



Field Trip: T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Natural Area, February 12, 2022

Joint field trip for Piedmont Bird Club and T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society

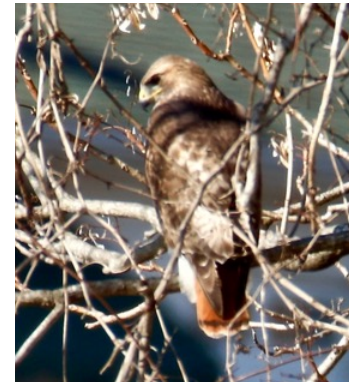
submitted by Amy Hanson, Trip Leader

On Saturday, February 12, nineteen birders gathered on a 65°F sunny-with-a-light-breeze day to explore the T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Natural Area. The group included new members Evan, Kathryn, Ava, and Grey on their first outing with the PBC.

Our morning began with a sighting hoped for by Grey, that of a Red-tailed Hawk perched in a tree. Many of the typical wintering birds did not make an appearance on this spring-like day. Instead, there was a large influx of bluebirds, including a pair already investigating a possible home for the next breeding season.

About halfway through our mile-long figure-eight loop we began to hear the squeaky call of a Brown-headed Nuthatch or two, one of which graced us with an eye-level visit near the creek. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet also showed a noticeable lack of concern about our large group and hung out near us for several minutes, allowing great views and many photos. In total we saw or heard 27 species, a bit above average for this site in winter. The most unexpected species was a Ring-billed Gull, which looked very similar to an airplane until it flapped its wings.

Our two-hour journey ended as it began, with a Red-tailed Hawk perched in a tree, except this time there were two! One of them was facing toward us, the other away, allowing us to study their field marks through the scope. Thanks to all participants for a very enjoyable morning and to Jim Eldrett and his crew of volunteers for taking care of this lovely birding hotspot.



Red-tailed Hawk by Jim Gant



Ruby-crowned Kinglet by Evan Corey



Group photo by Lynn Allison



Male Eastern Bluebird by Ann Van Sant