



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

Editor

Ray Hannikman

Assistant Editor

Elinor Elder

Weather Summary

William A. Klamm

Editorial Assistants

Jean Hoffman

Ethel D. Surman

CONTRIBUTORS

Dave Corbin

Joe Emery

Wayne Hammond

Ray Hannikman

Rob Harlan

Dick and Jean

Hoffman Tom

Kellerman

William and Nancy

Klamm Charles

Knight Walter

Kremm

Tom LePage

Jack and Dorothy

Miller Perry Peskin

Ed and Cheryl Pierce

John Pogacnik

Jack Quinlivan

Richard Rickard

Larry Rosche

Gordon Spare

Jerry Talkington

All records, observations, and field notes should be sent
to:

Ray Hannikman
440 East 260th St
Euclid, OH 441321460

THE WEATHER

Spring, 1985

March - Temperatures averaged out to 40.3 degrees, 3.7 degrees above normal. Precipitation totaled 4.97 inches, or 1.98 inches above normal. Snowfall totaled 1.2 inches. Lake Erie was open with water temperature rising from 33 degrees to 40 degrees by month's end. Ice was confined to harbor areas the first week before disappearing.

April - Precipitation totaled 1.38 inches, 1.94 inches below normal. Temperatures averaged 53.6 degrees, 5.5 degrees above normal. Lake Erie water temperature warmed up to 50 degrees, some 8 degrees warmer than last year. Sunshine prevailed 67% of the time possible.

May - Temperatures averaged out to 60.4 degrees, 2.2 degrees above normal. Precipitation totaled 3.45 inches, 0.15 inches above normal. Lake Erie water temperature warmed to 59 degrees and sunshine prevailed 64% of the time possible.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

Contributors were almost universally blasé about the spring migration. Warm, summer-like temperatures in mid-April brought out the leaves early and this made it somewhat difficult to find those tree top dwelling warblers and vireos. And, at least locally, the only semblance of a major wave day occurred on May 1 at Sims Park but was short-lived as a mid-morning cold front moved out most of the many migrants there that day. One enthusiastic contributor from Kent conducted special searches and studies for waterfowl and shorebirds along the southern edges of the Cleveland area and turned up many exciting finds. No matter how you birded the spring the following paragraphs should put the entire picture of spring migration, 1985 into perspective for you.

Bitterns Most encouraging were several reports of Least Bittern, a species which has been found much less frequently in the Cleveland area than in the past. Three birds were continuously present in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area from May 12 to 27 (Pierce, Rosche) and two birds appeared in Kent on May 23 (Rosche). Sadly, a bird that appears to be in real trouble in both the Cleveland area and the entire state of Ohio is the American Bittern. Reflecting this were only two reports of this species - May 8 in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area and May 15 at Gordon Park. All contributors are urged to report all sightings of American Bittern to this publication so that a continuous monitoring of the status of this species can be maintained.

Waterfowl Only notable flock of Tundra Swans was 75 birds in Painesville on March 21 (Miller). Early March was the peak time for diving ducks on Lake Erie. March 5 saw the following counts at Lorain: 3500 Redheads, 1200 Canvasbacks, and 2200 scaup (sp.). Scaup ducks peaked at 4500 on March 20 along the Cleveland lakefront although a count of 2200 on April 7 indicated an influx of later migrants. Small numbers of all three scoters (1-3) were found at Lorain and Cleveland in March and April. Maximum count of Red-breasted Mergansers was 1800 on April 12 with 30+ birds still off Sims Park on May 19.

A special effort was made to survey waterfowl numbers at the many larger lakes and reservoirs in Portage and Summit Counties and significant observations were made.

Among them were 485 Ring-necked Ducks and 205 Ruddy Ducks at Mogadore Reservoir on March 28, 507 Lesser Scaup and 243 Ruddy Ducks on various Akron lakes on April 6, and a most surprising 80+ Northern Pintails at Lake Rockwell March 6 and 7 (Rosche). A similar gathering of Northern Pintails was reported from nearby LaDue Reservoir in March, 1983 (CBC, Vol. 79, No. 2). The observation of unusual numbers of any species of bird during migration is always a bonus and should be noted and reported so such sightings can be shared with fellow bird students.

Hawks No major flight days were reported. Turkey Vultures, in fact, were the most numerous raptor mentioned by contributors with the following excellent counts: at Perkins Beach - 88 on March 27 and 261 on April 5, 26 at Sims Park on April 14, and 47 at Hinckley on May 11. And, indicative of the migration, 81 Broad-winged Hawks at Perkins Beach on April 20 was the highest total for this highly migratory raptor. Completing the hawk picture, a late Rough-legged Hawk was noteworthy at Perry on April 20 and most encouraging were the reports of Red-shouldered Hawks nesting in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area and Spencer Wildlife Area.

