BIRD CALENDAR

of the

CLEVELAND BIRD CLUB

31st Year, Bulletin No. 4 September-December, 1935 Founded by Dr. Francis H. Herrick, 1905 Dr. S. Charles Kendeigh, Editor Biological Laboratory Western Reserve University

January 22, 1936

The autumn season had temperatures averaging about normal in September and October and 2.7° above normal in November; but in December the early cold weather that set in brought the average temperature for the month down to 5.3° below normal. The severest cold weather came on December 25 with a minimum of 0° being attained. This was accompanied during the day by 3.1 inches of snowfall. The extraordinarily high snowfall for December was 23.0 inches, although the normal for the month is only 8.9 inches. The total precipitation for December, converting snowfall into terms of rainfall, was above normal, although during the three preceding months the precipitation was below normal. Considering the year as a whole, the total deficiency in precipitation amounted to only 4.37 inches, a decided improvement over the drought conditions of 1934.

Month	Mean Temperature	Normal Temperature	Total Precipitation	Normal Precipitation
September	63.7°	63.9°	2.78 inches	3.33 inches
October	54.0	53.6	1.69	2.78
November	43.6	40.9	1.71	2.64
December	31.6	36.9	2.83	2.44

Mr. E.C. Hoffman, living in Lakewood, is very advantageously situated to observe bird migration along the lake shore. In early spring each year he commonly sees starlings, blackbirds, robins, meadowlarks, and other species migrating in large flocks, almost always in an easterly direction apparently on their way around the lake rather than straight across. This autumn he reports observing at different times migrating flocks of nighthawks, common terms, bronzed grackles, chimney swifts, and Bonaparte gulls. Most of these flocks were moving westward, just opposite to the direction of their spring movement. Mr. Hoffman also reported seeing three flocks of ring-necked pheasants, totaling 24 birds, on December 24 in the Rocky River valley – and unusual sight.

Mr. Ralph O'Reilly, Jr. writes of observing within 8 feet an orange-crowned warbler, a rare species, in a garden on the Heights. He also found another rare species, the lark sparrow, on the Heights High football field and was able to make out satisfactorily its diagnostic field characters. A Caspian tern was also found at Shaker Lakes. These records go to show that a watchful eye may observe many unusual things in unexpected places. On Sept. 4, Mr. O'Reilly found an immature green heron with undeveloped plumage and unable to fly at the base of its nest tree, a large willow. This is a late date for indications of recent nesting in this species.

As most readers of the Bird Calendar are aware, Dr. A.B. Williams has been conducting an intensive ornithological and ecological study of 65 acres in the North Chagrin Metropolitan Park. He mentions in his report that at the end of October he had completed four years of weekly visits to this area for the recording of all birds present – a very unusual record and one of unusual value. We wish other bird students in the Cleveland district would select other areas for similar intensive studies. Dr. Williams is planning to continue

indefinitely his studies of the North Chagrin avian population but probably with less frequent visits, as he wants to begin a similar intensive study of the Rocky River flood-plan forest birds. He reports that this autumn flocks of robins were feeding largely on fruits of wild black cherry in the river valleys in the absence of a crop of northern fox grapes in the upland woods. The Cape May warbler he found in good numbers, which is of interest in light of their unusual prominence last spring. The Rocky River valley may be an important migrating route for the bluebird. Both he and Mr. Hoffman reported flocks moving up the valley in late September and early October.

The Bird Club trip scheduled for Nov. 23 fell on a cold day with temperatures below freezing and a brisk north wind. The marshes were partly frozen with very few water birds in them. It was not until just before dusk, about 4:30 P.M., that ducks in any numbers were discovered. Then about 1500 mostly black ducks were seen at some distance out on Sandusky Bay. They were watched for nearly a half-hour. The birds were scattered over the water in small flocks and apparently in a restless mood. Flock after flock would rise from the water, circle around through the air, sometimes going out of sight but then returning to the water. When darkness began to settle down in earnest, an occasional flock, instead of returning, headed for the south and was not again seen. Apparently what was being witnessed was the initiation of a migratory hop for some more southern, more agreeable, haven.

The following interesting summary of the unusually large goose migration this autumn was kindly prepared by Mr. John Aldrich.

