



NORTHUMBERLAND
LAND TRUST

NLT Birding Marathon 2024

Wilkinson Nature Reserve - Richard Girardin - 2024 May 16-17



I started my 24-hour NLT Birding Marathon at 2:00 p.m. on June 16, 2024 by carrying my folding beach chair down the trail through the woods to the meadow next to the marsh at the Wilkinson Tract. It was quiet at first, with Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles making themselves heard above all others. As I sat, listened and watched, I was rewarded with the calls and songs of Red-eyed Vireo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue Jays, Black-capped Chickadee, American Robins, a Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, a Bay-breasted Warbler, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and the ever delightful Common Yellowthroat who so graciously posed for the camera (photo, page 2).

I then left the woods for a spot on the pipeline cut next to the Marsh and was rewarded by a Virginia Rail calling from the reeds and a Ruffed Grouse drumming in the woods on the south side of the cut line.

At 4:00 p.m. I took a walk up Pogue Road and happened upon Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Goldfinches, a White-throated Sparrow, a Black-and-white Warbler, Yellow Warblers and a Pine Warber singing from the pines. I took a break for dinner and to feed my dog at home, then returned for 7:15 p.m. until after dark.

The evening hours leading up to and including dusk were wonderful, with sightings of a Great Egret flying over the marsh, an American Woodcock that flew within 10 meters of my position, and an Eastern Whip-poor-will flying erratically back and forth over the woods on the west side to the marsh. At first I thought it was a nighthawk, but it was missing the wing bars. A Barred Owl also entertained me from those same woods.

On the morning of May 17th, I started my day at 6:54 a.m. after hiking into the wooded area on the west side of the property via an ATV trail that runs south from the northern pipeline cut. I was surprised and delighted by the condition and beauty of the hardwood forest and was greeted by Hairy and Pileated Woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatchers, Veerys, Wood Thrush, Baltimore Orioles, many Ovenbirds, a Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat (right), Yellow Warblers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

By 8:25 a.m. I had made my way back to southeast section of the property to spend more time near the reeded marsh. As I sat in my comfortable chair, I was joined by a Yellow-billed Cuckoo who serenaded me from the woods south of the cut line for about a half hour. Also present were Alder Flycatcher, Gray Catbird, a Hermit Thrush, a Wood Thrush, Swamp Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbirds, and Chestnut-sided Warblers. I headed for home around 10:00 a.m., with a very satisfying list of 53 species.



The full list:

Canada Goose

Mallard

Mourning Dove

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Eastern Whip-poor-will^T

Virginia Rail

American Woodcock

Ring-billed Gull

Great Egret

Turkey Vulture

Barred Owl

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Hairy Woodpecker

Pileated Woodpecker

Great Crested Flycatcher

Eastern Kingbird

Alder Flycatcher

Eastern Phoebe

Red-eyed Vireo

Blue Jay

American Crow

Common Raven

Black-capped Chickadee

Tree Swallow

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Gray Catbird

Veery

Hermit Thrush

Wood Thrush^{SC}

American Robin

American Goldfinch

Chipping Sparrow

White-throated Sparrow

Song Sparrow

Swamp Sparrow

Baltimore Oriole

Red-winged Blackbird

Brown-headed Cowbird

Common Grackle

Ovenbird

Northern Waterthrush

Black-and-white Warbler

Common Yellowthroat

American Redstart

Bay-breasted Warbler

Yellow Warbler

Chestnut-sided Warbler

Pine Warbler

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Scarlet Tanager

Northern Cardinal

Rose-breasted Grosbeak

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