

# THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

FOUNDED BY FRANCIS H. HERRICK 1905



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## THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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## Editorial Board

Rudolph J. Kula, Harold E. Wallin, Lida H. Whittier

The question of what records shall be included in the BIRD CALENDAR is a perennial one. Since most of our records are sight records, the greatest care must be taken by observers and editors alike in order to insure the accuracy of the record and to make the CALENDAR an authentic report of the bird life of the Cleveland region.

The following criteria for judging records have been adopted by the Editorial Boards

1. Familiarity of the observer with the species in question.
2. Conditions under which the observation was made (such as weather, distance, power glass used, etc.).
3. Detailed account of field marks identifying the species.
4. Verification by a second observer if possible.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Fred J. Ackermann  
James F. Akers  
L. P. Barbour  
Karl E. Bednarik  
Mrs. R.V.D. Booth  
Vera Carrothers  
M. Owen Davies  
H. C. Dobbins  
Maude Doolittle  
Elsie Erickson  
R. H. Flower  
Patricia Fraser  
Adela Gaede  
Winifred Goodsell  
Florence Gray  
Carl F. Hamann  
Emma L. Hanna

U. A. Hengesbach  
R. W. Hill  
Perry Frank Johnson  
Mrs. Frank J. Kidd  
Mrs. Arthur P. King  
Charles H. Knight  
Rudolph J. Kula  
John E. Lieftinck  
Mrs. A. F. Lued  
Mrs. Lucille Mannix  
C. L. Martin  
T. W. Mastin  
Mrs. Phelps Meaker  
Elsie Michel  
William Moseley  
Donald L. Newman

Margaret E. Perner  
Marjorie Ramisch  
Bertram Raynes  
Thomas Sandera  
Mrs. K. L. Seelbach  
Frank N. Shankland  
Margaret H. Sherwin  
Paul Smith  
Walter L. Smith  
Gordon Spare  
Mildred Stewart  
James D. Thorpe  
Mrs. John F. Walker  
Harold E. Wallin  
Mrs. S. H. Watson  
Lida H. Whittier  
Anthony N. Yeagle

## NOTES OF THE WEATHER

From the U.S. Weather Bureau, Cleveland Airport

September - Mostly cool and dry. Most of the precipitation occurred on two days and all time September records for minimum temperatures were set with 44° on the 7th and 41° on the 8th. Heavy rains on the 13th and 22nd.

October - Somewhat warmer and drier than normal and exceptional for the amount of sunshine which was almost continuous on 14 days. During a heat wave over the first 5 days all time maxima for individual dates were set with high temperatures of 88° on the 4th and 5th. The first and only frost was a light formation on the 9th.

November - The third coldest November in 81 years of records. The first hard freeze of the season occurred on the 3rd when the temperature fell to a record breaking 19°. The 15° minimum on the 20th tied the all time record for that date. Precipitation was more than double normal, mostly occurring as snow, with 13.1 inches on the 17th and 18th. Total November snowfall of 18.8 inches was the 3rd greatest for the month since the beginning of snowfall records in 1891.

The unusual snow storms of November seem to have had no effect on bird life, except perhaps in causing a concentration of birds around houses and feeding stations.

## SPECIES OCCURRENCE

Species not specifically mentioned were apparently present in usual numbers

No American egrets were seen in this region during the period covered, and they were reported in less than usual numbers in neighboring localities.

Owen Davies reports a least bittern at Rocky River Reservation September 10.

A flock of 260 whistling swans were at Waite Hill, Willoughby October 28, and 71 November 1 (Sherwin). From November 3-16 two immature whistlers were observed on Rocky River at the head of Madison Avenue. On the 17th one left, and the remaining bird was last observed in the river November 23 (Ackermann).

