



Retrospective: 20 Years Ago in the Cardinal

Autumn 1979 differed markedly from Autumn 1999. With contrastingly above normal precipitation and below normal temperatures, 1979 produced numerous documentation species, several regional records, and no fewer than two state records.

Late October and November produced four red-throated loons, three of them at inland reservoirs. Two red-necked grebes showed up in Cleveland during the same period. Little blue herons were still scarcer than they are these days, with only one report: an immature bird at West Branch Reservoir in Portage Co. A *Plegadis* ibis turned up at Celotex Marsh in October.

Waterfowl were reported in good numbers. Among less common species, reported were three brant in November, a male Eurasian wigeon which lingered for over a month at Lake Rockwell in September and October, 13 oldsquaws, 33 white-winged scoters (including the first Shaker Lakes record), 15 surf scoters, and 10 black scoters (including Seneca Co.'s first record).

Two yellow rails were found, including one seen at a distance of 3 feet on 11 Nov at Lake LaDue in Geauga Co. The decline of Great Lakes piping plovers was evident, with only two reports, both in August. Only two purple sandpipers were seen—one on 4 Nov at Headlands and one on 28 Nov in the Cedar Point parking lot. The big news for shorebirds, however, was the discovery of a breeding-plumaged spotted red-shank on 28 Aug at Huron by Larry Rosche and Elinor Elder. This was the first, and thus far the only, record for Ohio. Paling in comparison but noteworthy nonetheless were two reports of ruffs in September. Five red phalaropes added to 1979's great shorebird season.

Larids also provided some excitement. Two adult lesser black-backed gulls were found along the lakeshore, foreshadowing their imminent advance into the Great Lakes region. The season's other first state record came with an adult California gull found at Huron by Bruce Peterjohn and Evelyn Gordon on 24 Nov. It remained until the next day. Other notable species reported included an immature black-legged kittiwake at Wildwood Park on 30 Nov, and a Sabine's gull found on Lake Erie on 2 Nov. Common and black terns were well represented, with a peak of 4,000 commons on 2 Sept at Ottawa and 600 blacks in Cleveland on 17 Aug.

As for notable passerines, one western kingbird was found on 2 Sept in Holmes Co., and a Bewick's wren was identified as it ventured *inside* a Lancaster factory at 5:00 AM on 10/29. Two reports of loggerhead shrikes came in, with two young birds in Seneca Co., and a single adult at the Kent State University Stadium. A worm-eating warbler on 9 Sept became Cleveland's first autumn record. Two other regional records came from pine warblers, with one in Tiffin and one at Springville Marsh providing the second and third Seneca Co. records respectively. Sparrows were reported in normal numbers, with two notable species—one sharp-tailed sparrow at Port Clinton on 25-27 Aug and one Harris's sparrow on 3 Oct at Huron. Unlike the current season, winter finches were reported in very low numbers twenty years ago with nary a common redpoll. *Joseph W. Hammond*



A large number of Black Terns were reported statewide from 25 August - 5 September 1999. The two individuals pictured above were part of the fallout at Buckeye Lake as witnessed by Gina Buckey when she took these photographs on 26 August. Interestingly, Buckey also photographed an American Avocet on that date at Buckeye Lake (not shown).