

2022 Johnson County Spring Migration Count

Chris Caster

The Spring Count was held on May 7. Thankfully the COVID crisis was a greatly diminished concern this year and we did have some larger groups birding together. We also met for lunch at the North Liberty Community Center, a tradition very nice to renew without masks.

It was a fantastic day to be out birding. Sunrise was in the low 40s, but by afternoon it was 70 degrees and breezy. And no precipitation all day. But the migration seemed to be behind schedule due to the cold spring thus far. The trees were barely leafed out and there were lingering waterfowl, but few migrants. We managed a species total of 152, which is somewhat below our average. We had 14 species of waterfowl. Shorebird diversity was not great as we managed only 13. Seventeen warblers were likely one of our lowest count totals in that category.

We did have some pretty good birds though. The best bird in my opinion was the lovestruck Barn Owl coming to visit the Macbride Raptor Project's captive display bird. Mark Brown and I were there when it came in at sunset. And I was treated to a lengthy conversation between the two after dark. A beautiful Eared Grebe was on Swan Lake in breeding plumage, along with two Black-necked Stilts and an American Avocet. At Cedar River Crossing near Sutliff, Deb and Mark Rolfes discovered a Wilson's Phalarope and American Pipits. Mark Brown visited there later in the afternoon and found eight White-faced Ibis.

An estimated four Wilson's Snipe were performing their winnowing display at Williams Prairie at sunrise. American Bitterns were calling in two different locations along Swan Lake Road well west of Round Pond. The best warbler was certainly the Pine Warbler reported by Nick Timmer at Hickory Hill Park. Other good warblers were Kentucky and Golden-winged at Squire Point, Cerulean at Hanging Rock Woods, and Yellow-throated at Lake Macbride. A Summer Tanager was also at Hanging Rock – thanks to Jayden Bowen for running out to get that for us.

A Red-breasted Nuthatch was found by Karen Disbrow's group at Kent Park. Chris Edwards located a surprising three White-eyed Vireos and four Red-breasted Mergansers at Lake Macbride. Chris also had a Blue Grosbeak at Hawkeye Wildlife Area. Mark Brown had a Henslow's Sparrow and American Woodcock near the Gun Club Ponds along Greencastle Avenue.

Possibly the biggest miss was Great Horned Owl, but Eastern Screech-Owl was a close second. Other misses included Upland Sandpiper, Loggerhead Shrike, Bell's Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Mockingbird, Prothonotary Warbler, and Vesper Sparrow.

Thanks to everyone who participated!

Participants: Kyle Belcher, Tom Bootsmiller, Jayden Bowen, Mary Bowler, Brian Broderick, Mark Brown, Chris Caster, Karen Disbrow, Sandy Eads, Chris Edwards, Linda Fisher, Rick, Janet, Jenny Hollis and JJ Miller, Ken Lowder, Mark Madsen, Ramona McGurk, Mary Noble, Jason Paulios, Deb and Mark Rolfes, Janet Seiz, Nick Timmer, Eliza Willis.

SPECIES LIST

Greater White-fronted Goose	4	Turkey Vulture	47	House Sparrow	88
Canada Goose	308	Osprey	2	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	38
Wood Duck	50	Cooper's Hawk	3	American Pipit	3
Blue-winged Teal	154	Bald Eagle	12	House Finch	12
Northern Shoveler	69	Broad-winged Hawk	1	American Goldfinch	136
Gadwall	1	Red-tailed Hawk	7	Grasshopper Sparrow	2
American Wigeon	1	Barn Owl	1	Lark Sparrow	8
Mallard	70	Barred Owl	4	Chipping Sparrow	18
Green-winged Teal	1	Belted Kingfisher	4	Field Sparrow	20
Redhead	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	44	White-crowned Sparrow	8
Ring-necked Duck	18	Red-bellied Woodpecker	56	White-throated Sparrow	40
Lesser Scaup	4	Downy Woodpecker	77	Henslow's Sparrow	1
Hooded Merganser	4	Hairy Woodpecker	16	Savannah Sparrow	6
Red-breasted Merganser	4	Northern Flicker	11	Song Sparrow	68
Northern Bobwhite	3	Pileated Woodpecker	7	Lincoln's Sparrow	3
Ring-necked Pheasant	17	American Kestrel	6	Swamp Sparrow	3
Wild Turkey	4	Great Crested Flycatcher	15	Eastern Towhee	25
Pied-billed Grebe	17	Eastern Kingbird	6	Bobolink	3
Rock Pigeon	12	Willow Flycatcher	1	Eastern Meadowlark	17
Eurasian Collared-Dove	2	Least Flycatcher	4	Western Meadowlark	1
Mourning Dove	56	Eastern Phoebe	8	Orchard Oriole	4
Chimney Swift	3	White-eyed Vireo	3	Baltimore Oriole	25
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	Yellow-throated Vireo	13	Red-winged Blackbird	617
Sora	18	Warbling Vireo	24	Brown-headed Cowbird	100
American Coot	2	Blue Jay	145	Common Grackle	92
Sandhill Crane	8	American Crow	49	Ovenbird	1
American Avocet	1	Horned Lark	5	Northern Waterthrush	1
Black-necked Stilt	2	Bank Swallow	4	Golden-winged Warbler	1
Killdeer	51	Tree Swallow	217	Blue-winged Warbler	7
Dunlin	5	N. Rough-winged Swallow	6	Black-and-white Warbler	5
Least Sandpiper	16	Purple Martin	51	Tennessee Warbler	3
Pectoral Sandpiper	9	Barn Swallow	102	Nashville Warbler	10
American Woodcock	5	Cliff Swallow	45	Kentucky Warbler	1
Wilson's Snipe	4	Black-capped Chickadee	87	Common Yellowthroat	58
Spotted Sandpiper	23	Tufted Titmouse	44	American Redstart	7
Solitary Sandpiper	5	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	Cerulean Warbler	1
Lesser Yellowlegs	61	White-breasted Nuthatch	45	Northern Parula	6
Greater Yellowlegs	2	House Wren	123	Yellow Warbler	34
Wilson's Phalarope	3	Sedge Wren	4	Palm Warbler	7
Bonaparte's Gull	3	Marsh Wren	1	Pine Warbler	1
Ring-billed Gull	15	Carolina Wren	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	75
Caspian Tern	2	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	32	Yellow-throated Warbler	7
Black Tern	2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Black-throated Green Warbler	4
Forster's Tern	3	Eastern Bluebird	11	Summer Tanager	1
Double-crested Cormorant	42	Swainson's Thrush	1	Scarlet Tanager	3
American White Pelican	336	Wood Thrush	5	Northern Cardinal	171
American Bittern	2	American Robin	188	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	33
Great Blue Heron	1	Gray Catbird	85	Blue Grosbeak	1
Great Egret	4	Brown Thrasher	16	Indigo Bunting	9
Green Heron	2	European Starling	140	Dickcissel	1
White-faced Ibis	8	Cedar Waxwing	5		