

Fort Drum Natural Resources



Wildlife Viewing Report – 4 October 2018

Birds

Early October is a great time to get out and see migrating birds, as it is the time of year when the largest number of songbirds pass through northern New York, and waterfowl numbers are picking up, too. During the past few days large flocks of White-throated Sparrows and numerous Yellow-rumped Warblers have been observed throughout Fort Drum, along with a mix of other sparrows, warblers, kinglets, and vireos. Peak diversity of migrating songbirds actually occurred several weeks ago, when the last individuals of species such as Eastern Kingbird, Yellow Warbler, Bobolink, and Baltimore Oriole departed. Heavy songbird migration is possible through mid-October, after which the volume of migrants will drop rapidly, but waterfowl and water birds will continue to move in good numbers through November and into December.

For many birders warblers represent the main attraction during migration, and while the peak of passage for Yellow-rumped Warbler and Orange-crowned Warblers will occur during the first half of October, most other warbler species are either long departed or are winding down. During late August and early September it was not unusual to see 15-18 species of warbler in a morning on Fort Drum, sometimes all in one flock, but by the first of October ten species was a good day, and by 15 October it will be difficult to see more than two or three species.

The most unusual species seen on Fort Drum during the last month was a Nelson's Sparrow in a Training Area (TA) 17 marsh. Nelson's Sparrows are fairly rare migrants through New York and are very secretive and difficult to find, but this was the second observation on the installation in two years and the third in four years. Other noteworthy recent sightings include two Sandhill Cranes seen passing over TA12C on 11 September, Orange-crowned Warblers in TA6A on 27 September and TA17B on 1 October, and an unusually high tally of 21 Philadelphia Vireos seen throughout the Training Area between 4 and 27 September. The best day for Philadelphia Vireos was 13 September, when six were found on a 2-km walk in TA3; it is unusual to see more than two or three individuals of this species in a day. Also worth noting was a Sedge Wren in TA12D on 3 October, as this species appears to be absent most years by the end of September, although has been documented as late as 13 October. A Red Crossbill heard over TA6A on 12 September was mildly surprising as none had been detected on the installation in many weeks. Less unusual were 3 Pine Siskins heard over the same location on 27 September, the season's first for Fort Drum.



Yellow-rumped Warbler in Training Area 12C in October 2008.

Species observed on Fort Drum from 29 August – 4 October 2018:

Canada Goose	Northern Flicker	American Goldfinch
Wood Duck	Pileated Woodpecker	Eastern Towhee
Blue-winged Teal	American Kestrel	Chipping Sparrow
American Wigeon	Merlin	Field Sparrow
Mallard	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Vesper Sparrow
American Black Duck	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Savannah Sparrow
Northern Pintail	Alder/Willow Flycatcher	NELSON'S SPARROW
Green-winged Teal	Least Flycatcher	Fox Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	Eastern Phoebe	Song Sparrow
Ruffed Grouse	Great Crested Flycatcher	Lincoln's Sparrow
Wild Turkey	Eastern Kingbird	Swamp Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Yellow-throated Vireo	White-throated Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	Blue-headed Vireo	White-crowned Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Philadelphia Vireo	Dark-eyed Junco
Black-billed Cuckoo	Warbling Vireo	Bobolink
Common Nighthawk	Red-eyed Vireo	Baltimore Oriole
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Blue Jay	Red-winged Blackbird
Chimney Swift	American Crow	Rusty Blackbird
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Common Raven	Common Grackle
Sandhill Crane	Tree Swallow	Ovenbird
Killdeer	Black-capped Chickadee	Northern Waterthrush
American Woodcock	Tufted Titmouse	Golden-winged Warbler
Wilson's Snipe	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Blue-winged Warbler
Solitary Sandpiper	White-breasted Nuthatch	Black-and-white Warbler
Lesser Yellowlegs	Brown Creeper	Tennessee Warbler
Greater Yellowlegs	House Wren	Orange-crowned Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Winter Wren	Nashville Warbler
Common Loon	Sedge Wren	Mourning Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Marsh Wren	Common Yellowthroat
American Bittern	Golden-crowned Kinglet	American Redstart
Great Blue Heron	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Cape May Warbler
Great Egret	Eastern Bluebird	Northern Parula
Green Heron	Veery	Magnolia Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Bay-breasted Warbler
Bald Eagle	Swainson's Thrush	Blackburnian Warbler
Northern Harrier	Hermit Thrush	Yellow Warbler
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Wood Thrush	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Cooper's Hawk	American Robin	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Gray Catbird	Pine Warbler
Broad-winged Hawk	Brown Thrasher	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Northern Mockingbird	Prairie Warbler
Belted Kingfisher	European Starling	Black-throated Green Warbler
Red-headed Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing	Canada Warbler
Red-bellied Woodpecker	House Sparrow	Wilson's Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Purple Finch	Scarlet Tanager
Downy Woodpecker	Red Crossbill	Northern Cardinal
Hairy Woodpecker	Pine Siskin	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
		Indigo bunting