

BIRDWALK NEWSLETTER

6.19.16

By Jayne J. Matney

“Tally up the good dads and the bad dads in the animal world, and mammals come up surprisingly short. Males provide direct care of their young in less than 5% of mammal species. Some mammals, like grizzly bears, are notoriously bad dads, known to kill their own cubs. In some 90% of bird species, the males stay around to help: They share the duties of nest-building, incubate eggs, feed brooding females and the chicks, even train their young for independent life.” From “Why Bird Fathers Are Superior” by Jennifer Ackerman, writer Wall Street Journal.



Father Anhinga building the nest

species including feathery fathers were present. The Audubon Swamp is teeming with 20 or more Little Blue Heron including young ones, Green Heron, and Black-crowned Night Heron with Fledglings. A few White Ibis were included in the count. To top the breeding season off with great success were the Anhinga. At Ravenswood and the Dikes, Anhinga were raising young. Two of these females seem to have flushed their first brood out of the nest and are now nesting again with a second. Yellow-crowned Night Heron with young fledglings are also making the list.

It was a Happy Father’s Day here at Magnolia Plantation! The hot, humid weather we had been having earlier this week receded, and we had a reprieve of a mild outdoors. Perry and the crew of 7 participants enjoyed a nice breezy day of birdwatching. The Wood Ducks, Great Blue Herons and their fledglings, and the Great and Snowy Egrets were seen all over the property on this day. At least 35 to 40 individuals of each



Highlights of today’s walk includes Osprey (1),

Mississippi Kite (2), Bald Eagle (1 first year), Yellow-bellied Cuckoo (1), Chimney Swift (3), Ruby-throated Hummingbird (1), Summer Tanager (1), Indigo Bunting (1), Orchard Oriole (3), Eastern Bluebird (8), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (3), Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and 25 Northern Parula!

Later that day, one of our tour guides brought in a picture of a Black-bellied Whistling Duck out at our pond! This is the second day of sighting this bird here.

Our “usuals” not previously mentioned are:

- 50 Laughing Gulls 5 Least Terns 40 Moorhen 15 Black Vulture 10 Turkey Vulture
2 Mourning Dove 8 Red-bellied Woodpecker 1 Downy Woodpecker 5 Blue Jay
10 American Crow 6 Fish Crow 1 Yellow-throated Warbler 1 Brown Thrasher
40 Carolina Wren 10 Tufted Titmouse 6 Carolina Chickadee 1 Common Yellowthroat
40 Northern Cardinal 75 Red-winged Blackbirds 10 Common Grackle 10 Boat-tailed Grackle



Right: Male Anhinga tossing a fish back!



Above: Large Gator trying to stay cool



Below: Great Blue Heron fledgling awkwardly navigating around Egret Nest with young.



Above: Female Wood Duck with her ducklings