

Highlights from the EMAS “Anyone Can Birdathon”

Photos by Jay Wherley



Cedar Waxwing

“Finally got to hear a beautiful Wood Thrush call for the first time this year, definitely the highlight of the day! Plus, the Black-and-white Warbler made a grand appearance and perched beautifully for us to see.”

“At one point I had a male yellow-throated warbler and a male blackburnian warbler in view at the same time up at Chestoa Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway. TGIF-less boat traffic on Lake James. I had a peaceful 6 miles of paddling my kayak down the lower end of the N. Fork of the Catawba, across Lake James and up a portion of the Catawba River and return. I didn't break any speed records in the 6+ hour trip but I set a new personal record of 53 species identified. Overall, it was a big day for birding in McDowell County--78 species.”

“A bird that I never dreamed would be on my list today: Black-billed Cuckoo! S/he was at Owen Park near the river -- and flew right in front of me, over the path, and landed eye-level in a tree about 20 ft away. Wow!”

“Today I actually got 2 new yard birds! Yellow warbler and red-winged blackbird. So I was very happy about that.”

“I wasn't sure which day I was going to submit this weekend because we've been doing a backyard bird count pretty much every day since the quarantine started. Then today we did a 12 mi circuit hike in Shining Rock Wilderness to celebrate the reopening of the Pisgah NF trails. We usually carry our binoculars and we had so many wonderful sightings I had to submit! Many were first time sightings for me (life birds!) such as a chestnut-sided warbler clearly sharing his chestnut shoulder with us on the approach to Sam Knob. Then I realized in hindsight that we had already seen two others!! Maybe tomorrow we will get just as lucky and I can submit my husband's list too... because technically there are two of us !”

“Hearing Swainson's Thrushes singing in my yard”

“Saw a least flycatcher building a nest, and had a rose-breasted grosbeak fly into a leafless shrub 10 feet from my face!”

“We laughed at the times the catbird expressed frustration at our horizontal suet feeder with a board covering the top. He'd flutter and grasp it upside down for about 5 seconds & then retreat to a nearby branch to meow loudly!”

“First bird of the day actually seen:
American Woodcock, a lifer!”

“Watching crows chase a raven out of tree canopy in
woods across from my house...lots of caws, croaks and
screams.”

“I set the tough challenge of limiting myself to only
spots within Buncombe County for this year’s big day.
The parkway closure from Craggy Picnic to Mt.
Mitchell made things a bit
harder as I had to drive through Marion to get to the
must-do high elevations, thus cutting other things out of
my itinerary. Still, I enjoyed the day immensely and
look forward to
next year’s event! Highlights for me were singing
Bobolinks and all 6 swallows (including Bank) at
Biltmore, 3 owls (Saw-whet, Barred, and Screech),
seeing Peregrine Falcon and
Bald Eagle at their nests, and experiencing sunrise in
Sandy Mush.”

“The beautiful Louisiana Waterthrush and Worm-eating
Warbler took turns singing on opposite sides of the
trail. We were engulfed by their songs.”



Eastern Screech Owl