



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
Winter Season 1980-1981

December - Temperatures averaged out to 28.5 degrees, 1.8 degrees below normal. Measurable precipitation occurred on 17 days and totaled 2.10 inches, 0.26 inches below normal. Snowfall was 13.5 inches with 5.0 inches on December 24 the heaviest. Ice formation began to develop on lagoons and basins by the 17th but Lake Erie remained open with extensive slush ice first appearing on the 20th. Variable skim ice and pack ice conditions prevailed from the 20th to the 26th and by the 27th extensive ice cover existed and 85% to 95% ice cover continued the rest of the month. Sunshine prevailed 28% of the time possible.

January - Snow again occurred on 17 days and totaled 15.0 inches. Temperatures averaged out a cold 20.1 degrees, 6.8 degrees below normal. Lake Erie remained extensively ice covered through the 13th, then some fairly continuous fissures opened and reclosed regularly through the 25th. Extensive shore ice with open water offshore continued to diminish through the 31st. Sunshine prevailed 37% of the time possible.

February - The cold spell continued with most daily temperatures well below normal for the first 14 days. A warming trend then developed with daily temperatures well above normal. Overall, the temperature averaged out to 31.5 degrees, 1.54 degrees warmer than normal. Snow totaled 9.7 inches with 3.8 inches on the 11th the last snowfall. Lake Erie regained extensive ice cover at times, especially the 4th through the 6th and 12th through the 14th, as variable ice prevailed at other times with diminishing shore ice and open water coming on and after the 17th. Sunshine prevailed 36% of the time possible.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

Winter disappeared in mid-February. By that time, the gulls had long departed, but those early spring migrants, the black birds, put thoughts of a bird-filled spring into birders minds. Highlights of the season included the return of last winter's Heermann's Gull (even though the highlight here may have been that the bird returned just in time for Lorain's Christmas Count), a late Swainson's Thrush, sedentary Snowy Owls, and the region's second Varied Thrush. Below are the paragraphs that tell the story of the winter of 1980-1981.

Waterfowl Scaup ducks were the most prominent species along lakefront areas. Greater Scaup numbered about 1,200 at Lorain Harbor throughout February whereas scaup, species unreported, were most prevalent along the Cleveland lakefront in December. Common Goldeneye and Common Mergansers, species whose numbers can build up in late February, did not exhibit this pattern. And to close out a lackluster winter waterfowl season, Oldsquaw and scoters were inexplicably scarce. Even though these species are never particularly abundant during the winter, the season's tallies of one each of Old-squaw, White-winged Scoter, Black Scoter, and no Surf Scoter were abnormally low winter counts.

Gulls Herring and Ring-billed Gulls virtually disappeared after mid-January. The exception was February 13 when 7,400 Herring Gulls and 1,800 Ring-billed Gulls were counted along the Cleveland lakefront. The pattern of winter gull occurrence the last three and four winters had been peak numbers of gulls in late December and early January, a mid-January drop-off in numbers, and an influx in early February. This pattern did not materialize in 1981. Arctic and European species, normally associated with February, were recorded mainly in December and early January. Gull watchers were disappointed that the less common species did not reappear in February when Lake Erie was iced in for it is when gulls are sitting on ice or flying about small open water areas that the rarer species are more easily picked out and can be compared with the more common species. Despite a virtual dearth of gulls for half the period, the Noteworthy Records Section abounds with great gull sightings.

Snowy Owl and-Rough-legged Hawk Certainly one of the season's highlights was the regular occurrence of at least two Snowy Owls at various lakefront sites. Most observa-

tions were from Burke Airport, but the birds could be found anywhere from Rocky River to Wildwood Park. Remarkably, six Snowy Owls, four at Burke Airport and two at Gordon Park, were counted on January 1 (Klamm). Along with the Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, joined by a Marsh Hawk in late December, also wintered in the Burke Airport/Muny Light vicinity. Maximum count was eight on December 23. It is interesting, and probably not coincidental, that peak numbers for both Snowy Owls and Rough-legged Hawks simultaneously occurred in late December and early January indicating a healthy (at least for a couple of days) rodent population in this area. Lack of snow cover also aided the population as hunting for rodents is much easier when snow does not hamper the search for food.

American Robin Most contributors mentioned the large numbers of American Robins that were encountered during the season. All areas reported good counts with particularly impressive tallies from F.A. Seiberling Nature Center in Akron, 1,000 on January 4 (Stover), 500 from Mentor on December 27 (Newhous), and 400 from Euclid on December 28 (Hannikman). Hearty Hermit Thrushes were located at North Chagrin on December 19 (Corbin), Cuyahoga Valley National Park on December 21 and 26 (Stover, Rosche), and February 11 at Lorain (Pogacnik).