Unusually large numbers of blue and snow geese have been reported at Meaford, Ontario, at the south end of Georgian Bay. These geese were seen there during the period from Oct. 16 to Nov. 1 with the peak of numbers being on the 28th of October. In all, about 6000 geese were seen, the majority being white (snow geese). When they left Meaford they were reported to have flown south and southeast.

At the same time that the peak of numbers of these geese was occurring at Meaford, large numbers were being reported at Niagara Falls by Buffalo bird students. On Oct. 27 about 10,000 geese were seen on the Niagara River above the falls. About 9000 of these were blue geese, a few hundred were snows, and a few hundred Canadas. On Oct. 28, about 1550 blue geese and 55 snows were seen there and on Oct. 30, only about 150 blue and one snow goose were left.

The flight was apparent at Cleveland a few days later. On the morning of Nov. 2, a flock of 30 snow geese was seen by Franklin Cobb, of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, flying south at Gordon Park. On the afternoon of the same day, Mr. Aldrich saw a flock of approximately a hundred blue geese flying southeast over his home in Cleveland Heights. Around this time Mr. Melville Philips, a professional waterfowl keeper at Kirtland Hills, reported that he had seen the largest number of blue and snow geese flying over that he had seen in may years. Mr. B.P. Bole and Mr. B.P. Bole Jr., also reported that during the week of Nov. 3 at Kirtland Hills they had seen flocks of hundreds of geese containing many white geese flying over on several different days.

It will be interesting to see from reports from the wintering grounds of these species of geese whether or not the numbers there are greater this year. If not, we might conclude that the main route of migration for some reason, was moved further east this year than normally.

In connection with this same topic, the following observation of Dr. Francis H. Herrick is interesting.

"- - - there was one record of Canada Geese for November 2, which was interesting. In the garden at 5 P.M. on that day I heard a distant honking overhead, and could make out, at a height of rather less than one mile, about 100 geese that were flying rapidly in harrow formation, and heading south by east. The sides of their harrow were unequal, and as I was watching them two individuals got squeezed out of the longer line. Instead of falling back to the end of their line, they persisted in flying close up, and in a few minutes worked their way back in close to the point where they had left their companions."

Likewise on Nov. 2, Dr. J. Paul Visscher observed 500 geese near Vermilion. All these records point to a very concentrated and heavy movement of geese on this date, probably marking the peak of the autumn migration of these species in this region.

The red-breasted nuthatch has been studied with some interest during recent years because of the species' invasion from the north into this region coming apparently every other winter. It was absent last year and was again reported in numbers this past autumn. In an attempt to determine whether this two-year cycle of occurrence might be of any long-time significance, a survey of past volumes of the Bird Calendar was made and the following table compiled. During the eight years previous to the winter of 1912-13, no birds were recorded, possibly due to the paucity of observers. In the table that is given below no attempt at estimating relative abundance during various years is attempted, simply a note is made whether the species was or was not recorded even for a single individual. During certain years the only birds recorded were during the spring, sometimes as late as May.

Winter	Present	Absent	Winter	Present	Absent
1912-13	#		1924-25	#	
1913-14		#	1925-26	#	
1914-15	#		1926-27		#
1915-16	#		1927-28	#	
1916-17	#		1928-29		#
1917-18	#		1929-30	#	
1918-19		#	1930-31	#	
1919-20		#	1931-31	#	
1920-21		#	1932-33		#
1921-22	#		1933-34	#	
1922-23	#		1934-35		#
1923-24	#		1935-36	#	

The table shows that except for the winter of 1930-31 invasions came in alternate years as far back as 1925-26 but not previous to that winter. How would you explain the facts presented in this table?

One hundred fifty-two species were seen during this period of September 1 to December 31. This is 13 less than the number that was observed during the similar period of 1934 and one less than the number in 1933. Five species not previously recorded this year are included in this bulletin: blue goose, snow goose, redhead duck, red-breasted nuthatch, and lark sparrow. The total list for the year stands at 215 species. Compared with 1934, this year's total is 9 less, but compared with 1933, it is 3 more.

