

## Bird Bash for May in Nipissing Area – May 23-24

At last (you say), am getting to the May bird bash results. And they were excellent! – Eighteen of you managed to locate 134 Species!

Some 59 of them were new for the year! And so just where to start?

Taxonomically, the Green Heron would be first. It was seen by Kaye Edmunds, in the Laurier Woods area, I believe, and by Grant and Shirley McKercher. Three new “ducks” came forth for the list – Blue-winged Teal and Northern Shovelers had somehow eluded previous ones, and a very surprising, White-winged Scoter was sighted by Chris Suhka near Field.

Then there were two rails; - Virginia, seen or heard by many at Laurier, and Sora out at Warren, along with the American Coot. But, surely the most exciting bird had to be the American Avocet still out at the Verner lagoon. This very pretty, “shore-bird” is the first sighting of it known within this area. Other new shore-birds for the year were Lesser Yellow-legs, Spotted, Semi-palmated, and Least Sandpipers, and Dunlin, all within either Callander, Powassan or Verner lagoons. Attending those locations were the groups of Lori Anderson, Matt Walters, Renee Levesque and yours truly, and that of the McKerchers. These two groups were both involved in the Great Canadian Birdathon, throughout the day.

A Bonapartes Gull was spotted by Brent Turcotte and by both birdathon groups. The McKercher pair and Anderson quartet spotted Common Terns out at Cache Bay, but just Chris was able to discern Black Terns.

Only Chris managed to come upon Whippoorwills and Common Nighthawks, while Chimney Swifts were going down a chimney on Main St. in the hundreds on Main Street in North Bay, enjoyed by the Anderson foursome, while Mary Young also saw some. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were now around in goodly numbers, seen by many of you.

As to flycatchers, Alder, (only by Chris, and by Brent Turcotte), Least, Great Crested, and Eastern Kingbirds were

spotted, the latter three by the two birdathon groups. All five swallow species came into view, often in large numbers, but with Northern Rough-winged being identified only by the McKerchers, and by Chris. House wrens were spotted by the Anderson bunch – at Vic Rizzo’s hideout. Four vireo species were about, seen by many, with the rarer Philadelphia being observed only by Chris.

Veerys were fairly plentiful, but Swainson’s Thrush were discovered only by the two birdathon groups, and by Craig and Elaine Hurst. Gray Catbirds were also fairly plentiful, and Brown Thrashers were observed by Donna Demarco among others, but only Mary Ann Kenrick had a very rare for these parts, Northern Mockingbird, in her vicinity – near Ski Club Road. American Pipits were found by the Anderson trio at Callander lagoon, and, by Chris, who also found, finally arriving Cedar Waxwings, out in Field.

Nineteen species of wood warblers were discovered, all first timers, except for the Yellow-rumped. The only ones often seen in these parts not to come up, but which were probably somewhere around, - were, Orange-crowned, Cape May, and Northern Parula. Palm Warblers are early arrivers and were probably further north by then, in their breeding area. Especially good to find, during their normally very short visit here, were Blackpolls, seen by Brent.

Among six sparrows, the only new one for the season on the Bird Bash were Whitecrowns, spotted by many. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were enjoyed by a number of you, while beautiful Indigo Buntings were discovered only by the Anderson quartet.

Bobolinks were now about, spotted by most groups who were within the countryside. Beautiful Baltimore Orioles were observed by the Anderson quartet; (which gets us to the end of the first of the year discoveries).

Among the rareties of the day (in taxonomic order, but not first of the year), were the Pied-billed Grebe and American Bittern spotted only by Chris, and Trumpeter Swan which Brent found up the Cranberry trail.

Six predators were located, including Northern Harrier, and Sharp-shinned Hawk (spotted by the Anderson quartet, and by the Hursts). Brent seemed to be the only one to re-locate a normally pretty common - Killdeer. The Wilson's Snipe and Woodcock were found again, both observed by Mary, and by Chris. Caspian Tern were seen again, this time by the Anderson trio, and, by Chris.

Mourning Doves were seen by just a few, including Peter and Pam Handley. The only owl this month was the re-appearing Saw-whet discovered by Chris. Belted Kingfishers were found also, by just a few as with the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Northern Flicker. The three main, local woodpeckers were also pretty abundant.

Eastern Phoebes put in a fairly strong appearance once again. Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen by a number of you, - but, perhaps oddly, no White-breasted showed up. Winter Wrens were seen (or heard) again, at least by Chris, who also spotted both kinglets. Likewise found again, was the Hermit Thrush (normally our first thrush (other than the American Robin), seen by a few, including John Levesque.

Eastern Meadowlarks were only upon the list of the Anderson quartet. They also saw Brown Headed Cowbirds as did Helen McCombie. Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, American Goldfinches and Evening Grosbeaks were at a few feeders, while House Sparrows were found only by the Anderson foursome (near Verner).

All in all, it was a great week-end for bird observations. Congrats to all!

Next month's (this June's) bird bash will be over the week-end of June 20.

And, as before, you can confirm the details of this and other bird bashes by clicking upon - [www.nipnats.com](http://www.nipnats.com)  
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Dick Tafel, Compiler

