

Common Redpoll: S. Zadar saw two at GPI on 4 Nov, and V. Fazio found 24 at HBSP on 12 Nov, but thus far it seems it will be a poor year for the species here.

Pine Siskin: Three on 18 Sept in *Trumbull* (C. Babyak) could have been earlyish migrants or from scarce local breeders. More obvious migrants appeared in the first week of Oct, with birds from GPI (S. Zadar) to Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati (N. Cade), both on the 7th. Near the end of the period on 26 Nov, J. Pogacnik had ~100 at EHSP, but reports were not widespread.

American Goldfinch: Reports of flocks of ~200 came from *Franklin* on 29 Sept (B. Master) and *Scioto* on 7 Nov (B. Lund); in the latter case the birds were converging on hemlock seed, more wintry fare for the species.

CORRIGENDA: (1) In the Spring issue, we erroneously reported three red-breasted nuthatch nests in *Hocking* on 29 May; in fact, F. Renfrow discovered the species at three locations in that county, but did not confirm nesting, though at one of those locations a suspected nest hole was later discovered on a 3 July visit. (2) A scribal blunder in the Summer issue resulted in a serious error: the confirmed nesting of a mourning warbler in *Hocking* reported for 3 July was in fact that of a magnolia warbler. The total of 19 nesting warbler species in the area stands. (3) In the Index to *The Ohio Cardinal* in the Summer issue, the unknown author of "Characteristics of Two Species of Chickadees" in Vol 1, #3 has been found to be Milton Trautman; the article was reprinted with permission from Trautman, M. 1966. Characteristics used in the field identification of Black-capped and Carolina Chickadees. *Oh. St. Mus. Info. Series* Vol 1, #3. The Oh. Hist. Society, Columbus.

CONTRIBUTORS: We appreciate the help of the following birders who shared reports of their observations and other data for this issue: Lynne Aldrich, Chad Amos, Matt Anderson, Lynda Andrews, Hank Armstrong, Carole Babyak, Zac Baker, Brian Barchus, Bob Barrett, Tom Bartlett, Marje Baughman, Erich Baumgardner, Randee Becker, Bob Bell, Dan Berglund, Jack Berninger, Andy Bess, Dan Best, Adam Blank, Brad Bolton, Charlie Bombaci, Bill Bosstic, Liz Brennan, David Brinkman, Lori Brumbaugh, Jen Brumfield, Gina Buckley, Sandra Buckles, Donald Burton, Mike Busam, Grace Butcher, Neill Cade, Granville Carey, Paul Chad, Ann Chasar, Dwight Chasar, Suzanne Clingman, Delores Cole, Linda Comeaux, Nathan Compton, Bob Conlon, Clay Corbin, Rich Cressman, Andrea Daily, Jeff Davis, Leo Deininger, David Dister, Doug Dunakin, Micki Dunakin, Curt Dusthimer, Steve Edinger, Mike Egar, Marcus England, Vic Fazio, Duane Ferris, Anders Fjelstad, Frank Frick, Jim Fry, Charles Gambill, Larry Gara, Lee Garling, Ted Gilliland, Rita Goeke, Peter Gottschling, Jeff Grabmeier, Darlena Graham, Joe Hammond, Betty Hardesty, Rob Harlan, Paul Haskins, Becky Hatfield, Jeff Hays, Pat Hays, Helen Hendrickson, Bill Heck, Dick Hoffman, Jean Hoffman, Chuck Holliday, Craig Holt, Janet Holzworth, Dave Horn, William Hull, Keith Johnson, Bill Jones, Phyllis Jones, Ned Keller, Tom Kellerman, Tom Kemp, Isaac Kern, Pat King, Peter King, Don Kinsman, Everitt Kitchen, John Kolar, Ron Kolde, Bob Lacker, Bob Lane, Denise Lane, Amy Lavy, Bill Leaman, Jay Lehman, Gabe Leidy, Greg Links, Jerry Lippert, Doreene Linzell, Bill Loebick, Edit Lotz, Paula Lozano, Barbara Lund, Charlotte Mathena, Bernard Master, Millie McCarty, Jim McCormac, Sarah McCormack, Jeff McCoy, Kathy McDonald, Don Miles, Jeffrey Miller, Jan Miller, Steve Miller, Mary Misplon, Jared Mizanin, Kathy Mock, Ben Morrison, Donald Morse, Mike Murphy, Heather Nagy, Patti Niehoff, Rich Nirschl, Jackie Nooker, Art Osborn, Doug Overacker, Bob Paxson, Steve Pelikan, John Perchalski, Haans Petruschke, Lester Peyton, Ed Pierce, Brad Phillips, Bob Placier, John Pogacnik, Len Powlick, Bill Pratt, John Rakestraw, Barb Redmer, Glenn Redmer, Scott Reeves, Steve Richards, Frank Renfrow, Richard Rickard, Craig Reiker, Bill Rinehart, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Paul Rosenberry, Ed Roush, Linda Roush, Bob Royse, Jon Ruedisueli, David Russell, Dave St. John, Dan Sanders, Charlie Saunders, Regina Schieltz, Ed Schlabach, Robert Schlabach, Tim Schrock, Jeff Schultz, Jim Scott, Rod Sharpnack, John Shrader, Troy Shively, Carol Skinner, Mark Skinner, Darlene Sillick, Harry Slack, Steve Smith, Su Snyder, Bill Stanley, Gene Stauffer, Jay Stenger, Steve Stockford, Dave Styer, Tim Taylor, Rob Thorn, Elliott Tramer, Sandy Wagner, John Watts, Melvin Weaver, Monroe Weaver, Bill Whan, Pete Whan, Paul Wharton, Mary Jo White, Susan Wilkinson, Ben Winger, Connie Wolcott, Scott Wright, John Yochum, Leroy Yoder, Norman Yoder, Sean Zadar.

