

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

FOUNDED BY FRANCIS H. HERRICK 1905



PUBLISHED BY THE KIRTLAND BIRD CLUB

AND

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

2717 EUCLID AVE., CLEVELAND 15, OHIO

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

Devoted to the study of ornithology in the Cleveland Region

Subscription price \$1 per annum

Spring Migration Number

Issued July 15, 1952

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SOMETHING TO WATCH FOR

A letter from John Lieftinck in Luxembourg calls our attention to a report in AUDUBON FIELD NOTES (6(1):20) for February 1952 of the occurrence of the least tern near Indianapolis, the third record in two years, suggesting the possibility that the species may perhaps be nesting along Lake Michigan. Mr. Lieftinck reported 3 least terns at Lake Dorothy near Akron on September 4, 1951 (CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR, 47(4):3), and he suggests that observers in this region keep an eye on Lake Dorothy this coming September.

NOTES ON THE WEATHER

(From U. S. Weather Bureau, Cleveland Airport)

March was predominantly cloudy and wet with seasonable temperatures but a few warm days. Precipitation occurred on all but 3 days to the 26th and as snow on most of them to the 17th. Snowfall was about twice the normal amount for the month.

April was evenly divided into a cool and wet period during the first half and warm and dry thereafter. Precipitation occurred on all days but 2 during the first 15 days, with snowfall from the 5th to the 7th totaling 7.8 inches. Sunshine abundant from the 16th to the close of the month.

May averaged very close to normal with respect to temperature, while precipitation was only slightly below, with no extremes in either element. However, cloudiness was considerable with measurable precipitation occurring on about one half the days of the month, all between the 5th and 25th.

COMMENTS ON SPRING MIGRATION

Spring migration this year was a real event. One hundred and eighty-one species of birds (136 on May 18), more than were observed in any other year, were seen on the Museum-sponsored bird walks, while many observers had no trouble at all making their "Century Days" an actuality. Jim Akers saw 106 species on May 12 in the Sandusky region and the Burroughs Nature Club on their all-day field trip May 24 saw 126 in the Willoughby area. Starting with an increase of early migrants, especially robins, meadowlarks and redwings, March 10-12, when the temperature went as high as 55°, 51° and 47° respectively, the influx built up until the first part of May when the birds were really pouring in. C. F. Gibbs of Cuyahoga Falls comments that the small bird migration during the first 3 weeks of May was the most vigorous that he has observed during the past 10 years. As to average dates of arrival, however, many species were a little late. The warbler migration was particularly heavy, with a large wave May 10-14 and another smaller one May 24-25. Donald Newman says of the latter, "At the Shaker Lakes Bird Sanctuary throughout the afternoon of May 24, Mr. & Mrs. George King and I watched a dizzying and seemingly endless wave of warblers flow through the trees in uncounted numbers...and at 6:15 P.M. when we reluctantly departed the movement was still in progress. Bay-breasted warblers, almost all of them males, were by far the most numerous and we saw an estimated 150 in a period of 3 and 1/2 hours....Accompanying the Bay-breasts were Magnolias, Blackburnians and Canadas in considerable force, with a scattering of Wilson's, Chestnut-sided and Redstarts." In the earlier wave Black and White, Yellow, Magnolia, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided and Redstart were quite common (Hill). An interesting note is that 4 out of 5 of the warblers brought in to the Museum were found to be very "fat", much more so than in other years in the spring (Kula).

SPECIES OCCURRENCE

Species not specifically mentioned
were apparently present in usual numbers

Jim Akers reported 3 white-winged scoters at Avon March 12, and a dead bird of this species was found April 27 on the Black Brook Bird Walk (Booth).

Turkey vultures were seen in numbers at 2 different roosts at the Hinckley Reservation, with as many as 50 birds in each roost (Wallin).

On May 15 on the Museum grounds a sparrow hawk dropped on a flicker feeding at the base of a tree and found himself in a battle, the flicker grasping the sparrow hawk with its claws and jabbing it repeatedly with its bill until the flicker finally flew off, leaving the sparrow hawk literally shaking its head (Kula).

