



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
Spring 1979

March - Ice cover was extensive through the 4th. Between the 4th and the 8th shore ice remained extensive as some open leads developed offshore. Not until the 24th did all shore ice completely disappear. Snowfall was heavy on the 25th and 26th. Precipitation occurred on 18 days and totaled 2.33 inches. This was 0.72 inches below normal. Even though sunshine prevailed only 34% of the time possible, temperatures averaged 42.9 degrees to average out 6.8 degrees warmer than normal.

April - Sunshine again prevailed 34% of the time possible with measurable precipitation on 14 days and trace precipitation on another 7 days. Snow occurred over the lake on the 6th with trace snow over land. Precipitation totaled 3.09 inches and was below normal by .40 inches. Cooler than normal temperatures prevailed on 21 days and overall the month averaged out 1.7 degrees cooler than normal.

May - With 17 days of below normal temperatures the month was 1.5 degrees cooler than normal. The period from the 6th to the 12th provided most of the warmer than normal weather. Trace precipitation occurred on 4 days and measurable precipitation on another 10. Downpours on the 24th, 25th, and the 26th provided 3.96 inches of the month's total 4.77 inches of rain. This was in excess of normal by 1.28 inches. Sunshine prevailed 37% of the time possible.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

"Where should I bird today?" -- that was the question birders in the Cleveland region had to try to answer as they decided how to meet the season's migration. Early in the season the lakefront, with its waterfowl movements, was the place to be. As the season progressed and the flow of passerine migrants increased migrant traps such as Shaker Lakes and Rocky River were the places to look for the most birds. However, by disregarding the lakefront late in the season, you could miss a Laughing Gull, or a Willet, or even a Ruddy Turnstone. Be that as it may, the following paragraphs of commentary and field notes attempt to piece together a picture of the spring of 1979 and in the Noteworthy Records section you will find such a diversity of species that you will come to realize the richness, the challenge, and ultimately, the rewards of spring birding in the Cleveland area.

Waterfowl Common Loons were very much in evidence during April. Both the larger inland lakes and ponds and Lake Erie hosted good numbers of these sleek birds. Just two years ago, in 1977, only a single Common Loon was observed during the entire spring. During the last half of April alone a drive along Cleveland's lakeshore from Rocky River to Wildwood Park could produce two dozen loons. The largest group of loons reported was 75 birds observed from a fishing boat on Lake Erie one mile off Avon Point on April 20 (Pogacnik). This unusual observation lends credence to the following comment written by Arthur B. Williams in his 1950 Birds of the Cleveland Region, "Since loons are birds of the open waters, it is probable that their numbers on Lake Erie during migration may be greater than our records indicate." What also is adding immensely to our knowledge not only of the migrations of Common Loons but also of all lakefront-migrating species is the fact that there simply are more keen observers spending more hours of birding along the lakeshore and it may just be that more of what had heretofore been thought of as unusual and/or uncommon may be the rule rather than the exception to lakefront birding.

For the most part, reports of northbound Whistling Swans centered around LaDue Reservoir. There, between March 19 and 23, up to 150 Whistling Swans could be observed (Elder). Shaker Lakes, with 40 Whistling Swans on March 8 (Fazio) and 20 on April 1 (Peskin), was the only other local area from which any significant numbers of swans were reported.

Without much correlative information on spring movements from the Lorain area, the picture of the season's waterfowl migration must, at best, be a limited one. From Lorain did come, however, the season's premier waterfowl record, a female Barrow's Goldeneye, in early March. Details of this extraordinary record appear in the Noteworthy Records section. Other highlights from Lorain include a report of about 1,000 Common Goldeneyes on March 1 (LePage) and the region's only spring scoter, a White-winged, from March 9 to March 12 (Pogacnik). Though there was much more extensive coverage of the Cleveland lakefront during the time of peak waterfowl numbers there were no extraordinary concentrations of waterfowl to be found. The most abundant duck was the Red-breasted Merganser. Maximum numbers of this species occurred in mid-April. And, of the three Oldsquaws of the spring, there was a somewhat out of place individual at Shaker Lakes on April 18 (LePage).

