



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 |
| 14 Perkins Beach | 43 Mentor Headlands |
| 15 Terminal Tower | 44 Mentor Marsh |
| 16 Cleveland Public Square | 45 Black Brook |
| 16 Cuyahoga River | Headlands State Park |
| 17 Brecksville Reservation | 46 Fairport Harbor |
| 18 Akron | 47 Painesville |
| 18 Cuyahoga Falls | 48 Grand River |
| 19 Akron Lakes | 49 Little Mountain |
| 20 Gordon. Park | Holden Arboretum |
| 20 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)

Editor

Ray Hannikman

Assistant Editor

Elinor Elder

Weather Summary

William Klamm

Editorial Assistants

Jean Hoffman

Ethel D. Surman

CONTRIBUTORS

Kay Booth
Dave Corbin
Elinor Elder
Vic Fazio
Ray Hannikman
Neil Henderson
Tom Kellerman
William and Nancy Klamm
Charles Klaus
Charles H. Knight

Walter Kremm
Tom LePage
Jack and Dorothy Miller
Perry Peskin
John Pogacnik
Richard Rickard
Craig Rieker
Larry Rosche
Gordon Spare
Jerry Talkington

* * * * *

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

Ray Hannikman
440 East 260th St.
Euclid, OH 44132

THE WEATHER
Spring, 1984

March - Some amount of precipitation came on all but 6 days so sunshine prevailed 35% of the time possible. Precipitation totalled 3.8 inches, 0.81 inches above normal. Snowfall totalled 19.3 inches. Temperatures averaged 28.4 degrees, 8.2 degrees below normal. Lake Erie sustained extensive ice cover as the water temperature remained a stable 36 degrees. Some fissures opened and reclosed with wind and weather changes.

April - Temperatures averaged 46.8 degrees, 0.13 degrees cooler than normal. Precipitation occurred on 15 days and totalled 2.29 inches, 1.03 inches below normal. Sunshine prevailed 52% of the time possible. Lake Erie water temperature rose from 36 degrees to 43 degrees by month's end. Ice cover was persistent but variable with wind and weather and abruptly ended in the 14th-16th period.

May - Temperatures averaged out to 54.0 degrees, 4.2 degrees below normal. Precipitation for the month came on 17 days and totalled 5.95 inches, 2.65 inches above normal. Lake Erie continued to warm with water temperature rising from 43 degrees initially to 54 degrees at month's end. Sunshine prevailed 52% of the time possible.

COMMENT OF THE SEASON

White-winged gulls in May, a tremendous influx of warblers in late Hay, and, in general, later-than-usual peak occurrence dates for many species -- these words summarize spring season's migration was cold Lake Erie as ice remained until mid-April. The following paragraphs will expand on the above as well as reveal the details of the Cleveland area's first Bell's Vireo and the sighting of a very seldom noted visitor, Smith's Longspur.

Waterfowl As usual bay ducks peaked at Lorain. High counts were 4,000 Canvasbacks, an excellent lakefrot count, 7,000 Scaup ducks, 3,000 Common Goldeneyes, and 1,700 Common Mergansers there on March 10 (Fazio). The same day at Avon Lake were an additional 3,000 Common Goldeneyes, 2,500 Red-breasted Margansers, and 1,200 Common Mergansers. Unusual inland spring records of Oldsquaw delighted observers at Shaker Lakes, 12 (5 males and 7 females in summer plumage) on April 6 (Fazio), and 3 summer birds at Lake Rockwell on April 9 (Rosche). Up to 3 Oldsquaws lingered at the Gordon Park Impoundment from May 3 to 12 (many observers).

Great Blue Heron From April 28 through May 11, large numbers of Great Blue Herons, up to 63 on April 29, gathered near the far east runway of Burke Airport. These numbers were unusual for the area and it was thought that the birds were attracted to this area by dead fish being exposed by the late-melting lake ice. No reports were received on whether any air traffic was affected by the heron's presence.