Aurora Pond was visited by a bald eagle May 3, 12 and 21 (Carrothers and Gaede, Hamann).

Raymond Hill saw a pigeon hawk May 10 at Richmond Beach.

On April 18 while driving down the hill on Route 87 towards the Chagrin River a ruffed grouse was seen at the edge of the road, and when the car was backed up slowly to get a better view of the bird, it ran out onto the road towards the car as if to attack it. This procedure was repeated several times, the grouse retreating into the weeds in between forays (Whittier).

An encouraging number of bobwhite were reported this spring - not abundant by any means, but more numerous than in the last few years.

Every spring members of the rail family dropping down in city yards and streets, presumably exhausted during migration flights, provide a shock to people who have never seen or heard of the birds before. A sora was discovered being stalked by a cat in her yard in Shaker Heights May 20 by Mrs. Deforest Mellon, who put the bird in her car overnight, where it was observed the next day pacing up and down the back seat. At Lee and Miles Road on April 24 a coot was chased by dogs while about 50 people looked on, until it was rescued by James Lanigan, who brought it to the Museum. Both these birds were released at Shaker Lake. A Florida Gallinule kept in a bird cage overnight May 22 was released by the finder only after being assured by the Museum that it had no monetary value.

Robert McNeese reports an unusual concentration of woodcock on April 27 in Brecksville just off Riverview Road near Wiese Road, where he flushed 13 birds in a circular marshy area about 2 yards in diameter resulting from drainage of earlier rains.

A Western sandpiper was seen on the Black Brook Bird Walk May 2 (Booth), the first spring record we have for the Cleveland region.

Donald Newman saw 43 common terns at White City May 18, while Raymond Hill saw 20 black terns May 3 at Aurora Pond.

Owen Davies saw a long-eared owl April 22 in Lakewood.

From May 10-19 a red-headed woodpecker stayed in the museum yard and spent most of its time following a robin around that was feeding young in a nest in an elm tree. Whenever the robin had food in its mouth, the woodpecker would dart at it, whereupon the robin would fly 30 or 40 feet away, sometimes dropping the food before it flew.

There was a heavy blue jay migration along the lake shore this spring. The Black Brook Bird walk figures are: April 27(125), May 4(225), May 11(250), May 18(50), May 25(30) (Booth). On April 27 also at Black Brook the Burroughs Nature Club saw 400 jays in flocks of 87,44,43,50,31,30,21 and 23, mostly flying high and steadily north, while some flocks appeared to be resting at the north edge of the swamp (Pallister). On May 11 at Huntington Park Bay Village, there were 100 jays (Fleming), and on May 4 at Gordon Park 125 (Piskac, Smiley).

Mrs. George King saw 2 Bewick's Wrens at the Coast Guard Station, Fairport, on May 4, while Mrs. R.V.D. Booth reported a short-billed marsh wren March 29 at Headlands and Coast Guard Roads, and Mrs. Lucille Mannix saw 2 birds of this species at Black Brook on May 24.

A White-eyed Vireo was seen on the South Chagrin Bird Walk May 4 (Sturm).

P.F. Johnson reported seeing the prothonotary warbler along the edge of the Black River May 22, and says he had never seen it there before, while Adele Gaede saw one at Shaker Lake for the first time May 21.

There were 9 records of the golden-winged warbler, one of the orange-crowned (April 20, Elyria Bird Walk, Akers), 2 of the pine, one of prairie (May 10, Black Brook, King), 7 of Connecticut and 14 of mourning. Two very unusual records were for the Brewster's warbler and the yellow palm warbler. The Brewster's was seen at the Holden Arboretum May 18 by Mildred Stewart, Lucille Mannix and Marjorie Ramisch who writes, "First located by song (like that of golden-winged warbler), then seen at top of large trees just beyond pine planting. At first glance appeared to be blue-winged. Check of coloration revealed white underparts." The yellow palm warbler was seen May 15 by Owen Davies in his backyard in Lakewood. There are 4 other records for northern Ohio for this species, 2 sight and 2 specimen (Borrer, Donald J., A Check List of the Birds of Ohio. Reprinted from the Ohio Journal of Science, Vol. 50, pp. 1-32 January 1950). The western and yellow palm are readily distinguishable in the field.

