

Fort Drum Fish & Wildlife Management Program



Wildlife Viewing Report – 6 February 2018

Birds

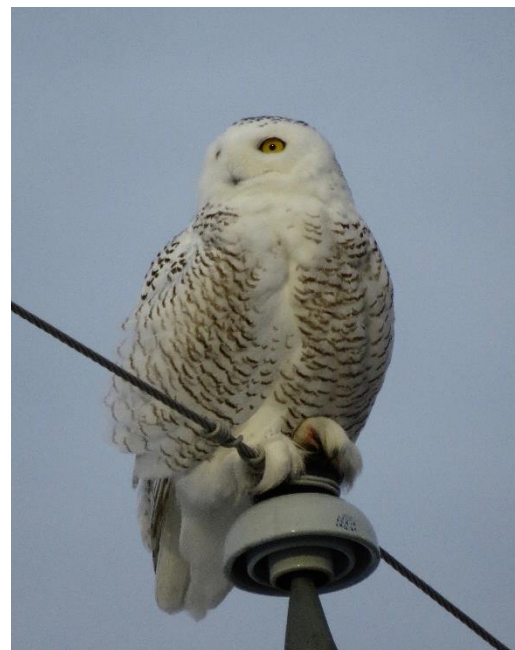
As is often the case, bird activity has been pretty light on Fort Drum this winter, with a few localized exceptions. Some groups of birds that often are relatively common during winter in northern New York are scarce this year, most notably open country hawks, which unlike most years are almost totally absent from the large fields in Training Areas 12 and 13. Some irruptive species, such as Common Redpoll and Bohemian Waxwing have not come south in any numbers this year, regular wintering birds such as Northern Shrike are unusually scarce, and few American Robins and other species that winter in highly variable numbers are being seen.

Perhaps the most interesting avian phenomenon in northern New York this winter is the appearance of numerous Pine Siskins, White-winged Crossbills, and Red Crossbills in and near the Adirondacks. These species roam around large parts of North America searching for large crops of conifer cones, on which they feed. When they encounter bumper crops of cones, they will settle down to breed, which they can do at any time of the year, even during the middle of harsh, northern winters. Crossbills in particular are rare in New York most winters, but can be abundant during these periodic irruptions, and both species of crossbill as well as Pine Siskins are now common in the Adirondacks and likely are nesting. So far no Pine Siskins or White-winged Crossbills have been found on Fort Drum this winter, but several Red Crossbills have been observed in Training Areas 7 and 14 recently, where this species has nested in the past.

Snowy Owls irrupted south again this winter, although not in the large numbers seen in other recent irruptions. Although present in northern New York generally, very few have been seen on Fort Drum. One or two Snowy Owls have spent the winter in agricultural fields immediately adjacent to Fort Drum and likely hunt over fields on the installation, but actual use of Fort Drum habitat has not been well documented this winter.

Except during relatively mild winters, most water on Fort Drum ices over in winter so most waterfowl leave for the season, but persistent open water in the Cantonment often allows at least a few ducks and geese to overwinter. Despite very cold early winter temperatures a handful of Mallards and American Black Ducks wintered on West and Pleasant Creeks, with two Green-winged Teal joining them. A few hundred Canada Geese were also present up to early January but these geese appear to have moved on.

(continued)



Snowy Owl on Delles Road across from Fort Drum on 11 January 2018.

Fort Drum Fish & Wildlife Management Program

Wildlife Viewing Report – 6 February 2018 (continued)

Among half-hardies, that is species that usually migrate south for the winter but are capable of overwintering given the right conditions, the only notable representative encountered on Fort Drum this year so far is Red-headed Woodpecker. At least three adult Red-headed Woodpeckers are overwintering in Training Area 5 oak woodlands, thanks to a large acorn crop. During the fall several Red-headed Woodpeckers were seen storing acorns, so it wasn't a surprise when three or four individuals were found in December, well after this species usually departs Fort Drum for the winter. This is the fourth year since 2011 that Red-headed Woodpeckers have overwintered on Fort Drum, each time corresponding to the presence of abundant acorns.

