

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK, BIRD COUNTS – APRIL, 2019

April is always a good month and this year was no exception; there were two additions to the list. A total of 126 species were seen over 30 counts and 146 hours (last year there were 140 species). For the year the list stands at 169 with an overall total of 255. There were 3,904 birds on the 3rd and 53 species on the 1st. There have now been over 1,000 surveys (1,004) and nearly 5,000 hours (4,918). So to the birds.

There was a Red-throated Loon on the 1st and Common Loons were seen to the 19th. Now to the bird of the month on the 18th whilst using the scope I picked out a white bird flying directly in towards the shore. The wing beats were rapid and shallow and the beak was heavy and drooped. It turned to the north and I could see a black diagonal bar on the upperwing and long tail streamers yes this was an adult White-tailed Tropicbird. What made it all the crazier the sea was calm. More normal was an adult Brown Booby on the 16th and an immature on the 17th. On the 3rd a total of 2,650 Double-crested Cormorants flew to the north, this was more than double the previous high count of 1,310 also on April 3 in 2016. There was a male Magnificent Frigatebird on the 14th.

The only higher counts for the herons were 179 Great Egrets on the 2nd and 53 Tricolored Herons on the same date. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were seen from the 23rd no more than two a day. There were single Roseate Spoonbills on the 6th and 24th.

Blue-winged Teals were seen to the 5th. There were seven Northern Shovelers on the 1st and three on the 11th. There were three Green-winged Teal on the 5th. Lesser Scaup were noted to the 3rd. There were 12 Surf Scoters (sitting on the sea) on the 4th with two on the 6th and one on the 16th. There were two White-winged Scoters on the 6th. Just 57 Black Scoters seen the last (one on the sea) was on the 27th. Red-breasted Mergansers were only seen in low numbers the highest count was of 33 on the 1st.

Single Swallow-tailed Kites were seen on four dates from the 15th. There were single Sharp-shinned Hawks on the 8th and 15th. There was a dark morph Short-tailed Hawk on the 9th. During the month 14 Merlins were seen flying to the north or coming in off the sea. There was also a Peregrine Falcon on the 10th.

For the shorebirds there was an American Golden-Plover on the 11th. There were single Greater Yellowlegs on the 11th and Lesser Yellowlegs on the 1st. There were two Spotted Sandpipers on the 1st with one on the 15th, then four seen on the 21st. During the month 50 Whimbrel flew to the north with counts of 13 on the 15th and 17th. Sanderling peaked at 130 on the 28th. There were 18 Semipalmated

Sandpipers on the 20th with 13 on the 21st. For the Least Sandpiper there were 18 on the 21st with nine on the 23rd. Dowitchers were seen on the 1st there were four Short-billed and six Long-billed.

There were two Parasitic Jaegers on the 1st with one on the 5th. Bonaparte's Gulls were seen to the 5th with a late individual on the 20th. Herring Gulls were seen to the 21st. During the month ten Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen to the 22nd. The last Great Black-backed Gull was also on the 22nd. There were single Gull-billed Terns on the 3rd and the 17th. There were also singles Roseate Terns on the 5th and 14th. Forster's Terns were last seen on the 18th.

White-winged Doves were seen from time to time with two on the 13th. There was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo on the 20th with two on the 22nd this is a new high count. There was a Common Nighthawk on the 21st. I have come to expect Chuck-will's-widows to fly in off the sea this year one flew to the north out at sea and another came in on the 14th. What I did not expect was an Eastern Whip-poor-will to fly in off the sea on the 26th. Chimney Swifts were seen from the 11th. There was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird on the 23rd. Single Pileated Woodpeckers were seen on five dates. There was a Great Crested Flycatcher on the 13th. Eastern Kingbirds were seen from the 16th with ten on the 24th. There was an American Crow on the 27th. Tree Swallows were present all month in very low numbers. There was a Northern Rough-winged Swallow on the 22nd and Bank Swallows were seen from the 16th. There was a Cliff Swallow on the 11th with two on the 27th. The wintering House Wren was last seen on the 2nd with migrants on the 7th and 13th. Cedar Waxwings were seen to the 10th.

There was a Tennessee Warbler on the 26th with a male Black-throated Blue Warbler on the 22nd. There was a Pine Warbler on the 26th (this was the warbler day). Single Prairie Warblers were seen on the 8th, 21st and 22nd. The wintering Palm Warbler was seen to the 4th with migrants on the 14th, 15th and 26th. There was a male Blackpoll Warbler on the 26th. There were single American Redstarts on the 19th and 26th. We now come to the second new bird for the month an Ovenbird there was one on the 26th. There was a male Summer Tanager on the 6th (there was one on the 6th in 2018!). There was a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak on the 26th with a male Blue Grosbeak on the 21st. Finally there were two Bobolinks on the 21st with 20 on the 25th.

I await May with anticipation it is normally a good month.

Harry Robinson