

The Cleveland

BIRD CALENDAR

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and The Kirtland Bird Club

The Cleveland Bird Calendar was founded in 1905 by Francis H. Herrick of The Western Reserve University. The purposes of the publication are to provide information on the movements of birds through the Cleveland region, to monitor populations densities of resident birds and to help in the establishment of patterns of vagrancy for rarely encountered species of the region.

The Cleveland Region consists of a seven county area including Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage and Summit counties.

The Cleveland Bird Calendar is published quarterly by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and The Kirtland Bird Club.

Due dates for field records from contributors are as follows:

- 15 March for the Winter season
- 15 June for the spring season
- 15 September for the summer season
- 15 December for the fall season

Cover design: **Bonaparte's Gull** by Thomas Kellerman, 1989.

June, July, August 1989

Volume 85 Number 3

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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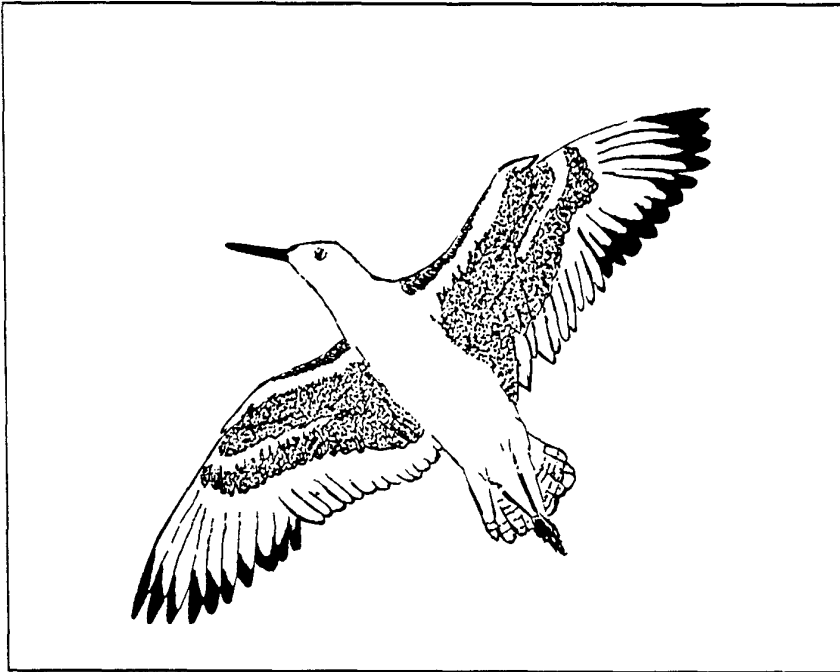
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The Weather Summer 1989

by William Klamm

June - Temperatures averaged 0.7 degrees warmer than normal at 68.3. The extremes reached a high of 92 on the 25th and a low of 47 on the 11th. Lake Erie water temperatures rose from 60 degrees on the first to 65 on the 30th. Sunshine prevailed 46% of the time. Rain fell on 15 days and totaled 5.22 inches, which was 1.73 inches above normal.

July- Temperatures averaged 73.4 degrees, again warmer than normal by 1.8. A high of 96 was reached on the 10th and the low for the month was 52 on the first. Lake Erie temperatures slowly rose to 75

degrees by the 31st. Sunshine improved to 56% of the time. Precipitation was scattered on ten days that totaled 3.02 inches, .35 below normal.

August- Temperatures averaged 71 degrees which was .06 degrees higher than normal. Extremes were a high of 91 on the 5th and lows of 53 on the 8th and 9th. Lake Erie temperatures eased up to 77 degrees on the 9th and remained there until the 20th when they dipped to 75. By the end of the month they further declined to 73. Sunshine increased to 60% of the time. Ten days registered precipitation and totaled 1.09 inches, 2.29 below normal.

Reflections:

Thirty Years Ago: King Rails raised three young in the Route 532 Swamp in Cuyahoga Falls (DeSante, Wiley). American Coots nested in Akron for the first time (DeSante). Eastern Bluebirds were improved in the Elyria area (Johnson). A pair of Blue Grosbeaks summered in Painesville (Steckle).

Twenty Years Ago: Red Crossbills were thought to have nested in the Rocky River Reservation (Stasko). A female Nashville Warbler was seen feeding a Brown-headed Cowbird in Stebbins Gulch on 24 June (Flanigan). A male Ruddy Duck was observed at Corning Lake on 6 July (Hocevar). Sedge Wrens were reported from Lorain County on 28 July and 11 August (Johnson). A nice flock of 839 Common Nighthawks passed over Lakewood on 27 August (Klamm).

Ten Years Ago: Ovenbirds were noted as being totally absent from Bedford, Brecksville, and North Chagrin Reservations. An immature Iceland Gull was totally out of place on 2 July at Headlands Beach State Park (LePage). A Common Barn Owl was observed in broad daylight near the Lorain County Airport on 28 July (Pogacnik). There were four late August sightings of Golden-winged Warblers.

**Comment on the
season**

by Larry Rosche

This summer contributors reported 221 species, of which, 139 were thought to be nesting or at least attempting to nest. The relic populations of northerly species seem to be holding on to their precarious existence in the hemlock dominated areas of the region. Carol Tveekrem completed the twelfth Greater Akron Summer Bird Count (see FIELD NOTES). The first Cleveland Area Breeding Bird Survey was conducted and compiled by Rob Harlan. Hopefully this endeavor will continue to receive the enthusiastic support that it did this year. Long term studies are the best measuring devices of avifauna occurrence in the region. Mr. Harlan is to be congratulated on his initiative and hard work.

While I am always impressed by the numbers and varieties of our breeding birds it was this summer's oddities that overwhelmed me. An almost unbelievable number of out of season birds were verified either by photographs or multiple observations by regular contributors. A territorial Fox Sparrow in Akron! Who would have ever believed it? Not me. This one I had to see, and I did. I'll let you read about the others but don't be surprised if you find yourself asking "is this publication about the summer birds of Greater Cleveland, Ohio"? Eyebrows are certain to be raised over the reports of fifteen species of waterfowl, eleven of hawks and nine of gulls. By the middle of July attention usually swings from nesting birds to migrating shorebirds. This summer the shorebird passage was difficult to assess along Lake Erie. When no habitat exists along the lake it is a matter of being in the right place at the right time for migrants as they fly along the lake shore. Passerines were slow in their arrival but moving in fair numbers during the last week of August.

On a less positive note, the devastating gash in the face of Geauga County created by the extension of State Route 422 further fragments an already very fragmented local woodland. Studies have shown that several of our common species need large woodlands to survive. Among those that easily come to mind are Acadian Flycatcher and Hooded Warbler. They will certainly be affected by the ongoing development of our mature forests. Urban sprawl is creeping ever farther away from Cleveland. Indeed, it is now fairly difficult to find a sizeable group of Bobolinks or Eastern Meadowlarks without getting into the outer reaches of the region.

SUMMER 1989

Pied-billed Grebes were not reported as having been successful in their breeding attempts locally. This seemed odd because they had such a good year in 1988. Obviously the wet weather of May and June was detrimental to their nesting efforts. Double-crested Cormorants were daily occurrences along Lake Erie and at Lake Rockwell. They were widely distributed elsewhere in the region and are no longer rare in the summer.

Least Bitterns remained at Barberton throughout the period (Hannikman, Rosche, Tisdale). Two were noted at Spencer Wildlife

Area on 8 June (Kraps) and two were at the Ira Road Beaver Pond in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area (hereafter CVNRA) 21 July (Kopko). Great Blue Herons are doing well and were common in all seven reporting counties. A nest in a live Norway Spruce at Lake Rockwell provided the first positive breeding record for the location. A nice flock of 13 Great Egrets was at Barberton on 31 Aug. (Wert).

Local Canada Geese, Wood Ducks and Mallards produced many young. Blue-winged Teal were escorting ducklings at the Barberton Holding Basin by mid-June (Rosche, Wert). Once again a hen Green-winged Teal was an irregular visitor to the Barberton Holding Basin. Summer Lesser Scaup and

Red-breasted Mergansers were found in their usual small numbers in the counties that border on Lake Erie. Hooded Merganser reports were very good this year. Rosche found a hen and nine small young swimming in the Cuyahoga River in Northampton Township on 3 July. This was probably a first breeding record for Summit County. An immature was seen intermittently on Nesmith Lake in Akron from 5 July (Pierce, Rosche). Another was an irregular visitor to Lake Rockwell in August. A young Hooded Merganser was in association with Mallards on the Rocky River from 23 Aug. It fed when the Mallards fed and lounged when they lounged. Crayfish were among some of the

food items of this individual (Klamm). Up to six Ruddy Ducks spent the majority of June and July in Barberton. Another six were at Mogadore Reservoir at the same time.

