

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

Fall and Winter number

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NOTES ON THE WEATHER

From the U.S. Weather Bureau at Cleveland Airport

September-October-November - September temperatures averaged a little above normal with heat records set on the 12th (98°) and 13th (96°). Precipitation near normal. October temperatures rather low except for 87° on the 1st. First killing freeze on the 21st with 26°. Driest single month since May 1934 and the third driest October in 82 years of record. Total rainfall since April only about 60% of normal. November had extended warm periods, with the first wintry weather on the 27th. Rainfall from the 18th to the 22nd brought total to near normal. One half inch of snow, far below average.

December-January-February - Mild weather continued in December, the temperature of 62° on the 9th the highest of record. Precipitation above normal, occurring mostly as rain. Total snowfall 8.4 inches, about average for the month but considerably less than the total of 22.1 inches last December. January was also mild with temperatures only briefly below normal. Lowest temperature was 6° on the 6th. Snowfall of 12.5 inches a little more than the average for January, but the seasonal snowfall total of 22.2 inches at the end of the month was less

than the usual accumulation to that time of the year. February was also mild except for a few below normal temperatures, notably 5° on the 18th, the lowest during the winter season. Precipitation below normal, occurring mostly as rain. Snowfall 4.2 inches, most of it falling on the 16th.

In spite of the mild weather, most people had the usual number of birds at their feeders, although no unusual species were reported and there seems to have been a scarcity of some species at particular localities.

THE RECORD

No loons were reported for the fall season, but one was seen December 21 at Fairport (Booth).

A flock of 336 horned grebes was seen November 16 at White City by Donald Newman, who says, "The birds were strung out singly and in small groups all along the lake beyond the breakwall as far as I could see with binoculars...This is the largest concentration of this species I have ever seen, nor can I discover any other record of such numbers in the Cleveland region." Jim Akers saw two pied-billed grebes January 30 at the Avon C.E.I. plant.

Although no great blue herons were reported from this region during the winter, James C. Hageman reports black-crowned night herons near Lakeview Park in January, both young and adult. A total of 4 birds were seen.

An American bittern, grounded October 16 in Euclid, and a least bittern which ran in front of a car in Rockefeller Park September 22, were both banded and released at Holden Arboretum by Rudy Kula.

Spectacular flights of geese were observed October 18-19 by many people. Jack Singleton says that on October 18 flocks of Canadas passed over for 30 minutes at W. 140th and Lorain, one string taking a full minute to go by. Tom Sandera estimated 3000 birds in about 20 flocks at Mud Brook the same day. Adela Gaede saw about 935 from 7:25 to 8:15 A.M. in Cleveland and on Route 87, Jim Akers saw 350 along Bagley Road east of Pearl Road, and Owen Davies estimated 500 in Lakewood, all on October 18. On the 19th 1000 Canadas were seen by Fred Ackermann over the Rocky River Reservation, and many smaller numbers were reported by others. Jim Akers also reports a flock which he thinks stayed in the vicinity of Berea for at least 2 days at the end of October. The first report of Canadas for 1953 is 3 seen by Lucille Mannix February 28.

On October 18 Jim Akers saw 1250 geese in Middleburg Heights - 500 at 12, 300 at 12:10, 450 at 12:15. Three snow geese were in the second flock and 7 in the third. The last flock was forced to alter its course slightly by departing aircraft from the airport, and in swerving showed lighter wing linings (in darker birds). This latter fact plus their similarity in size to snow geese indicated to Mr. Akers that the birds were blue geese.

These flights preceded a snow and wind storm October 19 and 20 and other species were moving that weekend also, notably robins and rusty blackbirds.

A single snow goose was reported October 5 swimming in the Chagrin River (Shankland). An immature blue goose was seen at Shaker Lake for several hours on October 21 (Watson). An immature blue goose with an injured right leg stayed on Baldwin and Wallace Lakes, Berea, October 25-31 (Akers).

