

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

Founded by Frances H. Herrick

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Spring Migration Number

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NOTES ON THE WEATHER

March - This was the first month since April of last year in which temperatures averaged below normal; also the third wettest March in 84 years of local record and the wettest since 1910. New weather records for March were set by the monthly amount of snowfall, the greatest snowfall in a 24 hour period and the greatest amount of snow on the ground at any time. Snowfall amounted to 16.5 inches during the first 4 days of the month, and rainfall on the 24th and 25th was exceptionally heavy.

April - This was the warmest April in 84 years of local record; however, the lowest temperature, 19° on the 3rd, established a new, all time, low for the month. Thunderstorms were numerous and mostly light to moderate in character.

May - Temperatures averaged below normal for the month of May. The rainfall was less than half of the normal for May, the driest since 1934. Yet, the sunshine and cloudiness were nearly normal.

An interesting comment of the spring weather and the reaction of birds was told by Merit Skaggs.

"The big news of the winter season was the big snow of March first to the fifth which dumped about 20 inches of snow on Cleveland and the nearby area. The storm seemed to be quite local as surrounding areas did not have as much snow. During the storm, birds were hard-pressed for food and many of them congregated about feeding stations. We were very much surprised and pleased to have a flock of prairie horned larks visit our yard for two days. They ate fine grains and were interesting to watch."

THE RECORD

The American Egret was observed several times within the area this spring. Mrs. R.V.D. Booth reports that Mrs. Stiles Smith often had an Egret sitting in a dead tree at her home (overlooking Lake Erie near Mentor Harbor Yacht Club), the dates were from April 19 to 24. Rudy Kula observed an Egret at Richmond Beach on April 28, and Don Dimpsey saw one on April 21 in the Buttonbush Bog at Holden Arboretum.

There are only two records for the Least Bittern. Steve Harty saw one at Nesmith Lake near Akron on May 15, and Vera Carrothers reports one for North Chagrin on May 26.

Nine Whistling Swans were reported seen at Long Lake on March 14 by Mrs. George Wiley and Don Dimpsey saw seven at the Holden Arboretum on March 21.

There were two successful hatchings of Canada Geese reported on the record. Harold Wallin observed two young at North Chagrin on May 8, and Don Dimpsey, while at the Holden Arboretum, saw four.

On March 14 and 15, Mr and Mrs George Wiley and Emmet Shellenberger had a wonderful opportunity to study a male European Widgeon on Lake Rockwell in Kent, Ohio.

A Metropolitan Park policeman reported to Harold Wallin that Turkey Vultures had arrived in numbers at Hinckley Lake from March 13 to 15 and by March 27 they were estimated to number 80.

Mrs. Stanley H. Watson reported that a King Rail was present at one of the Shaker Lakes from April 16 to 17.

Considerably earlier than previous records are the reports of nesting Screech Owls within the Cleveland Area. From April 28 regularly through May, Stephen Harty observed (on the locality behind the Cleveland Museum of Art) two adult birds feeding their three young. An even earlier date (April 7) is reported by Ralph Dexter (see page 4).

Apparently another first for the region is the wintering of the Short-Eared Owl. Three Owls were seen either on or in the immediate vicinity of the Cleveland Airport from December 17 to March 21. This report is given by Jim Akers.

Again this year, Perry F. Johnson saw the Bewick's Wren on April 9 and 11 in Elyria, Ohio.

As is usual, the Sunday morning bird walks produced some interesting records. The outstanding of which was the White-eyed Vireo. On May 9, at Shaker Lake, and on May 16, in South Chagrin, the bird was seen.

The warbler migration this spring was very disappointing. Perhaps due to the below average temperature in May, the birds were held-up further south and then passed through quickly. At any rate, there were no pronounced "waves" reported, and few, if any, definite concentrations of birds. The only rare warbler reported (two records) was the Orange-crowned Warbler. One bird was seen on May 12 in Rocky River Metropolitan Park, near Detroit Avenue, by Fred Ackerman. Two other Orange-crowned Warblers were seen in Lakewood Park by Owen Davies.

Probably the rarest find for the period was an Oregon Junco on March 14 and 15. Raymond Hill writes, "I saw an Oregon Junco at Mr. and Mrs. Earl Lansinger's feeding station (on Oak Hill Road in Cleveland Heights). She (Mrs. Lansinger) called up and we went over and watched it on and off for an hour or more. We had perfect views, close up, and compared it with a Slate-colored Junco there at the same time. It was also seen by Adela Gaede and Vera Carrothers."

