TOM RENICK COUNTY PARK – BIRD COUNTS OCTOBER, 2026

There was one addition to the list plus another caused by the split of Willet into two species. So, the total now stands at 348 (at Apopka in 19 years had 368 species). For the month had 155 species over 31 days and 122 hours. The best days were the 4th with 59 species and the 18th with 1,231 birds.

There was a Common Loon on the 30th. A Northern Fulmar flew to the north on the 31st, there were four previous sightings in 2017. For Cory's Shearwater there was one on the 9th with three on the 10th, four on the 21st, one on the 22nd and three on the 23rd. There were ten Scopoli's Shearwaters on the 10th and one on the 24th. The count of ten is a new high count. Great Shearwaters were seen on 11 days with ten on the 21st. In all 44 seen. There was a Sooty Shearwater on the 23rd. There was also a Manx Shearwater on the 18th. Northern Gannets were seen from the 20th with 304 on the 28th. Brown Pelicans peaked at 333 on the 24th. There was an adult male Magnificent Frigatebird over the river on the 2nd.

Great Blue Heron peaked at 32 on the 11th. There was a Great White Heron on the 30th. There were two Reddish Egrets on the 6th with one on the 20th. There were single Green Herons on the 3rd and the 4th. There were also single Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on the 2nd and the 5th. White Ibis peaked at 160 on the 12th. There was a Glossy Ibis on the 15th with 14 on the 20th, three on the 21st and one on the 22nd. There were 31 Roseate Spoonbill on the 9th with one on the 25th, 12 on the 26th and four on the 27th. There was a Wood Stork on the 9th with five on the 11th and two on the 24th. For the vultures there were 44 Black on the 12th with 108 Turkey on the 25th. Finally, for this group an immature American Flamingo flew to the north over the river on the 21st, this is the second record.

There were four Wood Duck on the 9th with five on the 16th. There were three Gadwall on the 18th with singles on the 27th and the 30th. There was an American Wigeon on the 21st. On the 27th what was probably a "wild" male Mallard flew to the south. There was a Mottled Duck on the 16th. Blue-winged Teal were seen on six days with 53 on the 17th. There were eight Northern Pintail on the 29th. Green-winged Teal were seen on nine days with 30 on the 12th. Lesser Scaup were seen on 11 days from the 6th with 80 on the 27th. There were three Black Scoter on the 30th. There were also three Bufflehead on the 17th with one on the 30th.

Indicating fall passage there were ten Osprey on the 9th and 27 on the 12th. Up to three Bald Eagles were seen from the 5th with four on the 24th. Single Northern Harrier were seen on the 2nd and 5th with two on the 9th, three on the 12th, one on the 13th and one on the 28th. There were single Cooper's Hawks on the 4th, 6th, 14th and 22nd. There were two Broad-winged Hawks on the 11th with singles on the 12th, 15th, 19th and 24th. There were two Swainson's Hawks on

the 11th a joint high count. Red-tailed Hawks were seen on six days with two on the 21st and 26th. American Kestrels were seen on 16 days with four on the 11th. Merlins were seen on 21 days with 18 on the 10th a new high count. In all there were 73 birds. Peregrine Falcons were seen on 16 days from the 11th with 21 on the 11th. In all there were 65 birds.

There was a Sandhill Crane on the 14th. Black-bellied Plovers peaked at 17 on the 12th. There was a Killdeer on the 4th. There were four American Oystercatcher on the 24th. There were also three Black-necked Stilts on the 12th. There were two American Avocet on the 10th with a Greater Yellowlegs on the 28th. Prairie Willets peaked at 34 on the 21st. There were single Spotted Sandpipers on the 17th, 19th and 20th. There were eight Red Knot on the 28th. There was a single Western Sandpiper on the 13th. There was a Long-billed Dowitcher on the 30th. There was also a Red-necked Phalarope on the 9th.

