

Sixty Christmas Bird Counts—their results once again ably compiled by Ned Keller for this issue—took place during what were to prove the mildest weeks of the winter. As always, their results, presented here in full, play a unique role in describing the birds of the season, and in the Reports that follow we cite CBC reports only in especially significant cases rather than repeating them. Those looking for evidence of ravages of the West Nile virus—such as vindication of fall's often-alarmist predictions about plummeting raptor populations—will find decidedly mixed messages here.

The Reports follow the taxonomic order of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998), including the 42<sup>nd</sup> (July 2000) and 43<sup>rd</sup> (July 2002) Supplements. Underlined names of species indicate those on the OBRC Review List; documentation is needed to add reports of these species to official state records, or to attributed records in the Reports. 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 SP in Clark; BIWA=Big Island WA in Marion; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Cuyahoga and Summit; Dike 14—the Gordon Park impoundment in Cleveland; EFSP=East Fork SP in Clermont; EHSP=East Harbor SP in Ottawa; eop=end of the period, in this issue 28 Feb 2003; fide="in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; GLSM=Grand Lake St. Marys in Mercer and Auglaize; HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in Lake; KPWA=Killdeer Plains WA in Wyandot; LSR=Lakeshore Reservation in Lake; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in Lucas; MP=Metro Park; m obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in Hamilton; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ODOV=Ohio Division of Wildlife; ONWR=Ottawa NWR in Ottawa and Lucas; ONWRC=monthly bird census at ONWR; ph=photograph; PP=power plant; 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.

### Corrigenda


The blue-headed vireo and grasshopper sparrow sightings of 21 Jun 2002 (in Vol 25, No. 4) should have been credited to **Judy Hochadel**.

**Vic Fazio** pointed out to us an error in Vol 25, No. 4's treatment of mute swan: their first successful nest at Medusa Marsh dates from 1989, with another in 1994 (following a period in which fewer surveys were conducted), and nesting observed annually since that time; the first multiple broods were three in 2001, leading to last summer's five successful nestings. Success for mute swans, anyway.

### For the Record

Here are noteworthy reports from earlier dates in 2002 that for one reason or another escaped our notice:

**Cattle Egret:** One discovered in *Tuscarawas* on 7 Nov 2002 (**David E. Miller**) represented a first fall record for the area.

**Eurasian Wigeon:** A drake was discovered at ONWR on 3 Nov 2002 (**Tom Bartlett**, **Ned Bixler**) during the monthly census. 

## Winter 2002-03 Reports

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**Common Loon:** High count five at LSR 1 Dec (**J. Pogacnik**). One lingered at Huron 4 Jan (**G. Miller**). On 8 Jan, two were found trapped in shrinking open water, one in Rocky River, *Cuyahoga* (rescued 12 Jan fide **M. Stetz**), and one in *Union* (**J. Rockenbaugh**). A bird at Bayshore PP, *Lucas* on 21 Feb (**G. Links**) must have been an early migrant.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** A few toughed out mid-winter weather, with a remarkable 42 at Rocky Fork SP in *Highland* 4 Jan (**D. Dister**) and one 30 Jan in Zanesville (**C. Crook**).

**Horned Grebe:** A handful persisted. One was at Wellington Res, *Lorain* 2 Jan (**B. Morrison**), another at Rocky Fork SP 4 Jan (**D. Dister**), one at Avon Lake 31 Jan (**G. Miller**)-1 Feb (**V. Fazio**), and another at Camp Dennison, *Hamilton* 31 Jan (**S. Corbo**).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Notable was one 4-12 Jan (**B. Foppe**, m obs) at Camp Dennison.

**Northern Gannet:** Best numbers since 1947-48. First-year birds crashed inland in *Seneca* 3 Dec (**M. Rutger** fide **V. Fazio**, expired 4 Dec) and in *Ashland* (**N. Thomas** fide **T. Leslie**, expired 10 Dec). An imm at *Lorain* on the late date of 10 Jan was documented for the OBRC. Undocumented reports of other imm birds came from *Lake* 1 and 6 Dec and *Cuyahoga* 12 Dec.