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The following list includes the more unusual records for the past season:

Blue Goose (J.A.) - Nov. 2 (100)

Snow Goose (J.A.) - Nov. 2 (30)

Whistling Swan (M.B.S.) - Nov. 3 (103 - Pymatuning Lake)

Redhead Duck (M.B.S.) - Nov. 17 (17 - Pymatuning Lake)

Pipit (M.B.W., Shankland) - Oct. 14, 20 (20)

Northern Shrike (A.B.W.) - Dec. 21 (1)

Philadelphia Vireo (O'R, M.B.S.) - Sept. 15 (2)

Orange-crowned Warbler (O'R) – Sept. 28 (1 – observed within 8 feet)

Lark Sparrow (O'R) – Oct. 17 (1 – markings clearly seen) Snow Bunting (M.B.S.) – Nov. 17 (75 – Pymatuning Lake)

The following people submitted records for computing the indices of abundance:

Benjamin P. Bole, Jr. Margarette E. Morse E.C. Hoffman Merit B. Skaggs Lynds Jones Arthur B. Williams S. Charles Kendeigh M.B. Walters

Other observers sent in miscellaneous migration data: S. Prentiss Baldwin, John Aldrich, Dale C. Kellogg, J. Paul Visscher, and Francis H. Herrick. During the course of the past year, 15 people have reported more or less regularly for these calendar bulletins.

The following table of statistics is furnished for better estimating the value of the data soon to be presented.

	September	October	November	December
Number of trips	31	28	19	18
Observers per trip	1.6	1.6	1.9	2.0
Hours per trip	3.3	3.2	3.0	2.4
Miles on foot per trip	5.0	4.4	3.6	4.2
Miles per hour	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.7
Percentage of time in denser woods	64	55	31	60
" " " open country	23	28	30	32
" " " marshes	5	4	14	3
" " along lakes and strea	ams 8	13	25	5

The total number of trips for this period (96) is 4 less that was taken last year during the same period. The total number of trips taken during 1935 is 413, or an average of 1.1 per day throughout the year. In 1934, the total number of trips for the year was 363 and in 1933, it was 432.

In the tables that follow an attempt is made to compare the relative abundance of different species in the same habitat and the abundance of each species this year and last. Indices of abundance are determined by multiplying together the average number of birds of each species seen for all the trips during the month and the percentage of all the trips on which the species was recorded. A comparison of abundance during different years can be made more exact if an accurate basis is available as to the amount of time spent each year in each habitat. As the indices of abundance are averages for the three autumn months of September, October, and November, a comparison of the amount of time spent in the various habitats has been made for this year and last by using the figures in the statistical tables and totaling the number of hours for the three months.

				1935	1934
Numbe	r of h	ours	in denser woods	124	106
"	"	"	" open country	67	49
"	"	"	" marshes	20	55
"	"	"	along lakes and streams	37	14

The data in this table are approximate only but give some basis for correcting the indices of abundance during those two years. With an increase in the number of hours of observation there would probably be an increase in the number of individuals recorded in about the same proportion. Likewise there would be an increase in the number of species listed although this increase would be in lesser proportion. Allowance should be made for this in the tables that follow.

BIRDS OF THE DENSER WOODS

Species	Index of Abundance (Average of Sept., Oct., Nov.)			
•	1935	1934 `	Remarks	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	203.0	63.0	Average Oct. & Nov.	
Blue Jay	181.7	137.0		
Cardinal	136.1	44.2		
White-breasted Nuthatch	107.8	138.7		
Tufted Titmouse	95.4	111.4		
Black-capped Chickadee	94.8 [*]	97.0		
Downy Woodpecker	85.8	85.3		
Red-eyed Vireo	46.4	1.5	September only	
Black-throated Green Warbler	29.4	105.4	September only	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	20.3	absent	Oct. & Nov. only	
Hairy Woodpecker	19.2	23.3	·	
Redstart	11.3	14.0	September only	
Winter Wren	9.1	1.2	Oct. & Nov. only	
Brown Creeper	3.2	12.4	November only	
Pileated Woodpecker	2.1	4.4	•	
Towhee	2.0	16.4	September only	
Barred Owl	0.5	0.3		
Ruffed Grouse	0.5	2.7		
Ovenbird	0.5	4.4	September only	
Woodcock	0.1	0.9	September only	
Carolina Wren	0.07	2.2	1	
Great Horned Owl	0.03	0.0		
Grand average	49.0	41.2 [**]	Excluding the red-breasted nuthatch	

