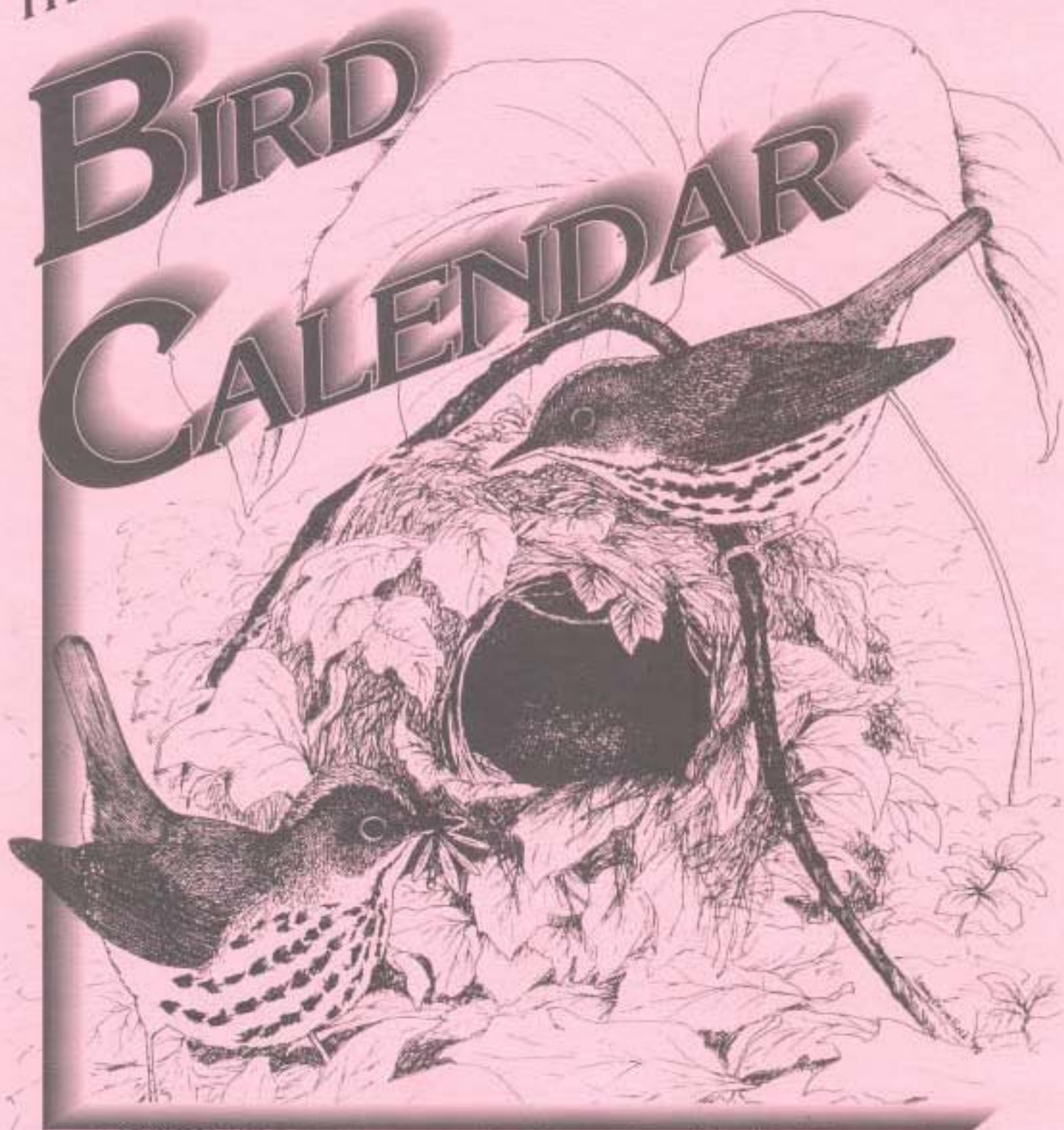


THE CLEVELAND

September, October, November 1999
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BIRD CALENDAR



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and The Cleveland Museum of Natural History

The Cleveland Bird Calendar was founded in 1905 by Francis H. Herrick of The Western Reserve University. The purposes of the publication are to provide information on the movements of birds through the Cleveland region, to monitor population densities of resident birds, and to help in the establishment of patterns of vagrancy for rarely encountered species of the region.

The Cleveland region includes Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit Counties.

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Suggested due dates for seasonal field reports are as follows:

March 5 - Winter Season

June 5 - Spring Season

September 5 - Summer Season

December 5 - Autumn Season

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by Jennifer Brumfield, 1998.

September, October, November 1999
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The Cleveland Bird Calendar

Editor:

Larry Rosche (LR)

Consulting Editor:

Ray Hannikman (RH)

Editorial Assistants

Dwight W. Chasar - Weather Summary

Technical Editor

Garnet Byrne (GB)

Contributors:

John Augustine (JA)

Emil Bacik (EB)

Nick Barber (NB)

Dan Best (DB)

Black River Audubon (BR)

Dave and Jenny Brumfield (DJB)

Dwight and Ann Chasar (DAC)

Leo Deininger (LD)

Bob Finkelstein (BF)

Andy Fondrk (AF)

Ted Gilliland (TG)

Frank Greenland (FG)

Robert Harlan (RHL)

Craig Holt (CH)

Thomas LePage (TLP)

Paula Lozano (PL)

Kevin Metcalf (KM)

Jared Mizanin (JM)

Ben Morrison (BM)

Perry Peskin (PP)

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Sandy Wagner (SW)

Vernon Weingart (VW)

Jeff Wert (JW)

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Clyde Witt (CW)

Scott Wright (SW)

Sean Zadar (SZ)

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The new millennium**



AUTUMN 1999



Autumn 1999 by Dwight Chasar

SEPTEMBER: Temperatures averaged 65.0°, 1.1° above normal. The high was 89° on the 12th, and the low was 40° on the 25th. Lake Eric was 73° on the 1st and eased down to 67° by the 30th. It was sunny 70% of the time possible. Rain occurred over 9 days and totalled 1.93 in., 1.51 in. below normal. The greatest 24 hr. rainfall was 1.30 in. on the 29th-30th.

OCTOBER: Temperatures averaged 52.5°, just .3° below normal. The highest was 76° on the 29th; and the lowest, 31° on the 21st. Sunshine occurred about 67% of the time possible. Rain occurred over 9 days and totalled 3.06 in., a departure of .52 in. above normal. The greatest 24 hr. fall was 1.53 in. on the 13th. Lake Erie water cooled to 55° by the 31st,

NOVEMBER: Temperatures averaged 45.9°, 3.3° above normal. The highest was 73° on the 9th and the lowest 25° on the 30th. Sunshine occurred 57% of the time possible. Occurring over 6 days, rain totalled 3.31 in., .14 in. above normal. The greatest 24 hr. fall was 2.55 in. on the 2-3rd. Snow totalled 1.6 in., most of it on the 3rd. Lake Erie temperature dropped to 48° by the end of the month. ❖



Loons provide interest to readers at any season. While it is well published that **Red-throated Loons** occur in good numbers in eastern Lake Erie, it is highly unlikely for numbers of this species to be seen in the Cleveland region. This Fall, relatively high numbers (8) of Red-throateds were reported off Lakeshore MP. This number was unprecedented and unexpected. These birds were observed at a great distance, but because of conversations with loon researcher, Dominic Sherony of Rochester, NY, they have been included. Sherony, after many years of data collection, has found out that large numbers of Red-throated Loons use central Lake Erie as a staging area before heading south. Perhaps, these birds were on their way to meet up with their congeners. No other reports of this species were received. **Common Loons** were in fair numbers at several lakefront sites, but absent at others. The highest inland total was 25 at LaDue on Oct. 25 (AF). **Pied-billed Grebes** put in a good



Philadelphia Vireo - North Chagrin Reservation - Nov. 17, 1999
by Haans Petruschke



Comment on the Season

by Larry Rosche

In the 1998-1999 Bird Calendar year, 270 species were reliably reported. New for the region (awaiting approval by the Ohio Bird Records Committee) was Common Ground Dove. The absence of suitable shorebird habitat meant no knots, stilts or godwits being reported. Elegant waders, such as Snowy and Cattle Egrets and Little Blue Herons, were also among the absentees. Did we miss Brant and Long-eared Owl? This was the lowest species total in my tenure as editor.