Winter Finches Evening Grosbeaks were in poor evidence. The only "major" flock, 30 to 35 birds, sporadically appeared at a feeder in Bath throughout the period (fide Dexter). Small numbers were elsewhere reported from Munroe Falls, North Chagrin, Chardon, and Kirtland Hills. Common Redpolls showed a similar pattern with the only reliable flock being the 40 or so birds around Shaker Lakes for the period.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Harlequin Duck - A female was noted from Eastlake on January 3 (LePage).

Merlin - An adult male was found at Summit lake on December 21, 22, 24, and 29 (Stover). On December 24 the Merlin struck an American Kestrel that had been harassing it.

Virginia Rail - An out of season stray appeared in Akron on January 31 (Rosche).

American Woodcock - A very early migrant was heard doing flight calls on February 25 in Chardon (Faber).

Purple Sandpiper - A single bird remained at East 72nd Street from December 27 to 29 (many observers).

Red Phalarope - Two birds were observed at Wildwood Park from December 6 to 20 (Hannikman et al.)

Pomarine Jaeger - An immature, judged to be a different bird than the individual recorded at Lorain in late November 1980, was recorded at Lorain on December 24 (Pogacnik).

Iceland Gull - Lorain Harbor observations: an adult and first-year immature from December 26 to January 13 (Pogacnik et al.) East 72nd Street observations: an adult of the Kumlien's race on January 10 (Rosche et al.)

Lesser Black-backed Gull - (1) Two adults were present from December 12 to 16 at Lorain Harbor. A sub-adult on December 21 and another adult on January 12 completed the winter's sightings from Lorain (Pogacnik). (2) An adult was observed at East 72nd Street on January 10 and 11 (Hannikman et al.)

Thayer's Gull - All sightings were from Lorain Harbor: December 12 (1 adult), December 16 to 20 (1 first-year immature), December 21 to 26 (3 adults), January 13 (1 adult), January 17 (1 first-year bird, 2 second-year birds) (Pogacnik, Hannikman et al.)

Black-headed Gull - An adult remained at Lorain from December 20 to January 2 (Pogacnik et al.).

Heermann's Gull - This lost bird, an adult, returned to Lorain on December 20 and reappeared on January 17 and 19 (Pogacnik, Klamm).

Black-legged Kittiwake - Single immature birds appeared at Lorain on December 20 and 21 (Pogacnik) and at East 72nd Street on January 11 (Rosche).

Long-eared Owl - A lone individual was at the F. A. Seiberling Nature Center on January 21 (Stover).

Gray Catbird - A single bird dawdled at Lorain from December 20 to January 19 (Pogacnik).

Brown Thrasher - One was reported from the western part of the region on December 21 (Stasko).

Varied Thrush - A first-year male frequented a feeder in Parma Heights from early January to mid-January (fide Klamm, LePage, Corbin). This is the second record of this species for the Cleveland region.

Swainson's Thrush - Exceedingly rare anywhere in the United States in the winter, an individual was documented from North Chagrin Metropark on December 20 (Corbin). Quite curiously, the areas only other winter record was also from North Chagrin, on Christmas Count Day December 18, 1971.

Common Yellowthroat - An immature male remained in the vicinity of Squire's Castle of North Chagrin Metropark from December 16 to 20 (Corbin).

Red Crossbill - Three birds were at Ridgehill Cemetery in Lorain on January 13 and February 23 (Pogacnik).

White-winged Crossbill - (1) Three birds were noted from Virginia Kendall on December 1 (Stover, Corbin). (2) An immature male appeared at a feeder in Lorain on January 25, and remained until the end of the period. Four birds were also found at Ridgehill Cemetery in Lorain on January 13 and 23 (Pogacnik).

FIELD NOTES

T'was the Day after Christmas At about 9:30 a.m. on December 26 I drove out of our lane to do some errands. As I passed a Barred Owl rose from the snow about four feet off the lane. It flew about 100 feet deeper into the woods and perched there. I stopped to investigate. At the side of the lane from which the owl rose I found a dead rabbit and much fur. On the opposite side of the lane were rabbit tracks which ended in a depression in the snow. In and around the depression were blood spots, fur, a few bits of down, and wing marks in the snow. We had many errands that day and drove past the kill several times. On each occasion the owl was seen to leave its kill and perch about 100 feet deeper in to the woods. However, when we drove past at dusk and three more times after dark, the owl stayed with the kill, even though it was only about four feet from our lane. Perhaps the owl took greater comfort from the darkness. The next morning the rabbit was gone. Fox tracks led to the spot. There was no sign of a fight. We could not ascertain whether the fox drove the owl away from the kill or whether the owl flew away with it. -CHARLES KLAUS

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.

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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 at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle. Visitors are always welcome.

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The Kirtland Bird Club sponsors a weekly RARE BIRD ALERT at (216) 696-8186. Sightings of species rare in the Cleveland region as well as other interesting observations should be called in to the tape on Mondays as the tape is replaced with current sightings each Tuesday. In the case of extreme rarities, e. g., Sabine's Gull, Varied Thrush, the tape should be called the day of the observation.