

I birded Hamilton Veterans' Park with some frequency from April 2002 to December 2003; because of my schedule, most of my birding was during the spring and fall migration periods and winter, with rather little in the breeding season. A "Birder's Guide to Hamilton Veterans' Park" based on my experiences during that period is available on line at Adrian Binns's Delaware Valley Birding site. Details for some of the reports below can be found by 'searching' the archives of the New Jersey Birds list ([jerseybi@princeton.edu](mailto:jerseybi@princeton.edu)); the results of many of my trips to the park are also available at Cornell's ebird.org, under the 'hot spot' Hamilton Veterans' Park.

Rick Wright  
Aimophila Adventures  
251 East Rudasill Road  
Tucson, AZ 85704-6024  
520 544-8643, anzyleduc@hotmail.com

### Birds recorded in Hamilton, New Jersey, Veterans' Park, 2002-2003

Probable and confirmed breeders are marked with an **N**. Note that the northern flickers, the warbling-vireos, the yellow-rumped warblers, and the dark-eyed juncos are listed subspecifically.

Common Loon: rare spring migrant, passing high overhead in May.

Pied-billed Grebe: uncommon spring and fall, high count 2 individuals; no indication of breeding.

Double-crested Cormorant: common non-breeding resident as long as the water remains open; common spring migrant.

Great Cormorant: rare spring migrant in late April.

Great Blue Heron: common non-breeding resident, in late summer up to 9 or 10 birds at a time.

Great Egret: common non-breeding resident; more common than Great Blue Heron except in winter, when it is absent.

Snowy Egret: one occurrence, April 2003.

Cattle Egret: one occurrence, May 2003.

Green Heron: one or two seen most days in April and August; young of the year seen in fall may have been locally produced, but I have no indication of breeding in the park.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: rare migrant.

Mute Swan: one record of two birds overhead, fall 2002.

Tundra Swan: one record of two birds overhead, winter 2003.

Snow Goose: uncommon in winter, single digits often accompanying Canada Goose flocks. Both 'blue' and 'white' birds have been seen.

Greater White-fronted Goose: a single bird wintered in the area and was seen in the park several times in winter 2002-03.

**N** Canada Goose: abundant in fall and winter; one or two pairs breed in the park.

Barnacle Goose: one seen on several occasions in November 2002; no indications of captivity.

Green-winged Teal: common late-summer and spring migrant.

American Black Duck: single digits regular in winter until water freezes.  
N Mallard: wild birds are common in migration and winter, and several pairs breed around the lake, wild birds sometimes breeding with feral Mallards.  
Northern Pintail: one record.  
Northern Shoveler: rare migrant. The relative scarcity of ducks on the lake may be due to the presence of domestic waterfowl, the aggressive nature of the abundant Canada Geese, or the quality of the lake's water.  
Ring-necked Duck: rare migrant.  
Bufflehead: uncommon migrant in spring.  
Common Merganser: common overhead in late winter, but uncommon on the lake itself; high counts less than 20.  
Red-breasted Merganser: one record.  
Ruddy Duck: rare migrant and summer visitor.  
Black Vulture: a few individuals roosted in winter 2002-2003; absent in 2003.  
Turkey Vulture: common year round, but no indication of local nesting.  
Osprey: fairly common migrant.  
Bald Eagle: one record.  
Northern Harrier: fairly common fall migrant, rare in winter.  
Sharp-shinned Hawk: common in fall and spring, numbers varying in winter from 1 per trip to 3 or 4.  
Cooper's Hawk: common in fall and spring, several birds wintering; and at least one pair summers. Breeding was confirmed in the 1990s.  
Broad-winged Hawk: rare spring migrant.  
Red-tailed Hawk: common year round; no nest found, but birds are strongly territorial in the late winter and spring.  
American Kestrel: rare in winter; no indication of local breeding.  
Merlin: rare migrant and winter resident, never more than 1 at a time.  
Peregrine Falcon: rare but regular in winter.  
Semipalmated Plover: rare spring, common fall migrant (the planting of trees on the north shore of the lake resulted in very low shorebird counts in fall 2003).  
N Killdeer: common year round, several pairs bred summer 2002.  
Greater Yellowlegs: rare fall migrant.  
Lesser Yellowlegs: uncommon to rare as a migrant.  
Solitary Sandpiper: very common fall migrant, up to 25 individuals at a time; much less common in spring.  
N Spotted Sandpiper: common spring and fall, two or three pairs breeding.  
Semipalmated Sandpiper: rare fall migrant.  
Least Sandpiper: the commonest shorebird at the lake, up to 60 individuals at a time in spring and in fall.  
Sanderling: one record.  
Pectoral Sandpiper: uncommon fall migrant.  
Wilson's Snipe: uncommon in spring and fall.  
American Woodcock: only one record; apparently does not breed.  
Laughing Gull: very common spring and summer.  
Ring-billed Gull: abundant in winter, high counts 250+; uncommon in summer.  
Herring Gull: common in migration and winter, uncommon in summer.

