

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

Founded by Francis H. Herrick



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Editorial Board:

James F. Akers, Lucille Mannix, Donald L. Newman

ANNOUNCEMENT

Beginning with this issue, the Cleveland Bird CALENDAR is being edited and published solely by the Kirtland Bird Club which has assumed this responsibility with the hope and firm resolve of continuing publication regularly each season, as has been done ever since the inception of the CALENDAR forty-nine years ago.

Well aware of the high standards set by the editors who have preceded us, we shall strive to produce a CALENDAR which is not only readable and reflective of the avifauna of the Cleveland region but one which will deserve the respect of all field ornithologists. To that end we invite our subscribers to send us their bird records and especially to send us accounts of nesting activity and of bird behavior in any of its various manifestations so that the CALENDAR may be more than just a repository of names and dates.

We shall, of course, be grateful for criticisms, comments, and suggestions from any of our readers.

The Editors

CONTRIBUTORS

James F. Akers
Fred J. Ackermann
L. P. Barbour
Mrs. Robert V. D. Booth
Owen Davies
Donaldson Dimpsey
Adela Gaede
Carl F. Hamann

Kathleen S. Hostetler
Perry F. Johnson
Mrs. F. Lansinger
Lucille Mannix
Donald L. Newman
Margaret Perner
Margaret H. Sherwin

SUMMARY OF WEATHER CONDITIONS

From U. S. Weather Bureau Reports (Cleveland Hopkins Airport)

June - Warm and dry, with new all-time high temperatures of 93 degrees on the 12th and 13th, and 97 degrees on the 15th. Precipitation measured only 1.38 inches, less than half of normal, which made this the driest June since 1933.

July - In 84 years of record, this was the third driest July, with precipitation totaling only 1.49 inches, of which 1.28 inches fell on the last day of the month. New highs of 97 degrees on the 2nd and 99 on the 14th contrasted with new lows of 51 degrees on the 6th and 50 degrees on the 8th and 16th.

August - Rather cloudy and cool, sunshine measuring only 50% of the possible. Rainfall, totaling 3.16 inches, was one-half inch above normal and was distributed throughout the month.

SPECIES OCCURRENCE

Listed below are the noteworthy records for the summer months, during which period we always have fewer field observers and, consequently, a less complete coverage of the Cleveland region, with the result that the records for some species are indeed scant. For the following breeding species we have no records at all: Marsh Hawk, Upland Plover, Black Tern, (doesn't breed in our immediate area, but is generally seen in August), Prairie Horned Lark, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Migrant Shrike.

Little Blue Heron - In a small swamp near the junction of Routes 87 and 44, Lucille Mannix and Robert Maly saw 3 of these uncommon visitors on August 28. Also present were 17 Green Herons, 1 Least Bittern, and 1 King Rail.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron - Suggesting the possibility of a new breeding species for the Cleveland region, Fred Ackermann reports seeing an adult Yellow-crown on June 20, in Rocky River Metropolitan Park, which is his third summer record of an adult in that area. He also reports observing one immature bird in the Park on August 1, 6, 13, and 31; and two immatures on August 20. Commenting on the occurrence of this "rare and accidental visitor" (see BIRDS OF CLEVELAND), Ackermann remarks that "young birds stop here at the same place each fall but are about 3 weeks earlier this year."

Wood Duck - The Sherwin Pond at Waite Hill was splashed with color on June 7, when Margaret H. Sherwin observed 35 male Woodies on its placid surface.

Redhead - A lone male of this species, quite dull in color, kept to the lagoon at White City, where it was observed by Donald L. Newman on August 21, 22, and 29. The previous earliest fall record was October 12, 1951.

Lesser Scaup Duck - On July 31, near his home in Lakewood, and again on August 14, at White City, Owen Davies saw a solitary male. September 16, 1951 was our previous earliest fall date.

King Rail - One seen by Lucille Mannix on August 28, in swamp area near junction of Routes 87 and 44.

Golden Plover - Probably the same bird, on August 21, 22, and 29 at White City, reported by Donald L. Newman.

Black-billed Cuckoo - On the exceptionally late date of August 28, Lucille Mannix and Robert Maly observed an occupied nest of this species in the scrub field area adjoining Sunset Pond in North Chagrin Reservation. Several

days later Vera Carrothers observed a half-grown nestling being fed by one of the parents.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher - Two in Rocky River Metropolitan Park on June 2, reported by Fred Ackerman.

Olive-sided Flycatcher - One, in same place and on same date as above species, also observed by Ackermann.

