

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 (June-July) - August 25
Autumn (Aug.-Nov.) - December 25

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The Ohio Cardinal

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On the Cover: This western kingbird was digiscoped in Butler County's St. Clair Township on 15 July 2002 by Dave Russell.

Summer 2002 Overview

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For most of the year, birds use their adaptive skills freely. If an autumn storm drives them far afield, they can usually manage. Extraordinarily warm or cold winters may affect their food sources enough to induce them to spend the season at widely different latitudes. The breeding season, however, is different. Then birds become quite conservative in their habitat choices, sticking tight in all but the most extreme conditions. Thus, variations in weather may be less important in assessing our summer birdlife than at other times, simply because, except for migrants still on their way to or from breeding grounds to our north, or the occasional non-breeding wanderer, it is dominated by nesting birds. So we can simply say that both June and July were considerably warmer and drier than normal. As for illustrative data, three-quarters of Columbus's July rain fell on the 23rd; in Cleveland during the same month, on fully 10 days the temperature rose above 90°F.

We should not, however, downplay the almighty atmosphere's larger effects. It was probably the weather elsewhere—specifically in the Southeast, ravaged by drought of long duration—that affected the variety of our region's summer birds. As the season came to a close, unusual numbers of southeastern breeders dispersed more widely than usual into the Northeast and Midwest, presumably due at least in part to the drought's depletion of food sources. Extraordinary numbers of kites—Mississippi and swallow-tailed—were seen, and ibises, storks, odd herons showed up far afield in good numbers. Perhaps the heat kept Ohio observers indoors, for we had less than our share of reports of these rarities. Just next door, Indiana birders had, besides rarities from the west, white ibis, both whistling-ducks, and both kites. Our only southern stray this summer was a flyby Mississippi kite. Having complained about that, let's note that our count of four Review Species reported—adding to the kite a ruff, an extraordinary red-necked stint, and a western kingbird—was about average for the season, and there was much of interest beyond just rare birds.

And probably it was the unstable weather of spring, which made for such good fallouts of neotropical passerines this year in Ohio, that caused individuals of many species to trickle through unusually late into June. Tardiness was a theme for shorebirds, for example. June short-billed dowitchers tend to be failed breeders headed south early, usually near the end of the month, but one on 12 June probably represents a record late northbound migrant. There are very few records later than 16 June for semipalmated sandpipers still apparently northbound. White-rumped sandpipers have been recorded in small numbers during the second week of June, but flocks of 28 on the 8th then six on the 17th are quite remarkable. And as for Wilson's phalarope, we see them often in May and July, but all our published June records can be counted on one hand; this June alone we had as many as 10 Wilson's. Most were inland too, while historically ~80% of our 500+ recorded birds come from close to Lake Erie.

It is worth noticing how many of these unusual shorebird records came from the new Thomas Wetlands in Paulding County during June. In June, reservoirs had few mudflats, and wetlands managers elsewhere seemed—as usual—to ignore the needs of migrant shorebirds. Nor did prevailing winds open up habitat on the unmanaged Lakeshore spots like the Crane Creek estuary and Sheldon Marsh. Improbably enough, this brand-new wetland project in usually corn-and-beans Paulding County became, by default perhaps, Ohio's best spot for migrant shorebirds. It had to share the title at times with another spot in the same county, the sewage lagoons in the town of Paulding, which produced excellent numbers of shorebirds during routine dredging operations. Overall, shorebirds seem to be matching their late departures with late arrivals, and it will be interesting to see if the warblers, thrushes, vireos, etc., do so as well. For example, as of this writing, banders to our north are reporting *Catharus* thrushes arriving a week or more later than in recent years.

This summer 25 species of warblers were recorded; numbers in the 20s are routine—after all, 27 warbler species have bred in Ohio at one time or another—but this was the lowest summer number in these pages over the past 10 years. In 1993, late departures by most species, and the occurrence of a Swainson's warbler in Jefferson Co., brought that summer's total to a hard-to-beat 32. This season's shorebird total of 31 species, by contrast, is the highest since 1993 as well, when 32 were present (this was back when piping plovers were regularly, if sparingly, found in Ohio). Only seven shorebird species are confirmed as ever having bred here, so most of our reports were of migrants, this summer decidedly mostly late rather than early. Shorebirds seem to touch down, lay eggs, and desert their nestlings in a great hurry, but then they must travel distances far greater on average than those traversed by warblers. Even among the waterfowl some strange late records emerged: our second June snow goose, our first June brant, and a veritable invasion of summering ruddy ducks.

