

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS MAY, 2016

Hi folks, another month and the spring has gone (May 22nd) and it is summer (May 25th) which means half as many species each day. This was shorebird month with the heaviest passage in the first half of the month there were still stragglers at the end of the month. For the month I saw 88 species over 19 visits and 98 hours. I have now seen 151 species this year and 155 overall.

There were four additions this month. There was an adult Reddish Egret over the Halifax River on the 4th, a Cliff Swallow on the 6th, a Blackpoll Warbler on the 4th and a Tufted Titmouse on the 8th. So what did I see for the rest of the month?

There were single Brown Boobies on the 6th and 18th there were also 1 to 2 Northern Gannets on occasions through the month. Herons were still moving with 31 Snowy Egrets on the 8th, the Reddish Egret and up to two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons from the 15th. Two Roseate Spoonbills were seen on three dates over the river. The last Black Scoter was on the 1st whilst Red-breasted Mergansers (1 to 3) were seen regularly. There were 3 Swallow-tailed Kites on the 13th and a pair of Cooper's Hawks has to be nesting in the immediate area.

There were high counts of ten Black-bellied Plovers on the 7th, 13 Semipalmated Plovers on the 7th, 22 Willets on the 11th, 4 Spotted Sandpipers on the 18th, 8 Whimbrel on the 6th, 1 Red Knot on the 6th, 430 Sanderling on the 5th, 161 Semipalmated Sandpipers on the 6th, 55 Least Sandpipers on the 11th, White-rumped Sandpipers on four dates from 5th to 8th with 3 on 6th and 8th. There were 7 Pectoral Sandpipers on the 6th with 8 on the 7th. There were 8 Dunlin on the 21st with 2 Short-billed Dowitchers on the 6th and 1 on the 30th.

Some last dates for the gulls: Ring-billed on the 14th, Herring on the 18th and Great Black-backed on the 14th. There were two Gull-billed Terns on the 7th with one on the 18th. There was one Common Tern on the 7th with five on the 18th. The Least Terns peaked at 47 on the 15th.

There was a Common Nighthawk on the 8th and 11th with an Eastern Kingbird on the 7th. The last Tree Swallow(s) were seen on the 13th. Bank Swallows were seen to the 8th with 13 on the 6th. There was also a Cliff Swallow on the 6th. Barn Swallows peaked at 8,460 on the 6th with 5,700 on the 7th and 1,140 on the 8th. Passage continued to at least the 30th. Warblers were scarce there was a Palm Warbler on the 4th, single Blackpoll Warblers on the 4th and 14th with an American Redstart on the 14th. On the 30th a warbler flew in off the sea but I did not get a good enough look to identify it. A total of 65 Bobolinks flew to the north on the 8th.

The 6th was a special day I saw 9,623 birds and 59 species both are record high counts. Just when will I get to see the petrels and shearwaters?

Harry Robinson