Species observed on Fort Drum from January 1 – February 6, 2018:

Canada Goose	Blue Jay
Mallard	American Crow
American Black Duck	Common Raven
Green-winged Teal	Horned Lark
Wild Turkey	Black-capped Chickadee
Ruffed Grouse	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Bald Eagle	White-breasted Nuthatch
Cooper's Hawk	Brown Creeper
Northern Goshawk	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Red-tailed Hawk	American Robin
Rough-legged Hawk	European Starling
Rock Pigeon	Snow Bunting
Mourning Dove	American Tree Sparrow
Snowy Owl	Song Sparrow
Red-headed Woodpecker	White-throated Sparrow
Downy Woodpecker	Dark-eyed Junco
Hairy Woodpecker	Northern Cardinal
Northern Flicker	Red Crossbill
Pileated Woodpecker	American Goldfinch

Fort Drum Fish & Wildlife Management Program



Wildlife Viewing Report – 01 March 2018

Birds

Birding on Fort Drum was very slow during the first half of the winter but has picked up the past few weeks, thanks to the arrival of irruptive finches starting in January and unseasonably warm weather during the last 10 days of February that kicked off an early start to spring migration.

Our last wildlife viewing report described the arrival of Red Crossbills to Fort Drum, which continue to be observed in red pine plantations throughout the southern portion of the installation. Red Crossbills are almost certainly nesting in Training Area (TA) 14 and perhaps TAs 6A, 7, and elsewhere, although they have only been found in a few locations so far. Despite an abundance of Pine Siskins in the Adirondacks and other nearby areas, none were seen on Fort Drum until 20 February, but since then siskins have been found in many TAs. Similarly, Purple Finches were undetected on Fort Drum until late February but are now being seen or heard throughout the installation. The extensive conifer forest in TAs 14C and 14D along Weaver and Lewisburg Roads is probably the best place on Fort Drum to see these finches.



***Red Crossbill in Training Area 5D
in May 2015.***

A variety of early-season spring migrants were seen on or over Fort Drum during the last week of February, thanks to unusually warm weather and southerly winds.

On 21 January the season's first Red-winged Blackbirds were seen flying over TA6A, along with Horned Larks, at least one Lapland Longspur, and several species of finch. Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles continued to move in small numbers for the rest of the month, with numbers increasing by 25 or 26 February. At the same time large numbers of Snow and Canada Geese started passing over Fort Drum, with many flocks seen every day through the end of the month. Raptor migration also kicked off during this period, with many sightings of Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, and Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawk. The first Northern Harrier of the year was seen in TA12D on 27 February, and the first Killdeer the following day.

As of this writing it appears that northerly winds and some snow are likely going to stop migration for a few days, but migration is just starting, and there should be plenty more Snow Geese, hawks, and other early migrants when the weather warms up again.

(continued)

Fort Drum Fish & Wildlife Management Program

Wildlife Viewing Report – 1 March 2018 (continued)

Species observed on Fort Drum from February 7 – March 1, 2018:

Snow Goose	Red-headed Woodpecker	Song Sparrow
Canada Goose	Downy Woodpecker	White-throated Sparrow
Mallard	Hairy Woodpecker	Dark-eyed Junco
American Black Duck	Northern Flicker	Northern Cardinal
Common Merganser	Pileated Woodpecker	Red-winged Blackbird
Wild Turkey	Merlin	Common Grackle
Ruffed Grouse	Blue Jay	House Finch
Ring-necked Pheasant	American Crow	Purple Finch
Bald Eagle	Common Raven	Red Crossbill
Northern Harrier	Horned Lark	Pine Siskin
Cooper's Hawk	Black-capped Chickadee	American Goldfinch
Northern Goshawk	Red-breasted Nuthatch	
Red-tailed Hawk	White-breasted Nuthatch	
Rough-legged Hawk	Brown Creeper	
Killdeer	Golden-crowned Kinglet	
Ring-billed Gull	American Robin	
Rock Pigeon	European Starling	
Mourning Dove	Lapland Longspur	
Snowy Owl	Snow Bunting	
Barred Owl	American Tree Sparrow	

