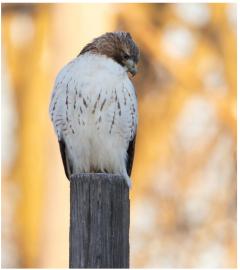
January 21, 2024 – St. Clair River Trip Leaders: Don Burlett, Jim Koppin

It was a sunny day for a change, when 11 birders joined this field trip. We began at 8 AM at Lake St. Clair Metropark. We began by checking out the feeders at the Nature Center. There were the usual suspects but we did have a few Red-winged Blackbirds and some Brown-headed Cowbirds. We walked along the trails hoping to catch a Great Horned Owl, which we did as it flew from the woods across the channel to the far woods. It was a pretty good start.



White-breasted Nuthatch Malissa Bossardet

Black-capped Chickadee Malissa Bossardet



Red-tailed Hawk Malissa Bossardet

We then drove (carpooling) to the Harlet Ensign site where we found Trumpeter Swans, a handful of geese and ducks in the small amount of open water. We also had a flight of Snow Buntings pass us as they headed for another spot.



Tundra Swans Malissa Bossardet

We then began our drive along the river, not stopping for the Lake St. Clair as it was completely frozen over. As we moved north, we made stops at the Harsen's Island ferry (nothing there), in Algonac (a few ducks including Long-tailed Ducks and Mallards), Marine City (not much activity but a few Ducks and some Tundra Swans, St. Clair (lots more Long-tailed Ducks along with Common Goldeneye, Redheads and, Hooded Merganser, Bufflehead and others), Marysville (more Long-tailed Ducks) and finally into Port Huron. We stopped at Desmond Landing for gulls (mostly Herring), the USCG boat, Edison Parkway and Lighthouse Park. We did add Red-breasted Merganser along the way but by far the most common ducks were the Long-tailed Ducks in the 1000's.



Long-tailed Ducks Kayla Niner



Red-breasted Merganser Kayla Niner



Ring-billed Gull Kayla Niner

It's been a bit of a weird winter with warm temperatures for a long period followed by very cold temperatures. The river was open for the most part and very little ice along the way. The temperature was relatively mild with a solid west wind.

Some of us had lunch to top off the day. As always, trips are always different from year to year. Not suffering the weather too much was welcomed, in spite of the lack of some species we hoped for. Maybe next year.

<u>Species List – 41 species</u> Canada Goose Mute Swan Trumpeter Swan

Tundra Swan Mallard Canvasback Redhead Ring-necked Duck Long-tailed Duck Bufflehead Common Goldeneye Hooded Merganser **Common Merganser Red-breasted Merganser** Bald Eagle Northern Harrier Red-tailed Hawk **Ring-billed Gull** Herring Gull Great Black-backed Gull **Rock Pigeon** Mourning Dove Great Horned Owl Red-bellied Woodpecker Downy Woodpecker Blue Jay American Crow Black-capped Chickadee Tufted Titmouse White-breasted Nuthatch **European Starling** American Tree Sparrow Song Sparrow Dark-eyed Junco **Snow Bunting** Northern Cardinal Red-winged Blackbird Brown-headed Cowbird House Finch American Goldfinch **House Sparrow**