

*The Ohio*



# CARDINAL™

Vol. 23, No. 4  
Summer 2000



*The Ohio Cardinal* is a quarterly publication devoted to the study and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife.

*The Ohio Cardinal* exists to provide a permanent and timely record of the abundance and distribution of birds in Ohio; to help document the occurrence of rare species in the state; to provide information on identification of birds; and to provide information on birding areas within Ohio.

*The Ohio Cardinal* invites readers to submit articles on unusual occurrences of birds, bird distribution within the state, birding areas in Ohio, identification tips, and other aspects of ornithology. Bird reports and photographs are welcome from any area of the state. Report forms are not a necessity but will be supplied upon request. Unusual species should be documented, and forms to do so are available upon request from the Editor, Publisher, and Records Committee Secretary.

### Seasonal Report Due Dates

Winter (Dec.-Feb.) - March 25  
Spring (Mar.-May) - June 25  
Summer (Jun.-Jul.) - August 25  
Fall (Aug.-Nov.) - December 25

### Please send all reports to:

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### Subscriptions

The subscription rate for one year (four issues) is \$20.00. Please send all subscription requests to:

*The Ohio Cardinal*  
c/o Edwin C. Pierce  
2338 Harrington Rd.  
Akron, OH 44319

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### The Ohio Cardinal

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*On the Cover:* **Blue Grosbeak** - Crown City Wildlife Area, Lawrence Co., 17 July 2000. Photo by Bob Royse.

### Summer 2000 Overview

by Bill Whan

O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown,  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is made.

Tennyson, *The Princess* (1847)

Summer, our shortest season, spans only June and July, but nevertheless has time for migration as well as for nesting. Many local breeders, such as swallows, grow restless in July as young and old alike gather preparatory to moving south. Still more intriguing to summertime seekers of the unusual are the movements of shorebirds, mysterious creatures of the Arctic whose last northbound stragglers have no sooner passed through Ohio than the first forerunners show up on their way south. Shorebirds got short shrift here this season, as rains kept water levels in rivers and reservoirs high, and policies did likewise for manipulable levels in managed wetlands. The Magee Marsh census on the usually productive date of 16 July, for example, discovered but two migrant shorebirds, one solitary sandpiper and one white-rumped sandpiper. After the Crane Creek estuary's water rose early in June, only Conneaut Harbor provided consistent habitat for shorebirds through July. If references to Conneaut in this season's Reports start to sound monotonous, readers should remember that in the absence of the Ashtabula County shore habitats, six shorebird species (23%+) wouldn't have been reported *anywhere* in the state this summer.

After the warmest spring in a hundred years, June's temperatures moderated. Cleveland recorded no readings in the 90s, Columbus only two, and Cincinnati one. July was markedly cooler than normal, especially compared to July of 1999: in Columbus it averaged a full 8°F cooler than last year, the first July without temperatures in the 90s since 1992, and the first month in the last 14 with below-normal temperatures. As for precipitation, June was wetter than normal, in the central part of the state the sixth consecutive month with above-normal rains. July showed a slight shortfall, but by and large the summer made up the deficits of last year's drought.

The water level of Lake Erie, as measured in Cleveland, was 571.33 feet above sea level at the end of the period. On 1 Jan of this year it stood at 570.10 feet, on 1 Jan 1999 at 570.57 feet, and on 1 Jan 1998 at 572.67 feet. One way of looking at the summer Lake Erie levels is that by 1 Aug 2000 the Lake had regained nearly half the level lost since the end of 1997. On 16 August, Environment Canada reported that Lake Erie levels were only 5 cm below their long-term average, and that Lake Ontario levels were actually 20 cm above their long-term average.

Five Review Species were reported in June and July, two more than last year; reports of two of them—Mississippi kite and least tern—came in both summers. One species couldn't have been a repeat, as it was a new state record, our 407<sup>th</sup>, the long-awaited white-winged dove. Our last two additions to the state list have been doves, and an informative article on our next expected dove appears in this issue. Some remarkable breeding records were confirmed, especially among waterbirds, and our first Wilson's phalarope nest in twelve years was verified, the first away from Lake Erie. Birds were found in new areas: cliff swallows because of expanding colonizations,