

AUDUBON PARK BIRD COUNTS – NOVEMBER, 2014

November was an exceptional month with nine additions to the list (Dunlin, Snow Goose, Stilt Sandpiper, Virginia Rail, Gadwall, American Woodcock, Swainson's Hawk, Northern Pintail and Cave Swallow). The list now stands at 194 in 201 surveys with 200 still a possibility by the end of the year.

In a previous newsletter I said that the frogs/toads had stopped calling well that did not last too long as the commonest frog the Southern Leopard Frog has now taken over. Luckily they do not call every night but when they do you can hear little else.

Now to the birds on the 1st there was the Dunlin which did not settle. On the 3rd the Snow Goose flew over in the dark as did an American Bittern; there were also 56 Boat-tailed Grackles in the area that is a high count. On the 4th a Barn Owl flew over calling, surely this was the bird of October 5th. Also the Stilt Sandpiper flew over but as with the Dunlin it did not land. Finally for the 4th there was a Painted Bunting. On the 6th it was warbler time as there were 27 Pine Warblers and single Yellow-throated and Bay-breasted Warblers. The Virginia Rail along with a Sora were calling at first light in the impoundments on the 8th. That day was a bird of prey day as I saw a Crested Caracara flying across the impoundments with a Broad-winged Hawk over the trees. The 10th brought 47 Wilson's Snipe; that is the highest count to date. A Gadwall flew over being the next addition to the list.

On the 11th an American Woodcock took off with the snipe and later a dark morph Swainson's Hawk showed twice to the south of the impoundments. A flock of some 25 Northern Pintail flew to the south on the 13th and again on the 15th. There were also single Northern Harrier and Merlin on the 13th. There were two House Finch on the 15th.

There was now a gap with nothing of note being seen, now that is unusual. On the 24th there were two new high counts; there were eight Pied-billed Grebe and three Soras. There were more high counts on the 25th with 327 Red-winged Blackbirds and 32 Pine Warblers. The high counts continued with four Hermit Thrushes, 12 Wood Storks, 221 Laughing Gulls and 258 Black Vultures on the 27th. On the 29th a Black-crowned Night-Heron flew over in the dark and there was another high count; there were 13 Ruby-crowned Kinglets. These high counts are important as they give a better picture of what is using or passing over the park. To round up the month there was another addition to the list on the 29th a juvenile Cave Swallow, which was unexpected.

I wonder what December will bring. Along with this newsletter I can provide an up to date spreadsheet which details all the sightings back to October 2013. If you would like to receive the spreadsheet please let me know.

Harry Robinson,

Co-President,

West Volusia Audubon