We hope our readers have noticed improvements in *The Ohio Cardinal* recently. Over the past year, for example, we have been able to afford to publish and mail more pages—212—than ever before, all free of advertising, wasted space, or fillers. We have greatly improved the reproduction of photographs by using more expensive paper stock. We accompanied our last issue with a copy of the new OBRC Checklist of the Birds of Ohio. Over the past year, we've offered five essays on the status of Smith's longspur in Ohio and how to find it, a paper on interpreting radar images of bird migration, another on albinism in birds, two reprintings of lengthy seminal works on Ohio birds by J. P. Kirtland, and notes on an old record of wood storks in Hancock County, a leucistic rough-legged hawk in Scioto County, the brown-headed nuthatch in Geauga County, pomarine jaegers in Cuyahoga County, shorebird population estimates, nesting hermit thrushes in Hocking County, grassland birds in Butler County, and Toledo-area sightings from before 1940. In addition, each issue featured an extensive interpretive seasonal summary of bird reports from around the state, "Further Afield"—a regular column from Rob Harlan—, and quarterly updates on actions of the Records Committee. Upon request, we can furnish an index to all issues back to 1978, and copies/photocopies of back issues are available from the Publisher.

If you have enjoyed and learned from any feature in our recent issues, we encourage you to renew your subscription promptly when we remind you that the time to do so has come. The number of regular subscribers who apparently forget our repeated reminders is sometimes alarming. If yearly renewals seem too easy to overlook, consider subscribing for several years at a time.

Because we are considering no increase in the subscription rate, only having more subscribers will enable us to further improve the publication. Please recommend *The Ohio Cardinal* to your birding friends; send us their names and addresses and we'll mail them a sample issue. We promise to give you everything we can afford, and to further improve as our list of subscribers grows. Expanding this list will also increase the number of our contributors; articles, field notes, photographs and drawings, and seasonal sightings reports are the very heart of *The Ohio Cardinal*, and we eagerly solicit them from readers. An open and active community of birders statewide, communicating freely their experiences, expertise, and research, is our highest goal.

In *The Wilson Bulletin* in 1894, then sustained so much by Ohio ornithologists, the Secretary of the governing body issued the following appeal: "Do not complain because there is not more information under 'Notes.' You are to blame for the lack of those information-giving items. The officers cannot do all. We can only publish what you send us. Please remember this and try and give us something for our next Bulletin. A society cannot accomplish much unless each and every member takes an active working interest. There is work and plenty of it for each of us, so let us get at it and devote a little more of our time to the chapter...Fellow members, I appeal to you to 'do as you would be done by,' do not wait for others to send in their notes but send in yours, and let us see if we cannot make our next Bulletin an interesting one. Yours truly, William B. Caulk." Amen.

The Reports follow the taxonomic order and nomenclature of the 7th edition of the *AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998), including the 42nd (July 2000) and 43rd (July 2002) Supplements. Underlined names indicate those on the OBRC Review List; documentation is needed to add reports of these species to official state records, or to attributed reports herein. When supplied, county names appear *italicized*. Unless numbers are specified, sightings refer to single birds. Abbreviations, conventions, and symbols used in the Reports should be readily understood, with the possible exceptions of the following: BCSP=Buck Creek State SP in *Clark*; BIWA=Big Island WA in *Marion*; BSBO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CCE=Crane Creek estuary in Ottawa NWR; CPNWR=Cedar Point NWR in *Lucas*; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley National Park in *Cuyahoga* and *Summit*; EFSP=East Fork SP in *Clermont*; EHSP=East Harbor SP in *Ottawa*; *fide*= "in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; GPI=Gordon Park impoundment (Dike 14) in Cleveland; GRWA=Grand River WA in *Trumbull*; HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in *Lake*; Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh WA in *Wayne*; KPWA=Killdeer Plains WA in *Wyandot*; LMP=Lakeshore Metropark in *Lake*; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in *Ottawa* and *Lucas*; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in *Lucas*; Metzger=Metzger Marsh WA in

Lucas; MP=Metropark; m obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in *Hamilton*; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ODOW=Ohio Division of Wildlife; ONWR=Ottawa NWR in *Ottawa* and *Lucas*; ONWRC=monthly census at Ottawa NWR, reported by **E. Pierce**; Res=reservoir; Res'n=reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley WA in *Greene* and *Warren*; WA=Wildlife Area; ~≈approximately.

