



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
Summer 1977

- June - Overall, the month was cool and wet. Temperatures averaged out 4.8 degrees cooler than normal. A minimum of 35 degrees was reached on the 3rd and a maximum of 89 degrees was attained on the 17th. Precipitation was well distributed on 14 days and totaled 4.81 inches which was 1.83 inches in excess of normal. This was helped in part by thunderstorms on 7 days and particularly on the 30th when 1.80 inches fell. Sunshine prevailed during 66 percent of the time possible.
- July - Precipitation was distributed on 11 days and totaled 3.94 inches which provided 0.49 inches in excess of normal. A maximum high temperature of 94 degrees on the 15th tied the previous record while minimum temperature of 51 degrees on the 27th was followed by a 52 degree low on the 28th which set a new record low for the day. Nonetheless, temperatures managed to average out 1.7 degrees warmer than normal as sunshine prevailed during 81.6 percent of the time possible.
- August - Temperature deviations from normal were relatively trivial as the month averaged out a mere 0.2,degrees cooler than normal, having reached a maximum of 88 degrees on the 28th and a minimum of 47 degrees on the 25th. Precipitation was scattered over 14 days and reached 3.92 inches to provide 0.92 inches above normal. Sunshine broke through for 79 percent of the time possible.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

For many birders (the editor hereby confesses his own guilt), summer means travel to distant birding hot spots with exotic sounding names like Huachuca Mountains, St. Lawrence Island, Loxahatchee, Churchill, etc. in search of the fabulous avifauna that may be found in these places. But the summer season in the Cleveland region holds exciting rewards for those birders who decide not to hang up the binoculars until the warblers return in late August. Observing local nesting species gives the birder an opportunity to appreciate the difficulties that birds endure to raise a brood while the fascinating and ever-changing variety of interesting (and oftentimes rare) birdlife will be found with conscientious coverage of lakefront birding areas. Details of the summer season appear in the following paragraphs, while the Noteworthy Records Section is spiced with sightings like Hudsonian Godwit, American Avocet, Canvasback among others.

Shorebirds The southbound migration of shorebirds began in the last few days of June when Dowitchers, Lesser Yellowlegs, Willets, and other species appeared at White City. This early influx of shorebirds, though not especially significant in terms of numbers, continued at White City during the first two weeks of July when species like Stilt and Western Sandpipers and American Avocet, decidedly uncommon birds in the Cleveland region, surprised observers. Small numbers of waders could be seen through the rest of the summer at White City.

White City was not the only place to observe shorebirds as Burke Airport hosted a wide variety of shorebirds. Observers noted nesting Upland Sandpipers, Pectoral Sandpipers appeared in unusual numbers as 97 and 60 were tallied on July 30 and August 6 respectively (LePage), and Black-bellied Plovers, in varying stages of plumage, graced the runways the whole month of August. Rare, Arctic-breeding shorebirds appeared at Burke Airport. The details of these sightings appear in the Noteworthy Records Section.

Another significant shorebirds concentration point was the landfill behind the Cleveland Muny Light Plant. Possessing an extensive mudflat and being adjacent to Burke Airport, the landfill attracted large numbers of shorebirds, but unfortunately, observers were not able to identify most of the smaller 'peeps' as distances between the observers and the mudflat made identification, even through scopes almost hopeless. Dowitchers could be identified and were tallied in impressive numbers; 100 were noted on August 10 (Hoffman). In the future, hopefully with better accessibility to the mudflat, this area

may add valuable data on the migration and abundance of shore-birds in the Cleveland region.

Terns Both Common and Black Terns gathered in great numbers on the mudflat area of the landfill behind Muny Light beginning in early August and remained numerous almost the whole month. Numbers were estimated at about 1,000 individuals for both species for the period from about August 9 through August 27. Caspian Terns and an occasional Forster's Tern added variety to keep the observers from becoming spellbound by the sight of the thousands of terns. Along with the enormous numbers of terns were thousands of Herring, Ring-billed, and Bonaparte's Gulls and it was truly a scene when the assembled gulls and terns would occasionally all fly up together in a cloud of birds only to settle back down again on the mudflat.