A new early fall date for the Canada goose is September 26 when 11 were seen flying overhead at East 176th Street, Cleveland, by Adele Gaede. There was a large flight of these geese on October 28-29, observed at Willoughby, Clifton Beach, Abram's Lake, Huntsburg, Mudbrook and Cleveland. There was a stiff northwest wind on the 28th with temperatures ranging from 41° to 49°. Most of the birds seen were flying in a northeast direction.

A lesser snow goose was observed at Clifton Beach October 28 by Owen Davies.

**Other waterfowl moving on October 28 were mallard, black, baldpate, pintail, green-winged teal, wood duck (there were good flights of wood duck all fall), ruddy, redhead, ringneck, lesser scaup and bufflehead.**

**A new early fall date for the redhead is October 12 when 4 were seen on Sherwin Pond at Waite Hill (Sherwin).**

Big flocks of lesser scaup were observed November 11(4000) and November 25 (2000) on the lakefront by Adela Gaede. A new early fall date for this species is September 16 when a single bird was seen at White City by Donald Newman.

All three scoters have been present at White City this fall, the white-winged in greater numbers (maximum of 12) than ever before reported. The white-winged scoter was first reported November 11, surf November 20 (maximum of 6), American November 25 (maximum of 7). The birds were usually close to shore and were seen by many observers.

A new early fall date for the ruddy duck is September 16, one at Sherwin Pond at Waite Hill (Sherwin).

Broad-winged hawks are seldom seen in our region in the fall and there was only one record this year, that of a bird seen October 22 at Elyria by P. F. Johnson.

An osprey was seen September 13 at Aurora Lake by Carl Hamann.

On September 4 and 5 at Lake Dorothy near Barberton John E. Lieftinck saw a Hudsonian godwit. He writes: "First identified by Mr. Alex Carlo of Barberton, subsequently verified by me. It was feeding on the edge of a mud flat and was approached so close that binoculars could no longer be used to good advantage. It was also seen in flight when the white rump and black-banded tail were very noticeable. The bird retained a good deal of the breeding plumage. This, I believe, is the first record for the Cleveland region in the 20th century." Mr. Lieftinck had previously listed a Hudsonian godwit near Sandusky May 19, 1946.

Other highlights of the shorebird migration were a piping plover at White City September 22 (Newman), 2 golden plover November 10 at Edgewater Park, a new late fall date for this species (Hill), 2 black-bellied plover September 9 at White City (Newman), and one September 14 at Black Brook (Ackermann), and a new latest fall date for the pectoral sandpiper November 11 at Lower Shaker Lake (Newman).

Also on September 4 at Lake Dorothy John Lieftinck saw what he believed to be 4 least terns. His description of the observation follows: "Scanning the Lake (which is relatively small and narrow) I noticed four small white birds floating on the water. Presently they took to the air, flew towards me and were promptly identified as Least Terns, presumably on migration from the breeding grounds on islands in the Missouri or Mississippi River. They were exceedingly tame and inquisitive and flew repeatedly to within only a few yards. The small size (smaller than Black Tern), short snow-white tail only barely forked, dark patch through eye region indistinctly continued across nape, very white upper-wing coverts except for dark areas near front edge and tip of wing, as well as the voice, all were diagnostic. I know the species well from visits to the New Jersey Coast. I don't think the Least Tern has been listed in the Cleveland area within historic times, although there are a number of Ohio records. I might add that the bills were dark and that all four birds were in the same immature plumage."

A large flock of 350 prairie horned larks was observed at Brecksville November 11 by Charles Knight.

A late nesting for the barn swallow is indicated by two young perched on a wire and being fed by an adult on September 2 near Burton (Carrothers).

Of several magpies reported in this region last spring - all undoubtedly released birds - the latest reports are of one seen September 7 by Harlie G. Stevick on a road 5 miles east of Solon and reported to us by P. F. Johnson; and a bird that came in the spring to the home of Mrs. Frank J. Kidd, Wiltshire Road, Chagrin Falls (possibly the same bird?) and which stayed on, with assists in the matter of food from Mrs. Kidd, until about Thanksgiving when it was found frozen on a snow bank.

