

Spring Report

1 March 1987 through 31 May 1987

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As this issue represents the revival of The Ohio Cardinal, the number of birders contributing reports, as anticipated, was lower than what will hopefully be typical in the future. Obviously, a dozen or so major observers cannot effectively canvas the state, especially during spring migration when so many areas are productive. However, the following reports probably represent a fairly decent assessment of the birding picture in Ohio during the spring of 1987. As noted earlier, we expect the number of contributors to increase for upcoming issues. The Ohio Cardinal needs to receive more data from the southern part of the state, southwest Ohio in particular.

Certainly one of the great aspects of birding is its high degree of unpredictability. No two migration periods will ever be the same. Whether the spring migration is good, mediocre, or poor, the sheer number of birders combing the woods, fields, and marshes of the state guarantee that at least a few sightings of particular interest will occur. By most accounts the spring of 1987 would fall into the mediocre category, but three particularly good species were found: Ohio's first Brambling in Bath, Ohio, March 31 to April 7; a Kirtland's warbler along the Crane Creek Bird Trail on May 9; and a Swainson's warbler in Jackson County May 18-25 [perhaps later?]. Additional details on these species are included in this report and in separate articles in this issue.

Other noteworthy sightings included Tricolored heron, Greater White-fronted goose, Mississippi kite, Swainson's hawk, Yellow rails in two locations, Piping plover, Reeve, Common Black-headed gull, California gull, Bewick's wren, Bell's vireos in two or three areas, Harris' sparrow, and Hoary redpoll.

Two hundred seventy-seven species were reported [plus 5 uncorroborated species] for the period. In addition, Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers were seen. Shorebirds were represented by 30 species and warblers by 38 species! Some species appeared in lower than average numbers. Cattle egrets were scarce as were all scoters. Orange-crowned, Prairie, and Worm-eating warblers were hardly mentioned in the reports. Are these species down or are contributors just not reporting them? No Barn owls were reported. Lapland longspurs were reported only once. Present in above average numbers were Lesser Golden- and Semipalmated plovers. Record numbers of the latter were seen. Dickcissels also appeared in greater than usual numbers.

As always, weather played an important part in this year's spring migration. An extremely generalized summary of the weather shows that March was warmer than normal and relatively dry. It appears that waterfowl passed through quickly or completely bypassed the Lake Erie marshes due to favorable flying conditions. The warmer than usual

March conditions resulted in early budding of vegetation. Foliage was advanced by a week or more compared to normal throughout spring.

Persistent northeast winds occurred in April and May. Major snow fell in the northeast in late March and early April. The result was a later than normal arrival of May migrants; on the other hand, early spring migrants such as kinglets and White-throated sparrows lingered in above average numbers. Beginning on May 7, winds began to switch around to the south and southwest and a flood of migrants reached northern Ohio. One observer theorized that many warblers, vireos, thrushes, etc., were held up in southern Ohio and remained there in substantial numbers until this wind reversal occurred. May 9 was a particularly favorable day, and hundreds of observers were treated to one of Crane Creek's migration spectacles, complete with an extremely cooperative male Kirtland's warbler.

Unfortunately, migration conditions remained almost too favorable for the most part through mid-May and migrants passed through quickly. Late May brought wet, hot, and humid conditions with few birds of note.

We would like to stress to all contributors the importance of providing proper documentation for all species where such is required. Providing these details will allow at least an improved level of objectivity in determining which sightings should or should not be accepted. Also, contributors are urged to comment on other than just rare species. Important population trends can be gleaned from these remarks.

Following is a species by species account of the Spring 1987 season. We have maintained the same format used in prior Ohio Cardinal issues. Place names and observer initials will be summarized at the end of this section.



Male Brambling, Bath, Ohio. March 31-April 7, 1987. Photographed by Larry Rosche.