Turkey Vultures fledged young at the Gorge Metropark in Cuyahoga Falls (Stover). This has been a reliable location for the past several years. No nesting Turkey Vultures have been reported anywhere else in the region during the eighties. Ospreys were moving in late August with a high of three at Lake Rockwell on the 29th (Lanham). Dick Hoffman encountered an early Northern Harrier at Gordon Park on 22 Aug. Sharp-shinned Hawks are extremely rare nesters in the region. This summer, birds were seen at their 1988 nesting spot at Tinker's Creek State Nature Preserve, in the CVNRA, at Mogadore Reservoir, in Rocky River and near Sand Run Metropark in Akron. This certainly indicates probable nesting. Cooper's Hawks are doing quite well locally. A pair in immature plumage hatched five young (one fell from the tree and died) in a maple tree in Akron. An interesting thing about this pair was that when Pierce and Rosche observed the nest they found three of the young nearly fully grown and one very tiny, down-covered chick. It seemed odd that immature birds would know how to spread out egg-laying over a period of time so as to ensure fledging for at least a few of the young. Red-shouldered Hawks were uncommon but widespread, with reports from all seven counties. Broad-winged Hawks were uncommonly distributed with reports from all counties except Lorain. Migrants were reported in Peninsula 24 Aug. (Kopka) and at Streetsboro on 30 Aug. American

Ospreys were moving in late August

Kestrels were described as declining in Portage County. The birds that frequent the various freeways in Cleveland were noticeably absent this summer. The best area for this bird is in Lorain and Medina Counties. Observers should note any status change.

No broods of Ring-necked Pheasants were reported. It seems they are decreasing at an alarming rate. Ruffed Grouse are doing well in the Chagrin and Grand River areas. A gobbling Wild Turkey was near Garrettsville on 3 June (Rosche, Tisdale). Two Northern Bobwhites, calling enthusiastically, at the old Strongsville Airport on 3 July surprised Bob Furst and Rosche. They were fairly common in eastern Portage County. Few reports of rails were received. Both Virginia Rails and Soras raised young at Barberton. Up to eight Soras could be seen there regularly in August (Kopka, Vanderpoel). Common Moorhens had nesting success in Barberton and Cuyahoga Falls (m.obs.). It was questioned why no reports of this species come from counties other than Summit. American Coots were observed with three young at Spencer Wildlife Area in June (Krapf, m.obs.). This was a good record for Medina County.

Shorebirds were found lingering at Gordon Park in early June and generally scarce along Lake Erie due to no habitat. Inland, fair numbers of migrants were found in Portage County section of Walborn Reservoir (hereafter Walborn), Baldwin Lake, and the Barberton Holding Basin (see table). The beach at Headlands BSP recorded a few birds but these individuals usually did not remain for any period of time.

The first Black-bellied Plover reported was at Barberton on 6 Aug. (Kopka). Hannikman first reported two Lesser Golden-Plovers at Headlands BSP on 12 Aug. Six Semipalmated Plovers were dawdling at Gordon Park on 1 June (Harlan, Klamm). Two were still there on 4 June (Hoffman). LePage spotted the first returnee at Headlands on 5 Aug. Willets were reported from E. 55th St. on 9, 14, 15 June (LePage), in Lorain 3 July (Rosche) and 29 - 31 Aug. at Walborn (Lane, Rosche, m.obs.). Upland Sandpipers in Fairport Harbor had nesting disturbed by untimely mowing. No word was received on the success of the Hopkins International Airport birds. This pair could easily be viewed from United Airlines Concourse on 15 June (Rosche). The only Whimbrel was at Burke Airport on 31 Aug (LePage). Ruddy Turnstones were uncommon while Sanderlings were common along Lake Erie from the last third of July. They were rarities inland, with two adults at Barberton on 27 July (Nauer, Rosche) and two at Walborn on 18 Aug. (Lane). Peeps were fairly common and widespread. Unusual was a Least Sandpiper that spent the entire summer in Barberton. Western Sandpipers were found

COMMON SHOREBIRD SURVEY SUMMER 1989

LOCATION DATE	JULY	BHB 13	BL 16	BHB 16	BHB 21	BHB 27	AUGUST	BHB 8	BHB 11	BHB 18	WBR 20	BHB 20	BHB 27	WBR. 29
SEMIPALM PLOVER					3			1	2	6	3	1	4	13
KILLDEER	25	40	25	25	48		154	175	60	100+	15	60	200	
GR. YELLOWLEGS		1	1	1	-		1	-	-	40	1	2		
LS. YELLOWLEGS	8	6	10	20	30		30	24	20	50+	100	35	50	
SOLITARY SANDP.		2	1	1	2		5	2	1	3	-	2	-	
SPOTTED SANDP.	20	1	6	10	4		3	1	3	2	-	2	1	
SEMIPALM SANDP.		1		5	5	10	1	-	3	50+	10	20	26	
WESTERN SANDP.								-	-	3	-	1	-	
LEAST SANDP.	30	15	25	25	35		8	6	45	50+	2	10	6	
PECTORAL SANDP.			3	3	3		3	10	12	50+	208	15	40	
STILT SANDP.			1	1	2		3	3		3	-	9	-	
SB. DOWITCHER	3		4	4	5		2	1	15	40+	6	6	-	

BL = BALDWIN LAKE; BHB = BARBERTON HOLDING BASIN; WBR = WALBORN RESERVOIR

at Walborn on 13 Aug. (Lane) and again 27,29,31 (m.obs.). One was studied at Barberton on 27 Aug. (Rosche, Vanderpoel). Vanderpoel reported a flock of ten White-rumped Sandpipers in Barberton on 21 Aug. The first Baird's Sandpipers of the year were located by LePage at Headlands BSP and by Pierce at Walborn on 30 Aug. A flock of 208 Pectoral Sandpipers at Barberton on 21 Aug. was fairly sizeable (Vanderpoel). Four Dunlins were still at Gordon Park on 1 June (Harlan, Klamm). Stilt Sandpipers in breeding plumage were at the Barberton Holding Basin from 6 Aug. Juveniles arrived in late August and the flock grew to 15. Two were reported from Walborn on 20 Aug. (Lane). Short-billed Dowitchers were common in Barberton and at Walborn but only one was reported from Cleveland on 10 Aug. (Klamm). A Common Snipe at Streetsboro Bog on 18 July raised questions about the possibility of local breeding. American Woodcock young were

flushed in Firestone Metropark on 2 July. The only other report came from Bedford Reservation on 27 Aug. (Knight). Wilson's Phalaropes were found in Barberton on 11 Aug. (Kopka, Rosche) and at E. 55th St. on 19 Aug. (LePage).

This summer afforded observers excellent opportunities to study the immature plumages of many species of gull (see Noteworthy Records). It is hoped that all took advantage of this unique situation. Bonaparte's Gulls numbered into the hundreds at Headlands BSP, with most being in first-summer plumage. Both Ring-billed and Herring Gulls were common throughout the summer. Ring-billed Gulls have never been found nesting locally but a very young bird at Headlands BSP in early July raised the question. Herring Gulls are breeding locally and contributors are encouraged to turn any data on nest sites. It was only a few years ago that they were first found to be nesting in the region. The usual small

numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls were found at Headlands BSP and Lorain.

Caspian Terns were more noticeable inland than usual. Up to 25 adults and young were frequenting Barberton by late July (Kopka, Vanderpoel). Other smaller groups were seen at West Branch SP, Lake Rockwell, and the Akron Lakes. Along Lake Erie this species was below average with a high of only 15 at Headlands on 28 July (Fjeldstad). Common Tern numbers were impressive in Lorain with a high of 125 on 26 Aug. (Klamm). The first dispersed migrants noted at Headlands BSP were on 30 June (Hoffman). They were scattered reports of singles on inland lakes. Forster's Terns caused a stir by their continual presence through the period in Lorain. LePage conjectured that they no longer had a resting place in Huron, Ohio and therefore simply moved to the first readily

available area. Regardless, it was nice to see them so regularly in the same location. There were over 50 present by late June. As migrants and young joined the flock it grew to 150 by 17 Aug. (Klamm). Black Terns were scarce throughout the region, with only a few noted along Lake Erie and even fewer inland.

Black-billed Cuckoos received mention from only a handful of contributors. They reported from near Garrettsville on 3 June (Rosche, Tisdale), the CVNRA on 10 June (Harlan), at Gordon Park on 9 July (Klamm), and in Twin Lakes on 11 and 12 July (Rosche). Yellow-billed Cuckoos were equally scarce. Reports were from the CVNRA (m.obs.), Lorain County, Spencer Wildlife Area (Krapf), and South Chagrin Reservation (m.obs.). These certainly pertained to birds attempting to breed, in that they were all reported between mid-June and early July. Migrant cuckoos were found at Spencer Lake Wildlife Area and Headlands BSP in August. The common owl species seemed to be faring well. Barred Owls were reported widely and from each county in the region. Common Nighthawks improved this year and migration was widely distributed the last half of August. No great flocks were reported as was the case last year but Kiwi mentioned that there were large numbers in Shaker Heights on 27-28 Aug. A Whip-poor-will was reported at the Warrensville Farms on 3 June (Knight) and four were tallied on the the Greater Akron Summer Bird Count (Tveekrem). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were moving noticeably from mid-August.

Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported from all seven counties.

Juveniles noted at Bratenahl and Headlands BSP (Hoffman). Unfortunately, no young were noted at Shaker Lakes by Fazio for the first time in twelve years. Resident woodpeckers were all reported in good numbers, particularly Red-bellied and Pileated. Encouraging reports of Hairy Woodpecker were from Portage County and the CVNRA (mobs). A pair of Pileated Woodpecker at Shaker Lakes were the most urbanized of this species (Fazio). Flycatchers were doing fairly well in the region. One of the best locations was Spencer Lake Wildlife Area where seven species were reported. One species of flycatcher that always elicits comments is the Olive-sided. This summer a very late bird was in Bedford Reservation on 9 June (Knight). Early fall arrivals were found at Shaker Lakes on 7 Aug. and two on the 22 Aug. (Fazio). Bedford Reservation also had an early returnee on 27 Aug. (Knight). Eastern Wood-Pewees were very common in the region. The first Yellow-bellied Flycatcher to be reported was at Headlands BSP on 18 Aug. (Rosche). The only other report was from Firestone Metropark on 27 Aug. (Pierce). Acadian Flycatchers were well reported from the older forests.

Purple Martins staged a surprising build-up in Lorain ...

Alder Flycatchers continue their uncommon occurrence. A report from Bedford Reservation on 25 June was from a new location (Elder). Willow Flycatchers were very common in most of the region. Territorial Least Flycatchers were reported in Barberton, the CVNRA, Headlands BSP, Spencer Wildlife Area, and Streetsboro Bog. Eastern Phoebes were thought to be as usual. Apparently it was a good year for both Great-crested Flycatchers and Eastern Kingbirds. Many observations indicated that Eastern Kingbirds were prolific along the shore of Lake Erie.

Purple Martins staged a surprising build-up in Lorain during the last third of August. A high tally of 606 was made on 17 Aug. (Klamm). They were nesting fairly commonly in the rural sectors where houses are maintained properly. Fazio felt that they were increasing in the Shaker Lakes area. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were persistent at Lake Rockwell. Their first nesting was washed out by high water. They diligently laid a second clutch but again were flooded out. This proved too much for them and they departed much earlier than usual. Elsewhere in the region it was mostly the same sad story. On the other hand, Bank Swallows seemed to be in high numbers and nesting successfully throughout the region, except for southern Summit County. The first young were noted in Shalersville on 12 July. The majority departed on time (mid-August) with a few stagglers still remaining in Barberton at the periods end. Young Cliff Swallows were at West Branch State Park on 11 July. A single bird was reported on several June dates in Lorain County (LePage). Others were found in small numbers along

Lake Erie from 13 August (Hannikman, Fjeldstad).

Red-breasted Nuthatches summered at Lake Rockwell for the first time in two years (Rosche). White-breasted Nuthatch young were first seen in Kent on 10 June. Brown Creepers were found in Brecksville Reservation, Little Mountain, and North Chagrin Reservation. Carolina Wrens were felt to be doing well and House Wrens likewise. Marsh Wrens were locally common but once again no reports of nesting Sedge Wrens were received. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were said to be doing well in the CVNRA (Harlan). Eastern Bluebirds were fairly common in all counties except Cuyahoga. The first fledglings reported were at Lake Rockwell on 20 June. Veeries summered well in the region as far south as Wadsworth (Kopka). Migrants were fairly conspicuous along Lake Erie the last third of August. An early Gray-cheeked Thrush had returned to Shaker Lakes by 30 Aug. (Fazio). Two Swainson's Thrushes were tardy in the Bedford Reservation on 9 June (Knight). Returning migrants were becoming noticeable all through the region by late August. Few reports of Wood Thrushes were received but nobody expressed concern over them. Northern Mockingbirds were again successful at Gordon Park with fledglings noted on 16 July (Klamm). Brown Thrashers were doing fairly well in preferred locales. A bird at Donald Gray Gardens on 23 July seemed out of place (LePage). White-eyed Vireos were uncommon but locally easy to find at Barberton, CVNRA, and Lake Rockwell. A singing bird near Grafton on 30 June was from a

previously unreported site in Lorain County. Solitary Vireos were noted at traditional breeding areas in Geauga and Lake Counties as well as the CVNRA and Hinckley Reservation. Birds at Lake Rockwell and a family group at South Chagrin Reservation on 27 Aug. (Hoffman) were new editions to known nesting areas. A singing bird in Twin Lakes from 3 July through 16 Aug. was certainly out of habitat (Rosche). Yellow-throated Vireos were fairly common and two at Spencer Wildlife Area were as expected from that sector of Medina County (Krapf). Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos were very common and widespread. The latter being much more so. It seemed to several observers that the summer purpose of the Red-eyed Vireo was to further expand the population of Brown-headed Cowbirds.

Even in summer, warblers still receive the most attention of the contributors. Whether as late migrants, breeders or early returnees this family simply is preferred to the others. It is too great a task to convey all of the data received. This season had reports of 24 species and one hybrid in June and July! Throw in the fall migrants and it adds to an incredible 32 species. Of these, nineteen or so were on territory. It is possible that number 20 (Black-and-White Warbler) nests but so far no young have been found. As usual small numbers of Blackpoll Warblers lingered well into June. The first good southward movement began on 23 August. Warbler reports from Shaker Lakes often doubled combined reports from all other areas. The 27th and 30th of August must have been remarkable at that location.

A Northern Parula was a good find

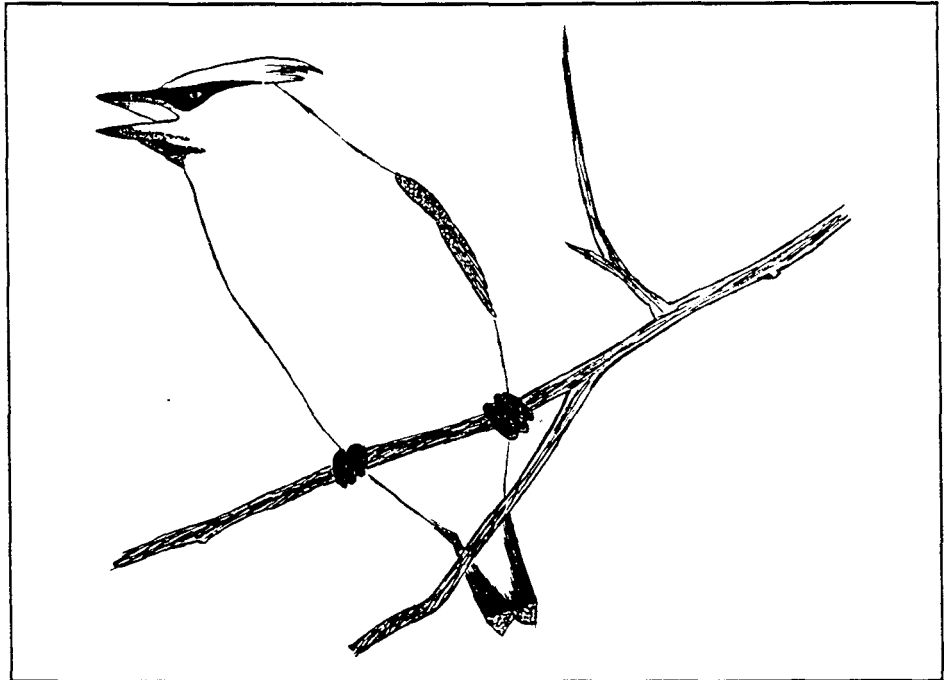
at Headlands BSP on 28 Aug. (Fjeldstad). Chestnut-sided Warblers remain uncommon nesters with reports from five locations including three at the American Society of Metals property in Geauga County (Fondrk). Fall migrants were fairly common from mid-August with a high of 27 at Shaker Lakes on 27 Aug. (Fazio). A defensive Magnolia Warbler was in Chardon on 24 June (Fondrk). Ninety-five migrants were reported from Shaker Lakes on 27 Aug (Fazio). Eighty Cape May Warblers were reported from Shaker Lakes on 30 Aug. The first Black-throated Blue Warbler was located at the Holden Arboretum

..Pine Warblers nesting at Brecksville Reservation.