Hawks Favorable weather conditions and keen observers afield combined to produce reports of hawk flights as have not been recorded since the spring of 1973. Curiously, the most significant observations were from the western areas of the region -- Perkins Beach and Lorain. The following tables show the dates of major hawk flights, the species involved, and the numbers of hawks observed -

At Lorain (Pogacnik) --

Species	Date					
	3/18	3/21	4/3	4/12	4/14	
Turkey Vulture		5	52	243		7
Sharp-sh. Hawk		1	1	28		15
Cooper's Hawk	1	1	1	4		
Red-tailed Hawk	12	18	46	18		7
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	6	5			3
Broad-winged Hawk				2		3
Rough-legged Hawk	1		4	6		2
Bald Eagle			2	1		
Marsh Hawk		2	2			
American Kestrel	3	2	2	2		1

At Perkins Beach (Klamm) --

Species	Date					
	3/17	3/23	4/2	4/21	4/25	4/30
Turkey Vulture	6	12	40	13	11	5
Sharp-sh. Hawk		1		14	74	3
Cooper's Hawk				2	2	
Red-tailed Hawk	29	9		4	2	3
Red-shouldered Hawk		2		1	1	1
Broad-winged Hawk				116	474	429
Marsh Hawk	1	1		1	1	
Osprey					4	
American Kestrel	6	3		3		

The most obvious difference between these two tables involves the numbers of Broad-winged Hawks reported. Had there been Lorain observations for the period from April 20 to to April 30, when the main passage of Broad-winged Hawks occurred over Perkins Beach, a determination could have been made about the extent of the Broad-winged Hawk flights of this period. Were the hawks just a Perkins Beach phenomenon or did their migration encompass an area to include Lorain? A lack of late April observations from Lorain prevents this question from being answered. Interesting were the 13 Rough-legged Hawks noted at Lorain for this was quite in contrast to the report of none at Perkins. Twelve of the Rough-legged Hawks at Lorain occurred in April, curiously late for such a large number of this normally winter transient. Most heartening were the three Bald Eagles at Lorain and a fourth individual at Lake Rockwell. In recent years one eagle per year has been considered good fortune. Four in a single season is really incredible.

Shorebirds Shorebirds were in very poor evidence during the spring. Certainly the lack of habitat, and access thereto, is the chief reason for the low numbers. No Semipalmated Plovers were reported, there was only a single Ruddy Turnstone at White City on May 26 (Hannikman), and Black-bellied Plovers appeared at White City on May 13, three birds in changing plumage (Hannikman), and at Mentor Headlands Beach, a single bird on May 24 (LePage). It is sad to report that White City, an area where many novice birders first discovered the diversity of shorebird species that can occur in Cleveland and where veteran observers spent countless hours watching and hoping for such strays as Sabine's Gull, Gannet, Parasitic Jaeger, et. al, has been closed due to construction at the Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant. A season's Noteworthy Records section will seem empty without White City reports.

Gulls, Terns Second year Glaucous Gulls were late at Lorain, March 1 to 9 (Pogacnik), East 72nd Street, March 1 (Hoffman), Burke Airport, April 1 (Klamm), and Lorain, April 12 to 20 (Pogacnik). A solitary adult Glaucous Gull was with a concentration of gulls just west of the breakwall at White City on April 8 (Hannikman). An immature Little Gull frequented Wildwood Park from April 23 to May 6 and was noted at Edgewater Park on may 4 (Klamm).

As is typical for any spring, Common Terns were decidedly uncommon with no more than 11 birds being seen on a single day. Caspian Terns, on the other hand, were in good

numbers along the Cleveland lakefront. Maximum count was 144 birds on April 24 (Klamm). Black Terns, undetected in spring since 1974, were noted with two birds being present along the Cleveland lakefront on May 6 (Klamm).

Thrushes The spring's only Mockingbird occurred at White City on May 4 (Hoffman). Hermit Thrushes whose spring migration usually encompasses the entire month of April and the first third of May and thus lasts longer than any of the other thrushes, did not arrive in expected numbers until April 22. The species was fairly common until May 8 after which date no Hermit Thrushes were reported. Swainson's Thrushes, with the exception of a simple bird at Akron's Firestone Metropark on May 5 (Rosche), and Gray-cheeked Thrushes did not even arrive in the area until that remarkable May 8. Thereafter, Swainson's Thrushes were abundant until May 15 and the species showed well between May 20 and May 22 and again on May 28 and May 29. Gray-cheeked Thrushes evidently passed through early for sightings consisted mainly of lone birds from May 18 to May 22. No Gray-cheeked Thrushes were observed after May 22.

