



NORTHUMBERLAND
LAND TRUST

NLT Birding Marathon 2024

Pelton Nature Reserve - Katsu Sakuma - 2024 May 21



It started with a calm and warm morning at 6:30. Due to a thunderstorm a few hours prior, it was still overcast and the fields were wet. My first birds were a series of colourful birds, starting with Eastern Bluebirds followed by bright yellow American Goldfinches, then the flashing red of a singing Scarlet Tanager on top of a tree. It was a perfect start to the day. Then I went searching for the common residents like Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird, flycatchers and woodpeckers through the pine plantation and hardwoods, hoping to find a few late migrant warblers around the marsh area.

Among the songs of breeding warblers like Yellow, Common Yellowthroat and Nashville Warblers, I heard a buzzy "zee bee bee bee." Then a Golden-winged Warbler (right) just popped up in front of me! This is the first sighting recorded here since the Birding Marathon started eight years ago. I also found Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers, which are considered to be late migrants further north. Low pressure and the thunderstorm of the previous day may have made them stay here a little longer. I crossed the creek and bushwhacked through shrubs to the area where I saw Canada Warblers last year, and there they were. It's good to see a few of them since their habitat is decreasing. After I returned to where I started around 11:00 am, it had quieted down.



When I returned at 7:00 in the evening, it was still quiet except for two Barred Owls calling each other in the distance. Then I saw two Turkey Vultures flying to the east. I went straight back to the marsh area hoping to see or hear a Common Nighthawk. After staying there an hour or so, I heard their typical nasal "peent" call. Also I saw a Broad-winged Hawk, and as I entered the wooded area I flushed a Ruffed Grouse, bringing my total to 58 species.

The Pelton Nature Reserve sits on the Oak Ridges Moraine and has wetlands, mixed woods and grasslands that provide important habitat for many kinds of wildlife. We're very fortunate to have this land as one of the many nature reserves of the Northumberland Land Trust. I enjoyed birding there a lot. Thank you to the donors for their financial support and to Leslie Abram and John Geale for organizing this event.

The full list:

Canada Goose

Mallard

Ruffed Grouse

Mourning Dove

American Robin

Purple Finch

American Goldfinch

Chipping Sparrow

Common Nighthawk^{SC}

Ring-billed Gull

Turkey Vulture

Broad-winged Hawk

Barred Owl

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Hairy Woodpecker

Northern Flicker

Pileated Woodpecker

Great Crested Flycatcher

Eastern Kingbird

Eastern Wood-Pewee^{SC}

Alder Flycatcher

Warbling Vireo

Red-eyed Vireo

Blue Jay

American Crow

Black-capped Chickadee

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Winter Wren

Gray Catbird

Brown Thrasher

Eastern Bluebird

Veery

Wood Thrush^{SC}

Field Sparrow

White-throated Sparrow

Vesper Sparrow

Song Sparrow

Swamp Sparrow

Eastern Towhee

Red-winged Blackbird

Common Grackle

Ovenbird

Northern Waterthrush

Golden-winged Warbler^{SC}

Black-and-white Warbler

Nashville Warbler

Common Yellowthroat

American Redstart

Cape May Warbler

Bay-breasted Warbler

Yellow Warbler

Chestnut-sided Warbler

Black-throated Green Warbler

Canada Warbler^{SC}

Scarlet Tanager

Northern Cardinal

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]*