^{[*} unreadable in original; value calculated based on grand average] [** unreadable in original; value calculated based on following text]

The average abundance of the birds in the denser woods is only slightly greater this year than last. The difference of 7.8 in the grand averages for this period is nearly the same as the difference of 5.7 noted for the summer season in the last bulletin, but may be due to the slightly greater number of hours of observation. The blue jay and cardinal appear to have increased in abundance this year, but the black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, and white-breasted nuthatch have decreased. Altogether 11 species in this list show some indication of an increase in numbers and 11 species show a decrease.

BIRDS OF THE OPEN COUNTRY (Open woods, shrubby fields, farmland, cities)

Species	Index of Ab 1935	oundance (Av 1934	rerage of Sept., Oct., and Nov.) Remarks
Starling	2102.3	418.3	
Robin	1498.7	2568.7	
Slate-colored Junco	1130.4	612.0	October and November only
English Sparrow	544.9		
Tree Sparrow	208.6	590.5	November only
Song Sparrow	159.0	72.8	
Goldfinch	124.8	177.3	
Bronzed Grackle	94.3	7.5	
Bob-white	92.1	47.7	
Crow	73.3	54.2	
Bluebird	40.8	24.9	September and October only
Catbird	32.0	55.2	September only
Northern Flicker	27.6	11.7	
Killdeer	25.9	23.3	
Chimney Swift	22.5	114.8	September only
Mourning Dove	11.3	19.3	
Phoebe	10.3	0.9	September only
Ring-necked Pheasant	9.8	0.6	
Sparrow Hawk	5.0	0.7	
Cedar Waxwing	3.8	14.9	
Meadowlark	1.6	5.3	September and October only
Red-headed Woodpecker	1.4	0.1	
Red-tailed Hawk	1.1	0.3	
Savannah Sparrow	1.0	0.9	September only
Prairie Horned Lark	0.9	18.9	
Field Sparrow	0.6	49.4	September and October only
Red-shouldered Hawk	0.4	1.2	
Screech Owl	0.3	0.03	
Warbling Vireo	0.2	0.0	September only
Sharpshinned Hawk	0.03	0.07	
Grand average	195.9	168.7	Excluding the English sparrow
	(127.8)	159.8	Also excluding the starling)

The uncorrected indices make it appear that the open country birds are more abundant this year than last, as was also noted in the two preceding bulletins. Seventeen species show an increase in the size of their indices, and 12 species show a decrease. The increase in the index for the starling is most noteworthy; if this species is excluded from the grand average, the average index for 1935 is actually smaller than for 1934. If a correction were made to allow for the greater number of hours of observation this year, the average index for open country birds would be smaller this year than last, even if the starling were included.

BIRDS OF THE MARSH

Species	Index of Abı	andance (Av	erage of Sept., Oct., and Nov.)
-	1935	1934	Remarks
Red-winged Blackbird	123.6	281.9	September and October only
Coot	84.4	1.3	
Mallard	22.2	0.0	
Green Heron	4.8	2.0	
Pied-billed Grebe	2.0	3.8	September and October only
Marsh Hawk	1.0	1.3	
Great Blue Heron	1.0	0.5	September and October only
Alder Flycatcher	0.6	0.0	September only
Northern Yellow-throat	0.1	5.4	September only
American Bittern	0.1	0.0	September only
Grand average	24.0	29.6	

The mallard and coot were apparently more abundant this autumn that they were last year, while the red-winged blackbird appears to have been less abundant, although if allowance be made for the difference during these two years in the amount of time spent in this habitat, the blackbird would also show greater abundance this year.

