Sussex Bird Club Field Trip Report

Location: Rickett’s Glen SP and SGL 57 in Sullivan and Wyoming counties, PA

Date: Thursday June 21 through Sunday, June 24, 2018

Time: all day

Weather: Variable

Leaders: Rob and Carol Blye

Attendees: Sue G, Sharon L, Rob S

Sussex Bird Club conducted its second trip to northeastern Pennsylvania beginning on Thursday June 21 through Sunday, June 24, 2018. Two vehicles departed Lewes about 8:30 AM and drove north to Rickett’s Glen SP Route 118 trailhead and left one vehicle. Then we drove Rob’s truck to the top of the mountain and started down the Glenn Falls Natural Area trail. The falls are spectacular and the trail is very steep and arduous. Rob’s GPS logged some 4.2 miles all downhill with about 15 waterfalls of from 95 to 15 feet high. On the way down we saw or heard Acadian flycatcher, winter wren, several warblers and a juvenile slate-colored junco. Then we drove on to the Endless Mountains Motel, registered, unpacked and headed to dinner in Dushore.

Our morning Friday started with a 30-min drive to Coalbed Swamp and a brief tour around the mine shaft (hermit thrush and blackburnian warbler showed well and sang for us) and edge of the spruce bog. We could not find a trail and wisely decided not to bushwhack into the swamp as there were several sore knees and legs after the arduous hike down the Glen. We birded our way out of the swamp and around the area ending up at the Hayfields and village of Ricketts pull off. We were on an unsuccessful journey to find an alder flycatcher for Sharon’s life list. We tried several places on Mountain Springs Road and hiked the Hidden Hemlock trail where some heard a Swainson’s thrush. Also evident were chestnut-sided warbler, black-throated green, black throated blue, American redstart and hooded merganser with young. We ended the day with dinner in LaPorte, several miles south of the motel.

Saturday morning started with a rainy visit to a known spot for sandhill crane which yielded swallows, bobolink, eastern meadowlark, Baltimore oriole and brown thrasher – but no cranes. We hit several of the hotspots from the day before and picked up several alder flycatcher for Sharon, singing white-throated sparrow and lots of common yellowthroats. We ended the day with a long drive birding Dutch Mountain Road north all the way to Route 87 (turkey, prairie warbler and field sparrow) and a dinner scouting trip to Dushore. We returned to the motel, then dinner at the Dushore Hotel where we were served by a guest, Pat, who was commandeered to wait tables because the regular waitress blew off work that night.

Sunday morning we hit the crane spot again (more bobolinks and meadowlarks) on the way to breakfast at Pat’s Restaurant, owned by our waitress of the night before! We greeted Pat, ate breakfast and struck out for home. Rob and Sue guided us to a white pelican at 1000-acre swamp south of Delaware City and then headed to the DOS picnic to receive an award for the Roadrunner’s birdathon. Sharon, Carol and Rob kept birding and found some 30 species including two fly over sandhill cranes, cave swallows, a pheasant and little blue herons.

We finished the PA trip with about 64 species detailed on the attached table.