

Fir Island

February 6, 2024

Early morning fog gave way to sun and an enjoyable day of birding. Starting in the Cedardale area east of I-5, we saw dozens of Trumpeter Swan and Brewer's Blackbird, and two Northern Harrier. American Kestrel, Bald Eagle, and Red-tailed and Cooper's Hawks perched along Dike Rd., while many more swans fed in the fields. Songbirds along Mann Rd. included Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Varied Thrush. We also found Eurasian Wigeon among the many ducks on Wylie Rd. With Wiley Slough still closed, we headed to Hayton Reserve and Jensen Access, where we watched murmurations of thousands of Dunlin and a few early swallows. At North Fork Access, highlights were a Short-eared Owl, Virginia Rail and our first of three Snow Goose flocks. After lunch, interior island roads added a Pine Siskin flock and several Tundra Swan. The Skagit Flats Great Egret was a no-show, but Channel Drive produced several more species, including Northern Shrike, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Downy Woodpecker, Red-breasted Merganser, Hooded Merganser and Common Goldeneye.

63 species (approx. qty.)

Attendees: Phil, Tari, Annie, Marcia, Pat, Dianne, Denny, Ken, Reg, Gary, Rick, Maureen Z., Jeff, Val, Judy Lo. Pam P., John E., Wilma, Amy, John H., Annie, Mike C.

CHECKLIST:

WATERFOWL: Snow Goose (12,000), Trumpeter Swan (1100), Tundra Swan (23), Gadwall (10), Eurasian Wigeon (2), American Wigeon (600), Mallard (1750), Northern Pintail (25), Green-winged Teal (41), Ring-necked Duck (1), Greater Scaup (11), Bufflehead (17), Common Goldeneye (2), Hooded Merganser (6), Red-breasted Merganser (2)

LOON, GREBES: Pied-necked Grebe (2)

PELICANS, HERONS, IBIS: Double-crested Cormorant (3), Great Blue Heron (8)

RAPTORS: Bald Eagle (43), Northern Harrier (8), Cooper's Hawk (2), Sharp-shinned Hawk (1), Red-tailed Hawk (3), American Kestrel (3)

RAILS, CRANES: Virginia Rail (3), American Coot (1)

SHOREBIRDS: Dunlin (13,000)

GULLS, TERNS: Short-billed Gull (5), Glaucous-winged Gull (400)

DOVES, PIGEONS: Rock Pigeon (15), Eurasian Collared-Dove (3), Mourning Dove (4)

OWLS: Short-eared Owl (1)

HUMMINGBIRDS: Anna's Hummingbird (3)

WOODPECKERS: Downy Woodpecker (1), Northern Flicker (4)

SHRIKES, VIREOS: Northern Shrike (1)

CORVIDS: Steller's Jay (1), American Crow (9), Common Raven (2)

LARKS, SWALLOWS: Tree Swallow (3), Barn Swallow (7)

CHICKADEES, BUSHTIT: Black-capped Chickadee (2), Chestnut-backed Chickadee (1)

WRENS: Bewick's Wren (2), Marsh Wren (1)

KINGLETS: Golden-crowned Kinglet (5)

THRUSHES: American Robin (55), Varied Thrush (2)

MIMIDS, STARLINGS: European Starling (430)

LONGSPURS, SPARROWS: Spotted Towhee (1), Song Sparrow (7), White-crowned Sparrow (5), Golden-crowned Sparrow (6), Dark-eyed Junco (65)

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES: Red-winged Blackbird (400), Western Meadowlark (14), Brewer's Blackbird (150)

FINCHES, WEAVER FINCH: House Finch (8), Pine Siskin (10), House Sparrow (3)