Iceland Gull: one record.  
 Lesser Black-backed Gull: uncommon in winter; most often seen overhead.  
 Great Black-backed Gull: common in winter, uncommon in summer.  
 Bonaparte's Gull: one record.  
 Forster's Tern: one record.  
 Rock Pigeon: uncommon in the park itself; breeds just north of the park.  
 N Mourning Dove: common all year.  
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo: rare migrant spring and fall; no summer records.  
 Great Horned Owl: two pairs presumed to breed.  
 Common Nighthawk: rare fall migrant. Not present in the summer.  
 Chimney Swift: abundant fall migrant; common overhead in summer, but not known to breed in the park.  
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird: common migrant and presumed breeder.  
 Belted Kingfisher: uncommon all year; no known nest in park.  
 N Red-bellied Woodpecker: the commonest picid.  
 N Downy Woodpecker: common, with a notable decrease in fall 2003.  
 N Hairy Woodpecker: common, at least six pairs breeding; on many trips in fall 2003, more common than Downy Woodpecker.  
 Yellow-shafted Flicker: common in migration and winter, uncommon to rare in summer. No nest found.  
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: uncommon in fall and winter, common migrant in spring.  
 N Eastern Wood-Pewee: common breeder.  
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: rare spring and fall migrant.  
 Least Flycatcher: uncommon spring and fall migrant; no breeders.  
 N Eastern Phoebe: common in spring and fall, at least one breeding pair.  
 N Great Crested Flycatcher: common migrant, uncommon breeder.  
 N Eastern Kingbird: common migrant, bred 2002.  
 Purple Martin: uncommon migrant; does not breed.  
 N Tree Swallow: common migrant and summer visitor; one pair bred 2002 in martin house.  
 N Northern Rough-winged Swallow: common migrant and summer visitor; several pairs breed.  
 Bank Swallow: rare migrant.  
 N Barn Swallow: common migrant and summer resident; at least one pair has bred.  
 N Blue Jay: common in winter and in fall migration; rare breeder.  
 N American Crow: uncommon in winter and migration; bred in 2002.  
 N Fish Crow: common resident, breeding on the islands in the lake.  
 Black-capped Chickadee: one record, fall 2002.  
 N Carolina Chickadee: common resident, apparently diminished in number in 2003.  
 N Tufted Titmouse: common resident, greatly outnumbering Carolina Chickadee.  
 Red-breasted Nuthatch: absent 2002, rare in winter 2003.  
 N White-breasted Nuthatch: uncommon resident, breeding.  
 Brown Creeper: rare to uncommon migrant; rare in winter, no breeding record.  
 N Carolina Wren: common resident.  
 N House Wren: common in summer, very common in migration; several pairs breed.  
 Winter Wren: rare in winter and fall migration. No nesting record.

