

# Birding Ecotours



## USA: 1-DAY NORTHWEST OHIO TRIP REPORT

By Jacob Roalef



*This rare female Kirtland's Warbler was a top highlight of the day (photo Kathi Hoffman)!*

## Overview

Kurt and Kathi decided to visit northwest Ohio for several days before heading north to Michigan for more birding fun. We were lucky enough to link up for their first full day of birding here and what a day it was. While they have been to the region in previous years, the birding is so amazing that it is certainly worth repeat visits. During our day together, the birding was fantastic, and we only made it to two locations because of that! We birded the morning at Magee Marsh and the afternoon was spent on the auto-road of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. We ended our day together with 86 species and lots of laughs!



*We managed to see several **Bay-breasted Warblers** throughout the day.*

## Detailed Report

After picking up Kurt and Kathi at 7am, we decided to head to Magee Marsh as our first birding stop of the day. Although the famous boardwalk there had limited access during this time, the surrounding trails and even the parking lot can offer some great birding and we certainly weren't disappointed. Right away we were treated to a nice migrant flock along the parking lot edge. The birding was so good that we were glued to one spot for almost an hour, as some birds left, others just came in to replace them. Highlights included **Bay-breasted, Magnolia, Palm, Blackpoll, Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Nashville** and **Chestnut-sided Warblers** plus a very cooperative, **Black-billed Cuckoo** which flew in for a moment before carrying on. After reading

the above, one can understand why it was so difficult to leave this spot and continue venturing onwards.

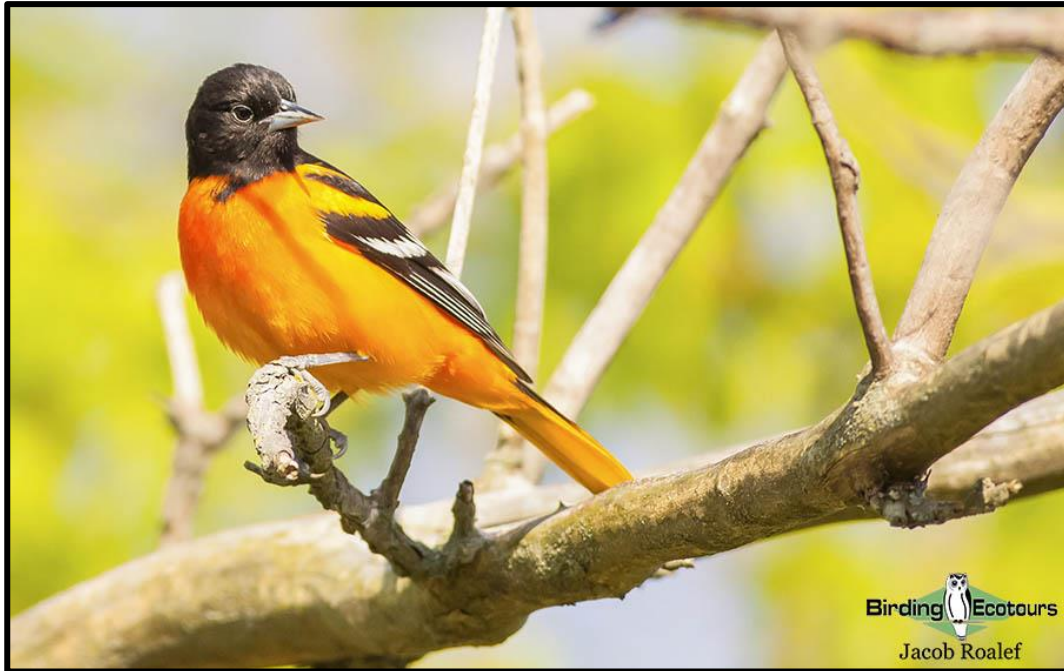


*The striking white eye-ring of a Nashville Warbler really tends to stick out.*

Eventually we made it out onto the Estuary Trail where we were treated to two more **Black-billed Cuckoos**; what an incredible cuckoo day! We also heard a **Northern Waterthrush** singing, and had views of a beautiful **Northern Parula** and a glowing **Red-headed Woodpecker**, not to mention about a dozen **American Yellow Warblers**. We started to make our way back to the car and passed the entrance to the boardwalk. Luckily, as we were passing by, we overheard some workers talking about the possibility of them allowing walk-ons at this time so we asked and next thing we knew, we were on the amazing Magee boardwalk! This place is amazing for birds, and it wasn't long until magic struck with a jaw-dropping female **Kirtland's Warbler** making an appearance! We enjoyed this sighting with several other excited birders, and one could really feel the joy of birding in the air. The rest of the boardwalk was of course enjoyable with species like **Prothonotary**, **Nashville**, and **Cape May Warblers**, **White-throated** and **White-crowned Sparrows**, **Great-crested Flycatcher** and **Swainson's Thrush**.

After a nice picnic lunch, we started our journey along the 7-mile auto-road tour in Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. The beginning sections featured more water bird species and we enjoyed species like **Trumpeter Swan**, **Great Egret**, **Sandhill Crane**, and **Common Gallinule**. As we continued along into the more exciting second half of the drive, we were treated to some really nice views of both **Dunlin** and **Least Sandpiper**. We even managed to get onto a distant **Sora** that was foraging in and out of the reeds there. Finally, we came up to a small woodlot located along the road which again had a fantastic flock of migrant songbirds in its branches. One of the first species we saw after getting out was a brilliant **Canada Warbler**, which is always a real treat to see. Other birds

included **Magnolia, Blackpoll** and **Chestnut-sided Warblers, Indigo Bunting,** and **American Redstart.** We finally rounded the corner and headed for the exit on what was certainly a fantastic day of birding! Warblers stole the show on this particular day, as they tend to do, and we tallied 19 different species on this trip before we said our goodbyes and put a cap on a great day trip.



*While warblers often steal the show, there are other beautiful species to see such as **Baltimore Oriole.***