Golden-crowned Kinglet - Appearing some three weeks before our previous earliest fall date, a female of this species was recorded by Lucille Mannix on July 29, in Rocky River Metropolitan Park.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Difficult to classify as either a late spring or early fall date is the report by Donaldson S. Dimpsey of a sight record of this bird on June 28, at the Holden Arboretum. Our previous latest spring and earliest fall dates are June 7, 1947 and August 16, 1953, respectively.

Black and White Warbler - Observed by Fred Ackermann in the Rocky River Park District on July 8, which matches the previous earliest fall date set in 1945.

Magnolia Warbler - Two singing males, who on one occasion engaged in a spirited chase, were reported from Hinckley Metropolitan Park on June 12, by Fred Ackermann and Owen Davies. Were these late migrants, or does this occurrence suggests a new breeding habitat in the Cleveland region?

Redwinged Blackbirds - In the same swamp where she saw the Little Blue Herons on August 28, Lucille Mannix also recorded an estimated 2000 Redwings.

Orchard Oriole - Owen Davies provides two records of this uncommon breeding bird: a pair feeding their young in a nest located at a height of about 25 feet in a maple tree at Avon, on June 26; two individuals at Aurora Lake on July 10.

FIELD OBSERVATION REPORTS

Eastern Green Heron - On July 17, the nest of this bird was found about 12 feet up in the middle of a group of wild apple trees and consisted of a minimum number of sticks. One young was observed in the nest. It still was covered with down and sat frozen with neck out-stretched. Two adults were seen going back and forth with food. - CARL F. HAMANN

Hooded Warbler - It was not until two or three years ago that I discovered the Hooded Warbler in Aurora Township, and my records come from the waterworks woods (now well on the way to being a mature beech-maple woodland), where during the breeding season the song of the male proclaimed its possible presence as a breeding species. Up to the present no nests had been found, and my first evidence, the fussing of the parent birds, lead to the finding of a fledgling being fed by them. This was on June 23, 1954. A month later while prowling around the same area, a pair of Hooded warblers was again complaining of my presence. Efforts to find the reason for their disturbance failed, but the next day, July 23, I made another try.

Concealed behind a log and camouflaged by a few small maple branches, I was able to watch the birds, especially the male, go to a certain spot with food. In about an hour's time the male went to this particular spot three times, while the female seemed to be more wary and continued to hover around the area in a state of alarm. Finally, cramped, mosquito-bitten, and eyes about to drop from their sockets, I determined to give up and see whether "this was it". The nest was found in a most exposed position not more than ten inches from the ground and built on top of a fallen beech branch which still held some of its dried leaves. There was nothing over the nest to conceal it. As near as could be told there were four gray downy young in the nest. This is my first breeding record for Aurora Township. - CARL F. HAMANN

Bobolink - On June 22, 1954, in one of the fields where I was carrying on a breeding bird census, my first nest of the Bobolink was found. There were four half-grown young in the nest who were being fed by both adults. The strategy employed in locating the nest was aided by the new house that was being erected nearby, some 300 feet away, concealed in which I was able to watch the birds going back and forth with food. Even so, considerable searching was necessary before the nest was found. Located in a small clump of grass flat on the ground, and with the young frozen, it was difficult to see. On June 28, the next visit, the nest was empty and the young were apparently being fed by the adults on the ground in the field nearby. Location was in Aurora, corner of Eggleston and Parker Roads. - CARL F. HAMANN

Redwinged Blackbird - In a field at the corner of Eggleston and Parker Roads, in Aurora, I found the nest of this bird in an unusual situation. The surroundings and location were similar to that of birds nesting in grassy fields. The Redwing's nest was on the ground in a small clump of wild aster and contained four eggs on June 1, 1954. I found two or three nests of Field Sparrow this spring in exactly the same situation, and except for the eggs one would not have known the difference. The nest was not observed again, but on June 18, the young were apparently out of the nest and being fed on the ground nearby, for the adults dive-bombed me, and the male made a near miss by actually hitting the top of my head. - CARL F. HAMANN

Mockingbirds in Brecksville - A startling telephone call in the middle of June told of a pair of Mockingbirds building a nest in a severely pruned honeysuckle bush near the WHK transmitting station on Pleasant Valley Road, about 13 miles south of Cleveland.