Mallards and blacks, lesser scaups and goldeneyes wintered in good numbers. Other ducks reported were redhead, canvasback, bufflehead, ruddy, gadwall (January 30), baldpate, pintail, oldsquaw, green-winged teal (January 7, 15, 21, one at Cascade Park, Elyria, Johnson). In a flock of 1000 lesser scaup January 1 Adela Gaede and Vera Carrothers noted one albino. Only two white-winged scoters were reported, at Fairport Harbor November 1 (Armour).

A few rough-legged hawks were seen October 17-30 in the Cleveland region, but none were reported during the winter.

Mrs. Booth of Painesville reports a duck hawk and a goshawk at her home, the duck hawk on January 12 and the goshawk December 2. Of the latter she says, "At 10:10 A.M. on December 2, I...noticed a large bird come slowly into an apple tree about 50 feet south of the house. He sat there quietly for a minute or two and then glided into a maple tree to the west a few feet. Sat there turning his head around while the sparrows began to scold. I watched in fascination, clearly saw the black and white stripes over the eye and the grey underparts and slaty back and tail barrings. Rather foolishly I went for my binoculars and came back to find the bird gone."

A Wilson's snipe visited the Museum yard November 1. Two purple sandpipers were seen October 31 and November 1 at Fairport Harbor by Tom Armour and reported to us by Jim Akers. Paul Smith saw a western sandpiper October 19 and 2 on October 26 at Black Brook.

An immature Iceland gull November 1 was seen as close as 15 feet with 7x50 glasses at Fairport Harbor November 1 by Tom Armour, as reported by Jim Akers, who saw a glaucous gull December 28 on the Christmas Census. This bird (?) also seen by R.W. Hill December 31 and January 1 at E. 72nd Street.

Mrs. Sherwin had a flock of 50 mourning doves at her home in Waite Hill January 25.

The WILLOUGHBY NEWS HERALD of November 19 relates how a saw-whet owl invaded the home of Mr. and Mrs. John F. Martin in Willoughby. It apparently came into the screened porch in pursuit of a rat, as both owl and rat were trapped when the Martins closed the porch doors.

P.F. Johnson reported the only olive-sided flycatcher for the fall season, one seen September 4 at Elyria.

Red-breasted nuthatches were seen in small numbers from the end of September on. Mrs. Sherwin reports a bird of this species which was first noted in August and was still present February 28 at her feeders in Waite Hill. Creepers were very scarce this winter.

On October 7, on the lawn of the Board of Education Building in downtown Cleveland, and again on October 24 in Eastman Park, Donald Newman watched a winter wren hopping about on the grass. "Unlike their normally furtive selves," writes Mr. Newman, "each of these birds was as bold and as fearless as the noisy House Sparrows which frequent the Park and the Mall. Indeed, one of the wrens came directly up to my shoes as I stood motionless at the edge of the walk, so that for the moment our roles were reversed: I was the observed while the wren was the observer." A winter wren visited a feeder at Mentor Yacht Club several times in February (Booth), while Carolina wrens were noted at feeders in Brecksville and North Olmsted and a pair wintered on the east bank of the Grand River near Painesville (Booth).

There was a particularly heavy golden-crowned kinglet migration in October, and an influx of these birds December 4-7, after which they were quite scarce. Only a few records of ruby-crowned kinglets during the winter.

Unusually late dates for the blue-headed and red-eyed vireos are October 16 at Elyria for the former and November 24 at Brecksville for the latter (Johnson, Hostetler).

Fred Ackermann, Mrs Jessie Davies and Kay Hovanic saw a parula warbler in the Rocky River Reservation October 23. Mr. Ackermann says, "It fed at our feet and was so tame I could almost touch it...it sat in the sun a bit and closed its eyes as though tired."

There was a heavy warbler migration last fall, especially in the first two weeks of September, with peaks of numbers about September 7-9. Frank Phelps at Elyria writes that "...more birds were seen in our dooryard than in any of the 20 years we have lived here. Most numerous were blackpoll, myrtle and cape may. Blackpolls visited our two large maples daily from September 28 through October 17, in numbers ranging from 2 or 3 to 8. Last one on the 21st." Owen Davies report of the concentration of warblers he found in Lakewood Park will be found on p.8 while Mrs. Watson's report of her drip bird bath is reported on pp. 6-7.

