



CLEVELAND REGION

Published by
The Cleveland Museum of Natural History
and
The Kirtland Bird Club

THE CLEVELAND REGION

The Circle Has A Radius of 30 Miles Based on Cleveland Public Square

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Beaver Creek | 30 Lake Rockwell |
| 2 North Amherst | 31 White City |
| 3 Lorain | 32 Euclid Creek Reservation |
| 4 Black River | 33 Chagrin River |
| 5 Elyria | 34 Willoughby |
| 6 LaGrange | Waite Hill |
| 7 Avon-on-the-Lake | 35 Sherwin Pond |
| 8 Clague Park | 36 Gildersleeve |
| 9 Clifton Park | 37 North Chagrin Reservation |
| 10 Rocky River | 38 Gates Mills |
| 11 Cleveland Hopkins Airport | 39 South Chagrin Reservation |
| 12 Medina | 40 Aurora Lake |
| 13 Hinckley Reservation | 41 Aurora Sanctuary |
| 14 Edgewater Park | 42 Mantua |
| Perkins Beach | 43 Mentor Headlands |
| 15 Terminal Tower | 44 Mentor Marsh |
| 16 Cleveland Public Square | 45 Black Brook |
| Cuyahoga River | Headlands State Park |
| 17 Brecksville Reservation | 46 Fairport Harbor |
| 18 Akron | 47 Painesville |
| Cuyahoga Falls | 48 Grand River |
| 19 Akron Lakes | 49 Little Mountain |
| 20 Gordon. Park | Holden Arboretum |
| Illuminating Co. plant | 50 Corning Lake |
| 21 Doan Brook | |
| 22 Natural Science Museum | |
| Wade Park | |
| 23 Baldwin Reservoir | 51 Stebbin's Gulch |
| 24 Shaker Lakes | 52 Chardon |
| 25 Lake View Cemetery | 53 Burton |
| 26 Forest Hill Park | 54 Punderson Lake |
| 27 Bedford Reservation | 55 Fern Lake |
| 28 Hudson | 56 LaDue Reservoir |
| 29 Kent | 57 Spencer Wildlife Area |



CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN
PARK SYSTEM



PORTAGE ESCARPMENT
(800-foot Contour Line)

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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THE WEATHER
1 March - 31 May, 1983

March - Precipitation occurred on 12 days to total 3.54 inches, 0.55 inches above normal. Snow measured 11.3 inches with 5.7 inches on the 10th, 2.4 inches on the 11th, and 3.0 inches on the 22nd. Lake Erie remained open, only harbors retained rotting ice in the first few days. Temperatures varied widely, with 81 degrees on the 5th and 19 degrees on the 22nd. Overall, temperatures averaged out to 40.8 degrees, 4.2 degrees above normal. Sunshine prevailed 46% of the time possible. Lake Erie water temperature rose from 33 to 39 degrees.

April - Generally warmer in the first half and cooler in the last half. Extremes in temperature were from 27 degrees on the 18th to 80 degrees on the 27th. Temperatures averaged 47.1 degrees, 1.0 degree below normal. 15 days of precipitation included snow on the 17th with 2.1 inches, the 18th with 1.0 inch, and 19th with 0.3 inches. Total precipitation was 4.48 inches, 1.16 inches above normal. Lake water temperature rose from 39 to 46 degrees. Sunshine prevailed 37% of the time possible.

May - Temperatures averaged out to 55.7 degrees, 2.5 degrees below normal. Precipitation occurred on 14 days to total 4.17 inches, 0.87 inches above normal. Lake Erie water temperature increased from 46 degrees to 52 degrees. Sunshine prevailed 53% of the time possible.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

The following comment was heard from a contributor - "If you just came to the Sunday morning birdwalks, you would think there was no spring migration." And this was true as weather was miserable, very cool, rainy, sleety et cetera. But migration is never stopped, just delayed; and days of little activity are followed by those days when you can get 20 species of warblers by just walking around half of your local park. The spring season is from March 1 to May 31 and the following paragraphs will attempt to portray that season for you.