Warblers For the second year in a row, the peak warbler migration occurred before May 15. In 1978 the first warm weather around May 12 pushed through incredible numbers of warblers. This year the first real warm weather of May 7 and 8 produced excellent numbers of warblers even though observers' reports and comments were in agreement that the numbers were not as great as last year's. Certainly spectacular was the total of 32 species of warblers on May 8 at Shaker Lakes (Fazio). For the remainder of May the Tennessee, the Magnolia, and the Bay-breasted Warblers predominated and were very numerous until the end of the period. The Mourning Warbler, classified as an uncommon spring migrant, was widely noted after May 8. The intensive warbler survey at Shaker Lakes produced more than 14 Mourning Warblers and even though multiple sightings of the same individual birds were probably involved here, Mourning Warblers certainly were not uncommon at Shaker Lakes. On the negative side Cape May Warblers appeared down in numbers and a note of concern came from an Akron birder who stated that the Ovenbird was noticeably absent, especially from the Cuyahoga Valley (Rosche). The season on the whole, though, was most satisfactory.

Evening Grosbeak With the exception of a flock in Parkman whose numbers varied from 24 birds on March 9 to 14 on April 24 (fide Dexter) Evening Grosbeaks were present in small numbers. Other reports came from Chagrin Falls, Chardon, Bedford Metropark, Brecksville Metropark, and Shaker Lakes.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Red-necked Grebe - (1) An individual in winter plumage was seen at Lakeview Park in Lorain on March 12 (Pogacnik). (2) On April 7 another in winter plumage appeared at LaDue Reservoir (Rickard). (3) A summer plumaged bird was noted from a fishing boat 1-1/2 miles from the Avon Lake Power Plant on April 20 (Pogacnik).

Eared Grebe - A bird in summer plumage was at Lorain Muni Pier on April 9 and 12 (Pogacnik).

Common Goldeneye - The observation of a male at Shaker Lakes on May 27 established a new late spring date for this species (Fazio). Previous late date was May 22, 1947.

Barrow's Goldeneye - A female was at Lorain Harbor on March 1, 4, 9 and 10 (Pogacnik). Characteristics observed were: (1) Bill bright yellow from tip to base; (2) Bill was stubbier than female Common Goldeneye's; (3) Head was flat-topped and forehead was more vertical than Common Goldeneye's; (4) Bird was slightly darker than female Common Goldeneye. The identification of this bird represents the first sight record of a female Barrow's Goldeneye in CBC records.

Harlequin Duck - A well-marked male lingered at the Edgewater Park boat basin from April 12 to April 17 (Klamm).

Bald Eagle - (1) An adult and an immature appeared over a residence in Lorain on April 3. Another adult appeared under the same circumstances on April 12 at Lorain (Pogacnik). (2) An immature, frequently harassed by Crows, remained at Lake Rockwell on April 14 and April 15 (Rosche).

Whimbrel - A lone bird fed in the grass of the runways of Burke Airport on May 4 (Klamm). This is only the second spring record of this species in CBC files.

Willet - (1) Single birds were at Wildwood Park on April 23 and 29 (Klamm) and at White City on May 16 (LePage). Eight birds were on the breakwall at White City on May 3 (Klamm).

Greater Yellowlegs - A new early spring date was established when a decidedly early bird appeared at Lorain on March 4 (Pogacnik). Previous early spring date was March 21, 1933.

Lesser Yellowlegs - A very early migrant was at Shaker Lakes on March 24 (Fazio).

Glaucous Gull - A second year bird sighted from a fishing boat off Lorain on May 16 became the first individual of this species noted here in the month of May (Pogacnik).

Iceland Gull - A second year bird was observed at East 72nd Street on March 1 (Hoffman).

Black-headed Gull - A bird in breeding plumage plied back and forth over the river mouth at Clifton Beach and then settled onto the moorings of the yacht club on the morning of March 21. By afternoon the bird had moved to the Rocky River fishing pier (Klamm).

Laughing Gull - An adult in summer plumage was observed on March 31 at Lorain (Pogacnik, Ward).

Franklin's Gull - A breeding plumaged bird (rarely noted in the Cleveland area) was observed on the morning of May 13 at the East 55th Street Marina (Hoffman) and at White City on May 28 (LePage).

