



USA: 2-DAY NORTHWEST OHIO TRIP REPORT

10 - 11 MAY 2021

By Jacob Roalef



Golden-winged Warbler was certainly a top highlight of the two days.

Overview

Gene decided to take a quick trip up to northwest Ohio to see what all the fuss was about during spring migration. The winds didn't pan out well for our two days together and made for a bit of a slower time, however, even a few slow days in this region can be really great and we managed to finish strong. Over the course of two days, we visited several great parks including Pearson Metropark, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Magee Marsh, Howard Marsh, Oak Openings Metropark and Maumee Bay State Park. In the end we still had a great time and managed 114 species! Not bad for a couple of "slow" days on the lake front.



*This adorable **Eastern Screech Owl** sure wasn't shy.*

Detailed Report

Day 1, 10th May 2021.

After meeting up at the hotel with Gene at 7am, we were off to Pearson Metropark to see what the morning would bring us. This lovely park is a great place to start a day of birding as there are normally migrants in the warming trees. Unfortunately, this morning was a slow day for migrants, so we headed inside to view the feeders and the "View on Wildlife" set up they have there. A few of the typical species made an appearance like **Black-capped Chickadee** and **White-breasted Nuthatch**. We had nice views of both **Hermit** and **Swainson's Thrushes** and then bam, a brilliant **Red-headed Woodpecker** flew into the feeder area. It was an absolute stunner. We explored the park a bit further which was still slow but yielded a few nice species including **Indigo Bunting**,

Ovenbird and **Baltimore Oriole**. From here we moved onto the wetlands in the northern portion of the park which was a bit quiet although a few **White-crowned Sparrows** showed nicely for us.

Next up, Maumee Bay State Park. There is a lot of area one can cover here but we focused most of our time on the huge boardwalk area. Here we were treated to stunning views of a glowing **Prothonotary Warbler** and an adorable red morph **Eastern Screech Owl**. We also enjoyed another **Red-headed Woodpecker**, who could get tired of these?! Next, we ventured over to Howard Marsh, one of Ohio's newest parks. This huge marsh has already hosted many great species and today it did not disappoint. **Blue-winged Teal**, **Common Gallinule**, **Sora**, **Ruddy Duck**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Western Osprey** and **Yellow-headed Blackbird** (uncommon/rare in Ohio) all put on a nice display for us.



*This **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was nice enough to perch up on a Muskrat hut for us.*

After a lunch at the famous Blackberry Corner Tavern, we hit up the Estuary Trail at Magee Marsh. Unfortunately, this was really slow with the only action coming in the form of **American Yellow Warblers** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**. We decided to then give the auto-road at Ottawa NWR a go as our last location for the day. Birding here went a little better with nice shorebirds such as **Marbled Godwit** and **Grey (Black-bellied) Plover**. We also had views of a dozen **Bald Eagles** all at once! Overall, a nice end to a great day of birding.

Day 2, 11th May 2021.

Today we decided to head a little further west, over to the beautiful Oak Openings Metropark. This park offers some unique habitats in Ohio such as oak savanna and with that comes a nice mix of birds. Our first stop proved that migration today would be slightly better than the previous one as

we snagged **Blue-winged Warbler**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, **American Redstart**, **Yellow-throated Vireo** and **Grasshopper Sparrow**. We continued along and managed some excellent views of **Lark Sparrow**, one of the area's top breeding species utilizing the habitat here. As the day progressed, we visited the nature center here and noticed things starting to slow down. We did see a few nice breeding species such as **Hooded Warbler**, **Eastern Phoebe** and **Carolina Wren** visiting a nest. From here we decided to call it a day on Oak Openings and head back east for some lunch before more birding in the afternoon.

Our first post lunch stop was Metzger Marsh. Unfortunately, the wind really picked up and we had a tough time seeing any songbirds in the small woodlot there. We did manage a few nice waterbirds including **Common Tern**, **Black-necked Stilt** (uncommon), **American White Pelican** (uncommon) and hundreds of **Double-crested Cormorants**. We decided to venture back to Pearson Metropark for our final stop of the day as we believed it to be away from Lake Erie and a little more protected from the wind. We enjoyed a nice walk through the park which was pretty quiet until all of a sudden we came across an amazing migrant flock! This flock was loaded with various warblers including **Golden-winged**, **Magnolia**, **Blackburnian**, **Black-and-White**, **Black-throated Blue**, and **Chestnut-sided Warblers** plus **Northern Parula** and **American Redstart**. This is the sort of thing that makes birding in Ohio in the spring so amazing. What an incredible finish to our two days of birding!



*Our views of **Blackburnian Warbler** may not have been at eye-level like this however it is a striking bird even in the canopies.*