identify Vesper Sparrows , south of Rutherglen, among the six common sparrow species identified altogether, while he and Renee came upon first time Rusty Blackbirds at the Marsh Drive area.

And so now getting to birds previously observed at earlier “bashes” this year, let’s start taxonomically with the Common Loon. This was only upon Sheldon’s, and Lori’s list, and that of Elsa Tafel, and Brent Turcotte. Double-crested Cormorants were seen by a number, but the American Bittern only made it to Sheldon’s viewpoint, near Lavigne, Paul Smylie on Widdifield Station Road, and that of Barb Stewart – at Magnetewan. Great Blue Heron were spotted by many, but only Kaye Edmunds found a Green Heron.

Turkey Vultures were observed by several, as were Canada Geese. Wood Ducks were one of the few duck species, discovered by some of you, while American Back Ducks were only upon Kaye’s list. After the always common Mallards, no other duck species were found.

Osprey were seen only, it seems, by Sheldon, and by Kaye who also saw the only Northern Harrier. She also saw a Merlin, as did the Sturges. The latter found the only Red-tailed Hawk. American Kestrel, were, as usual, seen by many.

Spruce Grouse were spotted by John and Rene Levesque off lonely Merrick Quarry Road, north of the city. Ruffed Grouse were, as usual, quite common. Virginia Rail were identified by Kaye in Laurier, and by your compiler beside Nosbonsing Park Road. Sandhill Crane were also observed by your compiler, near Pine Lake road, by Sheldon, and by the Anderson pair.

The only forms of shore-bird found were the Killdeer spotted by Brent Turcotte, near Lake Nosbonsing, and Wilson’s Snipe by Sheldon. He also saw Caspian Tern. Both main gulls were, of course, around. Mourning Doves were seen by a few, including Donna Demarco in the east end. The only owl was the Barred near the Doug Patterson home area near Mattawa.

Common Nighthawks were briefly discovered by Renee, near Circle Lake, while Whippoorwill was enjoyed by Sheldon – first time ever at his cottage, said he, and by Mary, near her home at Corbeil. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were watched by many of you, as was the Belted Kingfisher. Likewise, the four main woodpecker species.

Alder Flycatchers were heard by just a few including Renee and your compiler, and by the Smylie duo. Eastern Phoebes, and Great Crested Flycatchers were on several lists. Eastern Kingbirds appeared only upon that of your compiler and the Sturge and Anderson duos. Kaye came upon a Northern Shrike (might it possibly have been a Loggerhead – since the former is not normally in these parts in the summer?).

Warbling Vireos were noted by Fred Pinto (in Laurier?), and by the Smylie pair. Red-eyed Vireos were heard by almost every one, but Blue-headed only by your compiler, the Smylie pair, and by Renee, the latter at her home area. Blue Jays were, as per usual, seen by many, including the Peter Handleys, as were crows and ravens.

Tree Swallows and Barn swallows were the only swallows detected, while chickadees and Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen by most of you. Unusually, no White-breasted Nuthatches were apparently found (same as last month). Winter Wrens were on a few lists, including Boxwells, and Smylies, while Sheldon, and Barbara, noted the only House Wrens.

Veerys and Hermit Thrushes were noted by very many of you, but Swainson's only by Renee. Robins are now almost everywhere. Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers were also seen (or heard) by many. Likewise, Cedar Waxwings.

Now among the 17 wood warblers, the Nashville was observed just by Fred, and Sheldon, and the Anderson pair; Magnolia solely by a Levesque combo; Northern Waterthrush by Renee and John, (on Oak Ridge Lane ); and Canada by your compiler (off mosquito-infested Johnson road trail), and by Mary. Black-throated Green were enjoyed by Sheldon, and by the Smylie

pair, who also found Blackburnian, and Black-throated Blue. Pine was spotted only by Sheldon.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were on several lists, but Indigo Buntings only upon that of the two Levesques (at Marsh Drive), and the Boxwell, and the Smylie duos. Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks were enjoyed by many, within the farmland areas of the district. Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles were, of course very common, while the Purple Finch, and American Goldfinches, appeared upon several lists. Evening Grosbeaks were seen only by the Levesque-compiler duo, and that of Mary Young.

House Sparrows were found solely by the Anderson duo, and by the Smylie and the Sturge pairs.

And so, congrats to all! You can view the details of this and other year's lists by checking up the web page of the Naturalist club at - - [www.nipnats.com](http://www.nipnats.com) <<http://www.nipnats.com/>

July's "Bird bash" will be over the week-end of July 25-26. Reserve time for it!

Dick Tafel, Compiler.