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*The Ohio Cardinal* is a quarterly publication devoted to the study and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife.

*The Ohio Cardinal* exists to provide a permanent and timely record of the abundance and distribution of birds in Ohio; to help document the occurrence of rare species in the state; to provide information on identification of birds; and to provide information on birding areas within Ohio.

*The Ohio Cardinal* invites readers to submit articles on unusual occurrences of birds, bird distribution within the state, birding areas in Ohio, identification tips, and other aspects of ornithology. Bird reports and photographs are welcome from any area of the state. Report forms are not a necessity but will be supplied upon request. Unusual species should be documented, and forms to do so are available upon request from the Editor, Publisher, and Records Committee Secretary.

<b>Seasonal Report Due Dates</b> Winter (Dec.-Feb.)-March 25 Spring (Mar.-May)-June 25 Summer (June-July)-August 25 Autumn (Aug.-Nov.)-December 25	<b>Please send all reports to:</b> Bill Whan 223 E. Tulane Road Columbus, OH 43202 <a href="mailto:billwhan@columbus.rr.com">billwhan@columbus.rr.com</a>
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**On the Cover:** An adult Mississippi kite fed an insect to a juvenal bird in Hocking County 31 August 2007, establishing Ohio's first breeding record in the historical period. Photo by Aaron Boone.



## Summer 2007 Overview and Reports

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June of 2007 in Ohio was warmer than usual, and July cooler, both by a couple of degrees; still, Dayton experienced its third-coolest July on record. More significantly, the summer's weather was considerably drier than normal, with the southwest and south-central counties experiencing pronounced drought. The apple crop was fine from Knox County north, but a disaster to the south. Spring's erratic weather will affect our birdlife well into next year. For example, two large sweetgum trees in the editorial front yard, which in a normal year produce a couple of pickup-loads of fruit, suffered enough from April's freeze that this year's crop of "monkey-balls" won't fill one's hat. Seeds from these and many other local plants will furnish no food for birds in the coming fall and winter.

At this time of year, birds are at their most conservative in choosing habitat, because reproduction is at stake. Outlying areas at airports, for example, continue as refugia for declining grassland nesters like meadowlarks, certain sparrows, and upland sandpipers. Apparently airport managers have found that taller grass, inviting to these species, discourages more bothersome starlings and Canada geese, thus airport margins are less often mowed than agricultural lands. Bird observers are less welcome than ever at such places, but the birds at least are tolerated. Upland sandpipers were abundant in Ohio not so long ago, when pastures were a part of farmlands; in the '30s Hicks found them nesting in 76 Ohio counties; now many 'pastures' are at airports; every Ohio county has an airport, and all are worthy of study for birds. Lark sparrows, birds of drier climes and denizens in Ohio of rare sand "blow-out" habitats—such as reliable areas in the Oak Openings near Toledo—also turned up as breeders in waste areas where native vegetation has not regained a foothold, such as abandoned quarries and gravel pits. Little backwaters or chinks of wild or semi-wild habitat out in the vast agricultural stretches of the state's west also were, when scrutinized by atlasers, found surprisingly productive of birdlife. We were also made aware of how human fragmentation of the landscape—shelterbelts of trees in the prairie, or even a golf course in forested country, can enable birds like the Mississippi kite to reclaim ancestral territory or even exploit new areas. Will highwalls in abandoned strip-mines give common ravens a foothold to return to Ohio?

Increased coverage and reporting accompanying the *Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas* project yielded a bounty of unusual nesting or at least summering records among more common species as well. The Atlas is advancing our knowledge of Ohio's birdlife extensively. Perhaps one cannot salute the sacrifices of Ohio birders who have helped in this effort—most say they're having too much fun—but their contributions will be significant and lasting. More discoveries will follow in years to come, and new help is always needed from the birding community to ensure coverage is adequate. *Cardinal* readers are encouraged to help all they can with this project.

Review species reported this summer included tricolored heron, Mississippi kite (two), Eurasian collared-dove (numerous), scissor-tailed flycatcher (two), and common raven (three), a list impressive less for its length