Marsh Wren: rare fall migrant.  
Golden-crowned Kinglet: common spring and fall migrant; rare in winter.  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: common spring and fall migrant; no winter records.  
N Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: common breeder, about 5 pairs.  
Eastern Bluebird: common migrant, rare in winter; no nest found.  
Veery: common migrant; no summer records.  
Swainson's Thrush: uncommon migrant.  
Hermit Thrush: common migrant, uncommon in winter.  
N Wood Thrush: rare migrant, quite common breeder.  
N American Robin: common breeder, common migrant, irregularly common throughout the winter.  
N Gray Catbird: common breeder, rare migrant. No winter records.  
N Northern Mockingbird: common resident.  
American Pipit: uncommon migrant; no winter records.  
Cedar Waxwing: very common migrant, uncommon to rare in winter; no breeding record.  
N European Starling: abundant in winter and migration; a few pairs breed in the park.  
White-eyed Vireo: rare migrant.  
Blue-headed Vireo: common migrant.  
Yellow-throated Vireo: rare migrant; no summer records.  
Eastern Warbling-Vireo: common migrant, common in summer; no nest found.  
N Red-eyed Vireo: very common migrant, common breeder.  
Blue-winged Warbler: uncommon migrant; no breeding records.  
Tennessee Warbler: rare migrant.  
Orange-crowned Warbler: one record.  
Nashville Warbler: uncommon migrant.  
Northern Parula: common migrant; no summer records.  
N Yellow Warbler: common migrant, rare breeder.  
Chestnut-sided Warbler: common migrant; no summer records.  
Magnolia Warbler: very common migrant.  
Black-throated Blue Warbler: common or uncommon migrant, no summer records.  
Myrtle Warbler: very common migrant, common in winter 2002-03, virtually absent winter 2003.  
Black-throated Green Warbler: common migrant.  
Blackburnian Warbler: common to uncommon migrant.  
Pine Warbler: rare migrant; one wintered 2003-2004.  
Palm Warbler: uncommon fall migrant, rare in spring.  
Bay-breasted Warbler: common migrant spring 2003, otherwise uncommon to rare migrant.  
Blackpoll Warbler: common migrant.  
Black-and-white Warbler: common migrant; no summer records.  
American Redstart: common migrant; uncommon in summer, no nest found.  
N Ovenbird: very common migrant and breeder.  
Northern Waterthrush: rare migrant.  
Kentucky Warbler: one record of a spring bird in appropriate breeding habitat; did not linger.  
Mourning Warbler: rare spring and fall migrant.

N Common Yellowthroat: common migrant and breeder.  
Wilson's Warbler: one record 2002, common migrant spring 2003.  
Canada Warbler: common migrant.  
Scarlet Tanager: common migrant; no breeding record.  
N Northern Cardinal: common permanent resident and breeder.  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: rare migrant; no summer records.  
Blue Grosbeak: one record, an apparently unmated female spending spring and early summer 2002; no breeding record.  
Indigo Bunting: uncommon in summer, presumed breeder.  
N Eastern Towhee: common in spring and fall, rare in winter; still a common breeder, probably thanks to the park's very low deer population.  
N Chipping Sparrow: common migrant and common breeder.  
N Field Sparrow: common breeder, uncommon migrant and winter resident.  
American Tree Sparrow: uncommon in winter.  
Savannah Sparrow: common migrant, uncommon in winter; no summer records.  
Fox Sparrow: uncommon migrant, uncommon late-winter visitor.  
N Song Sparrow: common permanent resident and breeder.  
Lincoln's Sparrow: uncommon fall migrant, uncommon to rare spring migrant.  
Swamp Sparrow: common winter resident; no summer records.  
White-throated Sparrow: abundant winter resident and migrant.  
White-crowned Sparrow: uncommon spring and fall migrant.  
Slate-colored Junco: common winter resident, abundant fall migrant.  
Red-winged Blackbird: uncommon migrant and winter resident; seen in summer, but does not breed in the park.  
Rusty Blackbird: one record.  
N Common Grackle: very common breeder, abundant migrant, often abundant in winter.  
N Brown-headed Cowbird: common breeder, abundant migrant, often common in winter.  
N Orchard Oriole: bred in 2002; not seen at all in 2003.  
Baltimore Oriole: uncommon migrant; no summer records.  
Purple Finch: uncommon to rare fall migrant; rare winter visitor.  
N House Finch: very common resident and breeder.  
N American Goldfinch: common in migration and winter, uncommon breeder.  
N House Sparrow: common resident and breeder.