Fort Drum Natural Resources



Wildlife Viewing Report – 19 April 2018

Birds

Back in early March when we last published a wildlife viewing report it looked like we were in store for an early bird migration, thanks mostly to a late February warm spell that brought large numbers of blackbirds, robins, waterfowl, Killdeer and other early spring migrants northward at unusually early dates. Unfortunately, stubbornly cold temperatures reestablished themselves, and migration has been very sluggish since, with birds trickling in slowly and few significant migration events. As of 19 April several species of bird that normally arrive in numbers by 15 April remained scarce or had not been detected at all. However, it is not clear whether some of these birds really aren't here or have arrived but escaped the attention of observers in the field.

On the night of April 12-13 there was a significant movement of birds in northern New York, but this was followed by several days of snow, sleet, freezing rain, heavy rain, and high winds, conditions not suitable for finding birds. Field work after the worst of this miserable weather ended suggests that Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and several species of sparrows arrived during the night of 12-13 April. Most conspicuous by their absence or scarcity are Pine Warbler and Chipping Sparrow, two species that normally arrive around 12 April but remain virtually absent on Fort Drum as of 19 April.

Waterfowl were the most conspicuous migrants throughout most of this period, although for much of March persistent ice prevented many ducks from using ponds on the installation. As soon as ice was out Ring-necked Ducks started appearing on ponds throughout Fort Drum, with a smattering of other species scattered about. Five Northern Shovelers at Matoon Marsh in TA17B on 30 March were relatively unusual for Fort Drum. Unprecedented on Fort Drum was a Trumpeter Swan seen on the Indian River and later on the same date at Matoon Marsh. Trumpeter Swans nest at Perch River Wildlife Management Area in Jefferson County and at a few other sites in northern New York, and thanks to a reintroduction effort in Ontario are increasing throughout the region, so the appearance of this swan on Fort Drum was not unexpected.



Trumpeter Swan on the Indian River in Training Area 17 on 30 March 2018.

~~Seen~~ on 4 April along FUSA Boulevard may have been this same Trumpeter Swan or perhaps a different individual wandering around looking for a mate.

The only other unusual sighting this period was of a Sandhill Crane migrating over TA12. There are only a handful of crane sightings for Fort Drum, but this species is likely going to become much more regular in the future. Until the early 2000s Sandhill Cranes occurred in New York strictly as a migrant, but the first breeding pair was found in central New York in 2003, and over the subsequent decade breeding pairs colonized locations throughout the state, including sites in Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties. If current trends continue, in the future Sandhill Cranes will be seen regularly on and near Fort Drum at least as a migrant and maybe even as a breeder.

Weather has been very poor for migration for nearly all of April, but the weather forecast indicates a change is coming, with temperatures forecast to reach 60 degrees on 23 or 24 April. A strong warm front following a sustained period of cold weather could produce a very large wave of migrant songbirds. Based on the timing of this predicted warm-up, expect to see large numbers of Barn Swallow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pine Warbler, Eastern Towhee, and several species of sparrow arrive. This migratory wave should begin a period that will see the arrival of new species of bird virtually every day for several weeks, leading to the peak of spring migration in mid-May.

Species observed on Fort Drum from 2 March - 12 April 2018:

Snow Goose	Osprey	White-breasted Nuthatch
Canada Goose	Bald Eagle	Brown Creeper
Trumpeter Swan	Northern Harrier	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Wood Duck	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Eastern Bluebird
American Wigeon	Cooper's Hawk	American Robin
Northern Shoveler	Red-shouldered Hawk	European Starling
Mallard	Red-tailed Hawk	Cedar Waxwing
American Black Duck	Rough-legged Hawk	House Sparrow
Northern Pintail	Snowy Owl	House Finch
Green-winged Teal	Barred Owl	Purple Finch
Ring-necked Duck	Belted Kingfisher	Red Crossbill
Bufflehead	Red-headed Woodpecker	Pine Siskin
Hooded Merganser	Downy Woodpecker	American Goldfinch
Common Merganser	Hairy Woodpecker	American Tree Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Northern Flicker	Chipping Sparrow
Ruffed Grouse	Pileated Woodpecker	Field Sparrow
Wild Turkey	American Kestrel	Vesper Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Merlin	Fox Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	Eastern Phoebe	Song Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Northern Shrike	Swamp Sparrow
Sandhill Crane	Blue Jay	White-throated Sparrow
Killdeer	American Crow	Dark-eyed Junco
Ring-billed Gull	Common Raven	Eastern Meadowlark
Herring Gull	Horned Lark	Red-winged Blackbird
Common Loon	Tree Swallow	Brown-headed Cowbird
Great Blue Heron	Black-capped Chickadee	Common Grackle
Turkey Vulture	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Northern Cardinal