Common Loon

3/15 Bresler Res. [RC], 4/5 Caesar Creek [15] [CBB], 4/5 Cowan Lake [14] [LG], 4/16 Eastwood Lake [27] [CM], Late: 5/30 Caesar Creek [SL], 5/31 Beaver Creek Res. [TB]

Pied-billed Grebe

3/15 Buck Creek SP [10] [DO] [widespread]

Horned Grebe

3/7 Buck Creek SP [DO], 3/15 Buck Creek SP [30] [DO], High: 4/9 Mogadore Res. [160] [LR]

Red-necked Grebe D

3/8-18 Summit Lake [LR, EP]*, 4/9 Beaver Creek Res. [TB]*, 4/12 Bresler Res. [RC]*

Double-crested Cormorant

4/19 Spring Valley WA [3] [CC,JS], 5/3 Ottawa NWR [6] [ECP], 5/9 Mosquito Lake [27] [CB]

American Bittern

4/26 Medina Co. [ECP], 4/27 Firestone Metropark [ECP], 5/6 Huron [TL], 5/13 Gordon Park [RH], 5/17 Akron [LR]

Least Bittern

5/8 Cuyahoga Valley NRA [ECP], 5/11 Maumee Bay SP [KA], 5/13 Cleveland [RH], 5/16 Cuyahoga Valley NRA [LR], 5/19 Cleveland [TL], 5/24 Springville Marsh [TB]

Great Blue Heron

4/26 Washington Co. [22 nests] [LB] High: 5/30 Magee Marsh [250] [ECP] [widespread]

Great Egret

3/22 Wilmington [LG], 3/27 Ottawa NWR [ECP], 4/3 Marietta [LB], 4/5 Euclid [LR] High: 5/30 Magee Marsh [50] [ECP] [widespread]

Snowy Egret D

4/10 Cleveland [TL], 4/23 Wayne Co. [JH]*, 5/23 Ottawa NWR [RH], 5/24 Magee Marsh/Ottawa Ref. [5] [KA], 5/30 Magee Marsh [ECP]

Little Blue Heron

5/9 Magee Marsh [KA], 5/11 Lucas Co. [4] [KA], 5/23 Oxbow [JS],
5/23 Ottawa NWR [RH, ECP]

Tricolored Heron D

5/5 Barberton [LR, EP]*

Cattle Egret

5/12 Erie Co. [TL], 5/16 Ottawa Co. [KA] [only reports]

Green-backed Heron

Early: 3/30 Cleveland [TL], 4/21 Barberton [LR] [widespread]

Black-crowned Night-Heron

High: 5/3 Ottawa NWR [25] [ECP]

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

5/15 Dayton [several] [CM], 5/28 Columbus [3] [KA]

Tundra Swan

3/1 Ottawa NWR [50] [ECP], 3/7 L. Rockwell [6] [LR], 3/9
Youngstown [32] [CB], 3/16 Cuyahoga Co. [40] [RH], 3/22 Mosquito Lake
[118] [CB]

Mute Swan

3/1-12 Medway [CM], 5/24 Allen Co. [RC]

Greater White-fronted Goose D

3/1-8 Mosquito Lake [CB]*

Snow Goose

3/1 Mosquito Lake [CB], 3/15 Mogadore [LR], 3/22 Summit Co. [ECP]

Canada Goose

High: 3/1 Ottawa NWR [5400] [ECP]

Wood Duck

3/7 Buck Creek SP [DO], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [50] [ECP], 5/9 Mosquito
Lake [12 - "decreasing"] [CB], 5/24 Springville Marsh [30] [TB]

Green-winged Teal

3/15 Buck Creek SP [35] [DO], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [275] [ECP]
[widespread]

American Black Duck

3/1 Ottawa NWR [100] [ECP], 3/7 Buck Creek SP [40], 3/15 Buck Creek SP [30] [DO]

Mallard

3/1 Ottawa NWR [450] [ECP], 3/7 Buck Creek [150] [DO], [widespread]

Northern Pintail

3/7 Buck Creek SP [8] [DO], 3/30 Barberton [20] [LR], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [35] [ECP]

