

Fw: Reifel Bird Sanctuary and Richmond W. Dyke (April 6) trip report with set 1 photos
Inbox

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Barbara Waldern

6:47 PM (4
hours ago)

to me

The day was dry with little sun, but a little cool. The two of us persevered and got to the Reifel Bird Sanctuary on Westham Island in Delta by around 10 a.m. Right away we noticed four Sandhill Cranes! Going there in April instead of March had paid off, in that we visited in time for their return. After grooming itself, one appeared to begin a morning yoga routine, standing in the crane position, of course, on one leg in the water. The others were poking around the marsh grass. We encountered the those three again, yet on the path among the humans, surprising because they are generally known to be shy creatures. Many mallards and blackbirds were waiting along the path for handouts. The mallards looked very comical either running up to us in their wobbly way or flying to a slide landing at our feet. Wood ducks, pintails, wigeons and other fowl paced around or swam nearby. Chickadees and sparrows were hedging their bets for some kindness or spillage above in the branches. The song sparrows and red-winged blackbirds were singing beautifully, while the marsh wrens were scolding us.

We completed the outer loop, following the dyke before cutting back towards the center of the property and returning to the entry point. It was time to end Part 1 and take up Part 2 of the day's trip. We got to Steveston village in Richmond by around 1:00. Wanting to have hot drinks, we took a table at the Steveston Bakery Cafe on a short break.

We found preparations for the Richmond Cherry Festival under way at Steveston Beach. It is happening tomorrow, Sunday. Glad we picked the Saturday!

It being a little cloudy and breezy, the West Dyke Trail was not very busy except for a few dedicated dog-walkers. Despite that kind of weather, several slider turtles were trying to sun themselves on platforms in a pond. We saw one little cutie vainly try to climb onto a platform, only to fall backward into the water. Quite a few great blue herons were foraging in the trenches and marsh ponds. Above, a few hawks circled, perhaps one golden eagle, too.

Alas, there was no sign of the snow geese. Had they already taken off for Siberia, or had they delayed their departure due to the colder-than-usual March weather?

We went as far as Blundell Rd., beside the golf course, before we turned around. It had been a relaxing and rejuvenating experience.