Hawks The following table recaps the hawk counts for Shaker Lakes, Rocky River, and Perkins Beach for the period from April 25 to 29 ---

Date	4/25	4/25	4/26	4/26	4/27	4/27	4/28	4/29
Location	RR		SL	PB	SL	PB	SL	SL
SL								
Turkey Vulture	4	14	13	12	-	7	15	6
Sharp-sh. Hawk	25	62	39	9	5	18	74	12
Cooper's Hawk	1	1	7	1	-	-	1	-
Red-tailed Hawk	9	15	1	8	2	3	36	6
Red-shoul. Hawk	1	4	-	1	-	-	3	-
Broad-Wg Hawk	329	490	546	226	4	131	457	8
Golden Eagle	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
N. Harrier	-	3	-	4	-	-	1	-
Osprey	-	4	5	-	-	-	-	-
Merlin	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Am. Kestrel	1	4	5	1	2	-	-	-

All totalled, 2,036 raptors, 1,271 of which were Broad-winged Hawks, were recorded from March 20 to May 31 at Shaker Lakes alone. The Shaker Lakes observer regretted that his April 27 hawk-watch began late at 12:00 noon and lasted two hours -- and he still tallied 131 Broad-winged Hawks. When these excellent same day data from two widely-scattered locations are looked at, some questions concerning the entire local hawk migration picture develop. Since spring hawks generally move southwest (west) to northeast (east) and tend to follow the lakeshore, how many, if any, of the hawks seen on the west side are again noted on the east side? Why is there an absence of spring hawk reports from east side lakefront areas (lack of observers)? Because of the general west-to-east movement of spring hawks, are the peak west side counts earlier in the day than east side counts? It was back in the early 1960's that local birders became aware of the spring hawk patterns in northern Ohio and here we are, a generation later, still seeking more knowledge of this phenomenon. Hawk reports in future years will hopefully provide some of the answers to the above questions.

Shorebirds Shorebird migration was nothing to call home about except for the rarities of the Noteworthy Records section and Spotted Sandpiper. Unusually high counts of this species were recorded: 75 past Lorain on April 30 (Pogacnik) and 80 past Sims Park on May 18 (Corbin). Such numbers promise a good local breeding season for this species.

Gulls, Terns White-winged gulls are associated with winter and ice and since Lake Erie did not shed its ice cover until mid-April the winter gulls remained far past their usual spring departure dates. Sightings of Glaucous Gulls were concentrated within the period from March 8 to 11 with 8 birds at Lorain on the 10th (Fazio). This species was last noted on April 8. Iceland Gulls were recorded locally for the first time ever in April and May with a new record late spring date of May 6 at the Gordon Park Impoundment. Thayer's Gulls peaked at Lorain on March 8 with 4 birds present (Pogacnik). Four sightings in April and a May 13th Thayer's Gull at Gordon Park may have been of the same individual seen at various locations. And to complete the "winter" gull picture for the spring, Lesser Black-backed Gull could not be left out as the species was recorded on four dates in March and a third-summer bird appeared at Gordon Park on April 28 (LePage).

The spring ice on Lake Erie also affected Bonaparte's Gulls. This species was not found in March until a lone bird appeared on the 17th and no subsequent build-up of numbers materialized. High count

for the season was a paltry 300 on April 22. What a contrast from spring 1983 when Bonaparte's Gulls were recorded in unprecedented numbers. The ice may have forced the gulls to move right over frozen Lake Erie ice areas, or perhaps more realistically, the birds chose a more coastal migration route. In any case, the species was uncommonly scarce this spring.

One of the most interesting changes in spring time birding in the Cleveland area in the past five years has been the tremendous increase in sightings of Forster's Terns. Whether this species has been misidentified in the past is a moot point, the numbers tell the story. Forster's Terns have gathered mainly in two places -- the tires at Lorain and the Gordon Park mudflat. High counts at Lorain were 51 on May 10 (LePage) and 54 on May 12 (Klamm) and 26 at Gordon Park on May 14 (Klamm). And talk about numbers -- how about those Caspian Terns: 324 Caspian Terns along the Cleveland lakefront on April 23 must have been a local record for any season (Klamm). Other outstanding Cleveland lakefront tallies were 220 birds on April 21 and 214 on April 27 (Klamm). As is usual, no Black Terns were seen locally.