Long-eared Owl - (1) Maximum count at the old Brooklyn Airport was three birds on March 4. Single birds were noted on several days until April 15 (Bacik). (2) One was present at Ridgehill Cemetery on March 14 and 16 (Pogacnik).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird - The appearance of a solitary bird at Rocky River Metropark on April 22 marked a new early spring date for the species by one day (Klamm).

Short-billed Marsh Wren - Two birds occurred at Donald Gray Gardens: on May 2 (LePage) and May 11 (Besser).

Veery - Two very early birds were noted at Shaker Lakes on April 13 (Fazio).

Northern Shrike - What appeared to be the immature that had been banded on December 2, 1978 was at Mentor Marsh on April 14, a late date for the species (Talkington). A band could be seen on the bird's leg.

Worm-eating Warbler - (1) A "very bright, buffy" individual lingered at Shaker Lakes from April 25 to May 1 (Hoffman, Fazio). (2) Another appeared at the Sulgrave Oval along the Shaker Rapid right of way on May 5 (Rickard). (3) From May 3 to 11 another individual, paler than the late April bird, frequented the Shaker Lakes area (Hoffman, Fazio).

Brewster's Warbler - One appeared on the Sunday morning bird-walk at Rocky River Metropark on May 13 (Stasko). The observer noted that this bird sang a song totally unfamiliar to him.

Lawrence's Warbler - On May 22 a single bird was seen at Lake Isaac (LePage).

Orange-crowned Warbler - A very tardy bird dawdled at Shaker Lakes until May 27 (Fazio).

Kentucky Warbler - Three birds were noted on that incredible May 8 at Shaker Lakes (Fazio).

Orchard Oriole (1) Very early on the morning of May 6 an adult male was noted near a field at the end of East 175th Street (Kellerman). (2) A singing immature male was found at the Clarkwood Estates in Warrensville Heights on May 12 (Knight).

Lapland Longspur - Upwards of two hundred of these birds, many of them in breeding plumage, were observed coming off the lake on March 23. The birds landed on a beach just west of the Hot Waters, regrouped, then headed west (Pogacnik).

Snow Bunting - A bird just beginning to show signs of summer plumage was on the rocks at the north end of the parking area at White City on April 3 (Hannikman). Only a May 2, 1955 observation of a bird in Fairview Park is a later spring date for this species.

FIELD NOTES

TURKEY VULTURE FLIGHT OVER DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND On April 2 Turkey Vultures were moving in a generally easterly direction over the downtown area while I observed them from the 22nd floor of the Federal Office Building at East 9th and Lakeside Avenue. I first noted the movement about 1:20 p.m. when five vultures were visible over the Cuyahoga River. By 1:30 a total of 14 vultures and one small falcon had passed out of view.

I continued to count the birds until 1:50 p.m. During the latter twenty minutes the vultures came by as scattered individuals and in various sized groups of up to eleven in number. The total for the half hour was 69 Turkey Vultures. The only other hawk was the small falcon. During this time a storm cell was moving in off the lake and the flight path of the vultures continually moved to the south. I first saw them coming along very near the lake edge and at the end of

the period they were all passing south of the Terminal Tower.

The groups of birds circled and soared, making considerable use of updrafts around the taller buildings such as the Justice Center, the Federal Office Building, and the Terminal Tower. Most of the birds were at low altitudes, often below the tops of the tall buildings and rarely higher than the Terminal Tower.

I did not watch for the birds after 1:30 p.m. and shortly after 2:00 p.m. there was a short period of heavy rain followed by a heavier rain at 3:30 p.m. which would have hampered observation and undoubtedly brought the birds to roost. This was my first experience with any major movement of Turkey Vultures. - JEAN HOFFMAN

NESTING HOUSE FINCH House Finches have been observed during the breeding season in the Cleveland area for about five years, and have been presumed to have bred for the past two years. Partial nesting cycles and fledged young have previously been observed in the area, beginning with a partially completed nest in an atypical location high in a Sycamore and reported by Newman in May, 1977 (CBC 73 (2): 21-22). Other evidence of nesting, including at least one complete cycle reported from East Liverpool by Laitsch in 1977, have been reported for Ohio. Until this writing, however, I believe no completed nesting cycle has been reported for the Cleveland area.

