

larvae droppings striking leaves." One of the four series files for nocturnal flight calls of black-billed cuckoo reads, "Stereo cut with presumed ovenbird nocturnal flight call and distant chorus of green frogs."

There are a few species for which no known flight calls exist. Both loggerhead and northern shrikes each have a page of their own, but have no links and no information except a behavioral note that each is presumed to migrate primarily at night. It is not clear to me why these and other species not known to give flight calls merited inclusion in a reference guide for flight calls. The answer may lie in the fact that the authors freely acknowledge the novelty and incomplete nature of the available information. Or it may be that they found it best not to interrupt the taxonomic flow of all migratory landbirds of eastern North America by creating a separate list of these supposedly silent travelers. In some of these cases they have added discussion text. For example, the mourning dove page recognizes no known flight call, notes that the species migrates by day and night, and continues: "Although no vocalizations are given in flight, a distinctive wing whistle is often heard in flight during the day and has been heard from birds in nocturnal migration." For nine owl species, only two have sound files, barn owl and northern saw-whet owl, only one of which (barn owl) has a flight call. Another free admission of lack of confirming evidence lies in the extensive use of the word "presumed." It is a reminder that this guide is no definitive reference. The authors' two-fold intent, as stated in the introduction, is to provide not only a utility for advanced birders to increase their knowledge and enjoyment, but also to provide a "preliminary foundation" for further study of migration and bird populations.

For the advanced birder, the real challenge lies in applying this information this release provides in the field. When confronted with a suite of calls each between 50 and 100 milliseconds, only practice, patience, and familiarity will yield knowledge and enjoyment. This guide certainly provides the tools necessary to begin to untangle the web of seeps and zeeps, whistles and peeps that rain on a listener from the night sky. Whether this CD will be widely used as a research tool remains to be seen. Certainly any body of information is better and more stimulating than none at all. The body/focus of this work is truly unique. The authors deserve heaps of praise for their dedication, time and energy that culminated in this project. It is one of a kind and I suggest anyone interested in flight calls and nocturnal migration invest the 40 dollars before next migration. 🐦

A Disastrous Trip

W. F. Henninger

We reprint here a note from Rev. Henninger, a well-known birdman of the day, which appeared in The Wilson Bulletin (16:21-22) in 1904. Frank W. Langdon was a respected Cincinnati ornithologist, and W. Leon Dawson the author of The Birds of Ohio (1903). -Ed.

For several years it had been the desire of the writer to visit the famous Port Clinton (Ottawa County, O.) marshes to explore the bird world at the same place where Langdon had been so fortunate in 1880*. The afternoon of June 1st found me at Port Clinton, in a terrible rain and wind storm. Early the next morning found me out on the Portage River exploring the marshes for miles, then in the afternoon out on the Lake Erie waters. June 3rd, and 4th, on which day I was joined by Rev. W. Leon Dawson of Columbus, found me on Sandusky Bay, on the grounds of the Portage Gun Club and the Wynous Point Shooting Club. It was the same scene everywhere. The storm had carried the water higher inland than for the last eighteen years, and everything had been flooded. The only birds that had escaped destruction of their nests were the Red-winged Blackbird and the Long-billed Marsh Wren. All our searching was in vain. Not a Grebe, not a Least Bittern were seen, but few Coots and Gallinules heard. On Friday, Brother Dawson ascended the dizzy height of the water works tower at Sandusky, but as far as the eye could see, the waters spread over the Sandusky marshes. Under these condition [*sic*] it was a wonder that any birds had escaped, and our record of sixty-six species noted during our three days' stay will still compare favorably with Langdon's ninety, as seen in 1880.

Of interest were only a troop of five Bonaparte Gulls and four Semi-palmated Sandpipers on June 3rd, several Black Terns and sixteen Turnstones, seen on June 4th on Sandusky Bay. The Turnstones were found on a newly planted cornfield, and it was a pretty sight to watch them turning over the clods and catching their prey. It was in the club house of the Wynous Point Shooting Club that we found the most interesting things, stored away in the collection of birds, and enabling Brother Dawson and myself to bring home at least a few noteworthy records from this disastrous trip.

The first was a specimen (sex unknown) of *Chen hyperborea nivalis*, shot in the fall of 1886.