A myrtle warbler was seen December 3 in Brecksville (Hostetler).

R. W. Hill saw two meadowlarks December 13 between Cleveland and Painesville.

The only evening grosbeaks reported were 6 November 22 near Chesterland (Goodsell), and a single bird at Gordon Spare's feeder on Wilson Mills Road near Chardon from February 11 into March. Mr. Spare says that his farm neighbor reports evening grosbeaks in his sugar bush areas in numbers.

Two purple finches visited feeder in Brecksville February 7 and 9 (Hostetler), and a flock of red-polls near the lower Shaker Lake reached a maximum number of 150 in late January. They were still there in late February and fed on birch seeds.

A most unusual record is sent in by Charles Knight who recorded two Nelson's sparrows daily in the fields at Warrensville Farms from October 14 to November 4. One remained until November 16, and on December 4,7,8,14,24,28, January 5, February 1 Mr. Knight recorded 3 birds of this species at the same location.

Two white-throated sparrows spent the winter in Eastman Park in the heart of downtown Cleveland. Donald Newman says that although they associated with the flock of English sparrows that frequent the Park, yet they seemed to remain somewhat aloof. He writes, "Both of these birds were evidently in immature plumage, and one, which I did not observe at all during the latter part of February, was so obscurely marked on the crown that it was only its distinctive call note which identified it. Mild though the winter was, it seems probable that these two White-throats could not have survived had not they found a constant source of food in the manure which the Park Department banked around the shrubbery in mid-December, when, certainly, there were few weed seeds left to feed on."

The first wave of early spring migrants came in February 20 to 24.

New early fall dates:

Whistling Swan, October 18, Waite Hill, Sherwin
Lesser Snow Goose, October 5, Willoughby, Barbour
Blue Goose, October 18, Middleburg Heights, Akers

New Late Fall Dates:

American Egret, October 18, on way to Mosquito Creek, Gaede
Least Bittern, September 22, Rockefeller Park (Kula)
Semipalmated Sandpiper, November 2, Black Brook, Paul Smith
Western Sandpiper, October 26 (2), Black Brook, Paul Smith
Caspian Tern, October 12 (7), Black Brook, Paul Smith
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, September 29, Elyria, Johnson
Prairie Marsh Wren, October 23, Becker Marsh, Mentor, Akers
Parula Warbler, October 23, Rocky River Metropolitan Park, Ackermann
Savannah Sparrow, November 16 (3), Clifton Park, Ackermann

Correction:

The Nashville warbler reported for July 27 in the last issue of the CALENDAR (48(3):4) was an error and should be deleted.

RECORDS FROM NEIGHBORING LOCALITIES

Mosquito Creek

Little Blue Heron (8) September 6 (Carrothers, Martin)
Pigeon Hawk September 27 (Martin, Mannix)
King Rail October 12 (Barbour)
Good shorebird migration, including golden and black-bellied plovers,
Baird's, Stilt, Western and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Dowitcher
Red Phalarope September 27 (Hill, Martin, Mannix)
Northern Phalarope September 1 (Gaede, Carrothers, Erickson)
Short-eared Owl October 23 (Akers)

Sandusky Region

Great Black-backed Gull January 3 (Gaede, Carrothers)
American Egret - 55 (30,15,10) September 18 (Akers); 50 in one flock
October 5 at Venice Marshes (Hill)
European Widgeon and Snowy Egret September 18, Castalia (Akers)
Hudsonian Curlew September 18, East Harbor (Akers)
Poor goose flight at Magee Marsh last fall (Bednarik)
Bald Eagles on nest by end of February Magee Marsh (Bednarik)

Pymatuning

Lesser Snow Goose (2), Blue Goose (60) October 18 (Gaede, Erickson)

Meander and Evans Lakes

Western Grebes November 15-30. Seen by many observers, including Vera Carrothers.

