

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS – MAY, 2020

A month of two halves the first two weeks had a series of fronts and the rest of the month was quiet this meant that there was a wide range of species during the first two weeks but little at the end of the month; there was even an unexpected addition to the list. For the month 116 species were seen which was much higher than the previous May high count of 100 in 2017. For the year the list stands at 187 with an overall count of 266. There were 31 surveys over 155 hours. The best day was the 1st when 1,731 birds and 57 species were seen.

There was a Common Loon on the 7th the latest spring record by a day! On the 12th there was a Wilson's Storm Petrel (wind N 13). The last Northern Gannet was seen on the 17th and the last Double-crested Cormorant was seen on the 27th. There was a Magnificent Frigatebird on the 10th. There were single Reddish Egrets on the 1st and 30th. There was one to two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons all month with three on the 30th. There was a Glossy Ibis on the 5th with four on the 20th and three on the 28th. Roseate Spoonbills were also seen on three dates there were three on the 5th, four on the 27th and seven on the 31st. There were single Wood Storks on the 11th and 31st.

The only ducks were: a Black Scoter on the 10th, five Red-breasted Mergansers on the 17th and one on the 19th. Up to three Swallow-tailed Kites seen frequently they have to be breeding on the island. There were single Mississippi Kites on the 11th and 20th. The last Bald Eagle was seen on the 27th. There was a late Sharp-shinned Hawk on the 2nd this is the latest record for the park. Cooper's hawks were present all month so had to be nesting close by. There were single Red-tailed Hawks on the 12th and 22nd. Finally for this group there were two Merlins on the 1st with singles on the 6th and 9th.

Black-bellied Plovers were seen to the 29th. There was a Wilson's Plover on the beach on the 1st with a Semipalmated Plover on the 2nd and seven more on the 7th. There was an American Oystercatcher on the 5th with five on the 17th. There were singles Lesser Yellowlegs on the 5th and Greater Yellowlegs on the 23rd. There was also a Solitary Sandpiper on the 1st. Willets were seen though to the 28th. There were two Spotted Sandpipers on the 2nd, two on the 7th, three on the 9th and one on the 20th. There were six Whimbrel on the 5th with nine on the 9th, two on the 23rd and two on the 24th all flew to the north. Ruddy Turnstone were last seen on the 26th with a party of five Red Knots on the 12th. Sanderlings were last seen on the 30th. Isolated Black-bellied Plovers, Willets, Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling may still be seen in June. Semipalmated Sandpipers were seen to the 17th with 20 on the 6th and 35 on the 12th. Least Sandpipers were seen to the 15th with eight on the 7th and 15 on the 12th. There were single White-rumped Sandpipers on the 5th and 13th. There were also three Pectoral Sandpipers on the 2nd with two on the 7th.

An adult light morph Parasitic Jaeger flew to the south on the 24th not sure what it was doing here at this time of the year. Ring-billed Gulls were seen to the 2nd and Herring Gulls were seen to the 8th. There were single Gull-billed Terns on the 10th and 26th. There was a party of three Roseate Terns on the 10th. Common Terns were seen on five dates no more than four a day. There were two Arctic Terns on the 10th. There was a first-summer Forster's Tern on the 26th. Least Terns were present all month with 17 on the 17th. There was a single Black Tern on the 10th. Black Skimmers were seen on 14 dates with 15 on the 18th.

There was a White-winged Dove on the 1st with a Common Nighthawk on the 4th. There were single Ruby-throated Hummingbirds on the 1st and 17th. For the woodpeckers there was a Downy on the 21st and 29th with single Pileated on the 6th, 7th and 8th. There were single Great Crested Flycatchers on the 4th and 5th with two on the 6th then singles seen on the 26th and 27th. There were 26 Eastern Kingbirds on the 1st with two on the 4th. Also on the 1st there was a Gray Kingbird. The Loggerhead Shrike was seen to the 27th. There were one to two American Crows all month with four on the 22nd. There were three Purple Martins on the 1st with one on the 7th and three on the 28th. There were two Tree Swallows on the 1st. There was a Northern Rough-winged Swallow on the 14th. There were three Bank Swallows on the 1st. On that date there were also three Cliff Swallows with one more on the 17th. The higher Barn Swallow counts were 1,180 on the 1st and 458 on the 13th. The last flying to the north was seen to the 24th and to the south from the 30th. There was a Gray Catbird on the 9th.

Now I said that there was an addition to the list this month most unexpectedly there was a female Nashville Warbler in the Sea Grapes on the 6th. There was a Northern Parula on the 9th. On the 5th there was a Magnolia Warbler. There was a Cape May Warbler on the 4th with three on the 9th, then one seen on the 18th. There were two Black-throated Blue Warblers on the 6th with a late Palm Warbler on the 8th. There were three Blackpoll Warblers on the 4th with one on the 8th. There was a Black-and-white Warbler on the 1st. There were three American Redstarts on the 4th with one on the 5th, three on the 6th and one again on the 8th. There was an Ovenbird on the 9th. Up to two Common Yellowthroats were seen regularly to the 22nd with three on the 5th. Just looking at this group shows how the varied weather helped this year.

There were single Blue Grosbeak on the 2nd and Indigo Bunting on the 4th. There were 15 Bobolink on the 1st with 13 on the 6th. The only Brown-headed Cowbirds were singles on the 5th and 13th. There were single adult male Baltimore Orioles on the 1st and 4th. Finally there were up to four House Finches a day.

Harry Robinson.