Apart from the yearly bad news, it is hard to imagine a season as exciting as Fall. I know, Spring is when everyone shakes off the dust and gets outdoors again, but the warblers are more plentiful and many are just as handsome in the Fall. Much of the data comes to me in different formats, so I hope I didn't omit anything important to a reporter. For the first time, study at the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site (TLS) provided new data on Fall passerine movements. It is poor science to draw conclusions from a one year project, but the numbers of southbound migrants impressed all the biologists working there. Locally, the only comparison with the Ravenna TLS is Lake Rockwell. I have been watching Fall migration at Lake Rockwell for a long time, and I have never found as many birds there. At Ravenna, it didn't seem to matter where I stopped, birds would appear in numbers and variety.

The hawk and passerine migration along Lake Erie was covered very well by local birders. Zadar and others provided numerous outstanding reports from the Gordon Park area. Headlands Beach State Park and environs continued to demonstrate what is meant by "migrant trap." Warblers were in very high numbers at Headlands and for a prolonged period. Migration at Firestone Metropark in Akron has long been one of the best reported inland birding sites in the Spring. This Fall produced many excellent sightings as well. Shorebirding hotspots have all but disappeared from the region. It seems nearly all of our more uncommon shorebird species will shift to the rare status level. Thanks to all the observers for finding the time to report their sightings.

Good birding in the new millennium!

showing on inland lakes. On Oct. 24, 55 were tallied at Springfield Lake and Mogadore Reservoir (LR). Punderson Lake hosted 11 on Nov. 8 (AF). Wellington Reservoir hosted 12 on Nov. 13 (RHL, SW). The high tally for **Horned Grebes** was a 95 off Huntington Beach on Nov. 21 (TLP). **Double-crested Cormorants** continue to migrate and forage in large numbers locally. The small lake at the Firestone Country Club in Akron hosted an unheard of 127 on Oct. 7 (JR). Four **Great Egrets** were at West Branch SP on Sep. 18 (CH). **Green Herons** departed by mid-Sep. Seven were at Mill Stream Run on Sep. 2 (SZ). Seven **Black-crowned Night-Herons** graced the west bank of the Cuyahoga River at Merwin St. on Sep. 30 (PL). Late **Turkey Vultures** were seen at the Cleveland Zoo on Nov. 25 (RHL, SW) and in the CVNRA on Nov. 28 (DAC).

Waterfowl continue to puzzle this editor. If there were as many ducks as federal wildlife officials lead us to believe, then where were they? This desk certainly didn't receive too many eye-popping waterfowl reports. The guns along the breakwalls at the mouth of the Grand River were remarkably silent most days. Local puddle ducks remain at or near all time lows. Divers are mixed. Ring-necked and Ruddy Ducks appear to be flourishing. In the case of the Ring-necked Ducks, it seems they have found different staging lakes than in previous years. Ruddy Ducks were numerous inland and in good totals along the shore of Lake Erie. Both Red-breasted and Hooded Mergansers were numerous at the end of the season. The Hoodeds were in preferred inland lakes and the Red-breasted were in large numbers along Lake Erie.

Seven **Snow Geese** drifted over HBSP on Oct. 14 (KM). Three were in Oberlin on Oct. 19 (BR). A flock of 42 passed over Fairport Harbor on Oct. 23 (EB). One was seen at Gordon Park on Oct. 24 (CR). The Hudson Bay migrant **Canada Geese** returned to North Chagrin by Sep. 14 (KM). As many as 55 **Mute Swans** could be found at Mogadore during October and November (LR). Two were at LaDue on Nov. 6 (RR). **Tundra Swans** put in a decent showing in Geauga Co. A total of 294 passed over the county on Nov. 3 (*fide* DB). LaDue held 14 on Oct. 22 (AF). November 24 brought swans closer to the Cleveland area. A flock of 32 passed over Eastlake (TK). Another 22 drifted over Gordon Park (CR). About 45 Tundra Swans were heard and seen over Cleveland Heights, heading east (DJH). The 60 **Wood Ducks** at Shaker Lakes on Oct. 18 marked the high for the season (RR). The high tally for **Gadwall** was 110 at Lake George on Nov. 21 (LR). **American Wigeons** remain at disappointing lows. Three **Blue-winged Teals** were late at Ira Road (CVNRA) on Nov. 1 (TMR). The high for **Northern Pintails** at HBSP was 4 on Oct. 17 (RH). Six were in Lorain on Nov. 6 (SZ, m.obs.). The 8 **Northern Shovelers** found in Portage Co. lakes on Oct. 11 was the high inland tally (LR). **Green-winged Teals** were average. The high count of **Canvasbacks** was 10 at Wellington on Nov. 11 (FG). A few visited Lake Medina in Nov. (CW). Wellington also provided the high count of **Redheads** (20) on Nov. 6 (FG). A female, was noted at Veteran's Park on Oct. 11 (NB, RH, LR). A Redhead at Shaker Lakes on Oct. 26-31 was one of the very few ever reported from this site (LD, RR). **Ring-**

A Comparison of Waterbird Daily High Counts Lakeshore Metropark----Headlands Beach SP Area

Species	Total	Date/Obs.	Total	Date/Obs.
Red-throated Loon	4	Nov. 14 (JP)	0	
Common Loon	88	Nov. 14 (JP)	16	Oct. 23 (RH)
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Nov. 3 (JP)	18	Oct. 31 (RH)
Horned Grebe	94	Nov. 12 (JP)	20	Nov. 21 (RH)
Snow Goose	0		7	Oct. 14 (KM)
Canada Goose	23	Sep. 30 (JP)	225	Sep. 19 (RH)
Mute Swan	1	Nov. 25 (JP)	3	Nov. 25 (RH)
Tundra Swan	192	Nov. 14 (JP)	0	
Wood Duck	1	Sep. 30 (JP)	14	Sep. 4 (RH)
Gadwall	7	Oct. 17 (JP)	7	Nov. 25 (RH)
American Wigeon	7	Oct. 17 (JP)	28	Oct. 30 (RH)
A. Black Duck	7	Nov. 11 (JP)	20	2 dates (RH)
Mallard	113	Oct. 24 (JP)	70	Nov. 21 (RH)
Blue-winged Teal	33	Sep. 30 (JP)	15	Sep. 28 (RH)
Northern Shoveler	8	Oct. 7 (JP)	0	
Northern Pintail	145	Sep. 30 (JP)	4	Oct. 17 (RH)
Green-winged Teal	72	Oct. 24 (JP)	7	Oct. 24 (RH)
Canvasback	107	Nov. 3 (JP)	1	2 dates (RH)
Redhead	6	3 dates (JP)	1	7 dates (RH)
Ring-necked Duck	0		10	Oct. 30 (RH)
Greater Scaup	12	Oct. 17 (JP)	0	
Lesser Scaup	206	Oct. 17 (JP)	8	Oct. 8 (RH)
Surf Scoter	29	Oct. 7 (JP)	4	Oct. 14 (KM)
White-winged Scoter	2	Nov. 14 (JP)	1	Oct. 17 (RH)
Black Scoter	5	Oct. 24 (JP)	5	Oct. 14 (KM)
Oldsquaw	1	Nov. 15 (JP)	0	
Bufflehead	26	Nov. 15 (JP)	6	Nov. 21 (RH)
Common Goldeneye	7	Oct. 24 (JP)	3	Nov. 26 (NB)
Hooded Merganser	211	Oct. 24 (JP)	9	Nov. 27 (RH)
Common Merganser	6	3 dates (JP)	0	
Red-brst. Merganser	23,670	Nov.25 (JP)	8000	Nov 24 (RH)
Ruddy Duck	114	Nov. 3 (JP)	40	Oct. 25 (RH)

This table presents a view from two areas in the same county, but yields somewhat different results. Counts for Lakeshore MP include only birds using Lake Erie. The counts for Headlands Beach SP Area also include Mentor Lagoons and Veteran's Park. Except for Shipman Pond, virtually no puddle ducks use Headlands Beach SP. The 145 Northern Pintails reported at Lakeshore MP constituted more pintails than have been seen at HBSP in several decades. Headlands Beach SP receives the bulk of its coverage on weekends, whereas the Lakeshore MP dates reflect several week days. However, some weekend dates appear often enough to draw a few parallels.

