



CLEVELAND REGION

Published by
The Cleveland Museum of Natural History
and
The Kirtland Bird Club

THE CLEVELAND REGION

The Circle Has A Radius of 30 Miles Based on Cleveland Public Square

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Beaver Creek | 30 Lake Rockwell |
| 2 North Amherst | 31 White City |
| 3 Lorain | 32 Euclid Creek Reservation |
| 4 Black River | 33 Chagrin River |
| 5 Elyria | 34 Willoughby |
| 6 LaGrange | Waite Hill |
| 7 Avon-on-the-Lake | 35 Sherwin Pond |
| 8 Clague Park | 36 Gildersleeve |
| 9 Clifton Park | 37 North Chagrin Reservation |
| 10 Rocky River | 38 Gates Mills |
| 11 Cleveland Hopkins Airport | 39 South Chagrin Reservation |
| 12 Medina | 40 Aurora Lake |
| 13 Hinckley Reservation | 41 Aurora Sanctuary |
| 14 Edgewater Park | 42 Mantua |
| Perkins Beach | 43 Mentor Headlands |
| 15 Terminal Tower | 44 Mentor Marsh |
| 16 Cleveland Public Square | 45 Black Brook |
| Cuyahoga River | Headlands State Park |
| 17 Brecksville Reservation | 46 Fairport Harbor |
| 18 Akron | 47 Painesville |
| Cuyahoga Falls | 48 Grand River |
| 19 Akron Lakes | 49 Little Mountain |
| 20 Gordon. Park | Holden Arboretum |
| Illuminating Co. plant | 50 Corning Lake |
| 21 Doan Brook | |
| 22 Natural Science Museum | |
| Wade Park | |
| 23 Baldwin Reservoir | 51 Stebbin's Gulch |
| 24 Shaker Lakes | 52 Chardon |
| 25 Lake View Cemetery | 53 Burton |
| 26 Forest Hill Park | 54 Punderson Lake |
| 27 Bedford Reservation | 55 Fern Lake |
| 28 Hudson | 56 LaDue Reservoir |
| 29 Kent | 57 Spencer Wildlife Area |



CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN
PARK SYSTEM



PORTAGE ESCARPMENT
(800-foot Contour Line)

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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THE WEATHER

- September - A fairly bright month with sunshine averaging 67% of the time possible, even though measurable precipitation occurred on 15 days well distributed throughout the month. Sustained winds from northerly directions occurred on 12 days. Total precipitation of 3.16 inches was in slight excess by 0.26 inches. Temperatures averaged 1.8 degrees warmer than normal.
- October - Some violent frontal movements occurred in mid month. Northerly winds were dominant on ten days, and total precipitation of 3.98 inches was in excess by 1.56 inches. Sunshine amounted to 47% of time possible, and temperatures averaged 1.0 degree warmer than normal.
- November - Provided the first touch of winter, with some snow on the 15th and considerably more on the 23rd. Precipitation was heaviest in the latter days of the month, which was fairly gloomy, sunshine occurring only 27% of the time possible. Temperatures, however, averaged slightly warmer than normal by 0.3 degree, while precipitation totaling 3.69 inches was in excess by 1.08 inches.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

Two historic firsts - - the report of a Glossy Ibis and of a Painted Redstart - - were the dramatic highlights of the autumn (See Noteworthy Records section for details). With the addition of these two species, the total of species recorded in the region since the first surveys in 1796 is 337.

But the season as a whole was not a dramatic one, for there was seemingly no great surge of migrants at any one time nor was there an incursion of any of those northern species which cyclically or irregularly come into the region in late autumn. Indeed, this autumn was characterized more by negatives than by positives; more by what was lacking than by what was present, as will be demonstrated in some of the following paragraphs.

Swans in Migration. A few Whistling Swans were seen on the Cleveland lake-front on November 7 and 8, but the major movement through the region occurred from November 14 through 16. At about 11:00 AM on the 14th, a flock of 40 moved east past Mentor Marsh in a heavy overcast with occasional light rain, and some 90 minutes later a band of 12 flew by (Kitson). On the night of November 15, four separate eastbound flights were heard over Cleveland Heights, the earliest at 7:35 PM and the last at about 11:40 (Newman). At Waite Hill that same night, a seemingly sizable flight, which could be heard for seven or eight minutes, occurred at 11:15, and four others were heard between then and 2:00 the next morning. On the 16th, again at Waite Hill, a group of 32 swans, calling continuously, was bound south-southeast at 4:15 PM in bright sunlight (Flanigan). At Chardon on the morning of the 16th, a group of ten and then one of 20 birds were seen as they headed in the direction of Bass Lake, where perhaps 200 swans were on the water shortly after noon. By about 4:00 PM only some 60 were still present and soon they "took off in small groups in the late afternoon sunlight, circling the lake to get altitude and heading south-east on the next leg of their journey" (Spare).