on 22 Aug. (Elder). Four were at Headlands BSP on 26 Aug. The earliest Yellow-rumped Warblers were four at Shaker Lakes on 22 Aug. (Fazio). Fifteen Black-throated Green Warblers at Little Mountain on 6 July was an impressive total (Fondrk, Harlan, Pierce). A tardy Blackburnian Warbler was at Bedford Reservation on 9 June (Knight). Harlan found Pine Warblers nesting at Brecksville Reservation. This was probably a first for Cuyahoga County. At least three birds remained on territory at Lake Rockwell. A migrant was noted 23,27 Aug. at Shaker Lakes (Kiwi, Peskin). A Prairie Warbler at the American Society of Metals property on 23 June was a first for the location. Kopka had four at the usual Peninsula location in

the CVNRA on 24 June. The first Bay-breasted Warbler returnee was on 19 Aug. at Shaker Lakes (Fazio). Late Blackpoll Warblers were reported on 3 June at Headlands BSP (Hoffman), on 4 June at Shaker Lakes (4) (Fazio) and lastly on 23 June, again at Headlands BSP (Rosche). A Black-and-White Warbler at Lake Isaac on 18 July was an interesting find (Harlan). Six American Redstarts at Thompson Ledges on 15 June were representative of this species distribution throughout the region (Fjeldstad). Prothonotary Warblers were reported only from the Jaite Area of CVNRA (m.obs), Brecksville Reservation (Harlan) and Bedford Reservaton (Elder). Breeding Ovenbirds fared well with a high of 11 at the Mill Stream Run Reservation on 6 June (Harlan). The only summer report of Northern Waterthrush was along Eagle Creek near Nelson on 12 July (Rosche). Louisiana Waterthrushes were thought to have been flooded out in most cases. Kentucky Warbler was a first summer record for North Chagrin Reservation on 17 June (Kellerman). A late Mourning Warbler was in Lake View Cemetery on 1 June (Hoffman). The first fall migrants were at Sims Park (LePage) and three at Headlands BSP (Hoffman) on 23 Aug. Twenty-seven Wilson's Warblers were tallied at Shaker Lakes on 30 Aug. (Fazio). Probable territorial Canada Warblers were in Bedford, Brecksville, and North Chagrin Reservations. An adult carrying food was seen in Stebbins Gulch on 6 July (Fondrk, Harlan, Pierce). The only Yellow-breasted Chats were in Shalersville on 4 June and two on the Greater Akron Summer Bird Count.

Scarlet Tanagers were common nesters as were Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Indigo Buntings were



Cedar Waxwing by Victor Fazio III

abundant and still singing into August. Rufous-sided Towhees were as numerous as Rosche could ever remember in Portage County. Sparrows were not the most often reported species but breeders apparently managed quite well. Fourteen Vesper Sparrows were along Law Road in Lorain County on 20 June. They were rare to uncommon in the eastern part of the region. Savannah Sparrows were very common in the rural sectors. They were literally under foot in the large strawberry farms near Mogadore. These birds had an apparent penchant for sweets. Grasshopper Sparrows were very scarce and were reported only from Biggs Road in Lorain County (Krops), Strongsville (Harlan, Kopka), and near Garrettsville. A White-throated Sparrow was late at Headlands BSP on 3 June (Hannikman, Hoffman). A White-crowned Sparrow was an outstanding find at Donald Gray Gardens on 1 June (Harlan). Two made an early appearance at Headlands

SBP on 13 Aug.(Fjeldstad).

Summering Dark-eyed Juncos were located in traditional Chagrin River Valley locations. Up to ten were in Stebbins Gulch and six at Little Mountain on 6 July (Fondrk, Harlan, Pierce). Reports from Bainbridge, Hunting Valley, Moreland Hills, North Chagrin Reservation, and several Geauga County locales were encouraging.

Bobolinks were fairly common throughout the region in June. If they survived early hay-making efforts then they had good breeding year. Fazio commented that fall Bobolink migration was normal. The most noticeable flock in Portage County was an unimpressive 50 at Walborn on 30 August. Ten years ago would have produced flocks of 200 or more. Blackbirds were gathering by the tens of thousands at Mentor Marsh and Barberton by the middle of August. Brown-headed Cowbirds were being fed by a variety of host species including a Pine Warbler in Brecksville Reservation (Harlan).

Eastern Meadowlarks are still quite numerous in the rural sectors of Lorain and Medina County, especially when compared to the rest of the region.

Orchard Orioles were reported widely with a report from Lake Isaac on 3 June being from a new summer location (LePage). Northern Orioles elicited few comments and therefore were considered to be doing well. Purple Finches were easy to find in the Twin Lakes area and along Major Road in the CVNRA. This species is still fairly common from the Chagrin River eastward.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

American Bittern - One to two were seen repeatedly through 22 July at the Barberton Holding Basin (Hannikman, Rosche). No other reports were received on this statewide declining species.

Snowy Egret - An adult of this locally rare species stopped briefly at Gordon Park on 1 June (Hoffman).

Little Blue Heron - Two reports were received. An adult flew over Gordon Park on 13 August (Hannikman, Rosche) and an immature was at Walborn Reservoir on 20 August (Lane).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron - Two adults were seen at South Chagrin Reservation at least through 12 August (Harlan, m.obs.).

Northern Pintail - A hen was studied at Barberton on 21 July for

the second July report ever turned into *The Cleveland Bird Calendar* (Rosche).

Redhead - A pair remained at Barberton into June with the male last seen 19 June (Wert, m.obs.).

Ring-necked Duck - A pair was located on LaDue Reservoir 11 June (Fondrk). Another pair was observed on 8-9 July and a single through 31 August at North Chagrin Reservation (Kellerman).

Greater Scaup - The first record in the summer files for *The Cleveland Bird Calendar* was of a female on Oberlin Reservoir 30 June (Rosche). It was seen and photographed by Gustafson and Peterjohn on 16 July at the same location.

Osprey - A bird was daily at Lake Rockwell throughout the period. While there are many summer records for this species, this is the first, in recent history, for a bird to be residing at the same location. (Rosche, m.obs.)

Bald Eagle - An immature summered at Lake Rockwell and an adult was there throughout August (Rosche, Lanham, Tisdale). An immature was seen at Wildwood Lakefront State Park throughout the summer (m.obs.) and probably the same individual was at Gordon Park in 16 August (Hoffman).

Peregrine Falcon - Charles Klaus and others kept tabs on the pair that frequented the Terminal Tower Building. Apparently the birds roosted on a ledge of the Higbee Company above Public Square. Personal communication with Harvey Webster of The Cleveland Museum of Natural History confirmed that no nesting had taken place. The male was

said to be an adult and the female an immature. The heads of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and a Red-headed Woodpecker were noted on the ledge where the birds roosted. Comments on the apparent decline in the numbers of Rock Doves in the area were also received from Mr. Klaus. This constituted the first summering record for this species in the history of *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*, although there have been two July reports.

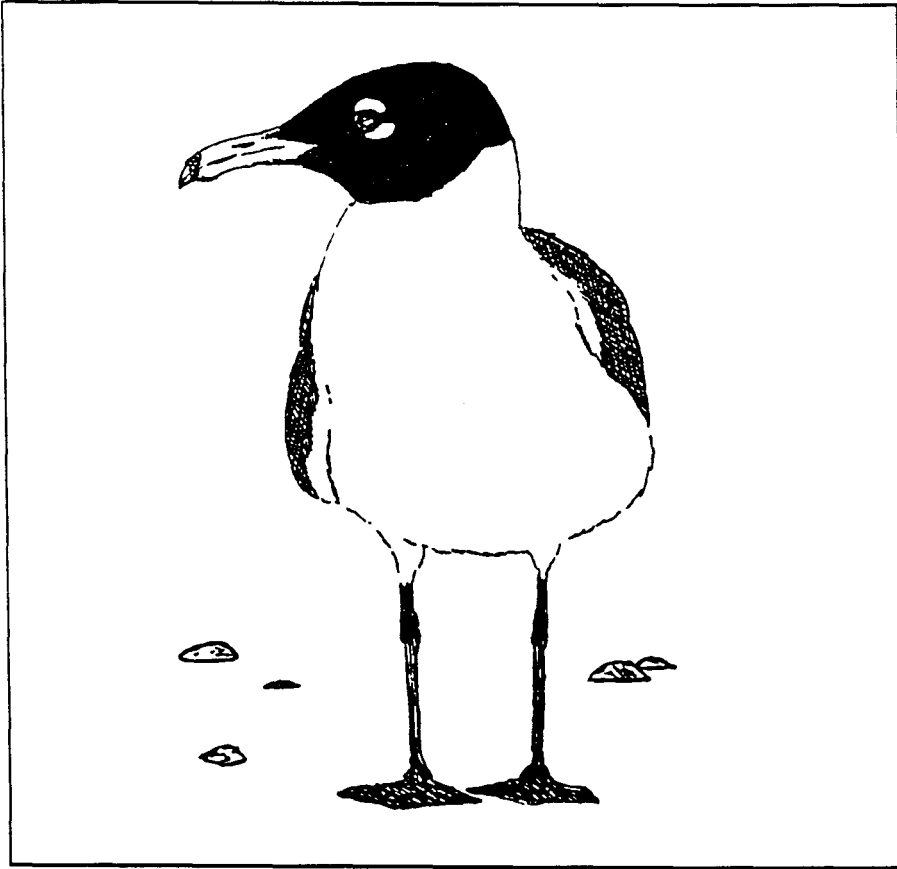
Buff-breasted Sandpiper - An bird in adult plumage was at Walborn Reservoir from 18 August through 30 August (Lane, m.obs.).