Fort Drum Natural Resources



Wildlife Viewing Report – 21 June 2018

Birds

We haven't released a wildlife viewing report in a while, in part because much of Fort Drum has been shut down for recreation for the past few weeks. Access should be good for the upcoming July Fourth weekend, so now is a good time to run through some of the recent birding highlights from May and the first half of June.

Spring migration has been lackluster for the past few years, so the high volume of northbound migrants that passed through Fort Drum this May was a definite highlight of the year. Tennessee, Nashville, Bay-breasted, and Cape May Warblers moved through in especially large numbers, which wasn't that much of a surprise because these same species passed through Fort Drum in very high numbers last fall. More surprising was the good number of Blackpoll Warblers this May, as Blackpolls were unusually scarce on Drum last fall. Orange-crowned Warblers, generally rare in spring, were in Training Area (TA) 6A on 4 May and TA 3A on 16 May. The most unusual sighting of the spring was a **Yellow-breasted Chat** found in TA 6A on 14 May that remained through at least 18 May.

Thanks no doubt to an ongoing tent caterpillar outbreak, cuckoos have been more common on Fort Drum this spring than during the past few years. Black-billed Cuckoos are widespread in good numbers, especially in Training Areas dominated by young woods and shrubland. Although not nearly as common as Black-billed Cuckoos, Yellow-billed Cuckoos are widespread as well, mostly occurring in stands of relatively mature trees.



Black-billed Cuckoo in Training Area 3 in 2008.

At least a dozen singing male Sedge Wrens were in Training Areas 12 and 13

during May, an unusually large number for so early in the season. Efforts to find some of these birds on 21 June were only partially successful, and it seems that at least a few of the early-arriving Sedge Wrens have moved, perhaps because conditions are too dry in many areas this year. Surveys over the coming weeks will hopefully provide some insight into whether these birds moved elsewhere on Fort Drum or left the installation entirely. The closest Sedge Wren to any road is east of Antwerp Tank Trail about 0.25-mile south of Poagland Road, and can usually be heard and occasionally seen from the road. Henslow's Sparrows are declining throughout Jefferson County, and Fort Drum is no exception. The five territorial males currently known to be present on Fort Drum are all far from roads. One male that spent at least a week or two singing near Gray Road appears to have moved elsewhere. A Short-eared Owl has been seen in TA 12 several times since mid-May and is presumed to be nesting, but the nest site so far has eluded detection.

On 21 June a Philadelphia Vireo was observed along Antwerp Tank Trail in a patch of cottonwood and birch. Presumably this is the same male that spent several weeks in this patch of trees last summer and was the first confirmed breeding-season record on Fort Drum. On the 21st he was singing a song that seemed slightly different from Red-eyed Vireo song tonally, but unlike most descriptions of Philadelphia Vireo song had very short pauses between phrases, so that song delivery did not seem particularly slow.

Whip-poor-will surveys were conducted along FUSA Boulevard and Carr Road on the night of 29-30 May. It was a spectacular night for nocturnal birds, with a bright moon and no wind. On the two 10-stop routes combined a total of 60 Eastern Whip-poor-wills, 12 Barred Owls, and 2 Northern Saw-whet Owls were heard. Afterward, a drive through the fields along Antwerp Tank Trail netted another half-dozen whip-poor-wills and several very vocal Sedge Wrens. No Common Nighthawks were detected on these surveys, primarily because nighthawks are largely restricted to the sandy portion of Fort Drum farther to the south, where nighthawks have been seen many mornings since about 22 May.

