

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK – BIRD COUNTS – JUNE, 2016

As far as species goes (71) this was by far the quietest month but, surprisingly, the content was more interesting than that for May! There were even nine additions to the list. I carried out surveys on 17 days over 87 hours. So far this year I have seen 161 species with three remaining from the earlier Christmas Bird Counts making for a grand total of 164 species. The three species are: Sooty Shearwater, Razorbill and Long-tailed Duck.

There was one day with strong easterly winds the 19th and there were 5 Cory's and 1 Greater Shearwaters, both are new species. As a squall approached on the 26th two immature Brown Boobies fled in front of it. In contrast on the 1st a calm day a Magnificent Frigatebird flew to the north. On the 1st there were five Common Terns whilst on the 19th there were 29 Common Terns and two adult Arctic Terns another new species. That covered the seabirds.

Most of the herons/egrets were seen during the month with a Green Heron on the 24th (second record) and an adult Black-crowned Night-Heron on the 3rd (a new species). Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were to be seen on most days hunting for Ghost Crabs with a high count of five on the 25th. There were 54 White Ibis on the 26th a new high count. Roseate Spoonbills, 86 in all, were seen flying to the north with 41 on the 8th a new high count. Much to my surprise five Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks flew north up the Halifax River on the 8th another new species.

Swallow-tailed Kites were seen occasionally but there were nine on the 29th a new high count. With these kites on the 29th there was an adult Mississippi Kite a very unexpected new species. Another unexpected new species was a light morph Short-tailed Hawk on the 15th.

Shorebirds were scarce but from the 7th a southerly passage of Black-necked Stilts started. In all for the month 80 were seen with 27 on the 26th there were also two Whimbrel on the 19th. The Black-necked Stilts were another new species.

White-winged Doves were seen on 5 dates with three on the 24th. The two Nanday Parakeets were seen on the 1st. There was a Downy Woodpecker on the 18th just the second sighting. Great Crested Flycatchers were seen on the 3rd and 8th another new species. Barn Swallows started flying to the south from the 12th with a Bank Swallow on the 29th.

Spring migration appeared to end on May the 31st with the last Barn Swallow flying to the north. The fall passage started on the 7th with the parties of Black-necked Stilts flying to the south. So the summer appears to be one week long...The Barn Swallows as I said earlier started back from the 12th.

Just what will July bring?

Harry Robinson