A second though seemingly smaller passage of swans occurred on November 21-22. At 8:10 AM on the 21st, "a good-sized flock was heard flying directly east over Waite Hill" but low, scudding clouds prevented them from being seen (Flanigan). Later that morning a band of 12 moved on a southeasterly course over Painesville (Booth), while at Bass Lake two groups of about 60 and 80 birds appeared high over the lake but did not stop there (Spare). On the afternoon of November 21, two flocks totaling 141 birds rested on the water off-shore at White City (Klamm).

Few Migrating Canada Geese Reported. Passage of Canada Geese through the region was scarcely observed. One small movement was recorded on November 14 at Mentor Marsh where, shortly before noon, a band of 65 flew over headed northeast in a heavy overcast and was followed in about 14 minutes by a flight of 70 on a more easterly course (Kitson).

At Sherwin Farm in Waite Hill some 2,000 Canada Geese had gathered by October 30 (Sherwin). Their presence in that number would indicate that this goose did move into the region during October.

Ducks Generally Not Numerous. Fair numbers of Mallards, Blue-winged Teal, and Wood Ducks were reported, but the other dabbling ducks were recorded in only negligible numbers. For the Shoveler there was not a single record. With the exception of the Red-breasted Merganser, the various species of diving ducks along the lakefront at Cleveland were not at all abundant. Just a single Canvasback was observed, on November 11 (Carrothers); only three Common Merganser, on November 29 (Klamm); and from Headlands State Park the sole record of the Redhead -- four on November 29 (Hammond).

Red-breasted Merganser Abundant. Along the lakefront at Cleveland the Red-breasted Merganser was first reported on October 31, when 465 were tallied off Lakewood Park (Klamm). By November 8, this species had vastly increased, with an estimated five to six thousand on the lakefront waters that day (Stasko); and it remained numerous for the rest of the month. The peak number was reported on November 14, when an estimated 9,000 -- one of the largest number ever recorded -- were concentrated in a stretch of about one and one-quarter miles west from Edgewater Park. In some areas the raft of birds was a half-mile wide (Klamm).

Snowstorm Grounds Coot and a Rail. On the day after the snowstorm of November 23, which as usual was particularly heavy in the eastern part of the region, Dennis Wint, nature supervisor for the Willoughby-Eastlake school system, received five telephone calls reporting the grounding of American Coot in Kirtland, Willoughby, and Wickliffe (fide Flanigan). In Kirtland Hills on the night of the 23rd, a dead Coot was found just outside the door of a residence (Mildred Daniels fide Flanigan).

Since almost nothing is known about the movement of the American Coot through the Cleveland region in the autumn, the finding of these grounded birds offers a bit of evidence suggesting that migration occurs quite late in November. Supporting this tentative belief is the fact that our record over the years reveal that the Coot population markedly decreases in the final ten days of November.

A Virginia Rail was discovered huddled in the deep snow at a residence in Cleveland Heights on the night of November 24. It was later taken to the Natural History Museum where it was fed and cared for, and on the 30th it was banded and released (Kitson). This record is the only one for this species for the entire BIRD CALENDAR year, December 1969 to November 1970.

Migrating Nighthawks Scarce. Unlike other years, no sizable migration of Common Nighthawks was noted in either late August or early September. The largest numbers of migrants reported were a group of 80 on September 4 and 91 on September 6, feeding over Rocky River Reservation before they drifted off to the southeast (Stasko). At Strongsville late in the evening of September 9, approximately 40 were hawking over a wooded area (Hocevar).

In October three Nighthawks were leisurely feeding over the racetracks in Warrensville Heights on the evening of the 14th and two were in the same area on the 19th, which marks a new latest fall occurrence date (Knight).