Red-necked Phalarope - Two were at Walborn Reservoir on 21 August (Lane).

Laughing Gull - An adult was found in Lorain 18 June by Hugh McGuinness and verified by Hannikman. A bird at Headlands BSP on 29 June was described as being in second-summer plumage (Hoffman). A first-summer plumaged bird was in Lorain on 16 July (Gustafson, Peterjohn). A juvenile, found there later on the same day, was felt to be early (Hoffman).

Little Gull - Up to three were observed at Headlands BSP (all in first-summer or molting into second-winter plumage) through 22 July (Hannikman, m.obs.). Another first-summer plumaged bird was in Lorain through 27 July (Klamm, LePage, m.obs.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull - The first summer report of this species was at E. 55th St. on 9 Aug. (LePage). Because this species is similar in habits to the Herring Gull, it stands to reason that they will soon be encountered in any month of the year.



Laughing Gull by Victor Fozio

Black-legged Kittiwake - Our first summer record was on 9 and 19 June in Lorain (Klamm). This bird afforded the observers the unique opportunity to make comparisons with first-summer plumage Little and Sabine's Gulls.

Sabine's Gull - The now famous bird was in Lorain, off and on, throughout the period (m.obs.). It was seen at Headlands BSP on 22 July by Hannikman.

Winter Wren - This extremely rare nester was found in five locations. Two were regular at North Chagrin Reservation from 3 June through 13 August (Kellerman). Two were at Virginia Kendall Park on 20 June (Rosche). A singing bird was at Thompson's Ledges on 22 June (Peskin). Two were at

Little Mountain and one at Stebbins Gulch on 6 July (Fondrk, Harlan, Pierce).

Philadelphia Vireo - A bird was in Parma Heights on 5 June (Harlan). This broke a late spring date record that had stood since 2 June 1940.

Golden-winged Warbler - The first fall report was in the CVNRA on 19 Aug. (Kopka). A male was at Sims Park on 23 Aug. (LePage) and one at Shaker Lakes on 27 August (Fazio).

"Brewster's Warbler" - A singing bird was observed at West Branch State Park on 3 June (Rosche). One was located in the CVNRA by Kopka on 22 June.

Yellow-throated Warbler - The only report was from Brecksville Reservation on 11 June (Harlan).

Black-throated Blue Warbler - A singing male was found at North Chagrin Reservation on 11 June (Kellerman).

Connecticut Warbler - A very early migrant was at Shaker Lakes on 30,31 August (Fazio).

Mourning Warbler - Birds returned to the property at the American Society for Metals in Newbury (Fondrk) and Lake Rockwell (Rosche) where they are hopefully breeding.

Fox Sparrow - Unbelievably, a territorial male was found by Pierce on 4 June at Firestone Metropark in Akron. He saw it regularly throughout most of the month. The bird was photographed diagnostically by Rosche on 26 June at the same location. This is the first summer record of this species in history of *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*.

Yellow-headed Blackbird - Two females were noted in a flock of migrant blackbirds foraging in recently cultivated fields along Smith Road west of Medina on 20 July (Rosche).

ADDENDUM: Please add **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** at Gordon Park on 14 May (Hannikman) to Volume 85 Number 2.

FIELD NOTES

The Cleveland area breeding bird survey by Robert Harlan

The study of local breeding bird populations is becoming a subject of increasing importance to many people interested in environmental issues. Concerns such as tropical deforestation, urban expansion, habitat modification and climate variation all have an impact on our nesting species. In an attempt to provide statistical information on the breeding birds of the Cleveland region a cooperative effort to gather data was initiated in the summer of 1989. The Cleveland Area Breeding Bird Survey (CABBS) was patterned after the well-known U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Breeding Bird Survey (*Robbins, et. al., 1986*). The only major difference was that CABBS routes were 12.5 miles long, one-half the distance of the federal routes. Effort was made to include the wide range of biotic communities as described in *A Field Book of Birds of the Cleveland Region (Rosche, 1988)*.

A total of twelve surveys were run in the seven county Cleveland Area over pre-plotted roadside routes. The routes were run in June under favorable weather conditions. Participants counted birds at half-mile intervals for three minutes at each stop beginning one-half hour before sunrise. Ten routes were conducted so that every bird seen or heard within 1/4 mile of the car was recorded on prepared tally sheets. On the other two routes only species, not individuals, were recorded at each stop. Only the ten routes in which every individual was counted are included in the statistics that follow. A total of 6431 individuals were encountered on these routes, representing 96 species. An additional four species (Blue-winged Teal, American Coot, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Grasshopper Sparrow) were recorded on the other two routes, situated in Lorain and Medina Counties. Some interesting finds included American Coot in Medina County, Cliff Swallow in Lorain County, Yellow-throated Warbler in Cuyahoga County and Mourning Warbler in Portage County.

Table 1 Highs, Lows and Averages

Highest species count - Lake Rockwell---	73
Lowest species count - Avon-----	40
Average number of species per route -----	55.8
Highest individual count - Lake Rockwell-----	1211
Lowest individual count - Mill Stream Run ---	326
Average number of individuals per route -----	638.1
Four southern routes (Medina, Portage and Summit Cos.)	65.3 species/route; avg. and 902 individuals/route
Six northern routes (Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake and Lorain Cos.)	49.5 species/route; avg. and 462 individuals/route
Four routes west of the Cuyahoga River	54 species/route avg. and 535 individuals/route
Six route east of the Cuyahoga River	57 species/route avg. and 707 individuals/route

Table 2 Breakdown by species groupings Group

	Individuals	%
Blackbirds and orioles (7 species)	1240	19.3
Rn. Pheasant, R. Dove, E. Starling, H. Finch, H. Sparrow	1083	16.8
Finches and sparrows (12 species)	1054	16.4
Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, and thrushes	535	8.3
Vireos and warblers (17 species)	473	7.4
Bc. Chickadee, T. Titmouse, Wb. Nuthatch, and wrens (5 species)	341	5.3
Herons, waterfowl, and gulls (6 species)	331	5.1
Swallows and swifts (7 species)	284	4.4
Flycatchers (7 species)	167	2.6
Woodpeckers (6 species)	64	1.0
Vultures and hawks (5 species)	10	0.2
Others (13 species)	849	13.2
	<u>6431</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 3 Species in order of abundance

Red-winged Blackbird	736*	Savannah Sparrow	18
European Starling	556*	N. Rough-winged Swallow	17
American Robin	380*	Blue-winged Warbler	17
House Sparrow	304*	Great Blue Heron	15
American Crow	295*	Rock Dove	15
Northern Cardinal	287*	Wood Duck	14
Common Grackle	282*	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	13
Song Sparrow	250*	Veery	13
Mourning Dove	229*	American Redstart	11
House Finch	205*	Northern Flicker	10
Canada Goose	196	Eastern Kingbird	10
Common Yellowthroat	135*	White-breasted Nuthatch	10
Tufted Titmouse	125*	Brown Thrasher	10
Indigo Bunting	125*	Eastern Phoebe	9
Cedar Waxwing	120*	Cerulean Warbler	9
American Goldfinch	120*	Northern Bobwhite	8
House Wren	116*	Hairy Woodpecker	8
Blue Jay	108*	Eastern Bluebird	8
Red-eyed Vireo	104*	Orchard Oriole	8
Yellow Warbler	103*	Green-backed Heron	6
Chipping Sparrow	93*	Belted Kingfisher	6
Gray Catbird	89*	Alder Flycatcher	6
Black-capped Chickadee	85	Carolina Wren	5
Chimney Swift	80*	Vesper Sparrow	5
Brown-headed Cowbird	79*	Purple Finch	5
Herring Gull	74	Horned Lark	4
Barn Swallow	73	Black-throated Green Warbler	4
Field Sparrow	73*	Louisiana Waterthrush	4
Bank Swallow	67	Turkey Vulture	3
Eastern Meadowlark	62	Red-tailed Hawk	3
Eastern Wood-Pewee	48	Ring-necked Pheasant	3
Willow Flycatcher	46	Ovenbird	3
Tree Swallow	45	American Kestrel	2
Northern Oriole	44*	Spotted Sandpiper	2
Killdeer	42	Black-billed Cuckoo	2
Wood Thrush	35	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2
Great Crested Flycatcher	30	Pileated Woodpecker	2
Hooded Warbler	30	Red-headed Woodpecker	2
Bobolink	29	Cooper's Hawk	1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	27	Red-shouldered Hawk	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	27	Cliff Swallow	1
Mallard	26	Purple Martin	1
Swamp Sparrow	26	White-eyed Vireo	1
Rufous-sided Towhee	25	Chestnut-sided Warbler	1
Downy Woodpecker	22	Yellow-breasted Chat	1
Warbling Vireo	21	Yellow-throated Warbler	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	20	Mourning Warbler	1
Acadian Flycatcher	18		
Scarlet Tanager	18		

