

Trip Report
Hawkwatching
September 20, 2020

Hawkwatching is just one of those things. It can either be extremely rewarding or very dull when no migration seems to take place at all. Today turned out to be pretty good with a very good southbound passage of Bald Eagles, as well as a nice selection of other birds of prey. The overlook was fairly busy as Vicky Burke, our intrepid leader and hawk expert, has a group of regulars who come to the overlook to help her monitor the hawk migration, plus we had a steady stream of interested visitors who were often surprised at what we were doing. What made it more enjoyable was when some of the general public managed to time their visit to see a hawk or eagle flying over their heads.

Like a good majority of hawkwatches, a good proportion of the migrating raptors were quite distant and required constant scanning by us to make sure they didn't slip through without getting counted. The day started with a small flock of Double-crested Cormorants moving south and as the day warmed up, a steady stream of Monarch Butterflies drifted overhead – always a pleasure to watch them. We had a small flock of warblers feeding in the Sourwood tree below us and a few Barn Swallows drifted south. As well as around a dozen Bald Eagles (including one adult which passed directly overhead), we had a good number of Broad-winged Hawks, a single Red-shouldered and several larger Red-tails. Another nice sight was several American Kestrels, the smallest of our falcons, flying gently south. They always look delicate with their long wings and tails. All in all a great day and I am already looking forward to the next time

Birds
37 Species Encountered

Chimney Swift	American Kestrel (5)	Pine Siskin
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Eastern Wood-Pewee	American Goldfinch
Double-crested Cormorant (7)	Red-eyed Vireo	Eastern Towhee
Turkey Vulture (12)	Blue Jay	Tennessee Warbler
Osprey (1)	American Crow	Hooded Warbler
Cooper's Hawk (1)	Common Raven	Cape May Warbler
Bald Eagle (12)	Carolina Chickadee	Magnolia Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk (1)	Tufted Titmouse	Blackburnian Warbler
Broad-winged Hawk (250)	White-breasted Nuthatch	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk (3)	Barn Swallow	Black-throated Green Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Gray Catbird	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Hairy Woodpecker	Brown Thrasher	
Pileated Woodpecker	Swainson's Thrush	