Corrigenda

The number of great blue herons at Magee Marsh WA on 19 May 2002 should be 39. Delete the 28 Apr 2002 record of gray-cheeked thrush. The 38 black-crowned night-herons in Sandusky's Turning Pt Isl were seen on 10 Mar 2002.

For the Record

Here are noteworthy reports from the previous period that for one reason or another escaped our notice for publication in the Spring 2002 issue of *The Ohio Cardinal*:

Horned Grebe: One in alt plumage was at ONWR 26 May (**B. Zwiebel**) and seen the following day there (**S. Cummings** *vide* **Zwiebel**).

Snowy Egret: One was near Wilmot in *Stark* 3 Apr (**P. Soehnen**).

Blue-winged Teal: High count was 300 at Killbuck 8 Apr (**M. Keim**).

Green-winged Teal: The 7 Apr ONWRC found 356 of this species.

Northern Pintail: On 7 Apr, 833 were tallied by the ONWRC.

Hooded Merganser: At Pleasant Hill Lk, 205 was a fine number on 2 Mar (**J. Herman**).


Sanderling: An inland sighting came from N of Shreve in *Wayne* 2 May (**B. Glick**).

Wilson's Snipe: The ONWRC of 3 Mar found two.

Sedge Wren: **G. Troyer** saw two in Berlin, *Holmes*, on 8 May, then heard two there a week later.

Lark Sparrow: **E. Tramer** remarked that the Oak Openings colony may be expanding; on 27 May he flushed a male from a field ½ mile E of the park, two miles from the nearest known nest sites. Unfortunately, the field was plowed and put into soybeans a few days later.

Lapland Longspur: One remained at ONWR as late as 5 May (ONWRC). Of the four previous published May records of this species, by far the most spectacular was a "crude estimate" of 10,000 near Toledo on 1 May 1949 by **Harold Mayfield**.

White-winged Crossbill: A pair persisted from late Dec as late as 3 May at a Massillon feeder (**T. Ross**). 

Summer 2002 Reports

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Common Loon: Several basic-plumaged birds sat out the season on the sidelines at Ohio reservoirs. **P. Haskins** reported one on Seneca Lk, *Guernsey/Noble*, on 10 Jun. **B. Cullen** noted a first-summer bird in *Wood* 16 Jun through at least 28 Jul. One at KPWA, first reported by **G. Miller** on 28 Jun, remained through the period, and a vocal duo summered near Findlay (**B. Hardesty**).

Pied-billed Grebe: The ONWRC tallied nine on 2 Jun, and the Magee census 22 on 21 Jul (**H&S Hiris**). At least one brood was at MWW, with reports of a hen with four chicks on 8 Jun (**F. Frick**), one with six on 14 Jun (**L. Brumbaugh**), then one with five on 20 Jun (**Frick**). Two hens with 12 young were seen at GRWA 12 Jun by **G. Leidy**, who found another with six young at Mill Stream Run Res'n 7-29 Jul. Fifteen birds including chicks were at Slate Run MP in *Pickaway* on 28 Jul (**J. Hammond**), and a pair spent the season at a *Muskingum* wetland this year (**J. McCormac**).

Horned Grebe: Exceedingly rare in summer. **M. Crofts** (*vide* **E. Pierce**) found one in breeding plumage at ONWR in Jun (this may have been that seen twice in late May there: see "For the Record"); stranger still was another in alternate plumage at KPWA's upground reservoir on 6 Jul (**R. Sempier**, ph), seen by several other observers in the week before and after.

American White Pelican: **J. Pogacnik** spotted two over Sandusky Bay on 22 Jun for the only summer report.



This alternate-plumaged horned grebe graced Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area's upground reservoir in Wyandot County for several days in July. It was photographed there on 6 July 2002 by Ron Sempier.