

Greenville County Bird Club Trip Report



Date: December 2nd, 2017

Location: Santee NWR, Bluff and Pine Island Units

Leader: Denise DuPon

We had a beautiful December day to explore one of my favorite South Carolina National Wildlife Refuges, Santee NWR. We started at the Bluff Unit looking for waterfowl. Unfortunately, most of the ducks and geese were far out in Cantey Bay and a bit difficult to ID but we managed to find Snow Geese and 3 species of ducks mixed in with the hundreds of Canada Geese. We were also lucky to see a single American White Pelican as it flew over the bay. From the viewing platform overlooking the field we were able to find a group of Sandhill Cranes through the heat shimmer. It's amazing how much heat shimmer you can get on a mid-50 degree day!

After lunch at the visitor center we headed over to Pine Island hoping for an assortment of sparrows. The best we could do was a single Song Sparrow but we did have the excitement of flushing an unknown species of bird from just under our feet. There was also a very large flock of Rusty Blackbirds feeding in the wetland, we couldn't get an accurate count but we saw several large groups move through our sight line at the back of the swamp. The day's highlight was the discovery of a Cedar Waxwing caught high in a tree on a spider web. It was spotted with binoculars in the woods about 50 feet back from the road. With help from everyone in the group we were able to locate and release the trapped bird and watch as it flew away to rejoin its flock!

A total of 47 species for the day:

Snow Goose	American Crow
Canada Goose	Carolina Chickadee
Gadwall	Tufted Titmouse
American Wigeon	House Wren
Green-winged Teal	Carolina Wren
Pied-billed Grebe	Brown-headed Nuthatch
Wild Turkey	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Double-crested Cormorant	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
American White Pelican	Eastern Bluebird
Great Egret	Hermit Thrush
Turkey Vulture	American Robin
Osprey	Brown Thrasher
Bald Eagle	Gray Catbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	Northern Mockingbird
Northern Harrier	Cedar Waxwing
Barred Owl	Common Yellowthroat
Sandhill Crane	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Mourning Dove	Song Sparrow
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Eastern Towhee
Red-headed Woodpecker	Northern Cardinal
Northern Flicker	Rusty Blackbird
Pileated Woodpecker	Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Phoebe	House Finch
Blue Jay	