Nighthawks The annual late-summer gathering of Common Nighthawks was well documented from all corners of the region. The following table lists the date of major Nighthawk movements, approximate numbers of birds observed, and the observer:

| DATE | NUMBER OF BIRDS | LOCATION | OBSERVER |
|------|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| 8/21 | 40 | Cleveland Heights | Vavrek |
| 8/23 | 150 | Cleveland Heights | Newman |
| 8/23 | 212 | Lakewood | Klamm |
| 8/24 | 50 | Forest Hill Park | Hoffman |
| 8/26 | 300 | Willoughby/Geneva | Rickard |
| 8/26 | 100 | Near West Side of Cleveland | LePage |
| 8/26 | 60 | Headlands State Park | Hammond |
| 8/27 | 200 | Peninsula | Besser |
| 8/27 | 750 | Lakewood | Klamm |
| 8/28 | 50 | Lakewood | Klamm |
| 8/30 | 110 | Cleveland Heights | Baum |
| 8/30 | 135 | Lakewood | Klamm |
| 8/31 | 22 | Upper Shaker Lakes | Knight |
| 8/31 | 92 | Cleveland Heights | Newman |
| 8/31 | 100 | Chagrin Falls | Clark |

Unusual fact about the 100 Nighthawks in Chagrin Falls on August 31 was that they were reported to be gathering at 5:30 p.m. Major movements are usually noted about one to one-and one-half hours before sunset.

Bank Swallow, Purple Martin For a four-day period beginning July 3 and lasting through July 11, Bank Swallows were concentrated around White City in impressive numbers. Approximately 1,600 and 1,200 were tallied on July 9 and 10 respec-

tively (Klamm). The birds streamed by in groups of various size and they gathered on both the willow trees that border the north side of the lagoon and the rocks of the breakwalls both to the immediate east and west of the lagoon. Observers remarked that this gathering on seawalls had rarely been noted in previous years of watching the migration of Bank Swallows at White City.

In the absence of reports from the Akron Airport, a traditional staging area for Purple Martins before the start of the journey southward, no massive gatherings of these birds were received, maximum number was 300 on August 23 at Mentor-on-the-Lake (Hammond). As for the nesting of these swallows in our area, one observer at Lorain reported "more Purple Martins than ever before" and stated that the birds, both adults and young, had departed by mid-July (Dolbear). The Martin colony at White City was successful. Both adult birds and young remained somewhat later than at Lorain as birds were being observed through the middle of August. (Hannikman).

Uncommon Nesters Nesting success for the Red-breasted Nuthatch and the Mockingbird, both infrequent breeders in the Cleveland area, was documented at Rocky River Metropark, Gordon Park, and Perkins Beach. Both adult and young Red-breasted Nuthatches were observed at Rocky River on June 19 while two, possibly three, nesting attempts were made by the pair of Mockingbirds at the Gordon Park site. Two young birds were seen on July 23 and 24; however, only one adult could be found on July 31. Fledgling success from the probable third attempt was unknown as neither adults nor young could be found after August 20. The nesting at Perkins Beach was a first for that locality and the observers who located this pair were surprised that the birds had escaped detection until nesting was well underway. Two young from this nest were last seen on July 24, an adult was last observed on July 31. (Special thanks to William and Nancy Klamm for their detailed accounts of the nestings of both the Red-breasted Nuthatches and the Mockingbirds).

Warblers Early appearances of Connecticut and Wilson's Warblers signaled the beginning of the fall warbler migration. Initially, Magnolia, Cape May, and Bay-breasted Warblers predominated, but by month's end most of the non-resident migratory warblers had been reported. August 30, a Tuesday when not many birders could get into the field, was described as "phenomenally booming" with warblers at Lakewood Park (Klamm), whereas, one contributor noted that migrants were scarce around Mentor Marsh and Holden Arboretum (Hammond). In any event, there was no doubt that the return of those "confusing" fall warblers had begun.

House Finch As reported in the Spring 1977 issue of the CALENDAR, House Finches attempted nesting for the first time in the Cleveland region at Upper Shaker Lakes. Though this nesting eventually ended in the abandonment of the nest, the House Finch appears to be in the process of establishing itself as a permanent resident here. In Westlake, a pair regularly visited a feeder for about two weeks beginning July 10 (Soster), while an Akron resident reported that "several families" frequented a feeder in early August (Ginaven). Others were reported in June from the Akron area (Biscan). No details were submitted, however, for any nesting from Akron. One female sang at a residence in Shaker Heights July 28 (Rickard). For better or worse, it appears that the House Finch is here to stay.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Great Egret - Ten individuals were reported at the landfill behind Munny Light about 5:15 p.m. on August 9 (Hoffman). Eleven birds, probably the same individuals mentioned above, were observed in flight, heading west to east, along the Lake Erie shoreline at White City at about 7:10 p.m. (Hannikman).

Yellow-crowned Night Heron - (1) An adult bird remained for most of the summer in the Rocky River Metropark vicinity (several observers). (2) An immature bird spent the afternoon of August 6 at a residence near Lorain (Ward).

Northern Shoveler - An early migrant appeared at the landfill behind Munny Light on August 21 (Klamm).

