

Audubon Park Bird Counts October and November, 2013

On October 14, 2013 I started a series of weekly bird counts at Audubon Park; this has proved to be a fascinating area. Eli Schaperow did the original research on this property and he identified a total of 61 species as of May 1, 2013. It is his species list that forms the basis of this survey. From December I am hoping to increase the number of surveys to two a week. These counts represent those species that I physically see in the park and also those that I record flying overhead. So it is a record of what can be seen in and from the park. As an example on November 24th I saw a Common Loon flying from the west to the east it did not land. Likewise the Double-crested Cormorants on the 4th flew to the south.

Currently a small party of White Ibis is feeding by the impoundments and single Great Egret and Little Blue Heron are also present. The other herons and egrets visit occasionally. One species currently undocumented is the Green Heron. During the month I only saw Blue-winged Teal and Hooded Merganser on the water, the Green-winged Teal nearly landed on the second day. One thing that really surprises me and that is the absence of species such as the Pied-billed Grebe, Common Gallinule (prev. Common Moorhen) and American Coot. There is a small flock of Killdeer on the short grass, their numbers are growing and a few Wilson's Snipe are feeding at the western end of the impoundments. The Lesser Yellowlegs and Least Sandpiper only visited briefly. A Belted Kingfisher is present on most visits

All the regular woodpeckers are present and the migrant Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has been seen twice. Eastern Phoebe a winter visitor are present in good numbers but the Tree Swallow another winter visitor is all but absent, not sure why. The House Wren and Ruby-crowned Kinglet can be seen on every visit and they will likely remain until April when they head north. The warblers are represented by both Palm and Yellow-rumped at the marsh and Orange-crowned and Yellow-throated are present.

The list now stands at 94 species and it should keep growing to say 120 species by the summer. I am also trying to identify all butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies, reptiles, amphibians and mammals that I see. These lists will only start to grow with the warmer weather in the spring.

I am also sending a copy of the spreadsheet which I update after each visit.

Harry Robinson,

Co-President West Volusia Audubon Society