Orchard orioles were seen this spring at Shaker Lake, Holden Arboretum and Gordon Park, but no nest has been reported to us.

Evening grosbeaks thinned out during the period, flocks being reported at Mantua in March (14 birds) (Rogers), Willoughby up until May 25 (Barbour), and at Brecksville, where Dr. McKay on Wiese Road saw the last male May 15 and the last female May 27. The previous last date for this species was May 20, 1950. Dr. McKay fed altogether from November 13 to May 27 700 pounds of sunflower seeds. Sixteen of the birds in his flock were banded by Dr. Ralph W. Dexter, 6 males and 10 females, the birds being captured in single cell automatic traps set on the window feeder. According to the THE GROSBEAK SURVEY NEWS published by B.M. Shaub of Northampton, Massachusetts, there was a wider dispersal of evening grosbeaks this winter than in any previously recorded flight and in far larger numbers. Wintering ground

extended from northwestern Minnesota to Nova Scotia and south to Greenville, South Carolina. The species was scarce in those part of southern Ontario and Quebec that usually report fairly large winter populations. The Schaub's think that a relative scarcity of some of the evening grosbeak's natural foods on the usual wintering grounds explains the invasion.

Pine grosbeaks were reported for the last time in March - 4 on March 9 eating apple seeds in the Brecksville Metropolitan Park (Hostetler), and 2 immature males on March 17 in the north end of Cascade Park, Elyria, where winter records were also made (P.F. Johnson).

BIRDS OF CLEVELAND lists Nelson's sparrow as a fall migrant, but several were seen this spring at Richmond Beach - 1 May 23, 2 May 28 (1 collected) (Kula, Sandera).

Forty white-crowned sparrows spent May 10 at the Museum singing in the rain (Flahive).

New latest spring dates are:

Baldpate, May 25(1), Sherwin Pond (Sherwin)
 Redhead, May 18(1), Gordon Park (Carrothers)
 American Merganser, May 21(1), Sherwin Pond (Sherwin)
 Tennessee Warbler, May 31(2), Bedford (Knight)
 Evening Grosbeak, May 27(1), Brecksville (McKay)
 Pine Siskin, May 25(2), Gordon Park (Piskac); (1), Holden
 Arboretum Bird Walk (Bole)

New earliest spring dates are:

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, March 2(1), Willoughby (Barbour)
 Cerulean Warbler, April 12(1), Headlands and Coast Guard Road (Booth)

RECORDS FROM NEIGHBORING LOCALITIES

Grand River

April 22, 1 mockingbird - Don Strock

Pymatuning

May 3, 500 ring-billed gulls, mostly in a field - Rendell Rhoades

Leesville Lake

April 28, 1 Carolina chickadee - James F. Akers

MOSQUITO CREEK					
	March		April		May
	22	29	5	20	25
Loon		2	10		
Pied-billed Grebe		5			
Great Blue Heron		1	1		
Whistling Swan	150	125	50		
Mallard		20		3	
Black Duck		12		2	
Gadwell		10			
Baldpate		100			
Pintail		150	1		
Blue-winged Teal		5		6	
Shoveler				4	
Redhead		60	50	5	
Ring-necked Duck		20			
Canvasback		40		2	
Lesser Scaup		15		50	
American Merganser		20	6		
Coot		30	20	300	
Semipalmated Plover					4
Black-bellied Plover					1
Hudsonian Curlew					1
Upland Plover				2	
Greater Yellowlegs				3	
Semipalmated Sandpiper					8
Herring Gull			50		
Pipit	20	12			
Redwing		200			
OBSERVERS: March 22, April 20, Hill; March 29, Gaede, Hill, Carrothers, Erickson; April 5, Booth; May 25, King					

