

TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK – BIRD COUNTS MARCH, 2023

There were two additions this month which is exceptional (March does not normally produce additions). There were 31 surveys over 180 hours. The best day was the 11th with 63 species and 1,672 birds. For the month 139 species located this is the highest March count (there were 134 in 2021 and 2022). For the year 165 species located with 316 ever.

There were single Common Loons on the 1st, 8th and 25th. Very few Northern Gannets but 353 flew to the south on the 22nd (wrong way). There were six American White Pelicans on the 7th. Brown Pelicans peaked at 235 on the 28th. Double-crested Cormorants are migrating to the north best count was that of 172 on the 29th. There was one major flock of Anhinga as 190 seen on the 11th.

There were 35 Great Egrets on the 11th with 39 Snowy Egrets on the 18th. There were 16 Little Blue Herons on the 11th with 27 Tricolored Herons on the same date. There was a Reddish Egret on the 15th with two on the 28th (this is a joint high count). There were single Green Herons on the 10th and the 22nd. There were three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on the 17th with singles on the 18th, 23rd and 26th. White Ibis peaked at 125 on the 10th. Glossy Ibis were seen on 11 dates with 69 on the 15th this is a new high count. Wood Storks were seen to the 20th with 12 on the 4th. For the vultures there were 39 Black on the 19th and for the Turkey there were 250 on the 18th.

One of those special events a flock of 60 Snow Geese flew to the north on the 8th where had they wintered? There was a Gadwall on the 21st. There were three American Wigeon on the 9th with another three on the 21st. There were two Mottled Duck on the 5th. Blue-winged Teal were seen from the 18th with 19 on the 21st. For the Green-winged Teal there were 12 on the 2nd and 20 on the 9th. There was a female Redhead on the 27th. There were two Ring-necked Ducks on the 13th with one on the 29th. There were five Greater Scaup on the 1st with 15 on the 11th. There was a Black Scoter on the 12th with two on the 13th. There were two Red-breasted Mergansers on the 15th with one on the 29th.

Ospreys were migrating to the north from the 15th with 12 on the 15th, 21 on the 19th, 12 on the 25th and 13 on the 26th. Swallow-tailed Kites seen from the 4th. On the 13th with a front closing in (one hour away) a total of 45 flew to the north this is by far the highest count for the park. There were two Northern Harriers on the 10th with singles on the 17th and 22nd. There were also single Sharp-shinned Hawks on the 1st, 8th, 12th and 31st. The male Kestrel was seen to the 21st with a second bird present on the 3rd. Singles were also seen later on the 26th and 28th. Single Merlins were seen on 14 dates with two on the 18th. Not a Peregrine in sight.

There was a Sandhill Crane on the 7th. There was a Semipalmated Plover on the 27th with a Piping Plover on the 4th the latter is always a rarity. There were two American Oystercatchers on the 1st. A flock of 22 Black-necked Stilts flew to the north over the river on the 19th. An American Avocet did likewise on the 22nd. There was a Greater Yellowlegs on the 21st with three Lesser Yellowlegs on the 14th. There was an early Whimbrel on the 24th. There were three Red Knot on the 29th. There was a Western Sandpiper on the 11th with a Dunlin on the 19th. There was also a Long-billed Dowitcher on the 19th.

There were single Parasitic Jaegers on the 3rd and 22nd. An adult Franklin's Gull flew to the south on the 3rd. There was a Bonaparte's Gull on the 9th with two on the 11th, then one seen on the 21st. Now to the first addition: a first-winter California Gull flew to the north on the 29th. There were single Lesser Black-backed Gulls on the 13th, 27th and 29th. There was a Gull-billed Tern on the 15th. There was a Caspian Tern on the 11th. Common Terns were seen from the 8th with five on the 11th and eight on the 29th. There were three Least Terns on the 31st. Black Skimmers were seen on ten dates with five on the 12th.

All three owls in one month are probably a first. There was an Eastern Screech-Owl on the 27th, a Great Horned Owl on the 4th and single Barred Owls on the 20th and 28th. Chuck-will's-widows were heard from the 25th with two on the 25th, seven on the 27th, three on the 28th and two on the 29th. The count of seven is a new high count for the park. Eastern Whip-poor-wills were heard from the 7th when two located this is another new high count for the park. In all singles were located on five dates to the 30th. There was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird on the 23rd.

There was a Red-headed Woodpecker on the 31st. There were eight Red-bellied Woodpeckers on the 6th a joint high count. There was a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on the 6th. There were single Northern Flickers on the 12th and the 22nd (normally only 2 – 3 records a year). Pileated Woodpeckers were seen on 16 dates with two on the 3rd. Single Eastern Phoebe were seen on the 5th and 13th. The wintering Loggerhead Shrike was last seen on the 19th. There was a White-eyed Vireo on the 13th. There were single Yellow-throated Vireos on the 6th, 11th and 31st. There were single Red-eyed Vireos on the 16th and the 30th. Fish Crows have been migrating to the north all month with 485 on the 10th and 580 on the 11th.

Purple Martins were seen from the 11th they were seen on nine dates with 20 on the 15th. Tree Swallows peaked at 630 on the 18th. There was a Bank Swallow on the 30th. Barn Swallows were only seen in low numbers with 32 on the 30th. There was a Carolina Chickadee on the 9th. The wintering House Wren was last heard on the 28th. There were single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers on the 1st and 7th with two on the 26th/27th. The Ruby-crowned Kinglet was last seen on the 20th. There were two Eastern Bluebirds on the 3rd with one on the 6th. There were single Hermit Thrushes on the 12th and 27th. The last American Robins were 12 on the 15th.

There were three Gray Catbirds to the 26th with five on the 7th a new high count. The last was one on the 27th. There were single Brown Thrashers on the 5th, 10th, 14th and 22nd with two on the 30th. There was an American Pipit on the 7th. Cedar Waxwings were seen daily with 245 on the 2nd, 305 on the 6th and 250 on the 8th.

There was an Orange-crowned Warbler on the 5th. There was a Northern Parula on the 2nd with three on the 17th the latter is a new high count for the park. The adult male Cape May Warbler was seen on the 5th and 11th. There were single Yellow-throated Warblers on the 2nd and the 12th. There was a Prairie Warbler on the 26th. Now to the other addition to the list there as a female Western Tanager on the 8th. There was an Eastern Towhee on the 13th. There was also an Indigo Bunting on the 20th. Brown-headed Cowbird numbers declined there were 370 on the 4th, 190 on the 12th, 50 on the 18th, 15 on the 23rd and one on the 30th. There was a male Baltimore Oriole on the 5th with a female on the 12th and the 13th. House Finches peaked at seven on the 13th/14th. There were 12 American Goldfinch on the 3rd with 40 on the 19th.

Can we reach 320 species by the end of the year?

Harry Robinson.