

BirdWalk Newsletter 7. 17. 16

Conducted by : Perry Nugent

Written by: Jayne J Matney

The Prothonotary Warbler is always a welcomed sight because of its beautiful bright colors. Predominately yellow-orange with greys on the wing and muted blues and greens on the back, and large black eyes and small black beak, there is no mistaking this vibrant bird. The nest is first started by the males as they get ready to attract their mates. Then the female joins in the building process using mostly mosses, liverworts, grasses, leaves and rootlets. The nest ends up being a little cup structure inside of a tree crevice. What is especially interesting about this fact, is that the Prothonotary Warbler is one of only two warblers that nest in a crevice like this! See below a couple of pictures that Perry has captured here at Magnolia Plantation over the years.



Above: Prothonotary young in nest

Right: Prothonotary adult in crevice with nest

Photos by Perry Nugent

Luckily for us, they prefer to nest in bald cypress, tupelo, and gum trees among others which makes our Audubon Swamp perfect for their choosing. You may find anywhere from 3 to 7 eggs that are speckled

rust-brown. After doing a search, I found a range/migratory chart that I thought I would share with you from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.



Insect eating Prothonotary Warbler (Male)
Photo by Ray Swagerty

Prothonotary Warbler
Protonotaria citrea



“There’s this magical sense of possibility that stretches like a bridge between June and August. A sense that anything can happen.”
Aimee Friedman

Highlights of the Day: July 17th was a cloudy, muggy Sunday morning with only 1 participant out with Perry on his quest to find avians. 32 species were found which included approximately 70 Wood Ducks! Some of these were late brood babies. We are so thrilled to have such wonderful success with these unique birds. A Summer Tanager was spotted along the way. Also viewed were 6 Great-crested Flycatchers, 1 Pileated Woodpecker, White-eyed Vireo, and 4 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. But the real excitement came when they located an American Redstart. (See photo on last page)

There was a “fish kill” in the corner of the cross dike at the large old rice field and birds were gathered there to take advantage of the available food. Anhinga, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron of different stages in plumage, Tri-colored Heron, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, and White and Glossy Ibis were all sharing the feast. 40 Moorhen and a few remaining American Coot were close by, along with Laughing Gulls and Turkey Vultures. Our usual passerines such as the Northern Cardinal, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Mockingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Bluejay, Red-winged Blackbird, Common and Boat-tailed Grackles and Mourning Dove were represented.



Carolina Wren



Cedar Waxwing



Above: Carolina Chickadee

Right: American Redstart

Photos here by Ray Swagerty