Ring-necked Ducks topped out at 1060 at the Shalersville LaFarge ponds on Oct. 27 (LR, VW). Best Lake held up to 200 on Oct. 24 (*fide* DB). The 105 Lesser Scaup at LaDue on Nov. 22 was the high inland count (AF). Four **Surf Scoters** passed by HBSP on Oct. 14 (KM). Two were there at the end of the period (LR,

m.obs). A **White-winged Scoter** was at HBSP on Oct. 17 (RH). One was off Gordon Park on Nov. 6 (SZ, m.obs). Five **Black Scoters** were at HBSP on Oct. 14 (KM). Two put in a one-day stand at LaDue on Oct. 24 (*fide* DB). Three females/immatures were at HBSP on Nov. 8 (NB). A **Common Goldeneye** was at Elm

Lake in Streetsboro on Nov. 21 (CH). They were in very poor numbers along Lake Erie. The **Hooded Merganser** flock at Lake Rockwell grew to 290 by Nov. 21 (LR). A **Common Merganser** was at Shaker Lakes on Oct. 26-Nov. 5 (LD, RR). Eight were at Lake Rockwell on Nov. 21 (LR). **Red-breasted Mergansers** gave an average November showing. **Ruddy Ducks** put on a tremendous showing of local abundance this past season. Mogadore hosted well over 1500 in Oct.-Nov. (LR). Wellington held 700 Nov. 11-22 (CH, FG).

At Headlands Beach SP, hardly a bird conversation goes by without hawks coming to the forefront. Metcalf, Hannikman, Petruschke, and I banter back and forth over reports of birds of prey that have never been verified in the region. Golden Eagle always comes to mind. (Recently, a photograph of an immature was taken in Kirtland.) Over the years we have developed a great deal of concern for the lack of proof of the existence of Northern Goshawk in the region. As of January 2000, no photographic evidence of this species has been provided in the region. I know of only one bird that has been photographed in the entire state. It was not in the region. This desk received 3 reports of Northern Goshawk for the Fall 1999 season. Each came without details. Because so many goshawks are reported each year, the species was removed from the state required documentation list. Equally astonishing is the removable of the casual Golden Eagle from the same list. The editors wonder about any report of Northern Goshawk. These are birds of the deep woods. Suitable local habitat is minimal. They hunt large prey,

not House Finches. This November, we even received a report of a full adult perched along the Grand River. Oh, for a camera. Most observations are of birds zipping by and quickly gone. Even more frustrating to editors is sightings of immatures from the same small park on a yearly or nearly yearly basis. The editors wish to encourage all of our fine reporters to be very careful when recording this species.

Only one of the 2 **Osprey** nests at Berlin Reservoir was successful (BM). An Osprey was at Lower Shaker Lake on Sep. 10 (LD). Birds were noted at LaDue on Sep. 18 (RR) and Oct. 23 (CH). One was at East Branch on Sep. 26 (fide DB). Another was over Aquilla Road on Oct. 1 (fide DB). One visited Gordon Park on Oct. 2 (CR). An Osprey drifted past Whiskey Island Marina on Oct. 12 (PL, FG). Two **Bald Eagles** were at Tinker's Creek SNP on Sep. 19 (GB). One was over Fairport Harbor on Oct. 9 (DJB, RH, LR). Five eagles were reported from Geauga County during the season (fide DB). An immature was at Edgewater SP on Nov. 13 (TLP). **Northern Harriers** moved through in decent numbers. A female was over HBSP on Oct. 9 (RH). One was in Lorain on Oct. 30 (TLP). Three were tallied in Geauga Co. from mid-Oct. through the period

(AF, fide DB). One was in Lorain Co. on Nov. 22 (CH). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** spelled trouble for a Hairy Woodpecker in Brecksville on Nov. 15 (BAT). A sharpy showing a leg band was seen in Valley City from Sep. 28 through the period (FG). A partial albino was at Gordon Park on Nov. 6 (SZ, m.obs.). **Red-shouldered Hawks** have become fairly common. All seven counties appear to have solid populations. The two **Broad-winged Hawks** reported from Mentor on the late date of Oct. 26 were puzzling (JA). A **Red-tailed Hawk** allowed an observer an unusually close approach at Merwin Street on the morning of Oct. 20. The reason, it was having breakfast. (PL). **Rough-legged Hawks** put in a strong showing. An adult female was seen over Munson Township on Oct. 26 (KM). Headlands BSP hosted one on Oct. 30 (RH). Two light morphs were seen at there on Nov. 11 (NB, LR). A light-morph bird put in a rare appearance at Firestone MP on Nov. 11 (EP, JR). Zadar recorded Rough-leggeds fairly consistently throughout Nov. His high tally was 6 on Nov. 13. Another light morph was seen in Middlefield Township on Nov. 23 (fide DB). One was over LaDue on Nov. 22 (AF). **American Kestrel** numbers seem to have rebounded somewhat from the lows of the mid-nineties.

As many as 3 **Soras** could be found at Lorain Harbor in Sep. (TLP, m.ob.). One was at HBSP on Sep. 14 & Oct. 14 (RH). Two flushed out of tall grass at Gordon Park on Sep. 24 (CR). **American Coots** were found in typical large numbers. The 840 at Wellington Reservoir was indicative (RHL, SW).



Rough-legged Hawk-Gordon Park-Nov. 14
by Haans Petruschke

Shorebirds were difficult to find because of the lack of suitable lakefront habitat. Even though Lake Erie seemed as low as any year in my recollection, few birds were seen along the shoreline. The Grand River was so low that exposed gravel bars and rocks made for decent shorebirding in Fairport Harbor. This area was nothing compared to the Gordon Park and Lorain of past years. Inland, West Branch SP had lots of mud, but few birds. Until the return of ample shorebird habitat, birds like American Avocet, Willet, Whimbrel, Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, Red Knot, Western, White-rumped, and Stilt Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitcher, and any phalarope will be difficult to find.

A **Black-bellied Plover** was at Sims Park on Sep. 19 (PL, BF). Another visited HBSP on Sep. 28 (RH). An **American Golden-Plover** was at HBSP on Oct. 9 (RH). The four **Semipalmated Plovers** at West Branch SP on Sep. 1 provided the high tally for the region (CH). Six **Greater Yellowlegs** and 8 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at West Branch SP on Sep. 1 (CH). Two **Solitary Sandpipers** dawdled at LaDue on Sep. 27 (RR). The high count of **Ruddy Turnstones** was 5 at HBSP on Sep. 16 (RH). No **Red Knots** were seen for the year. The high number for **Sanderlings** was 30 at HBSP on Sep. 16 (RH). One was late at Fairport Harbor on Oct. 24 (BW, SZ). Twelve **Least Sandpipers** were at West Branch SP on Sep. 1 (CH). Hannikman found 1-2 **Baird's Sandpipers** amid the exposed rocks on Grand River in Fairport Harbor most of Sep. Five **Pectoral Sandpipers** flew by the shelter house in Fairport Harbor during the squally weather of Halloween (RH). Four were at LaDue on Oct. 23 (CH).



Bonaparte's Gull-Eastlake-Nov. 1999
by Sean Zadar

Three **Dunlins** were at LaDue on Oct. 21 (RR). A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was at West Branch SP on Sep. 1 (CH). One was seen along the Grand River on Sep. 25 & Oct. 1 (RH). Two **Common Snipes** were seen at Jaite Marsh in the CVNRA on Sep. 30 (SZ). Another twosome was in Mantua on Oct. 23 (CH). An **American Woodcock** was flushed in Valley City on Sep. 18 (FG). Another was at Herrick Fen on Oct. 1 (GB). One was seen at HBSP on Oct. 23 (KM)

Fall is when the gull enthusiasts hope to see the rare small gulls. This season the results of hours of gull watching were very disappointing--no Sabine's Gulls and only one reporter found Little and Franklin's Gulls. Lorain has long been noted

for its fine gull watching. This season the best gull found there was the expected Lesser Black-backed Gull. No Glaucous or Iceland Gull had arrived by the end of November.

A probable **Pomarine Jaeger** was seen at Eastlake on Nov. 8 (NB). The high count of **Bonaparte's Gulls** at HBSP was 1000 on Nov. 28 (RH). It takes a little discipline to count **Ring-billed Gulls**. On Nov. 27, 16,000 were counted in Lorain (EP). As many as 3 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were at Eastlake in Nov. (NB, KM, m.obs.). Three more were in Lorain on Nov. 29 (SZ, m.obs.). By the end of Nov., two different **Thayer's Gulls** were being reported at Eastlake (NB, m.obs.). The **Caspian Tern** at LaDue on Sep. 27 was the only inland report for the species (RR). **Common Terns** lingered at Lorain on Nov. 7 (TLP), and at Gordon Park Nov. 27 (DJH). The high count for the season was 300 at HBSP on Oct. 8 (RH). Barber found 35 at Edgewater SP on Oct. 20. In what must be described as a very disappointing show, only one **Forster's Tern** was seen at HBSP. None were reported from Lorain during the period. A late bird was at Gordon Park on Nov. 24 (BW, SZ).