2. Trumpeter Swan 1877 and White-fronted Goose, shot in the fall of 1868.
3. White-winged Scoter, shot in fall of 1881.
4. Peregrine Falcon, shot in fall of 1882, by Colonel E. A. Scoville.
5. A hybrid, between *Anas obscura* and *Anas boschas*, killed in the fall of 1878, by Judge E. B. Sadler.
6. A pure Albino Redhead, killed in fall of 1880.
7. A partial Albino Coot, and
8. A partial Albino Wilson's Snipe, both killed in the fall of 1881, by C. J. Clark.

The Coot has many white feathers on the head and neck, also smaller white feathers on various parts of the body. The Wilson's Snipe has the upper part of both wings almost entirely white.

9. A Snowy Owl, shot in fall of 1881.

All of the Ohio Ducks were represented in this collection, among them the rare Gadwall in several specimens.

* *Ed. Note: Langdon's account "Summer Birds of a Northern Ohio Marsh" appeared in the Journal of the Cincinnati Society of Natural History (1880, 3:220-232). Wheaton calls it "A list of 95 species, for the most part briefly annotated or not, of Birds observed 'on the grounds of the Wynous' Point Shooting Club, near Port Clinton, Ottawa County, Ohio, during the week ending July 4, 1880.' Especially valuable for full notes of the nesting of Ardetta exilis, Gallinula galeata, Hydrochelidon lariformis, Podiceps cornutus (?), and Podilymbus podiceps" (1882, Report on the Birds of Ohio). Wheaton questioned Langdon's report of nesting horned grebes in part because his tentative identification was based on examination only of eggs and downy young. ↗*



This eastern bluebird was photographed carrying food on its way to a nest site in Wyandot County's Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area. Photo by Ron Sempier in July 2002.

Five Days Among the Islands of Lake Erie

Lynds Jones

The following notes appeared in The Wilson Bulletin of 1901, Vol 13:70-71, of which Jones was editor at the time. His The Birds of Ohio: A Revised Catalogue appeared in 1903, the same year in which Dawson's The Birds of Ohio was published, incorporating an introduction and analytical keys from Jones. -Ed.

Five days, from August 5th to the 9th, spent among the islands near the western end of Lake Erie yielded surprising results. We two insatiable bird cranks, Rev. W. L. Dawson and the writer, left Oberlin on the noon train and left Sandusky on the 3:30 boat and were landed on the wharf of Middle Bass Island at 6 o'clock. The work of recording the resident birds began at once. A large pond near the middle of the island was swarming with shore birds of eight species, not to mention a half dozen Great Blue Herons, nine King Rails, many Green Herons, a Bittern and a flock of fourteen Black Ducks. Swallows skimmed the water's surface and Common Terns winged across the island. A solitary Kingfisher sprung his rattle on us. This was a most propitious beginning. Yellow Warblers were apparently in full song.

I shall not take the time to go into detail now, but rather summarize the work done.

From Middle Bass we secured a row boat, and in it visited nine islands, involving about 30 miles of rowing, some of it in rough seas. Upon four of the islands Common Terns were still nesting in considerable numbers, while perhaps half of the birds flying about were in young plumage. On one island the Purple Martins formed a roost of nearly 2000 individuals. The best of evidence pointed to a considerable roost of blackbirds on one other island.

It is interesting to note that Carolina Wrens and Cardinals were seen and heard singing on East Sister Island, well into the Canadian boundary, while in Lorain county they are not at all numerous. Indeed, the Carolina Wren is a rare find at any time of year. On the other hand, Yellow Warblers were not recorded north of Middle Bass, where they were in full song. The physical conditions were apparently as favorable on East Sister as on Middle Bass, and certainly no less so on North Bass. Here, too, on these most northern islands the Red-winged Blackbirds were building in considerable numbers, although there was no suggestion of swampiness along the stony beach. True, the nests were placed low down in the brush.

The din of screaming Terns, calling Blackbirds and warbling Wrens was something to be remembered. Indeed, for hours after leaving the vicinity the same sounds mingled with the southing wind and roaring surf. The Terns were nowhere [*sic*] so numerous that they obscured the sky, but their numbers were uncountable on four of the smaller islands. Black Terns mingled freely with the Common Terns, but were evidently not breeding anywhere in the vicinity. Likewise the American Herring Gulls, few in numbers, were merely roosting out of harms way.

In all 58 species were recorded. The largest number, 42, were found on Middle Bass. On one rock reef but four species were present.

One cannot resist the conclusion that this chain of islands is a natural highway for the birds on their annual migrations. ↗