

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS – APRIL, 2016

Whilst there were no major rarities this month (Black Guillemot standing) it still proved to be very interesting. The dry data is that the list climbed by 21 to 151, there were 103 species for the month and 142 for the year. In April there were 18 surveys and 91 hours spent on those surveys. During the month there were 50 species on two dates the 1st and 24th. The greatest number of birds 2,459 were seen on the 15th.

Now to the interesting stuff - the birds. On the 15th the weather was rough and just ahead of a squall line an adult Brown Booby flew to the south followed shortly by a Long-billed Curlew that flew south along the shore! On that day a total of 657 Northern Gannets seen. In calmer conditions 1,310 Double-crested Cormorants flew to the north on the 2nd. Circling over the Halifax River there were 75 Anhinga on the 9th.

Hérons continued to move to the north there were 19 Great Egrets on the 8th, 29 Snowy Egrets on the 15th, 41 Little Blue Herons on the 8th, 27 Tricolored Herons on the 8th, a Green Heron flew in from the sea on the 23rd and there were 12 Glossy Ibis on the 2nd. To round out this section four Roseate Spoonbills flew to the north up the river on the 24th. There were also a selection of ducks with 48 Blue-winged Teals on the 15th, nine Northern Shoveler on the 9th, 14 Northern Pintail on the 9th, 12 Green-winged Teal were also seen on the 9th. Finally Red-breasted Mergansers peaked at 29 on the 15th.

A single Swallow-tailed Kite was seen on the 29th. One to two Merlins were seen on five dates with a Peregrine Falcon on the 29th. Apart from the Long-billed Curlew mentioned earlier this was shore bird month. Black-bellied Plovers (most in breeding plumage) peaked at ten on the 15th. There were six Semipalmated Sandpipers on the 23rd. I saw but did not note small flocks of unidentified peeps flying to the north. There was an adult Piping Plover on the beach on the 30th and an American Oystercatcher flew to the south on the 27th. Both were new species for the park. A Solitary Sandpiper flew to the north at first light on the 24th. Spotted Sandpipers were seen on seven dates with three on the 24th. A total of 46 Whimbrel were seen flying to the north with 14 on the 16th. A Marbled Godwit flew to the north with a flock of Willets on the 10th. Finally for this group there were single Short-billed Dowitcher on the 24th and Red-necked Phalarope on the 15th.

Great Black-backed Gulls peaked at 18 on the 15th and a Roseate Tern was seen on the 9th. Least Terns were seen from the 6th with 153 on the 17th. The two Nanday Parakeets were seen on the 3rd and 13th. Barn Swallows peaked at 1,053 on the 24th. A flock of 12 Bobolinks flew to the north on the 23rd. Finally there were two brilliant male Baltimore Orioles on the utility wires across A1A on the 6th. Passerines get a pass this month. Where were you?

Harry Robinson