

Field Trip Report – Wild Card Gull Trip

February 5, 2023

Leader: Don Burlett

Seven birders braved chilly but warming weather on the day. It was cloudy and breezy as we arrived at Crosswinds Marsh. Although the gates were unlocked until nearly 8 AM, we proceeded to checkout the frozen ponds for gulls and these were totally absent. The gulls we did see were swirling around above us. These were mostly Ring-billed Gulls and a Herring Gull along with a very nice Iceland Gull. However, with the landfill inactive, the prospects for more gulls was very low.

We proceeded to drive to a nearby field where 5 different gull species were seen Saturday but, alas, they were not there also. We did spot a Northern Harrier flying across the fields along with a couple of Horned Larks. As we were leaving that area, a Bald Eagle cruised over the landfill.

We then drove to Lake Erie Metropark, knowing this was also an area where gulls have been seen. Sadly, the only gulls seen there were Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. This result seemed to be consistent with this year's gull situation – not many gulls and not much variety. However, the lake at the park held lots of ducks, geese, swans and other species. A huge flight of Canvasbacks flew in and we were very impressed with the number of ducks. Swans abounded along with a handful of Great Blue Herons.

It turned out to be a decent outing but the gulls were outclassed by raptors, 4 to 3. Maybe next year will yield a few more gulls to see. The species for each site are listed below. There were 28 species total seen today.

Crosswinds Marsh

Ring-billed Gull 27

Herring Gull 1

Iceland Gull 1

Red-tailed Hawk 2

American Crow 7

American Robin 4

American Tree Sparrow 4

Northern Cardinal 1

Fields Near Crosswinds

Canada Goose 12

Ring-billed Gull 10

Herring Gull 1

Northern Harrier 1

Bald Eagle 1

American Crow 2

Horned Lark 2

European Starling 35

Lake Erie Metropark

Canada Goose 500

Mute Swan 350

Tundra Swan 25

Wood Duck 1
Gadwall 3
Mallard 75
American Black Duck 5
Canvasback 1000
Redhead 1
Bufflehead 10
Common Goldeneye 51
Hooded Merganser 6
Common Merganser 250
Ruddy Duck 10
American Coot 6
Ring-billed Gull 23
Herring Gull 14
Great Blue Heron 6
Cooper's Hawk 1
Bald Eagle 20