



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 | 51 Stebbin's Gulch |
| 22 Natural Science Museum | 52 Chardon |
| Wade Park | 53 Burton |
| 23 Baldwin Reservoir | 54 Punderson Lake |
| 24 Shaker Lakes | 55 Fern Lake |
| 25 Lake View Cemetery | 56 LaDue Reservoir |
| 26 Forest Hill Park | 57 Spencer Wildlife Area |
| 27 Bedford Reservation | |
| 28 Hudson | |
| 29 Kent | |



CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN
PARK SYSTEM



PORTAGE ESCARPMENT
(800-foot Contour Line)

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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THE WEATHER
Fall 1977

September - Overall, the month was fairly warm and dry.

Temperatures averaged out 1.7 degrees warmer than normal. A maximum of 88 degrees on the 1st and a minimum of 47 on the 29th were reached. Precipitation totaled 2.52 inches which was 0.28 inches in deficit from the 12 days on which rain fell. Sunshine prevailed 53% of the time possible.

October - A maximum of 73 degrees on the 1st and a minimum of 35 degrees on the 15th were attained, but the month averaged out 1.2 degrees cooler than normal. Precipitation was distributed on 13 days, but most of it occurred during the first 20 days. The total of 1.93 inches was in deficit by 0.64 inches from normal. Sunshine prevailed 43% of time possible.

November - A decidedly dismal month with sunshine barely prevailing 12% of the time possible. While the month turned out to be warm and wet, it ended in a wintry mode with snow on the 26th through 29th. Temperatures averaged 3.8 degrees warmer than normal while precipitation on 21 days totaled 3.62 inches which was in excess of normal by 0.86 inches.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

The fall season in the Cleveland region had a little something for every type of birding enthusiast: species rare in our area appeared, included among which were Red-throated Loon, Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Barn Owl, etc., spectacular migratory flights of Common Loons and Whist-ling Swans were observed along the Cleveland lakefront, warblers returned in good numbers after a poor showing this spring and Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks staged a widespread incursion in-to many parts of the area during the latter half of October and throughout November. Re-live the fall of 1977 as the following paragraphs of commentary, noteworthy records, and field notes tell the story of the season.

Common Loon It has been several years since any significant early morning migration of Common Loons has been observed, so it is of interest to report the passage of these birds that occurred on November 12. On that date, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., 471 Common Loons were observed migrating over Kuhlman Woods, an area just about one mile south of White City. An additional 22 loons were noted as the observer walked along East 140th Street toward White City later that morning. Again, as in past observations of migrating loons, the birds moved in loose flocks with numbers ranging from single birds to loose strings of about forty of individuals. The loons, aided by the strong, northerly winds of the period, entered the observer's line of sight from the north and the majority moved south and southwest over the woods, some, however, pursued an east to west course north of the woods. Curiously, no other observers reported any other loons on November 12 or the next day when 36 loons were noted between Kuhlman Woods and White City. Several of the small flocks seen on November 13 were headed north over Kuhlman Woods toward Lake Erie (Hannikman).

Other than the above observations, Common Loons were noted in small numbers both along the lakefront and at favored larger inland bodies of water with initial observations beginning in late October and continuing through November.

Whistling Swan One of the highlights of any autumn migration in our area is the passage of Whistling Swans. The following table summarizes the reports of these birds for the month of November.

| DATE | NUMBER OF BIRDS | LOCATION | OBSERVER |
|-------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 11/5 | 5 | Lakewood | |
| 11/7 | 20 | Gordon Park | |
| 11/11 | 5,000 (est.) | Cleveland Lakefront | Elder & Hannikman |
| 11/11 | 40 | White City | Hoffman |
| 11/12 | 10 | White City | Hannikman |
| " | 27 | Cleveland Heights | Hoffman |
| " | 83 | Seiberling Nature Center, Akron | Szabo |
| " | 8 | Cleveland Lakefront | Hoffman |
| 11/13 | 29 | White City | Hannikman |
| " | 600 | Summit Lake | Biscan |
| " | 7 | Painesville | Miller |
| 11/22 | 63 | Lakewood | Klamm |
| 11/23 | 400 | LaDue Reservoir | Elder |
| 11/24 | 24 | White City | Hannikman |
| " | 44 | Cleveland Lakefront | Klamm |
| " | 250 | " " | Hoffman |
| " | 120 | Chardon | Spare |
| " | 120 | Seiberling Nature Center, Akron | Szabo |
| 11/25 | 34 | LaDue Reservoir | Besser |
| " | 60 | Bass Lake | Spare |