Late Flock of Martins. An exceptionally large number of late-migrating Purple Martins was concentrated in a "favorite gathering place" in Bay Village about a half mile south of the lake shore on September 12 and 13. About 125 were there on the 12th and nearly 350 the next day (Stasko).

Yearly Total. In the BIRD CALENDAR year now ended, that is, from December 1, 1969 to November 30, 1970, 240 species were recorded and the hybrid Brewster's Warbler. This is the smallest number of species since 239 were recorded in the year 1957-58, and it is the first time the number has fallen below 250 since 1959-60. For the entire year there were no records of the Least Bittern, Loggerhead Shrike, Western Meadowlark, and Lapland Longspur.

The absence of records of the Western Meadowlark is particularly disheartening because this species seemed to have established itself in the region, though in a highly restricted manner; for it was recorded in every breeding season from 1958 through 1969 in at least one and sometimes two localities. Normal mortality is the simplest explanation for the nonappearance of this meadowlark in the two localities where it was found in the past few years. Yet a change in the character of the habitat, which occurred in both localities, may have been the real cause of its absence. At Avon where the Western Meadowlark was recorded in the nesting season of 1965 through the spring of 1968, the grass farm which the birds occupied was not in operation in 1969, thus altering the character of the ground cover. By 1970 the farm had been converted into a golf course. At Warrensville Farms, where the species was recorded in the nesting seasons of 1967 through 1969, increased usage of the area by mankind in 1970 may have had a deterrent effect upon this ground-nesting species, causing it not to take up residence for the breeding season.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Double-crested Cormorant - A rare inland occurrence for this species, which indeed has become rare even on Lake Erie, is a report of two adults at Lake Rockwell on October 12 (Leach) and October 18 (Raynes).

American Bittern - On the quite late date of October 2, one was recorded in Goodyear Heights Metropolitan Park (Szabo). This is the only record for the entire summer and autumn of 1970.

Glossy Ibis - At 10:30 AM on September 20, a single adult, flying quite low along the Lake Erie shoreline, moved east past Perkins Beach. When its course of flight was interrupted by a rising mass of gulls that had been disturbed from the water by a power boat, "the ibis wheeled around in several circles (affording excellent observation), gained some altitude, and then continued toward Edgewater Beach where it was lost from view" (Klamm). This is the first record in the history of the region, though in early May 1969 two adults remained for at least three days in the vicinity of Middlefield, just a few miles outside the Cleveland region.

Surf Scoter - (1) With the waves surging high on Lake Erie on October 3, a lone female or immature, unaccompanied by any other waterfowl, kept to the less turbulent waters of the lagoon at White City, staying close to shore and even coming on land occasionally (Peskin). This is a new earliest occurrence date. (2) A female, together with a few Scaup, was identified on the water off Perkins Beach on November 7 (Klamm),

Common Scoter - At Perkins Beach on November 21, a female was diving in the company of a small band of Scaup (Klamm).

Bald Eagle - (i) An immature was watched for ten minutes on October 17, as it at first circled quite low over west Akron; then drifting easterly and north it gained altitude and disappeared toward the northeast (Ulrich). (2) At Mt. Glen Farm in Kirtland on November 20, a perched bird did not fly off even when a rider on horseback approached to within some 30 feet (Mrs. George P. Haskell *fide* Booth).

Golden Plover - (i) At White City two were seen on the quite early date of September 2, and one was there on October 13 (Carrothers). (2) Fifty-four were counted in the dump basin behind Burke Lakefront Airport on September 27 (Klamm and Hocevar); three were there on October 3, one on the 4th, and two on the late date of October 21 (Klamm).

Ruddy Turnstone - One was feeding along the sandy beach at White City on November 26 (Hocevar) and again -- "mostly in leaf-litter areas" -- on November 28 (Klamm). These are new latest fall dates, the previous latest date being November 10, 1945.

Spotted Sandpiper - In the Scenic Park section of Rocky River Reservation where the warm water discharged from the Lakewood waste water plant keeps the river open all winter, a single bird was feeding along the bank on October 31 and November 7, which are new latest occurrence dates, though they obviously represent an occurrence brought about by unnatural circumstances. The previous latest fall date was October 21, 1962.

Baird's Sandpiper - A tardy transient, in the company of Dunlin and Sanderling, was feeding along the tideline on the beach at White City on October 7 (Newman).

