



CLEVELAND REGION

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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

Editor

Ray Hannikman

Assistant Editor

Elinor Elder

Weather Summary

William A. Klamm

Editorial Assistants

Jean Hoffman

Ethel D. Surman

CONTRIBUTORS

Emil R. Bacik
 Howard R. Besser
 Kay F. Booth
 Diane Busch
 Dave Corbin
 Tom Denbow
 Ralph W. Dexter
 Elinor Elder
 Ray Hannikman
 Dick and Jean Hoffman
 Perry F. Johnson
 Tom Kellerman
 William and Nancy Klamm
 Charles H. Knight
 Walter Kremm

Tom LePage
 Jack and Dorothy Miller
 Ron and Marie Morgan
 Perry K. Peskin
 John Pogacnik
 Richard Rickard
 Larry Rosche
 Dee Ross
 Marjorie Sheldon
 Margaret H. Sherwin
 Gordon Spare
 Michael Stasko
 Jerry Talkington
 Carol Tveekrem

All records, comments, and observations should be sent to:

Ray Hannikman
 440 East 260th Street
 Euclid, OH 44132

WEATHER
Spring migration, 1981

March - Lake Erie remained open and ice-free all month, but measurable snow fell on 11 of the first 20 days for a total of 16.9 inches. Total precipitation occurred on 17 days, measured 1.61 inches as water, and was 1.41 inches below normal. Temperatures averaged out to 36.0 degrees or 0.1 degrees cooler than normal. Sunshine prevailed 49% of the time possible.

April - Temperatures were generally much warmer than normal for the first 14 days, cooler during the next 8 days, and alternating warmer or cooler on succeeding days to average out to 50.6 degrees, 2.3 degrees warmer than normal. Precipitation was well distributed on 16 days to total 4.62 inches, 1.13 inches above normal. Sunshine again prevailed 49% of the time possible.

May - Precipitation occurred unevenly during the month. Measurable rain came on 9 days between the 5th and 16th, none from the 17th to the 25th, and on 4 days thereafter to total 2.19 inches, 1.32 inches below normal. Sunshine prevailed 50% of the time possible. Temperatures averaged out to 55.7 degrees, 2.6 degrees cooler than normal.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

The essence of spring migration - the northward push of migrants to their breeding grounds - is evident throughout each month of the spring in the Cleveland region. March sees small numbers of Whistling Swans winging majestically northward, as well as larger flocks of Canada Geese, and courting mergansers, bay ducks, and other waterfowl pair up on Lake Erie and on the area's larger lakes before moving on. Raptors and sparrows dominate the April scene. From darting Sharpshinned and Cooper's Hawks to blossoming kettles of Broad-winged Hawks, the birds of prey pass through, and fortunate are those who are rewarded with sightings of our area's most spectacular species -- both Bald and Golden Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. Sparrows of up to a dozen species fill area parks as April wanes into May, the vireo, warbler, and flycatcher month. And birding in May is quite an experience with many species in full song. The staccato 'che-bek', 'che-bek' of the Least Flycatcher, the ethereal notes of the Wood Thrush, the loud whistles of the Northern Oriole - all of these and many more carry us through May toward summer's beginning. Whether you chased the birds of spring of 1981 or let them come to you depends on your own involvement in birding, but just by picking up this publication you will hopefully get more acquainted in what was spring migration 1981.

Waterfowl For the most part, Common Loons appeared in ones and twos, both along the Cleveland lakefront and at the Akron Lakes area, in April. Latest individual was a breeding plumaged and calling bird at Lake Rockwell on May 25 (Rosche). One of the season's most enticing reports was that of more than 100 Pied-billed Grebes noted at the Akron Lakes system on April 2 (Tveekrem). Such a concentration of this species has rarely been noted in recent springs. Unfortunately, the observer did not report any sightings for the following day so it can not be determined at this point just how long all those grebes remained in the Akron area. The first Whistling Swans were noted on March 2 at LaDue Reservoir (20 birds) and at Sherwin Pond (50 birds). Highly unusual was the report of 700 Whistling Swans at Lake Rockwell on March 27 (fide Rosche). Numbers such as these have not been reported for spring migrant swans in the past 30 years.

The picture of the spring migration of bay ducks is somewhat clouded as few reports were received from Lorain, a staging area in March for Scaup ducks, Common Goldeneye, Canvasbacks, Redheads, Common and Red-breasted mergansers.