Waterfowl Waterfowl migration was not one of the season's highlights. Quite in contrast to spring 1982, when a freak April blizzard grounded many Common Loons, was the lack of any numbers of this species in April. Maximum count was three at Lake Rockwell on May 13 (Rosche) with the balance of the spring's sightings, just five individuals, on four dates in April. Tundra Swans made just token appearances with the largest count being two "flocks" of five birds -March 20 over Kuhlman Woods and probably the same group at Muny Light and five over a field near Aurora on March 29. Most unusual, but perhaps typifying the spring's waterfowl migration, was the total lack of any concentrations of Red-breasted Mergansers. 147 was the highest tally for the season when the normal high count for a spring numbers 2,000 to 3,000. It can only be surmised that the lack of ice on the lake in February and the warm, early March weather pushed Red-breasted Mergansers out of the region early.

If there were a highlight to the waterfowl migration, it had to be a place, the Gordon Park Impoundment, not a species of bird. Here a number of species lingered well past their normal departure dates -- American Wigeon (May 22), Redhead (May 18), Greater Scaup (May 18), Common Goldeneye (May 18), Bufflehead (May 16), and Ruddy Duck (2) (May 18). And finally, two inland sightings at LaDue Reservoir seemed atypical for the season —a very unusual local count of 60 to 100 Northern Pintails on March 26 and 6 Oldsquaw, calling and in almost summer plumage, on April 5 (Elder).

Hawks With two exceptions, hawks were not impressive. Peak days were April 27 with **111** Broad-winged Hawks at Perkins Beach and May 2 with 59 Sharp-shinned Hawks there

(Klamm). Quite interesting was April 14 when more than a dozen American Kestrels were reported from both Perkins Beach and Sims Park. Northern Harrier, with 5 at Sims Park and 2 at Perkins Beach, was also a species duly reported from both places. Other evidence of a strong west-to-east lakefront movement for April 14 was indicated by the 135 Tree Swallows at Perkins Beach and a fantastic 2,000+ at Sims Park. It is always interesting when reports, such as the above, from two independent field parties at opposite ends of the region can be compared to see how extensive a day's movement was and which species were involved.

Shorebirds "Few shorebirds" was the terse commentary of one veteran shorebirder to describe the spring's migration. With the exception of the ubiquitous Killdeer, shorebirds were just not around and contributors cited high water both in Kent and at the Gordon Park Impoundment as reasons for these birds' poor local showing. Some of the better reports were 25 Lesser Yellowlegs on May 2 and 1 Black-bellied Plover on May 29 at Gordon Park and 2 Upland Sandpipers at Burke Airport from April 24 to 26.

Gulls Glaucous Gulls, all single birds, were reported on three dates in March, the last March 25. Great Black-backed Gulls remained in the area until mid-May. But the real story, in a repeat of the previous winter, was the Bonaparte's Gull. An analysis of the migration patterns of this species from late February to early April is certainly warranted. The following table will serve as the start of the discussion:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
1970	4-18	1,533	1976	4-4	925
1971	4-11	575	1977	4-8	2,190
1972	4-8	5,605	1978	4-16	1,000
1973	4-14	1,345	1979	4-23	2,570
1974	4-14	228	1980	4-20	2,540
1975	4-20	665	1981	4-16	700
			1982	4-5	4,560

