

June 2013: Birding by Kayak

Part 1 by

May Martineau (OYBC Central Chapter)

It was a little colder than it was the year before on the kayak trip. But it's warm enough for short sleeves. I'm on the short trip and my goal for this trip is to see a Prothonotary Warbler. Last time I saw one flitting around in a tree; this time I really want to see one up close.

While I wait in the water I get accustomed to my kayak. When everybody is in the water finally, we head downstream towards the lake. Along the way I see a Great Blue Heron and a Double-crested Cormorant, but not much else. But then we reach the bridge where the Cliff Swallows nest. I start seeing a lot of Catbirds, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, American Goldfinches, and Song Sparrows to name a few. After this we find an outlet from the lake. We go down it some way and find a mother Mallard and her four babies, and about fifteen feet away from her is a Green Heron fishing. He did end up flying away before most of the group had seen him, but only to the other side of the lake.



We then find a large tree across the stream and we have to turn around. I continue around the circumference of the lake, and I find directly in front of me a gorgeous male Prothonotary Warbler. He was so yellow he was almost orange on his breast.

As we go on the list gets longer: Cedar Waxwings bathing and more warblers. Then a nest is spotted, but we don't know what it is. Directly above that is a Kingbird nest. After this I keep going around



the lake, but not for long. It's time to go. We head back the way we came. I'm sad we have to leave, but on the bright side, I achieved my goal!

Editor's note: some of the OYBC gang launched their kayaks farther upriver, so they had a longer paddle, much of it on the open water rather than the coves near the TAASC launch point.

Birding by Kayak

Part 2 by
Nathan Martineau (OYBC Central Chapter)

The OYBCers who chose to take the challenge of the longer kayak trip had a completely different experience than those who went on the other trip. Although there was less time for birding, the paddling was highlighted by a great blue heron or Double-crested Cormorant every hundred yards or so.

The overgrown riverbank, punctuated occasionally by an impossibly big house, held Gray Catbirds, Song Sparrows, and Eastern Wood Pewees, while the treetops were inhabited by Great Crested Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, Red-eyed,



Warbling and Yellow-throated Vireos, Baltimore Orioles, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers.

Everyone loved the colonies of Cliff Swallows. With their stout stature, striking white foreheads, and amusing antics, the swallows

were undoubtedly the highlight of many peoples' experience on the river that day.

Editor's note: After lunch we got to help check & band tree swallow nestlings with Darlene Sillick; Several volunteers from the Ohio Wildlife Center were present, including OYBC's very own Darlene Sillick, and gave a presentation on wildlife rehabilitation.



The following list of bird species, which includes birds seen on both the short and long routes, was compiled by Trevor Zook.

Baltimore Oriole
Song Sparrow
Brown-headed Cowbird
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
Eastern Phoebe
Tree Swallow
Purple Martin
Mallard
Northern Cardinal
Pileated Woodpecker
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Carolina Chickadee
Mourning Dove
Warbling Vireo
Eastern Kingbird
American Goldfinch
Prothonotary Warbler
Cedar Waxwing
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Great Blue Heron
Rock Dove
European Starling
Cliff Swallow

Gray Catbird
Blue Jay
Double-crested Cormorant
Indigo Bunting
American Robin
House Finch
Wood Duck
Chimney Swift
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Downy Woodpecker
Canada Goose
Turkey Vulture
Eastern Bluebird
White-breasted Nuthatch
House Wren
Great Crested Flycatcher
Scarlet Tanager
Herring Gull
Red-tailed Hawk
Eastern Wood-Pee-wee
Ring-billed Gull
Chipping Sparrow
Red-eyed Vireo
Brown Thrasher

