

BIRDING FESTIVAL HIKE EVALUATIONS - 2011

Saturday, May 14

Weather: 13 degrees, winds nil, fog, overcast

Attendance: 17

Comments: As always, the blue phlox, field chickweed, early buttercups, fragrant sumac and invasive swallowwort was pointed out, and a general overview and history of the area was given. The rain held off beautifully, although visibility was restricted due to a misty fog that persisted throughout the walk. Birds seen were Eastern Towhee, Baltimore Orioles, Northern Flickers, Field Sparrow, Gray Catbird and three species of vireos including Warbling, Philadelphia and Red-eyed. Thirteen species of warblers: Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Black-and-white, and American Redstart.

Sunday, May 15

Weather: 11 degrees, wind strong, light rain

Attendance: 0

Comments: It was just me and myself and I on this hike due to the high winds and steady rain. However, there were pockets of warblers here and there in sheltered areas, and in one spot, I found a nice collection of Red-eyed, Philadelphia and Warbling Vireos, and 8 species of warblers comprising Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, American Redstart and Common Yellowthroat. Also present were 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches.

Monday, May 16

Weather: 7 degrees, wind steady, light rain

Attendance: 3

Comments: Much the same conditions as yesterday with occasional misty rain and light rain, and pretty much the same species of birds encountered as it is obvious that they are going nowhere until weather conditions improve and winds once again start arriving from the southwest. The pocket of migrants was almost in the same spot as yesterday with another smaller one just west of there which we stopped and surveyed for awhile.

Tuesday, May 17

Weather: 9 degrees, light wind, cloudy

Attendance: 9

Comments: Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green Warblers and American Redstarts rounded out the warblers seen this morning. Other birds of note included Philadelphia Vireo, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, and Osprey.

Wednesday, May 18

Weather: 10 degrees, light wind, light rain

Attendance: 6

Comments: Despite the rain, warblers were well distributed for this walk, and a small band of great crested flycatchers had arrived and were back and forth all during the walk. There seemed to be quite a few species of warblers around but few in number.

Thursday, May 19

Weather: 16 degrees, winds nil , clear

Attendance: 6

Comments: It was a perfect morning and the trees were full of warblers and other birds. Highlights: Scarlet Tanagers, many Baltimore Orioles, Philadelphia Vireo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Great-crested & Least Flycatchers, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrows, 16 warblers (including Blackburnian (many), Blackpoll, Cape May, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Bay-breasted, Tennessee, Nashville, Blue-throated Blue, BI-throated Green, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Parula, Redstart, Ovenbird, Black and White), W.W. Scoters, Common Mergansers and Long-tailed Ducks off shore, Wilson's Snipe flying around.

Friday, May 20

Weather: 18 degrees, nil winds, mainly sunny

Attendance: 5

Comments: Although the morning bird-wise wasn't quite as perfect as yesterday, there was still an excellent variety to view, including Yellow-throated Vireo, all kinds of Redstarts, Tennessee Warblers calling enthusiastically, and singing Wood Thrushes. The new iPod I have with the extension speaker proved very useful in bringing out a few birds so people could have a better look at them.

Saturday, May 21

Weather: 13 degrees, winds nil, fog then clear

Attendance: 10

Comments: Fog for the first half hour made birding difficult, but once the skies cleared, it became exceptional birding with 18 species of warblers present. Tennessee warblers were singing enthusiastically and American Redstarts were particularly numerous. The Yellow-throated Vireo was still present in the same spot, and an Olive-sided Flycatcher sat out in the open for several minutes for all to see. My entourage was so keen that they continued to bird one spot long after I had to leave for a Birding by Ear workshop.

Sunday, May 22

Weather: 14 degrees, winds very light, overcast

Attendance: 2

Comments: It was a great finish to the Birding Festival with both a Gray-cheeked Thrush being seen as well as a Worm-eating Warbler, the latter being the first appearance of this eastern nearctic species since 2009. The bird was easily spotted as it fed among the branches near the trail system's west end. Blackpoll Warblers were common during the walk as well as American Redstarts. The two people I had with me were from Bancroft, which mirrors the overall participation during the entire week, with people from Buffalo, Hamilton, Kingston, Peterborough, Ottawa and Toronto representing some of the other places that visitors were from, making the Birding Festival an amazing tourist attraction for the County. Unfortunately, this potential for important tourist dollars is not recognized by County leaders and the event continues to be promoted only by those who organize it.