Easily seen from the above is that peak numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls have usually been recorded in mid-April. Also revealed from past spring records is that very few Bonaparte's Gulls are noted before the beginning of April after which there is a gradual build-up of numbers until the "peak" day is reached. A far different migration

occurred this spring. The previous issue of the Cleveland Bird Calendar documented the unprecedented wintering of this species along the Cleveland lakefront. After a slight mid-February drop-off in numbers, a buildup of Bonaparte's Gulls was already underway at the end of February with several thousand along the Cleveland lakefront. Numbers built up locally until March 25 when 11,700 Bonaparte's Gulls were recorded. This count is probably the highest count ever in the spring in the entire history of the region. Counts of more than 10,000 were also noted on March 17 and 20. After April 2, usually around which date the Bonaparte's Gulls are just beginning to penetrate the Cleveland area, numbers thinned out with counts of 150-875 being made until April 30. But why the unprecedented March numbers? Since more Bonaparte's Gulls wintered locally than ever before, it is not difficult to see that springtime numbers, augmented by individuals that had wintered along the east coast or at other Great Lakes locations, would naturally be greater than in previous springs. Not coincidentally, Little Gulls, with 10 along the lakefront on March 20, peaked with the Bonaparte's Gulls. The Little Gulls were described as "quite vocal" on several occasions and certainly were commencing their courting activities to be consummated, perhaps, in more suitable breeding habitat at other Great Lakes locations.

Owls For the first time in several years, no Long-eared Owls were located at the Old Brooklyn Airport. Since the construction of I-480 will take this place, one of the best places to attempt to find owls in the area will be lost.

Whip-poor-will Certainly the occurrence of this species in our area follows a curious pattern. Only one Whip-poor-will could be found in the spring of 1982; however, as many as three, at Donald Gray Gardens on May 3 (LePage), were observed and during the period from April 28 to May 10 Whip-poor-wills could usually be found at this location. The only other place where this species was recorded this spring was Sims Park, similar to Donald Gray Gardens in that it is a park bordering the lake. Since the majority of Whip-poor-will sightings are made at these two lakefront parks, the birds must be using these places as resting areas before moving farther northward across the lake. And surely indicated by the numbers of sightings was an excellent northward movement of this species into our area during late April and early May.

Flycatchers The last several days of May were teeming with flycatchers. At Sims Park, singing Least, Acadian, Alder, Willow, and Olive-sided Flycatchers appeared daily after May 20 while flycatchers were described as “conspicuous” around Kent and Portage County (Rosche). It is heartening to see a very increased awareness of flycatcher migration. Since these birds peak at the same time as warblers and thrushes and are much more difficult to identify when silent, they were not being as actively sought by birders as these species and consequently the true extent of their abundance was being underreported. Now the challenge of flycatcher identification is yielding new knowledge about the movements of these birds.

Eastern Bluebird it is usually March and early April when migrant Eastern Bluebirds pass along the lakefront. At Sims Park; however, migrant bluebirds were noted during the last half of May and two clearly migrant birds surprised an observer at Erie Street Cemetery in downtown Cleveland on May 26. Possible reasons for such late movements were given as follows: (1) the birds observed were actually very late migrants and (2) there was a northward dispersal of bluebirds whose early spring nesting attempts failed because of very cool weather. And it was even speculated that since bluebirds were somewhat regular at Sims Park that they may be nesting locally, but this was dismissed because proper habitat is lacking for bluebirds at this location.

Cedar Waxwing Incredibly, no Cedar Waxwings were reported from March 1 to May 14. Then, during the latter third of May, flocks of from 10 to 70 birds appeared throughout the region and played around into early June. Of the local nesting species, this one certainly deserves the title of most erratic.

Warblers Bang! it was May 7, with warm, southerly winds, and the trees were filled with warblers. 21 species were tallied that day, with a majority of those species making their initial appearances in the area. Shaker Lakes produced high counts of 200 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 15 Black-and-White Warblers, 200 Blackburnian Warblers, and 20 Black-throated Green Warblers, and the observer noted these were conservative figures. (Besser)! Other impressively abundant species were Magnolia Warbler,

Tennessee Warbler, which invaded Kent with hundreds being seen (Rosche), and Yellow-breasted Chat, with at least four different individuals banded at Sims Park. All in all, local birders expressed satisfaction with the warbler migration.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Little Blue Heron - An adult was at Peninsula from May 7 to the end of the period (Rosche).