*Denotes species found on all ten routes

Brown Thrashers were found on only three routes, all in the southern part of the region. White-eyed Vireo was found only once in 125 miles of driving along the ten various routes. As recently as 1987 this species was a fairly common nester in the Cleveland region. Cuckoos also made a poor showing. Species such as herons, waterfowl, hawks and owls were not adequately censused by this method. Also, a large proportion of the individuals of certain species, such as Turkey Vultures and Herring Gulls, were most likely visitors and not local nesters. All in all, though, most results should lend themselves nicely to future comparison.

The Cleveland Area Breeding Bird Survey is intended as an ongoing program, ideally with all routes run on an annual basis. Comparisons can hopefully be made over a period of years and the resulting data serve as a testimony of avian population changes on the local level.

Acknowledgements: I am grateful to all the following, who, in addition to the author, participated in the survey: Victor Fazio, Anders and Joyce Fjeldstad, Andrew Fondrk, J.P. Harlan, William and Nancy Klamm, Tom LePage, Robert McCullough and Larry Rosche.

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A summary of the Greater Akron Summer Bird Counts from 1978 -1989 by Carol Tveekrem

The Greater Akron Audubon Society has annually conducted a summer bird count. This count is organized in a manner similar to the Christmas Bird Count and uses many of the same observers. However, the count area is different, including most of Summit County south of the Ohio Turnpike (1-80). Initially, we considered using the Cuyahoga Falls CBC territory and doing the count in one day. We decided to use the larger area and conduct the count over a four consecutive day period for several reasons: much of the area within the CBC circle has become urban-suburban sprawl; some of the best habitat is located just north or south of the circle; choosing one day often means doing a count in less than optimum weather; and using a four day Friday - Monday period allows the birders to choose both the best time for them and the best weather. Those who wish to bird more than one day may do so, as long as territory is not duplicated.

The diversity of habitat types in Summit County yields a remarkable variety of birds. Our 1989 species count, 120 plus a hybrid, is our third highest in 12 years. We had 127 in 1988, and 122 in 1985. Most of the unusual birds are straggling migrants or southern overshoots. Kentucky Warbler has nested twice. Black-crowned Night-Herons are becoming regular in the Portage Lakes, but so far no nest sites. Several northern species have nested in hemlock/birch woods in cool ravines: Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Solitary Vireo.

Alder Flycatcher and both bitterns may have nested in suitable areas. Although Black-throated Green Warbler is found regularly, no nests have been located, but Mourning Warbler nested in 1986.

New species for this year were Ruddy Duck, Mute Swan and Fox Sparrow. No nests or young were seen. There are several pair of captive Mute Swans in the area, but these two were free-flying birds, rather wary of people. The Ruddy Duck was seen last year, but not during the count period. The Fox Sparrow, apparently a singing male which had delayed its northern migration, was not seen after June 26, perhaps because it stopped singing. We missed Red-headed Woodpecker for the first time this year. Great Horned Owl was also missed. It was a poor season for cuckoos, only one Black-billed and no Yellow-billed were seen. Some other birds whose numbers seemed low this season: Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Acadian Flycatcher, Bank Swallow, Blue Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Thrasher, American Redstart, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Brown-headed Cowbird. The low numbers of Blue Jay and Northern Cardinal are more likely due to their being at a secretive stage of nesting than to any real decline. Some observers commented on lack of swallows, especially immatures, but we tallied our second highest count for Tree Swallows. Canada Geese continue to increase in the area; Mallards have been abundant for the last

six years; Turkey Vultures may be on the increase; Blue-winged Warblers set a new high, and House Finches are well established.

Over the years the total number of birds has varied with the number of party hours. Logically, party hours should also influence the numbers for each species, but chance plays a much larger part here. Even allowing for this variation, some species seem to be in decline: Brown Thrasher, Eastern Meadowlark and Common Nighthawk, and possibly the American Goldfinch. One large Bank Swallow site has succumbed to sand and gravel mining. Great Blue Herons appear to be increasing slightly.

The most numerous bird this year was the European Starling, followed closely by House Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, American Robin, Mallard, Common Grackle, Mourning Dove, Song Sparrow, Canada Goose and House Finch. The top five have been the same species (not always in the same order) every year until this year when Mallard edged out Common Grackle. Mallards were not even in the top ten until 1986, House Finches not until 1988 and Canada Goose this year. Our state bird, Northern Cardinal, dropped from the top ten list for the first time.

This type of bird count does not give accurate density. There is very little urban area coverage. Our best coverage is near water and in parks. Small woodland species are generally undercounted, while large, open country or aquatic species may occasionally be counted more than once. American Crows do not really outnumber chickadees, although almost as many or more

SELECTED SPECIES	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
GREAT BLUE HERON	8	10	13	9	15	31	27	30	56	29	74	32
GREEN-BACKED HERON	18	7	19	16	24	22	28	30	26	23	41	24
CANADA GOOSE	7	5	65	40	77	50	80	129	199	89	240	353
WOOD DUCK	13	24	25	42	22	60	39	77	87	52	86	26
MALLARD	53	102	95	102	178	263	367	635	524	695	633	619
TURKEY VULTURE	3	2	5	12	23	14	18	24	51	16	43	40
COMMON MOORHEN	17	2	1	9	5	1	20	8	7	4	9	7
RING-BILLED GULL	0	0	0	0	0	31	77	10	28	25	51	17
COMMON NIGHTHAWK	23	18	16	38	36	46	32	25	22	9	17	11
BELTED KINGFISHER	14	10	24	17	8	27	24	31	24	36	41	30
RED-BELLIED WP.	6	6	21	14	12	21	25	36	42	25	34	28
DOWNY WOODPECKER	18	36	70	105	70	81	61	112	103	85	130	41
HAIRY WOODPECKER	5	12	6	22	16	23	12	21	19	14	16	15
NORTHERN FLICKER	47	40	72	80	87	78	62	103	112	79	91	54
E. WOOD PEWEE	35	24	67	101	83	124	104	102	122	50	119	57
ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	3	11	14	48	16	40	32	32	58	25	72	19
EASTERN PHOEBE	3	3	21	17	2	16	14	12	23	11	22	14
G. CRESTED FLYC.	18	14	34	20	13	38	39	37	43	28	45	33
EASTERN KINGBIRD	3	5	7	16	15	15	14	28	38	19	55	32
N. ROUGH-WINGED SW.	14	27	71	40	50	53	48	77	71	43	62	52
HOUSE WREN	109	96	108	118	128	149	154	167	192	152	177	113
BLUE-GRAY GNATC.	8	3	5	12	7	15	16	6	22	11	8	4
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	42	6	16	12	17	10	15	7	11	11	25	22
WOOD THRUSH	38	25	76	73	71	94	74	85	82	41	90	61
BROWN THRASHER	32	14	33	20	23	19	17	11	20	11	19	5
WARBLING VIREO	12	14	14	46	30	50	47	35	40	25	53	43
RED-EYED VIREO	40	35	82	134	105	160	151	155	150	92	138	85
BLUE-WINGED WARB.	38	6	69	48	24	43	62	41	60	38	63	71
YELLOW WARBLER	79	32	85	165	124	157	221	100	154	91	239	218
CERULEAN WARBLER	9	6	11	25	16	27	7	16	26	12	11	5
COMMON YELLOVTHR.	94	64	150	266	139	150	221	188	201	143	221	154
HOODED WARBLER	14	11	16	53	8	43	38	27	57	28	83	28
SCARLET TANAGER	19	8	34	38	21	35	34	43	46	37	73	24
ROSE-BREASTED GB.	20	20	44	46	50	58	42	160	62	30	90	39
INDIGO BUNTING	81	67	103	259	95	170	240	154	184	100	155	78
RUFIOUS-SIDED TOW.	40	16	56	75	62	61	77	47	55	41	107	61
CHIPPING SPARROW	48	57	91	203	74	308	196	164	169	123	167	110
FIELD SPARROW	55	61	127	283	128	166	227	96	147	87	208	111
SONG SPARROW	186	155	420	538	368	583	548	478	446	309	485	362
SWAMP SPARROW	35	17	29	54	12	32	55	38	76	25	56	54
BOBOLINK	7	4	13	11	31	34	27	32	30	17	40	33
NORTHERN ORIOLE	44	22	83	80	70	86	116	64	104	80	123	65
TOTAL SPECIES	99	98	108	109	111	113	115	122	110	114	127	120
PARTY HOURS	85	60	125	170	127	228	245	226	210	130	202	135
PARTICIPANTS	17	17	28	30	29	35	35	40	38	28	39	29

may be seen. It should be noted that eastern Summit County did have huge aggregations of crows this summer.