The birds were seen for the first time on June 2, and were present daily thereafter until July 1, after which they were not seen again. They sang much of the time, but the nest, containing one egg, was not discovered until June 15. Perhaps the birds became alarmed because they were being observed so closely, for they abandoned the nest yet remained in the area for two weeks afterward. A neighbor west of the radio transmitter insists that a pair nested on their farm last year and that a cat caught one of the young. - KATHLEEN S. HOSTETLER

Brewer's Blackbird in Northern Ohio - On August 16, at East Harbor, I observed from a distance of 30 feet a bird which answered in all respects the description in Peterson of Brewer's Blackbird. This individual was in the company of two male Redwings and an immature Bronzed Grackle so that a size and color comparison was easily made. Even in the poor light of a rainy day, the iridescence of the body plumage was quite pronounced and the white eye was most noticeable. - James F. Akers (East Harbor is not a part of our Cleveland region, but the appearance of this Blackbird in our immediate vicinity is of importance because it suggests the possibility of its occurrence in our area where, according to BIRDS OF CLEVELAND, it has not been observed. - Editor's Note)

Caspian Terns at White City - For 10 to 15 minutes on the tranquil morning of August 29, two Caspian Terns cruised about inside the breakwall at White City and several times sailed in low over the lagoon. On one such flight one of these heavy-winged birds plunged with a mighty splash into the glassy waters of the lagoon and came up with a fish 6 to 8 inches long held at right angle to its bill. As the Tern gained altitude, it shifted the fish so that the head pointed down its gullet, and in a moment with but a single gulp the fish had disappeared.

Later one of these Terns performed a ludicrous antic when in full flight at a height of perhaps 300 feet it casually turned its head so that its bill pointed skyward and nonchalantly reached up with its right foot to scratch the back of its neck, without interrupting for a moment the even stroking of its wings. During this brief comic interlude the Tern resembled some animated cartoon character such as Walt Disney might have created; so ridiculous was the bird that I chuckled aloud. - DONALD L. NEWMAN

BREEDING BIRD POPULATION STUDIES

I.

Climax Beech-Maple Forest with some Hemlock - Total area 65 acres

Location - North Chagrin Metropolitan Park

Coverage - April 25; May 1, 8, 9, 15, 23, 30, 31; June 6, 13, 16, 20, 27; July 5.
Total hours - 50

Census by Margaret Perner

Breeding Bird Population

Species	Territorial Males
Red-eyed Vireo	28
Hooded Warbler	22
Wood Thrush	20
Redstart	18
Scarlet Tanager	13
Wood Pewee	12
Cerulean Warbler	10
Cardinal	8
Tufted Titmouse	7
Ovenbird	7
Black-capped Chickadee	6
Acadian Flycatcher	5
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	4
Black-throated Green Warbler	4
Downy Woodpecker	3
Crested Flycatcher	3
Louisiana Waterthrush	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	2
Blue-winged Warbler	2
Carolina Wren	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1
Phoebe	1
Barred Owl	1
Cooper's Hawk	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	1
Cowbird	<u>Present</u>
Total males	182
Number of species	26
Density	280 territorial males per 100 acres

Visitors - Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Wood Duck, Black-billed
Cuckoo, Robin, Catbird

II.

Ridge (Oak-Hickory) and (Beech-Maple) Forest - Total area 50 acres

Location - Brecksville Reservation, Cleveland Metropolitan Park

Coverage - May 24; June 6, 11, 24; July 3.

Census by Kathleen S. Hostetler

Breeding Bird Population

Species	Territorial Males	Nests
Redstart	13	
Red-eyed Vireo	11	
Ovenbird	8	
Wood Thrush	7	1
Cerulean Warbler	7	1
Wood Pewee	6	1
Scarlet Tanager	5	1
Hooded Warbler	5	
Acadian Flycatcher	4	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	3	1
Black-capped Chickadee	2	
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	
Robin	2	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	2	
Blue-winged Warbler	2	
Cardinal	2	
Blue Jay	1	1
Flicker	1	
Song Sparrow	1	
Veery	1	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	1
Downy Woodpecker	1	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<u>1</u>	1
Total males	88	
Number of species	23	
Density	176	territorial males per 100 acres

Visitors - Ruffed Grouse, Hairy Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher,
Tufted Titmouse

III.

Grassland Habitat - Two Ungrazed Fields

Location - Aurora Township, Portage County

Size and Description - Approximately 20 acres, consisting of two fields, one of 8 acres and the other of 12 acres (paced). The first field lies at the intersection of Eggleston and Parker Roads, east of the former and north of the latter; the second field 1.5 miles southwest and adjacent to the local cemetery. Both fields, which are slightly rolling, have an elevation of 1140 feet and lie on the glaciated Appalachian Plateau.