There were no indications of any real migration of chickadees moving from east to west in this region in October, such as was reported from southern Ontario after the 15th of October by Mr. Arnold Dawe of Weston. Donald Newman reports seeing chickadees at Rockwell and East 14th Street on October 30, moving westward, and says he saw a similar band of chickadees on the Mall a few years ago, also traveling in a westerly direction. His comment is: "These several observations would seem to add one more bit of evidence to indicate that the Black-cap is not as much of a permanent resident bird as we sometimes have thought."

The red-breasted nuthatch was first observed September 9 this season and was recorded sparingly in small numbers through November.

On November 6, when the weather was unusually cold, a house wren was seen on the windowsill of the greenhouse near Highland Park in Beachwood.

A new latest fall date for the brown thrasher is November 27 (Watson, Shaker Heights). Of course the thrasher sometimes winters.

Paul Smith saw 3 veeries November 4 at Black Brook, a new latest fall date by almost a month. There was a heavy snowfall that day and the ground and trees were covered with a thick coating of snow and the marsh and streams were all frozen over. About noon time the sun came out for awhile and in the auto ruts on the pavement the snow melted a little, and the veeries were drinking water at the bottom of these ruts.

Mr. Smith also saw 206 golden-crowned kinglets at Black Brook on October 28.

Only one migrant shrike was recorded in our region, on September 8 on Route 87 (Carrothers).

Blue-headed vireo - new latest fall date - November 5 - Cascade Park, Elyria (Johnson).

The warbler migration began early and was heaviest in September, falling off to a trickle in October, except for myrtles. Cape May migration was heaviest September 8-16. Owen Davies comments that during September it was not uncommon to find large flocks comprising 6-10 species in Lakewood Park and Rocky River, while Mrs. Watson says that the migration as observed at her home on South Park Boulevard, Shaker Heights, was earlier and larger than at any time in the last 5 years. She recorded at her feeder a new latest fall date for the bay-breasted warbler, October 20. The Connecticut warbler

was recorded 4 times in September and mourning warbler twice. A new latest fall date for the redstart is October 20, one seen at Lakewood (Davies).

Another new latest fall date is October 16 for the rose-breasted grosbeak (Rocky River Reservation - Ackermann).

The first pine grosbeaks were recorded November 20 when three were seen at Cascade Park, Elyria, by P. F. Johnson. From the 26th to the 30th there was a flock of about 12 in West Hill Colony (Shaker Boulevard and Lander Road) (King), and November 27-30 one of 8 in Willoughby (Shankland). The birds were feeding especially on ornamental crab apples, pulp and seeds, and were also seen eating the buds of large maples. The flocks were made up largely of immature males and females. From 1915 until this fall there have been only 15 records of the occurrence of this species in this region.

The first evening grosbeaks reported were a flock of 50 on October 12, the earliest appearance on record here. They were seen on the lake shore in the City of Rocky River (25 in one tree) by Mrs. John F. Walker. From October 20 on flocks of from 11-50 and small groups of 1-5 were seen in Shaker Heights, South Euclid, Willoughby, Mentor, Kirtland, Chardon, Black Brook, Fowlers Mill, Aurora and Berea. Berea and Rocky River were the only "west side" localities where this species was observed, confirming observations of previous years that the bird has not been observed in our region west of the valley of Rocky River. The flocks were seen eating apples, wild cherries, the fruit of the sumac, and in particular, boxelder seeds. There seems to be a difference of opinion among observers as to whether or not they ate sunflower seeds at feeders. Mrs. Phelps Meeker's experience at her window feeder leaves no doubt in her mind that they do eat sunflower seeds, and in quantity, while Mrs. Watson says they did not eat sunflower seed at her feeder. This species was last seen in this region in large numbers the winter of 1945-46, with scattered records in 1948 and 1950.

