

Field Notes and Bird Sightings

Refuge Volunteer and bird identification expert, Don Morrow often leads birding tours at the Refuge. Call (850) 925-6121 for more information. Here is Don's most recent July 3 Refuge report:

It's the dead of summer. A great time of the year to get up early and head out birding. Today, I logged 63 species at St. Marks while doing a shorebird survey. Most of the resident species have already fledged and we're getting a few returning migrants or post-breeding dispersals. Some highlights of my morning were:

Tower Pond (worth the short buggy hike to get there)

- Reddish Egret
- Black-necked Stilt
- Black-bellied Plover
- Wilson's Plover
- Semipalmated Plover
- Greater Yellowlegs
- Willet
- Lesser Yellowlegs
- Whimbrel
- Marbled Godwit
- Stilt Sandpiper (seen by Matt Johnstone)
- Semipalmated Sandpiper
- Short-billed Dowitcher
- Forster's Tern
- Black Skimmer

Mud flat across from turnoff for Lighthouse boat ramp

- Roseate Spoonbill
- American Oystercatcher
- Black-bellied Plover

- Wilson's Plover
- Semipalmated Plover
- Willet
- Ruddy Turnstone
- Royal Tern
- Least Tern

I'm still waiting for the Pensacola Flamingos to arrive and watching for Black Terns to come through. Purple Gallinule are common this year and are being followed by black, fuzzy chicks. It's hot out there, but don't let that deter you. Go down to the refuge and celebrate your freedom to bird.

Good Birding, Don Morrow