On November 15, Lorain had lots of gulls and mergansers, but we saw no Bonaparte's Gulls. One adult Lesser Black-backed Gull was on the docks at the marina. The former "hot waters" had gulls and duck hunters; and between the docks just east of there, we were happy to identify a first winter Lesser Black-backed Gull, a plumage we have seldom verified. The bird was with mostly Herring Gulls, some also first winter, flying, fishing and landing, both on the water and on the dock. It was slightly smaller than the Herring Gulls, but surprisingly aggressive toward them. Its pale rump with very black tail band and dark primaries were first noted, then the double secondary bar in the upper wing, very contrasting mantle (similar to Great Black-backed Gull, but a little darker) and pale edging on the tail were also seen. The head was small and paler than the mantle, as were the underparts, and the bill was black and not massive. In all, a pleasing sighting in an otherwise mostly bland day's birding.

Jean Hoffman

The only **Black-billed Cuckoo** report was from Lakeshore MP on Sep. 18 (JP). A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was at Baldwin Lake on Sep. 8 (RHL, SW). Two were identified at Euclid Beach SP on Sep. 11 (RHL, SW). One was at HBSP on Sep. 12 (RH). Another was in Lorain on Oct. 22 (SZ). A red morph **Eastern Screech-Owl** was at HBSP on Oct. 9 (KM, m.obs.). One was calling in Brecksville during September and early October (BAT). A gray morph was in Valley City through the season (FG).

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were fairly abundant through the first third of Sep. Ten were counted in Sagamore hills on Sep. 2 (DAC). Longtime downtown Cleveland observer Drew Rolik, mentioned that **Common Nighthawks** were extremely poor this year. This sentiment is echoed throughout the region. Reports were only a few birds compared to the 100's in the early nineties. A group of 25 was feeding on flying ants in West Geauga Commons on Sep. 8 (fide DB). Another 40 was over Rocky River Reservation on Sep. 12 (PL). The last nighthawk was at HBSP on Sep. 28 (RH). A remarkable gathering of 1000+



Leucistic Eastern Bluebirds- Ravenna TLS- Oct 5, 1999
by Larry Rosche

Chimney Swifts was noted at Stinchcomb-Groth Monument in Rocky River Reservation on Sep. 9 (PL). A late flock of 150 was seen over HBSP on Oct. 8 (RH). A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was tardy at the Lorain Impoundment on Sep. 25 (PL, BF, SZ, TG).

Red-headed Woodpeckers were found in expected numbers. One was at HBSP, where they have become fairly rare, on Sep. 5 (RH). **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** moved through quietly. The high count was 6 at the Ravenna TLS on Oct. 5 (LR). On Nov. 5, 18 **Downy Woodpeckers** were counted at Ira Road (TMR). This reflected their typical abundance throughout the seven county region. **Northern Flickers** remained abundant at the Ravenna TLS through November. Along the lake, they were somewhat disappointing.

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at HBSP on Sep. 4 (RH). Two were at the Ravenna TLS on Sep. 7 & 8 (LR). Another was in the CVNRA on Sep. 8 (DAC). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** put in a strong September showing at HBSP (RH). A brightly colored, probably a first year, was in

Cleveland Hts. on Sep. 6 (DJH). One graced a residence in Lakewood on Sep. 23 (PL). An **Acadian Flycatcher** was tardy at Mill Stream Run on Sep. 22 (SZ).

Least Flycatchers were in average numbers. A **Great Crested Flycatcher** was

late in Concord Township on Oct. 7 (JP). An **Eastern Kingbird** at HBSP on Sep. 4 was our only report (RH).

White-eyed Vireos continued to sing all through Sep. at The Ravenna TLS (LR). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was in the CVNRA on Sep. 12 (DAC). **Blue-headed Vireos** were as expected. The first **Philadelphia Vireo** was at HBSP on Sep. 4 (RH). Three were there on Sep. 14 (RH). Another was seen there Sep. 21 (NB). One was at Shaker Lakes on Sep. 23 (DJH). Another was in Lakewood the same day (PL). A **Red-eyed Vireo** was late at HBSP on Oct. 25 (RH).

A **Bank Swallow** was late at HBSP on Sep. 5 (RH). A **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** was tardy at HBSP on Oct. 1 (RH). The 50-60 **Black-capped Chickadees** at Gordon Park on Oct. 30 was a very good tally (PL, SZ, BF, TG, BW). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were found in all counties and in fair numbers. The high count for **Brown Creepers** was 10 at HBSP on Oct. 9 (RH). Five were seen at Edgewater Park on Oct. 6 (NB). **Carolina Wrens** continue to be seen in solid numbers. One was at Wildwood SP on Oct. 3 (TK). **House Wrens** were common well into October. **Marsh Wrens** put in a decent showing. One was at Gordon Park on Sep. 24 (CR). A bird was in Lorain on Sep. 26 (SZ, m.obs.). A bird was noted at Sims Park on Oct. 1 (TK). One was at Mentor Marsh on Oct. 30 (KM). The latest wren was at Ira Road on Nov. 8 (TMR).

Veeries pulled out of the region by mid-Sep. The latest report was Sep. 19 at Sims Park (PL, BF). Three **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were seen at Firestone

MP on Sep. 28 (RHL, EP, JR, SW). They were well reported at HBSP from mid-Sep through early Oct. Four were found at the Ravenna TLS in mid-Sep (LR). One was in Rocky River on Sep. 23 (PL). Others were at Whiskey Island Marina on Sep. 27 and Edgewater SP on Sep. 30 (PL). A **Swainson's Thrush** was late at Big Creek MP on Oct. 26 (SZ). No late **Wood Thrushes** were reported.

Northern Mockingbirds have increased to a fairly uncommon status. One was in Cleveland Hts. on Oct. 10 (DJH). Another was found on Franklin near West 38th St. on Oct. 15 and Nov. 28 (DR). A bird was at Broadway and Turney on Nov. 12 (DR). Two **American Pipits** were early at HBSP on Sep. 11 (KM). Three were at LaDue on Oct. 21 (RR). Silver Creek Farm was refuge for 50-60 on Nov. 4 (file DB).

Warblers received mixed reviews. Headlands and Ravenna TLS were outstanding. Elsewhere, reports were less encouraging. Some species were in far better than expected numbers. These included: Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Northern Parula, Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Bay-breasted, and Wilson's Warbler.

A **Blue-winged Warbler** was a seasonal rarity at HBSP on Sep. 12 (RH). Late birds were found at the Erie St. Cemetery on Oct. 9 (SW) and Hell Hollow on Oct. 11 (JP). **Tennessee Warblers** were in excellent numbers. One was late on Oct. 19 in Munson Township (KM). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were found with great regularity on the east side of the region. One was at Whiskey Island on Sep 29 (CR). Others were noted

there on Oct. 12 & 13 (PL, FG, BF). One was at Nathan Hale Park on Oct. 1 (RHL, SW). One was a good find at Firestone MP on Oct. 6 (EP, JR). At HBSP, 14 were recorded for the season (NB, DJH, RH, KM, LR). One was in Cleveland Hts. on Oct. 8 (BW). Three were reported from Lakeshore MP in Oct. (JP). The last **Nashville Warbler** was at North Chagrin on Oct. 27 (KM). **Northern Parulas** put in a great showing at HBSP. Birds were there most days in Sep. A tardy individual was there Oct. 25. (RH). A bird was at Whiskey Island on Sep. 29 (CR). Two were there on Sep. 30 (PL, FG). One was at Euclid Beach SP on Oct. 2 (RHL, SW). Parulas were seen at Firestone MP on Sep. 27 & 29 (EP, JR). A **Yellow Warbler** at HBSP on Oct. 9 was fairly late (KM). The high count of **Chestnut-sided Warblers** was 15 at HBSP on Sep. 21 (NB). Fourteen **Magnolia Warblers** provided a good count at Firestone MP on Sep. 28 (RHL, EP, JR, SW). The high tally for HBSP was 20 on Sep. 12 (RH). **Cape May Warblers** were in very good numbers in the eastern sector. From Sep. 11 through Oct. 10, up to 15 could be found at HBSP (RH, KM. m.obs.). On Sep. 11, 7 were counted at Euclid Beach SP (RHL, SW). One was at Lake Medina on Sep. 14 (CW). Another was seen at Edgewater SP on Oct. 6 (NB). Cape Mays