Flycatchers This group produced a somewhat mixed-up migration. Four Eastern Kingbirds from April 27 to 29 were an unusual number for late April - after April 29 no kingbirds were reported until May 12. Most other species peaked in the last third of May, a little later than normal. Shaker Lakes produced these counts -- Great Crested Flycatcher (15 on May 19), Least Flycatcher (27 on May 11, 30 on May 19, and 11 on late May 31), and Eastern Wood-Pewee (22 on May 19). Alder Flycatchers appeared at Sims Park and also at Shaker Lakes and Streetsboro Bog. Alders are strictly migrants at Sims Park and Shaker Lakes but are known breeders at Streetsboro. More field work can possibly lead to more nesting locations for this species.

Warblers Spring warbler migration -- to be continued. This statement aptly describes what happened to warblers in the Cleveland area as most species were still passing through in numbers at the end of May. Witness 35 Magnolia Warblers, 70 American Redstarts, 22 Wilson's Warblers, and 19 Canada Warblers at Shaker Lakes on May 30. And peak days for most species occurred from May 18 through 22 as the following remarkable counts from Shaker Lakes can attest to: 120 Magnolia Warblers (5/22), 24 Black-throated Blue Warblers (5/22), 80 American Redstarts (5/22), and 37 Ovenbirds (5/11) (Fazio). Sims Park, another location monitored daily during May, experienced its

peak wave days in early June but nonetheless had 20+ Ovenbirds and Common Yellowthroats on May 11 (Corbin). Other comments from observers who birded certain areas extensively were as follows: "Warblers were fair to excellent", Portage County (Rosche), and, somewhat surprising, ".Overall, it was a very poor showing in regular areas of observation" Rocky River Valley, Western Suburbs, (Klamm). The lateness of the season may hold some surprises in the nesting season reports of contributors.

Sparrows May 11 was the peak day for White-crowned Sparrows and Lincoln's Sparrows. On that day 122 White-crowned Sparrows were tallied by a single party from the Rocky River Valley to the Cleveland lakefront and 100+ Lincoln's Sparrows inundated Sims Park. The spring's most abundant sparrow is usually the White-throated; the above counts, however, surpassed any total for this latter species. Other sparrow reports of note were 15 Fox Sparrows at Sims Park on April 15 and a late Vesper Sparrow at Gordon Park on May 12.

Winter Finches Evening Grosbeaks occurred both in lingering, persistent flocks, and as migrants. The large flock that occurred in Chesterland during the winter continued with 40 birds on March 7, 30 on April 14, (with a large flock in a nearby woods), and 50 from the 30th to May 9 (Klaus). Another flock frequented the Lake Rockwell area until May 19 (Rosche). Migrant Evening Grosbeaks were observed at Sims Park through the first half of May. Most curious was the report of possible Pine Siskin nesting at Lake Rockwell. Birds were observed carrying nesting material and agitated behavior was noted, but no actual nest could be found (Rosche). Crossbills and Common Redpolls were entirely absent from the region.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Red-necked Grebe - Single birds were reported as follows: a winter-plumaged bird at the Gordon Park Impoundment on April 7 (Fazio) and a summer-plumaged individual at Lake Rockwell on April 8 (Rosche).

Least Bittern - A lone bird was found in the Rocky River Valley, an unusual location for the species, on May 13 (Klamm).

Cattle Egret -A sub-adult appeared at Shaker Lakes on May 22 (Fazio).

White-winged Scoter - An immature male lingered at the Gordon Park Impoundment from May 24 to 29 (many observers).

Northern Goshawk - One was noted on the April 4 hawk watch at Shaker Lakes (Fazio).

Golden Eagle - On bright and sunny April 25, a "practically" adult individual was discovered in the Rocky River Valley (Klamm). In recent years there have been more reports of this species from all areas of Ohio, so much so that it should be looked for when hawk-watching conditions are most favorable.

Merlin - Three individuals were noted: (1) At Shaker Lakes from March 20 to April 3 (Fazio); (2) In the Rocky River Valley on April 26 (Klamm); (3) At Sims Park on April 29 (Corbin, Hannikman).