Redpolls were observed at Shaker Lake and vicinity November 22-28, the highest number seen being 3, unusually low for this species (Hill, Watson, Mannix, Gaede). November 22 is a new early fall date for the redpoll.

Two pine siskins were seen October 25 at Aurora (Hamann).

New latest fall date for the Henslow's sparrow is October 27, when 3 were seen at Lake Lucerne by R. H. Flower.

Tree sparrows, first reported October 8, have been seen in lesser numbers than usual since then.

The white-crowned sparrow seen September 19 by Mrs. Watson on South Park Boulevard, Shaker Heights, establishes another new earliest fall date.

## RECORDS FROM NEIGHBORING LOCALITIES

Correction: In the last issue of the CALENDAR (Vol. 47, No. 3) an error was made in the designation of a locality on page 5. "Brownhelm Twp, Lorain County" on line 3 of "Records from Neighboring Localities" should read "Vermilion."

MOSQUITO CREEK	September					October	November
	2	8	15	21	22	13	2
Horned Grebe							50
Pied-billed Grebe		3	6				1
Double-crested Cormorant							1
Great Blue Heron	12	12	20	5	6	18	4
American Egret	1						
Canada Goose						45	
Mallard				4			25
Black Duck							200
Pintail				6			
Blue-winged Teal	8	21	25	14	8	4	
Redhead							40
Goldeneye							12
Bufflehead							6
Ruddy Duck							30
American Merganser							25
Coot					1		
Semipalmated Plover	3	1	2	4	6		
Killdeer	25	20	25	40	20		12
Golden Plover	3	7	43	1			
Black-bellied Plover	1			5	1	4	
Ruddy Turnstone	2						
Greater Yellowlegs	5	2	2		7	1	
Lesser Yellowlegs	3	4		8			
Knot	4						
Pectoral Sandpiper		2		4	6	2	
Least Sandpiper	9			3			
Red-backed Sandpiper							20
Dowitcher	2						
Semipalmated Sandpiper					3		
Sanderling	1	4	1	1	8		
Rough-legged Hawk			2				
Bald Eagle	2						
Pipit							50
Observers: Sept. 2,8 (Gaede); Sept. 15-22 (Hill); Sept. 21 (Hamann); Nov. 2 (Akers)							

## PYMATUNING

October 12 - Loon 1, Horned Grebe 12, Double-crested Cormorant 1, Great Blue Heron 10, Canada Goose 50, Mallard 37, Black 50, Pintail 2, Redhead 1, Ruddy 30, Bald Eagle 2, Killdeer 75, Greater Yellowlegs 4, Lesser Yellowlegs 6, Pectoral Sandpiper 25, Red-backed Sandpiper 25, Dowitcher 4, Sanderling 1, Pipit 75, Redwing 400 - James F. Akers

SANDUSKY REGION (Including Castalia and Locust Point)					
	October				November
	14	17	21	28	25
Pied-billed Grebe	9	2		16	2
Great Blue Heron	23	4		5	1
American Egret	3				
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	1				
Mallard	41	10	20	30	44
Black Duck	60	25	15	15	30
Gadwall					50
European Wigeon	1				
Baldpate	500	8	100	400	100
Pintail	55	10	6		50
Green-winged Teal	2				
Blue-winged Teal	9		4		
Shoveler	6		8	50	3
Redhead					50
Ring-necked Duck	1				
Canvasback					125
Lesser Scaup	2				25
Goldeneye					30
Bufflehead					4
Red-breasted Merganser					2
Osprey	1				
Duck Hawk	1				
Coot	26	125		500	100
Semipalmated Plover				2	
Killdeer	15	10			
Golden Plover		22			
Wilson's Snipe	1			1	
Solitary Sandpiper				2	
Lesser Yellowlegs	2	4			
Redwing	735		650		
Observers: Oct. 14 (Davies); Oct. 17 (Akers); Oct. 21 (Mannix); Oct. 28, Nov. 25 (Gaede)					

**SANDUSKY**

Ancient Murrelet, one taken in a commercial fishing net in the spring of 1951 by the Nielsen Fish Company of Sandusky. The mounted bird is in the hands of the fish company owner, Charles Nielsen -Karl E. Bednarik.

