

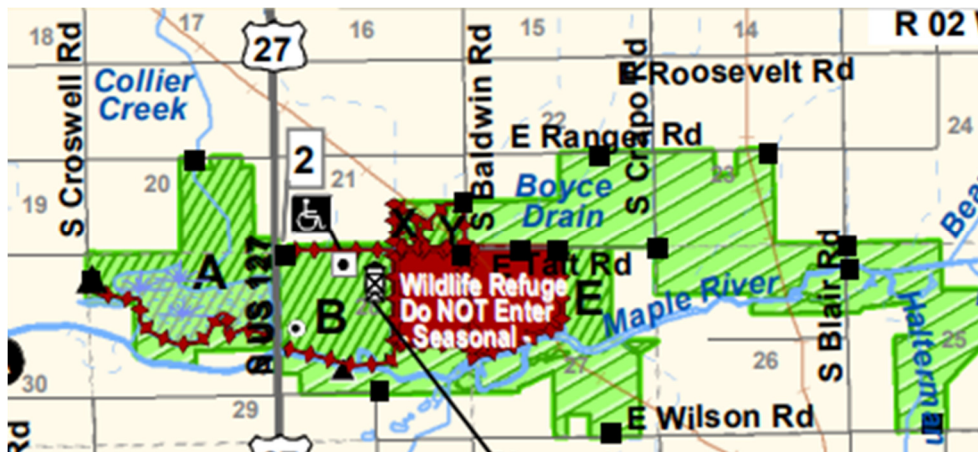
Field Trip Report – Maple River SGA Trip

April 21, 2024

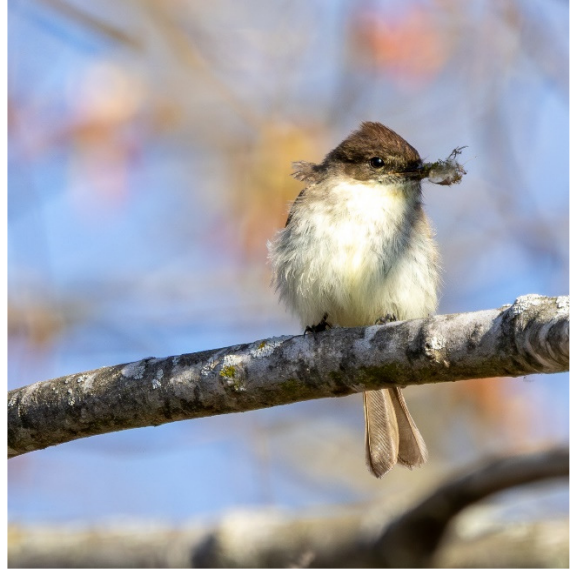
Leader: Don Burlett

This field trip was attended by 6 birders, willing to explore a state game area farther from home but of interest. As shown in the map below, this area involves a river flowing through a large area with some impoundments that bring in lots of birds. The units we visited is the eastern unit, spread on both sides of US-127 (incorrectly listed as 27 on the map). This area has been rather wet in past trips but was very usable without lots of standing water.

We began by walking along the dikes in the area listed as B on the map. There were a number of ducks and geese on this impoundment along with a few passerines in the area. We got both kinglets and several woodpeckers along with an Eastern Phoebe. It was notable that we did not see any warblers throughout this entire field trip. Sparrows, ducks and geese were the most commonly seen birds here.



We next drove along Ranger Road, just north of these impoundments and found a number of Horned Larks in the fields here. Along the way, we passed a cell tower with an active Osprey nest. We then hiked a dike along the backside of the impoundment listed as B on the map. This allowed us to see another shallow water area, possibly describable as a “floodle” where a large number of Sand Hill Cranes (close to 40), Canada Geese, Green-winged Teal and Northern Shovelers were present. We also encountered a handful of Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs along with a Solitary Sandpiper, Killdeer, etc. The Tree Swallows also were very numerous here as there was a ditch that was protected and it was warmer there, making a food supply worth exploiting. We also had an Osprey flyover here. We also encountered a partially leucistic Song Sparrow and some Rusty Blackbirds in this area.



Swamp Sparrow, Eastern Phoebe
Photo: Malissa Bossardet



Photo: Don Burlett



Partially leucistic Song Sparrow, Solitary Sandpiper
Photo: Malissa Bossardet



Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs
Photo: Malissa Bossardet

We then drove back across US-127 to area A on the map. On our way, we spotted an Eastern Meadowlark and House Sparrow. We might have seen a Savannah Sparrow but it was not ID'ed by the leader. Things were a bit quieter here. Could have been the time of day (near noon) or the wind direction or type of water here. We did get Ring-billed Duck, Blue-winged Teal (bringing our duck species count to 13) and our first Barn Swallow of the season.

After a short time here, we headed for lunch to discuss our day and other adventures. We totaled 54 species for the day and the entire list is provided below.

54 species observed:

Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Gadwall
American Wigeon
Mallard
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Northern Pintail
Green-winged Teal
Ring-necked Duck
Lesser Scaup
Hooded Merganser
Ruddy Duck
Double-crested Cormorant
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Bald Eagle
Red-tailed Hawk
American Coot
Sandhill Crane
Killdeer
Solitary Sandpiper
Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs
Mourning Dove
Belted Kingfisher
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Eastern Phoebe
Blue Jay
American Crow
Horned Lark
Tree Swallow
Barn Swallow
Black-capped Chickadee
White-breasted Nuthatch
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
American Robin
European Starling
Chipping Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Northern Cardinal
Red-winged Blackbird

Eastern Meadowlark
Rusty Blackbird
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
House Finch
American Goldfinch
House Sparrow