

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK – APRIL, 2017 BIRD COUNTS

April turned out to be a great month with nine new species, three of them being pelagic seabirds and that is special. In all this year I have recorded 154 species this year and the total list now stands at 202. This month I had 113 species (a record) this was over 21 surveys and 116 hours of fieldwork.

The seabirds come first there was an Audubon's Shearwater on the 15th with on the 16th a Wilson's Storm-Petrel and three Band-rumped Storm-Petrels these were all additions to the list. An adult Brown Booby flew to the north on the 30th. Northern Gannets were seen to the 25th. Brown Pelicans flew to the north through to the 26th with a peak count of 652 on the 8th. Double-crested Cormorants also flew to the north through to the 28th with a peak count of 365 on the 15th.

There was an adult Reddish Egret on the 26th (over the river). Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were seen from the 20th. There was a solitary Roseate Spoonbill on the 11th. Another new species was the Egyptian Goose there were two on the 9th with four on the 25th. The last Black Scoter was seen on the 12th. Swallow-tailed Kites were seen on four dates with two on the 11th and the 22nd. On the 26th a Northern Harrier flew to the north offshore all the others have been over the river. There was a Sharp-shinned Hawk on the 12th. There was a Merlin on the 1st with a Peregrine Falcon on the 8th.

A Sandhill Crane flew to the north on the 7th. Another new species was an American Golden-Plover that stopped off briefly on the beach on the 21st. There was a Semipalmated Plover on the 21st and 22nd. A Lesser Yellowlegs flew by on the 1st. Willets have been moving to the north all month the peak count was that of 245 on the 8th. There was a Spotted Sandpiper on the 20th. Whimbrels were seen on four days with 11 on the 8th. There was a single Semipalmated Sandpiper on the 21st with 15 on the 30th. A White-rumped Sandpiper flew to the south on the 30th (somebody had to fly in the "wrong" direction). Very unexpectedly a flock of three Purple Sandpipers flew to the north along the shore on the 8th. Finally for the shorebirds there was a winter plumage Long-billed Dowitcher on the beach on the 7th this was another new species.

There was a Gull-billed Tern on the 16th. There was a northerly passage of Royal Terns to the 14th. Common Terns were seen on eight dates with six on the 9th and Forster's Terns were last seen on the 14th. Least Terns were seen from the 1st with a peak count of 81 on the 23rd. There was a White-winged Dove on the 25th. A single Nanday Parakeet was seen on the 22nd. The next new species was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo which put in an appearance on the 25th. A Common Nighthawk flew to the north on the 23rd. Chuck-will's-widow was a new species in March now

there were two additional records. In a shower one dropped in and landed under a palm tree by my side on the 4th. On the 25th another flew in off the sea.

A Ruby-throated Hummingbird flew to the north on the 16th. There was a Great Crested Flycatcher on the 21st and 23rd. Eastern Kingbirds were seen from the 7th with 16 on the 8th. There was a Loggerhead Shrike on the 22nd and 26th. After weeks of easterly winds the wind was from the west on the 25th and the hirundines moved. On that date there were 145 Purple Martins, eight Northern Rough-winged Swallows, ten Bank Swallows, two Cliff Swallows and a massive count of 10,170 Barn Swallows. A further 9,150 Barn Swallows flew to the north on the 26th.

Cedar Waxwings were seen to the 14th with 190 on the 12th. There were single Savannah Sparrows on the 4th and the 28th. Another new species was a male Indigo Bunting on the 28th. Bobolinks peaked at 21 on the 9th. The last addition to the list was a male Orchard Oriole that stopped off briefly on the 9th. Finally the male Baltimore Oriole was last seen on the 1st. I look forward to May with interest.

Harry Robinson