An analysis of the above data reveals two things: (1) the greatest numbers of swans were observed, as usual, on weekends, in this case the second and fourth weekends of the month, both long weekends for many observers. That no swans were reported for the third weekend of the month is not surprising as many of the contributors listed in the above table were off that weekend chasing rare Arctic and European gulls at Niagara Falls! No swans? Probably no observers to see them! (2) Observations from lakefront localities consisted mainly of migrants passing eastward or southward whereas sightings from in-land bodies of water like LaDue Reservoir and the Summit Lakes were of swans that had stopped on these bodies of water before resuming their journey southward. So rarely has a spectacle of swans of the immensity that was witnessed by two lucky observers on November 11 been observed in our area that the details of the day are presented in the Field Notes Section.

Other Waterfowl Bay ducks were scarce during November. Red-heads appeared late in the month, but only in very meager numbers, only three Ring-necked Ducks were observed, and two those in October, and Canvasbacks avoided observation, only two birds were reported in late November after ten were observed on Lake

Rockwell on October 17 (Szabo). Common Goldeneyes and Buffleheads trickled through the region in November while Scaup ducks were not encountered in remarkable numbers.

No large rafts of Red-breasted Mergansers were observed; however, the flock of 50 Hooded Mergansers on LaDue Reservoir on November 29 was the largest number of these ducks seen here in several years (Elder). Details of the appearances of Surf Scoter and Black Scoter are to be found in the Note-worthy Records Section.

Hawks Raptors were not prominent in contributors' reports for the autumn. Notably scarce were Cooper's Hawks with only six records, Broad-winged Hawks, totally absent from fall sightings, and Red-shouldered Hawks, with only three birds being reported. On the brighter side were reports of nine Osprey, the most for the last five autumns, and such note-worthy birds of prey such as the Goshawk, Bald Eagle, and Peregrine Falcon, the latter bird remaining at Burke Airport for several days and affording many birders an opportunity of seeing their first wild Peregrine. Though not noteworthy in themselves, two reports of Sharp-shinned Hawks add variety to the fall raptor picture: the resident bird in Chagrin Falls became a "too regular" visitor to a feeder but disappeared after the first snows (Sheldon), and another individual remained for several minutes at a feeder in Solon before it dashed off (Surman).

Shorebirds Increased coverage of proper shorebird habitat along the Cleveland lakefront is changing current thinking on the status of a number of species of shorebirds that migrate through the Cleveland region. Heretofore, Whimbrels and Buff-breasted Sandpipers were considered rare fall transients; however, the almost daily coverage of Burke Airport during September produced records of these birds, up to four Whimbrels were noted on various dates through September 28, while the flock of Buff-breasted Sandpipers grew to 14 birds on September 11, seven birds were last recorded on September 24. This is the third consecutive fall that these two species have been present at Burke Airport throughout September, hopefully this trend of the last three autumns will become a regular feature of the fall shorebird migration in our region.

American Golden Plovers and Black-bellied Plovers were also a fall feature at Burke Airport. The grassy runways hosted up to 37 Golden and 3 Black-bellied Plovers, peak period of abundance for Golden Plovers was between September 24 and October 2 while Black-bellied Plovers reached their maximum numbers between October 15 and 30. Ruddy Turnstones inexplicably remained scarce during the fall, all in all, this squat, far ranging

shorebird was in very poor evidence for 1977.

Gulls, Terns Excellent counts of Ring-billed Gulls were made throughout the fall. Numbers built up to an estimated 50,000 birds along the Cleveland lakefront between the mouth of the Cuyahoga River and White City on November 12 and this abundance persisted through the end of the month (Hoffman). There was only a very minor incursion of Franklin's Gulls. No more than three birds were noted at one time (LePage), the usual number seen was one, the species was last recorded on November 20 (Hoffman, Klamm). The only Little Gull reported was an adult that remained with the flock of Bonaparte's Gulls at White City between October 23 and November 1 (Hannikman, Corbin).

Common and Black Terns virtually went unreported after being present in substantial numbers in August. Common Terns were only reported on September 8 and October 8 with a total of 46 birds recorded while Black Terns were only noted on September 3 with 50 birds being tallied. Quite in contrast were Caspian Terns which remained throughout September and early October at various points along the Cleveland lakefront.