Blue winged Teal

3/27 Ottawa NWR [ECP], 3/30 Barberton [10] [LR], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [70] [ECP], 4/12 Caesar's Creek/Spring Valley [20] [DO], 5/7 Mosquito Lake [8] [CB]

Northern Shoveler

High: 4/5 Ottawa NWR [50] [ECP]

Gadwall

3/15 Mogadore [15] [LR], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [26] [ECP], normal numbers reported from most observers

American Wigeon

3/14 Clark Lake [22] [DO], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [24] [ECP], normal numbers reported from most observers

Canvasback

High: 3/8 Maumee Bay [5000] [KA], 3/22 Buck Creek SP [80] [DO], others report normal numbers

Redhead

normal numbers reported from most observers

Ring-necked Duck

3/15 Springfield [30] [DO], High: 3/15 Mogadore [755] [LR], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [51] [ECP]

Greater Scaup

reported in fair numbers, Late: 5/20 Ottawa NWR [KA]

Lesser Scaup

3/22 Buck Creek SP [120], normal numbers reported from most obs.
Oldsquaw

4/7 Findley SP [4] [TL], 4/9 Eastwood Lake [CM], 4/9 L. Rockwell
[2] [LR], 4/10 Wilmington Res. [2] [LG]

White-winged Scoter

4/7 Wellington Res. [3] [TL] [only report]

Common Goldeneye

reported as normal by most observers, High: 3/1 Ottawa NWR [130]
[ECP]

Bufflehead

reported as normal by most observers,

Hooded Merganser

3/7 Buck Creek SP [DO], 3/14 Chesire [LB], 3/18 Nimisila Res.
[30] [ECP], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [25] [ECP], 5/24 Cleveland [RH]

Common Merganser

High: 3/1 Ottawa NWR [215] [ECP], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [101] [ECP],
reported as normal by most observers

Red-breasted Merganser

reported as normal by most observers

Ruddy Duck

High: 4/9 Mogadore [320] [LR]

Black Vulture

3/10 Fairfield Co. [12] [KA], 5/9 Clear Creek [5] [TB], 5/12
Adams Co. [2] [KA]

Turkey Vulture

3/5 Caesar Creek [SL], 3/8 Oak Openings [TK], 3/20 Caesar Creek
[150] [JS], 3/24 Ottawa NWR [34] [LY], 4/15 Oak Openings [60] [TK]

Osprey

4/9 Spring Valley [m.ob], 4/11 Cleveland [TL], Late: 5/31 CJ
Brown Res. [CM], 5/31 Buck Creek SP [DO]

Mississippi Kite D

5/20 Delaware Co. [KA]*

Bald Eagle

3/1 L. Rockwell [LR], 4/4 Tiffin [TB], others reported from normal areas

Northern Harrier

status unchanged

Sharp-shinned Hawk

High: 4/27 Ottawa NWR [42] [JKo]

Cooper's Hawk

3/6 Cuyahoga Co. [RH], 5/10 Lima [nesting] [RC], 5 pairs in Oak Openings [TK] [reported in good numbers by most observers]

Northern Goshawk D

4/5 Lucas Co. [MA]*

Red-shouldered Hawk

2/28 Mosquito Creek [3 pairs] [CB], 3/7 Ottawa NWR [24] [EP, TB, DB], 2-3 pairs in Oak Openings [TK], mixed reports from the northeast

Broad-winged Hawk

4/12 Caesar's Creek [DO], 4/17 Oak Openings [TK], 4/26 Cuyahoga Valley NRA [LR], 4/27 Ottawa NWR [99] [JKo]

Swainson's Hawk D

5/13 Hueston Woods SP [RH]*

Red-tailed Hawk

listed as OK by reporting observers [LB, TB, DO, EP]

Rough-legged Hawk

3/1 Mosquito Lake [CB], 3/21 Crane Creek [RC], 3/24 Ottawa NWR [6] [LY], 4/12 Caesar's Creek [DO], 5/10 Ottawa NWR [RH]