CHRISTMAS CENSUS

The Kirtland Bird Club and friends conducted the 13th Annual Christmas Census on December 28, 1952. Fifty-five species were recorded. The glaucous gull and phoebe were added to the list of species seen on the census making a total of 96 species since 1940. The phoebe was seen at Mrs. Francis Sherwin's home in Waite Hill, and on February 14 Mrs. Sherwin again saw a phoebe in the same location. The list of birds seen follows:

Horned Grebe 1, Mallard 77, Black Duck 110, Redhead 3, Canvasback 200, Lesser Scaup 174, Goldeneye 18, Ruddy Duck 4, American Merganser 33, Red-breasted Merganser 45, Cooper's Hawk 3, Red-tailed Hawk 3, Red-shouldered Hawk 2, Marsh Hawk 1, Sparrow Hawk 5, Ruffed Grouse 4, Bobwhite 24, Pheasant 5, Glaucous Gull 1, Herring Gull 1827, Ring-billed Gull 700, Bonaparte's Gull 728, Mourning Dove 164, Screech Owl 1, Great Horned Owl 1, Barred Owl 4, Kingfisher 7, Flicker 5, Pileated Woodpecker 6, Red-bellied Woodpecker 3, Hairy Woodpecker 22, Downy Woodpecker 93, Phoebe 1, Horned Lark 6, Blue Jay 125, Crow 10, Chickadee 211, Titmouse 82, White-breasted Nuthatch 93, Red-breasted Nuthatch 10, Brown Creeper 2, Robin 6, Bluebird 10, Golden-crowned Kinglet 24, Starling 345, English Sparrow 978, Bronzed Grackle 1, Cardinal 177, Redpoll 50, Pine Siskin 2, Goldfinch 19, Towhee 6, Junco 241, Tree Sparrow 418, Song Sparrow 30.

DRIP BIRD BATH

Mrs. Stanley Watson

We rigged up a drip bird bath late in August and from then until the hose was drained and taken down on October 28, after the first snow on October 27, we had a steady stream of bird visitors, in fact the traffic got a little heavy at times. The pool was home made, oblong, of cement poured into a wooden frame. The hose was plastic, very light weight, about 1/2 inch in diameter. The pool was about 2 inches deep in the center and sloped up at the ends and sides. It was set on bare ground that is surrounded by three good sized flowering crab trees and two forsythia bushes. There was a row of tuberous begonias between the bath and the lawn edge. The overflow from the bath made small puddles which the warblers used when the larger birds were filling the bath. We put three or four croquet wickets in the ground under the trees and the small birds used them as perches both before and after going in the water.

The water was turned on in the morning and left on until dusk, usually just a slow drip, but we found if we wanted to bring birds in quickly a good steady splashing stream was a good way to attract them.