New Early Spring Dates

Philadelphia Vireo on April 29 in Elyria, Ohio by P.F. Johnson Warbling Vireo on April 21 in Aurora, Ohio by Carl Hamann Parula Warbler on April 25, at the Holden Arboretum by Don Dimpsey Indigo Bunting on April 14 by Mrs Booth

New Late Spring Dates

Hermit Thrush on May 30 at the Holden Arboretum by Don Dimpsey Golden-crowned Kinglet on May 30 at Lakewood, Ohio by Owen Davies

Field Notes

"On April 7, 1954, a student at Kent State University (Miss Marilyn Rundle) found an immature Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) on the campus grounds. It was in a transitional stage between nestling down and juvenile plumage. Down feathers were still on the head and upper part of the body. The bird was not yet able to fly. Apparently it was just out of the nest, and presumably was forced or had fallen from the nesting site. It was banded with No. 515-23552 and kept in captivity in the biology museum until May 10. It was released on the campus in the evening of May 10. Robins attacked the owl so viciously that it had to be rescued and returned to the museum the following day. It died in captivity on May 23.

Two other Screech Owl juveniles, with some down feathers still on the head, were observed near the site of the original discovery on April 23, 1954, by Miss Bertha Horsfall. Probably all of these were from the same nest. Williams (*Birds of the Cleveland Region*, 1950) cites May 12 as the earliest record of downy young in the nest and May 16 as the earliest record of nestlings in transitional plumage. The observations reported here indicate nesting at least five weeks earlier than reported for this region by Williams."

Ralph W. Dexter
Kent State University,
Kent, Ohio

"My observations... indicate that the movement of warblers got off to a good, and perhaps early, start during the last week of April and, though slowed down by cold weather continued at a steady pace through the first two weeks in May. Perhaps the early species, such as Nashville, Black-and-White, and Black-throated Green, appeared in fair numbers for more days than usual, indicating the possibility that these species paused longer than usual in this area, or moved through more slowly than usual. However, the last half of the month, too, seemed to be more barren than usual of such abundant late-comers as the Tennessee Warbler and the Bay-breasted Warbler. These species were present, as indicated in my listings, but in reduced numbers. This I interpret as probably indicating that these species, along with other later migrants, moved over this area at an increased tempo, many missing it entirely in movements from farther south to farther north. Observations of flocks of warblers in late May, such as those of the 28th, as often as not appeared to be feeding their way north along the river, being present in numbers for a time, then moving on beyond the point of observation. To sum it up, my impression was that the early migration, though steady, was a leisurely one, with the species that are more common in late April and early May lingering, or stringing through over a longer period than usual, with the late migration, with its more typical species, skipping through with as short a delay for feeding and resting as possible. Though I have not compared my list directly with that of other years, I am quite sure that my totals of such species as the Black-and-White, Black-throated Green, Myrtle, Blackburnian, and Nashville were up; that my totals of Bay-breasted, Tennessee, and Cerulean were down. I missed the Golden-winged Warbler for the first time in some time also the Parula, Palm, and Mourning Warblers."

P. F. Johnson
670 Bell Ave.,
Elyria, Ohio

Date	26	27	28	2	3	4	5	6	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	27
Black-and-white Warbler		1	1	2	4			3	1	2	4	1		1	5		
Nashville Warbler			1	1	1				1	1					1		
Magnolia Warbler														2	5		
Cape May Warbler															1		
Black-throated Blue Warbler															1		
Blackburnian Warbler										1					1		1
Chestnut-sided Warbler															1		
Bay-breasted Warbler																	2
Black-pollled Warbler															1		
Palm Warbler															2		
Ovenbird				1				1			2			1			
Canada Warbler																	1
Redstart											1		1		4		2
English Sparrow	10	25	50	25	10	15	15	15	10	10	15	20	20	25	30	15	20
Bronzed Grackle	2	4	1	5	3	3	1	2	1	2	6	1	5	7	10	5	3
Cowbird	21	45	45	15	40	20	15	20	2	15	10	1	2	5	4	3	2
Scarlet Tanager															2		7
Cardinal	2	3	12	3	3		2	4	2	4	2	1	2	3	2	3	4
Rose-breasted Grosbeak																	2
Goldfinch				2				3									
Purple Finch				1		2											
Red-eyed Towhee		2	2														
Savannah Sparrow			1	1		1	1	1				2					
Chipping Sparrow	2	12	30	10	15	10	1					3	2	2	2	1	1
Field Sparrow			3		4	5	6	2				1				1	
White-crowned Sparrow		3		1	2			1				1	1	1		3	
White-throated Sparrow																	
Myrtle Warbler		8	10	15	10	4	2	4	2	4	6		2				
Black-throated Green Warbler			1								1			2	3		
Slate-colored Junco			6												6		2