SANDUSKY REGION						
	March		April	May		
	15	21	12	3	12	25
Loon				2		
Horned Grebe	1					
Pied-billed Grebe	1			1	12	1
Great Blue Heron	1			20	26	12
American Egret					17	8
Black-crowned Night Heron				6	25	10
American Bittern				2	6	6
Least Bittern						1
Whistling Swan		*1500	1			
Canada Goose					25	
Mallard	14		4	12	109	10
Black Duck	1000		2	5	7	3
Gadwell	8					
Baldpate	140		4	2	6	3
Pintail	100					
Blue-winged Teal				4	19	
Shoveler	25				2	1
Wood Duck	1		4	2	4	2
Redhead	15					
Ring-necked Duck	8					
Canvasback	100		5			
Greater Scaup	6					
Lesser Scaup	50			5	14	4
Goldeneye	20					
Bufflehead	5		4	2		
Ruddy Duck			5	15		3
American Merganser	350		8			
Red-breasted Merganser				6		
Bald Eagle	2					1
King Rail					6	
Sora					25	
Coot	25		3	1	12	10
Semipalmated Plover					10	
Golden Plover				**83		
Ruddy Turnstone					1	
Wilson's Snipe				1	12	
Spotted Sandpiper				10	2	5
Greater Yellowlegs				10	5	
Lesser Yellowlegs				10	50	
Pectoral Sandpiper				12		
Least Sandpiper					4	
Red-backed Sandpiper				1	9	7
Semipalmated Sandpiper						8
Herring Gull			1	6	12	
Ring-billed Gull			150	8	60	25
Bonaparte's Gull				2		

	March		April	May		
	15	21	12	3	12	25
Common Tern				5	4	3
Caspian Tern				10	10	
Black Tern					185	15
Kingbird					***39	
Migrant Shrike					1	
American Pipit				40	75	
White-eyed Vireo					1	
Prothonotary Warbler					1	
Redwing	2000		304			100

OBSERVERS: March 15, Carrothers, Ramisch, Mannix, Erickson, Gaede, March 21, Bednarik; April 12, Carrothers, Perner; May 3, McNeese; May 12, Akers; May 25, Carrothers, Cook, Dobbins, Gaede

* Sixteen miles west of Magee Marsh

** Observed in varying phases of spring and winter plumage in open fields just off Highway 2 west of Port Clinton, located in 3 or 4 different fields within a distance of 10 miles, at least 5 groups of varying numbers observed at length in strong light. One flock of approximately 40 whistled overhead with a sound similar to a jet plane. Fields had been turned into mud flats by the heavy spring rains. At approximately the same time in 1951 in the same area 94 individuals of this species were counted.

*** In freshly plowed field of several acres between Castalia and Huron, feeding from clod to clod.

NESTING RECORDS

The following are some of the more interesting or unusual nesting records sent in for this period:

The Canada Geese nested at North Chagrin Reservation again this year. Five had arrived at Sunset Pond Marsh 25. Presumably 3 of the young returned with the parents, but by March 30 only 2 birds remained. This pair nested on the island in the pond and incubation was in process April 15. Seven young hatched May 7. One of these subsequently disappeared, and 6 young are being raised (Wallin).

Prairie Horned Lark - Lawn of B.F. Goodrich Research Center, Brecksville - March 18, bird carrying nesting material; March 20, nest complete, no eggs; March 25, 3 eggs, female on nest; April 3, 3 eggs female on nest; April 4, 3 young, female on nest, light rain; April 5,6, five inch snowfall nest site covered; March 8, snow melted, young birds dead in nest, old birds seen on lawn, an example of the weather hazards experienced by early nesting species (Gibbs).

Bank Swallow - By May 31 there were an estimated 500 holes in the sand bank on Snowville Road, Brecksville. New holes were dug daily. This bank was fresh at the start of the season (Gibbs).

Cliff Swallow - On April 24 about 20 returned to former nesting place under eaves of large barn in Huntsburg. In about a week they began building nests. Several nests were taken over by English sparrows, but the colony was not driven away (Kula).