Shorebirds Outstanding migration data were gathered about the scope of inland spring shorebird migration with extensive coverage of the Barberton Salt Pond throughout the entire season. In addition to the many Noteworthy Records produced by this area, other interesting reports were as follows: Semipalmated Plover (maximum 25, 5/27-8); Ruddy Turnstone (14, 5/38); Semipalmated Sandpiper (250+, 5/28); Least Sandpiper (100+, 5/12); and Pectoral Sandpiper (370, 3/29) (Rosche). Common Snipe were still present at the end of the period and were thought to be nesting. It is hoped that this area will continue to remain accessible in the future as a whole new piece of the shorebird migration puzzle is beginning to be better understood and will be further and better defined with continuous coverage of this area.

Smaller numbers of shorebirds, but basically the same mixture of species, were found at Gordon Park. Major difference was the fact that inland numbers of Pectoral Sandpipers were much greater than at Gordon. Elsewhere, "unusually" low water levels in the Rocky River Valley attracted the "greatest" numbers of Solitary Sandpipers within the past 20 years with 28 being reported on May 12 (Klamm). One Upland Sandpiper, at Burke Airport on April 16 (LePage), was the only sighting.

Gulls. Terns Ring-billed Gulls showed well with 12,000 on March 15 and 7200 on March 20 along the Cleveland lakefront (Klamm). Peak counts of Bonaparte's Gulls were compressed into the narrow 5-day period from April 12 to 16 with a maximum count of 700+ birds from two different locations along the Cleveland lakefront on the 16th. Deemed unusual were up to 50+ Herring Gulls at period's end at Lake Rockwell and the summer's report will show that successful nesting occurred at this location.

Tern numbers were disappointing as the following maximum counts show: Forster's Tern (14, May 4), Caspian Tern (120, April 16), and Common Tern (40, May 12). Counts for Forster's Terns and Caspian Terns had reached 50+ and 200+ respectively during the past couple of springs, hence the disappointment over the spring numbers.

Flycatchers The larger flycatchers were somewhat early with Eastern Phoebe arriving on March 10 at Sims Park and both Eastern Kingbird and Great Crested Flycatcher being found on April 30. The local success story for Alder Flycatcher continues as birds were again noted at sites of previous nestings. And, as usual, a few Olive-sided Flycatchers trickled through during the last third of May.

Carolina Wren Most encouraging were at least three, possibly four, nesting pairs of this species from Portage County and Summit County (Rosche, Pierce). The only report from Cuyahoga County was of a migrant at Sims Park on April 14 (Quinlivan).

Sparrows Based on reports turned in to the Calendar, sparrow migration ended rather abruptly in mid-May. Highly unusual were no White-throated Sparrows after May 14 and one White-crowned Sparrow after May 13. And no Lincoln's Sparrows were reported after May 12. It almost seems as if contributors forgot to report any sparrows after mid-May. Fox Sparrows showed well, however, with 25 in Akron on April 6 and up to 8, with several singing males, at Sims Park April 13 and 14.

Warblers In all candor, the warbler migration was disappointing. This was due to several factors: foliage was well developed and made for difficult viewing, and there

were no major wave days on which many birds of more than 20 species could be found. Quite interesting was May 1 at Sims Park when 300+ Yellow-rumped Warblers, and 20+ Yellow Warblers and Black and White Warblers were tallied before a mid-morning storm and cold front drove all the birds eastward. One species that elicited comment was the Tennessee Warbler -- they were vocal and in numbers in the Rocky River Valley (Klamm) and there were "phenomenal" numbers in Kent and other Portage County locations (Rosche). Three Pine Warblers on territory at Lake Rockwell were unprecedented for that area and one pair actually was observed to be carrying nesting material. Sims Park again proved to be the best area for finding Mourning Warblers with two birds banded on May 21 and two remaining until May 30. The Only Connecticut Warbler occurred at Lake Rockwell on May 27. With breeding bird surveys now firmly entrenched, the summer Cleveland Bird Calendar promises some interesting warblers for the breeding season.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Little Blue Heron - An adult was found in Kent on April 22 (Rosche).

Greater White-fronted Goose - An impressive three birds were reported -- March 17 at Sherwin Pond (Talkington fide Hannikman), April 3 at Lake Rockwell (Rosche), and a bird flying past Sims Park on April 5 (Corbin). These latter two birds were first records for their respective locations. Unusual numbers of Greater White-fronted Geese reported from other parts of Ohio indicated an influx eastward of this more westerly migrating species into the state.

Bald Eagle - Three different birds occurred at Lake Rockwell: an adult from March 6 to 16, a sub-adult on May 8, and a first year bird on May 26 (Rosche).

Merlin - Two were briefly noted in Barberton -- on March 25 and extremely late on May 28 (Rosche).

