

NLT Birding Marathon 2024

McColl Nature Reserve - Doug McRae - 2024 May 26



Nicole Richardson and I birded the McColl property on May 26 and, while there was no sign of migrants, resident birds were in fine form. McColl is a diverse but challenging property to cover. There are no good trails but it has multiple “bands” of different habitats which each contains specific birds, and the terrain is a bit rough at times. Overall it slopes downhill to Cold Creek which runs through it.

My first good find was two Eastern Whip-poor-wills singing at first light - a species we have not recorded on this property before. Once the chorus of robins died down I could better hear other birds and soon started racking up a pretty decent list of resident breeders. By noon it was hot but we had amassed 69 species.

Highlights included a Yellow-throated Vireo along Cold Creek (a first for the property), a Merlin that is likely nesting, a Purple Martin (the only swallow seen) which is increasingly rare away from the lakeshore, and 13 species of warblers including uncommon ones such as Canada, Black-throated Blue (right), several Blue-winged and a stunning male Golden-winged that was singing a Blue-wing song, so likely a hybrid. As with any big day effort you always miss something common and our jinx birds were Downy Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.



It was lovely to be on this special property and see all the diversity that NLT protects through ownership and good stewardship.

The full list:

Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Mallard
Wild Turkey
Ruffed Grouse
Mourning Dove

Eastern Whip-poor-will^T
Spotted Sandpiper
Ring-billed Gull
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Turkey Vulture

Sharp-shinned Hawk	American Goldfinch
Red-tailed Hawk	Chipping Sparrow
Belted Kingfisher	Field Sparrow
Hairy Woodpecker	Song Sparrow
Northern Flicker	Swamp Sparrow
Pileated Woodpecker	Eastern Towhee
Merlin	<u>Eastern Meadowlark</u> ^T
Great Crested Flycatcher	Baltimore Oriole
<u>Eastern Wood-Pewee</u> ^{SC}	Red-winged Blackbird
Alder Flycatcher	Brown-headed Cowbird
Yellow-throated Vireo	Common Grackle
Red-eyed Vireo	Ovenbird
Blue Jay	Northern Waterthrush
American Crow	<u>Golden-winged Warbler</u> ^{SC}
Common Raven	Blue-winged Warbler
Black-capped Chickadee	Black-and-white Warbler
Purple Martin	Nashville Warbler
Cedar Waxwing	Mourning Warbler
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Common Yellowthroat
White-breasted Nuthatch	American Redstart
House Wren	Yellow Warbler
Winter Wren	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Gray Catbird	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Brown Thrasher	Pine Warbler
European Starling	<u>Canada Warbler</u> ^{SC}
Veery	Scarlet Tanager
<u>Wood Thrush</u> ^{SC}	Northern Cardinal
American Robin	Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Indigo Bunting

*[Editor's note: Species At Risk are in **bold** and underlined. Superscripts denote the risk category: E = Endangered; T = Threatened; SC = Special Concern]*