

Birdwalk Newsletter

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By Jayne J. Matney

Photos by Jo Frkovich

“NO WINTER LASTS FOREVER; NO SPRING SKIPS ITS TURN”

Hal Borland



According to us southern folks, it may seem that winter has been here far too long already. Periodically, we will get a sunny day and the alligators will make an appearance even on these winter days. This one seems to have fashioned herself a nice blanket for February! My first thought however, was that Magnolia Plantation has her own live “Chia Pets”! Not true, but Magnolia Plantation has so many things to offer and bird watching is one of the best



activities here! Many people were thinking about Valentine’s Day this weekend and Magnolia Plantation celebrates with a stroll through the gardens while eating different chocolates along the way. If you missed it, maybe you can come participate next year. As for me, my heart belongs to the Ibises this week. Whether they are perched up on a



branch, probing the mud with their curved, sensitive beaks, or flying by with black tipped wings, they represent relaxed, coastal living to me as much as the beach's pelicans.



On this particular Sunday morning, Perry's crew decided to drive the pathways instead of walking them. It was cold (28-31 degrees), and sunny but breezy. Still, 49 species were accounted for! Ravenswood gave them a view of Gadwall (approximately 100), along with American Wigeon, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, and Green-winged Teal. In the trees and banks, there were Anhinga, Great Blue Heron (12), and 20 White Ibis. Once they went around to the Audubon viewpoint, they saw 16 Canadian Geese. Along the forest road, they were fortunate enough to see many birds, some in numbers, such as the Red-bellied woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, 6 Northern Flickers, a couple of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Eastern Phoebe, White-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Tree Sparrow, Blue Jay, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Carolina Wren, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, White-Throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal and American Goldfinch. Closer to the dike, they spotted many Common Grackle, Red-winged Blackbirds, a Rusty Blackbird, Bald Eagle (1 Adult, 2 third year, 1 second year), 1 Northern Harrier, and a Red-tailed Hawk. Looking out into the pond off the dike, there were 50 Moorhen, 1 Lesser Scaup, and 300 Coot watching out for eagle movement. A single Black-crowned Night Heron was discovered on the edge of the water and 4 Turkey Vultures and 60 Ring-billed Gulls were cruising above.

