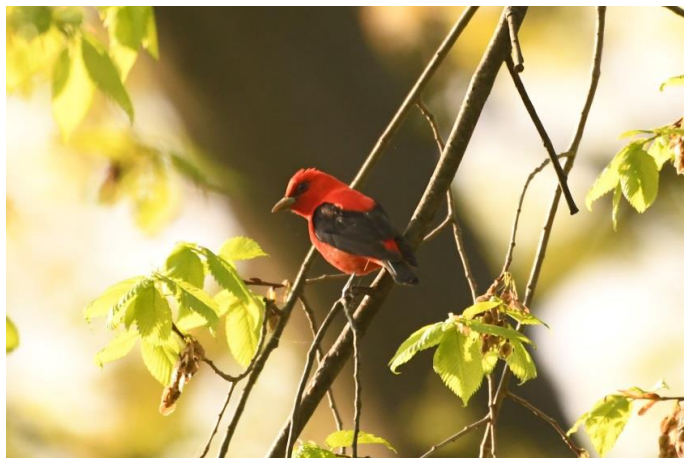


Field Trip Report: Red Oaks Country Park, Madison Heights, MI

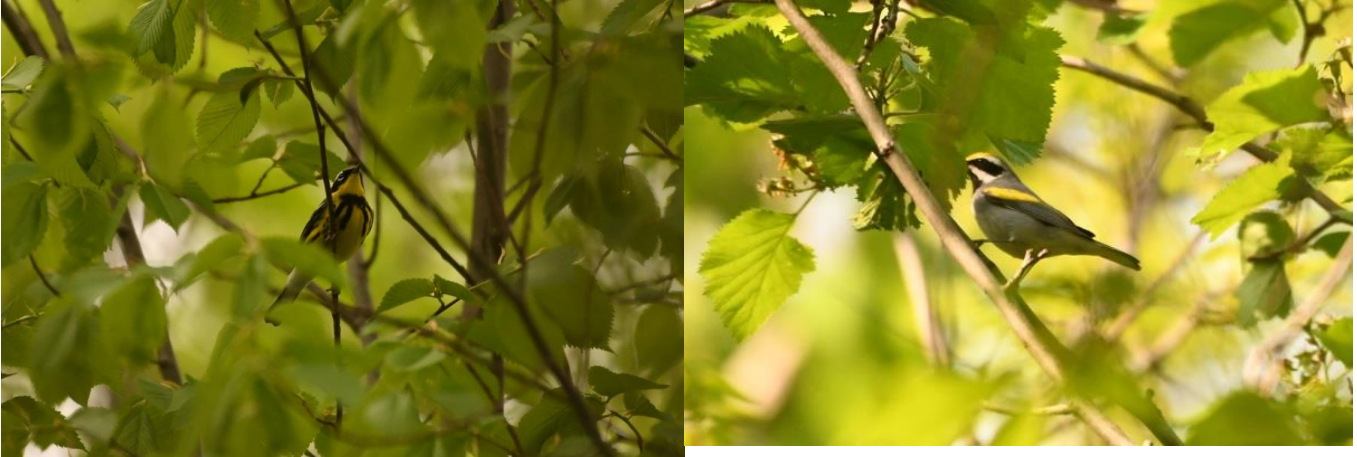
May 5, 2024

Leader: Kayla Niner

A group of fifteen birders gathered in the parking lot at Red Oaks Country Park. The weather was sunny and it was already starting to get warm, which meant warblers were already hopping through the trees. We had several species of warblers before we even left the parking lot, including Palm Warblers, Yellow-rumped, and Nashville Warblers. Rather than enter the park immediately, the group tracked down the road alongside the West side of the park. We stopped at an extremely productive tree that produced a Philadelphia Vireo, a Blackburnian Warbler, a Cape May Warbler, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and a vibrant red Male Scarlet Tanager, which was a sort-of-lifer for the trip leader who hadn't yet seen a male Scarlet Tanager in breeding plumage.



We finally entered the park where the birds continued to impress; we added Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, and American Redstart to the list as we made our way to the north end of the park. Unfortunately, we were unable to turn up the Northern Waterthrush that had been hanging around the area a few days before. As we made our way back south, we encountered some common species that upped our species count including House Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, and a Hairy Woodpecker checking out a nesting hole. We were starting to think we were going to make the parking lot without seeing much more when someone's Merlin said it heard a Golden-winged Warbler. Not willing to trust the app that often hears Ospreys at the park, we all stopped and looked for the bird. Two members of the group got eyes on the bird first and the whole group got glimpses of the bird, which was a lifer for at least one member of the group. It was definitely the find of the day.



Back at the middle of the park, we checked out the Nature Center pond before moving back to the parking lot. The parking lot produced for us again and we found a Blue-headed Vireo, a Red-eyed Vireo, a Black-throated Green Warbler, and we heard a Blue-winged Warbler, though we never found the bird. Some members of the trip saw and heard an Eastern Wood-pewee, a normally common bird, but early for the date.



Heading out into the South End, we got a Black-throated Blue Warbler that put on a show for us. We continued down to the South End hoping for Thrushes and Woodpeckers, but we were disappointed that the South End was mostly quiet. We did add two Indigo Buntings to the list along with a Northern Flicker and a Sandhill Crane that called as it flew over the park. However, we did enjoy the flowers, seeing such plants as White Trilliums, Golden Alexander, May Apples, and Jack-in-the-Pulpit. We also spotted a deer and a Red-Spotted Purple Butterfly.

We ended the trip at the Nature Center parking lot where the trip had started. We were tired and birded out, but we had an impressive list of 53 species.

Photo Credits:

Birds: Kayla Niner

Group Photo: Karen Kessler

Red Oaks Nature Center (Friendship Woods), Oakland, Michigan, US

May 5, 2024 7:51 AM - 11:40 AM

Protocol: Traveling, 1.98 mile(s)

Checklist Comments: Mostly cloudy becoming cloudy. In the low 60s rising to around 70. All the action at the north end of the park and the parking lot. Very little at the south end.

48 species

Mallard 2
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 4
Mourning Dove 3
Sandhill Crane 1
Turkey Vulture 2
Red-bellied Woodpecker 2
Downy Woodpecker 2
Hairy Woodpecker 2
Northern Flicker 1
Eastern Wood-Pewee 1
Blue-headed Vireo 1
Philadelphia Vireo 1
Red-eyed Vireo 1
Blue Jay 24
Black-capped Chickadee 2
Tufted Titmouse 1
Tree Swallow 1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1
European Starling 1
Gray Catbird 2
American Robin 14
House Sparrow 4
American Goldfinch 2
Chipping Sparrow 1
White-throated Sparrow 12
Baltimore Oriole 2
Red-winged Blackbird 3
Brown-headed Cowbird 2
Common Grackle 3
Ovenbird 1

Golden-winged Warbler 1
Blue-winged Warbler 1 Heard only.
Black-and-white Warbler 1
Nashville Warbler 4
American Redstart 1
Cape May Warbler 1
Northern Parula 3
Magnolia Warbler 2
Blackburnian Warbler 1
Yellow Warbler 2
Black-throated Blue Warbler 1
Palm Warbler 2
Yellow-rumped Warbler 11
Black-throated Green Warbler 4
Scarlet Tanager 2
Northern Cardinal 4
Rose-breasted Grosbeak 7
Indigo Bunting 2