**American White Pelican:** Quite unexpected was an imm seen 20 (**J. Stenger**) and 21 Jan in Dayton (**B. Foppe**); likely the same bird was found (**J. Hays**) over the Ohio R (thus in Kentucky) 24 Jan. Conceivably, the same bird was involved in an earlier sighting 24 Dec at GLSM (**E. Stahl** fide **K. Wolters**).



Nearly ice-bound in Cuyahoga County, this common loon was rescued and later released in Lake Erie. Photo by Gary Meszaros on 11 January 2003.



This first-year northern gannet was found in an Ashland County field on 4 December 2002. It was taken to a rehab center, but died six days later. Photo by Tim Leslie.



**Double-crested Cormorant:** A few stayed at warm-water outlets along Lk Erie, as three at Lorain 14 Jan (**J. Pogacnik**) or at Avon Lk 6 Feb (**P. Lozano**), or in open water further south, as one at EFSP 18 Jan (**J. Lehman**) or in *Morgan* 28 Jan (**C. Crook**).

**American Bittern:** **M. Troyer** documented one at Mt. Eaton, *Wayne* on 14 Dec; **S. Richards** found another in 8" of snow at Willard WA in *Huron* 29 Dec.

**Great Blue Heron:** Notable were 82 at Medusa Marsh, *Erie* 19 Feb (**P. Sherwood fide V. Fazio**); five nest sites had been claimed at the CVNP as early as 2 Feb (**D&A Chasar**).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Traditional Toledo winter roosts yielded only six (Toledo CBC 15 Dec). An adult was along the Cuyahoga R in Cleveland 28 Feb (**L. Gardella**).

**Black Vulture:** **L. Yoder** found four in NW *Coshocton* 15 Dec. CBCs for w. *Hamilton* found 19 on 22 Dec (**N. Keller**) and for Cincinnati 16 on 29 Dec (**J. Stenger**). **J. Fry** had 15 in *Fairfield* 13 Jan, **H. Nagy** 56 near the Granville, *Licking* roost 15 Jan, **D. Dister** seven huddled by the Hueston Wds SP lodge chimney 18 Jan, **B. Foppe** 30 from a *Clermont* roost 25 Jan, and **L. Dornan** ~12 near the New Concord, *Muskingum* roost 26 Feb.

**Turkey Vulture:** Late migrants included 30 at Hueston Wds SP 1 Dec (**J. Stenger**) and one in Trumbull 8 Dec (**D&J Hochadel**). In the absence of reports from *Athens*, the high count was 115, from Millersburg (CBC 14 Dec). Other roost counts included 23 near Granville 15 Jan (**H. Nagy**) and 20 near New Concord 21 Feb (**E. Snively**). Bizarre was one over Gordon Pk in Cleveland 3 Jan (**G. Leidy**).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** One was at Clear Fk Res, *Richland* 12 Jan (**J. Herman fide S. Snyder**). Eight on 9 Feb at Cowan Lk, *Clinton* (**E. Roush**) ended at 10 there 15 Feb (**P. Gardner**).

**Snow Goose:** ONWR had 40 on 8 Dec, none on 5 Jan, 12 on 2 Feb, and 29 on 3 Mar for the census. At MWW, 34 were seen 17 Dec (**F. Frick**), and in *Delaware* 11 on 14 Feb (**B. Shively**). Forty-eight others were scattered over the period in *Clermont*, *Clinton*, *Franklin*, *Lake*, *Muskingum*, *Ross*, *Warren*, and *Wayne*.

**Ross's Goose:** An adult was s. of Dayton 11 (**D. Dister**) through 26 Jan (**M. Busam**, m obs); documentation is with the OBRC.

**Mute Swan:** Springfield Lk in *Summit* held 26 on 9 Dec (**B&D Lane**), the w. *Hamilton* CBC recorded its first ever 22 Dec, 49 were tallied for the Gypsum CBC of 1 Jan, 15 along the Great Miami R was a record high 25 Jan (**D. Dister**), 20 were in *Morgan* 28 Jan (**C. Crook**), and 23 in *Erie* 15 Feb (**V. Fazio**); this exotic species is doing all too well.