Along the Cleveland lakefront maximum count of Scaup ducks was 1,200 on March 22 and 2,500 for Red-breasted Mergansers on March 27. Perhaps mid-February's break-up of lake ice resulted in an earlier than usual departure of waterfowl. Ring-necked Ducks piled up on a small pond in Aurora where 250 were counted on March 19 (Elder). And rounding out the spring waterfowl there was the usual scattering of reports of Oldsquaws and scoters in March and April.

Hawks Unfavorable weather conditions led to a disappointing spring hawk migration, at least in the Cleveland area. One observer commented that even when the weather appeared to favor good hawk movement no significant flights developed. Perkins Beach produced the more noteworthy counts of hawks: (1) Sharp-shinned Hawks - April 8 (22), April 22 (16), and April 28 (21); (2) Red-tailed Hawk - April 22 (8); (3) Broad-winged Hawk - April 22 (105), and April 28 (46) (Klamm). Due to constant observation the Lorain area produced a great deal of data on spring hawk movements in 1980. The observer was unable to continue his surveillance this spring, so the hawk picture for spring 1981, and probably for some time to come, must remain, at best, an incomplete one. Probably a direct result of the poor weather conditions, only one Osprey, on May 7 at Lake Rockwell, was reported. Even though significant numbers were lacking, the more significant species were not as a glance at the Noteworthy Records section will show.

Shorebirds Lack of habitat has virtually eliminated shorebirding in the Cleveland area. Semipalmated Sandpipers went unreported and both Semipalmated Plovers and Least Sandpipers occurred on just one day, May 21. Pectoral Sandpipers were well represented, however, with high counts of 280 and 80 at Lake Rockwell on April 10 and 8 (Rosche) and 40 along the Cleveland lakefront on April 2 (Hoffman). Black-bellied Plovers in late April were rather early (LePage, Klamm) and one was at Wildwood Park, a new locality for the species, on May 17 (Kellerman). Curiously atypical of the migration habits for the species was a flock of a dozen Spotted Sandpipers observed arriving at Sims Park from the east and then departing eastward within a few minutes on the morning of May 10 (Hannikman). At season's end the continuing presence of Upland Sandpipers at Burke Airport gave lakefront observers hope that the species would breed at this location.

Owls Local birders either are not reporting owls, not seeing owls, or not looking for owls as few were reported.

No Screech Owls were noted and the Saw-whet Owl went undetected (these little owls were probably delighted that they evaded local birders anyway!!). On the positive side Burke Airport hosted one Short-eared Owl on March 25 (LePage) and April 18 (Hoffman) while two appeared along the Cleveland lakefront April 2 (Hoffman). A little more effort (or a little more reporting) in the future may turn up better results concerning owls.

Flycatchers Traditionally flycatchers are one of the least commented upon and least reported groups of birds. Birders usually just take a look at an Empidonax flycatcher and if the bird is not singing or calling the binoculars are quickly focused on the nearest identifiable warbler. This situation will hopefully change as better field skills are acquired and perfected by local birders. Perhaps a corollary to the above statements was the fact that the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, an uncommon migrant in the Cleveland area, was more frequently reported during the spring than the Acadian Flycatcher, a breeder in proper habitat. Conspicuously rare during the last third of May was the Olive-sided Flycatcher, a species which should present no field identification problem. Only a single individual, in Garfield Park on May 31, was reported (Knight).

Wrens Quite interesting were reports of both Long-billed and Short-billed Marsh Wrens which appeared to be in residence in the areas where they were observed. Six singing Long-billed Marsh Wrens were reported from Lake Rockwell from May 22 to the end of the period (Rosche) and seven Short-billed Marsh Wrens were present at Carlisle Metropark in Lorain at the end of May (Pogacnik). Single Short-billed Marsh Wrens in a season are noteworthy, so seven in one area is quite a bonanza. Only two Carolina Wrens, one at Rocky River on March 1 (Stasko) and one at Wildwood on May 25 (Kellerman), showed up. The very slow recovery of this species in areas south of the Cleveland region has not yet locally begun to develop.

Warblers Continuous, good, steady movement, with no particular wave day and/or days, characterized the spring warbler migration. Beginning on May 4 when 19 species of warblers were found at Sims Park and continuing until about May 24, this steady flow of migrants persisted throughout the region. May 31 still found 10 species of warblers at Sims Park even though actual numbers corresponded to the lateness of the date (Kellerman).

