



SOAR Recap

February 7 2026

As I made the drive through the snow-covered landscape toward Carroll Valley for the first February bird walk, the temperature in the car read 16, and a firm grip on the steering wheel was needed because of the wind. I couldn't help wondering whether anyone else would show up. Turns out they did. I pulled into the parking lot just after Lisa. Before even getting out of her car she spotted a bald eagle overhead. The eagle appeared to be hovering as he headed into the wind. After a sharp turn he rode the wind out of sight.

Lisa said she had spoken with Dan Friday evening and she thought he was coming. Very shortly Dan arrived and the three of us set off into the wind. Fortunately, the path around the park had been plowed. I guess my phone calls may have helped because six days earlier it had not been. The tiny stream that parallels the early part of the path was completely invisible under the snow and ice, and other than a few crows the area was devoid of birds.

As we thankfully turned with the wind at our back, we started to see a few. There was a chickadee and in a thick pine bush multiple house finches trying to stay out of the wind but exposed to the sun. A little further along we saw some juncos, a song sparrow and the ever-present mockingbird. We also saw a cardinal, some white-throated sparrows and heard a wren.

We passed on, crossing the bridge to check the lake as it was guaranteed to be frozen solid. Instead, we stayed on the path and came upon a mallard bathing in the flowing stream. The mallard then joined the rest of his flock, and for the next few minutes, 19 mallards swam down the stream in single file as we followed along the path which paralleled the stream. Eventually, the stream turned right and the path turned left, so they could relax.

Turning back into the wind, we heard a white-breasted nuthatch. And following the smaller stream we saw something under the bridge. We looked and looked. From a fleeting glimpse, we determined it to be a wren. But was it a Carolina, which we had heard and later would see, or a winter? We had seen a winter wren near this spot last year, but a positive ID eluded us.

As we neared the parking lot we spotted a flicker, which was to be our only woodpecker of the day. There was not a lot of lingering as we reached the cars. Getting out of the wind and feeling a little heat would be welcome.

Next SOAR Walk:
February 21 at Carroll Valley Community Park.
Meet in front of Borough Building/Library



Species List



Bald eagle



common raven

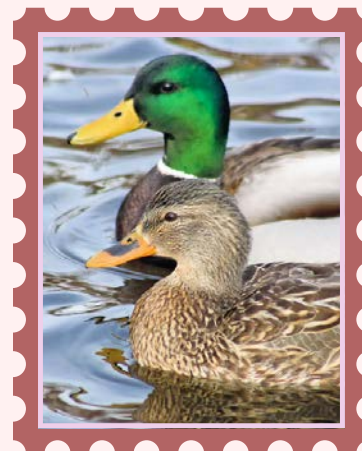


Northern flicker

American crow
 Bald eagle
 Belted kingfisher
 Blue jay
 C/BC chickadee
 Carolina wren
 Common raven
 Dark-eyed junco
 House finch
 Mallard
 Northern cardinal
 Northern flicker



Belted kingfisher



Mallard

Northern mockingbird

Song sparrow
 White-breasted
 nuthatch
 White-throated
 sparrow



Song sparrow