The toughest problem we encounter is finding enough

observers. Many Christmas Count regulars are not proficient at identifying birds when the trees have leaves. Summer vacations often conflict with the count dates, since schools are closed by the third weekend of June. An

earlier count period might include more late migrants; later, birds are more difficult to locate. We have a core of about 30 good observers to thank for all these data.

A field study of Sabine's Gull in first-summer plumage by Raymond L. Hannikman

The Sabine's Gull that frequented the Cleveland lakefront through-out the winter of 1988-89 remained in Lorain off and on during the summer season. As the gull attained first-summer plumage extensive field notes were taken. The bird was briefly seen at Headlands Beach State Park on 22 July 1989. On that date the bird was noted flying east as if to leave the region forever. Oddly enough it was relocated in Lorain and remained there throughout August.

Head and Body: In early June the lower scapulars nearest the breast, the last remnants of juvenal plumage, were a light, faded brown. Beginning in late June and continuing into July the partial hood, previously restricted to the upper hindneck and lower nape, had become more extensive, with smudgy patches of gray on the upper nape, crown and ear coverts. Throughout most of June, the sides of breast were light gray although this color was barely visible by early July.

Wings: In June the outermost two or three primaries were still growing in which gave the gull a somewhat tattered look. It was only at this time during the bird's long stay in northern Ohio that its plumage appeared worn. Photographs taken on 9 July revealed that the first primary was still growing in and that the white at the tips of the primaries was more extensive than expected. This was the impression both when the bird was flying and when it was at rest. Perhaps this was due to the primary tips being freshest at this time. July photographs showed that the secondaries closest to the body had not fully grown in. The gray on the mantle and coverts seemed uniform and combined with the black primaries and white secondaries to give the impression of an adult-like plumage.

Tail: The black tail band of first-winter plumage was completely molted. The white tail appeared very forked since the outer feathers were the first to be replaced.

Bare parts: No sign of the bill tip turning color was noticed until the middle of June, at which time the lower mandible had become a dull yellow. Two weeks later both mandibles had attained this dull yellow coloration. The yellow gradually became more intense throughout the time the bird was seen. The mouth lining was orange and the legs had become a dark flesh.

Comment: Personal communication between Larry Rosche and Peter Grant has confirmed that this was the first time that this species had ever been studied for any length of time in this plumage. Many thanks are extended to all of the observers who helped keep tabs on this bird throughout the year.

The woodpeckers of the Cleveland region

by Larry O. Rosche

The Cleveland region has had a total of eight species of piciformes verified in the 85 year history of *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*. Six nest regularly in the region, one is a common migrant and casual summer visitor and one is casual in fall and winter. Each species will be addressed as to its occurrence status both as a migrant and as a breeder. Because woodpeckers are not reported with the

enthusiasm as some species, it is somewhat difficult to give an accurate account of their distribution. For example, Hairy Woodpecker rarely elicits comments from contributors to *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*. It is the data collected on area Christmas Bird Counts that has proven to be most useful in monitoring the resident populations.

Red-headed Woodpecker

This handsome species is a common migrant along Lake Erie

and uncommon elsewhere.

Numerous birds can be usually be encountered during the first week of May at various points along the lake shore. Those that breed are also on territory by this time. Fall migration is primarily in late August and September, although the numbers seem fewer than in spring. It is a locally common nester along Lake Erie but uncommon throughout most of the region. In the winter, populations are greatly reduced and in some years they are totally absent, as reflected by Christmas Bird Count

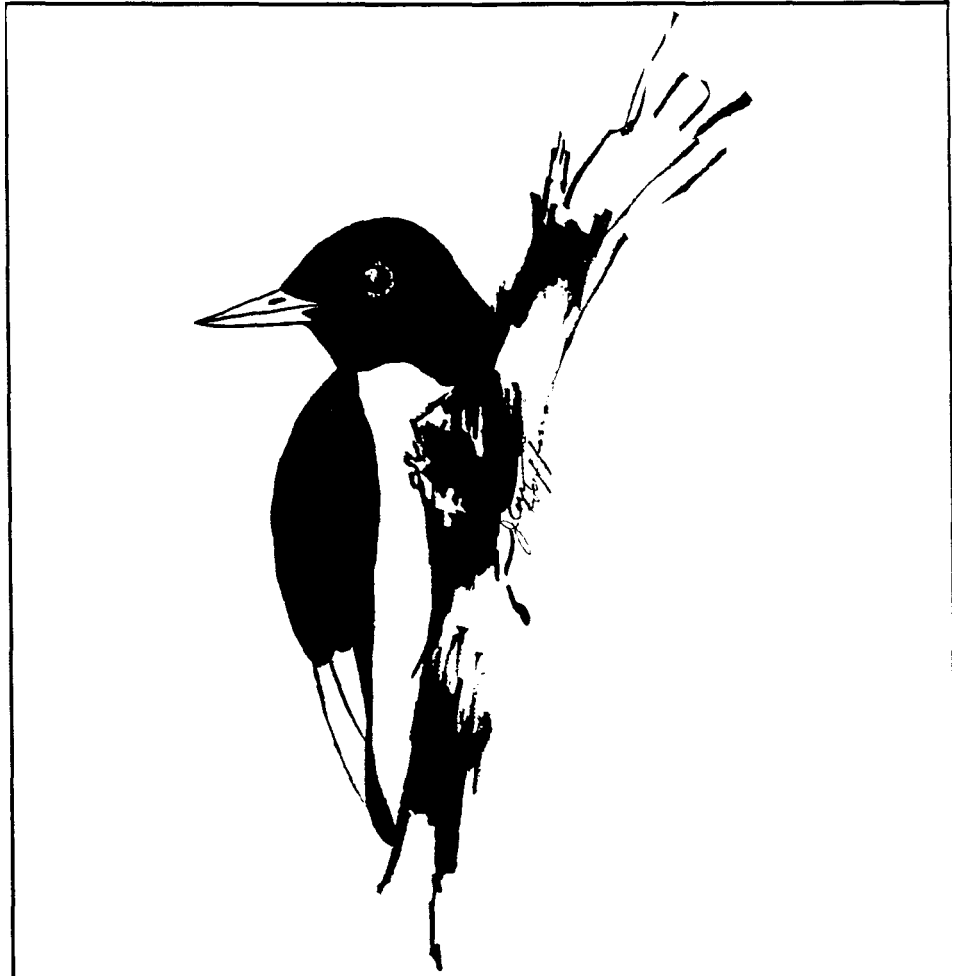
totals. Compilers will attest that this is bonus species on count day.

Because this an uncommon breeding bird some effort is needed to locate them in the summer. Red-headed Woodpeckers have distinct preference for mature woodlots with no understory. In rural areas a grassy pasture with several large oaks is an outstanding area to look for these birds. A few of the more reliable locations along Lake Erie are Gordon Park, Perkins Beach, Sims Park, Headlands Beach State Park, Mentor Marsh, and sometimes at Wildwood Lakefront State Park.

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Our second most common resident woodpecker is widely distributed in all seven counties of the Cleveland region. It has only recently surpassed Hairy Woodpecker in totals on local Christmas Bird Counts. At the same time, the steady increase of this species has been well documented on the Greater Akron Summer Bird Counts. Permanent residence is stressed here due to the fact that in migration and summer Common Flickers greatly outnumber Red-bellied Woodpeckers. In autumn there is an apparent influx of this species along Lake Erie. It is presumed that these individuals represent birds that have moved slightly south for the winter.

In winter these birds can easily be attracted to feeders and will appear in any neighborhood. They can also be found in the deepest of woods and were once thought to be a bird restricted largely to beech-maple forests (Williams, 1950). This conjecture



Red-headed Woodpecker by Jean Hoffman

does not seem to hold for Red-bellied Woodpeckers of the eighties. With the constant fragmentation of our forests it appears that these birds will persist into the future better than the species with more restricted habitat preferences.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

At present, this species is considered to be a common migrant. In spring sapsuckers usually arrive in late March and are most conspicuous in April. They often linger along the lakefront well into May. In the fall they start showing up in the last third of

September and can be quite common into mid-October. It is not unusual to see 30 or more at places like Headlands Beach State Park on a given day. They are rare in the winter, although they may return to a favored locale for several years in a row. They remain motionless for long periods of time in the winter and often go undetected. In summer they are casual. However, it is not entirely out of the question that they may breed in the region, as they do in nearby Ashtabula County. There certainly is ample habitat in Geauga County for this woodpecker to nest but as yet no reports have been turned in to *The*

Cleveland Bird Calendar.

