

Bird Bash Report

June 2022

By Dick Tafel, compiler

Do our birds dislike hot weather? It did not seem like it over our recent Bird Bash weekend. Nor did it seem to bother much our participants searching for their feathered friends, for twenty- nine participants managed to discover 121 local bird species, a bit above the average during our nineteen consecutive past years of searching.

As usual, we start with new birds observed during this year's Bird Bashes, following the order set out in our *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*. This gets us to Green Herons, enjoyed by Janet and Lloyd Sparks and by Diane Deagle.

Then there were two new warblers – the Cape May discovered by Sue Gratton with Faye Oei, and the Northern Waterthrush heard by our keen, ten-year old Jeremie Corbeil. He also heard a lovely Scarlet Tanager, also a new bird for our Bird Bash year.

Now to the birds noted during previous Bird Bashes this year, and following the same order, we begin with the Common Loon. It was found only by Steve Pitt, Denise Desmarais, Renee Levesque with yours truly, Keith Thornborrow, and the Sparks.

A Pied-billed Grebe was heard by Renee. A very few Double-crested Cormorants were spotted by Alex Dumouchelle, June and Kevin Telford, Grant and Shirley McKercher, and Steve.

The American Bittern was noted by Lori Anderson and the Telfords. Great Blue Herons were spotted by Elsa Tafel, Cindy Lafleur, Linda Conway, the Levesque duo, the Telfords, the Gratton pair, Jeremie, Keith, and Steve.

As to Turkey Vultures, they were watched soaring as they do by Linda Stoner, Gary and Connie Sturge, Diane, Jeremie, the Gratton duo, Denise, the Telfords, the Sparks, Lori, the Levesque pair, Steve, and the McKerchers.

Canada Geese were not as common as in previous months, noted only by Olivia

Brundia, the McKerchers, the Levesque pair, Alex, and Denise.

Trumpeter Swans, three of them, were discovered solely by the Levesque pair in Cache Bay.

The “dabbling” ducks, namely Wood, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Blue -winged Teal, and Northern Shovelers were discovered in lagoons by the Levesque pair and by Denise; the Green-winged was seen solely by the Levesque combo; the Wood by Steve; while Mallards by most of the observers. No Black Ducks were noted.

As to “divers”, the Common Merganser was seen by the McKerchers, Diane, and the Telfords; the Hooded by Cindy, the Gratton pair, and the Levesque duo; the Common Goldeneye solely by Diane; and the Ring-necked solely by the Gratton pair.

Getting to predators, we start with the Osprey, watched, sometimes in nests, by Diane, the Gratton pair, Jeremy, Keith, Linda, the McKerchers, the Levesque duo, and Denise. The latter two groups also saw Northern Harrier, as did Lori. The Levesque duo also watched Bald Eagles and American Kestrels, as did the Telfords, the Sturges, and the Sparks. Denise, and Diane likewise, watched the American Kestrel. Linda saw the Bald Eagle. The Broad-winged Hawk was seen by John Levesque, Lori, and the Sturges, while April McCrum and Renee heard that hawk. She and John saw the Merlin. No other hawks were observed and no owls either.

Ruffed Grouse were found only by the Levesque pair, Lori, and the Sparks. Wild Turkeys were spotted only by Diane.

A Sora Rail was spotted by the Telfords at the Kate Pace beaver pond, while the Common Gallinule was watched by Denise by the Cache Bay Trailer Park.

Sandhill Cranes were found by the Gratton pair, Jeremie, Lori, and the Sturges.

Killdeer and Spotted Sandpipers were discovered by the Levesque pair, with the Sturges noting the Killdeer. Wilson's Snipe were much enjoyed by the Levesque pair, Jeremie, and Steve. No American Woodcocks were heard.

Three Bonaparte Gulls were discovered by the Levesque duo in Cache Bay. Ring-billed Gulls were fairly widely distributed, but Herring Gulls were spotted only by the Levesque pair, Diane, Denise, the Sparks, Steve, and the Gratton duo.

Caspian Terns were noted by Denise and the Levesque pair who also picked out a group of Common Terns, all at Cache Bay. But no Black Terns seemed to be around!

Of course the Rock Pigeons continue to be everywhere, with Mourning Doves much less so – the latter being noted by the Sturges, Lori, Linda, Denise, the Sparks, the McKerchers, the Levesque duo, Jeremy, Alex, Keith, and the Telfords.

The Black-billed Cuckoo was heard only by Renee.

Unfortunately, no one was able to hear or see any Whippoorwills nor any Common Nighthawks.

