Hello to All,

The weather forced all of us to get out our winter clothing this morning, and to desire a great cup of coffee after our walk. Drizzle kept optics covered until there was movement to check for bird identification. For a few moments, whitish slush fell with the drizzle while on Darrow Bridge. It could be classified as snow.

While on Darrow Bridge the Mount Carmel High School Caravan football team was jogging towards us from Wooded Island. The coach had the team do two laps through Bobolink Meadow and Wooded Island. When they took a brief rest on Darrow Bridge, I asked the coach how the season was going. “Not so good, Ma’am.”: two wins and four losses to date. Although the Caravans crushed De La Salle last week, 49 - 7, they were defeated last night by Brother Rice 26 – 17. Ergo, the five mile jog to cleanse the soul and spirit on the day after a defeat.

Paul reported sighting two local Cooper’s Hawks near the golf course this morning. Although hawks are in migration, they tend to sit out “rain delays.”

In the early afternoon I counted a tight raft of 32 – 35 American Coots in the Outer Harbor. It is time to check the harbors after our usual “Mount Carmel” circuit on Wooded Island and through Bobolink Meadow.


TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

PLACES: Wooded Island and Bobolink Meadow

WEATHER: Drizzle, Temperature in the middle 40’s F. West wind 15 – 20 mph.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 31

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

1. Canada Goose – X.
2. Wood Duck – 1. Along the south shore of Wooded Island; hidden in brambles.
9. Ring-billed Gull – X. A scattered group of a dozen occupied the back steps of the Museum.
10. Chimney Swift – 15. Just after Paul Clyne commented that he had not seen any swifts this morning, a flock flew over us in the Rose Garden.
13. Hairy Woodpecker – 1. Reported by Eric in the section NE of Darrow Bridge.
17. Hermit Thrush – X.
22. Yellow-rumped Warbler – X. Second most encountered warbler.
26. Clay-colored Sparrow vs Field Sparrow – 1. Hot debate. A single sparrow showed itself perched on a shrub in Bobolink Meadow. There was no wing bars, and the auricular area was notable for a generous clay colored patch. No streaking or stickpin on breast. The throat was white, and there was a pale orange cast of color on the upper chest, more pronounced near the wings. I was outnumbered in calling this a Clay-colored Sparrow, but that does not equate with being mistaken. No photo. No Paul or Randy. Remains in the World of Opinion. This is reason enough to keep us going out into the field.
27. Song Sparrow – X. A few in Bobolink Meadow.
28. White-throated Sparrow – X. In the Rose Garden and Bobolink Meadow.

This is a group report, with many birders contributing to the list. Most of the birds were seen by at least several or all the birders.

Corrections, additions and comments are welcome.

Recordings are not used to attract birds.

This report will be recorded on eBird as a group report for the Wooded Island Bird Walks.

The Walks are free and open to one and all. They are held year round. Birders always show up near Darrow Bridge at the start times. Newcomers are warmly welcomed.

*Note:* Darrow Bridge has been barricaded by the Department of Transportation but there are openings at each end that allows for foot traffic. The Bridge has been deemed unsafe. Birders continue to meet on Darrow Bridge and scan the lagoons and trees while the group comes together.

The Walks start at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, and at 7:15 a.m. on Wednesday.

Birders gather on Darrow Bridge, which is located south of the Museum of Science and Industry. Ample parking is available east of Darrow Bridge and is accessible from South Lake Shore Drive at 57th Street (labeled Science Drive on a small blue street sign). There is a Stop Light at 57th Street. Make a turn at the Stop Light towards the Museum. Turn Left (south) at the intersection of Science Drive and Columbia Drive. Go through the parking lot to the west end near Darrow Bridge.

Best of Birding to All,

Patricia Durkin

Chicago Audubon Society Representative

Wooded Island Bird Walks