Pomarine Jaeger were seen on seven days from the 6th with four on the 27th, in all 13 seen. Parasitic Jaeger were seen on five days from the 6th with four on the 21st. Laughing Gulls peaked at 854 on the 18th. There was a first-winter Franklin's Gull on the 31st. Now to the addition to the list a first-year Heermann's Gull flew to the north up the river on the 21st. Ring-billed Gulls were seen on six days from the 10th no more than two a day. Herring Gulls were seen from the 6th with 158 on the 26th. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen on eight days from the 6th with 14 on the 26th. There were two Great Black-backed Gulls on the 18th. There was a first-winter Sabine's Gull on the 18th. Also, the 18th there was one immature and one adult Black-legged Kittiwake. There was a Gull-billed Tern on the 19th. Caspian Terns were seen on ten days with seven on the 6th. Royal Terns peaked at 88 on the 26th. There were six Common Terns on the 5th with ten on the 6th, one on the 12th and two on the 18th. Forster's Terns were seen on eight days from the 7th with four on the 13th and four again on the 26th. There was a Black Tern on the 6th. There was also a Black Skimmer on the 23rd with five on the 31st.

Common Ground-Doves were seen to the 11th with seven on the 3rd. There was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo on the 15th. There was a Barred Owl on the 1st with a Common Nighthawk on the 8th. The last female Chuck-will's-widow was heard on the 1st. There were single Eastern Whip-poor-will's on the 10th and 17th, both were out over the sea. Chimney Swift's only sighting was of 22 on the 4th. There were single Ruby-throated Hummingbirds on the 10th and 18th. Up to four Belted Kingfishers seen on 28 days. There were single Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on the 2nd and 11th. Downy Woodpeckers were seen on 11 days with four on the 4th. There was a Northern Flicker on the 3rd. Pileated Woodpeckers were seen on 18 days with counts of five on the 3rd, 13th and 30th. There was an Eastern Wood-Pewee on the 12th and the 13th. Single Eastern Phoebe seen most days from the 17th. There were two Eastern Kingbird on the 14th with a Gray Kingbird on the 22nd. There was a Loggerhead Shrike on the 1st.

There was a Red-eyed Vireo on the 3rd with two on the 4th, 8th and 9th. There was a Florida Scrub-Jay on the 12th. Tree Swallows were seen on eight days from the 7th with 20 on the 21st. There was a Northern Rough-winged Swallow on the 16th. Barn Swallows seen on eight days to the 24th with ten on the 16th. There were single Carolina Chickadee on the 5th and 19th. Tufted Titmouse were seen on eight days with three on the 4th. There was a House Wren on the 15th with a Sedge Wren on the 25th. There were two Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers on the 4th and the 11th with one on the 14th. Eastern Bluebirds were seen on 17 days with five on the 22nd. There were two Swainson's Thrush on the 4th. There was a Gray Catbird on the 4th with two on the 11th and one on the 15th. A Brown Thrasher was noted on seven days through the month. European Starling peaked at 340 on the 29th.

There was a Tennessee Warbler on the 4th with six on the 8th (a new high count), then singles seen on the 9th and 12th. There was an Orange-crowned Warbler on the 4th. For the Northern Parula there was one on the 3rd, two on the 4th, two on the 8th and singles on the 11th and 12th. There were four Cape May Warblers on the 7th and 8th with singles on the 9th and 11th. There was a Black-throated Blue Warbler on the 12th. There was a Yellow-rumped Warbler on the 30th. Single Yellow-throated Warblers were seen on six days from the 1st to the 28th. Palm Warblers were seen from the 9th no more than two a day. There was a Bay-breasted Warbler on the 3rd. There was a Blackpoll Warbler on the 9th with two on the 11th. There was a Black-and-white Warbler on the 7th. American Redstarts were seen from the 2nd to the 15th with six on the 11th.

There were two Summer Tanager on the 11th. There was a White-crowned Sparrow on the 29th. There was a Rose-breasted Grosbeak on the 22nd. There were single Blue Grosbeak on the 1st and 7th. There were two Indigo Bunting on the 1st. There were two Painted Buntings on the 4th (new high count) with one on the 13th. There was a Dickcissel on the 9th. There were three Eastern Meadowlark on the 13th another new high count. For Brown-headed Cowbirds there were two on the 12th with four on the 22nd and three on the 27th. Up to five House Finches seen on most days.

With the split of the Willet into Prairie (winter) and Saltmarsh (summer) it seemed worthwhile to summarize the seasons as I recorded them using the different calls. I have heard the Saltmarsh from March 5 (2019/2023) to September 30 (2021) and the Prairie from July 16 (2023) to April 30 (2024) with a late record on May 14, 2019. The high counts were 630 on December 8, 2025 for the Prairie and 520 for the Saltmarsh on August 3, 2026.

Harry Robinson