Black-capped Chickadee Several observers commented upon what appeared to be a minor westward movement of Black-capped Chickadees during October and early November. Migrant Chickadees, all heading westward, were observed at the following locations: nine birds in Willoughby on October 10 (Huey), ten birds on the east side of Cleveland and one bird in downtown Cleveland on October 31 (Newman), and twelve migrants at Lakeview Cemetery on November 5 (Hoffman). Chickadees were also described as being "exceptionally numerous at various lake-front locations and the influx of westward migrants apparently kept a small number of Chickadees at Donald Gray Gardens during October (Klamm). This westward movement of Chickadees has been noted before, the most notable of which occurred in October of 1963 when on October 22 of that year an estimated 1,100 Chickadees were tallied at White City (see CBC: 59, 33-34 for the account of that day's movement).

Carolina Wren One of the negative aspects to report for the fall was the total absence of Carolina Wren from contributors' reports. Last winter's unrelenting cold wreaked havoc on the local population of these birds, and it may be several years before the local population of this wren returns to the numbers that occurred throughout the first half of the 1970s.

Kinglets Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, both usually numerous and widespread migrants from late September through early November, were much reduced in numbers. "Exceptionally poor" was an apt commentary that one observer used to characterize the numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets as these tiny migrants literally trickled through the region (Klamm). The majority of reports was of between one and three birds, and this fact, combined with actually fewer reports of Golden-crowned Kinglets, indicate the poor showing these birds made during the fall. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were more numerous than Golden-crowns, but again numbers were not as great as they have been in the past. Another characteristic common to both kinglets' fall migration patterns was that few birds were reported in November, data of the past few years have indicated that numbers of both species of kinglets remained through the early part of November, this did not occur this year.

Warblers With both a good variety of species and some excellent numbers for several of those species, the fall warbler migration was a quite satisfactory experience. Migration climaxed the weekend of September 24 and 25 when, of the 22 species of warblers noted during the two-day period, observers recorded the autumn's highest counts for eleven of those species. An interesting fact of the two-day period was that on both the 24th and 25th the numbers of both Magnolia Warblers and Black-throated Green Warblers surpassed the total numbers recorded for each species for the whole spring of 1977!

One observer, in a sweep of several lakefront birding hotspots from spots from Mentor Headlands to the Donald Gray Gardens on September 29, alone recorded 19 species of warblers and also excellent numbers for both warblers and other passerines (Corbin). It was regrettable that this was a weekday when few birders for the day could have given a better picture of the magnitude of the migratory movement that day.

Pine Siskin, Evening Grosbeak The first report of Pine Siskins was of a flock of six at Lower Shaker Lakes on October 9 (Peskin). Beginning on October 24 and continuing through November 6, Siskins in flocks varying in size from ten to 80 individuals were reported from the following localities: 10-15 at a residence in Willoughby on October 24 and 25 (Huey), 30 on October 25 and 60 on October 30 at the old Brooklyn Airport (Bacik), 80+ in Lakewood Park on October 29 (Klamm), 10, 15

and 42 birds in Kuhlman Woods on October 29, November 5 and 6 respectively (Hannikman), and 17 at Lower Shaker Lakes also on November 6 (Besser). After November 6, the only report of Pine Siskins was of a single bird at a residence in Painesville (Miller). Common for a period of time and then almost completely absent is typical of the erratic wanderings of this species.

The Evening Grosbeak was widely reported from the eastern and southern parts of the region during October and November. Some of the highlights include: (1) a flock which averaged between 10 and 12 birds was noted at a residence in Chagrin Falls from October 27 to the end of the period (Sheldon); (2) 5-25birds were regular visitors to a feeder in Kirtland Hills (Bole, Jr.); (3) between 10 and 12 birds were seen or heard daily at a residence in Chardon (Spare); (4) a small group whose numbers varied from 3 to 4 spent November at the F. A. Seiberling Nature Center in Summit County (Szabo). Among the larger migrating flocks were: (1) 12 at Chapin State Park on October 8 (Corbin); (2) 20 at Firestone Metropark in Akron on October 15 and 16 (Biscan, Belitsky fide Dexter); (3) approximately 30 in Kuhlman Woods on October 15 (Hannikman); (4) and 15 at Lower Shaker Lake on November 6 (Peskin). Reports of small flocks, usually at feeding stations, came from several observers, and observers were hoping that the Evening Grosbeaks would remain through the winter to add variety to the winter's birding scene.

Only other winter finches to be reported for the autumn was a flock of 20 Common Redpolls that flew over a residence in Chardon on November 29 (Spare). Both crossbills and Pine Grosbeaks were unreported as of the end of November.

Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting Ordinarily, the occurrence of Lapland Longspurs would be included in the Noteworthy Records Section, the species was, however, more in evidence this past autumn. From October 25 to 31 between one and four Longspurs could be found either on the rocks at the north end of the parking lot at White City or in adjacent weedy areas. Then, on November 20, 13 Longspurs, largest number noted in nearly ten years, were among a large flock of Snow Buntings that landed on White City Beach (Stasko).

Concurrent with the better-than-average numbers of Lapland Longspurs were excellent counts of Snow Buntings. A "solid influx" was noted on October 23 when 238 Snow Buntings were tallied between Lakewood and White City (Klamm), included in this total was the flock of approximately 150 birds that remained throughout the day at White City (Stasko). On November 20 an observer

tallied about 530 Snow Buntings in several large flocks at White City (Stasko). Not since 1962 have Snow Buntings been recorded in such numbers.

Yearly Summary In the BIRD CALENDAR year now ended (December 1, 1976 to November 30, 1977), an excellent total of 261 species were recorded in the Cleveland Region, 11 more than 1976. Included in this total are such noteworthy birds like Snowy Egret, Hudsonian Godwit, Kirtland's Warbler, and Clay-colored Sparrow, but missing are species like Loggerhead Shrike and those erratic Red Crossbills and Pine Grosbeaks.

Two species are new to the Cleveland list: (1) The Lesser Black-backed Gull, a species not only new for the Cleveland Region but also for the State of Ohio, and (2) the Long-billed Dowitcher, records of which have never been previously published. The editor feels that competent, reliable observers, with a thorough comparative knowledge of the field characteristics of both the Short-billed Dowitcher and the Long-billed Dowitcher, can separate these two species in the field; thus the inclusion of the Long-billed Dowitcher on the yearly list.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Red-throated Loon - Two birds were inside the breakwall area at White City in the early afternoon on November 6 (Rickard, Herder). Studied over the period of an hour, identification was made on the basis of small size, and slim, upturned bill. This observation marks the first report of more than one of these loons in CALENDAR records.

Surf Scoter - Two flocks of six and seven birds flew past White City on November 6 (Rickard).

Black Scoter - (1) Three females were noted off Perkins Beach November 18 and 20, one remained to November 27 (Klamm, Stasko). (2) Five females were off Lakewood Park on November 27 (Klamm).

Goshawk - An immature was observed feeding on a Rock Dove at a residence in Akron on November 19 (Biscan). Observation lasted about 45 minutes during which time all essential field marks were noted - white eye stripe, large size, fluffy undertail coverts, and barred tail.

Bald Eagle - An adult was observed in Kirtland Hills on October 5 (Bole, Jr.).

Osprey - An extremely tardy bird was seen at Lake Rockwell on November 9 (Biscan).

Peregrine Falcon - Two reports of this noble falcon were received: (1) One bird appeared in northwest Geauga County on September 25 (Webster). (2) A single bird remained at Burke Airport October 3, 4, 5 (Hoffman, et. al.). Various types of behavior were noted: hunting, feeding, preening, soaring and other aerial maneuvers as the bird's normal pattern of daily life did not seem to be greatly affected by the air traffic of the area. For many who saw this bird it was their first Peregrine Falcon, a bird whose virtual disappearance from the eastern half of the country makes any sighting in our region a noteworthy occasion.

Long-billed Dowitcher - On October 14, at the East 55th marina, a single dowitcher was identified as this species. Characteristics observed were: the long, heavy bill, short tail barred with black and white on its sides, and barred flanks. Two other critical field marks were noted when the bird flew: the white rump that extended up the bird's back, and the single, 'peet' call notes, very much different from the 'tu-tu-tu' call notes of the Short-billed Dowitcher (Jean Hoffman). Lake front observers should be aware of the field characteristics that distinguish the Long-billed Dowitcher from the Short-billed Dowitcher as suspicious looking 'dowitchers' should be thoroughly scrutinized to determine if specific identification is possible for a particular bird under observation.

Stilt Sandpiper - Normally found only at favored lakefront locales and only rarely at that, a straggler was observed at Lakeview Cemetery on September 25 and 26 (Hoffman).

Hudsonian Godwit - A minor "invasion" of these birds occurred, as three were noted at three different lakefront locations in September: one bird each at White City on September 9 (Hoffman), at the Munny Landfill on September 11 (Klamm), and the last bird at Burke Airport on September 23 (Hoffman).

American Avocet - Two birds were at the Munny Landfill on September 10 (Hoffman).

