

TOM RENICK COUNT PARK FEBRUARY, 2016 BIRD COUNTS

The second month of this project is now complete. I spent some 95 hours this month over 19 days sea watching (I also checked the birds across A1A). I saw 81 species as against the 82 for January - so very close. For the year I have seen 95 species with another 20 species from the historical counts making a total of 115.

The spreadsheet has had babies as there are now five sheets. The first just deals with this survey. The second lists all the species I have seen together with the highest daily count for each. The third is just for me it lists from January 1st the additions to the list. The fourth is important as it now details the 76 counts that I carried out at Canaveral National Sea Shore in the 1990's (in the second spreadsheet I compare the highest counts from both sites). I am rooting for the left hand columns! The fifth is a notes box to detail things numbers cannot describe.

Now to the birds. There was a Red-throated Loon on the 20th with 1038 Northern Gannets on the 15th. An adult white morph Snow Goose flew to the south beyond A1A on the 27th. There were two Redheads on the 4th with a White-winged Scoter on the 28th. Black Scoter were present all month but until the 26th only small numbers seen. From the 26th to the 28th a total of 1089 flew to the north there were very few adult males so it is possible that this represents a movement of non-breeding birds.

There were single Northern Harriers on the 9th and 24th with a Merlin on the 9th. Two Lesser Yellowlegs flew to the north on the 26th. Willets still moved to the north all month with 41 on the 6th. Red Knot peaked at 420 on the 14th but were scarce at the end of the month. Four Western Sandpipers were seen on the 10th.

Jaegers numbers were much lower this month with just 13 Pomarine and 53 Parasitic for the month, there were 12 Parasitic Jaegers on the 24th. There was a first-winter Thayer's Gull on the 26th, that was unexpected. Black Skimmers peaked for the month at 68 on the 13th. Finally there was a Loggerhead Shrike on the 28th.

Three species had new high "counts" this month that are worth mentioning. Herring Gulls reached 1470 on the 13th, Royal Terns 852 on the 5th and Forster's Terns 419 on the 13th.

The best day was the 16th when 53 species seen and the highest bird count for the month was that of 5887 on the 12th. Please visit windy days are best.

Harry Robinson