



## USA: 2-DAY NORTHWEST OHIO TRIP REPORT

13 - 14 MAY 2021

By Jacob Roalef



*This cute **Eastern Screech Owl** was nestled in nicely and gave us excellent views.*

### Overview

Greg and Mo were just on the beginning of a great road trip adventure and their first stop was two days of birding in northwest Ohio. We had an awesome time enjoying the beautiful weather, birds and each other's company. Overall we took our time and visited several hotspot locations for the area including Pearson Metropark, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Maumee Bay State Park, and Magee Marsh. We tallied a nice 80 species for the two days and really focused more on close, enjoyable looks of the birds rather than a huge number of species.



*We enjoyed a few **Magnolia Warblers** during our two days of birding.*

### Detailed Report

#### **Day 1, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**

We started this morning at 7am at the Maumee Bay State Park campground area, where Mo and Greg were staying while in Ohio. The birds were certainly loud and active around the campground, so we decided to walk a little bit. We were treated to a hilarious male **Orchard Oriole** eating dead bugs off cars in the area. He even landed on my car and went into the trunk which I had left open! Luckily, no deposits were left. After this, we knew it was going to be a great day.

Pearson Metropark was our first real destination of the day. We enjoyed watching their feeders for a bit, however only typical birds came in like **Black-capped Chickadee** and **Blue Jay**. From here, we stretched our legs a bit and did some walking on the lovely trails at this park. Things were a bit quiet this morning, but we managed to get onto a few nice birds including **Cape May** and **Nashville Warblers**, **Eastern Phoebe**, **Grey Catbird** and **Red-breasted Nuthatch**. Next up was

the northern section of Pearson which hosts a nice wetland area. Here we enjoyed **Common Yellowthroat**, **White-crowned Sparrow** and a calling **Virginia Rail** which sadly didn't provide any visuals. We decided to head back to Maumee and check out the huge boardwalk area within the park. This lovely walk yielded us great views of **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Green Heron** and an adorable **Eastern Screech Owl** nestled in perfectly on a snag of a dead tree. Next up was a delicious picnic lunch in the shade followed by dessert at the famous Blackberry Corner Tavern. We decided to break for the day and pick back up in the evening for a special birding session to hopefully one of their most wanted targets!

I returned to the Maumee Bay campground about 20 minutes before sunset to meet up with Greg and Mo. This gave us a nice window to get ready and start searching for the nighttime aerial display of **American Woodcock**. We drove around the campground listening for a bit until we finally heard the "peent" of one calling. Unfortunately, there was just no way to get a visual on that one so we continued on. It wasn't long before we managed to get onto an extremely accommodating bird right in the middle of a mowed path! We watched for 15-20 min as this cute 'timberdoodle' would "peent", takeoff and flutter way into the sky before landing in the exact same spot it departed from, just like magic. What a treat and a great way to end the day!



*While not a great photo, this **American Woodcock** was a big highlight of the trip!*

### Day 2, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The morning started off in the parking lot of Maumee Bay where again, the birds were already loud. We walked around and enjoyed a nice **Swainson's Thrush**, a glowing **Indigo Bunting** in the sun and a loud **Chipping Sparrow**, singing his heart out. From this parking to the next, we were off to Magee Marsh whose parking lot area can be rather productive. Birding along the edges, we enjoyed several great species including **Bald Eagle**, **Baltimore Oriole**, **Rose-breasted**



**Grosbeak, American Yellow and Black-throated Green Warblers, and Warbling Vireo.** After a lovely morning of birding, we headed towards Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

We enjoyed a **Purple Martin** colony while we ate lunch at some of the nice picnic tables located here before we started our venture along the auto tour road. This nearly 8-mile road circles around some expansive marshes and wetlands along the Lake Erie shore. At our first stop, we enjoyed some shallow water hosting a few shorebirds including a **Wilson's Phalarope** and **Dunlin**. Behind us was a flock of **Sandhill Cranes** enjoying the grass of a different impoundment. We carried on from here, enjoying several water bird species such as **Trumpeter Swan, Common Gallinule,** and **Pied-billed Grebe**. Finally, we reached the back corner where a small lot of trees are located. This tiny patch can really see some great birding and today did not disappoint! Immediately we were greeted by a glowing red male **Scarlet Tanager** at eye-level posing nicely for everyone to view. We birded this patch for quite a while as new birds just kept coming in from the back trees. Highlights included **Tennessee, Black-and-white, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue** and **Magnolia Warblers, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and **Eastern Kingbird**. What an amazing patch of birds! Eventually we weaved our way out of here and out of Ottawa. We stopped for some tasty ice cream treats to celebrate some fantastic birding. While eating our sweets, Mo was talking about wanting to see a **Horned Lark**, so we made one final stop along some farm roads, and it didn't take long before we scored the target! A great cap on a lovely two days of birding in beautiful northwestern Ohio.



*This male **Scarlet Tanager** gave us some amazing, eye-level views!*