

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS – JUNE, 2020

Well this has to be shearwater month 87 in all it is normally a good year if I see one in June. The weather has been for the most part calm and hot. There has been a new species which caught me by surprise. There were 30 surveys over 155 hours. During the month 88 species located a massive improvement as in 2016, 2018 and 2019 just 71 species seen with 77 species in 2017. The best day counts were 601 birds on the 26th and 43 species on the 28th. So far this year I have recorded 195 species which is a higher total than that seen to the end of August in any other year. So now to the birds.....

Cory's Shearwaters: they were seen from the 18th 40 in all with seven on the 21st, 15 on the 26th and seven again on the 28th. Single Scopoli's Shearwaters were identified on the 19th and 28th. With such light winds they were not rising high enough to get a good view of the under wing so they were otherwise all listed under "Cory's Shearwater". Great Shearwaters were seen from the 14th there were 44 in all with higher counts of eight on the 21st, seven on the 25th, seven on the 26th and six on the 28th. Just a single Sooty Shearwater seen this was on the 21st. There was a Wilson's Storm-Petrel on the 17th with two on the 27th. At the end of the month it was sulid time: there was a juvenile Masked Booby that flew to the south circled a shrimp boat and landed on the sea; it later came north again. There was an adult Brown Booby on the 25th this flew to the north shortly after a Northern Gannet in itself a major rarity in June. There was another Brown Booby on the 1st.

Next we come to the new species a Least Bittern I had always thought that if I saw one of these birds it would be with a flock of migrating herons but that was not the case. This bird flew to the north very low over the houses on the 15th it was truly lost. From the 20th there was a northerly passage of Tricolored Herons 92 in all the best day was the 21st when 24 were seen. I do not understand why this species is migrating at this time of the year. There was a Reddish Egret on the 12th with a Green Heron on the 19th. There was a Black-crowned Night-Heron on the 9th and during the month up to three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were seen on most days. Glossy Ibis were seen on six dates with 26 on the 17th. For the Roseate Spoonbill there were two on the 4th with 23 on the 5th, 18 on the 7th and four on the 9th.

Swallow-tailed Kites were seen on most dates there were 78 in all however I have no idea how many birds were actually seen. The higher counts were 21 on the 17th, nine on the 26th and nine again on the 28th. There was a single Mississippi Kite on the 15th. A single adult Bald Eagle was present all month. There was a Red-shouldered Hawk on the 29th they are normally absent during the summer. There were single Short-tailed Hawks on the 17th and 30th with single Red-tailed Hawks on the 19th and 29th.

Shorebirds as normal were scarce there were single Black-bellied Plovers on the 9th and 17th. Even less expected was an American Oystercatcher on the 11th. Black-necked Stilts again migrated to the south out at sea there were two on the 11th, 30 on the 21st, three on the 22nd, eight on the 26th, nine on the 27th and 22 on the 28th. There were single Willets on the 4th and 12th followed by an actual passage from the 20th in all 87 seen with 44 flying to the south on the 28th. This was another unexpected event. There was a Ruddy Turnstone on the 4th with two Sanderling on the same date. Totally out of season was a Pectoral Sandpiper on the 28th it was with a flock of Willets.

There was an unexpected Parasitic Jaeger on the 7th with a more regular Gull-billed Tern on the 26th. There was a Roseate Tern on the 17th. Common Terns were seen on five dates from the 12th to the 21st no more than four a day. Black Skimmers were rare there were three on the 14th, two on the 21st, two on the 28th and one on the 29th.

There was a flock of five White-winged Doves on the 4th – a joint high count there was also one on the 21st. Now to the dark side there was a Great Horned Owl on the 26th with single Common Nighthawks on the 24th and 29th. Finally there was a Chuck-will's-widow on the 30th. A single Downy Woodpecker was seen on the 1st with a Pileated Woodpecker on the 21st. A Great Crested Flycatcher was present all month. Out of season was a Red-eyed Vireo on the 20th. There was an American Crow present to the 14th with it or another on the 29th. There were single Purple Martins on the 1st and the 8th. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were seen on six dates (there were singles on the 8th, 15th, 18th, 24th and 25th with two on the 17th). Up to four Barn Swallows were seen regularly. There was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on the 6th. Another major rarity was a female/immature Orchard Oriole on the 2nd this is only the second record for the park. House Finches were seen from time to time with six on the 2nd, four on the 11th/12th and three on the 29th. Just what will July bring?

Harry Robinson