

# Sit-a-Spell at Richardson-Taylor Preserve April 10, 2016

*By Julien McCarthy, Trip Leader*



In spite of one of those “polar vortex” forecasts which set the morning temperatures at below freezing in nearly mid-April, we pulled it off. Eight members agreed to delay the start until 1:30 p.m., and so we had reasonable weather to set up shop within the incredibly diverse habitat of the Richardson-Taylor Preserve. We hiked the trail directly to the observation platform overlooking the vast swamp where we set up portable chairs and began a relatively quiet vigil. Soon birds came out of hiding and revealed themselves. Mallards swam past as well as Canada Geese, and there were flybys of

Tree and Rough-winged Swallows. Other passerines littered the tree tops and sang to us. We were pleased to be able to identify some by song like the Black-throated Blue warbler that Diana Bowman pointed out.

From the platform, we proceeded further north to the power line easement. There beavers were substantially evident. We spotted many chewed trees and several dams and lodges. As usual, gorgeous Wood Ducks were present on the pond, and a huge Great Blue Heron flew by silently. The Belted Kingfisher belted out his loud chatter as he raced across the emerging swamp past a good sized colony of Red-headed Woodpeckers, whose appearances among the many stark dead trees were numerous. Later, by the shoulder of Plainfield Road, we got a late American Coot dabbling in some sumptuous fresh aquatic greens.

We chalked up 28 species in those three hours. Notable were: Wild Turkey, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and American Coot. I think that this will be worth repeating in 2017. However, we will demand better weather in the morning when the birds come out to show off in greater variety and numbers. It was rather pleasant sitting around while the birds “did their thing” right in front of us. Of course we saw many while in transit as well.

Happy Trails & Goooooooooooood Birding !