

# Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail Field Trip

June 4, 2016

*By Becky Loyacano, Trip Leader*



It was a beautiful sunny morning when we met at the trail entrance at 7 a.m. We arrived to the soft mellow songs of brilliant blue Eastern Bluebirds and the clear harmonious calls of the strikingly marked Eastern Meadowlarks. Chipping Sparrows were trilling from the meadow of colorful wildflowers, and an Eastern Wood-Pewee was chasing insects from its perch on the fence. We counted at least a dozen species in the parking lot area.

We started down the trail and heard the bouncing ball trill of the Field Sparrow, and then it popped out right in front of us with its distinctive pink bill. Walking along, we spotted Tree Swallows nesting in a Bluebird box. The Tree Swallows were so close to our footpath and used to people passing, that Ann Van Sant was able to get a very beautiful photo. Just past this, we witnessed an amusing aerial fight/play among some rosy colored House Finches.



Along the next stretch, between the pastures, a couple of long-forked-tailed Barn Swallows swooped down right over our heads, a Killdeer landed in just front of us, and we spotted a Blue Grosbeak in the field.



As we entered the shady woods, we heard the bright lively songs of Indigo Buntings and the explosive “peet-sah” of the Acadian Flycatchers. We were also fortunate to see three Baltimore Orioles foraging high in the tree canopy, flashing their brilliant orange and black colors.

A most exciting moment was when we identified a Willow Flycatcher foraging high in the tree off the boardwalk of Lake Betsy, calling its mellow “whit” as it moved around. We were also treated to long looks at a Green Heron entertaining us with its stealthy fishing antics at the water’s edge.

At Turkey Pond we were pleasantly surprised by a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo flyover, flashing us with its black and white tail and hearing its drawn out knocking jungle like call soon after. Swooping down on the sparkling pond’s surface was a symphony of twittering Tree Swallows, Rough-Winged Swallows, Cliff Swallows, and a chattering Kingfisher.

The last treat of the day was spotting two Ospreys flying overhead! 50 species was our tally for the 3.5 hours of hiking 1.7 miles along our recently designated National



Recreation Trail. We traveled through woods and fields; over bridges and boardwalks; and across lakes, ponds, streams and wooden bridges. A wonderful day of birding and camaraderie on this North Carolina Birding Trail Site!