

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS JANUARY, 2020

The weather was very mixed this month which may have led to the high number of species, unfortunately there were no additions to the list. There were 102 species as against the 97 species seen in 2018. The list still stands at 263. The best days were the 27th with 5,052 birds and both the 16th and 25th when 53 species seen. Again I covered every day for a total of 170 hours some of the extra hours relate to listening for owls.

There were single Red-throated Loons on the 3rd and 26th. Common Loons were seen regularly. Numbers of Northern Gannets varied but there were 561 on the 3rd. A first-winter Great Cormorant flew to the south on the 12th. There were single Reddish Egrets on the 9th and 27th. There was a Black-crowned Night-Heron on the 3rd. There were three Roseate Spoonbills on the 3rd with two on the 20th. Wood Storks were present most days with a new high count of 102 on the 16th.

There were three Mallard on the 10th. Greater Scaup peaked at 80 on the 2nd and Lesser Scaup peaked at 410 on the 29th. There were five Surf Scoters on the 4th with one on the 5th. There was a flock of six White-winged Scoters on the 16th with two on the 18th; the count of six is a new high count for the park. Black Scoters were only seen in very low numbers. There were five Buffleheads on the 4th with a Hooded Merganser on the 14th.

There was a Northern Harrier on the 8th. Single Merlins were seen on the 6th, 15th, 16th, 25th and 26th. There was a Peregrine Falcon on the 4th. Two Sandhill Cranes flew to the north along the river on the 26th. The most unexpected find was a Hudsonian Godwit that flew to the north on the 20th. Red Knots peaked at 75 on the 4th. There was a Western Sandpiper on the 30th.

24 Pomarine Jaegers were seen during the month with 6 on the 4th there were also 60 Parasitic Jaegers during January with 21 on the 4th. There was a first-winter Franklin's Gull on the 10th with an adult Black-headed Gull on the 31st this is the third record for this location. Bonaparte's Gulls had a new high count of 60 on the 17th only to be eclipsed by a count of 73 on the 22nd. There was a passage to the north of Ring-billed Gulls with 240 on the 24th. During the month 12 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen. There was a first-winter Glaucous Gull on the 22nd. Royal Terns peaked at 179 on the 30th. Again there was a major passage to the north of Forster's Terns the high counts were 506 on the 30th and 309 on the 31st (only 176 seen on February 1). Finally for this group Black Skimmers peaked at 50 on the 26th.

There were single White-winged Doves on the 16th and the 27th. There were single Great Horned Owls on the 12th and 25th with a Barred Owl on the 12th. There were single Downy Woodpeckers on the 6th, 13th and 27th. Pileated Woodpeckers put in an appearance there was one on the 13th with two on the 16th, then singles seen on the 24th, 27th and 29th. Up to two Eastern Phoebes were seen all month. Likewise American Crows were present all month with two on the 26th. American Robins peaked at 940 on the 1st and 880 on the 19th. There was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on the 25th. Cedar Waxwings were scarce but there were 65 on the 15th. Yellow-rumped Warblers peaked at 41 on the 1st and 181 on the 20th. There was a Chipping Sparrow on the 15th. There were two Savannah Sparrows (a high count) on the 26th with one on the 28th. Unexpectedly there was a male Shiny Cowbird on the 6th (I am still trying to locate a Bronzed Cowbird....). Brown-headed Cowbirds peaked at 410 on the 1st and 150 on the 28th. American Goldfinch peaked at 22 on the 5th. Finally House Finches peaked at six on the 25th.

What will February bring?

Harry Robinson