Chimney Swifts were caught sight of by just two, Linda Conway and yours truly.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were pretty widespread, being spotted by Diane, the Sturges, Denise, the Sparks, the McKerchers, the Levesque duo, Olivia, Steve, the Gratton pair, the Telfords, and John.

The Belted Kingfisher was heard only by yours truly in Laurier Woods.

Now, as to woodpeckers, first is the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, heard by the Sturges, the McKerchers, and April, and seen by Denise, Jeremie, and the Gratton duo. Downy Woodpeckers were spotted only by the McKerchers and by Linda. Hairy Woodpeckers were located by Denise, April, Olivia, and the Levesque duo. Northern Flickers were seemingly the most abundant, being spotted by John, the Telfords, Cindy, Steve, Jeremie, the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, the Sparks, Denise, the Sturges, Keith and Diane. The Pileated was noted only by Peter and Pam Handley, the Levesque pair, and John.

As to flycatchers, six species were discovered. The Eastern Wood Pewee was heard by April and the Sturges. The latter pair also heard the Alder Flycatcher, as did Jeremie. Least Flycatchers were heard by the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, April, the Sturges, and the Telfords. Eastern Phoebes were watched by Steve, Denise, Alex, and the Levesque pair, and heard by the Sparks. Great Crested Flycatchers were heard by the McKerchers, the Telfords, and by John, and seen by Diane. Eastern Kingbirds were spotted by Alex, the Levesque duo, Keith, and the Sturges.

Four species of vireos were detected, all difficult to see, but generally well

identified by song. Starting with the well-described Warbling Vireo, this was heard by the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, and the Sturges. Red-eyed Vireos seemed to be singing almost everywhere, and heard by most of the participants, though also seen by Jeremie and the McKerchers. Blue-headed Vireos were heard by the Sturges, the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, the Gratton pair, and the Telfords. The Philadelphia Vireo's song was interpreted by the Levesque pair and by Cindy.

Blue Jays were less frequently noted than usual, seemingly back in the woods attending young, but were spotted by the Levesque pair, the Gratton duo, Steve, John, the Telfords, the Sparks, Jeremie, the Sturges, and heard by the McKerchers and Denise. American Crows were pretty well distributed among most observers. Common Ravens were identified by Denise, the Sturges, McKerchers, Keith, Jeremie, the Telfords, Cindy, Linda, Diane, Steve, the Gratton pair, and the Levesque duo.

Swallows might have been in less abundance than in the past, but starting with the Tree Swallows, they were watched by the Gratton pair, Steve, Diane, Keith, the Sparks, the Sturges, the McKerchers, Denise, and the Levesque pair. The latter duo were the only ones to note the Northern Rough-winged Swallow – at Veuve River Road. They also saw Bank Swallows, spotted as well by Diane. Barn Swallows were observed by Steve, the Levesque duo, Keith, the Sturges, Alex, and Lori who, as well as Keith, also saw Cliff Swallows.

Black-capped Chickadees were widely distributed in our area, and were, of course, seen by many.

Red-breasted Nuthatches seemed to almost disappear during our warmer weather, but were visibly discovered by Denise, John, Steve, the Handleys, and the Telfords, and heard by Jeremie, the Sturges, and the McKerchers. White-breasted were even rarer, noted only by the Sturges and Steve. The Brown Creeper was spotted by yours truly in Laurier Woods.

House Wrens were noticed by the Sturges, Keith, Linda, and Alex, and heard by the Levesque duo. Winter Wrens were heard by four groups - Denise, the Telfords, the Gratton duo, and the Sturges.

The energetic Ruby-crowned Kinglet was spotted only by Jeremie, while the Golden-crowned was heard at three northern locations by the Levesque pair.

Now as to thrushes, Eastern Bluebirds were noted only by Steve and by Lori.

American Robins were enjoyed all over the place by most participants. The Veery was the next most active thrush, heard by many participants, namely Diane, the Levesque duo, the Sturges, Denise, April, Alex, and the McKerchers, and seen by the Telfords, Cindy, and Jeremie. The Hermit Thrush was heard only by the Levesque duo and the Sturges, who also heard the Wood Thrush, as did John.

Gray Catbirds were spotted by the Levesque duo, Denise, and Linda, and heard by the Sturges, the Telfords, and Diane. Noisy Brown Thrashers were quite noticeable, seen by Steve, Lori, Diane, Keith, Linda, Alex, Cindy, and the Levesque pair.

European Starlings were, as ever, quite ubiquitous.

Cedar Waxwings were spotted in many places by the Sturges, the McKerchers, Diane, Cindy, Denise, the Telfords, Linda, the Sparks, Steve, and the Levesque duo, and heard by April.