Black Scoter - A bird in female plumage was present at Gordon Park on May 4 and 5 (Klamm).

White-winged Scoter - An adult male was discovered off Sims Park on the late date of April 26 (Corbin).

Bald Eagle - An immature bird was at Lake Rockwell on March 2 (Rosche).

Northern Goshawk - (1) One was briefly observed at West Branch State Park on March 20 (Rosche). (2) This species was added to the ever-growing Sims Park bird list when an adult moved in from out over the lake and headed toward Lakeshore Boulevard on April 13 (Corbin).

Merlin - Three were reported: 2 over the old Brooklyn Airport on April 1 (Bacik) and 1 at Perkins Beach on May 2 (Klamm).

Peregrine Falcon - One soared effortlessly on a thermal over South Chagrin Metropark on the extremely late date of May 14 (Hannikman, Corbin, Kellerman, Mallon).

Purple Gallinule - An injured bird was brought into the Cleveland Museum of Natural History on April 17 and died shortly thereafter (Gustafson fide Corbin).

Laughing Gull - A good influx into the area with adults at Lorain on April 13, May 3, May 18 (2), May 19, and May 23 (2 second-summer birds) (LePage, Pogacnik); at East 55th on May 8 (LePage), at Wildwood Park on April 16(2) (Kellerman, Corbin), and Sims Park on April 17 (Corbin, Hannikman).

Franklin's Gull - Adults were reported from Lorain on May 4, 9, and 19 (Emery, LePage, Pogacnik).

Herring Gull - At period's end at least one pair was attempting to nest at Gordon Park (Klamm) and one pair at Lake Rockwell (Rosche).

Iceland Gull - A single bird was at East 72nd Street on March 12 (LePage).

Black-legged Kittiwake - An immature was noted at Lorain on March 26 (Pogacnik).

Saw-whet Owl - (1) One was finally found at the Old Brooklyn Airport on March 22 (Bacik). (2) One was discovered on a porch in Elyria on April 7 and was brought to the Lorain County Metropark District Visitor's Center where it died (*fide* Johnson). (4) In the heart of downtown Cleveland a single bird was banded at the Erie Street Cemetery on April 8 (Hannikman, Talkington). (5) The sound of scolding Black-capped Chickadees brought an observer to discover Sims Park's first Saw-whet Owl on the rather late date of May 2. This bird was also banded (Corbin, Talkington).

Sedge Wren - For most of the afternoon of May 9 one was present at Sims Park (Corbin).

Loggerhead Shrike - A rare visitor to northern Ohio, one was at Gordon Park on April 24 and 25 (Klamm).

Golden-winged Warbler - About noon on April 25 a male struck a picture window of an apartment on Noble Road. The bird recovered and flew to a Blue Spruce where it joined a female Golden-winged Warbler. Both birds remained until about 3:30 p.m. (Flahive). This date is a new early spring date of arrival for this species.

Yellow-throated Warbler - One was briefly glimpsed at Sims Park on May 2 (Talkington) and another occurred in Kent May 9 and 10 (Rosche).

Worm-eating Warbler - One was reported from Kent on May 8 (*fide* Rosche).

Kentucky Warbler - Overflight birds were at Sims Park on May 7 (Mallon), Shaker Lakes on May 8 (Besser, LePage), at Rocky River on May 12 (Klamm), and on May 24 at Chapin State Forest (Corbin).

Summer Tanager -A first-year male was found at Sims Park on May 31 (Corbin). The May 31 date was highly unusual as overflights of this species almost never occur so late in May.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow -Two sightings in a single spring season were remarkable —on May 18 and 28, both at Sims Park (Hannikman).