American Kestrel

reported as OK by most observers

Merlin D

4/25 Headlands SBP [LR, RH]

Peregrine Falcon D

4/1 Toledo [pair present through most of the period] [m.ob.],
5/7-9 Magee Marsh/Ottawa Ref. [ECP*, KA]

Note: The pair of Peregrines in downtown Toledo have caused quite a bit of excitement and speculation and have remained in the area through the date this report is being written. These birds, needless to say, created mass panic among the downtown Toledo pigeon population. At least one person observed a pigeon being taken in mid-air and plenty of slashed carcasses have been observed on downtown sidewalks. Upon its arrival, the adult male developed a definite interest in the immature-plumaged female. They were often observed chasing each other and the male often dove and circled about the female as she perched atop various buildings. Beginning in May, the falcons began appearing much less frequently, but their regular haunts could not be determined. Further details on these two Pergrines will be forthcoming in the next issue of The Ohio Cardinal. - MA

Ring-necked Pheasant

Reported as OK in northwest, mixed reports from northeast

Ruffed Grouse

4/12 Medina Co. [ECP], 4/22 Lake Co. [TL], 5/4 Scioto Trails SF [6] [KA]

Turkey

4/18 Scioto Trails SF [7] [KA], 5/9 Clear Creek [3] [TB]

Northern Bobwhite

reported a scommon in Portage, Washington, and Lucas Cos. [LR, LB, TK]

Yellow Rail D

4/20-5/5 Irwin Prairie [MA, TK, JO]*, 5/24-27 Big Island WA [KA]*

King Rail

5/24 Big Island WA [LR, ECP, KA], reported from 4 locations in Lucas and Ottawa Cos. [KA]

Virginia Rail

Early: 3/22 Springville Marsh [TB], 3/24 Spring Valley [CM, JH],
5/28 Little Cedar Point NWR [5] [TK]

Sora

Early: 3/28 Spring Valley [CM], 3/29 Springville Marsh [TB]

Common Moorhen

4/21 Barberton [LR], 5/3 Ottawa NWR [3] [ECP], 5/9 Mosquito Lake [2] [CB], 5/27 Big Island WA [15] [KA]

American Coot

3/7 Buck Creek SP [DO], 3/21 Ottawa NWR [50] [ECP], 4/1 Mogadore Res. [100] [ECP], 4/12 Caesar's Creek/Spring Valley [50] [DO]

Sandhill Crane

3/6 Ottawa NWR [2] [KA], 3/8 West Milton [WV], 3/22 Killdeer Plains [KA], 3/25 Marion Co. [KA]

Black-bellied Plover

High: 5/23 Ottawa NWR [51] [ECP]

Lesser Golden-Plover

4/25 Wayne Co. [50] [ECP], 5/3 Cleveland [LR], 5/9 Ottawa NWR [25] [TK], 5/11 Lucas/Ottawa Cos. [5000!] [KA] [not unprecedented-Ed.] [good migration in Lucas Co., many reports-Ed.]

Semipalmated Plover

5/5 L. Rockwell [LR], 5/9 Magee Marsh [TK], 5/13 Greene Co. [6] [DO], 5/15 Ottawa Co. [920!] [KA] [incredible-Ed.], 5/23 Ottawa NWR [100] [ECP]

Piping Plover D

4/11 Cleveland [LR, RH, RHa, TL, m.ob], [extremely rare on the Great Lakes now: all records should be carefully documented-Ed.]