Canvasback - An out-of-season female appeared at White City on June 11 (Hoffman). There has been only one previous summer record for this species in the history of the region, a bird that summered at Furnace Run Metropark in 1960.

Hooded Merganser - An immature was present at Lakeview Cemetery from July 24 to August 6 (Hoffman).

Bald Eagle - On June 22, an adult eagle was observed as it soared above an area southwest of the main parking lot at the Holden Arboretum. White head and tail were the key field marks noted on this bird as it continued sailing to the west until out of sight (Huey).

Piping Plover - One was observed on the mudflat at White City on the evening of July 15 (Hannikman) and remained until July 17 (Hoffman).

Black-bellied Plover - A bird in non-breeding plumage frequented the White City Beach area between June 30 and July 3 (Hoffman, Hannikman). Rather than being considered an exceptionally early fall vagrant, this bird is considered to have been an unsuccessful northbound migrant that did not complete the journey to its Arctic breeding grounds.

Whimbrel - At least two birds were present at either Burke Airport or the landfill behind Muny Light from August 20 to August 28 (Hoffman, et. al.).

Upland Sandpiper - Now a rare breeder in the Cleveland region, nesting occurred at Burke Airport as evidenced by the presence of two half-grown young and an adult on July 27. At this time the young were not able to fly (Hoffman, Klamm).

Lesser Yellowlegs - One appeared at White City on June 25, one day earlier than the previous early fall date (Hoffman).

Red Knot - (1) A bird in nearly full breeding plumage appeared at Burke Airport on July 30 (Klamm) and remained until August 6 (LePage). (2) A flock of five was distinguished among the many shorebirds gathered at the landfill behind Muny Light on August 21 (Klamm, Hoffman).

White-rumped Sandpiper - (1) Two birds were on the mudflat at White City on June 1 (Bacik). (2) Two birds were again seen at White City on June 14 but because of the two weeks between the observations these birds were probably not the same ones reported June 1 (Hoffman).

Dowitcher - Another new early fall date was established when a bird of this species was noted at White City on June 25 (Hoffman).

Stilt Sandpiper - A very early individual remained for most of the day, oftentimes in the company of several Dowitchers, at White City on July 9. In splendid summer plumage with rusty cheek patches and heavy breast barring, the bird was seen to wade belly-deep into the water and probe the bottom of the lagoon for food so intensely that its entire bill and forehead would be plunged into the muddy water in search of tiny morsels of food that are found in the lagoon (Hannikman).

Semipalmated Sandpiper - A solitary straggler, unsuccessful in its journey to its Arctic breeding grounds, lingered at White City on June 11, 18, 25. (Klamm).

Western Sandpiper - Closely scrutinized for about thirty minutes, a single specimen was observed at White City on July 2. Long bill, slightly drooping at the tip, black legs, size comparison with Least Sandpipers, and faintly rusty scapulars were the characteristics noted on this bird (Hannikman). This sighting marks a new early fall date for the species, previous early fall date was July 16, 1946.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper - Nine birds were observed at Burke Airport on August 2 (Besser). Formerly a rare fall migrant in our area, observations of this much-persecuted shorebird have increased in the past few years allowing birders to study the habits of this shorebird as it makes a stop here on its way to its wintering grounds in southern South America.

Hudsonian Godwit - First summer record in CALENDAR records occurred when an individual was noted at Burke Airport between August 20 and 24 (Hoffman, et al.). Several times both the Hudsonian Godwit and Whimbrel could be seen side by side, thus offering observers an excellent comparison of the long, upturned bill of the Godwit and the sickle-bill of the Whimbrel.

Sanderling - Another shorebird which appeared unexpectedly early, a summer-plumaged individual was present at White City throughout the evening of June 29 (Hoffman). This becomes another new early fall date, previous early date was July 7, 1942.

American Avocet - (1) Five finely plumaged birds were at White City on July 8 (Hoffman, et al.). (2) Two birds remained at the landfill behind Munny Light from August 9 to 12 (Hoffman).

Glaucous Gull - Unprecedented in the entire history of the Cleveland region was the occurrence of a second-year bird at White City Beach on August 7 (Stasko). This record thus becomes both the initial summer and August record for this Arctic gull in the history of the region. Coincidentally, this same observer also recorded the Cleveland region's very first summer sighting of the other winter white-winged gull, the Iceland, in July of 1965.

Franklin's Gull - An adult bird was sighted among a group of about thirty Bonaparte's Gulls during the evening of July 27 (Corbin). A few immature birds favored lakefront spots during August, somewhat earlier than is expected for this species.

Caspian Tern - On the afternoon of July 3, three individuals were observed flying west to east over White City (Hannikman). Previous early fall date for the species was July 6, 1974.

