

## TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS APRIL, 2018

In 2016 I saw 103 species in April, in 2017 I saw 113 species in April and this year I saw 140 species in April that says it all! There were even four additions to the list which now stands at 243. For the year I have recorded 174 species which goes well with the 187 that I saw in the whole of 2016. I carried out 30 surveys over 170 hours this month. There were 3359 birds on the 27<sup>th</sup> and there were 65 species on the 9<sup>th</sup> - that is a new high count. Now to the birds.

There were 11 Common Loons during the month with a full breeding plumage individual in the surf on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Single Brown Boobies were seen on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. The Northern Gannets have been gradually leaving but there were still 120 on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Double-crested Cormorants have been moving to the north all month there were 416 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 425 on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 456 on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Finally for this group there were 272 Anhingas on the 9<sup>th</sup> that left the previous high count in the dust.

The herons and egrets have also been moving north all month there were 135 Great Egrets on the 8<sup>th</sup> (a new high count), 170 Snowy Egrets, 62 Little Blue Herons and 34 Tricolored Herons also on the 8<sup>th</sup>. There was a Reddish Egret on the 15<sup>th</sup> with single Green Herons on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. There was a Black-crowned Night-Heron (a real rarity) on the 13<sup>th</sup> and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons (up to three a day) have been seen from the 12<sup>th</sup>. To round out this section there was a Roseate Spoonbill on the 3<sup>rd</sup> with three on the 4<sup>th</sup> - a very poor year for them so far.

There were four American Wigeon on the 20<sup>th</sup>. There were 495 Blue-winged Teals on the 8<sup>th</sup> with 307 on the 11<sup>th</sup> the last was on the 20<sup>th</sup>. There were 11 Northern Shoveler on the 8<sup>th</sup> with a very late Lesser Scaup on the 16<sup>th</sup>. There were single Surf Scoters on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> with a White-winged Scoter on the 28<sup>th</sup>. There were two Hooded Mergansers on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> with one on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Red-breasted Mergansers were seen all month with 30 on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

There were single Swallow-tailed Kites on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. A Northern Harrier flew to the north on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The last Sharp-shinned Hawk was seen on the 14<sup>th</sup>. There were two Short-tailed Hawks on the 9<sup>th</sup> (one light one dark) with one dark morph on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Migrant American Kestrels were seen on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. During the month 28 Merlins were seen the last being three on the 30<sup>th</sup>. In contrast there were only five Peregrine Falcons the last being on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Now to the shorebirds there were three Black-necked Stilts on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Willets have as usual been flying to the north all month but there were a high 421 on the 1<sup>st</sup>. A total of 11 Spotted Sandpipers were seen with four on the 29<sup>th</sup>. This year a total of

45 Whimbrel flew to the north with 13 on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 17 on the 29<sup>th</sup> (a new high count). There was a single Marbled Godwit on the 1<sup>st</sup> this is really an early fall passage migrant. On the 29<sup>th</sup> 20 Semipalmated Plovers, 283 Semipalmated Sandpipers (new high count), 60 Least Sandpipers, six Pectoral Sandpipers and a White-rumped Sandpiper all flew to the north. Surprisingly there was a Purple Sandpiper on the 8<sup>th</sup> with two on the 11<sup>th</sup> I have only seen this species fly through the surf. To complete this section there were two Red-necked Phalaropes on the 11<sup>th</sup> with a Red Phalarope on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

There were single Parasitic Jaegers on the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> there were no April sightings in 2016 or 2017. The last Bonaparte's Gull was seen on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The other gulls are still present. There were two Gull-billed Terns on the 6<sup>th</sup> with singles on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. There were also single Roseate Terns on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. A real spring rarity was a Black Tern on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

There was a White-winged Dove on the 13<sup>th</sup>. On the 8<sup>th</sup> a Cockatiel flew to the north this was the first of the new species for the park. Next there was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The second new species was an Eastern Screech-Owl calling just across A1A on the 8<sup>th</sup>. As for last year a Chuck-will's-widow flew in off the sea on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The third addition was a stunning Red-headed Woodpecker that flew to the south on the 15<sup>th</sup>; for the woodpeckers there were also single Pileated Woodpeckers on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Eastern Kingbirds were seen from the 4<sup>th</sup> with seven on the 24<sup>th</sup>. There was also a Gray Kingbird on the 16<sup>th</sup>. There were single Northern Rough-winged Swallows on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. There was one Cliff Swallow on the 9<sup>th</sup> with two on the 19<sup>th</sup>, then one seen on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Barn Swallows were seen all month with 2,350 on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 2,910 on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Cedar Waxwings were seen to the 25<sup>th</sup>. There were single male Black-throated Blue Warblers on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. There was a very late Yellow-rumped Warbler on the 21<sup>st</sup>. There was a single Prairie Warbler on the 7<sup>th</sup> and a late Palm Warbler on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Finally for the warblers there was a Blackpoll Warbler on the 27<sup>th</sup>. We now come to the last addition to the list there was a Rose-breasted Grosbeak on the 19<sup>th</sup>. There was also a Blue Grosbeak on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Bobolinks have had a strong passage from the 4<sup>th</sup> in all 258 seen with 86 on the 24<sup>th</sup> (a new high count) and 78 on the 28<sup>th</sup>. As I said it was a good month hopefully May will also be interesting.

Harry Robinson