BIRDS OF THE OPEN LAKE, LAKESHOR, AND STREAMS

Species	Index of Abundance (Average of Sept., Oct., Nov.)				
	1935	1934	Remarks		
Herring Gull	577.2	78.9			
Black Duck	431.6	14.1			
Bonaparte Gull	321.1	263.1			
Ring-billed Gull	198.0	3.5			
Lesser Scaup Duck	126.4	2512.5	November only		
Belted Kingfisher	10.5	3.4			
American Golden-eye	2.1	0.0	November only		
Bald Eagle	0.1	0.0			
_					
Grand average	208.4	359.4			

Except for the larger index for the lesser scaup duck in 1934, all species show a larger index of abundance during the present year. It must be remembered, however, that considerably more time was spent in this habitat this year than last, which may, in part, explain the increase in the size of the indices.

AUTUMN MIGRATION
(Species arranged chronologically chiefly in order of last date on which seen)

<u>Species</u>	First <u>Record</u>	Height of Migration	Last <u>Record</u>	Remarks
Louisiana Water-thrush			Sept. 2 (3)	
Grinnell's Water-thrush			Sept. 3 (1)	
Wilson Warbler			Sept. 4 (2)	
Canada Warbler	Sept. 2 (3)		Sept. 4 (6)	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			Sept. 8 (1)	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Sept. 8 (1)	Sept. 23 (15)		
Caspian Tern			Sept. 9 (1)	
Spotted Sandpiper			Sept. 9 (1)	
Purple Martin			Sept. 12 (8)	
Wood Pewee			Sept. 12 (1)	
Common Tern			Sept. 12 (350)	
Nighthawk		Sept. 3 (250)	Sept. 14 (3)	
Blue-winged Warbler			Sept. 14 (1)	
Chipping Sparrow			Sept. 14 (4)	
Philadelphia Vireo	Sept. 15 (2)		Sept. 15 (2)	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo			Sept. 15 (1, 1)	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Sept. 2 (4)		Sept. 16 (6)	
Wood Thrush			Sept. 16 (1)	
Slate-colored Junco	Sept. 20 (6)	Oct. 19 (200)		
Scarlet Tanager			Sept. 20 (1)	
Black and White Warbler	Sept. 2 (4)		Sept. 20 (1)	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Sept. 15 (2, 1)		Sept. 21 (2)	
Cowbird			Sept. 21 (5)	
Acadian Flycatcher			Sept. 21 (2)	
Long-billed Marsh Wren			Sept. 21 (1)	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			Sept. 23 (3)	
Hooded Warbler			Sept. 23 (1)	
House Wren			Sept. 28 (2)	
Orange-crowned Warbler	Sept. 28 (1)		Sept. 28 (1)	
Sanderling			Sept. 28 (44)	
Semipalmated Sandpiper			Sept. 28 (22)	
Solitary Sandpiper			Sept. 28 (1)	
Ruddy Turnstone			Sept. 28 (1)	
Least Flycatcher	Sept. 14 (3)		Sept. 28 (1?)	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Sept. 28 (1)	Oct. 6–27		
Yellow-throated Vireo			Sept. 29 (1)	
Blackburnian Warbler	Aug 19 (1)	Sept. 29 (14)	Oct. 2 (1)	
Cerulean Warbler			Oct. 2 (1)	
Turkey Vulture			Oct. 3 (23)	
Woodcock			Oct. 3 (1)	
Alder Flycatcher			Oct. 3 (1)	
Chimney Swift	0 (1)	 O-4 10 (10)	Oct. 5 (1)	
Brown Creeper	Oct. 6 (1)	Oct. 10 (12)	0-+ 6 (1)	
Brown Thrasher			Oct. 6 (1)	
Ovenbird		 Oot 20 20	Oct. 7 (2)	. 16 (1)
Flicker	 Cont 14 (0)	Oct. 20–29	Oct. 7 (2) & Nov	7. 10 (1)
Magnolia Warbler	Sept. 14 (2)	Sept. 28-Oct. 2	, ,	
Palm Warbler	Sept. 8 (2)	Oct. 6 (15)	Oct. 9 (1)	
Savannah Sparrow Black-throated Green Warbler		 Sept 14 Oct 1	Oct. 11 (1)	
Diack-unvaled Green wardler		Sept. 14-Oct. 1	1 001. 14 (1)	