**Tundra Swan:** Over 1200 reported the first week of Dec statewide. Later ONWR, where some swans winter, had 81 on 8 Dec, 450 on 5 Jan, 21 on 2 Feb, and 93 on 2 Mar (ONWRC). Later birds may have dispersed from this or other locations, witness 31 on the Gypsum CBC of 1 Jan, 52 over Fairport Hbr 4 Jan (**G. Meszaros**), eight on Lake Pippen, *Portage* 6 Jan (**L. Rosche**), seven at a pond in *Clinton* 13 Jan (**L. Gara**), six on the monthly Kelleys Isl census of 25 Jan (**T. Bartlett**), five in *Champaign* on 25 Jan (**D. Overacker**), 13 over the CVNP on 29 Jan (**G. Leidy**), eight at Sheldon Marsh SNP 1 Feb (**S. Cagan**), and three at Killbuck Marsh WA 2 Feb (**S. Snyder**). Nine adults at BCSP on 21 Feb (**D. Overacker**) were on the way to the breeding grounds.

**Wood Duck:** The few later reports came from the south, so a drake near Wooster, *Wayne* on 15 Jan was noteworthy (**S. Snyder**).

**Gadwall:** Lingered southward, with 120 at EFSP 7 Dec (**N. Cade**) and 80 there 18 Jan (**J. Lehman**). A few over-wintered, witness six in *Champaign* 25 Jan (**D. Overacker**), 15 at Camp Dennison 1 Feb (**A. Oliver**), and 25 in *Greene* the same day (**J. Brown**). Up north, on 5 Jan the ONWR CBC had two and **J. Pogacnik** three at LSR.

**American Wigeon:** A few were found mid-winter in open water, such as one in Zanesville 30 Jan (**C. Crook**). Double figures over-wintered at Camp Dennison (m. obs).

**American Black Duck:** The ONWRC tallied 300 on 8 Dec but only single figures thereafter. The Columbus CBC counted 728 on 15 Dec, and ~900 were in fields in SW *Erie* 14 Jan (**V. Fazio**). EFSP in *Clermont* harbored 150 on 2 Feb (**N. Keller**), and by 18 Feb 1250+ could be found in *Erie* (**Fazio**).

**Mallard:** The fourth most numerous CBC bird at 38,242. High count at one location was 6500+ in SW *Erie* later on 14 Jan (**V. Fazio**).

**Northern Shoveler:** Persisted through 10 Jan in double-digit numbers at Camp Dennison in *Hamilton* (m obs), and **B. Morrison** discovered one at Summit Lk on 8 Jan.

**Northern Pintail:** Small numbers 4 and 25 Jan at Castalia were expected (**C. Caldwell**), but four drakes at Welborn Res, *Portage* 1 Jan were unusual (**B. Morrison**). Small numbers wintered at Camp Dennison (m obs) with a peak of 12 on 13 Feb (**B. Foppe**).

**Green-winged Teal:** Some were at Camp Dennison through 10 Jan, when 12 were seen (**S. Reeves**). At The Wilds, *Muskingum* on 31 Jan, **B. Morrison** noted four drakes, and **J. Watts** later that day eight.

**Canvasback:** No huge aggregations. At LSR, 315 passed by on 1 Dec (**J. Pogacnik**), ~700 were off Bayshore PP on 6 Jan (**G. Miller**), and on 1 Feb, **V. Fazio** tallied 200+ at Avon Lk. Up to half a dozen wintered at Camp Dennison (m obs). At EFSP on 2 Feb, 16 may have represented early migrants (**N. Keller**). Only 96 on CBCs.

**Redhead:** No large flocks developed, the CBCs tallying only 14 statewide. Over-wintering birds at Camp Dennison peaked at four 10 Jan (**S. Reeves**). On the move by 26 Feb, with ~50 at Avon Lk (**P. Lozano**) and 134 on 27 Feb at EFSP (**H. Armstrong**).