were late at the Ravenna TLS on Oct. 27 (LR) and in Parma on Nov. 17 (CR). By mid-Oct. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** seemed to be everywhere in good numbers. Tallies reached to over 100 at selected lakefront sites. **Black-throated Green Warblers** were in high numbers. Counts reached double digits at several reporting locales. Ten were at Whiskey Island Marina on Sep. 19 (PL, BF). Another 10 was at Firestone MP on Sep. 28 (RHL, EP, JR, SW). Fifteen were tallied at the Ravenna TLS on Sep. 30 (LR). Twenty were counted at HBSP on Sep. 21 (NB). **Blackburnian Warblers** were seen in fair numbers. The high tally was 6 at Mentor Lagoons Park on Sep. 14 (RH, LR). The last **Yellow-throated Warbler** report was on Sep. 14 in the CVNRA (DAC). **Pine Warblers** were detected at Euclid Beach on Sep. 4 and Oct. 2 (RHL, SW). Another was in Parma on Sep. 6 (CR). One was seen at Holden Arboretum on Sep. 26 (RR). Two were reported from Lakeshore MP (JP). The 50 **Palm Warblers** at Whiskey Island on Sep. 29, were by far the best count (CR). Another 15 was in Mayfield Hts. on Oct. 3 (NB). Once again, **Blackpoll Warblers** were in high numbers at HBSP. On Sep. 12, 60 were seen there. Again, on Oct. 9, 50 more birds were there (RH). They were also numerous at the Ravenna TLS, and Firestone MP. The only **Cerulean Warbler** reported was from Riverview MP on Sep. 2 (JP). **Black-and-white Warblers** fared well. **Ovenbirds** were found in low numbers. A **Northern Waterthrush** was in the CVNRA on Oct. 3 (DAC). The latest **Louisiana Waterthrush** was at the Ravenna TLS on Sep. 15 (LR). The earliest **Mourning Warbler** was in Boston Hts. on Sep. 3 (LR). Birds were at HBSP on Sep

Cape May
Warblers were
in very good
numbers...

12, & 14 (NB, RH) and again on Oct. 2 (RHL, SW). A dead immature female was found in Lakewood on Sep. 17 (PL). One put in an appearance at Whiskey Island Marina on Sep. 28 (PL, FG). Four were reported from Lakeshore MP in the period (JP). A **Hooded Warbler** was at Firestone MP on Sep. 28 (RHL, EP, JR, SW). **Wilson's Warblers** were common along the lake. A **Canada Warbler** was at Station Road on Sep. 12. (GB).

Sparrow migration was exciting in some ways and disappointing in others. High tallies of Fox, Lincoln's, and White-crowned Sparrows were reported from most areas. On the other side of the coin, the passage of spizella sparrows was severely lacking in numbers. Few Chipping and Field Sparrows were noted at lakefront migrant traps. No report was received this Fall of the highly sought after Clay-colored Sparrow .

Eastern Towhees were still feeding begging youngsters in Parkman on Sep. 5 (JA). The first date for **American Tree Sparrows** at North Chagrin was Oct. 27 (KM). A **Chipping Sparrow** was tardy at Shaker Lakes on Nov. 5 (RR). Six **Field Sparrows** remained in Valley City



Merlin-Ravenna TLS-Oct. 12, 1999
by Larry Rosche

throughout the period (FG). A **Vesper Sparrow** was at Gordon Park on Oct 24 (CR). One visited HBSP on Oct. 25 (RH). One was reported from Penitentiary Glen MP on Oct. 4 (JP). The only **Grasshopper Sparrow** was reported from Girdled Road MP on Sep. 27 (JP). The number of **Fox Sparrows** using the Ravenna site was simply unbelievable. I wonder if there are other uninhabited 33 square mile tracts of land in Ohio where this phenomenon occurs? Good numbers were also reported from Valley City. One was in Geauga Co. on Nov. 2 (AF). Four were at HBSP on Oct. 11 (NB). Another four birds were found at Ira Road on Nov. 22 (TMR). An estimated 100 **Song Sparrows** were at the Gordon Park Impoundment on Sep. 24 (CR). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were in good supply. Ten were counted at HBSP on Sep. 21 (NB). **White-throated Sparrows** peaked early at HBSP on Sep. 28 when 120 were conservatively estimated (RH). On Oct. 5, 250 were tallied at Gordon Park (PL, FG). **White-crowned Sparrows** were in higher than average numbers in Valley City and most of Portage Co. An estimated (200+) were at Gordon Park on Oct. 12 (SZ). **Dark-eyed Juncos** arrived in good numbers by the first of Oct.

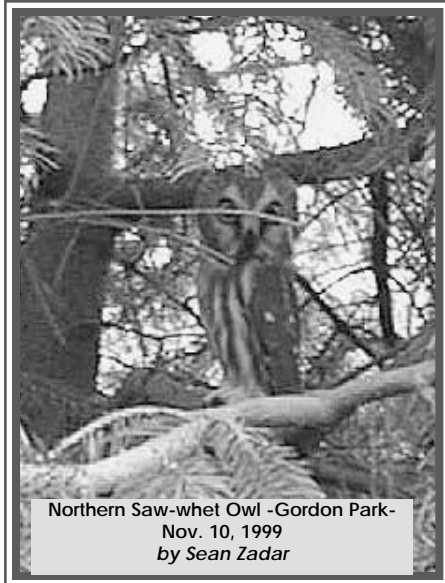
Lapland Longspurs provided excitement at HBSP and at Gordon Park. Three cruised HBSP on Oct. 8 (RH). Four were there on Oct. 30; and another 3, on Nov. 21 (RH). A female was seen at Gordon on Oct. 16 (TG, BW, SZ). The first **Snow Bunting** was detected on Oct. 14 at HBSP (KM). Fifty were seen at Gordon Park on Nov. 10 (RHL, SW). A flock of 40 was at HBSP on Nov. 8 (NB). Three **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were at the Cleveland Botanical Gardens on Sep. 20

(RHL, SW). An immature was reported from Lakeshore MP on Oct. 28-Nov. 9 (JP). Usually uncommon along the shore of Lake Erie, 3 **Indigo Buntings** were at Gordon Park on Sep. 22 (RHL, SW). One was in Mayfield Hts. on Oct. 10 (NB). Ten **Bobolinks** were seen at Lorain on Sep. 26 (SZ, mobs.). Two **Eastern Meadowlarks** lingered in Wellington on Nov. 11 (FG). **Rusty Blackbirds** were numerous in Portage Co. and in the CVNRA. An estimated 600 were at Firestone MP on Nov. 25 (EP, JR).

Purple Finches were widespread in small numbers. **Common Redpolls** put in an early appearance. Several birds were at Gordon Park in November (m.obs.). One was at Ira Road on Nov. 20 (RHL, SW). Lakewood City Park played host to 10 on Nov. 23 (TLP). **Pine Siskins** were scattered about in smaller numbers than redpolls. Three were at Gordon Park on Oct. 16 (TG, BW, SZ). **Evening Grosbeaks** were somewhat early at Findley SP on Sep. 26 (RHL, SW). Eight more were reported from Lakeshore MP on the same day (JP). One flew over the Jaite areas in the CVNRA on Nov. 9 ; another was at the Ravenna TLS on Nov. 10 (LR). One was at a feeder in Valley City on Nov. 26 (FG). ✨



RED-NECKED GREBE - One was seen in Lake Erie between E. 55th and E. 72nd Streets on Oct. 24 (Rieker). Two were reported from Lakeshore MP on Nov. 14 (Pogacnik).



Northern Saw-whet Owl -Gordon Park-
Nov. 10, 1999
by Sean Zadar

Plegadis IBIS- A dark ibis was spotted flying west over the Lorain Impoundment on Sep. 26. The bird was seen briefly and observers were careful not to try to label it as Glossy or White-face. This desk appreciates the restraint shown by all involved with this exciting observation. (Gilliland, Winger, Zadar, Lozano, Finkelstein).

NORTHERN GOSHAWK - An immature was reported from Gordon Park on Oct. 29 (Zadar, m.obs.). An adult was perched along the Grand River in Fairport Harbor on Nov. 20 (Bacik).

GOLDEN EAGLE - One was seen soaring west to east over Parma on Oct. 24 (Rieker). An immature allowed a leisurely study over the Ravenna TLS on Oct. 27 (Rosche).

MERLIN - This dynamic falcon is becoming more common. I keep it in the Noteworthy Reports sections because they still bring a rush of excitement to even the most calloused of observers. The Ravenna TLS hosted immatures on Sep. 8 and Oct. 12 (Rosche). A bird was seen at Firestone MP

on Sep. 28 (Harlan, Pierce, Reyda, Wagner). One was seen at Gordon Park on Oct. 2-13 (Rieker, m.obs.). One was at Headlands Beach SP on Oct. 1 (Hannikman). Another flew in from the lake there Oct. 11 (Barber). A Merlin was spied at Horseshoe Lake in Shaker Heights on Oct. 21 (Deinger). One was at Wildwood SP on Nov. 13 (LePage). Yet, another was at Edgewater SP on Oct. 28 (Barber).

