

## **Field Trip Report – Oak Openings Metropark and Irwin Prairie Nature Reserve**

**May 28, 2022**

**Leader: Don Burlett**

A small group of birders (4 total) came to enjoy a very nice day of birding. The day started off with some clouds and very temperate weather. We began the trip at the Buehner Nature center and birded along a woodland trail north of the center. There were some birds available to see but many were high in the trees or distant and were identified by call. The birds here were highlighted by Olive-sided Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Pine Warbler and Northern Parula.

We then traveled to the fields on Girdham Road. These fields are protected from intrusion because these are breeding grounds for several important sparrows. We got very nice looks at Lark Sparrow, including a breeding moment along with other sparrows in the area, including Grasshopper Sparrow and Field Sparrow. The ever-present Red-headed Woodpeckers were flying all over the place. We also spotted calling Eastern Towhees, Baltimore Orioles and other woodland species. Up the road we heard a Yellow-breasted Chat calling from just in the inaccessible area. Reports of a Blue Grosbeak were noted but we didn't identify a call or see one.

After a lunch break, we headed to Irwin Prairie to see how it was there. Water levels were okay and we added a number of species not seen previous, including Indigo Bunting, Cedar Waxwing, Red-winged Blackbird and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The highlight of this section was a Sedge Wren calling from just off the boardwalk. He did present himself for good looks, a delight to actually see.

Overall, we identified 45 species but it was the overall quality of the species seen and the enjoyment of nature itself that made this a fun trip. Always a good trip because of the iconic species seen here regularly, it's not a trip to miss too often. The list of species is provided below.

Don Burlett

45 species

Canada Goose  
Mallard  
Mourning Dove  
Turkey Vulture  
Red-headed Woodpecker  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Northern Flicker  
Least Flycatcher  
Olive-sided Flycatcher  
Eastern Wood-Pewee  
Great Crested Flycatcher  
Eastern Kingbird

Red-eyed Vireo  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Tufted Titmouse  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
House Wren  
Sedge Wren  
Eastern Bluebird  
American Robin  
Gray Catbird  
European Starling  
Cedar Waxwing  
American Goldfinch  
Grasshopper Sparrow  
Field Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Lark Sparrow  
Eastern Towhee  
Yellow-breasted Chat  
Baltimore Oriole  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Blue-winged Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Northern Parula  
Yellow Warbler  
Pine Warbler  
Scarlet Tanager  
Northern Cardinal  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Indigo Bunting