

1987-88 Christmas Bird Counts

Pete Montion and Tom Kemp

Fifty-nine counts were received for Ohio for the 1987-88 Christmas Bird Count season. We are pleased that all counts conducted in Ohio were submitted to THE OHIO CARDINAL.

Gypsum led the way with 92 species, this accomplished with only nine observers! Close behind were Cuyahoga Falls with 88 species and Toledo with 87. No other counts registered more than 80 species. Most individuals were tallied at Cleveland and Buckeye Lake, with 58,180 and 56,430, respectively. Cuyahoga Falls recruited an amazing 182 observers, Cincinnati 106, Wilmot 76, and Dayton 74. Numbers of common species are correspondingly high on those counts.

December was quite mild throughout the state accounting for an increased tally of lingering species. Common loons and grebes were well represented. Undocumented Red-necked and Eared grebes were reported from Lakewood and Cleveland, respectively. Double-crested cormorants were listed on five counts, including 43 at Gypsum. Waterfowl numbered 28 species. Greater White-fronted geese were at Ottawa NWR and Trumbull County. Undocumented Blue-winged teal were reported on four counts, with 25 at Trumbull County! An undocumented King eider was at Gypsum and an impressive 492 Hooded mergansers were tallied at Trumbull County. Ruddy ducks numbered 1511 at Gypsum.

Good numbers of vultures were counted in the southern tier of counties, including 17 Blacks and 13 Turkeys in Adams County. Thirty-nine Northern harriers at Killdeer Plains was a good count and 15 Cooper's hawks at Cuyahoga Falls is a nice total. A Northern goshawk at Wellington was reported without details. The 119 Red-tailed hawks at Wilmot was impressive, 76 observers notwithstanding. An undocumented Merlin was reported at Wilmot and a Peregrine from Zanesville. One of Toledo's Peregrines was found. A Broad-winged hawk with no details at Zanesville was demoted to Buteo, sp.

A Virginia rail was at Gypsum and a Sandhill crane at Trumbull County. Shorebirds made news with 2 Lesser yellowlegs at Toledo, Solitary sandpiper at Mansfield, and Spotted sandpiper at Tiffin. Unusual gulls were scarce; 3 Little gulls at Mentor and a Lesser Black-backed at Cleveland were noteworthy. No "white-winged" gulls were found.

Owls were highlighted by a Common Barn-owl at Portsmouth and a Northern Saw-whet at Toledo. Forty-four E. Screech-owls at Mansfield was impressive. Surprisingly, in a year thought to be invasion, only 2 Snowy owls were found. One hundred Red-headed woodpeckers at Wilmot was outstanding as were 515 Downy woodpeckers at Cincinnati Eastern (Oh, how I would love to have 100 observers on a count!). Eastern phoebe were listed on four southern counts. 10,000 crows roosting at Mansfield was a good count. 1,400+ Black-caps and 2,000+ Carolinas were high chickadee counts at Cuyahoga Falls and Cincinnati Eastern, respectively.

Thirty-five Red breasted nuthatches at Dayton was a good total. Totals of Carolina wrens at W. Hamilton County (248) and Cincinnati Eastern (674) indicate the species has rebounded well in SW Ohio. Single House wrens were reported from W. Hamilton County and Washington County/Parkersburg. Marsh wrens were found on only two counts. Incredibly, two Blue-gray gnatcatchers were reported, one from Toledo and one from W. Hamilton County. No details were received on either bird.

Ohio's first Northern wheatear appeared during count period in the Ottawa NWR count circle. See details in this issue. A Wood thrush at Toledo was an excellent find (although no details were received) and 47 Hermit thrushes on the Lake Erie Is. count was very high. Impressive numbers of American robins were found on the W. Hamilton County and Cincinnati Eastern counts. Only 2 Gray catbirds and a handful of Brown thrashers were found.