PEREGRINE FALCON - A bird flashed by the "Hot Waters" in Lorain on Sep. 25 (Zadar, m.obs.). One provided a thrill at Ira Road in the CVNRA on Sep. 27 (Romito). Bob Faber reported this species at East Branch Reservoir on Oct. 9 (fide Best). A falcon was near the point at Headlands Beach SP on Oct. 8 (Hannikman). Another bird was sighted there by Isaac Kerns on Oct. 11 (Barber). One was seen in Fairport Harbor on Oct. 23 (Bacik). A local bird was seen at Gordon Park on Oct. 24 (Winger, Zadar). An immature was again seen in Lorain on Nov. 18 (Pierce, m.obs.).

SANDHILL CRANE - Duane Ferris reported 3 Sandhill Cranes at LaDue Reservoir that had been seen by City of Akron Watershed rangers on Aug. 27. One has to wonder where these birds origi-

nate and why they appear at this location so regularly. The cranes remained in the LaDue vicinity through Nov. 27 (Rickard, m.obs.).

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER - A single bird was seen at Tri-C West in Parma on Sep. 11 (Barber). One was also seen with a Baird's Sandpiper on the Grand River in Fairport Harbor on Sep. 14 (Hannikman).

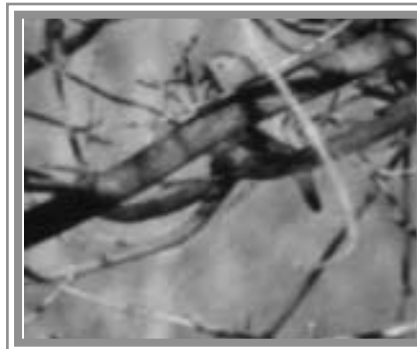
POMARINE JAEGER - A juvenile was documented thoroughly from Gordon Park on Nov. 13 (Winger, Gilliland, Zadar). Juveniles were identified at Headlands Beach SP on Nov. 21 & 25 (Hannikman).

LITTLE GULL - The only reports were of singles from Lakeshore MP on Oct. 22, Nov. 2 & 13 (Pogacnik).

FRANKLIN'S GULL - Single observer reports were from Eastlake on Nov. 20, 22 (Pogacnik), and Lakeshore MP on Nov. 3 & 13 (Pogacnik).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL Rarely seen away from Lake Erie, an adult was spied at Springfield Lake on Oct. 26 (Holt).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - The only report was from Lakeshore MP Nov. 2 (Pogacnik).



Common Ground Dove-CVNRA Nov 6, 1999
by Jared Mizanin

COMMON GROUND DOVE - A dove, apparently this species, was seen and photographed by Jared Mizanin at the Jaite area in the CVNRA on Nov. 5 & 6.

Discussions of the photographs and documentation with national and local experts have led me to believe Mr. Mizanin has a very strong case for acceptance of this first state record. While the photographs alone are not quite sufficient, written documentation supplies enough information for the sighting to be included here.

BARN OWL - Accidentally omitted from the Summer Season report, a bird was seen by Lou Gardella and Rosche at the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site on July 23.

SNOWY OWL - The only report was of an immature bird sitting on the ore piles at Lorain on Nov. 25 (Pogacnik).

SHORT-EARED OWL - This species was found in outstanding numbers this season. From Oct.

12 through Oct. 30, as many as seven were tallied at Gordon Park (Zadar, m.obs.). Birds were observed at Headlands Beach SP on Oct. 16 & 30 (Hannikman). One was spied as it flew by the E. 55th Marina on Oct. 8 (Barber).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL - A bird was seen sitting on a deck in Claridon Township on Nov. 13 (vide Best). On Nov. 10, Zadar found one alive and the remnants of 2 saw-whets at Gordon Park. The fate of the last one was in question soon after. One was reported from Lakeshore MP on Oct. 28 (Pogacnik).

NORTHERN SHRIKE - In all my years of study at Lake Rockwell, I have never seen a Northern Shrike. There must have been 6-8 visit the Ravenna TLS during November. The first of many reports was two juveniles at the Ravenna TLS on Oct. 27. (Rosche). One flew over the Natural Area at Headlands Beach SP on Oct. 30 (Metcalf,

Hannikman). A bird was found at Gordon Park on Nov. 10 and remained through the period (Finkelstein, Harlan, Lozano, Wagner, Winger, Zadar). One was at Headlands Beach SP on Oct. 30 (Hannikman, Metcalf).

PHILADELPHIA VIREO - A brightly colored individual was found at North Chagrin on Nov. 17-24. This broke a 25 year-old record for lateness (Metcalf, m.obs.). See Field Notes.

SEDGE WREN - Two of these elusive wrens were spied on Sep. 25 at Headlands Beach SP (Bacik). Another was found there by Harlan and Wagner at on Oct. 2. One was at Gordon Park the same day (Rieker).

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER - A male was at the Ravenna TLS on Sep. 8 (Rosche). A female was at Euclid Beach SP on Sep. 11 (Harlan, Wagner). A male was at Rocky River MP on Sep. 17 (Harlan, Wagner).

CONNECTICUT WARBLER - One was seen well at Headlands Beach SP on Sep. 12 (Hannikman, Rosche, Weingart). Another was spotted there on Sep. 21 (Barber). On Sep. 19, a bird appeared suddenly on a branch of a small tree at Villa Angela SP. It casually walked along the branch and disappeared (Lozano, Finkelstein). One was skulking in the brush at Whiskey Island on Sep 29 (Rieker).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT - This species remains one the most difficult warblers to detect in Fall migration. This season two were detected; one was at Findley SP on Sep. 18 (Rieker), and another at Edgewater SP on Oct. 5 (Barber).



Northern Saw-whet Owl remains-Gordon Park-Nov. 10, 1999
by Sean Zadar



NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW - A very cooperative bird provided a detailed study for Hannikman and Rosche at Headlands Beach SP on Sep. 14. One was seen at Edgewater SP on Sep. 30 (Barber).

HENSLOW'S SPARROW - Sharp eyes found one at Gordon Park on Oct. 12 (Zadar, m.obs.).

RED CROSSBILL - On Sep. 25, 9 were seen by many observers in Lorain (Zadar, Lozano, Winger). Three were at Gordon Park on Oct. 2 (Rieker). Two were seen by many at Gordon Park on Oct. 29. ✨



A Capsule Summary of Migration at Headlands Beach State Park and Fairport Harbor

by Ray Hannikman

It was another excellent Fall at HBSP. Warblers were in excellent numbers. Standouts were Blackpoll, Magnolia, and Cape

May Warblers. Mid-September saw the dunes at Headlands Beach State Park crowded with migrant warblers. They were in the bushes, the grass, and along the breakwall. Surprising was the strength of the migration in the month of October. October produced 140 species at Headlands. This

was 2 more than September. On October 9, Larry, Dave and Jenny Brumfield and I located a grand total of 88 species! This was a terrific indicator of the potential of early October at Headland Beach SP.

I was pleased with the shorebirds (especially the Buff-breasted Sandpiper) along the Grand River in Fairport Harbor. This area has become a regular stop during birding trips to HBSP.

A Capsule Summary of Migration at Firestone Metropark

by Ed Pierce

Warblers are usually more evenly dispersed in the Fall at Firestone Metropark, and the number of species seen on a given day is less than in Spring. This Fall, a peak of 11 warblers was seen on Sep. 27. Jim Reyda and I found 7-11 species from Sep. 10 through Oct. 6. However, the number of each species was higher than the sparse Spring warblers we experienced this year; for example, 6 Tennessee Warblers were found on Oct. 1 and again on Oct. 6. A total of 14

Magnolia Warblers was outstanding on Sep. 28, as were the 9 Black-throated Greens and 14 Blackpolls the same day.

Blackpoll Warbler was, by far, the most prevalent warbler. They were seen on all 14 trips to the park from Sep. 9 through Oct. 14. Odd Fall warblers for the park were Northern Parula on Sep. 27, Hooded Warbler on Sep. 28, Orange-crowned Warbler on Oct. 6, and Palm Warbler Sep. 29.

Other unusual species this Fall were the continued presence of Double-crested Cormorants on Firestone Reservoir from August 11 through November 17. A maximum of 127 was counted on Oct. 7. A male Merlin was observed by Rob Harlan and me as it flew east, parallel to Warner Road, past the spillway on Sep. 28. This was the first park record known to me in 22 years! A light-morph Rough-legged Hawk flew over the Lonesome Pond area on Nov. 11. I believe this was only the second record for the park.

Fall birding can be tedious, but it does have its rewards.

Documentation of a Late Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*)

by Kevin Metcalf

Age: 1st Fall (?)