**PUT-IN-BAY**

A harlequin duck was collected by Milton Trautman in October 1951 and the skin is in his possession - Karl E. Bednarik.

**SOUTH BASS ISLAND**

A Nelson's sparrow was collected by a student of the Stone Laboratory of Hydrobiology in August 1951 - Karl E. Bednarik.



## BROWNHHELM TWP, LORAIN COUNTY

Perry F. Johnson reports 3 clay-colored sparrows observed at close range October 10, 1951, on the bluff of the Vermilion River immediately north of Camp Iss-See-Kee. The light was good and an 8x glass used. Mr. Johnson became well acquainted with this species while stationed at Camp Wolters, Texas in 1943, where it is a sometimes abundant migrant.

## MAGEE MARSH, OTTAWA COUNTY

November 8 - Knot 1; October 19-21 - duck hawk, 2 adults, 1 juvenile, juvenile now in Cleveland Museum of Natural History collection, stomach contents, 1 golden plover, identified by feet and feathers; November 3 - short-eared owl 1 - Karl E. Bednarik.

## FIELD NOTES

Autumn "Century"

Most of us, at one time or another, have participated in a so-called century-run when, collectively or individually, we have tried to list a hundred or more different species between dawn and dusk.

Mr. John E. Lieftinck once told me that at Bay Point near Sandusky he listed 105 species in one day without straying more than one mile in any direction, but lists of up to 130 species are not uncommon for northern Ohio when several experienced birders combine their efforts and with the help of an automobile visit as many varied habitats as possible.

To the best of my knowledge all of these centuries were made in the month of May at the height of the spring migration. On Saturday, September 22, 1951, Mr. Lieftinck and I set out to prove that May is not the only month in which the figure 100 can be reached. Plans were carefully laid and the hours between 7 and 11 A.M. were spent at Sand Run Reservation and in adjacent gardens of several large estates. We then made a bee-line for Mosquito Creek, with short stops at one or two good places on the way. At 4 P.M. we went back to Akron via Mogadore Dam and Wingfoot Lake, giving us at least one half hour of daylight at either place. Everything worked out according to schedule, except that it rained heavily between 10 and 11 A.M., and after 6 P.M.

Even so, when we reached home shortly after 7 P.M., we had 96 species on our list. To this total could be added another six species that were merely glimpsed or indistinctly heard (Wilson's, Nashville and Blackpoll Warblers, Henslow's Sparrow, Towhee and Bobwhite).

While officially we may have failed to reach one hundred, I think we demonstrated conclusively that it can be done. In fact, if it had not rained heavily for several hours, I feel we would have exceeded one hundred species by a very comfortable margin. I should add that somehow we missed such common birds as Green Heron, American Bittern, Herring Gull, Spotted Sandpiper, Turkey Vulture, Prairie Horned Lark, Phoebe and some others. Our weakest point was warblers, of which we listed only 12 species. Shorebirds, on the other hand, showed up well with 16. Seven kinds of hawks and 9 different kinds of ducks also helped to boost the total. No rear [sic] rarities were found. However, Green-winged Teal, Golden Plover, Red-backed and Baird's Sandpipers as well as American Pipit were among our better finds - James D. Thorpe.

Waterfowl Migration at Magee Marsh, Ottawa County, Ohio

Casual observations on waterfowl migration and behavior were made at the Magee Marsh Wildlife Management Area. The data, herein, deals mainly with the approximate dates of ingress and egress of the various species in the southwestern Lake Erie region.

