

**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.

**Species List – 41 species**

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