Date: November 18 - 24

Location: North Chagrin Reservation of Cleveland Metroparks, Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

Observers: Kevin Metcalf, Haans Petruschke, Victor Fazio, Larry Rosche, m.obs. (photographed and videotaped)

Weather: Generally mild, from cloudy to sunny. 30's - 50's F.

On November 18, 1999 I noticed a small, yellowish-looking bird in a willow about 60 ft. outside of the North Chagrin Nature Center. I knew it was going to be interesting, initially looking warbler-like, so I grabbed my binoculars and went outside.

The bird was roughly the size of a goldfinch (direct comparison), very yellow underneath, with drab grayish-olive tones to the upperparts. Without seeing the bill, and from a distance at first, I thought maybe it was a warbler--maybe Tennessee, until it turned; and I clearly saw it had a thicker vireo bill. With closer views, the bright yellow throat and upper breast, and eye-line that continued through the lores, identified this as a Philadelphia vireo, as well as the shape, which was short-tailed and plump-looking for a vireo.

Over the next few days the bird was seen by many experienced observers. The vireo frequented a dogwood (*Cornus* sp.) with ivory-colored berries which it daily, and viewers were allowed to walk within 5 ft. of the bird. (I have video taken on Nov. 23 that is so close the vireo's head fills most of the image).

Detailed Description

Upperparts: The upperparts were grayish-olive-green, appearing more green or gray, depending on the angle to the observer and the lighting. The crown at times looked grayer than the back color. There was a whitish to "dirty"-white superciliary line, whitest directly over the eye. The eye appeared blackish, (no hint of a chestnut tone, so possibly a late fall bird?) with a medium to dark-gray eye line running through the lores. The line was actually less distinct behind the eye, quickly

blurring into the grayish tones of the rear of the face and nape. Under the eye line the face had an indistinct pale line, with gray tones under that. The wings looked basically the same color as the back, with greenish edging on the feathers. The edging on the greater coverts gave the appearance of a faint wing-bar. The greater primary coverts were dark gray.

Underparts: The chin was a pale, dull yellow, getting brighter toward the throat and quite a bright yellow on the lower throat and upper breast. The belly and sides were pale yellow, and the undertail coverts were yellow, slightly brighter than the belly. The legs, feet and claws were a medium cool gray. The bill was gray, fairly straight and stout, with a slight hook at the end, definitely thicker and less pointed than a warbler. (Vic Fazio and I both noticed that the bill seemed longish for a Philadelphia vireo, but in fact the bill length can overlap that of the Warbling Vireo).

Besides the dogwood, the vireo visited a clump of holly bushes near the Nature Education Building, several willows, and a row of low bushes along the Sunset Pond. It also fed on the ground. Besides berries, it seemed to glean invertebrates from twigs and leaves. It had strong site fidelity, seeming to stay within about 100 yards of the dogwood tree. I saw the bird at least a dozen times, spending a total of a couple of hours with it. The earliest I saw the bird was about 8:45 a.m., and the latest, about 4:50 p.m. The bird was very active, well preened and healthy-looking.

Additional Information: To my knowledge no one looked for the bird on Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving). It

was sought after on the 26th - 28th, but was apparently gone by then. The bird was probably present on Nov. 17 (the day before I discovered it), as another Cleveland Metroparks naturalist said that she saw the same bird then, in the same dogwood tree.

Notes on a Common Crane in Indiana

by Jenny Brumfield

This past autumn, one of the rarest sightings for Ohio birders was in Indiana! The adult male Common Crane was found at Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area (JP), Indiana on October 30. It remained in the vicinity through 13 November. This was probably the Great Lakes Region's best bird of the season. A few of us traveled the six-plus hours to see the Eurasian vagrant, while most just gawked at the mentioning of the sighting on the Ohio Birds Listserv and fantasized over a luscious variety of pictures of the bird on the Indiana Audubon web pages. The hype has since faded, and now comes the time to determine whether the crane is of wild origin or not. If it is a wild bird, then this sighting would prove to be one of the easternmost and probably southernmost records for the United States. In the past few years Common Cranes have been reported from Nebraska (one of the largest staging areas for migrating Sandhill Cranes), Quebec, Montana, and Alaska. In fact, just this year Common Cranes were also reported from Quebec and Montana! While the Indiana records committee is busily pondering over the origin of their Common Crane, Ohio birders can come to the conclusion

that such a bird is not an impossibility in our state. To that end, it is my intention to bring to your attention the identification of this Eurasian species. I will discuss my own personal observations of the Indiana bird, while providing outside information from other sources. In this article the adult Common Crane (*Grus grus*) will be described and simultaneously compared to the adult "Greater" Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*), a species with which most of us are familiar and which is regular in our region.

Size and shape

The Common Crane is a fairly large crane, but not obviously larger than the subspecies of Sandhill Crane ("eastern Greater Sandhill") found in our area during spring and autumn migrations. Both species are shaped similarly: tall and stately, long-legged and long-necked. The Indiana bird appeared to be slightly more pot-bellied than the surrounding Sandhill Cranes (about 30 or so, of the "Greater" race), but I have not found this mark to be mentioned in any other sources.

Plumage

The adult Common Crane is pale slate gray overall, possibly ever so slightly darker than the pale mouse gray coloration of the Sandhill. The Common's most distinctive feature is its black forehead, lores, nape, throat, and neck. Adding to the striking black-necked appearance is a distinct and elongated white cheek, which starts behind the eye and extends downward to the lower hindneck. The white cheek patch of the Sandhill blends to the throat and chin and is not nearly as well defined. However, note at long distances it can be very hard to discern the amount of white on



the face of Sandhill Cranes. In bright lighting the white appears to be more distinguished. The Common Crane's ornamental "bustle" or "tail plumes" (which are, in actuality, elongated inner secondaries and tertials, and not true tail feathers) are blackish and distinctly darker than the same feathers of a Sandhill Crane. The greater and median coverts on the Common Crane are largely tipped in black. The lower back feathers may be brownish.

Bare Parts

The Common Crane's bill is fairly long (approaching or equal to the length of the head), fairly heavy, pointed, and an overall pale grayish-yellow coloration. The bill of the Sandhill is dark gray to blackish, fading to an olive gray on the mid-mandible area. The Common's bare, dark red crown

(pappilous skin) is smaller and more centrally located on top of the head than on that on a Sandhill, whose forehead, lores, and crown are dull to bright red. The legs of a Common Crane are black while Sandhill Cranes have legs that appear dull greenish black to very dark olive. The eyes of both species are deep scarlet red, though the eyes of a Sandhill can range from scarlet to orange.

Flight Identification

In flight, cranes are huge and majestic, with long wings of uniform width, long projecting legs, and narrow extended necks. Their wing stroke pattern, with a snapping upstroke and slower downstroke, differentiates cranes from other long-legged, long-necked birds (Tacha, *et al* 1992). Flight identification of the Common Crane is simplified by their

entirely black primaries and secondaries that appear as a broad black trailing edge on gray wings. Sandhill Cranes have entirely gray wings. The black-necked appearance of the Common is not as distinct at long distances on flying birds, so the dark linings of the wings is the best mark. Cranes fly in families in groups and larger flocks, which fly in diagonal lines or in V's. It is interesting to note that when families of cranes take flight the male is almost always first to take to the air, followed by the young, and then the female.

Vocalizations

Jonsson (1992) describes the migrating call of Common Crane as very far-carrying and consisting of nasal and grating trumpet blasts. This is not unlike the description of the Sandhill cranes' call: distinctive, penetrating bugle-like calls, or trumpeting, rattling, and croaking (Tacha, et al 1992). Interestingly, adult Sandhill Cranes' repertoire may exceed a dozen vocalizations. The only mentioning I can find of the Indiana bird possibly vocalizing is this brief post that appeared on the Indiana Audubon's website, by Jim Bergens, a naturalist for J.P.: "I was checking groups of cranes on the ground and in the air when I heard an unfamiliar crane call and I looked up and to the north and there they were (the Common Crane and its "family" of three Sandhill cranes)." No other reports could be found and the author did not witness any vocalizations.

Distribution and Origin

This crane is relatively common in parts of Eurasia, but it is strictly an accidental visitor to North America. Most of our records have been of birds in enormous migrating flocks of Sandhill Cranes at staging areas on the

A complication arises ...