**Ring-necked Duck:** The Cincinnati CBC found a local record 558 on 29 Dec. At Wellington Res in *Lorain*, ~200 remained on 2 Jan (**S. Snyder**), and 26 were at Adams Lk SP in *Adams* 24 Jan (**D. Overacker**). Ten to 20 over-wintered at Camp Dennison, with a high of 30 on 13 Feb (**B. Foppe**). **B. Royse** kept track of a wintering flock on the Scioto R in Columbus that numbered as high as 150 in Jan and Feb. Up to six over-wintered at Lk Pippen in *Portage* (**L. Rosche**), who called 120+ there on 26 Feb "incredible."

**Greater Scaup:** ODOW aerial surveys found scaups in higher than normal numbers, though other duck spp were down. Close to shore, numbers of this species were less striking, with a high report of 170+ at Avon Lk 18 Feb (**V. Fazio**). The CBCs found only 190 statewide. Greaters made a good showing in the southwest, with many single-digit reports and 16 in the Great Miami R in *Butler* 9 Feb (**M. Busam**) and 20 at EFSP 26 Feb (**F. Renfrow**).

**Lesser Scaup:** High count 600+ on 4 Jan at Huron harbor (**B. Whan**), and numbers low, at least within sight of shore, even at warm-water outlets. Six or fewer were regular along the Great Miami R throughout Feb (m obs). Twenty at EFSP 26 Feb (**F. Renfrow**) may well have been returning north.



This canvasback lounged around in the warm water off E. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street in Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, on 25 January 2003. Digiscoped photo by Joe Hammond.



**King Eider:** The last report of the imm male from last season came from Mentor on 18 Dec (S. Snyder).

**Common Eider:** An imm fem, first seen 3 Nov in Fairport Hbr, completed molting and was last seen as ice was closing in the harbor 13 Jan (J. Pogacnik).

**Harlequin Duck:** No Lk Erie reports. A female or imm spent 22-29 Dec in SW Toledo (M. Anderson, m obs), and probably the same bird reappeared at Weir Rapids on the Maumee 4 Jan (S. Lauer). S. Tackett (fide C. Mathena) found a fem and male in Dayton on 12 Jan, both were relocated regularly through 26 Jan (M. Busam).

**Surf Scoter:** About 25 reported, all along the Lk Erie shore, with high counts of 11 at Rocky River 9 Dec (P. Lozano) and of five at Avon Lk 8 Feb (B. Whan), where two on 26 Feb were the latest reported (Lozano).

**White-winged Scoter:** Fewer than 20 reported, most in Lk Erie. High count three 23 Feb at Avon Lk (J. Kuenzli). Inland, a fem was in Columbus 19 Feb (R. Thorn) and another on the same date (C. Mathena fide L. Theriault) through the 23<sup>rd</sup> (J. Lehman) in Dayton.

**Black Scoter:** About 15 statewide, all from Lk Erie. High count 10 on 9 Dec at Rocky River (P. Lozano), the latest 25 Jan in Cleveland (R. Rickard), with none reported in Feb.

**Long-tailed Duck:** All reports: two EFSP 4 Dec (B. Stanley), Lk Erie Islands census 16 Dec (J. Pogacnik), Gypsum CBC 1 Jan (V. Fazio), 4 Jan Bay View (C. Caldwell), 4-10 Jan Lorain (D. Sanders, m obs), 6-8 Jan Summit Lk (G. Bennett, B. Morrison), 15 Jan-6 Feb Avon Lk (L. Dornan, P. Lozano), 24 Jan Cincinnati (J. Hays), and 1-22 Feb in Butler (S. Fitter fide R. Cottrell, M. Busam).

**Bufflehead:** A near-record high count of 2143 on the Lk Erie Islands CBC 16 Dec was followed by monthly census counts there of 984 22 Dec and 545 25 Jan (T. Bartlett). Over-wintered at Camp Dennison, with a peak of 15 there on 2 Jan (B. Foppe). Ten were on the Great Miami R, Butler on 2 Feb (M. Busam).

**Common Goldeneye:** Unremarkable, with a high count of 2668 on the ONWR CBC of 5 Jan. At Bayshore PP in Lucas, 1050 were present 21 Feb (G. Links). Two were at the mouth of Killbuck Creek 28 Feb for an unusual local record (L. Dornan).