FIELD NOTES

Common Redpoll Banded in Anchorage Alaska Recovered in Lake County Ohio During the winter of 1982 and through the following spring there was an irruption of Common Redpolls at the backyard feeders at my home in Lake County, Ohio. The location is about one-half mile west of the mouth of the Chagrin River and 100 yards from Lake Erie. Two mist nets were operated near the bird feeders, mainly on weekends, but some banding was done before leaving for work and some after returning home.

It all began on 14 February and ended 19 April. During that period 645 Common Redpolls were banded -- 130 of which were ASY-M —all others were AHY-U. The big day was 20 March with the netting and banding of 82 Common Redpolls and the capture and banding of a Hoary Redpoll - a handsome AHY-M. The only previous record of Hoary Redpoll banding in Ohio was in 1977. My wife Cynthia first saw the Hoary and called me at work to say “there is a strange white Redpoll at the feeder”. The Hoary was easily spotted among the flock of Common Redpolls due to its whiteness and also its more stubby, conical bill. The bird was present the day before it was captured and banded, and for three days following.

Among the 49 Common Redpolls netted on 25 March there was one bird, an ASY-M, that was wearing a foreign band #1510-29847. When I sent a report to the Office of Migratory Bird Management of the Fish and Wildlife Service, they were at first reluctant to make this record a part of their permanent files without a double check, due to the unusual nature of the recovery. Only after confirming the date to them did I learn of the truly impressive migration of this bird. It had been banded in Anchorage, Alaska (more than 3,000 miles from my mist nets) on 6 February 1981 by Mrs. Elizabeth Allen (subpermittee to Larry Hood of Anchorage).

Mrs. Allen ran a large feeding program in her yard in the foothills east of the city and banded 5 other Common Redpolls that day. Larry Hood expressed surprise at the recapture saying (pers. corres.) "as we are on the 'wrong' side of the mountain for movement into the midwest, I can only assume this was an interior bird and in the fall of 1981 the bird went southeast instead of southwest. I have handled several hundred Redpolls here in Alaska, but have had only a handful of returns and only 4 recoveries; window kills within less than one-half mile of the banding site. Why this one was such a 'traveling man' is hard to understand."

Examination of the records from the Bird Banding Laboratory reveal that 10,758 Common Redpolls were banded in Alaska from 1956 to 1981 -- and only 11 recoveries were tallied -- of this 11 only one occurred outside Alaska, and that one being our #1510-29847.

Ohio banded Common Redpolls numbered 1,647 from 1960 through March 1982 -- not including my total. There were 5 recoveries tallied, 4 of which were from Ontario, Canada. The 645 individuals banded at my station during February, March, and April 1982 indicates the presence of a remarkable number of Redpolls in northeastern Ohio at that time.

The paucity of "repeaters" at my mist nets suggests an ever-changing population of Redpolls. They were present at the feeders a day or two and then a new group would move in. Only 4 birds repeated at the nets after a week, as follows:

#1580-29990 banded 2-14-82, recaptured 4-11-82
#1580-29993 banded 2-18-82, recaptured 2-28-82
#1580-29994 banded 2-18-82, recaptured 3-28-82
#1580-29101 banded 2-21-82, recaptured 3-21-82

Five days after I had banded the last Redpoll, the Pine Siskins arrived at the feeders and from 24 April to 1 June I banded 331. Not one Pine Siskin was banded during the time the Redpolls were at the feeders. --
JERRY TALKINGTON

Then There Were Two, Then None -This is a continuation of the account of the friendly Screech Owl in the last issue. From March 1 through 20 the Screech Owl was absent from the opening to our blue-painted wood duck house, but it

reappeared on March 21 and was present every day until May 12. From May 12 through May 31 it appeared only on May 16 and 17.

For a time in April I felt a bit uncertain about my identification of the occupant as a Screech Owl. I approached within 50 feet of the duck house with my binoculars and still had difficulty in recognizing the face of an owl. The eyes were closed, and I could not discern the beak, which was evidently partially covered by feathers.