Killdeer

reported as normal

American Avocet

5/22 Magee Marsh [KA]

Greater Yellowlegs

3/18 Cuyahoga Valley NRA [RH], 3/22 Barberton [LR], 3/28 Champaign Co. [DO], High: 5/3 Ottawa NWR [44] [ECP]

Lesser Yellowlegs

High: 5/2 Barberton [60] [LR], 4/25 Wayne Co. [150] [ECP]

Solitary Sandpiper

4/25 Wayne Co. [20] [ECP], High: 5/9 L. Rockwell [29] [LR]

Willet

5/2 Cleveland [18] [RH, TL], 5/2 Barberton [10] [LR] [1st Summit Co. record], 5/9 Magee Marsh [KA]

Spotted Sandpiper

reported as normal

Upland Sandpiper

4/22 Cuyahoga Co. [RH], 4/23 Cleveland [TL], 5/2 Middletown [8] [TL], 5/25 Sandusky Co. [TB]

Whimbrel

5/12 Magee Marsh [TL], 5/17 West Branch SP [LR, EP] [1st Portage Co. record]

Marbled Godwit

4/19 Sandusky Co. [EL], 5/2 Cleveland [RH, TL]

Ruddy Turnstone

High: 5/23 Crane Creek [80] [RH]

Red Knot

5/23-24 Ottawa NWR [ECP, KA], 5/28 Cleveland [2] [TL] [only reports]

Sanderling

5/24 Cleveland [RH], 5/31 Cleveland [RH] [only reports]

Semipalmated Sandpiper

5/16 Ottawa NWR [TK], 5/23 Ottawa NWR [25] [ECP] [only reports!]

Least Sandpiper

5/5 Barberton [ECP], 5/9 Buck Creek SP [DO], 5/16 Ottawa NWR [TK] [only reports]

White-rumped Sandpiper

5/23 Ottawa NWR [RH], 5/27 Big Island WA [12] [KA] [only reports]

Pectoral Sandpiper

3/22 Buck Creek SP [DO], 3/27 Ottawa Co. [ECP], 5/16 Ottawa NWR [TK] [only reports!]

Dunlin

4/25 Wayne Co. [5] [ECP], 5/23 Ottawa NWR [200] [ECP]

Stilt Sandpiper

4/27 Barberton [LR], 5/11 Big Island WA [2] [KA], 5/17 Cleveland [TL], 5/23 Huron [TL]

Ruff D

5/23 Ottawa NWR [Reeve] [LR, TL, EP, m.ob.]

Short-billed Dowitcher

5/9 Ottawa NWR [TK], 5/10 Barberton [23] [LR], 5/15 Magee Marsh [150] [KA], 5/23 Ottawa NWR [ECP]

Long-billed Dowitcher D

3/8 Springville Marsh [TB]*

Common Snipe

3/1 Ottawa NWR [ECP], 3/26 Marietta [LB], 3/29 Clark Lake [5] [DO], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [13] [ECP], 5/3 Ottawa NWR [13] [ECP]

American Woodcock

2/20 Washington Co. [LB], 3/2 Germantown Reserve [DN], 3/2 Lucas Co. [TK], 3/13 Champaign Co. [DO], reported OK in northwest

Wilson's Phalarope

5/9-10 Ottawa NWR [4] [TK, RH], 5/16 Oregon [2] [MA, TK], 5/23-24 Ottawa NWR [2] [RH, KA], 5/24 Cleveland [3] [RH, TL]

Red-necked Phalarope

5/22 Magee Marsh [KA] [only report]

Laughing Gull D

5/15 Magee Marsh [KA], 5/31 Headlands SBP [TKe]

Little Gull

5/8 Magee Marsh [KA]

Common Black-headed Gull D

4/6 Cleveland [RH, RHa]

Bonaparte's Gull

3/15 Springfield [DO], 4/5 Ottawa NWR [60] [ECP], 4/12 Mosquito Lake [8] [CB], 5/4 Washington Co. [LB]

Ring-billed Gull

reported as normal by most observers

California Gull D

4/29 Cleveland [RH]*

Herring Gull

reported as normal by most observers

Iceland Gull D

3/21 Cleveland [TL], 3/22 Metzger Marsh [RH], 4/6 Cleveland [KA]