Marked increases were noted in the numbers of blue-winged teal by late August; a peak was reached about September 10-20. Many still were present during the second week in October. However, by October 19 only a few stragglers remained. A lone blue-winged teal was observed at the Magee Marsh on November 2.

Green-winged teal made their appearance by mid-September and on October 1-2 they seemed to be as abundant as blue-winged teal. From October 9 to 15, groups of more than 100 were often flushed at Magee. Numbers decreased sharply after October 15. Early arrival and departure of green-winged teal was confirmed by other marsh men.

Wood ducks were abundant throughout August and September. No influx was noted, but their numbers appeared to decline after October 1. Occasional birds were seen until November 10, and a single bird on November 20.

Baldpates showed an early movement, and on September 23 were as abundant as mallard and black ducks. Large numbers were present during the last week of September. A slight decline was noted by October 15, and on November 2-5 a cold wave left only a few baldpates in the region.

Pintails also migrated early. Flocks appeared about September 20 and reached an early peak by October 1. A later influx failed to reach proportions of other years. Few pintails remained after the marshes froze on November 2-5.

Gadwalls entered the region early and in unprecedented numbers, but the peak was short-lived. On November 2, the gadwalls were trailing only the black ducks and mallards in abundance, but the freeze of November 2-5 hastened their departure.

Shovellers arrived during the first week in October, and seemed to reach a peak about October 20-25. A few remained until December 1.

Mallard and black ducks are the most numerous species during the fall, and are also the most abundant breeders during the reproductive season. Changes in their abundance during migration are difficult to observe. Relative numbers are of more interest. During August the late afternoon feeding flights of these species were observed. Most of these flights left the Magee marsh and other nearby marshes about two hours before sunset. Feeding was done in stubble fields, often many miles from the marshes. Large flocks moved to a single field. Counts of these birds as they alighted in the field revealed that mallards outnumbered black ducks about 3 to 1. From October 19 to November 1 mallard and black ducks appeared to be about equal in numbers. Subsequent to the freeze of November 2-5, a preponderance of black ducks prevailed, and by December 1 black ducks outnumbered mallards about 4 to 1. Mallards and blacks constituted at least

95% of the dabbling ducks present after November 5.

Early movements of waterfowl into the Lake Erie region resulted in large numbers of ducks by October 19. Most dabbling ducks remained at a peak of abundance for the next two weeks. On November 2, a cold wave brought freezing temperatures and snow. On November 5, most Marshes were covered with 2½ to 3 inches of ice. Observations on waterfowl abundance were made difficult by this condition. Large numbers of ducks rafted on Lake Erie and Sandusky Bay and flew inland to feed on harvested fields of corn and soybeans. Moderate temperatures returned by November 6, but the marshes remained frozen until November 9. Observations at the Magee Marsh on November 6-8 revealed few waterfowl other than mallards and black ducks. The return of open water on November 9 and 10 revealed no additions other than an increase of mergansers and a scattering of diving ducks.

Geese also were present in large numbers during the early part of the season. Local observers reported more geese than have been present for many years. Blue and snow geese appeared on October 12 and reached a peak between October 20 and 25. Some remained after the freeze of November 2-5, but few were seen after November 10. The writer observed about 1 snow goose for every 30 to 40 blue geese. The Canada goose migration was more widely spread than that of the blue geese. Flocks appeared early in October and reached a peak about October 25-November 2. Many flocks were noted during the remainder of November.

Diving ducks seldom occur in the marshes in any appreciable numbers. Lesser scaups were observed at the Magee Marsh on October 10, and occasional flocks were seen thereafter. Ruddy ducks were abundant on Lake Erie on October 16, but few were seen in the marshes. Mergansers appeared at the Magee Marsh about November 1, and many were seen during the period of November 10-18. On November 18-19, another freeze occurred and few mergansers were observed after that date.

Coots were present by the thousands in the marshes from about September 20 until November 2.

Karl E. Bednarik