



Field Trip: Greensboro Lakes for Waterfowl, January 12, 2020

submitted by Dennis Burnette, photos by Dennis Burnette

On Sunday afternoon, January 12, we had what has become our annual field trip around the Greensboro lakes to look for over-wintering and migrant waterfowl. The outing was a joint activity with Piedmont Bird Club and T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society. It was led by Dennis Burnette, who is active in both groups.

A great turnout of 19 participants joined us to look for ducks, geese, coots, grebes, and other waterfowl. It was designed as a drive-and-stop field trip to visit as many lake and pond overlooks as possible.

We were surprised to see fishing boats in the water at our first stop next to Buffalo Lake. None of us recall ever seeing boating on the lake. There were several small flocks of ducks in the distance, but they kept on the move up and down the lake as they were disturbed by the boats.



Overlooking Buffalo Lake



Bog Garden boardwalk overlooking Benjamin Lake

We continued on our tour, stopping at overlooks on Lake Townsend, Lake Brandt, and Trosper Pond as well as marshes on Yanceyville Rd. and Plainfield Rd. We ended our trip overlooking the pond at the Bog Garden. Waterfowl were scarce everywhere we went, although we did end up with a short list of species plus Red-headed Woodpecker and other land birds.

It would have been nice to see more ducks, but it hardly mattered to most of us because the day was beautiful, with a sunny blue sky and unseasonably warm temperatures. (Any day out birding is a good day!) We speculated that many ducks are still much farther north because the mild winter has kept ice and snow from covering their food sources. There's no need to fly south if there's plenty to eat where they are.

This was a great field trip for beginners who wanted to learn more about identifying birds with a congenial group. We have other field trips coming up and hope folks of all birding levels will join us.