

Field Trip Report – Algonac SP and Wetzel SRA

April 29, 2023

Leader: Don Burlett

For most birding field trips, the biggest concern is which birds you will see. Of course, the weather does play a role in most outings but, in some, the weather and its effect on the nature of the outing are very important. This trip to Algonac State Park with ten hearty birders fits into the category of challenging, to say the least. Having visited this park in spring in the past, I knew what was coming. After alerting the group about conditions, we carried on with great gusto and perseverance. A few pictures will capture the moments in this segment of the day's outing.



Early spring birding can be challenging because all the desired warblers are not present and it tends to be cooler than late spring. We did get a couple of warblers along with several sightings of Eastern Towhee along with some sparrows and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. However, traveling on water covered trails for part of the hike along the Oak Savannah Trail proved more challenging and diverted attention away from the birds and onto how to traverse the trail without getting your boots full of water (always not possible). Everyone on this field trip earned their “mudder” merit badge along with some trail-blazing work. We did manage to see (or hear) 33 species along the way on this day of cloudy skies and drizzly rain. But we did have fun and enjoyed this portion of the field trip



After the Algonac “wading party”, six of us headed to Wetzel State Recreation Area to check on birds there. We enjoyed seeing a Kingfisher on territory along with nesting Trumpeter Swans and a family of Sandhill Cranes. Although we cut our walk short, so as to not disturb the Sandhill family, we did manage 16 species here and brought our overall count for the day to 38 species. We expect that the counts will go up from here as spring unfolds.





Many thanks to this spirited crew for enduring trail conditions not often encountered. It was a fun outing. The lists from both parts of this field trip are listed below.

Algonac State Park

Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Blue-winged Teal
Mallard
Mourning Dove
Killdeer
Great Blue Heron
Red-tailed Hawk
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Blue Jay
American Crow
Black-capped Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Tree Swallow
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
White-breasted Nuthatch
European Starling
American Robin
American Goldfinch
Chipping Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
White-throated Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Eastern Towhee
Red-winged Blackbird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Rusty Blackbird
Common Grackle
Common Yellowthroat
Yellow-rumped Warbler

Northern Cardinal

Wetzel State Rec Area

Canada Goose

Trumpeter Swan

Pied-billed Grebe

Mourning Dove

Sandhill Crane - Two adults and one chick

Killdeer

Turkey Vulture

Belted Kingfisher

Tree Swallow

American Robin

House Sparrow

American Goldfinch

Song Sparrow

Red-winged Blackbird

Brown-headed Cowbird

Northern Cardinal