

Field Trip Report – Oak Openings Field Trip

June 7, 2026

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It's always good to get back to previous locations for field trips. The last trip here was several years ago. Of course, June is a tough month for field trips because the birds have quieted down and settled into their breeding routine. However, there are always a few birds worth looking for and Oak Openings has several that we really wanted to see.



(Photo by Don Burlett)

We began the day birding near Girdham Road in the park and were greeted immediately by an abundance of Eastern Bluebirds. Field sparrows, Indigo Buntings and other species were obvious bouncing around in the open fields. The known breeding area for the Lark Sparrows did not disappoint, as we viewed both a male and female bird near the road. A surprise was the flight of two Yellow-billed Cuckoos along a tree line on Reed Road near the intersection. And, as usual, Red-headed Woodpeckers were also there in good numbers, bouncing amongst the trees. As we made our way back to our cars, a Blue Grosbeak was calling from the trees just south of Reed Road. It was very persistent but was buried in the trees, making no effort to put in a personal appearance.

We then returned to the Buehner Center and hiked a couple of trails north of the parking lot. The woods had good numbers of Eastern Wood-pewee, Acadian Flycatcher and Great Crested Flycatcher along with Gray Catbird, Veery and Eastern Bluebird. We did get some warblers (Common Yellowthroat, Northern Parula and Chestnut-sided Warbler) before we located and saw a nice male Hooded Warbler.

After lunch, we headed north to Wiregrass Lake Metropark to check it out. Not many birds but an interesting spot. While there, a Yellow-breasted Chat called from the brush near the parking lot. Again, it was a typical chat, in that it wanted to torture us with calls but no visual sign of the bird.

Finally, two of us visited Irwin Prairie and walked a little of the board walk there. There wasn't much there but we did hear a Summer Tanager call from the woods. However, being mid-day, the bird activity had diminished notably.

Overall, we had 54 species on the day and several were good looks. The list is provided below.

Mourning Dove	Carolina Wren
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	European Starling
Turkey Vulture	Gray Catbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Northern Mockingbird
Red-headed Woodpecker	Eastern Bluebird
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Veery
Downy Woodpecker	American Robin
Hairy Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing
Northern Flicker	American Goldfinch
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Chipping Sparrow
Acadian Flycatcher	Field Sparrow
Willow Flycatcher	Lark Sparrow
Great Crested Flycatcher	Song Sparrow
Eastern Kingbird	Swamp Sparrow
Yellow-throated Vireo	Eastern Towhee
Eastern Warbling Vireo	Yellow-breasted Chat
Red-eyed Vireo	Baltimore Oriole
Blue Jay	Red-winged Blackbird
Tufted Titmouse	Brown-headed Cowbird
Barn Swallow	Common Grackle
White-breasted Nuthatch	Common Yellowthroat
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Hooded Warbler
Northern House Wren	Northern Parula

Northern Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Summer Tanager
Northern Cardinal

Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting