



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 | 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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Weather Summary
Summer, 1984

June - Temperatures averaged out to 69.5 degrees, 1.9 degrees warmer than normal. Precipitation was poorly distributed on 9 days with 93% of the total 3.40 inches being recorded on the 6th, 13th, and 18th. Precipitation was only 0.09 inches below normal. Sunshine prevailed 77% of the time possible and the Lake Erie water temperature rose from 54 degrees on the 1st to 65 degrees on the 30th.

July - Precipitation, on 8 days, totalled 3.35 inches, 0.02 inches below normal. Temperatures averaged 68.7 degrees, 2.9 degrees below normal. Sunshine prevailed 77% of the time possible, and Lake Erie continued to warm to 73 degrees by the 31st.

August - Precipitation, on 10 days, totalled 5.51 inches, 2.13 inches above normal. Temperatures averaged 70.6 degrees, 0.2 degrees warmer than normal. Lake Erie warmed to a maximum of 76 degrees between the 20th and 24th and declined to 73 degrees by the 31st. Sunshine prevailed 63% of the time possible.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

Summer birding in the Cleveland area is certainly getting more exciting, no doubt about it. Surveys for the Ohio breeding bird atlas are turning up much new data on nesting species, a tremendous mudflat at Gordon Park attracted both excellent numbers of shorebirds as well as a great variety of species, and new species for the area continue to be discovered (American White Pelican and Curlew Sandpiper). And, as hinted at in the previous issue, Sims Park experienced a heavy movement of warblers in early June. The following paragraphs of commentary, noteworthy records, and field notes will further expound on an altogether rewarding summer birding season.

Shorebirds The season started off with a bang - a summer-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper at Gordon Park on July 15. Continuous pumping of dredgings in July and August created a magnificent mudflat and migrant shorebirds gathered in excellent numbers. Single-day counts of 100+ were recorded for Short-billed Dowitcher (130+ on August 25 and 100+ on the 26th), Semipalmated Sandpiper (3 days in late July and 3 in early August), and Lesser Yellowlegs (110 on August 5). Other shorebird highlights were several Western Sandpipers in July and August, Willets, Whimbrels, including 6 on July 18, and curious summertime sightings of Common Snipe. Spotted Sandpiper did well with downy young and fledged birds noted in July. And finally, regular work by birdbander Jerry Talkington brought shorebirders "up close and personal" looks at many species, from Western and Semipalmated Sandpipers in the same hand to delicately beautiful summer-plumaged Stilt Sandpipers. A treat for all, indeed!

To the south the hot spot was the Pittsburgh Plate and Glass Settling Pond in Barberton. Here impressive were 45 Spotted Sandpipers, 80+ Lesser Yellowlegs, and 100+ Least Sandpipers on July 17 (Rosche) and several visits thereafter produced good counts of shorebirds. Common Snipe were also found there on two occasions, but observations did not confirm breeding. Counts at West Branch State Park paralleled those of Gordon Park and PPG but numbers, as expected, were not as great.

Gulls After four unsuccessful years of trying, Herring Gulls finally produced young (2 birds hatched) at Lake Rockwell at the end of June (Rosche). A sitting bird occupied the site of last year's nesting at Gordon Park during June but the Canada Goose nearby prevented any serious nest building.

Other noteworthy gulls were the Calendar year's first Little Gull, a second-summer individual at Lorain on July 11 (Pogacnik), and Franklin's Gulls at Gordon Park from August 6 to 10 (Klamm) and at Lorain from August 17 to 21 (LePage).

Whippoorwill A count of 12 Whippoorwills in June and July in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreational Area was amazing. Previous area counts had never approached this total and future field work in this area would be wise to determine whether this count was a fluke or whether this species is as abundant as this count may have indicated.

Warblers Sims Park experienced an unusually late and heavy warbler wave. At least 19 species were present and 17 were banded on June 3 and numbers of warblers were impressively high for the date. Highlights were at least 8 Mourning Warblers (5 banded), 3 Connecticut Warblers (1 banded), Northern Parula, and Black and White Warbler (Corbin, Talkington).

For the second summer in a row Mourning Warblers were found during June and July in habitat suitable for nesting. Three males and 1 female were thought to have occurred in the Cuyahoga Recreational Area and a male carrying food was observed on several occasions. In the Little Mountain area 3 birds were singing on June 6 and at least 2 remained until July 15. No nesting behavior was observed with these birds, however. Three possible explanations for this dramatic (for the last 2 years anyway) change in status for this species are: (1) the birds have been in these areas all along and surveys for the Ohio breeding bird atlas have gotten birders out to find them, (2) cool, late springs have induced the later migrant Mourning Warblers to remain in this desirable habitat, (3) an actual southerly expansion of the breeding range of this species has occurred. Further summer studies of the above areas will continue to reveal more about this species' sudden thrust into the summertime birding picture of the Cleveland area.

Other interesting warbler reports were 3 singing Black-throated Green Warblers and 2 singing Magnolia Warblers at Stebbins Gulch on June 23 (Peterjohn) and 2 singing Black-throated Green Warblers and a singing Kentucky Warbler on June 9 at Little Mountain (Rickard). Fall migration was well underway by period's end with 16 species of warblers at Mentor Headlands on August 25 highlighting the reports.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

American White Pelican - The first record for the Cleveland area was of a bird at Lorain on August 14 and 17 (Pogacnik).

Least Bittern - A male called softly through the day from cattails on a pond in Lakeview Cemetery from June 2 to 6 (Hoffman). This was the first record of Least Bittern for the summer since 1967.

Tri-colored Heron - An individual was found in Rocky River Metropark on July 2 (Klamm). Only other record of this species for Cleveland was in May, 1976.

Ring-necked Duck - A male summered at Gordon Park (many observers).

Common Goldeneye - The first summer record in CBC files was of a female at Gordon Park from July 27 to 31 (Klamm et al.)

Bufflehead - Out of season was a female at Gordon Park on June 29 (Klamm).

Peregrine Falcon - A single bird, which delighted in chasing shorebirds, appeared at the Gordon Park Impoundment on August 25 (Talkington et al.). Colored bands could be seen on one of the bird's legs and it is hoped that this will reveal where the bird was banded. The bird was last seen on August 29.

Piping Plover - Three birds occurred at Gordon Park: July 24-25 (Corbin), August 10 (Klamm), and August 25 to period's end (many observers).

American Avocet - Sightings at Gordon Park were 2 on July 4, 1 on July 9 and 11, and 1 July 15 (Talkington, Klamm, Rosche).

Marbled Godwit - Birds were recorded at Gordon Park as follows: 1 July 4, 2 July 23, and 1 July 30 (Talkington, Klamm).

Red Knot - A breeding plumaged individual was found at Gordon Park on June 17 (Hannikman) and perhaps was the same bird seen there on July 14. A number of Red Knots remained at Gordon Park from August 10 to the end of the period.

White-rumped Sandpiper - A bird in winter plumage was banded at Gordon Park on July 28 (Talkington).

Curlew Sandpiper - A summer plumaged individual was discovered at Gordon Park on July 15 and remained until the 18th (Talkington et al.) Characteristics noted were decurved bill, reddish plumage, white rump, whitish underwings, and black legs. By the 18th the bird had begun to noticeably molt the plumage of its underparts. Seen by many from all over Ohio, and a life bird for most, the sighting was the Cleveland area's first verified record and only the second for the state. First Ohio record was just in May, 1984 and this bird could have conceivably been that individual.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper - One was seen briefly at Gordon Park on August 26 (Hannikman).

Wilson's Phalarope - Up to three remained at Gordon Park from August 17 to the end of the period (many observers).

Red-necked Phalarope - One spent August 26 at Gordon Park (Hannikman).

Hermit Thrush - This species again nested at Virginia Kendall Park in Akron (Rosche).

Yellow-rumped Warbler - Part of that early June wave at Sims Park was a single bird of this species on the 3rd, a new late spring date for the species (Corbin).

Worm-eating Warbler - First June record in CBC files was of a singing male at Stebbins Gulch on the 23rd (Peterjohn).

White-throated Sparrow - One was found in Cuyahoga Heights on July 8 (LePage).

Dark-eyed Junco - A singing male was noted at Donald Gray Gardens from June 19 to 22 (LePage).

FIELD NOTES

Poor Nesting Season for Chimney Swifts at Kent For the fourth consecutive year, the nesting population of Chimney Swifts has declined on the campus of Kent State University, Kent, Ohio. During the previous 36 years, the number of banded returns from the South American wintering grounds averaged 40.0. Between 1981-83 the average number of returns for banded birds was 21.7. In 1983 there were 24 resident

swifts on the campus, and in 1984 there were only 21, including eight nesting pairs, one nesting threesome, and two non-nesting residents. One pair abandoned the nest after three eggs were laid, one pair did not remain to complete nesting, and one pair failed to build a nest. Six pairs and the threesome succeeded in raising young. It is probable only 19 juveniles were produced in the colony (one pair built its nest out-of-sight making an accurate count impossible. Observations had to be made by mirror). Compared to earlier years (Ohio Jour. Sci. 69:193-213. 1969; Birdbanding 48:73-74. 1977; 51:14-16. 1979), the season of 1984 was poor and continued a downward trend over the past four years.

-- RALPH W. DEXTER

Waterfowl Nesting in Lakeview Cemetery We were very surprised in 1983 to find a Mallard in Lakeview Cemetery in a nest about 30 feet up in the hollow at the top of a Sycamore snag beside the pond. There was an old woodpecker hole in the side of the hollow which allowed observation of the bird. In May 1984 we again found a Mallard nesting in this location and saw three young that fledged from the nest. We saw the third looking out the old woodpecker hole, but it missed its trip to the pond below. In a few days there was no longer any sign of these fledglings, not unusual in Lakeview as very few waterfowl fledge young and even fledged Canada Geese suffer some mortality.

