

Trip Report
Lake Lure: Morse Park & Dittmer-Watts Nature Trail
January 30, 2021

It was a cloudy and cool start to the day (actually well below freezing – brrrr!) but thankfully there was no wind. A surprise was the fact that the water level Lake Lure had been drawn down for dam repair so there was little to no water in the marina area. Even the small ponds around the park were virtually dry with icy borders and small groups of stranded (now dead) frozen fish. There were a few birds in the park and a walk produced the following: small flocks of Cedar Waxwings feeding on the holl berries, several Great Blue Herons, a very obliging Swamp Sparrow and most surprising of all, an Eastern Phoebe which flew down onto the icy mud, picked up and swallowed a frozen small fish.

After a brief stop at a nearby lake along Girl Scout Camp Road, which had several beautiful drake Bufflehead, we walked several of the trails at Dittmer-Watts Nature Trail Park. Originally started in 2006 on wooded property adjacent to the municipal golf course, there are now over 3 miles of trails which run through various woodland habitats. Despite the somewhat scruffy pine woodland there were quite a few birds, and with some gentle “pishing” we brought in good numbers of Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse and a beautiful male Pine Warbler.

The trails were quite easy and wide with some slight hills so it made for an easy walk. By the time we finished the first Turkey Vultures were flying around and the best bird of the walk was a Brown Creeper that was feeding inconspicuously in the pines. The snow was falling by the time I got back to my house that afternoon, so our timing was very good!

Simon Thompson

Birds

Canada Goose

Mallard

Bufflehead

Rock Pigeon

Mourning Dove

Killdeer

Great Blue Heron

Turkey Vulture

Red-tailed Hawk

Belted Kingfisher

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Downy Woodpecker

Pileated Woodpecker

Eastern Phoebe

Blue Jay

American Crow

Carolina Chickadee

Tufted Titmouse

White-breasted Nuthatch

Brown-headed Nuthatch
(Heard)

Golden-crowned Kinglet

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Brown Creeper

Winter Wren (Heard)

Carolina Wren

Northern Mockingbird

Eastern Bluebird

American Robin

Cedar Waxwing

House Finch

Purple Finch (Heard)

American Goldfinch

Chipping Sparrow

White-throated Sparrow

Song Sparrow

Swamp Sparrow

Eastern Towhee

Pine Warbler

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Northern Cardinal