Wood Warblers: Seventeen of these wonderful North American warblers were observed for at least a second month by the participants. (Two were noted earlier in this report as first timers during this year's Bird Bash.) Most were heard, not seen, because of the thick foliage now everywhere. Your record-keeper will start with warblers seen, and then mention those warblers heard only.

The very rare for our area, but especially pretty Golden-winged, was much enjoyed by the Telfords on the Cranberry Trail, near Callander.

The beautiful, fairly common, Yellow was spotted by the Levesque pair, the Sturges, Jeremie, the Telfords, Linda, Diane, Denise, Cindy, and Steve.

Colourful, American Redstarts seem to enjoy people, and were watched by Cindy, the Levesque pair, Jeremie, the Telfords, Denise, Linda, the Sparks, and the McKerchers.

Common Yellowthroats which like to forage low down and often near walking trails were caught sight of by the Gratton duo, the Telfords, Denise, Diane, Cindy, Alex, the Levesque pair, and Jeremie.

Fairly easy to identify Chestnut-sided Warblers were seen by the Gratton duo, Cindy, Jeremie, the Telfords, Denise, John, the Sturges, Diane, and the Levesque duo.

First to arrive in the spring, fairly common Yellow-rumps were spotted by the Gratton duo, Diane, and the Telfords.

The very common, easily recognized by its song (*teacher, teacher, teacher*), the Ovenbird is not often spotted, but was so, by young Jeremie, the Telfords, and the Gratton pair.

The special, but usually hard to find, Black-throated Blue was visually discovered only by the Gratton pair.

Black and Whites, pretty easy to identify, were seen by the Levesque pair, Cindy, Diane, and the Telfords.

Denise spotted the Magnolia, and, after weeks of hearing it, actually saw the Canada Warbler.

Finally, the truly delightful Blackburnian Warbler was much enjoyed by Linda Conway and the watchful Telfords.

Warblers identified vocally included the Northern Parula by Denise, the Sturges, and the Levesque and Gratton pairs; Pines by the Telfords, the McKerchers, and yours truly; Black-throated Greens by the Levesque duo, the Sturges, Jeremie, April, and the Telfords, who also heard Mourning Warblers, as did the Sturges and the Levesque pair, who, along with the Sturges, heard Nashville Warblers, as did the Telfords. The Telfords observed 13 species of warblers altogether; the Levesque duo saw and heard 14.

And so that concludes the notes about our wonderful warblers, certainly very much observed by our active participants.

This gets us to the often hard to identify, but fairly common, sparrow species. Chipping Sparrows seem to be the most widespread, being seen by the Sturges, the Sparks, the Gratton duo, the Telfords, and heard by Diane, the Levesque duo, Denise, and April. Song Sparrows, along with Savannah Sparrows, were noted by the Sturges, the Telfords, the Levesque pair, and Denise, while Song Sparrows alone were discovered by Diane, Linda, John, Cindy, Alex, April, the McKerchers, the Gratton duo, and heard by Jeremie. Savannahs alone were noted by Lori. White-throats were generally heard only, with their Ontario calls of *Sweet Canada, Canada, Canada*, by Denise, the Telfords, the Sturges, the McKerchers, the

Gratton duo, Jeremie, the Levesque duo, April, and Cindy. Swamp Sparrows were spotted by the Levesque pair and heard by the Telfords. No juncos were discovered.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found by the Sturges and heard by April, the Levesque duo, Jeremie, the Gratton pair, and the McKerchers.

The Indigo Bunting was heard solely by the Levesque duo on Cook's Mill Road.

Bobolinks from the farm fields were noted by the Levesque and Gratton pairs, the Sturges, Lori, and Denise. Red-winged Blackbirds were seen by almost everyone, as were Common Grackles. Eastern Meadowlarks were found solely by the Levesque pair and Lori. The Brown-headed Cowbird was spotted only by the Sturges, who also found a Baltimore Oriole, as did Denise.

Purple Finches were noted by Denise, Alex, Steve, Keith, and the Sturges, and heard by the Levesque duo. The Pine Siskin was discovered only by the Gratton duo.

American Goldfinches were certainly prominent, being noted by Lori, Diane, Denise, the Telfords, Alex, Steve, Keith, the Sparks, Cindy, the Levesque pair, the McKerchers, the Sturges, and heard by Jeremie.

Finally, we have the often unfairly tormented House Sparrow - seen by Lori and the Levesque duo.

A very good June Bird Bash! Congrats to all who participated!

July's will be **over the weekend of July 30**. Might even be some shorebirds arriving back by then! Keep discovering our wonderful birds!