By mid-June we had discovered another Mallard nest in Lakeview, this time built about halfway up in a tall cypress tree a little removed from the pond amid considerable foliage. The nest was constructed in the crotch of a large branch at the trunk of the tree and the bird could be seen incubating and turning the eggs. On June 30 the nest was vacant, but a Mallard was on the pond with several young.

We speculate that all of these tree nests may have been the work of one bird, but can not verify this. Mallards have been known to nest in trees and even more unlikely spots, but these are still very unusual nests and a good response to the prevalence of predation on ground nests as almost no other Mallards fledged young in Lakeview this year.

We have never found a nest of the several Wood Ducks that also attempt to nest in Lakeview, but one successfully raised

two young this year. They were quite small and closely protected when first seen on the pond on June 20.

While Mallards and Wood Ducks are the only ducks we know to have bred successfully in the cemetery, the behavior of Blue-winged Teal is suggestive of possible attempts. There are normally one or more pairs present in May with a male frequently present into late May. Such was the case this year, but in addition, a lone female reappeared on June 17 through 20 to further support our speculations. Given the lack of breeding success of so many other waterfowl here, the absence of young does not rule out attempted nesting here or some other local area such as the Shaker Lakes. JEAN AND DICK HOFFMAN

Nesting Birds at Lake Rockwell While working on the Breeding Bird Atlas project the past two years, I have covered Portage County extensively. The county has more than 120 probable nesting species with such birds as American Bittern, rails, Common Snipe, owls, and Brown Creeper very difficult to confirm as breeders. I have noticed two areas which are particularly productive: the Norfolk and Western Railroad track which extends from Tinkers Creek State Nature Preserve near Aurora to 1-76 south of Kent and the immediate area surrounding Lake Rockwell.

On a good day in late June it is possible to locate 8 species of flycatchers along the tracks near state route 303. It is also along these tracks near Tinkers Creek that Brown Creepers can be seen and heard during the summer.

Lake Rockwell has such a great variety of habitat it only stands to reason that it would be a productive breeding area. I did not, however, expect to have up to 97 species summering there. I have been lucky to have had competent observers with me to attest to and marvel at the impressive number of nesting birds. I will try to elaborate upon what I feel are the more noteworthy nesters.

The nesting season began with Pine Siskins carrying possible nesting material in late March. Two birds were observed high in the same stand of pines until late May. No nest was ever found but a lot of vocalization and observations in the same two or three trees for more than two months can only make me wonder.

On May 27 I officially began to atlas Lake Rockwell with Bill Osborne. We found American Bittern, Cooper's Hawk, Barred Owl, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, Marsh Wrens, 4 species of vireos, and many migrant and potentially nesting warblers including 3 Pine Warblers. The most noteworthy find of the day was a pair of Northern Waterthrushes acting very possessive of an area of dense brushy swampland. These birds were noted weekly and on June 20 the lighter bird was carrying a caterpillar into the brush while the other bird scolded me. The birds were seen into mid-July, but I made no effort to locate a nest.

On June 20 I located a nest tree of a very busy pair of Prothonotary Warblers. Also on this date I was surprised by a singing male Blackburnian Warbler. As I watched it sing it darted out and caught a small moth, returned to its perch, uttered a triumphant but muffled facsimile of its song, and then carried the moth high into the pines. It soon returned to its singing and was observed each morning I returned through July 10. Chestnut-sided Warblers were observed in four similar looking areas. Each pair chose a grown-over clearing in a mature woods. There were many grapevines and much understory growth. These birds return in mid-May and by late May much nesting behavior is underway. They were readily observable up to July 25. Pine Warblers were found to be summering for the second year in a row at Lake Rockwell. At least one but in all likelihood two territorial males could be located in the many pine stands along the west side of Lake Rockwell. Unfortunately I saw no food carrying nor was I able to locate a nest for these birds. Warblers occurring commonly in order of abundance were Hooded, Cerulean, Blue-winged, and American Redstart.

Another bird of interest is Red-breasted Nuthatch. I encounter them on nearly every trip to Lake Rockwell pine stands, but it was not until June 27 that Elinor Elder and I watched a female disappear into a pine snag to quiet a noisy bunch of youngsters. Finally, "Ruby" the Herring Gull, hatched two chicks in late June on the goose platform where she has been trying for the past four years. Another case of practice makes perfect. LARRY ROSCHE

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 area as well as other interesting observations should be called in to the tape on Mondays as the tape is updated each Tuesday. In the case of extreme rarities, e. g., Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Sabin's Gull, the tape should be called the day of the observation.