Glaucous Gull D

3/4 Avon Lake [TL], 3/11 Cleveland [TL], 3/21 Cleveland [2] [TL], 4/6 Cleveland [KA], Late: 5/3 Cleveland [RH]

Great Black-backed Gull

High: 4/5 Ottawa NWR [25] [ECP]

Caspian Tern

4/12 Euclid [LR], 4/19 Cleveland [38] [RH], 5/5 Beaver Creek Res. [TB], 5/9 Mosquito Lake [4] [CB], 5/9 Buck Creek SP [DO], 5/9 Ottawa NWR [20] [KA]

Common Tern

5/3 Ottawa NWR [6] [ECP], 5/5 Beaver Creek Res. [TB], 5/8 Ottawa Co. [30] [KA], 5/10 Headlands SBP [LR] [only reports]

Forster's Tern

4/16 Cleveland [RH], 5/5 Beaver Creek Res. [TB], 5/8 Ottawa Co. [25] [KA], 5/9 Barborton [LR], 5/16 Cleveland [RH]

Black Tern

5/3 Barborton [LR], 5/4 Beaver Creek Res. [TB], 5/24-28 Big Island WA [LR, KA]

Rock Dove

status unchanged

Mourning Dove

status unchanged

Black-billed Cuckoo

5/1 Firestone MP [ECP], 5/9 Barberton [LR], 5/9 Washington Co. [LB], 5/24 Springville Marsh [TB], 5/30 Lima [RC], 5/31 Lake Co. [TL]

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

5/1 Firestone MP [ECP], 5/13 Crane Creek [TB], 5/16 Lucas Co. [TK], 5/24 Buck Creek SP [DO]

Eastern Screech-Owl

widely reported. status unchanged

Great Horned Owl

widely reported. status unchanged

Snowy Owl

3/1 Cleveland [RH], 3/4 Dayton [CM] [last of a good invasion]

Barred Owl

4/5 John Bryan SP [DO], 4/15 Lima [RC], 4/16 Springfield [DO], 5/5 Lucas Co. [nest with 2 young] [TK]

Long-eared Owl

March-April Ottawa NWR [max. 10] [TB, RH, ECP]

Short-eared Owl

3/16 Cuyahoga Valley NRA [RH], 3/21-22 Crane Creek/Magee Marsh [4] [RH, ECP], 3/21 Maumee Bay SP [2] [ECP], 4/16-19 Cleveland [RH, TL]

Northern Saw-whet Owl

3/7 Crane Creek [ECP], 3/21 Englewood Reserve [BM],
March-Columbus [no specific dates] [KA]

Common Nighthawk

4/26 Englewood [CBB], 5/1 Washington Co. [LB], 5/9 Kent [LR],
5/13 Greene Co. [15] [DO]

Chuck-will's-widow

5/11 Adams Co. [20] [KA] [increasing?-Ed.]

Whip-poor-will

4/15 Washington Co. [LB], 4/19 Germantown Reserve [TL], 5/4 Lucas Co. [TK], 5/11 Adams Co. [60] [KA], 5/13 Lucas Co. [10] [TK]

Chimney Swift

numbers noted as normal, abundant in northeast [CB]

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

4/26 Washington Co. [LB], 5/10 Logan Co. [DO], thought low statewide [RH]

Belted Kingfisher

status unchanged

Red-headed Woodpecker

3/28 Champaign Co. [DO], 4/17 Washington Co. [LB], 5/9 Mosquito Lake [8] [CB]

Red-bellied Woodpecker

status unchanged

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

4/11 Buck Creek SP [DO], 4/18 Clark Lake [DO], 5/3 Lima [RC], 5/9 Crane Creek [KA]

Downy Woodpecker

status unchanged

Hairy Woodpecker

status unchanged

Northern Flicker

status unchanged

Pileated Woodpecker

5/1 Cuyahoga Co. [nest] [RH], 5/4 Scioto Trails SF [9] [KA], "common" in Washington Co. [LB], scarce in northwest [TK]