Trip Report, Birding by Kayak

submitted by Jim Gant

Trip Coordinator(s): Susan Evans and Susie Hodnett

Location: High Point City Lake, High Point, NC

Temperature: 70's-80's

Weather: Mostly sunny with a light breeze

Target Bird(s), if any: Great Blue Heron Rookery

Number of participants: 6

Bird List: Canada Goose, Mallard, Mourning Dove, Killdeer, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Egret, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Red-headed Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, American Crow, Fish Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Carolina Wren, American Robin, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, Common Grackle, Ovenbird, Pine Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting; for a total of 36 species.

Comments: (such as, notable birds seen, interesting bird or animal behavior, condition of the birding site, participant comments):

It was a great day for a paddle. The weather was a little warmer than usual, but there was a light breeze. As we shoved off from the City Lake Marina, a short way down the channel we saw a Bald Eagle circle the lake area in front of us and after it had made about 1 ½ turns, it dove down to the water making a huge splash and flew off. As we were a bit of a distance away, we could not see if it actually caught a fish. But it was a fun sight to watch. Later as our paddle took us closer to the Great Blue Heron Rookery, we could hear the chatter from all of the young herons. We continued to paddle into the cove area where the nests could be seen the best. It appeared to us that that there were approximately 9 nests. Not all of the nests were clearly visible from the water. But we could see where either a chick had its head up in the air or there was an adult standing guard near the nest. As not all of the nests were visible, we could not get a good count of the young herons. We believe we saw at least 7, but we suspect there were several more. This year we did not see any Anhingas as we have in previous years. We saw several other species and heard many more back in the woods as we paddled by. All in all, a great birding day.

Photos for Birding by Kayak, 5/21/26

Great Blue Heron standing watch near a nest

Great Blue Heron adult returning to the nest to feed chicks

Great Blue Heron chick awaiting a meal

Great Blue Heron chick (L) begging adult for a meal. Adult awaiting the mate to return with the meal.

Two Great Blue Heron nests, each with chicks

Great Blue heron adult standing watch

Great Blue Heron adult returns with a meal for a chick

Great Blue Heron hunting for a meal for the chicks

Red-headed Woodpecker

2 Killdeer, 1 standing and 1 on a nest foreground

Osprey