

Greenville County Bird Club Trip Report

Date: February 21 – 24, 2013
Location: Tybee Island, Savannah NWR, Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve, Donnelley WMA, Bear Island, ~~Huntington Beach SP and Santee Coastal Reserve~~ {cancelled due to weather}, Huntington Beach State Park's Mullet and Mallard Ponds and Education Center
Leader: Paul Serridge
Species List
Compiled by: Paul Serridge
Total Species: 115 species

Don Faulkner and Paul Serridge headed down early to NE Georgia to search for the recently reported Northern Lapwing in a field off Alma Lane in Bulloch County, and the Snowy Owl on Tybee Island. We arrived at Alma Lane at 10.30 where we were joined by Chris, Justin, and Noah Clack. We also found several birders from different parts of the country-two were from Illinois! One of them already had the N. Lapwing in view which made it very easy to get on the bird. ABA area lifer!

The next stop was Tybee Island where the Snowy Owl was quickly located as it perched on the roof of a condo. By way of the exterior stairway excellent views were offered by the 3rd floor of an adjacent. A life bird # two for Don, Chris, and the Clack boys. It was later determined that the owl was not seen again after this day!

The Clack family moved on to Christopher Island, where they successfully located their sought-after Western Kingbird. Paul and Don traveled to the Savannah NWR in search of a Cinnamon Teal, which we did not find. In fact it had last been reported 5 days earlier and so was probably long gone. However, the visit to the NWR was successful – close looks at American Bittern and Sora.

We spent the night in Walterboro and visited Donnelley WMA and Bear Island on Friday, experiencing a drastic change in weather from warm to a cold, damp, windy day accompanied by torrential downpours. Fortunately by 2:00, the weather had cleared and the afternoon's birding was very pleasant. Mary's House Pond at Bear Island held 500+ Am. Avocets and 120+ Tundra Swans. Because the rain had turned the WMA roads into a thick gooey mess we did not venture into the refuge and stayed around Mary's House Pond and Bennetts Point Road.

Friday and Saturday nights were spent in Georgetown. Lewis Burke joined the duo on Saturday morning. The original plan of visiting Huntington Beach SP on Saturday was cancelled due to the weather, cancelling a venture to the jetty at the HBSP. Added were trips around Mullet and Mallard Ponds, and the Education Center. We did make a few forays out of the park (mostly to be in the car and stay dry!). The Litchfield Inn area gave close looks at a Clapper rail; Murrells Inlet boardwalk yielded 2 Am. Oystercatchers and an immature Great Black-backed Gull; and a small marsh / beach area to the north of the HBSP entrance where people dump oyster shells held lots of shorebirds.

On Sunday the weather was fine – cool but NO rain in sight – and we finally made it to the jetty at HBSP where the birds of the day were Razorbills and Piping Plovers. We did not go to Santee Coastal, which was a pity because two birders reported a Eurasian Wigeon there on Sunday morning. A lifer missed!

We tried the Garden City Pier before leaving but it was closed for the season. The pier can be good for Eiders and other sea ducks. On Sunday all we saw was a Common Loon.

In all we listed 115 species, far short of last year's 138, but, given the weather a satisfactory total. We enjoyed the trip and proved on Saturday that if you gut it out you can get good birds in the rain!

Species list:

Canada Goose	Accipiter sp.	Downy Woodpecker
Tundra Swan	Red-shouldered Hawk	Northern Flicker
Wood Duck	Red-tailed Hawk	Eastern Phoebe
Gadwall	American Kestrel	Loggerhead Shrike
American Wigeon	Wild Turkey	Blue-headed Vireo
Mottled Duck	Clapper Rail	Blue Jay
Mallard	Sora	American Crow
Blue-winged Teal	Common Gallinule	Tree Swallow
Green-winged Teal	American Coot	Carolina Chickadee
Northern Shoveler	Northern Lapwing	Tufted Titmouse
Redhead	Black-bellied Plover	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Ring-necked Duck	Semi-palmated Plover	Carolina Wren
Lesser Scaup	Piping Plover	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Bufflehead	Killdeer	Eastern Bluebird
Hooded Merganser	American Oystercatcher	Hermit Thrush
Red-breasted Merganser	American Avocet	American Robin
Ruddy Duck	Greater Yellowlegs	Gray Catbird
Common Loon	Lesser Yellowlegs	Northern Mockingbird
Pied-billed Grebe	Willet	Brown Thrasher
Horned Grebe	Ruddy Turnstone	European Starling
Eared Grebe	Sanderling	American Pipit
Northern Gannet	Dunlin	Yellow-rumped Warbler
American White Pelican	Short-billed Dowitcher	Pine Warbler
Brown Pelican	Long-billed Dowitcher	Eastern Towhee
Double-crested Cormorant	Wilson's Snipe	Chipping Sparrow
Anhinga	Laughing Gull	Savannah Sparrow
American Bittern	Bonaparte's Gull	Song Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Ring-billed Gull	Swamp Sparrow
Great Egret	Herring Gull	White-throated Sparrow
Snowy Egret	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Northern Cardinal
Little Blue Heron	Great Black-backed Gull	Red-winged Blackbird
Tricolored Heron	Forster's Tern	Eastern Meadowlark
Black-crowned Night Heron	Razorbill	Boat-tailed Grackle
White Ibis	Rock Pigeon	Common Grackle
Black Vulture	Eurasian Collared Dove	House Finch
Turkey Vulture	Mourning Dove	American Goldfinch
Osprey	Snowy Owl	House Sparrow
Bald Eagle	Belted Kingfisher	
Northern Harrier	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	



Snowy Owl



Northern Lapwing

All photos courtesy of Don Faulkner. To view more of Don's photographs visit:

http://www.flickr.com/photos/faulkners_fowl_shots/