**Hooded Merganser:** R. Thorn counted 150 at Hoover Res 21 Dec, and L. Rosche 20 at Fairport Hbr 7 Jan. Their over-wintering numbers at Camp Dennison peaked at 10 on 10 Jan (S. Reeves).



This pair of harlequin ducks spent 10 days along the Great Miami River in Dayton, Montgomery County, this season. Photo by Frank Renfrow on 18 January 2003.



The Cedar Point causeway in Erie County hosted a photogenic flock of common goldeneyes on 23 January 2003. Photo by Gary Meszaros.

**Common Merganser:** The largest counts were 2750 off Huron 4 Jan (B. Whan), 1150 off ONWR 6 Jan (V. Fazio), and 3650+ in Erie 13 Jan (Fazio).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** High count came from 5 Jan, when 5274 passed LSR (J. Pogacnik). V. Fazio counted 4600+ over a couple of miles of lakefront in Erie on 9 Jan. Numbers fell off drastically as the Lake froze thereafter.

**Ruddy Duck:** Sparsely reported from the usual spots, the highest number by far the 85 on the 1 Jan Gypsum CBC. Four were around 5 Jan for the ONWR CBC, and L. Rosche reported up to six wintering at Lk Phippen in Portage.

**Osprey:** E. Snively reported the first returning bird at The Wilds in Muskingum 27 Feb.

**Bald Eagle:** Continues to increase. Notable counts included 63 on an unspecified date during the first half of Jan in Muddy Creek Bay adjacent to Sandusky Bay during an ODOW aerial survey, 12 (four ad) in one spot in river bottoms in Scioto 13 Feb (D. Todt fide B. Sparks), and a record six for the Kelleys Island census 25 Jan (T. Bartlett). ODOW's informal Jan survey garnered 304 birds in 45 counties, with 167 adult birds and 137 immatures.

**Northern Harrier:** Present in expected numbers: CBCs found 285, vs 200 last year, 295 the year before, and 315 the year before that.

**Northern Goshawk:** One was in northern Union on 26 Jan (V. Fazio).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Nearly unanimously, observers, contrary to widespread alarms about impacts of the West Nile virus on raptors in Ohio, report this and other hawks are flourishing. L. Rosche called it "very widespread, and continues to increase in NE Ohio."

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Perhaps a bit less numerous than usual, but with decent numbers in the south. High count was eight, at The Wilds in Muskingum 5 Feb (H. Nagy).

**Golden Eagle:** Present in winter continuously since 1996, eagles at The Wilds in Muskingum numbered three, one ad and two imm (A. Parker, m obs).

**Merlin:** ~Twenty reported statewide, with the high count three at Calvary Cem in Cleveland (L. Gardella, 26 Jan). A bird returned to Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati on 9 Jan (N. Cade).

**Virginia Rail:** Spring-fed wetlands harbored several. The Millersburg CBC of 14 Dec located three in Holmes, as has become traditional. At SVWA, D. Dister discovered one 18 Jan, and by 26 Jan J. Lehman had found three at this site as well.

**Common Moorhen:** Highly unusual was one seen and documented by A. Barry et al. below the Hoover Res dam 15 Dec.



Cleveland's Calvary Cemetery in Cuyahoga County was a wintering location for up to three merlins this season. This one was photographed there by Gary Meszaros.



**American Coot:** Hung on at Wellington Res in Lorain, with 107 there 3 Jan (V. Fazio) and 40 on 12 Jan (S. Snyder). L. Gardella counted over 100 in the Cuyahoga R in Cleveland 24 Feb. Like many water birds, persisted into mid-Jan in good numbers at Camp Dennison in Hamilton, with 800 on 7 Dec (N. Cade) and 400 on 9 Jan (F. Renfrow).

**Sandhill Crane:** Over 2000 birds reported in western Ohio during the first two weeks of December, with a high count of ~500 over Darke on the 10<sup>th</sup> (fide R. Schieltz). Few reports were made thereafter, the most interesting of two in Pickaway on 4 Feb (J. Fry).