Late Water pipits were listed on four counts (L. Erie Islands, Wellington, Kingston, and Ohio River (6)). Four Northern shrikes were found and a Loggerhead shrike graced the Adams County count. 45,000 Starlings were found at Buckeye Lake. Outstanding was a Cape May Warbler photographed at Wellington. This was surely the rarity of the counts other than the wheatear. A Pine warbler was a rare find at Adams County. Chipping sparrows were listed on six counts. A Vesper sparrow at Athens and single Lincoln's sparrows at L.Erie Islands and Grand Lake St.Marys were outstanding, but submitted without details. Savannah sparrows appeared on 4 counts with a high of 9 at East Fork Lake. Only 3 counts reported Lapland Longspurs. A Yellow-headed blackbird at Ottawa NWR was a good bird and 11,000+ Brown-headed cowbirds at Cleveland was high. House finches are now everywhere in the state; all counts except Van Wert listed them. Common redpolls were scarce, but Pine Siskins and Evening grosbeaks were fairly widespread. Finally, Van Wert reported no House sparrows and Hancock County no starlings! I wonder what their secret is?

Following is the complete list of species and numbers for the counts. An asterisk indicates an unusual sighting or high number of individuals. We welcome comments from readers on the format for the counts and invite compilers to check our numbers for possible errors. Compiling and entering the figures into the computer is a tedious task.



Northern Saw-whet Owl, Clermont County, Ohio, January 1988. Photograph by Larry Gara.

	Common Loon	Pied-billed Grebe	Horned Grebe	Red-necked Grebe	Eared Grebe	Double-crested Cormorant	Great Blue Heron	Black-crowned Night-Heron	Tundra Swan	Mute Swan	Greater White-fronted Goose	Snow Goose (blue phase)	Snow Goose (white phase)	Canada Goose	Wood Duck	Green-winged Teal
1 Gull Woods																
2 Grand Rapids-Waterville																
3 Toledo																
4 Ottawa NWR																
5 Gypsum																
6 Lake Erie Islands	3	16	6				34	55	1*							
7 Firelands	4						151	64								
8 Elyria-Lorain	2		17				145	4	71							
9 Lakewood			11				2		155							
10 Cleveland	1	1	2	1*			26		1							
11 Mentor	2		13		2*		35									
12 Ashtabula	2	1	1				6		33		1					
13 Trumbull County	4						10		4							
14 Burton							4		12		1					
15 Cuyahoga Falls	2	17	13				28		1	2		1				
16 Plymouth		1					2			CW						
17 Tiffin							1									
18 Fremont																
19 Wellington	1		1			1	1		30							
20 Oxbow Lake																
21 Van Wert																
22 Grand Lake St. Mary's							16		6		2	7	301	8		
23 Hancock County	3	7					7						702			
24 Indian Lake							4						150			
25 Killdeer Plains							10		15			5	7	10200	100	
26 Mansfield	CW	12	5				12		CW					386		
27 Ashland	2	1					30						436			
28 Mohican State Forest													41			
29 Wooster							20						89			
30 Wilmot							20				9		980	2		
31 Salem	3						5		1				300			
32 Youngstown	2		1				7						1174	2		
33 Beavercreek			1				8						330			
34 Steubenville							1									
35 Cadiz							1						40			
36 Hoover Reservoir	5	3	3				3						198	1		
37 O'Shaughnessy Reservoir	1						2						44			
38 Greenville							2						213			
39 Dayton	1	7					28*						135			
40 Columbus		8					2						180	1		
41 Buckeye Lake							12			2*			130			
42 Zanesville		1					1						97			
43 New Lexington													CW			
44 Lancaster													52			
45 Kingston													400			
46 Paint Creek													75			
47 Oxford	3	3					13						309			
48 Hamilton-Fairfield	1		1				35						75			
49 Western Hamilton Co.	1						19						300	8		
50 Cincinnati Eastern	6	1					43						99	2	7	4
51 Adams County	1						12						128	5		
52 Portsmouth							64									
53 Washington County	2						5									
54 Athens	1						11						163			
55 Mt. Gilead													286			
56 Salt Fork State Park	2						3						83	1		
57 Wash. County/Parkersburg	2						24						66			
58 Ohio River (OH-IN-KY)							92						108			
59 East Fork Lake State Pk.	3	20	2				9						54	1	5	