Screech Owls do move about occasionally in mid-day. One day in mid-April I looked out in time to see him fly up from the creek just below the house and swoop up into the opening. I presume he was taking a drink of water.

About 8:35 p.m. on May 11 as daylight was fading I saw about 5 birds flying from the rear of our house, all about the same size; they approached the owl's house and 4 of them chased the Screech Owl into his house. The chasers disappeared immediately, and I was unable to identify them. I could only speculate that they might be other Screech Owls or possibly hostile Blue Jays. At 8:40 p.m. a Screech Owl flew out of the wood duck house and alighted in clear view on the lowest branch of a silver maple only about 65 feet from our house. It was my first good view of the entire owl. A couple minutes later he flew away. Five minutes later I saw a second Screech Owl emerge from the house and sit for a few minutes on a branch just outside of the house. Then he too flew off into the dusk. I did not see the owl again for 5 days until one reappeared at the house entrance on May 16 and 17. No owls were seen after this date. —WALTER P. KREMM

Flycatchers at Sims Park From my vantage point of ten years of birding at Sims Parks I would have to say that it may be the best area in Cleveland for the birder to study empidonax flycatchers both in the spring and fall. Least Flycatchers were present daily at Sims this spring from a very early April 30 through May 31; usually two or more could be seen or heard. Mid and late May brought Willow and Acadian Flycatchers to the park and both species continued to pass through the park well into the first week of June. On May 25 an Alder Flycatcher called briefly early in the morning. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were seen beginning May 22 and continued to be seen until May 31. Add to this list a tale of wandering Eastern Phoebe on

May 12 and 13, small numbers of Eastern Kingbirds, two May sightings of Olive-sided Flycatcher, resident Eastern Wood-pewees and Great Crested Flycatchers, and one can not help being impressed by this small, thirty acre lakefront park in Euclid. I have found that the best time to hear flycatcher vocalizations is early in the morning. I hope more birders take advantage of this “birding hotspot” to sharpen their skills at identifying empids. —DAVE CORBIN

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds Mating Ritual We have three hummer feeders. Just by chance we glanced at the feeder outside our bedroom window. It was alive with hummingbirds, at least 10, probably more. They were just swarming around the feeder, some were perched and feeding, others hovering all around. There was no fighting, as there usually is, but so much movement and circling that it was difficult to tell male from female some of the time, especially since it was dusk when this took place. Here are some of the things we observed from inside the house, just a foot away from the feeder.

There was much jockeying for position. . . sometimes there were two hummers sitting on the same perch, both of them sipping from the hole. We saw a female hovering near a male that was perched and drinking; when he saw her he removed his bill from the feeder (while remaining on the perch), moved his head over to the side to allow the female to feed while she was on the wing. Many times those flying around would stick their beaks into the backs and heads of those perched. During the half hour we watched we saw at least three pairs mating, the females sitting on perches, the males mounting them, and one pair floated to the ground while joined. The mating was very brief. We have no idea how long this had been going on before we arrived at the scene. There was also heavy drinking at the feeders at this time. We think this ritual is what Alexander Skutch describes in his book, Life of the Hummingbird. He calls it a Lek and says this happens when the males congregate in one spot to “sing” and attract females. --
JACK AND DOROTHY MILLER

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Inquiries and correspondence regarding subscriptions to the CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR should be addressed to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, Ohio 44106, Attention: Helen Yenkevich.

AN INVITATION: The Kirtland Bird Club meets at 7:45 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month except July and August at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, Uni-versity Circle. Visitors are always welcome.

The Kirtland Bird Club sponsors a weekly RARE BIRD ALERT at (216) 969-8186. Sightings of species rare in the Cleveland area as well as other interesting observations should be called into the tape on Mondays as the tape is replaced with current sightings each Tuesday. In the case of extreme rarities, e. g., Varied Thrush, Sabine's Gull the tape should be called the day of the observation.