Sandhill Crane - Four were observed at Perkins Beach on April 5 (Klamm) and three were at Gordon Park on April 12 (Harlan).

Lesser Golden Plover - A single bird in winter plumage was discovered on March 31 at Barberton (Rosche). This date not

only becomes the earliest spring date for this species but also the first sighting during the month of March in CBC files. This species was last recorded in the Cleveland area during the spring in 1968.

Red Knot - A winter-plumaged individual was at Gordon Park from May 23 to 30 (Klamm).

Western Sandpiper - Birds occurred as follows: two at Spencer Wildlife Area on May 26 and singles at Lake Rockwell on May 25 and Barberton on May 30 (Rosche). This species heretofore had never been observed in the Cleveland area in May.

White-rumped Sandpiper - A new Cleveland area high count for this species was established with 15 birds at Barberton on May 28 (Rosche). From 1 to 3 birds were also noted at Gordon Park from May 14 to 25 (many observers).

Dunlin - Another first March and new earliest spring date was when a single bird was seen at Barberton on March 29 (Rosche).

Stilt Sandpiper - The first spring record of this species since 1966 was recorded from Barberton on May 18 when five were seen (Rosche).

Long-billed Dowitcher - The Barberton Salt Pond strikes again with three summer plumaged birds on April 27 (Rosche, Osborne).

Wilson's Phalarope - The first spring sighting of this species since May 1957 were summer plumaged females at Barberton on May 28 and 30 (Rosche).

Laughing Gull - Sightings were made at Edgewater on April 1 (LePage), Lorain on April 19 (Pogacnik), and 2 birds at Gordon Park on May 12 (Talkington fide Hannikman).

Black-legged Kittiwake - One was at Lorain on March 5 (Pogacnik).

Black Tern - Always noteworthy in spring, lone birds appeared at Barberton on May 6 and 30 (Rosche).

Northern Saw-whet Owl - One was discovered perched in a pine tree near the west end of Sims Park late in the afternoon of April 6 (Hannikman). This species went unrecorded in the 1983-1984 CBC year.

Northern Shrike - One was reported from Lorain March 4 (Pogacnik).

Brewster's Warbler - A bird singing the song of the Blue-winged Warbler was located at Firestone Metropark on May 6 (Pierce).

Yellow-throated Warbler - A single bird was reported from Hinckley on April 24 (Harlan).

Ovenbird - An exceedingly early migrant was found at Sims Park on April 20 (Corbin, Hannikman).

Clay-colored Sparrow - One was discovered at Donald Gray Gardens on May 11 and remained through the next day for many observers to view it (Corbin et al.). This species was last observed in our area in the spring in 1977.

Sharp-tailed Sparrow - Two were found on May 11 -- at Sims Park (Corbin, Hoffman), and at Gordon Park (Talkington fide Hannikman).

Red Crossbill - A fifteen minute scope study was made of an adult male at Hinckley on April 21 (Pierce) and another was reported from this location on April 24 (Harlan).

FIELD NOTES

Spring, 1985 On April 29 I picked up 1/2 bushel of twigs about 10 inches long under a large sugar maple on our lawn. The next day I picked up another 1/2 bushel of twigs in the same place. On May 1 I observed Blue Jays building a nest on small branches in the maple about 40 feet above the ground. I picked up a third 1/2 bushel of twigs below the nest. The nest appeared only half-constructed. Looks like those Blue Jays are lousy nest builders.

On May 2 I threw out a partially constructed Blue Jay nest on top of a six foot high wood pile in our carport. On May 3 the Blue Jays, forced out of the carport, tried to build a nest on top of a mail box post leaning against the rear of our house. This year we've had more Blue Jays than usual. I have seen half a dozen at a time at our duck corn feeder, sunflower feeder, and suet feeder.

On May 17 I saw a female Wood Duck with 10 ducklings at the end of our ponds. She explored the pond with her young for about two hours and then they all disappeared into a side creek. Just as on June 5, 1982 when I observed a female Wood Duck and nine ducklings, there was no male present.

On May 28 I observed a female Wood Duck and five ducklings. From their size I judged them to be a new group. Since the ducklings evidently were unable to fly, both nests must have been located in nearby trees. Frequently I saw lone females come to the corn feeder. The female and her ducklings appeared again on May 28, 30, and 31. WALTER KREMM

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.

The Kirtland Bird Club sponsors a weekly RARE BIRD ALERT at (216) 289-2473. Sightings of species rare in the Cleveland area as well as other interesting migration observations should be called in to the tape on Mondays as the tape is updated with current sightings each Tuesday. In the case of extreme rarities, e.g., Varied Thrush, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, the tape should be called the day of the observation.

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, OH 44106
Attention: Helen Yenkevich