

Anastasia State Park Nature Walk Report

February 12, 2008

42 Species of Birds

Sixteen Participants: Teddy, Ned, Jacky, Lee, Fran, Peggy, Gigi, Don, Anita, Betsy, Eleanor, Diane, Edna, Susan and Russ from Ohio, and Jan, a Maine-iac!

What better way to spend a warm Tuesday morning in February than on a beautiful white sand beach with a group of friendly, inquisitive beach walkers, and 42 species of cooperative birds to enjoy. Many in this group were novice birders or backyard birders with lots of good questions. Many had never seen Anastasia State Park before but vowed to return.

All those confusing “white birds” even helped out our leaders by standing side by side for comparison! We had a great egret, a snowy, 3 shades of white ibis, and a wood stork all within close proximity of each other. Good job, birds!

For the more experienced birders we had good spotting scope views of a Sandwich tern, Bonaparte’s gulls, royal and Forster’s terns. A probable surf scoter was spotted beyond the waves. Many northern gannets were diving close to shore. Marsh and sedge wrens answered a tape and came in for a look at us while many clapper rails and a distant sora called.

Land birds included a good look at a pileated woodpecker on a power line post and an eastern phoebe on the line. Hooded mergansers in Salt Run were dazzling in the sunshine.

Thanks to Lee Chellemi for bringing 5 of her church friends. Great people! We hope to schedule a walk over in their neck o’ the woods in the near future. Also, the couple from Ohio were so enthused that a spotting scope may be in their near future. We found out later that Don is good at interpreting scat and tracks. Hopefully he will help us on future trips. And, several of our “regulars” are now planning the walks they will lead this spring. All in all, this was a very good day.

Teddy Shuler, St. Johns Audubon Education Chairperson