

BIRD WALK NEWSLETTER

Weekly Newsletter for Magnolia Plantation and Gardens

By Jayne Matney

SUNDAY 8:30AM WALKING TOUR
PHOTOS BY JO FRKOVICH

1.10.2016

January– A Time of Gathering, Wintering, and Nesting



A Gulp of
Cormorants



Badelying of Ducks



Even the yellow-
bellied pond slider
turtles are gathering!



Great Blue Heron
Skillfully Building Her
Nest

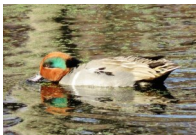
Plurality Seems To Be the Name of the Game These Days



Whether they are ducks flying south and gathering, or wintering passerines darting about in the fields and forests, or herons/egrets/and the like nest-building in their favorite spots in rookeries, Magnolia Plantation has them all this month!

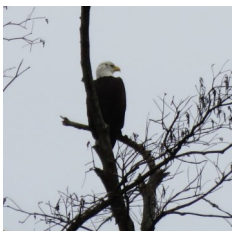
Recently, I was in a conversation with a co-worker and the topic of terms for plurality, animals in numbers, for different animals came up. Being a retired teacher, I am constantly finding ways to learn. So, immediately, I began researching those plurality terms on the internet. We definitely got a kick out of some of them! Since “plurality” is the way things are going right now out here in nature (and especially in the bird world), I will share some of these terms along the way! Now be advised, some of these terms may not be used in “modern times”, but at some point were used. You may even know other terms of your own.

The Water Oriented Birds: Ducks, Pelecaniformes, Gulls, and Wading Birds



We have “badelyings” of ducks on the property here. Ravenswood Pond is an excellent place for finding Gadwall, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, and Green-winged Teal (see photo to the left). Also in Ravenswood, Perry and his 6 birding companions spied a few American Wigeon, not quite a “company” of them and some Pied-billed Grebe in the mix. A few Hooded Mergansers have been spotted in various places on the property but not on this morning. Anhinga and Cormorant were also found in the tree branches and on the platforms. When these birds are found in numbers together, this group in plurality is called a “gulp”. These types of birds, were also spotted in Perry’s field and the large, old rice field. Ravenswood, The Audubon Swamp, Perry’s field, and the old rice field along the dike are all excellent places to find the wading birds. Great Blue Herons are gathering by the numbers as well as Great White Heron, Snowy Heron, and White Ibis- “sedges” of them! A Little Blue Heron was sighted in The Audubon Swamp. The moorhen and the coots, our Gruiformes or rails, prefer Perry’s Field and the old rice field. 75 Common Moorhen and 130 American Coots have gathered in “coverts” there. The coots tend to be a nice supply of food for the eagles that are nesting in winter here. Approximately 100 Ring-billed Gulls, a “colony”, were also seen flying along the river dike.

Diurnal Raptors, Woodpeckers, and Passerines



The diurnal raptors include the vultures, eagles, osprey, hawks, and falcons because of their soaring nature in search of food. The Sunday morning bird walk group saw 50 to 70 vultures, both Black and Turkey Vultures, which would definitely be enough to consider it a “murder” of them and they were seen circling above which is called a “mass” or “kettle”. Suiting, don’t you think? The tour group also saw 2 adult bald eagles atop the bare tree limbs. A Northern Harrier was seen soaring low just above the cattails. 4 Red-shouldered Hawk and 1 Red-Tailed Hawk made their appearance as well near the dike and wooded area close to the river.

The woodpeckers and passerines can be found mostly along the tree lined pathways throughout the property, the wooded trails, and the entrance and exit roads. 4 Red-bellied, one downy, and 3 Pileated were spotted this morning as well as 2 yellow-bellied sapsuckers and 4 Northern Flickers. In addition to the expected Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, American Robin, Northern Mocking Bird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, and American Goldfinch, the group also located White-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Ruby Crowned Kinglet, 8 Eastern Bluebirds, Hermit Thrush, a Pine Warbler, and 2 Black-and-white Warblers were found. A few “murders” totaling 30 American Crow and 200 Fish Crow, 200 Red-winged Blackbirds, 50 Common Grackle, and 6 Rusty Blackbirds roamed the property.

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