Dowitcher - The only record for the season is that of a single bird in Rocky River Reservation (an out-of-normal habitat) on September 5. It was associated with some three dozen Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and a half dozen Solitary Sandpipers, but unlike them "it was having difficulty feeding in the very shallow river because of the shale bottom. Probing was confined to picking at cracks and around scattered rocks strewn here and there on the flat shale bed" (Klamm).

Franklin's Gull - In the boat basin at Edgewater Park, one was identified on September 5 and seven on September 12, when several were photographed with Bonaparte's Gulls. "All specimens were in substantially second-year plumage" (Klamm). At White City on October 3, "a lone bird after fishing came in to rest on the sandspit of the settling basin" (Klamm); and one was there on November 8 (Carrothers).

Little Gull - On September 12 in the boat basin at Edgewater Park, an adult and an immature were observed both on the wing and at rest; and on November 22 an adult "was fishing in the Edgewater Park harbor area near the sewage plant" (Klamm).

Short-billed Marsh Wren - Rare as a breeding bird and equally rare in migration, one was discovered in the weedy edges of Lakewood Park on September 13 (Klamm).

Mockingbird - (1) The bird that frequented Highland Park Cemetery during the summer of 1970 was last seen there on September 2 (Knight). (2) The nesting pair at Willoughby Hills remained for the greater part of the autumn (See Field Notes section for details). (3) In Waite Hill one appeared on October 18 at a residence heavily planted with trees and shrubs where it was seen daily through the end of November. It apparently established a territory, for it drove off Robins, Cedar Waxwings, and Cardinals from favorite fruiting trees (Flanigan).

White-eyed Vireo - At French Creek Reservation in Lorain County, one was heard "singing bright and clear" for some five minutes on September 20 (Nagy).

Parula Warbler - Uncommon to rare in spring, this species is even rarer in fall. Yet this fall there were three records, each of a single bird: in West Geauga on September 9 (Kremm); at Lower Shaker Lake on September 24 (Knight); near Chardon on October 4. (Spare).

Magnolia Warbler - An immature was feeding in an area of weedy growth at the upper pond in Lakeview [Lake View] Cemetery on November 8, which is a new latest occurrence date (Corbin).

Kentucky Warbler - For about 15 minutes at mid-morning on September 20, an adult male, in the company of 20 or 30 warblers, predominantly Blackpoll and Bay-breasted, fed in the brushy willows on the bank of the Black River in Lorain until the entire flock moved on (Morse).

American Redstart - A male "in full summer colors" flitted among some shrubby growth at Headlands State Park for a brief time in the morning on the exceptionally late date of November 14 (Corbin and Kitson).

Painted Redstart - From about 9:00 AM on November 15 through November 22, this displaced bird was seen daily, except on the 17th and 21st, in the back yard of a residence in Middleburgh Heights adjoining a wooded ravine. The bird fed in a flower bed about ten feet from the house, scratching under the leaves for food. Occasionally it would fly up to the house and seize spiders or the insects trapped in spider webs hanging under corners of the house. It appeared in the morning and some days about 4 :00 PM. The bird, which was seen by a considerable number of observers, was very tame and often hopped up on the back stoop, unfrightened by people moving about inside the house a few feet away. There was no conflict between the redstart and the many other birds -- Cardinals, Slate-colored Juncos, Song Sparrows, etc. -- which came to the several feeding stations in the yard, though of course there was no direct competition for food. Snowfall on November 23 apparently put an end to the redstart's appearance (Redden).

This occurrence record is the first for the Cleveland region, seemingly the first for Ohio, and one of a very few east of the Mississippi River.

FIELD NOTES

Sanderling Takes Refuge Under Car. On a very blustery November 15, with wind-driven rain coming in off Lake Erie, a Sanderling that I had been watching along the beach at White City flew close to my car and took refuge under it, huddling close to a wheel. Eventually it flew back to the beach and alighted near a Dunlin. When I left they were both facing into the wind and sitting out the storm. - MICHAEL STASKO

Swifts Return Nightly to Chimney Roost. Beginning September 7 and continuing until the 21st, I watched in the evening as Chimney Swifts circled around a tall chimney next to my apartment in East Cleveland. Their number varied, the highest count being 40. The birds were not in evidence at all during the day, but appeared each evening before the sky darkened. Just before complete darkness they dropped, a few at a time, into the chimney. This was the third successive year that this roosting occurred. - FAYE B. KING