Bluebird - Nesting in box, April 17, 2 eggs; April 21, 5 eggs, female on nest; April 28, nest disturbed, eggs gone. Claw marks on post and box indicated large animal such as raccoon or opossum. May 14, revisited box, 5 eggs with female on nest; May 22, nest disturbed, one broken egg in box. May 27, nest found in previously unoccupied box 200 yards away, 5 eggs. Whether the same female laid all 3 clutches of eggs is not known, but the evidence indicates it. If so, it provides a good example of the persistence of the bluebird in its nesting efforts. The bluebird box program of the Cuyahoga Falls-Akron Audubon Club provided 55 boxes, 42 (76%) of which were occupied by bluebirds, 3 by house wrens, and 1 by English sparrows (Gibbs).

THE WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB ANNUAL MEETING

by Adela Gaede

Among the three hundred plus members of the Wilson Ornithological Club who attended the thirty-third annual meeting at Gatlinburg, Tennessee, in the Smoky Mountains were the following members of our Kirtland Club group: Mildred Stewart, Lucille Mannix, Elsie Erickson and myself. Arthur Stupka, park naturalist, and his committee made splendid preparation for the meetings, even having the young dogwood trees, lining the main strait of Gatlinburg, in bloom. Regrettably, they had failed to get in touch with the weatherman, who furnished plenty of moisture to the region after a twenty-seven day dry spell.

The meetings were held in the fine large playhouse of the Greystone Hotel. As usual, the papers presented were interesting and informative. The first paper, given by Arthur Stupka, "Some Natural History Features of Great Smoky Mountain National Park", gave us some idea of the history of the park and what to look for in the way of flora and fauna. Other papers of special interest were Margaret Morse Nice's "Concerning Incubation Periods", Olin Sewal Pettingill, Jr.'s "Ornithologically Unexplored Areas of the United States", James T. Tanner's "Survival Rates of Passerine Birds", Ernst Mayr's "Problems of Bird Systematics" and Harrison B. Tordoff's "The Relationships of the 'Fringillid' Subfamily Carduelinae". In what a very limited area some birds can be found was illustrated by Thomas L. Quay in his discussion of "Habitat and Territory in MacGillivray's Seaside Sparrow."

A number of bird walks were planned for Sunday. Among the nine courageous members who took the eight mile hike were our three Kirtland members. If a hike along the Appalachian Trail had always been one of your aims, a bit of fog and mist could not discourage you from taking at least those four miles of this famous trail. Though the superb view from Charlie's Bunion was lost in the mist, the red-breasted nuthatch seen at that spot, the singing of the winter wrens along the way, and the glimpse of the veery were appreciated.

As Mildred Stewart had to return on Sunday, she missed this outing and the beautiful weather of Monday. That day was given over to birding in the morning and shopping in the afternoon. The golden-winged warbler singing all about the park headquarters was the find of the morning; the beautiful weaving, pottery and wood carving the joy of the afternoon.

The trip homeward was made under sunny skies and delightful episodes made it a memorable trip. Two mockingbirds answering each other in song, the orchard oriole discovered in a thicket, the Carolina wren's nest shown us by a farmer (Lucille held one of the babies in her hand), the summer tanager seen at Norris dam and again in Cumberland Falls Park, the twenty-four bobolinks singing in the tree-top, the identification of the black vulture were some of these.

In his book "A Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi", Pettingill tells where in Cumberland Falls Park the red-cockaded woodpecker can be found. On our way to the Smokies we had stopped there in search of it and actually found one. There we also found the yellow-throated warbler.

The countryside was beautiful; redbud, white and pink dogwood and many other flowering shrubs were at their best. Set off as these were against the delicate greens of the unfolding buds, the world was a fairyland of beauty. We hope to be some of those who attend the 1953 meeting June 12 and 13 at the University of Michigan Biological Station on Douglas Lake. Can't we persuade others to join us? We have it on good authority that Kirtland's Warbler will be seen.