



SOAR Recap December 20th

In hindsight, the temperature in the mid-twenties from two weeks prior didn't seem so bad as we gathered on winter solstice eve for our second walk at Antrim Township Community Park. The gauge in my vehicle read 19 degrees as I arrived. Surprisingly the next to arrive was Jean, but it turned out she was just there to deliver goodies rather than endure the cold on our walk. Joining for the walk were Lisa, Dan and the two Jeffs. Before the walk began, Lisa passed out jam to those that missed out previously. Then it was off toward the woods.


The first to appear was a blue jay, a cardinal, and a chickadee. Then we heard a very loud drilling. It had to be a pileated woodpecker. It took some looking but we finally located it. Next came a flicker and then a red-bellied woodpecker, and in rapid succession hairy and downy woodpeckers. This matched our woodpecker total from the first walk. We again were hoping for a sapsucker, but it wasn't to be.

Before heading slightly downhill we spotted a hermit thrush in the exact location where Ian thought he heard one on our last walk. Guess he was probably right. Before reaching the next clearing several nuthatches were calling. In the clearing it was pretty quiet, but Dan did sight a white-crowned sparrow in the brush at the edge of the woods.

Next to appear were both kinglet species, ruby-crowned and golden-crowned. We had been looking for brown creeper, having seen two last time. Lisa finally found it climbing straight up a tree trunk. We marveled that it can find enough bugs to survive the cold, but obviously it does.

As we pressed on it became quiet again. Then flying low over the edge of a clearing was our only raptor of the day-- a northern harrier-- possibly slightly out of its normal range, but unmistakable. As someone pointed out at a recent Audubon meeting, many field guides are out of date as species adjust their ranges because of warming temperatures. Good for the authors and publishers, not good for birders.

We opted to head straight back to the parking lot as opposed to our usual route around the ball fields, because of the cold and the fact that we rarely see anything there.



Next SOAR Walk:
January 3
at Antietam Meadow Park

Species List



- American crow
- American goldfinch
- American robin
- Blue jay
- Brown creeper
- C/BC chickadee
- Carolina wren
- Dark-eyed junco
- Downy woodpecker
- European Starling
- Golden-crowned kinglet
- Hairy woodpecker
- Hermit thrush
- Northern Cardinal
- Northern flicker
- Northern harrier
- Pileated woodpecker
- Red-bellied woodpecker
- Ruby-crowned kinglet
- Tufted titmouse
- White-breasted nuthatch
- White-crowned sparrow

