

Governors Island

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Monument
New York



A Cedar Waxwing perched on a tree in Nolan Park. This bird prefers wooded areas and is probably just passing through.

September 20, 2009

9:30 am-12:00 pm
72 degrees, sunny, breezy

I returned to Governors Island today after two weeks away. Illness and a family visit kept me away, but I returned fresh and eager to find out if any migrants had arrived in my absence. I knew from my journal of September 20, 2008 that I could see a lot of northern flickers. There were about 50 here that day, centered mostly around the Parade Ground. So I headed there first thing, and immediately found quite a few. I would see many more throughout the day, totaling at least 40, perhaps more, on the Parade Ground, in Fort Jay, Nolan Park and Colonels Row. I expect more to arrive by next week. It is really quite amazing to see all these flickers in one place, and worth the trip to Governors Island just for that. But there was more.

September 20, con't



Double-crested cormorants.
Photo credit naturepic-sonline.com

Last September 20 was not a particularly busy day for migrants, except for the flickers. Some phoebes, a least flycatcher, a redstart and an ovenbird, along with an early arriving white-throated sparrow, were the only migrants I saw that day. Today was much different. Throughout the historic district I saw 9 different species of warbler. None were here in great numbers, but enough were on the island to let me know that migration has begun in earnest. Here is the warbler roll call:

Common yellowthroat	4 female
Northern parula	1 female; 1 male; 1 first year (immature) female
Palm warbler	4
American redstart	2 female; 1 male
Black and white warbler	2 female
Blackpoll warbler	2 female
Black-throated blue warbler	1 female; 1 male
Pine warbler	1 female
Magnolia warbler	1 first year (immature) female

Also passing through were a swamp sparrow, a hermit thrush, two brown thrashers, two winter wrens, two ruby-crowned kinglets, and an eastern wood pewee. An early arriving winter resident, a white-throated sparrow, was also spotted. It gave me a shiver knowing winter is so close!

Roll call of the other resident birds (some summer, some year-round) spotted today:

Canada geese	
Double-crested cormorants	
Great black-backed gulls	
Mourning doves	
American robins	
Gray catbirds	
European starlings	
Cedar waxwings	
Northern cardinals	1 female; 1 male
Brown-headed cowbirds	9 female; 5 male
House sparrows	

**September 26, 2009—
Servicewide Volunteer
Day**

To mark the National Park Service's (NPS) Service wide Volunteer Day, I held an adult birding program in lieu of my regular kids program. Members of the public were invited to help conduct a survey of the birds in the Historic District. Five visiting volunteers arrived ready and eager to count birds, and to discover a bit of nature on Governors Island. The NPS and I thank Amanda, Andrew, Brian, Lori and Pam for their hard work.

At 9:30, before the visitors arrived, I scouted the Historic District to make sure the feathered ones had shown up to be counted. I was glad to see that they had, and in good numbers. The program itself ran from 11:30 to 1:30, a half hour longer than scheduled. Everyone wanted to keep on going! We birded



Yellow-rumped warbler. Photo courtesy of naturepicsonline.com

(Continued from page 1)

Nolan Park, the South Battery area and Colonels Row. In the afternoon, between and after stints roving Castle Williams, I birded the remaining areas of the Historic District with Lori, who stayed on to help complete the job. The count for the day, broken into time slots and areas, follows:

Weather conditions through the day:

Partly cloudy, 62-65 degrees, becoming very breezy around 12:30 pm

9:30-10:30 am (Parade Ground, Glacis, Building 107 area)

Mourning dove	8
Northern flicker (yellow-shafted)	16
Winter wren	1
Golden-crowned kinglet	2
Wood thrush	1
Robin	2
Black-throated green warbler	1 female
Palm warbler	7
Black and white warbler	1 female

1:30 pm (casual observation while roving at Castle Williams)

Palm warbler	1
Black and white warbler	1 unknown

Service wide Volunteer Day Program

11:30-1:30 (Nolan Park, South Battery area, Colonels Row)

Canada Goose	1
Red-tailed hawk	1
Mourning dove	1
Northern flicker (yellow-shafted)	18
Eastern phoebe	8
Brown creeper	1
Golden-crowned kinglets	2
Hermit thrush	3
Robin	41
Catbird	1
Mockingbird	1
Magnolia warbler	1 female
Black-throated blue warbler	1 male
Palm warblers	20
Pine warbler	1 female
Blackpoll warbler	1 female
Black and white warbler	2 (1 female, 1 deceased male**)
Common yellowthroat	1 female
Northern cardinal	5 (2 female, 2 male, 1 unknown)
Song sparrow	2
White-throated sparrow	14
Slate-colored Junco	4
House sparrow	4

2:30-4:00 & 5:00-6:00 pm (Ft. Jay, Soissons's Dock, Buttermilk Channel)

Canada goose	50
Double-crested cormorant	5
Herring gull	3
Great black-backed gull	3
Mourning dove	2
Northern flicker (yellow-shafted)	4
Phoebe	6
Brown creeper	1
Winter wren	2
Hermit thrush	1
Magnolia warbler	2 unknown
Black-throated blue warbler	1 male
Black-throated green warbler	1 female
Yellow-rumped warbler	1 female
Palm warbler	4
Common yellowthroat	2 female
White-throated sparrow	17
Chipping sparrow	3
House sparrow	10
Double-crested cormorant	5
Canada	51
Red-tailed hawk	1 (unknown adult)
Herring gull	3
Great black-backed gull	3
Mourning dove	11
Northern flicker	38
Eastern phoebe	14
Brown creeper	2
Winter wren	3
Golden-crowned kinglet	4
Wood thrush	1
Hermit thrush	4