

## TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK – BIRD COUNTS MARCH, 2016

Well the third month is now complete there were 19 surveys. In January I saw 82 species, in February I saw 81 species and in March I saw 97 species so what will April bring? So far this year I have seen 115 species with an overall total of 130. What are the chances of reaching 200 by the end of the year?

There was only one rarity this month more on that later. Single Horned Grebes were seen on the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup>. There were flying to the north over the river five Roseate Spoonbills on the 2<sup>nd</sup> with another three on the 30<sup>th</sup>. One surprise was a Hooded Merganser flying to the north on the 19<sup>th</sup>. For the birds of prey there were single Swallow-tailed Kites on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, a Northern Harrier on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and a Merlin on the 28<sup>th</sup> (this came in off the sea). Jaegers were last seen on the 6<sup>th</sup>. The rarity was a first-summer Black-legged Kittiwake that flew to the north on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Finally there were three Common Terns on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

There was a White-winged Dove on the 18<sup>th</sup> and to my surprise there were two Nanday Parakeets on the utility wires across A1A on the 26<sup>th</sup>. A Belted Kingfisher flew to the north over the sea on the 25<sup>th</sup>. There was a Northern Rough-winged Swallow on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Two House Finches (a pair) took up residence in the park from the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Some of the higher counts: there were 1058 Brown Pelicans flying to the north on the 19<sup>th</sup> with 235 Double-crested Cormorants likewise on the 28<sup>th</sup>. There were 52 Anhinga's over the river on the 18<sup>th</sup>. There were 97 Sanderling on the 11<sup>th</sup> with 1730 Herring Gulls on the 5<sup>th</sup>. There were 2940 Tree Swallows on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 41 Barn Swallows on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The books appear to indicate that there is little evidence of herons migrating. They certainly do so as here are the highest daily totals for some species in March. There were 73 Great Blue Herons (one flock) on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 28 Snowy Egrets on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 39 Little Blue Herons on the 20<sup>th</sup>. All of these herons were flying to the north.

As this is the first year I have no idea what April will bring; it is sure to be interesting. Please join me.

Harry Robinson.