Great Plains. It is most likely that these individuals joined flocks of Sandhill cranes in Siberia, and then traveled with them across the Bering Strait and south to wintering areas on this continent (Kaufman 1996). A complication arises in determining the actual origin of birds sighted in the lower forty-eight. I will present only a very brief summary of the argument over origin, especially pertaining to the Indiana bird. The subspecies of Sandhill Crane that makes the great migration from Siberia down to the Great Plains is the "Lesser" Sandhill Crane, which is essentially just a smaller version of the "Greater" Sandhill, which I have described above. Most reports of Common Cranes that have appeared on the Great Plains areas have accordingly been with "Lesser" Sandhill Cranes. It can be more easily assumed that these birds are indeed wild in origin, because they have traveled from Siberia (their native range) to our continent with the "Lesser" Sandhill Cranes. The Indiana bird's origin is surrounded in question because it associated with "Greater" Sandhill Cranes, the subspecies regularly found here in the east. "Greater" Sandhill Cranes breed in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and southern Ontario, and migrate through Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia to winter in Georgia and Florida. Their chief stop-over is, you guessed it: Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area. No where do we mention "Siberia" in rela-

tion to "Greater Sandhill" Cranes, and so it seems more of a stretch for a Common Crane, of wild origin, to appear in migrating flocks of Sandhill cranes so far east. Other complications are involved, but this is the gist of the argument. Birders and ornithologists continue to study the migration patterns of Sandhill Cranes and their subspecies, and so it seems that sooner or later, we may be able to come to a better conclusion as to the origin of these wayward Common Cranes. Till then, we can still be on the lookout for these striking Eurasian vagrants.

The chief time periods during which Ohio birders should be on the lookout fall directly with Sandhill Crane migration: March and April, and October and November. Sandhill Cranes are generally seen flying over singly, in pairs, family groups, or in large flocks (100 or more birds). During their migration through Ohio they can be found on open agricultural fields, airport fields, and marshes.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to my dad for taking us all the way out to Indiana to see their Common Crane. Thanks to Jon Dunn for reviewing this article, providing information on the life history of the Sandhill Crane, and for an explanation of the Common Crane origin argument. Thanks to Larry Rosche for reviewing this article.

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And then there was Thompson Ledges ... Wow!

Dan Best scouted the main park on the south side of Ledge Road, as well as the newer Thompson Twp. Park acquisition on the north side, on June 18 in preparation for a Geauga Park District walk there on June 19. A return visit on June 20 was inspired by the previous two days plant and bird finds. Veeries and juncos, as well as a singing winter wren were in both sections. A Blue-headed Vireo was sighted in the north section from the road. Wood Thrushes were seen in the lush mesophytic forest below the Ledges in the main (south) section as well as Broad-winged Hawk and Scarlet Tanagers. Main (south) section also featured at least one singing Black-throated Green Warbler in the hemlocks. A Hermit Thrush was watched from a close distance just below the big Ledges in the main section of the park on June 20. She was agitated and was calling frequently, probably because there was a nest or recently fledged young nearby. Quite the Father's Day present for DB!

Geauga Park District Summer 1999 Bird Sightings by Dan Best

This report was received too late to be included in the summer Cleveland Bird Calendar. Ongoing studies by Dan Best and Andy Fondrk always provide updates on the rich avifauna of Geauga Co. The report has been edited to include highlights only. LR

An immature Common Loon was on East Branch Reservoir in Headwaters Park (EBR/HP) on July 30 (per Jim Heflich).

Great Egret sightings: 2 perched in mature trees on the east side of (EBP/HP) on June 10 (DB, DM, etc.); 1 in lake by St. Helen's school on the north side of St. Rt. 87 in Newbury on June 25 (DM).

An immature Bald Eagle and an Osprey were at EBR/HP on Aug. 31 (per Bob Faber).

American Kestrels nested in a storage building at Big Creek Park. Four young were banded by GPD Naturalist Tami Gingrich. One nestling was rescued and returned to nest after falling down into inconvenient spot along the

inner wall of the building. A fledgling was later found dead on June 21 in the vicinity of the building. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was heard in Big Creek Park on July 6 (DB); several were both seen or heard throughout June, early July along the Upper Cuyahoga River near Eldon Russell Park (UCR/ERP); Black-billed Cuckoos were also present, but not noted as often (AF, DB). A Black-billed was heard near Meyer Center in Big Creek Park on June 27.

Purple Martins hanging on in what seems to be ever-shrinking numbers at Amish martin houses in Middlefield Twp (DB). Duane Ferris found Cliff Swallow nests on an Amish barn in Huntsburg Twp. on June 15. A pair of Least Flycatchers nested in small beech tree inside wooded driveway cul-de-sac of Meyer Center in Big Creek Park. (DB, TG, JBB, etc.). As in past couple of years, two territories for Least Flycatcher were noted along the UCR/ERP (AF, DB). Brown Creepers - A few were found along UCR/ERP in swamp forests. Suspected nesters were seen under peeling bark of dead/dying elm trees (DB, AF). A confirmed nest was found under dead elm bark along Interurban Trail at the Rookery in Munson

Twp. (DB)

Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were noted regular in small numbers along UCR/ERP, especially in willows (AF, DB).

A Black-throated Green Warbler was noted in vicinity of Deep Woods picnic area in Big Creek Park on June 27 (DB). A Cerulean Warbler was a regular morning greeter in mature red oak outside of Meyer Center in Big Creek Park from early May through June (DB, etc.). Again this year, in Best's opinion, Yellow Warblers numbers were relatively low. Prothonotary Warblers did fairly well in plastic nest jars along the Upper Cuyahoga River near Eldon Russell Park (UCR/ERP) this summer. Nest results: 8 pairs produced 49 eggs., with 7 eggs lost to removal by house wrens, 33 of 42 hatched (78%) and 30 of the 33 young fledged. Additionally, there was a pair that nested in a natural cavity on Bridge Creek, nesting outcome unknown, but suspected unsuccessful. The male of this natural cavity pair had another mate on nest in a nearby jar. Banding and recapture and/or sighting of color banded Prothonotaries shows that we have some birds that have been in this breeding population at least 4 years, including, in a couple of cases, birds that were banded as young in the nest, now breeding- adults.

A pair of Dark-eyed Juncos disappeared from the Meyer Center feeding station during the first half of June. They returned with two young by Aug. 10.

Observers: Dan Best (DB); Andy Fondrk (AF) Tami Gingrich (TG); Helen Hendrickson (HH); Dottie Mathiot (DM). ❁

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NOTICE: All reports to The Cleveland Bird Calendar are archived in the The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

RARE BIRD HOTLINE: (216) 526-2473 (BIRD) The hotline is sponsored by the Kirtland Bird Club. In cases of extreme rarities, (i.e. Western Grebe, Mew Gull, Varied Thrush, Harris Sparrow, etc.), please contact the editors as soon as possible.

INVITATION: The Kirtland Bird Club meets the first Wednesday of the month, except July and August, at 7:45 P.M. in The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

FIELD STUDY: On the first Sunday of each month a census is conducted at Headlands Beach State Park. The purpose is to study the long term occurrence patterns of migrant and resident birds of the Grand River and Fairport Harbor section of the region. For more information call Larry Rosche at (330) 678-9408 or Ray Hannikman at (216) 261-9552.

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FIELD REPORTS, ARTWORK, PAPERS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS should be sent to Larry Rosche, 7473 Sylvan Drive, Kent, Ohio 44240.
e-mail: lorofs@aol.com

CLEVELAND REGION BIRDING SITES



1. Lorain Harbor
 2. Findley State Park & Wellington Reservoir
 3. Portage Lakes
 4. Mogadore Reservoir
 5. West Branch State Park
 6. Lake Rockwell*
 7. LaDue Reservoir*
 8. Cuyahoga Valley National Park
 9. Bedford Reservation
 10. Brecksville Reservation
 11. West Creek Preserve
 12. Rocky River Reservation
 13. Avon Lake Power Plant
 14. Edgewater Park & Perkins Beach (Cleveland Lakefront State Park)
 15. Burke Airport
 16. East 72nd St. Marina & Gordon Park (Cleveland Lakefront State Park)
 17. Villa Angela & Wildwood Yacht Basin (Cleveland Lakefront State Park)
 18. Sims Park
 19. Eastlake Power Plant
 20. Mentor Marsh and Lagoons
 21. Headlands Beach State Park
 22. Lakeshore Metropark
 23. Headwaters Park
 24. Lake Medina
 25. North Chagrin Reservation
 26. Tinkers Creek State Nature Preserve
 27. Hinckley Reservation
 28. Mill Stream Run Reservation
 29. Shaker Lakes
 30. Lakeview Cemetery
 31. Berlin Reservoir
 32. Happy Days (CVNP)
 33. Big Creek Metropark
 34. Spencer Lake State Wildlife Area
 35. Oberlin Reservoir
 36. Rocky River Park
 37. Seiberling Naturealm
 38. Sandy Ridge Reservation
 39. Wolf Creek Environmental Center
 40. Holden Arboretum*
- *Restricted/limited access