White-eyed Vireo - An individual was calling near the Rocky River Interpretive Center on June 19 (Stasko). The bird was not found after that date.

Black-throated Blue Warbler - A male was sighted among some trees that border the parking lot at the Shaker Lakes Nature Center parking lot on June 18 (Flynn). Very few records for this species exist for the month of June.

Connecticut Warbler - (1) A very tardy spring migrant appeared at the old Brooklyn Airport June 3 (Bacik). (2) Very early fall birds were sighted at Sims Park on August 13 (Corbin) and at the old Brooklyn Airport on August 15 (Bacik).

Wilson's Warbler - On August 12, early for the species, one bird was sighted at Sims Park in Euclid (Hoffman).

FIELD NOTES

BUSY BLUEBIRDS St. Joan's (Solon) Boy Scout Troop 421 made Bluebird houses during the cold days of last winter. Two boxes were placed at the edge of the woods on the property of Dr. and Mrs. Harry Fay. The Fay family, especially son Marty, one of the Boy Scouts, had great hopes of attracting a pair of Bluebirds. Not long after the boxes were put up a pair of Bluebirds moved in. The Fay family was able to watch the entire nesting process right up until the day the young birds fledged. Much to the delight of the family the same pair began preparations for a second nesting. The nesting cycle was observed again from the bringing of food into the nesting box right up to the feeding of the two young in trees near the patio. The Fay family again hopes to attract Bluebirds next summer. - DR. HARRY FAY FIDE ETHEL SURMAN

BEGINNINGS OF WARBLER MIGRATION At 7:40 a.m. on August 9, I heard the lisping notes of one or two warblers calling from high overhead as I waited at the bus stop near my home in Cleveland Heights. This was the first evidence for me that the southbound flight had begun. Then on August 13, I sighted a Yellow Warbler flitting about in the backyard, a sure migrant since this species does not nest anywhere in the vicinity. Finally, on August 25, I found a dead Pine Warbler at the base of the Central National Bank Building in downtown Cleveland, further evidence that migration was underway. - DONALD L. NEWMAN

NIGHTHAWKS ALONG THE HIGHWAY On Saturday August 27, my wife, Dottie, two of our friends, and I set out to attend the evening concert at Blossom Music Center. We entered southbound I-271 at the Chagrin Boulevard interchange at approximately 6:45 p.m. Almost immediately thereafter we began observing groups of Nighthawks numbering five or six birds in each group. These sightings continued all along our route down I-271, east on Route 301, and south on Akron-Peninsula Road until we had seen at least 40 birds.

A few hundred feet before the intersection of Akron-Peninsula and Northampton Roads there is a small pasture. We approached this pasture shortly before 7:00 p.m.; and found the air above it alive with a churning, diving, wheeling flock of about 100 Nighthawks. The birds were hunting at altitudes of zero to fifty feet, and during our ten minute period of observation were completely silent. The effect of that many birds maneuvering at high speed in a small area was absolutely stunning. - DONALD G. KUHN

HOUSE FINCHES ABANDON NEST The pair of House Finches which, as reported in the Spring issue of the BIRD CALENDAR were constructing a nest in a leafy cluster of branchlets in a sycamore tree at Upper Shaker Lake on May 30, apparently abandoned the nest some time after June 4. On that date I observed the nest for one hour in the afternoon, seeing the male only once when it perched about three feet from the nest, uttered many House Sparrow-like chirps and then flew off. Because of the height of the nest, about 48 feet, and the overhanging leaves, I could not determine whether the female was on.

Between 10:00 and 11:40 a.m. on June 11, I maintained a careful watch at the nest site. Though the male sang several times nearby at 10:35, I did not observe either bird until shortly after 11:30 when both appeared in the understory beneath the nest tree, calling responsively. They then dropped to an open patch of matted brown leaves to feed upon the tiny wind-blown seeds of the Carolina poplar trees which were fruiting at that time. After several minutes of feeding, they flew back into the understory and soon flew away, calling as they did. Finally, on June 15, between 7:00 and 3:10 p.m., I again kept watch at the nest site, but saw neither bird. - DONALD L. NEWMAN .

Erratum (Spring, 1977)

Great Crested Flycatcher - The reference made to a bird seen at Shaker Lakes on April 17 should be deleted. The error was made in the transcription of the data to the CALENDAR report form.

AN INVITATION: The Kirtland Bird Club meets at 7:45 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month except July and August in The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle. Visitors are always welcome.

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Inquiries and correspondence regarding subscriptions to THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR should be addressed to The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Attention Helen Yenkevich, Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, Ohio 44106.