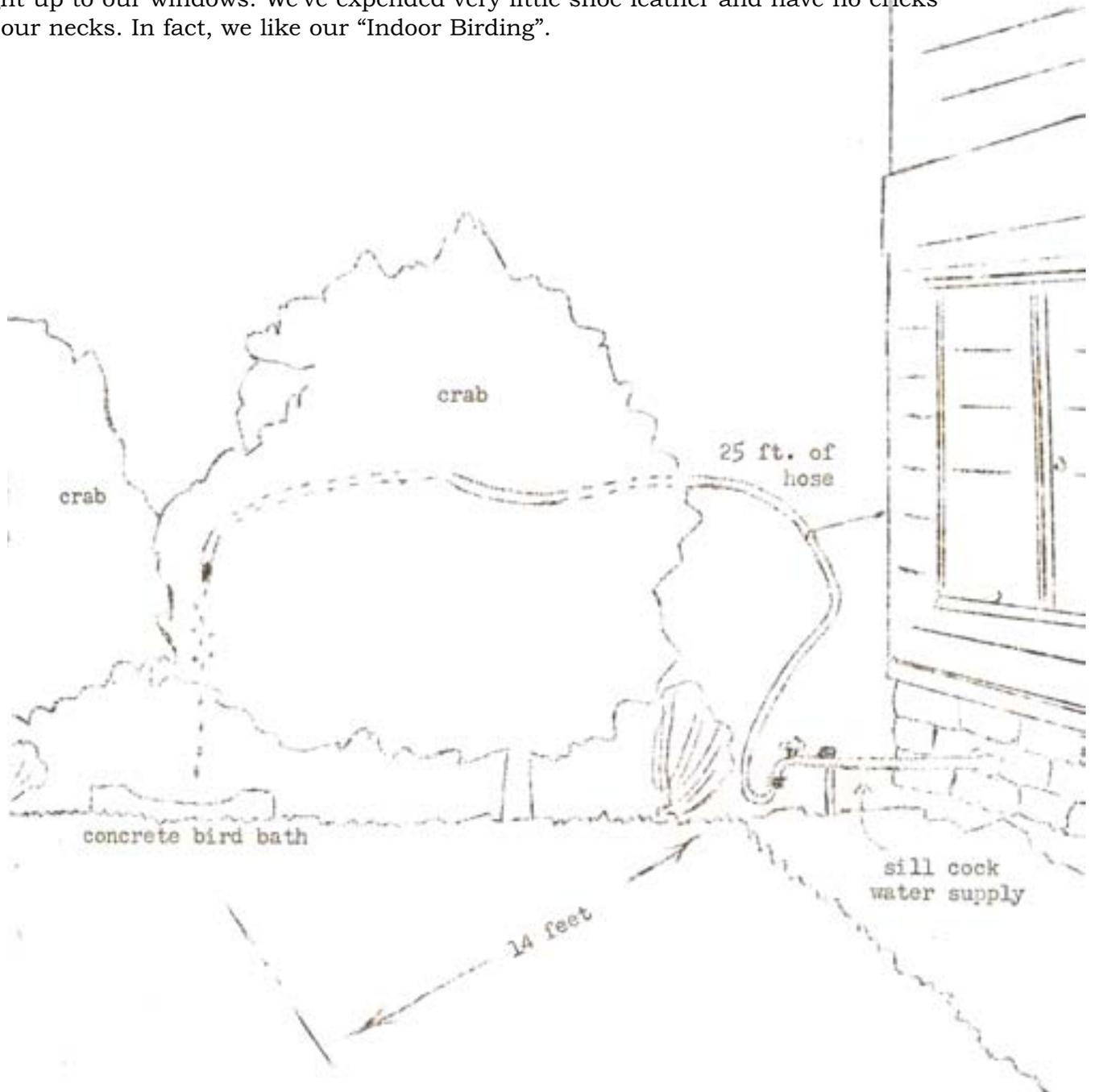
The little bird bath is just fourteen feet from a living room window, so all our observing was done from inside the house. We took the screens out of the windows and even when the windows were open, voices or the radio playing inside didn't seem to disturb the warblers at all, in fact, some mornings when I went out to turn on the hose some birds seemed to be waiting and practically flew past my ears to get to the water.

At times there were as many as ten varieties of warblers in one day. As last year, the bay-breasted seemed to be the most numerous, coming early, and some were seen right through the whole period. Generally speaking, the bay-breast and the black-throated green were the most numerous through September, with myrtle, palm and blackpoll the heaviest in October. October 27 was the last day I saw warblers, several myrtles.

Among the other birds, one of our interesting moments was seeing three gray-cheeked thrushes and two olive-backed bathing at the same time. Later, five different kinds of sparrows were seen at one time, white-throated, white-crowned, fox, song and chipping.

As of today (December 7) the bath is not so busy. I fill it once a day from a pail. On our few cold days when the water has frozen our winter residents sit in the crab trees and chatter until I carry a pail of hot water out, throw it in to melt the ice, and then they have a drink and a bath.

It's been a very interesting experience. Sixty different birds have been brought right up to our windows. We've expended very little shoe leather and have no cricks in our necks. In fact, we like our "Indoor Birding".