White-crowned Sparrow Field Sparrow Cape May Warbler Nashville Warbler Warbling Vireo Red-eyed Vireo Blue-headed Vireo Gray-cheeked Thrush Red-headed Woodpecker Catbird Phoebe	Oct. 2 (11) Sept. 23 (4) Sept. 14 (25) Sept. 23 (1) Sept. 9 (50 BPE	 Sept. 24 (25) 	Oct. 12 (1, 10) Oct. 12 (20, 3) Oct. 12 (1) Oct. 12 (1, 4) Oct. 12 (1) Oct. 12 (1) Oct. 12 (1) Oct. 12 (1) Oct. 12 (2) Oct. 12 (3) Oct. 12 (3, 1) Oct. 13 (1)	Some winter.
Black-throated Blue Warbler	Sept. 11 (2)		Oct. 14 (25)	Last seen on
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker Tennessee Warbler Redstart Swamp Sparrow Lark Sparrow American Bittern Olive-backed Thrush Bay-breasted Warbler Black-poll Warbler Pipit Towhee Hermit Thrush Wilson Snipe Lincoln Sparrow Winter Wren	Sept. 28 (1) Sept. 14 (2) Oct. 17 (1) Sept. 7 (30) Sept. 6 (2) Sept. 2 (1) Oct. 14 Sept. 30 (2) Oct. 11 (1) Oct. 26 (4) Sept. 28 (3, 3)	Oct. 2 (6) Sept. 14-15 Oct. 7 (100)	Oct 26 (4)	v. 23 – 1 wounded 18 (1)&Dec. 9 (1)
White-throated Sparrow	Sept. 24 (12)	Oct. 12 (200,	•	24 (2)
Northern Yellow-throat Fox Sparrow Myrtle Warbler Crow Bluebird Blue Goose Great Blue Heron Whistling Swan American Golden-eye	Oct. 2 (3) Sept. 2 (5) Nov. 2 (100) Nov. 3 (103) Nov. 3 (2)	Oct. 6-14 Oct. 3 (60) Nov. 2 (100) 	Oct. 26 (1) & Dec Oct. 28 (3) Oct. 28 (4) Oct. 30 (6) Oct. 31 (1) Oct. 31 (1) Nov. 2 (100) Nov. 3 (1)	Some winter.
Lesser Scaup Duck Prairie Horned Lark Tree Sparrow Ruby-crowned Kinglet Snow Goose Robin Hooded Merganser Common Loon Red-breasted Merganser Canada Goose Rusty Blackbird Bronzed Grackle Baldpate Ring-necked Duck Bufflehead Ruddy Duck Marsh Hawk Mourning Dove	Nov. 3 (50) Nov. 4 (10) Sept. 21 (1) Nov. 2 (30) Nov. 15 (1) Nov. 3 (1) Nov. 16 (125) Nov. 2 (100, 50 Oct. 11 (3) Nov. 3 (4) Sept. 23 (1) Nov. 16 (5) Nov. 3 (4)	Oct. 6 (20) Oct. 12-14	Nov. 3 (10) Nov. 4 (1) Nov. 9 (approxim Nov. 14 (2) & Dec Nov. 16 (7) Nov. 17 (2) Nov. 17 (30) Nov. 17 (4) Nov. 17 (3, 2) Nov. 17 (2) Nov. 17 (7) Nov. 17 (30) Nov. 17 (1) & Dec Nov. 17 (1) & Dec Nov. 17 (1) & Dec	c. 10 (1)

Pied-billed Grebe		 Nov. 17 (4)
Green Heron		 Nov. 17 (2)
Redhead Duck	Nov. 17 (17)	
Snow Bunting	Nov. 17 (75)	
Meadowlark		 Nov. 22 (6)
Red-winged Blackbird		 Nov. 23 (1)
Shoveller	Nov. 23 (25)	 Nov. 25 (3)
Pintail		 Nov. 23 (1)
Canvasback	Nov. 16 (25)	 Nov. 23 (150)
Rough-legged Hawk	Nov. 23 (1)	
Coot		 Nov. 23 (3)
Belted Kingfisher		 Nov. 23 (1)
Horned Grebe	Nov. 16 (3)	 Nov. 23 (3)
Mallard		 Nov. 23 (2) & Dec. 31 (2)
Killdeer		 Dec. 3 (1)
Northern Shrike	Dec. 21 (1)	
American Merganser	Dec. 24 (5)	