

## SOAR RECAP: SEPTEMBER 6 2025

Pleasant temperatures were evident as I arrived at Pine Hill Recreation Area for our first September walk. Sharon and Sandy were missing as they attended an outdoor art contest in Chambersburg. However, attendance was good as I was joined by Jean, Lisa, Becky and Lee, MJ and Ed, John and Sue, Ian and Carol. Viewing from the parking lot picked up after a slow start, with sightings of bluebirds, a pewee, barn swallows, and a pileated woodpecker starting our day.

We hadn't gone far down the path when Lee identified a yellow-throated vireo, which gave us hope of more fall migrants. As we walked the wooded path, it became quiet for long stretches. We did add a white-breasted nuthatch, a downy woodpecker and someone spotted a turkey vulture overhead that we likely spooked from its perch. Then it was quiet again, until we reached a picnic area with a view overlooking Lowes in the distance. The view was unobstructed except for a couple of dead trees. These trees turned out to be a favorite of the birds, with many species visiting them and the adjoining trees.

In quick succession we added a red-eyed vireo, flicker, hairy woodpecker, titmouse, black-throated green warbler, black and white warbler, scarlet tanager, hummingbird, magnolia warbler and a red-breasted nuthatch which perched in a snag for all to see. Lisa posited that for our next walk, we bring a breakfast picnic and just head straight for this area, "where all the birds are."

Back near the parking area Lee and Ian were trying to identify a new sighting. After some consultation and research we settled on Cape May warbler. Also in the distance across the park we sighted two red-headed woodpeckers. The first was a typical redhead. The second was immature with a distinctively not red head -- it was brown.

We were a sapsucker short of a "woodpecker slam," but we did total 33 species, which meant we met the "Fallon minimum." Fred Fallon is a birder of note in Prince George's County Maryland who in response to a question, once stated: "Any birder worth his salt should be able to see 33 species in a given day." We just made it!

As a few of us lingered in the parking lot over Lee's lemonade, we sighted what looked like hazy vertical lines extending skyward above the trees.

Everyone reached for their binoculars. They were millions of swarming insects. None of us had ever seen anything like it. They faded in and out of sight. Sometimes there were several "columns." A little research indicated that they were likely midges (as Becky suggested at the time). We all took pictures and will compare notes at some point.

Next SOAR Walk: September 20th  
at Pine Hill Park

# SPECIES LIST



American Crow  
American Goldfinch  
American Robin  
Black and White Warbler  
Black Vulture  
Black-throated Green Warbler  
C/BC Chickadee  
Cape May Warbler  
Carolina Wren  
Chimney Swift  
Chipping Sparrow  
Downy Woodpecker  
Eastern Bluebird  
Eastern Wood Pewee  
European Starling  
Gray Catbird  
Hairy Woodpecker  
House Finch  
Magnolia Warbler  
Northern Cardinal  
Northern Flicker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Red-headed Woodpecker  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Red-eyed Vireo  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Scarlet Tanager  
Song Sparrow  
Tufted Titmouse  
Turkey Vulture  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Yellow-throated Vireo