Further Afield by Rob Harlan

Once you've squeezed through the narrow gift shop aisles, skirting the rubber snakes, plastic six-shooters, bags of rock candy, and fabulous "Collector's Edition" ceramic thimbles, only then may you pass through the outer door to encounter a genuine piece of history. This particular piece happens to be the original Boothill Graveyard in Tombstone, the southeastern Arizona frontier town where, in the late 1870s and early 1880s, you might have found the Earps and the Clantons and the infamous (if overrated) O.K. Corral.

You might think Boothill Graveyard could have little in common with the Ohio birding scene, and quite frankly, it is a bit of a stretch. Except that for me, history and birding go hand in hand. When traveling, I always try to partake of some aspect of the local historical scene. A visit to the Tombstone boneyard, for instance, might provide a welcome relief from southeastern Arizona drudgeries such as separating Bendire's and curve-billed thrashers, or spending hours watching the Ramsey Canyon feeders, sifting through the hummer hordes, waiting for that single berylline hummingbird to appear (oh, the pain). But as you meander up and down the rows at Boothill, carefully sidestepping the agave, cholla and their miscellaneous thorny brethren, you can't help but develop a sense of morbid wonder and curiosity as you read the epitaphs on the grave markers before you:

- Billy Clanton, Tom McLaury, Frank McLaury, Murdered on the streets of Tombstone, 1881
- Margarita, Stabbed by Gold Dollar
- Teamster, 1881, Killed by Apaches
- George Johnson, Hanged by Mistake

Who were these people? Yes, popular history reminds us that the McLaury brothers and Billy Clanton opposed the Earps, but I'm sure every one of the permanent residents of Boothill would have a fascinating story to tell. The epitaph of one Frank Bowles never fails to give me pause, with its simple poignancy and inherent spookiness:

As you pass by
Remember that as you are, so once was I
And as I am, you soon will be
Remember me

Well, Mr. Bowles, I do remember you. I have no knowledge of your life, only that you existed as an individual; this fact alone is worthy of remembrance, and of course the same can be said for all of us. History acknowledges the existence of Frank Bowles, if only as a name, in a place and a time. But there is another epitaph at Boothill, one repeated many times over, up and down the rows. This one is even simpler, and to me, infinitely sadder. It reads only:

—Unknown

Remember Me

All of this serves to bring us finally (insert "big sigh of relief" here) to our connection with Ohio birds. Because there is wild bird, now virtually unknown, that inhabited Ohio in the hundreds of thousands in the 1930s, and in smaller numbers as recently as the 1960s, but is nowhere to be found on the current official Ohio Bird Records Committee state checklist. Following the example of the American Birding Association's Checklist Committee, a few years back the OBRC voted to remove this particular species from the state list, because it was a "failed introduction." This is certainly true, at least in the long term. But how does one judge "failure"?

Even though I am a member of the OBRC, I must admit some misgivings about this decision; here we have a species present in our state for some 60 years, and plentiful enough that more than 42,000 were taken by hunters in 1940 alone. I will not argue the fact that the introductions, ultimately, were a failure. But somehow it just doesn't seem fair to remove it from the state list. Perhaps I'm just an old romantic.

And so, it falls to us here to memorialize this non-canonical tidbit of Ohio birding history—none other than the rotund and chicken-like gray partridge *Perdix perdix*.