WARBLERS IN LAKEWOOD PARK

Owen Davies

During a wave of migrants in May it is not unusual to find flocks of warblers consisting of ten to fifteen species, or occasionally, up to twenty or more. In fall, warblers usually pass through in small flocks which can be overlooked; however, this definitely was not the case last fall. For at least a three-week period warblers were “popping” all over Lakewood Park.

It seemed to make little difference what time of day it was, or how many people were in the park. Warblers were “popping” at nine o’clock, at noon, at three p.m., and even at six p.m. One of the best days was Labor Day. The only thing that seemed to reduce the number of warblers was a stiff wind blowing in off Lake Erie.

You could depend upon finding warblers in the hickories or elms in front of Lakewood City Hall, but even better than this-in low bushes where you could look down on them, both along the east and west sides of the park. One of the unexpected experiences was that of hearing a singing black-throated blue warbler in fall migration.

In other locations the warbler migration seemed normal, yet here in Lakewood Park you could watch warblers as long as you wished. It was easy to compare one species with another as the groups moved from tree to tree. That this heavy migration did not cover too wide a path appears from a comparison with the list of warblers that I observed in other locations.

Warblers and Vireos at Lakewood Park Fall 1952

	August						September					
	16	23	24	29	30	31	1	6	9	11	12	14
Yellow-throated Vireo											1	
Red-eyed Vireo				1	2	2	2			1	3	
Philadelphia Vireo						1			1	2	2	
Black and White Warbler	2				4	4	4	2			4	4
Tennessee Warbler						1	1		1		1	1
Nashville Warbler											1	2
Parula Warbler											1	1
Yellow Warbler	12			4			1				1	1
Magnolia Warbler		2	1	8	3	4	3		4	4	7	7
Cape May Warbler			2	6		2	2	1	3	6	7	6
Black-throated Blue Warbler					1				1	1	5	3
Black-throated Green Warbler		1			1	1		1	5	3	6	4
Blackburnian Warbler			3	15	4	10	6	1	4	1	5	2
Chestnut-sided Warbler		1	1	5	8	7	3			1	3	1
Bay-breasted Warbler		2	6	5	3	4	3	2	6	4	14	7
Blackpoll Warbler			4	20	2	2	3	3	10	4	15	5
Pine Warbler				1								
Ovenbird						1						
Northern Waterthrush					1							
Mourning Warbler							1					
Wilson’s Warbler			1	6	5	2	2		2	6	4	7
Canada Warbler		2	1	4	3	7	5			2		
Redstart -		4			4	4	3		4	4	9	1

HAIRY WOODPECKERS AT BRECKSVILLE

Mrs. L. M. Hostetler

Are hairy woodpeckers territory conscious at all seasons of the year? On January 24, 1953, between one and two o'clock on a warm sunny afternoon an interesting performance caught our attention as two hairy woodpeckers vied for position in an elm tree only twenty feet away. Just as if an unseen conductor had given a cue to begin, simultaneously the two male birds in jerk-like fashion began a "Balinese dance" - but their feet never left their positions on the branch as their bodies snapped out a rhythmic dance to seven beats to the measure. Just as they had begun, concurrently, they stepped at the same instant and held a frozen position with bills pointing skyward or toward the tree.

At first, only a short interval of rest occurred, but as suddenly as a switch is turned on the dance began again in the identical pattern, only the intervals between the rhythmic jerks were lengthened. Occasionally they would exchange places on the branch or the trunk, always remaining two to four feet apart.

For one hour this behavior went on without interruption, even at the advent of the female hairy woodpecker who went straight to the tree occupied by the male woodpeckers, although she seemed to ignore the ritual and to be intent only upon impaling grubs and spider eggs as she climbed higher and higher. Finally she flew off to the valley below.

