

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK- BIRD COUNTS JANUARY, 2017

January was a good month as I saw 91 species as against the 82 species that I saw in January, 2016; a good start to the year. I carried out 21 surveys over 106 hours. January was the first month with no additions to the list now to the birds.

Common Loons were only seen on three dates with four on the 9th on that day the only Horned Grebe was also seen. There was no major passage of Northern Gannets or Brown Pelicans. American White Pelicans were seen over the Halifax River on five dates with 14 on the 4th as the highest count. Very unexpectedly an adult male Magnificent Frigatebird glided to the north on the 28th. Two adult Roseate Spoonbills flew to the north on the 18th.

On the 16th a total of 559 Turkey Vultures flew to the north; this was one of the highest counts. Ducks were very scarce there were two Northern Pintail on the 3rd and a Green-winged Teal on the 1st. There was a Surf Scoter on the 1st with three on the 22nd. On the 4th there was a White-winged Scoter. Black Scoters were seen on 18 dates with 65 on the 21st as the highest count. There were three Buffleheads on the 9th and a male Common Goldeneye flew to the north on the 8th.

There were single Northern Harriers on the 1st and 8th. Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks were each seen on three dates. There was a Merlin on the 1st with two Peregrine Falcons on the 20th. Willets appeared to be moving to the north in low numbers all month. Red Knot peaked at 240 on the 7th. There were 11 Western Sandpipers on the 4th and two Dunlin flew to the south on the 3rd.

During the month 54 Pomarine Jaegers were seen with 27 on the 3rd. A total of 127 Parasitic Jaegers were also seen with 70 on the 3rd - new high count. Laughing Gulls were common with a very high 10,700 on the 3rd. There was a first-winter Franklin's Gull on the 23rd it flew to the south. Herring Gull numbers were variable with a new high count of 1,880 on the 21st. Glaucous Gulls were seen on six dates with three on the 21st - a new high count. Sandwich Terns provided another new high count as 405 flew to the north on the 27th. Black Skimmers were seen on 12 dates with 39 on the 8th.

There was a Pileated Woodpecker across A1A on the 6th with an Eastern Phoebe there on the 18th. American Crows seem to be venturing onto the island there was one on the 18th with two on the 31st. There was a Purple Martin on the 18th but no more than 77 Tree Swallows were seen a day. A local rarity a Tufted Titmouse put in an appearance on the 18th. American Robins could be seen flying to the north on most days there were 1,385 on the 15th, 1,790 on the 28th and 2,570 on the 18th a new high

count. On the 18th along with the titmouse there was a Gray Catbird. Cedar Waxwings were seen from the 7th with 155 on the 18th. Yellow-rumped Warblers peaked at 64 on the 21st and the Palm Warbler stayed at the park.

Common Grackles peaked at 105 on the 6th a new high count and there were 615 Brown-headed Cowbirds flying to the north on the 16th - a new high count. There was a male Baltimore Oriole in winter plumage on the 20th and 28th. Finally there were five American Goldfinches on the 14th (a new high count) with two on the 31st.

Just what will February bring?

Harry Robinson