

## WALLACE BIRDATHON 2012

by John Geale, accompanying guest birder Roger Frost

It's still pretty dark at 4:00 a.m., but on May 24 that was when Roger and I were standing in the Beagle Club Road ski Wallace Birdathon. A and a distant Whip-poor-will that are now much more Road marsh, other largely



list: an American Woodcock was displaying, and an American Bittern was "pumping" in the wetland. By now it was getting light enough to rouse Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler and Common Yellowthroat, all of which could be heard here.

Along Macklin Road was the first of many spots where we tried to find an Upland Sandpiper, but this was one species that we never did catch up with. Wilson's Snipe, Cedar Waxwing, Veery, Brown Thrasher, and Grasshopper Sparrows, and a surprising Blue-gray as well as a few other more common species.



We did find Savannah Gnatcatcher,

We spent some more time in the general area of Alderville, finding Golden-winged and Pine Warblers, Eastern Towhee, a Wild Turkey sneaking off the road, Field and Vesper Sparrows, and an Orchard Oriole. At the Black Oak Savanna, Roger knew of a probable Cooper's Hawk nest, but when we got to it not a bird was in sight; we did see an Eastern Bluebird on the walk in, so it was not a complete loss!

Our next main stop was at Bull Road just north of Baltimore. For the first time in the day we heard or saw virtually every species we had hoped for: White-throated Sparrow, Winter Wren, Alder Flycatcher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Purple Finch, Brown Creeper, and Nashville, Black-and-white, and Canada Warblers. At this point we began to become acutely conscious of the fact that we were missing White-breasted Nuthatch, Downy Woodpecker, Kingfisher and Ruffed Grouse, despite having been in lots of suitable habitat. We had also stopped at several places where Roger thought there was a good chance of seeing a Blue-winged Warbler, but none had appeared.



At this we were Belted suitable

Peter's Woods and nearby areas were next. Roger was sure that Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks were in this area, as well as Barred Owl. Sure enough, the hawks were added to the list, and as we walked back towards the car the owl finally called several times. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, Common Raven and Scarlet Tanager were all welcome additions to the list, along with four more warblers: Blackburnian, Black-

throated Blue and singing loudly near breasted



Yellow-rumped, and a Louisiana Waterthrush which was the Peter's Woods stream. But still no Downy, White-nuthatch, Grouse, or Kingfisher.

We then visited Webbview Marsh on Coyle Road, north of Roseneath, where Black Terns had been recently seen - and perfect kingfisher habitat. No terns, no kingfisher. We did see Green Heron and American Kestrel before heading towards Port Hope and Candlewick Woods.

One stop along the way produced a Pied-billed Grebe, another a singing Clay-coloured Sparrow. Once at Candlewick, we could hear Common Loons offshore, and a pair of lingering Red-breasted Mergansers was seen. The woods themselves were very quiet, but we prepared to leave. The Cameco side a Red-bellied Woodpecker called as of the Port Hope beach produced a Spotted Sandpiper, a Black-bellied Plover, two Ruddy Turnstones, and Caspian Terns. Still missing the "easy" Downy, Grouse, Kingfisher and White-breasted Nuthatch, it was time to head for Presqu'ile.



Passing through Brighton, where we saw the only Chimney Swifts of the day, we made a stop at the constructed wetland. Families of Wood Duck and Common Gallinule were among the first birds seen, followed by Purple Martin, Northern Shoveler, Marsh Wren and Solitary Sandpiper; we failed to convince ourselves of the identity of a distant potential Ruddy Duck in poor light. In the park at Presqu'ile, the beaches and Owen Point were fairly productive, with Gadwall, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Dunlin and Common Tern being the most interesting. With no migration in evidence, the rest of the park was pretty quiet; one set of feeders had Ruby-throated Hummingbird and Pine Siskins - but no Downy and no nuthatch while we were there. A lone Redhead and a single Bonaparte's Gull along the cottage road were somewhat unexpected.

Now at 132 species we had to decide Lone Pine Marsh seemed to offer direction. A Pileated Woodpecker only other species we could add at Bittern, bringing our total to 134.



how to make best use of the evening. the most hope, so we headed in that flew across the road on the way, but the Lone Pine was a distantly calling Least

It was an interesting day of birding, made somewhat slow by the complete lack of migrants - presumably due mainly to the warm early spring having persuaded most migrants to be long gone. And missing several normally almost automatic species certainly lowered our count. However, thanks to many generous sponsors, a total of about \$1600 was raised for the Northumberland Land Trust. Many thanks to Roger for a great effort and to all of our sponsors for making it worthwhile.

For those who are interested, here is the day's complete list of species:

Common Loon	Whip-poor-will	Red-eyed Vireo
Pied-billed Grebe	Chimney Swift	Purple Finch
Double-crested Cormorant	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	House Finch
Great Blue Heron	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Pine Siskin
Great Egret	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	American Goldfinch
Green Heron	Hairy Woodpecker	Golden-winged Warbler
Least Bittern	Northern Flicker	Nashville Warbler
American Bittern	Pileated Woodpecker	Yellow Warbler
Mute Swan	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Canada Goose	Alder Flycatcher	Magnolia Warbler
Wood Duck	Willow Flycatcher	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Gadwall	Least Flycatcher	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Mallard	Eastern Phoebe	Black-throated Green Warbler
Northern Shoveler	Great Crested Flycatcher	Blackburnian Warbler
Redhead	Eastern Kingbird	Pine Warbler
Hooded Merganser	Horned Lark	Black-and-white Warbler
Red-breasted Merganser	Purple Martin	American Redstart
Turkey Vulture	Tree Swallow	Ovenbird
Osprey	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Northern Waterthrush
Red-shouldered Hawk	Bank Swallow	Louisiana Waterthrush
Broad-winged Hawk	Cliff Swallow	Mourning Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Barn Swallow	Common Yellowthroat
American Kestrel	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Canada Warbler
Merlin	Cedar Waxwing	Scarlet Tanager
Wild Turkey	Winter Wren	Eastern Towhee
Common Gallinule	House Wren	Chipping Sparrow
Black-bellied Plover	Marsh Wren	Clay-colored Sparrow
Killdeer	Gray Catbird	Field Sparrow
American Woodcock	Brown Thrasher	Vesper Sparrow
Wilson's Snipe	Eastern Bluebird	Savannah Sparrow
Solitary Sandpiper	Veery	Grasshopper Sparrow
Spotted Sandpiper	Hermit Thrush	Song Sparrow
Ruddy Turnstone	Wood Thrush	Swamp Sparrow
Semipalmated Sandpiper	American Robin	White-throated Sparrow
Dunlin	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Northern Cardinal
Ring-billed Gull	Black-capped Chickadee	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Great Black-backed Gull	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Indigo Bunting
American Herring Gull	Brown Creeper	Bobolink
Bonaparte's Gull	Blue Jay	Red-winged Blackbird
Caspian Tern	American Crow	Eastern Meadowlark
Common Tern	Common Raven	Common Grackle
Rock Pigeon	European Starling	Brown-headed Cowbird
Mourning Dove	House Sparrow	Baltimore Oriole
Barred Owl	Blue-headed Vireo	Orchard Oriole
Common Nighthawk	Warbling Vireo	