

BirdWalk Newsletter 7.31.2016

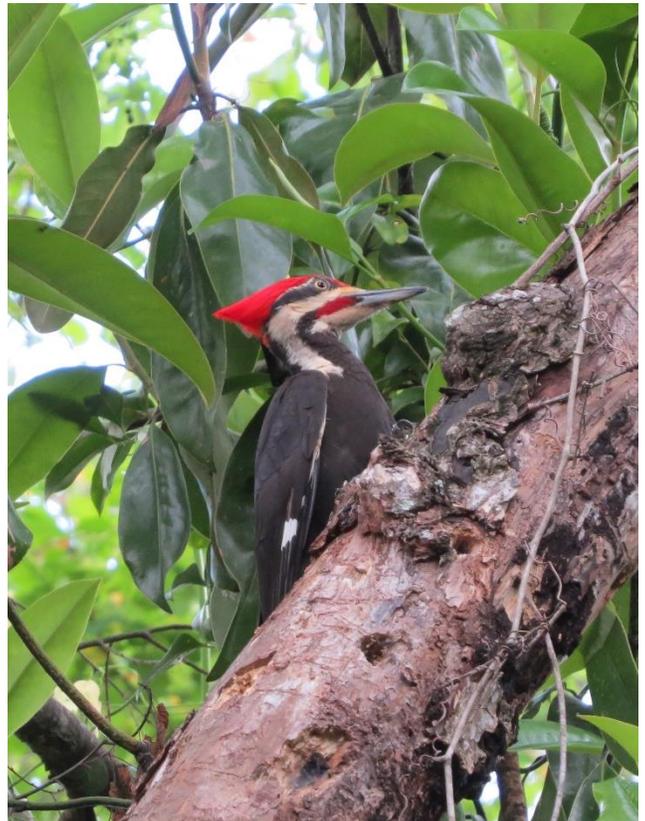
Magnolia Plantation and Gardens

Walk conducted by: Perry Nugent

Sunday Mornings 8:30-11:30

Written by: Jayne J Matney

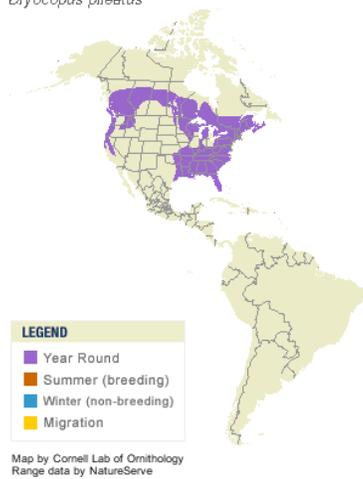
We have been consistently seeing the Pileated Woodpecker here on the property for many years. Historically, they hit a major decline in the late 1800's and early 1900's because of destruction of mature forests in the United States. But lately, these awe inspiring woodpeckers have been steadily increasing in numbers. They are much like the now critically endangered Ivory-billed Woodpeckers and are the largest of the woodpeckers in our country. The subspecies of this bird are more defined by geographical location than anything else. They are territorial living, non-migratory birds which stay with the



same mate.

They favor mature forests and parks looking for dead trees to excavate for insects such as ants and termites. They produce large rectangular gouges into these trees when drilling. They make round openings for nesting. These large excavators can be identified by a very loud call and loud drumming as they pound their way through the forest. The drumming on the side of the tree is used for territorial reasons, mating, nesting, and food acquisition. They have a specialized skull and spine that can handle the impacts of this behavior. Both

Pileated Woodpecker
Dryocopus pileatus



parents incubate eggs and care for their young, and unlike most birds, if any eggs fall out of their nest, they will re-establish into a new nest. Here at Magnolia Plantation we are always welcoming of these birds and hope that more find their way to our forests.

Highlights of the Day:

40+ Wood Duck were seen especially in Ravenswood and Audubon Swamp and this includes some babies still at this late date. The question remains: Are these babes a result of being from late migrating parents or are they a second brood by the parents?

2 Killdeer were seen flying overhead, while an Osprey took careful watch over the large old rice field. A dozen or so

White-eyed Vireo were singing in the tree tops, and a glimpse of a Great-crested Flycatcher was snatched near the Indian mound in the forest. One American Redstart was seen darting about in the garden. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was also seen but near the observation tower. 4 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were seen and are always a welcomed sight. A Belted Kingfisher, 6 Red-bellied Woodpeckers, a few Downy Woodpeckers and a Pileated woodpecker were sighted and 3 other times the Pileated Woodpeckers were heard through the trees in the forest. One Red-tailed Hawk was perched in the trees.

Others: The wading birds and other water birds were all accounted for on this hot, humid day.

Anhinga	5
Great Blue Heron	3
Great Egret	10
Snowy Egret	20
Little Blue Heron	6
Tri-colored Heron	6
Green Heron	8
Black-crowned Night Heron	3
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	2
White Ibis	5
Glossy Ibis	2
Common Moorhen	40

Laughing Gulls flew passed at the cross dike and along the river, while Black Vultures and Turkey Vultures soared high above, and 35 Red-winged Blackbirds fluttered in and out of the cattail stalks. Mourning dove, Chimney Swift, American and Fish Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird Northern Cardinal, and the Common and Boat-tailed Grackle round out the property's fleet of feathered friends.



Happier of happy though I be, like them
I cannot take possession of the sky,
Mount with a thoughtless impulse and wheel there
One of a mighty multitude, whose way
And motion is a harmony and a dance
Magnificent.....

William Wordsworth