The atmosphere was electric with tension and expectancy, however, for each instant we wondered when the ceremony would cease and a battle ensue. All at once the males flew at each other with dramatic intensity and with feathers flying. This violent duel lasted but a moment, then the birds left the arena and started their dance anew one hundred feet away in a maple tree along the creek in the valley below.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON FOOD OF COMMON BIRDS-IV

Ralph W. Dexter
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

This is the fourth annual report of a project devoted to a study of specific foods of common birds in Ohio in response to a request for such information from the Cleveland Bird Calendar. The previous report was published in the calendar a year ago (48(1):6-7.1952). Since then 30 bird stomachs and 16 Barn Owl pellets have come to hand for analysis. Nine of the stomachs contained nothing or such a small amount of material that no identification could be made. Analysis of the others, from 16 species, are as follows. Acknowledgment is made to Dr. Clinton H. Hobbs for assistance in identification of plant materials.

Green-winged Teal - Found dead at Lake Mogadore, November 15, 1952. Contents: 13 water beetle larvae, 1 adult water beetle, and numerous small seeds of three types.

Red-tailed Hawk - Trapped at Trimble Wildlife Area, Athens County, by William Price on March 1, 1952. Contents: 1 small rabbit.

Ruffed Grouse - Six shot at New Lyme Hunting Preserve, Ashtabula County, January 6-26, 1953, by Dr. C. F. Gibbs. Contents: (1) many twig tips and buds, many fragments of fern fronds, and 10 large, red stony seeds. (2) abundant catkins of *Betula* sp., 1 wild grape, and many macerated fruits with red seeds. (3) fragments of apple, several twig tips and buds, many seeds of choke cherry, and a large mass of club moss, (4) 12 wild grapes, abundant fruits, seeds, and leaves of *Rosa* sp., and several seeds of choke cherry. (5) mass of apple fruit and leaves, large mass of fruits and seeds of *Smilax rotundifolia* (6) large mass of fruits and seeds of *Smilax rotundifolia* and some unidentified leaves and twigs.

Black-billed Cuckoo - Found dead on campus of Kent State University, May 14, 1952. Contents: 1 caterpillar.

Barn Owl - 16 pellets collected July 24, 1952, from a silo at Hartville. Contents: 35 Field Mice (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) 14 Short-tailed shrews (*Blarina brevicauda*) 1 Canada Shrew (*Sorex cinereus*) 1 skull of Cottontail Rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) and the skull of one fringilled [fringillid] (Cardinal?).

Barred Owl - Captured November 8, 1952, at Woodbury Wildlife Area, Coshocton County, by William Price. Contents: bones and feathers of an unidentified bird.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - Found dead in Ravenna, April 22, 1952. Contents: large mass of black ants (some winged), and 1 winged red ant.

Brown Creeper - Found dead on Kent State University campus, March 29, 1952. Contents: 1 small specimen of a dipteran, an hemipteran, and a coleopteran; 1 large aphid, and a mass of fragments of lace bugs.

Catbird - Found dead on Kent State University campus May 10, 1952. Contents: 2 ants, 1 millipede, and many fragments of various insects.

American Robin - Found dead on Kent State University campus in May, 1952. Contents: 6 millipedes, 1 caterpillar, fragments of a beetle, several tufts of green grass, and 2 fragments of fleshy fruit. Killed by a car in Kent on June 9, 1952. Contents: 6 small beetles, 2 fragments of weevils, and 1 caterpillar.

Cedar Waxwing - Found dead on Kent State University campus October 14, 1952. Contents: 2 bees and 1 firefly.

Myrtle Warbler - Found dead in Kent on May 11, 1952. Contents: mass of insect fragments including those of beetles.

Ovenbird - Found dead on Kent State University campus May 10, 1952. Contents: 2 small beetles, 1 weevil, 1 millipede, and many unidentified insect fragments.

Meadowlark - Found dead in Kent March 22, 1952. Contents: 1 beetle.

Cowbird - Found dead in Kent August 8, 1952. Contents: 7 frog hoppers, 1 grasshopper nymph, 1 beetle, 1 spider, 5 grains of wheat, and some macerated fruit with small seeds.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Found dead on Kent State University campus May 14, 1952. Contents: mass of small yellowish seeds.