

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK BIRD COUNTS – MARCH, 2022

Well, this is the start of the spring passage with the departure of the winter visitors. I carried out 31 surveys this month over 182 hours. In all there have been 2,070 surveys over 10,722 hours. 134 species located this month which equals what had been a very high-count last year. So far, this year have located 154 species and the grand total now stands at 304 no additions this month. The best days were the 27th with 69 species and the 28th with 2,844 birds.

There was a Red-throated Loon on the 3rd. Common Loons were seen on seven dates with two on the 7th. There were only low numbers of Northern Gannets the high count was only that of 29 on the 5th. There were seven American White Pelicans on the 2nd with 12 on the 7th, one on the 9th, three on the 14th and 20 on the 18th. Brown Pelicans peaked at 326 on the 27th this was part of a northerly passage. Double-crested Cormorants were also moving to the north with 161 on the 25th and 178 on the 28th. Large flocks of Anhingas were seen circling over the river there were 200 on the 11th and 105 on the 26th.

Unexpectedly an American Bittern flew to the south on the 31st this is the third park record. Herons/egrets were moving to the north with high counts of 76 Great Egrets on the 17th, 43 Snowy Egrets on the 17th, 33 Little Blue Herons on the 29th and 17 Tricolored Herons on the 28th. There were single Reddish Egrets on the 1st and the 27th. There was a Green Heron on the 11th with a Black-crowned Night-Heron on the 4th. There was a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron on the 13th. White Ibis peaked at 125 on the 9th and Glossy Ibis at 55 on the 19th. There was a Roseate Spoonbill on the 11th with three on the 14th, two on the 17th and one on the 21st. Wood Storks were seen all month with high counts of 14 on the 11th and the 29th. Only low numbers of vultures now the high counts were 64 Black on the 29th and 138 Turkey on the 2nd.

There were two Gadwall on the 29th. There was an American Wigeon on the 10th with two on the 11th. There were two Mottled Duck on the 10th. Blue-winged Teal were seen on seven dates with 12 on the 17th. There was a Northern Shoveler on the 9th. Green-winged Teal were seen on four dates with 16 on the 20th. There was a Ring-necked Duck on the 1st with 11 on the 20th. Over the river there were 40 Lesser Scaup on the 9th with 110 on the 16th and 45 on the 24th. There were four Surf Scoter on the 4th with a White-winged Scoter on the 9th. There were three Black Scoters on the 12th. There were two Red-breasted Mergansers on the 1st with one on the 6th and two on the 9th.

This year there was a major spring passage of Ospreys perhaps the largest spring passage ever recorded in Florida. There were 42 on the 11th with 58 on the 12th (the high count), eight on the 13th, nine on the 17th, 21 on the 24th and 19 on the 25th. There was a Swallow-tailed Kite on the 11th with sightings on most dates from the 15th. The high counts were

of four on the 19th, 28th and 29th. There was a Northern Harrier on the 1st with two on the 2nd, then singles seen on the 3rd, 11th, 12th and 17th with two on the 23rd. Single Sharp-shinned Hawks were seen on the 1st, 2nd, 7th, 11th, 19th and the 28th. There was a dark morph Short-tailed Hawk on the 29th. A male American Kestrel was present all month. A total of 21 Merlins seen from the 13th with four on the 25th and the 28th. There was a Peregrine Falcon on the 11th.

Very exceptionally Sandhill Cranes were seen on three dates with one on the 11th, three on the 20th and two on the 25th. There was a Semipalmated Plover on the 7th. There was a Greater Yellowlegs on the 8th with three Lesser Yellowlegs on the 27th. There were 60 Red Knot on the 13th. There was a Western Sandpiper on the 20th. On the 31st a Purple Sandpiper flew to the south. There was also a Short-billed Dowitcher on the 31st.

There were five Bonaparte's Gulls on the 1st with one on the 6th and one on the 13th. Herring Gulls peaked at 820 on the 9th. There was a first-winter Iceland Gull on the beach on the 20th. Single Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen on the 4th, 16th, 20th, 21st and 22nd. There was a first-winter Glaucous Gull over the river on the 28th. There were three Gull-billed Terns on the 31st. Royal Terns peaked at 210 on the 13th and Sandwich Terns peaked at 34 on the 1st. There were single Common Terns on the 2nd, 12th, 25th and 27th. Forster's Terns peaked at 63 on the 1st. Black Skimmers were seen on 13 dates with 13 on the 1st and 11 on the 6th.

There was a White-winged Dove on the 20th. There was an Eastern Screech-Owl on the 26th with a Great Horned Owl on the 1st. There were three Chuck-will's-widows on the 28th (a new high count) with two on the 29th. There was an Eastern Whip-poor-will on the 26th, 27th and 28th. The wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was last seen on the 3rd with a migrant on the 29th. There were single Northern Flickers on the 3rd and 29th. Downy Woodpeckers were seen on 21 dates with three on the 6th. Pileated Woodpeckers were seen on 14 dates only singles noted. There were two Eastern Phoebe on the 2nd and the 3rd with one staying to the 12th. There was a Great Crested Flycatcher on the 27th. There were two Loggerhead Shrikes on the 20th.

The wintering Blue-headed Vireo was last seen on the 18th there was a Red-eyed Vireo on the 23rd. Fish Crows were migrating to the north from the 5th with 140 on the 8th, 134 on the 17th and 178 on the 28th. Purple Martins were seen on eight dates with 13 on the 26th and five on the 27th. There was only one significant passage of Tree Swallows there were 1,530 on the 28th. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were seen on six dates with four on the 24th and the 26th. There were single Bank Swallows on the 21st, 27th and 28th. There was a Cliff Swallow on the 29th. Only low numbers of Barn Swallows seen the high count was that of 91 on the 27th. A single Tufted Titmouse was noted on five dates. House Wrens were also noted on five dates to the 20th with one later on the 28th.

There were two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers to the 6th with one to the 19th. There was a late individual on the 27th. There was an Eastern Bluebird on the 3rd. Hermit Thrushes were heard on the 4th and 19th. The last American Robin was on the 4th. There were two Brown Thrashers on the 5th then one seen to the end of the month with two again on the 28th. Unlike the American Robins and the Tree Swallows Cedar Waxwings were seen in large numbers with 1,840 on the 14th, 1,490 on the 17th, 920 on the 20th and 700 on the 26th.

There was an Orange-crowned Warbler on the 18th. Up to two Northern Parula were seen all month. Yellow-rumped Warblers were scarce the high count was that of 12 on the 11th. There was a Yellow-throated Warbler on nine dates with two on the 19th. There was a Prairie Warbler on the 17th with two on the 26th, then singles seen on the 27th and the 29th. There were single Black-and-white Warblers on the 3rd, 6th, 18th and 25th. There were single Common Yellowthroats on the 8th, 26th, 28th and 29th. There was an Eastern Towhee on the 19th with a Chipping Sparrow on the 15th. There was a Savannah Sparrow on the 8th. Boat-tailed Grackles peaked at 92 on the 6th a very high count for this species. Brown-headed Cowbirds peaked at 180 on the 9th and 340 on the 14th just one pair left at the end of the month. There are three pairs of House Finches but 21 seen on the 7th.

April is awaited.

Harry Robinson