

Bird Bash Report

July 2021

By Dick Tafel, Compiler

It was a rather nice July day on Sunday, but a rainy Saturday was not at all good for birding. Regardless, there were sixteen (16) participants in this July weekend Bird Bash, discovering 90 species within their 24-hour period. That was somewhat disappointingly tied with two other years as the lowest number amidst the 18 years of July Bird Bash weekends. Last year we saw 95 species.

There were just a few first-time birds observed, following, as usual, the order within the *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*. That starts with the Cooper's Hawk, noted by yours truly along the easterly edge of Stewart Road north of Sturgeon Falls. Then there was a Pectoral Sandpiper seen within Warren Lagoon by yours truly and Renee Levesque.

Now for species seen in a previous Bird Bash this year: As usual that starts with the Common Loon. It was heard singing by Faye Oei, noted also by Lloyd and Janet Sparks, Denise Desmarais, Steve Pitt, and the Levesque duo.

Pied-billed Grebes were discovered only by the Levesque pair in Cache Bay.

Only a few of those provincially slaughtered Double-crested Cormorants were seen – by Denise and the Levesque duo.

An American Bittern was discovered by Steve Pitt near Astorville. A Great Blue Heron was watched by Steve, Denise, Gary and Connie Sturge, and the Levesque pair. The latter two groups also saw the Green Heron.

Turkey Vultures were noted by Grant and Shirley McKercher, the Sturges, Faye, Denise, Steve, Sheldon McGregor, and the Levesque duo.

There was a fair number of Canada Geese around, seen by most groups.

Now as to “puddle” ducks, within two of the local lagoons -Callander is at the moment “out of bounds” according to Callander council, and for some reason Verner was very shy of ducks) - there were lots of Wood Ducks, Gadwall, American Widgeon, Mallards and Northern Shovelers seen there by the Levesque pair and except for the Gadwall, also by Sheldon. Mallards were seen elsewhere

by Steve, the McKerchers, and Faye, and at Verner Lagoon, by Denise. Green-winged Teal were spotted at Warren Lagoon by Sheldon.

No diving ducks were noted, except for Common Goldeneye spotted by the McKerchers and the Levesque duo.

As to predators, the serious Osprey was enjoyed by Therez Violette at its nesting area at the ball field at Cache Bay, and also noted by Faye, Denise, the Levesque pair and the Sturges, who also saw a Northern Harrier. (The two adult Ospreys at Cache Bay were rewarded with two chicks, one or two of them seen by those who spotted the Osprey there.)

The Sturges also noted American Kestrel, as did the Levesque pair, Sheldon, and Denise. The Broad-winged Hawk was spotted by the Sparks and John Levesque, who, with Renee, also saw Merlins (right in their yard), as did the McKerchers. The latter duo and the Levesque pair also saw Bald Eagles.

Ruffed Grouse were found by the Sparks, Steve and Faye who also saw Wild Turkeys.

Sandhill Cranes were spotted by the Sturges and Steve.

Now as to other shorebirds of which many have already begun their sojourns back south, we will start with the local Killdeers and Spotted Sandpipers. They were noted by the Levesque duo and Sheldon, along with Lesser Yellowlegs and Least Sandpipers. The Levesque pair also saw Semipalmated and Solitary Sandpipers. They were all found at one or the other of the three birder-active lagoons.

Ring-billed Gulls were in abundance, but Herring Gulls were spotted only by Faye, the Sturges, Steve and the Sparks. The simple question is – just where are those many Herring Gulls that were here earlier in the season?

No Black Terns were discovered, but the Caspians were watched by Denise, the Levesque pair and Sheldon.

Rock Doves remained ubiquitous, while Mourning Doves were seen by Therez, Steve, the Sturges, and the Levesque pair.

A pair of Chimney Swifts gliding above Powassan Lagoon were watched by the Levesque pair.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were active at most feeder areas.

Belted Kingfishers were noted by the Sparks, Denise, Faye, the Sturges, and the Levesque pair.

As to the woodpeckers, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was found only by the Sturges, Faye, and the Sparks. A Hairy Woodpecker was spotted only by the Levesque pair who also saw, as did Steve, the Downy Woodpecker; the Levesque duo also had Northern Flickers on their lists, as did the Sturges, the Sparks, Therez, and Denise. Pileated Woodpeckers were watched only by the Levesque duo and the McKerchers.

Flycatchers were fairly numerous, especially Eastern Kingbirds, many of which were spotted by Sheldon, the Levesque pair, the Sparks, Denise, and the Sturges. The latter four groups also found Alder Flycatchers. Eastern Phoebes were spotted by the McKerchers, the Levesque duo, and Denise. The latter two groups also found Great Crested Flycatchers.

Amidst the vireos, no Warbling were spotted, but the Philadelphia was identified by the Levesque pair; the Blue-headed heard by the Sturges; and the very common Red-eyed heard and/or seen by both groups, plus the McKerchers.

Canada Jays did not make any list, but Blue Jays were noted by many, as were the American Crow and the Common Raven.

Three swallow species were noted: the Barn by Steve, the Sturges, Sheldon, and the Levesque pair; the Tree by the Sturges, Sheldon and the Levesque pair; and the Cliff, only by Sheldon.

Black-capped Chickadees were, as ever, seen all over the place, but the Red-breasted Nuthatch was noted only by Pam and Peter Handley, Steve, the Sturges, and Denise. No one spotted the White-breasted Nuthatch.

A House Wren was heard very well by the Levesque pair within the town of Verner, but no other wrens were identified.

No kinglets came into view or hearing.

As to thrushes, no one reported the Eastern Bluebird, but the Veery was noted by Denise, Sheldon, the Sturges, and the Levesque pair. The latter duo also heard

Swainson's Thrush, while the Sturges heard the Hermit. The friendly American Robins remained all over the place!

Gray Catbirds were spotted by Steve and the Levesque duo, both groups also finding the Brown Thrasher, as did Therez, and the Handleys.

European Starlings were, as usual, all over the place.

Cedar Waxwings were watched in large numbers, some soaring about like swallows, by the Levesque pair, Denise, the Sparks, and the Sturges.

Warblers were plentiful with the Yellow the most watched – by the McKerchers, Sheldon, Denise, Steve, and the Levesque duo. The latter pair plus John and the Sparks saw the American Redstart. Common Yellowthroats were found by Denise, Sheldon, the Sturges, and the Levesque pair. The latter two groups also found Nashvilles. Chestnut-sideds were located by the McKerchers and Denise. The Levesque duo identified Ovenbirds, while Denise found the Magnolia.

As to sparrows: the Song Sparrow was observed by many; the Chipping, by the Sturges, the McKerchers, Denise, and the Sparks; Savannahs and White-throats, by the Sturges, Denise and the Levesque pair, the latter group also seeing the Swamp, and Sheldon seeing the Savannah.

No Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were discovered (nor cardinals), but Indigo Buntings were enjoyed by the Levesque pair and the Sturges.

Bobolinks were spotted only by Denise and Sheldon. The Eastern Meadowlark was noted solely by the Levesque pair and the Sturges.

Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles continued to be very commonplace.

The Brown-headed Cowbird was noticed only by the Levesque pair near Veuve River. The Baltimore Oriole was completely missed.

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

American Goldfinches were on the lists of Therez, the Sturges, Steve, the McKerchers, the Levesque pair, and Denise.

House Sparrows were discovered by the Levesque duo and Sheldon.

And so that completes the July Bird Bash list. Big congrats to all participants, during a slightly complicated weekend for birding. There should be lots more southern migrants during the **August Bird Bash over the weekend of August 28-29**. Prepare for it!