The cemetery field was described in Audubon Field Notes (6:315, 1952); the field at Eggleston and Parker Roads was not previously censused but was selected because the one on the Johnson farm was under cultivation this spring. The new field is bounded on two sides by roads, on the north by similar territory, and on the east by a small orchard. The vegetation consists of mixed grasses and weeds except for the eastern edge where between Parker Road and a shallow ditch there is a rank growth of golden rod, blackberry, sumac, elderberry, and several small white ash saplings. An area 20 x 40 yards was plowed near the middle of the field and planted the crops.

Coverage - April 26, May 12, 17, 21, 29; June 1, 6, 18, 22, 23, 28; July 10, 12.

Total hours - approximately 28.

Census by Carl Hamann

Breeding Bird Population	Territorial Males
Species	6
Field Sparrow	4
Henslow Sparrow	2
Meadowlark	1
Bobolink	1
Redwinged Blackbird	1
Grasshopper Sparrow	1
Savannah Sparrow	* (See remarks below)
Alder Flycatcher	*
Redwinged Blackbird	*
Goldfinch	16
Total males	9
Number of species	80 territorial males
Density	per 100 acres

Visitors - Kingbird, Robin, Chimney Swift, Starling, Killdeer, Bobolink, Goldfinch, Indigo Bunting, Bronzed Grackle, Purple Martin, Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow

Remarks - Both fields are undergoing transition. The cemetery field is one-third grown to blackberry and at the west edge to many white ash saplings, 3 to 4 feet high, and a few scattered elderberry bushes. The presence of the Alder Flycatcher, 1 Redwing, and the Goldfinch was due to suitable nesting sites above the ground, and these are not counted as territorial males. The one Redwing whose nest was on the ground is counted as a territorial male.

IV.

(Editor's Note: Although the following census does not conform to the prescribed form for presenting such a study, it represents many devoted hours of field work and provides a comprehensive picture of the wealth of bird life that can be found in an area comprising ~ number of varied and discrete habitats. Thus this report is deemed valuable and worthy of publication.

Location - Holden Arboretum, with the exception of the Bole Forest on the east and a small fringe area on the west.

Census by Donaldson S. Dimpsey

Species	Pairs	Species	Pairs
Pied-billed Grebe	1 or 2	Wood Thrush	14
Canada Goose	1	Bluebird*	8
Wood Duck	4	Cedar Waxwing	10
Red-tailed Hawk *	1	Starling	4
Red-shouldered Hawk *	1	Red-eyed Vireo *	8
Ruffed Grouse	2	Warbling Vireo *	13
Bobwhite	10	Yellow Warbler*	8
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	Black-thr. Green	14
Killdeer *	1	Warbler Ovenbird	18
Woodcock	8	Louisiana Waterthrush	10
Mourning Dove *	4	Northern Yellowthroat	8
Great Horned Owl *	1	Hooded Warbler	6
Whip-poor-will	3	Redstart	8
Flicker	6	English Sparrow *	6
Pileated Woodpecker	4	Bobolink	6
Red-bellied Woodpecker *	1	Eastern Meadowlark	16
Hairy Woodpecker *	9	Redwinged Blackbird	25
Downy Woodpecker	12	Baltimore Oriole	10
Kingbird *	4	Scarlet Tanager	6
Phoebe *	8	Cardinal	8
Alder Flycatcher	5	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	11
Wood Pewee	4	Indigo Bunting	2
Tree Swallow *	16	Purple Finch	2
Barn Swallow *	2	Goldfinch *	11
Purple Martin *	16	Red-eyed Towhee	8
Blue Jay	8	Savannah Sparrow	3
Black-capped Chickadee *	30	Grasshopper Sparrow *	4
Tufted Titmouse	8	Henslow's Sparrow	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	4	Vesper Sparrow	6
House Wren *	12	Chipping Sparrow *	18
Catbird *	7	Field Sparrow	8
Brown Thrasher	6	Swamp Sparrow	2
Robin	4	Song Sparrow *	14
Number of Species	66		

Visitors - Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Sparrow Hawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Kingfisher

Remarks -A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches was seen near Pierson's Creek. Several times during the summer a Dickcissel was observed, but Dimpsey "could not track him down." On the property of B. P. Bole, Jr., close to the Arboretum a pair of Blue-headed Vireos was present throughout the summer.

* Indicates one or more nests found.