Whimbrel - On May 20 two flocks were encountered -- 3 at Mentor Headlands (LePage) and 7 at the Gordon Park Impoundment (Talkington). Prior to 1984 there had only been two previous spring records of this species.

Red Knot - Four were at Mentor Headlands on May 20 (LePage). The one previous May record of Red Knot was of a single bird.

White-rumped Sandpiper - All sightings came from Gordon Park: 1 on May 5 (LePage), 2 on May 10 (Klamm), 2 on May 19 (Kellerman), and 3 on May 28 (LePage).

Long-billed Dowitcher - First spring record in CBC files occurred at Lorain on April 30 where a lone migrant was found (Pogacnik).

Wilson's Phalarope - A pair was at the Gordon Park Impoundment on May 19 (Kellerman). Earlier, one was recorded at this location on May 6 (Hannikman).

Laughing Gull - On April 30 one appeared at the Gordon Park Impoundment (LePage).

Short-eared Owl - Three migrants were noted -- two at Gordon Park on March 22 and one at Shaker Lakes on April 5 (Fazio).

Carolina Wren - Only spring report was at Shaker Lakes on May 11 (Fazio).

Loggerhead Shrike - Two records, possibly of the same individual, were noted: one perched on a telephone wire at Harvard and Green on April 7 (Knight) and one along the fence at Burke Airport on April 8 (Hannikman).

Bell's Vireo - A singing bird was discovered at Mentor Headlands on May 27 (Rosche). A first record for the Cleveland area, this species has recently nested successfully in western Ohio and is thought to be expanding eastward.

Worm-eating Warbler - There were three spring sightings: at Sims Park on April 30 (Corbin), at Shaker Lakes on May 11 (Fazio), and at North Chagrin on May 13 (Kellerman).

Kentucky Warbler - (1) One was at Kent on May 6 (Rosche). (2) Easily seen right out in the open was a bird at Sims Park on May 12 (Corbin). (3) Between 1 and 2 birds were noted daily at Shaker Lakes from May 14 to 18 (Fazio).

Summer Tanager - Three reports indicated a good "overshoot" year -- all males, as follows, at a feeder at Shaker Lakes from May 9 to 11 (Fazio), in Hudson on May 19 (Henderson), and at Sims Park on May 25 (Quinlivan fide Corbin).

Smith's Longspur - An exquisite male in summer plumage remained at the Gordon Park Impoundment from early morning May 5 to early morning May 6 (Talkington). One of the best finds and rarest of Cleveland area vagrants, Smith's Longspur was last recorded in the Cleveland area in April, 1959.

Orchard Oriole - Amazingly Sims Park had the only reports of this species: an adult male on May 12, a first-spring male and a female on May 16, and a female on May 20 (Corbin).

FIELD NOTES

A Cooper's Hawk at Sims Park The immature Cooper's Hawk seen during February 1984 at Sims Park lingered into March and on March 15 spent much of the day at this lakefront location. At about 9:15 a.m. I first observed this accipiter as it flew into a small grove of conifers. As I approached these trees the hawk, carrying a large object in its talons, flew from the trees and lit on the ground at the southern edge of the conifer grove. Through my binoculars I could see that it was clutching a large white wing attached to the partly eaten remains of the breast of what I later determined to be a Rock Dove. For two or three minutes I watched the hawk as it consumed the flesh and entrails of its victim. My guess is that the hawk killed the pigeon the previous day and cached the remains high in the grove of conifers and slowly devoured this rather large prey. I later noted two piles of pigeon feathers under the conifers, one large pile of feathers iridescent in color, seemingly from the head

and neck. I had occasion to observe this cooperative Cooper's Hawk two hours later as it perched in a small sapling at the western end of the park. A Fox Squirrel started making short runs up the sapling toward the hawk. The hawk then spread its wings in a threat posture and hopped a short distance to a lower branch. The squirrel backed off and soon climbed down from the sapling and went on its way. --
 DAVE CORBIN

* * * * *

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, OH 44106.

* * * * *

The Kirtland Bird Club sponsors a WEEKLY RARE BIRD ALERT at (216) 696-8186. 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 updated with current information 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.