Now, I'll be the first to admit that introduced birds generally hold little interest for me, ranking only somewhat above fabulous "Collector's Edition" ceramic thimbles and a bit below rubber snakes. But at least hear me out. We all deserve to be remembered, yes?

According to the authoritative work on the Ohio history of the gray partridge (then known as the Hungarian partridge), Kaj Westerskov's "History and Distribution of the Hungarian Partridge in Ohio, 1909-1948" (Ohio Journal of Science 56(2):65-70, 1956), this species was first introduced into our state in 1909. Between that time and 1916, nearly 2,000 birds were released into almost every Ohio county, even though some areas were obviously better suited than others to this Eurasian grassland, farmland, and hedgerow species. Although a little thing known as World War I temporarily halted introduction efforts, about 7,000 more were imported between 1924 and 1930, with birds ending up in all but 14 unsuitable un-glaciated counties in southeastern Ohio. Between 1932 and 1940, another 8,420 birds were released in northwestern and central-western Ohio, as recognition of suitable habitat continued to improve. Thus, some 17,420 gray partridges were imported here, mostly from Czechoslovakia, between 1909 and 1940, with Ohio taxpayers footing the approximately \$62,000 bill.

As expected, these introductions took hold more readily in areas consistent with the partridge's habitat requirements, particularly the northwestern and central-western counties, or as Westerskov succinctly put it, "mainly on the lacustrine soils of former Lake Maumee, and in fairly good numbers on the glacial limestone soils of western Ohio, except in the southern part of this area." These numbers grew until a peak population density was reached in the early 1930s. In the prime territory of Henry, Wood, Defiance, Paulding, Fulton, Van Wert, Allen, Hancock, Putnam and Lucas Counties, Dr. Lawrence E. Hicks of The Ohio State University's Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit estimated an average of 25 or more birds per square mile until 1935, and considered the species common to very abundant in proper habitat. Even after declines began in the late 1930s, the statewide population was still estimated at 110,000+ birds in 1939, which hardly seems like a failure to me.

Hunting pressures were fierce, however, with the first season of legal hunting sanctioned in 1917. In 1938, 24,836 birds were taken statewide. In 1940, an estimated 42,250 were killed; in 1942, approximately 31,750 were taken; in 1944, nearly 21,250 bit the dust; and in 1946 an estimated 10,750 birds bought the farm. This very obvious decline mirrors its nearly identical downturn in similar habitats in Indiana during the same period (by the way, the Gray Partridge is also extirpated from Indiana, though it remains on their official state list).

Roadside surveys also clearly signified a rapid downward spiral, with averages of 27 birds seen per 1,000 suitable roadside miles in 1938, 15/1,000 miles in 1939, 6/1,000 miles in 1940, 1.3/1,000 miles in 1941, then 0/1,000 miles in 1947. Westerskov engaged in some serious footwork in 1947-48, looking specifically for this species, but located only 26 coveys statewide, determining that the partridge had "disappeared from most of its former range in northwestern Ohio and...most of the birds remaining in the state were found in the counties extending westward from Columbus toward the Indiana line, mainly in Madison, Fayette, Champaign, Clark, Miami and Darke. Scattered birds were found, however, here and there in the formerly inhabited range." The daily bag limit, six birds per day from 1919 to 1930, was reduced to four per day from 1931 to 1945, then to two per day in 1946 (the species was granted protected status in 1947), but managers could only hope to slow this species' inevitable fate. Its total statewide disappearance occurred imperceptibly sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s, despite some additional small, local "last-gasp" introduction efforts in the intervening years.

This is not to say, however, that all other introduced North American populations came to the same end. Healthy numbers continue to thrive on the upper Great Plains of the northern U.S. and southern Canada, for instance, and even southern Ontario has a decent population awaiting nearby Ohio birders. Of course, you could always look for one in Eurasia, if you so desired.

Obviously, most *Ohio Cardinal* readers weren't actively birding between 1920 and 1950 when the gray partridge was at its peak here, so we naturally have a difficult time relating to its importance as an Ohio bird. I suspect that the few readers who were active during the peak years might feel a more significant sense of loss, especially those who share strong hunting traditions. Even so, hunting pressures could only have exacerbated its population's decline, and a myriad of misfits in ecological conditions surely played a major role in the decline as well. Deep down, though, I suppose it doesn't much matter to me why the gray partridge declined and disappeared from Ohio. I'm satisfied to know that it was here and hope that it will be remembered, and that we'll be able to replace the small grave marker labeled "Unknown" with one marked instead "*Perdix perdix*, Rest In Peace".

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