As far as individual species of warblers were concerned, several significant aspects can be gleaned from contributors' reports. A possible four pairs of Prothonotary Warblers, two along the Cuyahoga River (Spare) and two in Riverview (Stasko), indicate that this species may be more common in proper habitat than previously supposed. The only area where the Ovenbird may be making a comeback is Painesville where the species was reported as "doing well" (Miller). Elsewhere, the majority of the spring's sightings of Ovenbirds were of migrants between May 9 and May 13 with only four birds noted after May 13. Concern for this species as a local breeder must remain. Intense birding at Sims Park produced Mourning Warblers daily from May 15 to May 25 with the rarer Connecticut Warbler present May 21 to May 23 and May 25. And finally, a glance at the Noteworthy records will show that the northward push of southern species of warblers was again in evidence this spring.

Evening Grosbeaks This species appeared in isolated flocks. Besides the smaller flocks around Waite Hill and Sims Park larger numbers were noted as follows: 30 at Lake Rockwell on March 15 and 12 at Virginia Kendall Metropark on April 28 (Rosche) and 20 in Chardon on April 29 (Spare). One knowledgeable observer stated that because the incursion of Evening Grosbeaks locally was very weak during the winter and that because the species reached central Ohio this area's spring birds were probably flocks which were returning to Canada (Dexter).

Sparrows April 28 was D-Day for sparrows. The locus of greatest numbers was Sims Park. Here there were late Fox and Tree Sparrows and early Lincoln's Sparrows, the uncommon Grasshopper Sparrow and the very rare Le Conte's Sparrow, and an amazing 600+ White-throated Sparrows. To complete the picture, other species at Sims Park were Chipping, Field, White-crowned, Song, and Swamp Sparrows. As the Noteworthy records section will reveal April 28 must have been quite a day to be afield as Goshawk and Sandhill Crane were both observed south of Cleveland. Too bad this day was a Tuesday when most birders could not be out.

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Addendum (Winter 1980, 1981)

Chipping Sparrow One appeared at a feeder in Cleveland Heights on December 20 and was observed until February 27 (Denbow). Only the second winter record in CBC files, it represents the area's first ever wintering bird.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Yellow-crowned Night Heron - An adult returned to Rocky River Metropark on April 9 and was present throughout the rest of the season (Klamm).

Least Bittern - One was noted at Mentor Marsh on May 9 (Hoffman).

Snow Goose - A very tame white-phase bird appeared at Wildwood on April 30 and remained until May 9 (LePage, Hannikman). Snow Goose had never been recorded in CBC files in May before this sighting.

White-fronted Goose - Three were with Canada Geese at the RB & W Company pond in Mentor on April 5 (LePage). This species was last documented in the Cleveland area in March 1971.

Harlequin Duck - (1) A female occurred at Lorain Harbor on March 12 (Pogacnik). (2) A pair was initially found at Wildwood on March 13 and later was located at East 72nd Street on various dates in March and through April 29 (Klamm).

Goshawk - An adult appeared briefly in Kent on the afternoon of April 28 (Rosche). This matches the previous late spring date of April 28, 1978.

Golden Eagle - An adult was studied on the ice at Lake Rockwell on March 18 (Rosche). See the Field Notes Section for the observer's description of this individual.

Bald Eagle - (1) An adult and an immature passed over Perkins Beach on April 28 (Klamm). (2) An adult and an immature were also reported from Lake Rockwell on unspecified dates (fide Rosche).

Peregrine Falcon - An adult was observed over Sims Park on May 3 (Talkington, Hannikman, Corbin).

Sandhill Crane - Another spectacular sighting for April 28, a single bird was noted soaring in "lazy circles" over the parking lot at Tinker's Creek Natural Area (Elder).

Sanderling - Only record of this rare spring migrant was six birds at the Gordon Park Landfill on May 10 (Hoffman).

Black-legged Kittiwake - An immature remained at Lorain Harbor from March 21 to 25 (Pogacnik).

Forster's Tern - For the second consecutive spring this species was noted with two birds at Lake Rockwell on April 10 and "for several days" after (Rosche, Elder) and single birds at East 55th Street on April 12 and 25 (Hoffman). All of the above sightings were well before the previous April early date of April 27, 1941.

Caspian Tern - Two reported along the Cleveland lakefront for April 2 matched the previous early spring date (Klamm).

Long-eared Owl - Single birds appeared at this species' traditional spring stopover point, the Old Brooklyn Airport, on March 14 and 20 (Bacik).

Snowy Owl - One light bird and one dark bird were present off and on at Burke Airport until the very late date of April 12 (Hoffman, Klamm).

