



SOAR RECAP AUGUST 16TH

The heat and humidity were back with a vengeance as I arrived at Antietam Meadow Park for the second August walk. Sharon would be a late arrival with sleepy granddaughter Sophia, but the turnout was good with Jean, MJ and Ed, Sue and Jeff (the rocket scientist), Dan, Carol, Becky and Jeff (the archeologist) all present and accounted for. We were optimistic given that two weeks prior we had counted 33 species. Little did we know.

As we started our walk, there was the ever-present dove on the power line and an active group of sparrows in a short bare tree -- we identified song, house and chipping. Maybe they were so active because they objected to the presence of a brown thrasher perched in their tree. Whatever the reason, after a short while they left.

A little further down the path we saw the resident mockingbird, a blue-gray gnatcatcher, red-bellied woodpecker and a house finch. Several chimney swifts soared overhead. We then spotted a small bird with some yellow coloring visible. We thought a warbler perhaps, but after a better look we decided it was the red-eyed vireo Dan had seen earlier.

We pressed on through the heat and humidity without much activity. At the far end of the trail, there were several tall spikey yellow flowers, which Becky identified as Maryland Senna. Every plant had multiple bees on them. We also observed several monarch butterflies on our walk.

When MJ caught up with the group (she had been busy photographing), she let us know she had seen a hummingbird. On the far side of the park, we saw the great blue heron, which again flew up to the top of a snag to pose regally. We added both crow species and as a light welcome breeze sprung up, both vulture species.

We totaled 24 species compared to our previous 33. We wondered if the heat and humidity played a role. We enjoyed cookies courtesy of MJ and then headed for our cars. A good thing, too, because 15 minutes later a heavy downpour hit the area.

**NEXT SOAR WALK:
SEPTEMBER 6
AT PINE HILL PARK**





SPECIES LIST

American Crow

American Goldfinch

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Brown Thrasher

Canada Goose

Carolina Chickadee

Carolina Wren

Chimney Swift

Chipping Sparrow

Common Grackle

Fish Crow

Gray Catbird

Great-blue Heron

House Finch

House Sparrow

Mourning Dove

Northern Cardinal

Northern Mockingbird

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Red-eyed Vireo

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Song Sparrow

Tufted Titmouse

Turkey Vulture