Between mid-May and 20 June Golden-winged Warbler surveys were conducted throughout Fort Drum, focusing mostly on the southern and central portions of the installation. As has been the case in recent years, more phenotypic Blue-winged Warblers than Golden-winged Warblers were found, with obvious hybrids making up about 15-20% of all “winged warblers” seen (based on DNA work conducted by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology many of our phenotypic Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers are hybrids, too). The only location where phenotypic Golden-winged Warblers outnumbered Blue-winged Warblers on surveys this year was along Reedville Road. Some areas, such as Training Area 6A and parts of TA 3 seem to have been completely taken over by Blue-winged Warblers. One interesting observation has been that about 25-30% of phenotypic Golden-winged Warblers seen in 2016 sang Blue-winged Warbler song, but no Blue-wings were seen singing Golden-wing song. About 5-8 years ago, when Golden-winged Warblers still outnumbered Blue-winged Warblers, it was much more common to see Blue-winged Warblers singing Golden-wing song.

Trumpeter Swan was documented on Fort Drum for the first time this spring, and since then Trumpeters have been observed in locations throughout the installation, including TAs 10, 12, 17, and 19. It is not clear whether one or more pairs are present or these are non-breeding individuals wandering around. Nesting has not been confirmed, but seems possible in at least two locations.

Here are a few short notes about a few more species visiting birders often ask about: As usual, several pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers are nesting in the open oak woods immediately east of the airfield. In the sandy fields in the same area and all around the airfield are numerous Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows, with many Clay-colored Sparrows scattered around. Upland Sandpipers are tough to find on Fort Drum because most are in off-limits areas, but they are occasionally seen east of the airfield. Mourning Warblers are scattered throughout Fort Drum, with a couple of reliable locations near the intersection of Lake School Road and South Tank Trail; look for cut over woods on these roads west and south of the intersection.



Philadelphia Vireo being banded in Training Area 3 in 2011.

Species observed on Fort Drum from 1 May - 21 June 2018:

Canada Goose	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Chipping Sparrow
Trumpeter Swan	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Clay-colored Sparrow
Wood Duck	Alder Flycatcher	Field Sparrow
Mallard	Willow Flycatcher	Vesper Sparrow
American Black Duck	Least Flycatcher	Savannah Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	Eastern Phoebe	Grasshopper Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Great Crested Flycatcher	Henslow's Sparrow
Ruffed Grouse	Eastern Kingbird	Song Sparrow
Wild Turkey	Yellow-throated Vireo	Swamp Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Blue-headed Vireo	White-throated Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	Philadelphia Vireo	White-crowned Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Warbling Vireo	Dark-eyed Junco
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Red-eyed Vireo	YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT
Black-billed Cuckoo	Blue Jay	Bobolink
Common Nighthawk	American Crow	Eastern Meadowlark
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Common Raven	Baltimore Oriole
Chimney Swift	Horned Lark	Red-winged Blackbird
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Tree Swallow	Brown-headed Cowbird
Virginia Rail	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Common Grackle
Common Gallinule	Bank Swallow	Ovenbird
Killdeer	Barn Swallow	Northern Waterthrush
Upland Sandpiper	Black-capped Chickadee	Golden-winged Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Blue-winged Warbler
Common Loon	White-breasted Nuthatch	Black-and-white Warbler
American Bittern	Brown Creeper	Tennessee Warbler
Great Blue Heron	House Wren	Orange-crowned Warbler
Green Heron	Winter Wren	Nashville Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Sedge Wren	Mourning Warbler
Osprey	Marsh Wren	Common Yellowthroat
Bald Eagle	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	American Redstart
Northern Harrier	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Cape May Warbler
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Cerulean Warbler
Cooper's Hawk	Eastern Bluebird	Northern Parula
Northern Goshawk	Veery	Magnolia Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Swainson 's Thrush	Bay-breasted Warbler
Broad-winged Hawk	Hermit Thrush	Blackburnian Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Wood Thrush	Yellow Warbler
Rough-legged Hawk	American Robin	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Eastern Screech-Owl	Gray Catbird	Blackpoll Warbler
Barred Owl	Brown Thrasher	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Short-eared Owl	European Starling	Palm Warbler
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Cedar Waxwing	Pine Warbler
Belted Kingfisher	House Sparrow	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Red-headed Woodpecker	American Pipit	Prairie Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	House Finch	Black-throated Green Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Purple Finch	Canada Warbler
Hairy Woodpecker	Red Crossbill	Wilson's Warbler
Northern Flicker	Pine Siskin	Scarlet Tanager
Pileated Woodpecker	American Goldfinch	Northern Cardinal
American Kestrel	Eastern Towhee	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Merlin		Indigo bunting