This bird seems to have little preference in the way of habitat. All they need is a tree and can be found on streetsides, orchards, or woodlands when they are in the region. Their unique way of drilling rings around a tree serves to alert observers to their presence.

Downy Woodpecker

This is our most common woodpecker. They are found at all seasons and in good numbers. Finding this species should present no task to the birder, regardless of their level of expertise. Any woodlot, big or small, will harbor this species. They are also found in fallow fields in rural areas and is certainly our only woodpecker that can be supported by small stalks of vegetation.

The only problem encountered with Downy Woodpeckers is one of confusing them with the much larger Hairy Woodpecker. The Downy Woodpecker is a sparrow-sized bird whereas the Hairy Woodpecker has the body size of a robin. The obvious bill size differential between the two provides a much better field mark than the black spots on the outer tail feathers of the Downy.

Hairy Woodpecker

In the Cleveland region this is a fairly common resident of mature woodlands and residential areas. The loss of older forests has affected this species numbers more so than any other local woodpecker. More and more this species is forced to retreat to city parks or other protected areas. Because these sites are heavily birded a misconception as to its abundance is often conveyed.

Census taking in the same locations over a period of years has provided us with a gloomy outlook for the future of this formerly very widely and densely distributed woodpecker. Finding a Hairy Woodpecker away from protected areas is not as easy as it was ten years ago.

It not the intention of this article to make this species out to be a threatened one. This bird is still easy enough to find if one has a little patience and a good ear.

Black-backed Woodpecker

Williams described the Black-backed Woodpecker as a rare and accidental visitor to the Cleveland region. It is presently casual and there has only been one sighting in the past 25 years. Black-backed Woodpeckers would most likely be encountered as a late fall or winter visitor. Observers in the region should be on the alert if a woodpecker invasion has been discovered along eastern Lake Erie.

Prior to 1950 there were only four reports. They were from Akron, Chardon, Painesville and Ravenna. There have been 12 reports referring to seven birds since 1950. The first was in Elyria on 11 December 1953. This species appeared almost yearly between 1957 and 1964, this was due, perhaps, to the Dutch Elm Disease that afflicted so many trees at that time. The only report since 1964 was a female photographed in Lorain on 27 September 1984.

Common Flicker

This species is a common migrant and nester. It is rare to uncommon in winter. The large woodlands of The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area usually maintain a

fair number at this time. In summer one will find this bird in virtually all areas of the region. Common Flickers are often found on the ground and have a preference for open spaces. In spring migration cemeteries offer excellent habitat for this species because of their porous soils. In fall migration many flickers can be seen as they pass by the lakefront. Indeed, at locations such as Gordon Park one can find the ground literally teeming with this species in September and October.

Finding a Common Flicker should present no problem even to the beginning bird watcher. It is a fairly large bird and the conspicuous white rump patch make this bird easy to identify. In flight one can easily tell why it used to be called "Yellow-shafted Flicker".

Pileated Woodpecker

This is certainly one of the most striking of all bird species. It is presently considered to be an uncommon resident in the majority of the region (Rosche, 1988). Geauga County seems to be a stronghold for this species and it should probably be considered common there. In Wheaton's time they were reported to be found on nearly every dead tree whereas Williams noted that they were not common in any part of the Cleveland region. Since 1950 they have benefited from the maturation of second and third growth woodlands in local parks.

Generally speaking, this is a tough bird to find away from large wooded tracts. Perhaps one of the best ways to attract this species is to imitate the call of the Barred Owl in locations where large oblong holes have recently been chiseled in a tree. While Pileated Woodpeckers are

considered to be residents, there is an apparent movement from late March to early April. In recent years they have been reported out of their regular habitat along Lake Erie and inland at this time. To see one during this period is a matter of being at the right place at the right time. A few of the more reliable locations for finding this species are in Hinckley and South Chagrin Reservations, along Major and Oak Hill Roads in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, and at Russell Park near Burton.

Acknowledgement:

Robert Harlan's research on woodpecker populations reported on local Christmas Bird Counts was invaluable.

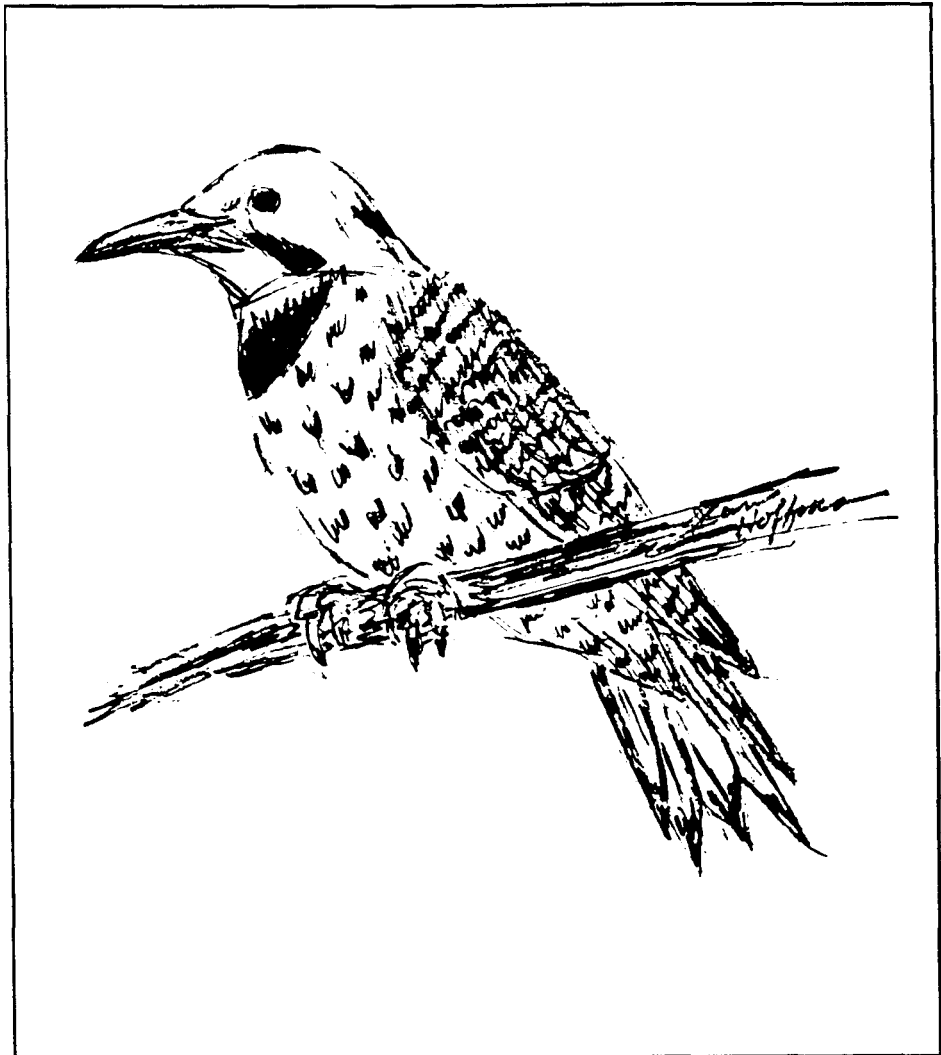
Literature:

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Rosche, L. O. 1988. A Field Book of the Birds of the Cleveland Region 2nd Edition. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Williams, A. B. 1950. Birds of the Cleveland Region. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



Northern Flicker by Jean Hoffman

Announcements

Rare Bird Hotline: (216) 289- 2473. The hotline is sponsored by the Kirtland Bird Club.

Invitation: The Kirtland Bird Club meets the first Wednesday of the month except July and August at 7:45 PM at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Visitors are always welcome.

Reports: All field sightings, notes, and artwork for publication should be sent to Larry Rosche 7473 Sylvan Drive, Kent, Ohio 44240.

Inquiries regarding subscription to The Cleveland Bird Calendar should be addressed to Joan M. Palmer, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, Ohio 44106. The subscription rate is \$4.00 annually.

Christmas Counts are scheduled for 16 Dec. 1989 in Cleveland and Elyria - Lorain; 17 Dec. 1989 in Cuyahoga Falls and Lakewood; 27 Dec. 1989 in Wellington; 30 Dec. 1989 in Mentor.

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