Two nests were observed in spring 1978, on the John Carroll University campus; neither was successful. The first was built 3.25 meters from the ground in a 4.6 m Blue Spruce, next to the central stem. This nest was a typical well-constructed cup of fine twigs and grasses and was lined with grasses, string, bits of cloth, and animal fur. Complete nests observed in 1979 were similar in construction. The pair began building on 24 April and had completed this nest by 29 April. It was deserted on 29 April after disturbance by a tractor mower, and before eggs were laid.

The second 1978 nest was built by what I believe was the same pair from 5 through 11 May, 3.6 meters from the ground in a 7.1 m Blue Spruce 62 meters from the first. This nest was highly atypical for the species, being domed with a side entrance. It was built and lined with the same materials as the first, but was about 4X the volume. The birds were observed at and in the nest until about 18 May. On 21 May, the nest contained one broken egg and was deserted. Both these nests were collected in late summer and further study of the atypical roofed nest is in progress.

Between 2 May and 31 May 1979, six complete or partial House Finch nests were observed on campus. One of these nests, designated "B", was discovered on 2 May with 2 eggs and 2 newly hatched (that day) young. The nest was 2.15 m above the ground in a 2.4 m columnar Arborvitae. By the evening of 2 May a third nestling had hatched, and the fourth on the night of 3/4 May. The nestlings were observed periodically for the next two weeks. Late on 19 May, the young successfully fledged, making this the first complete observed nesting cycle for the area.

Nest "A" contained a clutch of 4 eggs when discovered on 2 May, and was located 2.25 meters from the ground in an almost identical (2.5 m) Arborvitae 27.5 meters south of "B". The female was observed incubating until 10 May. On 12 May this nest was abandoned and two of the four eggs were missing. The third disappeared on 13 May and the fourth by 19 May. Nests "C" , "D" and "E" were all incomplete and inactive, and were observed on 14 May, 25 May, and 31 May respectively. They were built in Arborvitae or spruce from 1.7 to 2.4 meters above the ground.

Nest "F" was discovered on 31 May with one egg and an active pair of birds nearby. It is 1.6 meters above the ground in a 2.4 m spruce. The location of "F" is 6 meters from "E" and 10 meters from "D". Both of these partial nests probably represent attempts by the same pair which has been observed in the immediate area since 16 May.

At least four pairs, probably more, of House Finches occupy the John Carroll University campus at the present time and their nesting history will be observed and further reported at a later date. - BRUCE MCLEAN

SAW-WHET OWLS LEARN FAST The spring's only Saw-whet Owls were all noted in Kuhlman Woods, on April 12, 15, and 17. The April 12 bird was in the same tangle that a Saw-whet Owl had been seen in on March 19, 1978. Jerry Talkington and I successfully banded this April 12 Saw-whet Owl.

A little after 1:00 p.m. on April 15 I discovered another Saw-whet Owl roosting in some loose tangles in Kuhlman Woods. After I showed the owl to Elinor Elder, Jerry Talkington, and Tom Kellerman, it was off to Emil Bacik's "owlery", the old Brooklyn Airport, to seek out and to try to band a Long-eared Owl seen earlier that day. We had no luck with this sly fellow so it was back to Kuhlman Woods to try to band our second Saw-whet Owl of the spring. The bird was still there, so we thought we had a good chance at netting him. Also the owl

still clung to a meadow vole that it had caught. This, we reasoned, would hinder the owl's ability to get out of the net. After setting up the nets Jerry chased the owl out of the tangles and it flew directly into the bottom of the net. The bird got out, leaving the half-eaten meadow vole in the net. Well we just had to try again and the same thing happened. Tom later offered the suggestion that the Saw-whet Owl's extremely soft feathers enabled it to bounce out of even the very fine mist nets we had set up. Anyway, the owl still remained nearby and we decided to try again. Jerry, by now dubbed the "owl chaser", again chased the owl, from its perch and this time the little owl flew around the net. Several times the Saw-whet flew around the net as Jerry continued to chase the owl and Tom and I were beginning to think that this particular Saw-whet Owl was going to get the better of us. The owl kept getting warier and warier as he kept flying around our net and he eventually disappeared into the woods having successfully avoided capture. The three intrepid owl banders vowed to try again someday and we all came to realize that a Saw-whet Owl in the tangles is not necessarily worth one in the net. - RAY HANNIKMAN

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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.