Fort Drum Natural Resources



Wildlife Viewing Report – 28 August 2018

Birds

Since our last report most of Fort Drum's bird species have completed their nesting seasons, although a few species are still feeding young. A family group of Blue-winged Warblers in Training Area (TA) 6A that included two begging juveniles on 20 August represents a very late nesting attempt for this species. On 23 August a mixed species flock in TA 5D included Eastern Wood-Pewees and Yellow-throated Vireos feeding young, but also several species of obvious migrants, including Bay-breasted Warbler and Tennessee Warbler, along with a mob of Red-eyed Vireos and Baltimore Orioles. Such mixed species flocks are being seen daily on Fort Drum, although few have dependent young in them as most consist of actively migrating birds. During the next two weeks the diversity of birds occurring in such flocks should peak, with the potential for 20 or more species of warbler as well as many vireos, thrushes, grosbeaks, orioles, and other songbirds. Flycatcher migration is probably peaking already, as these aerial insectivores are among the earliest species to depart northern New York in the fall. On 27 August all of New York's breeding flycatcher species were seen on Fort Drum, including 4 Olive-sided Flycatchers, 2 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, and many actively migrating Eastern Kingbirds. Other migrants observed since 20 August include an Olive-sided Flycatcher in TA 6A on 20 August and again on the same perch on 24 August; three Wilson's Warblers also in TA 6A on 20 August; two Cape May Warblers in TA 7G on 23 August; and Swainson's Thrushes and Tennessee, Magnolia, and Bay-breasted Warblers on multiple dates.

Given that this is our first report since late June here a few highlights and updates from the latter half of the nesting season, starting with grassland birds. The Short-eared Owl thought to be nesting in TA12B was remarkably difficult to see for most of the season, but a juvenile was finally found calling at the suspected nest site on the evening of 29 June. Typically Short-eared Owls are relatively easy to see around their nest sites during the hour or two before dark each evening, but the owls here rarely allowed themselves to be seen. In our last report we noted that a dozen Sedge Wrens were on territory in May but many had moved by late June, but it turns out that only a couple actually seemed to abandon their early territories. Late June and July surveys documented the presence of 13-14 territories, with a one-day high count of 23 individuals on 8 July that included 12 singing males, 6 of which were accompanied by calling individuals thought to be adult females, and one family group with one adult and four juveniles. Unlike many years, no additional Henslow's Sparrows arrived on Fort Drum late in the nesting season, and only five territories were found for the year. A juvenile Henslow's Sparrow was in TA12C on 6 August.



Short-eared Owls in Training Area 13A in 2015.

The Philadelphia Vireo that occupied a territory in TA 13A remained on territory through at least 16 July, the last date it was heard singing. That it returned in 2018 was somewhat surprising because it did not seem to attract a mate in 2017, the first year it or any Philadelphia Vireo was documented on Fort Drum during the nesting season. Philadelphia Vireos are uncommon migrants through Fort Drum, and the first southbound migrant of the year was in a mixed species flock in TA 6A on 20 August.