Northern Phalarope - One, with a touch of rust on its breast, lingered at White City October 9 through 12 (Hannikman, LePage, Hoffman).

Glaucous Gull - A second-year bird appeared at Eastlake on the early date of November 27 (Hoffman).

Laughing Gull - An immature bird in the dark brown plumage of the first year frequented the mudflat area at White City on October 8 (Hoffman). This is only the second October record for the species in CALENDAR records, the first was also a first year immature.

Forster's Tern - A single bird in immature plumage was at White City on September 11 (Hoffman).

Caspian Tern - A new latest fall date of occurrence for this species was established when an individual was seen at the East 55th Street Marina on November 20 (Stasko). Previous late fall date was November 4, 1973.

Barn Owl - Much to the surprise of the two observers involved, one appeared at the Donald Gray Gardens on November 11 (Elder, Hannikman). The bird was studied for about one-half hour as it sleepily perched in a pine tree.

Long-eared Owl - An injured bird was captured in Lyndhurst on November 1 and brought to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History for rehabilitation (fide Segedi).

Whip-poor-will - One was last heard in Aurora on September 19 (Hudgeon, fide Carrothers).

Northern Shrike - An immature was at the Sulgrave Oval and Shaker Boulevard on November 24 (Rickard).

Prothonotary Warbler - A single bird was noted at a residence in Painesville on September 9 (Miller). Rare enough in the spring, this species is, at best, a mere vagrant in the fall.

Orange-crowned Warbler - One visited a suet feeder in Warrensville Heights on the late date of November 24 (Knight).

Northern Parula - On November 5, a very tardy female or immature was flitting about some shrubbery in a small clearing in Kuhlman Woods (Hannikman). Only other November occurrence in CALENDAR records was November 20, 1976.

Bobolink - A female at White City on September 25 represents the first autumn record for this species in the 1970s (LePage).

FIELD NOTES

Day of the Whistling Swans Between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on November 11, a blustery day of high winds and sporadic snow squalls, a massive west-to-east lakefront movement of Whistling Swans captivated the two observers lucky enough to be in the right places at the right times. Details of past movements of Whistling Swans indicated that the big birds often proceeded, or moved along with, major cold fronts, so the birds were looked for this day. Little did the observers realize that they were about to witness a migration spectacle almost unprecedented in the history of the region.

The first flock of about 15 swans was observed shortly after arriving at White City. The birds circled the area and then headed toward the east. The weather was extremely variable, one moment the snow squalls would be so severe that visibility was limited to about 100 yards, and minutes later the snow would be completely gone. The movement of swans, nonetheless, continued unabated; into the severest gales the powerful swans would fly, and though the progress of the birds through the winds was hindered, the birds would continue their east ward flight. An interest facet of the swans' movements was that the birds moved at varying distances out over the lake, quite a few times while vees of hundreds of swans were being followed out over the lake, different vees, closer to the observers, would move into sight. The swans were also moving at varying heights, from very low over the water to heights of several hundreds of feet. This three-dimensional migratory movement, i. e., long vees of swans moving at varying heights and distances from the observers, accentuated the enormity of the swans' passage that day.

After about one and a half hours at White City, the scene shifted to Gordon Park, nothing had changed, and the passage of swans had not diminished. As at White City, the flocks were so far out over the water that individual birds could barely be discerned, these flocks appeared as moving, white blurs against a dark gray sky. Observations continued at Gordon Park for about 45 minutes, then it was back to White City. Vees of swans were still moving when the observers had to depart for home.

In the three hour period an estimated 5,000 Whistling Swans were observed, one wonders how high the number could have gone if observations had begun in the morning hours. So continuous was the parade of swans that when one of the observers got home he looked out of his bedroom window to see two flocks of 40 swans passing out over the lake! The only regrettable thing about the afternoon was that there were not more observers along the lakefront to witness the remarkable migrations of the big birds that day. - ELINOR ELDER AND RAY HANNIKMAN

Grounded Lincoln's Sparrow At about 8:10 a.m. on September 15, at Erieview Plaza in downtown Cleveland, I came upon a grounded Lincoln's Sparrow which was standing on the broad expanse of cement on the west side of the building and, with drooping, outstretched wings, was facing into a still westerly wind. Picking up the utterly exhausted bird without the least resistance, I placed it in a nearby concrete square planted with a ground cover of myrtle and a low border of shrubbery. As soon as the bird set foot on the ground, it slowly closed its eyes but remained standing, seemingly sound asleep. When I returned at noon to see how it had fared, I could not find it. DONALD L. NEWMAN

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, and 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.