Whippoorwill - Two birds appeared before the previously recognized early date of April 18: a single bird at Donald Gray Gardens on April 9 (Klamm) and another individual that was banded at Sims Park on April 11 (Talkington).

Alder Flycatcher - The second record in CBC files occurred when a singing bird was discovered at Sims Park on May 26 (Corbin).

Worm-eating Warbler - (1) Sims Park's second record was of a bird on May 4 (Corbin). (2) Kuhlman Woods' first individual was briefly glimpsed twice on May 9 (Hannikman, Kellerman).

Lawrence's Warbler - One was mist netted early on the morning of May 3 at the F. A. Seiberling Naturealm in Akron (Morgan).

Yellow-throated Warbler - Single birds appeared at Brecksville Metropark on April 16 (LePage) and at Shaker Lakes on April 26 (Peskin, Hoffman, Besser).

Kentucky Warbler - For the fourth year in a row a singing male returned to Chapin Forest on May 23 (Corbin). Only other spring record was of a bird at Shaker Lakes on May 8 (LePage) and May 10 (Peskin).

Connecticut Warbler - A very early individual was noted in dense growth at Sims Park on May 4 (Talkington fide Corbin).

Orchard Oriole - A locally excellent spring for this species commenced with the sighting of a bird at Mentor Marsh on May 3 (LePage). Others were recorded as follows: a first year male at Sims Park on May 4 (Corbin), an adult male at Warrensville Farms on May 5 (Knight), a female at Mentor on May 10 (Booth), a first-year male at Deep Lock Quarry on May 10 (Rosche, Elder), and finally an adult male, an adult female, and a first-year male at Rocky River Metropark on May 10 (Klamm).

White-winged Crossbill - (1) An adult male visited a feeder in Parma Heights on March 6, 7, and 8 (Busch fide Stasko). (2) The immature male, present for much of the winter at a feeder in Lorain, remained from March 1 to May 31 (Pogacnik).

Le Conte's Sparrow - A brightly colored individual spent the afternoon at Sims Park on April 28 (LePage, Corbin et al.) This was the first April record since 1966.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow - A rather late migrant appeared at Shaker Lakes on May 25 (Besser, LePage).

FIELD NOTES

Golden Eagle at Lake Rockwell There was a large, eagle size bird standing on the ice facing west. The bill was dark with a bright yellow cere. The head was slightly lighter than the rest of a brown body giving a goldish cast on top and nape. The bird was not mottled as in immature Bald Eagle, but one light fleck was noted and when the wind gusted the undersides of the feathers appeared lighter than topside. The tarsi appeared to be feathered nearly to the toes. The feet were as brightly yellow as the cere. The tail appeared uniformly dark but the coverts were not visible. -- LARRY ROSCHE

A Hawk Strikes Twice About 2:00 p.m. on March 30 I heard what I thought was a bird strike our rear thermopane picture window with an unusually loud thump. I approached the window in time to see a Red-shouldered Hawk fly up from the ground outside the window onto a low branch of a sugar maple about 25 feet from our house. The hawk sat there with his back to the window for fully a minute, evidently recovering from the collision. Then the hawk turned slowly

around, flew to the ground below the window, retrieved the Cardinal it had just killed, and flew out of sight. I hurried outside, but the hawk had disappeared.

I noted from the smudge of feathers on the window that the hawk and Cardinal had struck the window only about six inches from the top. The hawk must have swept in at considerable speed because it came in under a 4-foot overhang and still hit near the top of the window.

The Red-shouldered Hawks I see and hear in our rear woods are evidently attracted to the numerous birds that are concentrated in the area of the feeders near our house. During this past winter a Red-shouldered Hawk stalked the birds at the platform feeder on at least 16 days. Twice I saw the hawk sitting on the feeder, and once I found a pile of feathers there. A few years ago I observed a sparrow hawk fly off with a Cardinal from the platform feeder. And on April 17, 1981 I glanced out at the platform feeder and saw a shower of feathers descending from the upper portion of a large tree near the feeder. I looked up and saw the hawk perched in the tree. - WALTER KREMM

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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, Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, Ohio 44106, attention Helen Yenkevich.

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The Kirtland Bird Club sponsors a weekly RARE BIRD ALERT at (216) 969-8186. Sightings of species rare in the Cleveland area as well as other interesting observations should be called in to the tape on Mondays as the tape is replaced with current sightings every Tuesday. In the case of extreme rarities, e. g., Sabine's Gull, Varied Thrush, the tape should be called the day of the observation.