Breeding Mockingbirds Remain in Willoughby Hills. [The following account is another installment in the continuing history of a pair of Mockingbirds which nested for the first time at a residence in Willoughby Hills in the spring of 1969. In the spring of 1970, nesting activity was noted on April 1, but the location of the nest made close observation impossible. On May 15, the parents were feeding two fledglings, only one of which was still present at the end of May. The chronology of subsequent events during the summer and autumn of 1970 is reported below. - Ed]

On June 7, two adults were seen together for the first time in more than two weeks. Our suspicion that the female was setting while the male was feeding the fledgling was confirmed; for during the following two weeks we saw food being transported in the direction of the second nest. The fledgling from the first nest was still in the area and was often fed by one of the adults.

As of June 27, two young had left the second nest; and the adults were building a third nest in an old apple tree in our yard. On July 5, one of the parents was feeding a fledgling from the second nest. Again, only one fledgling had survived long enough to leave the nesting area. The fledgling from nest #1 had now disappeared. In the weeks to follow, the young of the third nesting could be heard peeping in the apple tree, but they apparently did not live long enough to leave the immediate area of the nest since we did not see or hear them away from the nest, as we had all of the other broods. Many cats had been seen in the vicinity of the apple tree.

The delightful song and mimicry of the male was heard almost daily all summer, but the climax was reached between July 24 and 28. During those five days he sang and mimicked continually from morning until night, all the while flying from perch to perch, stopping a short time, and then flying on to the next perch. He circled the entire area in this manner again and again. His singing was very much like the continuous nervous, excited song that we heard for the few days preceding his departure in the fall of 1969.

On September 3, the peeping of another brood could be heard coming from the hedge. We were amazed because we had not seen any sign of nesting or of feeding. The young were heard daily. Finally, on September 17, the parents with three fledglings were seen in the open areas of the yard. We concluded that the nest was probably quite a distance from the hedge, and because of this we had not seen the building or feeding. The young had undoubtedly been brought to the hedge for protection when they left the nest, as the parents had done with every brood.

All five birds remained in the yard and in the adjacent fields for about two weeks, providing an excellent opportunity to observe the feeding activities and to hear the young. Gradually they began to separate, each venturing a little farther from the group and finding its own food. By late October we were seeing only one bird, which we judged was the male as we heard singing almost daily.

On October 26, an apparent fight occurred between two Mockingbirds. They chased each other from bush to bush and flew at each other, feet first. This same performance was seen again in November, giving rise to the probability that there was another male in the area. We had never observed the male and female flying at each other. [This combat may have involved a dispute over winter territory, with the male attempting to drive away one of its offspring or even its ertswile mate rather than a rival adult male. - Ed.]

From the lone Mocker which has been here since 1966 and the mate which joined it in 1969, there have been eight nestings, four in each year, and seven young which survived long enough to leave the nesting area. - GENEVIEVE REUTTER and RUTH SILLIMAN

Birds Congregate in Downtown Cemetery. Again this autumn, contributor Sybil Leach compiled a most impressive list of birds observed in ancient Erie Street Cemetery located in downtown Cleveland, not far from her business office. In 41 separate half-hour noontime visits to that seven and one-half acre plot of ground, from September 1, through November 3, she tallied 43 species including nine species of warblers. Some of her most interesting observations are these:

- an almost incredible number of Yellow-shafted Flickers, beginning with 20 on September 14, then 25 on the 17th and 21st, 35 on the 22nd, 50 on the 23rd, and 70 on the 28th. Numbers gradually declined during the first three weeks of October, but one was still present on the final day of observation, November 3.
- two Eastern Phoebes on October 20.
- two extremely late Brown Thrashers on October 19, perhaps the same two which were seen on October 9.
- on October 19, fifteen Hermit Thrushes, among them one which alighted on the upraised elbow of the immobile, binocular-holding, gray-clad observer, who was apparently mistaken for a granite tombstone.

- a Yellow-throated Vireo on September 30, a Philadelphia Vireo on September , and a Cape May Warbler on October 6.

- two Vesper Sparrows on October 23, an estimated 200 each of Slate-colored Juncos and White-throated Sparrows on October 19, and 4 Fox Sparrows that same day.