A second round of nightjar survey routes was conducted on the night of 29-30 June, with three observers surveying four routes. A total of 73 Eastern Whip-poor-wills were heard on these surveys, slightly fewer than was expected but it seems like whip-poor-wills do not call as well in late June as they do in May or early June. Only 6 Common Nighthawks were heard on these nightjar surveys although many more are known to occur in the surveyed areas, not surprising given that nighthawks are notoriously difficult to survey. The Chuck-will's-widow that was on Fort Drum in 2017 apparently did not return in 2018, or at least it could not be found on several efforts to determine whether it had returned.

Only eight Red-headed Woodpecker territories were found in TAs 5 and 6 this year, fewer than the 9-15 that have been documented in past years. There may well have been more territories this season outside of known traditional nesting areas, as there is extensive habitat that appears suitable but is rarely used as far as is known, and much of this habitat is not surveyed every year. However two patches of habitat that formerly supported nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers annually have not been used in several years, and the total number of pairs seems to be declining despite fairly high productivity most years.

Open sandy areas near the oak woodlands where the Red-headed Woodpeckers nest support large numbers of several sparrow species, as indicated by a survey of this area on 3 July. Highlights of this survey included 24 Clay-colored Sparrows, 37 Grasshopper Sparrows, and 34 Vesper Sparrows, many of which were seen carrying food. At least 7 Upland Sandpiper territories were found in open sandy grasslands during 2018, mostly in areas that are not accessible to visiting birders. On 23 June a pair of Upland Sandpipers was found with at least one tiny chick in TA 7.



Philadelphia Vireo in Training Area 13A in 2018.

Species observed on Fort Drum from 1 July – 28 Aug 2018:

Canada Goose	Merlin	Purple Finch
Wood Duck	Peregrine Falcon	Red Crossbill
Mallard	Olive-sided Flycatcher	American Goldfinch
American Black Duck	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Eastern Towhee
Hooded Merganser	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Chipping Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Alder Flycatcher	Clay-colored Sparrow
Ruffed Grouse	Willow Flycatcher	Field Sparrow
Wild Turkey	Least Flycatcher	Vesper Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Eastern Phoebe	Savannah Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	Great Crested Flycatcher	Grasshopper Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Eastern Kingbird	Henslow's Sparrow
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Yellow-throated Vireo	Song Sparrow
Black-billed Cuckoo	Blue-headed Vireo	Swamp Sparrow
Common Nighthawk	Philadelphia Vireo	White-throated Sparrow
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Warbling Vireo	Bobolink
Chimney Swift	Red-eyed Vireo	Eastern Meadowlark
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Blue Jay	Baltimore Oriole
Virginia Rail	American Crow	Red-winged Blackbird
Common Gallinule	Common Raven	Brown-headed Cowbird
Killdeer	Tree Swallow	Common Grackle
Upland Sandpiper	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Ovenbird
American Woodcock	Bank Swallow	Northern Waterthrush
Wilson's Snipe	Cliff Swallow	Golden-winged Warbler
Solitary Sandpiper	Barn Swallow	Blue-winged Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Black-capped Chickadee	Black-and-white Warbler
Common Loon	Tufted Titmouse	Tennessee Warbler
American Bittern	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Nashville Warbler
Great Blue Heron	White-breasted Nuthatch	Mourning Warbler
Green Heron	Brown Creeper	Common Yellowthroat
Turkey Vulture	House Wren	American Redstart
Osprey	Winter Wren	Cape May Warbler
Bald Eagle	Sedge Wren	Cerulean Warbler
Northern Harrier	Marsh Wren	Magnolia Warbler
Cooper's Hawk	Eastern Bluebird	Bay-breasted Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Veery	Blackburnian Warbler
Broad-winged Hawk	Swainson's Thrush	Yellow Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Hermit Thrush	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Barred Owl	Wood Thrush	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Short-eared Owl	American Robin	Pine Warbler
Belted Kingfisher	Gray Catbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Red-headed Woodpecker	Brown Thrasher	Prairie Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Northern Mockingbird	Black-throated Green Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	European Starling	Canada Warbler
Hairy Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing	Wilson's Warbler
Northern Flicker	House Sparrow	Scarlet Tanager
Pileated Woodpecker	House Finch	Northern Cardinal
American Kestrel		Rose-breasted Grosbeak
		Indigo bunting

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