**Killdeer:** CBCs totaled 89, versus 960 last winter. Most deep-winter reports came from the south, with a single-site high of five from Butler 19 Jan (M. Busam). On 21 Feb, birds appeared in the north, with two at Bayshore (G. Links) and perhaps the same two at MBSP (V. Fazio).

**Purple Sandpiper:** Scarce. One brought observers to HBSP/Fairport Hbr from 1 (B. Barchus) through 19 Dec (G. Bennett). Two were seen on the Lk Erie Islands CBC of 16 Dec (J. Pogacnik), and N. Barber glimpsed one at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St in Cleveland 19 Dec.

**Dunlin:** Two lingered at Walnut Beach, Ashtabula 7 Dec (G. Leidy).

**Wilson's Snipe:** High count was eight for the Millersburg CBC in Holmes 14 Dec. The same day four were at the Cuyahoga airport for B. Finkelstein. D. Overacker found one in Clark on 28 Dec.

**American Woodcock:** A rare mid-Jan report came from Woodbury WA in Coshocton (D. St. John fide R. Harlan).

**Jaeger sp.:** B. Barchus et al. spotted a distant jaeger at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St in Cleveland 1 Dec.

**Little Gull:** Sparse. J. Pogacnik had one adult 1 Dec and two 19 Jan at LSR, as well as two each at Eastlake PP on 13 and 19 Jan. Another was at Fairport Hbr 21 Dec (C. Holt fide L. Rosche).

**Black-headed Gull:** An adult seen 19 Jan at LSR was documented for the OBRC.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** Peaked at ~6000 at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St in Cleveland 14 Dec (L. Rosche). By Jan, peak numbers were ~1200 in Lucas (G. Miller) and 1082 at LSR the 19<sup>th</sup> (J. Pogacnik). A few, as many as 30+ (Rosche, 19 Jan) haunted E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St through Jan. Inland, remarkable were two at Rocky Fork SP on 4 Jan (D. Dister) and one at EFSP 25 Jan (D. Graham).

**Ring-billed Gull:** Began a retreat from Lk Erie in late Dec, and the w. Hamilton CBC could record a record 2455 birds on the 22<sup>nd</sup> (N. Keller). Last year the CBCs tallied 163,633, and this year 130,000, but numbers were way down after mid-Jan. Lynds Jones said in the *Wilson Bulletin* a hundred years ago that "the species has been all but unknown in Ohio," and such was the case once again after it got really cold.



This purple sandpiper occupied the breakwall at Headlands Beach State Park in Lake County on 8 December 2002. Photo by Gary Meszaros.

**California Gull:** An adult at Lorain 14 Jan was documented for the OBRC.

**Herring Gull:** Far more prominent than usual at the Lakeshore. Last year's CBCs counted 10,645, but this year 44,460, and they became more dominant as the winter progressed.

**Thayer's Gull:** Birds of all age classes widely reported from the Maumee R rapids to Ashtabula. High count three 22 Jan at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St in Cleveland (B. Winger).

**Iceland Gull:** Birds of all age classes, dominated by young ones, widely reported from the Maumee R rapids to Ashtabula. High count four, 19 Jan at Avon Lk PP (B. Whan) and 22 Jan at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St in Cleveland (V. Fazio).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Present in good numbers. M. Anderson had four on 15 Dec in Toledo, and N. Barber four in Cleveland the same day. High count 10-12 in the Sandusky Bay area 1 Jan (V. Fazio), with eight in Lorain 14 Jan (J. Pogacnik) and six at Avon Lk 19 Jan (B. Whan).

**Glaucous Gull:** Many seen across the Lakefront, with high counts of 12 at Avon Lk 18 Feb (V. Fazio), eight-10 in Cleveland 24 Jan (K. Metcalf), and eight there 22 Jan (Fazio). Birds younger than adults predominated, as usual.

**Great Black-backed Gull:** As long as open water remained nearshore in the western basin, as many as 750 could be found near Sandusky Bay (V. Fazio, 1 Jan), but later the remarkable numbers were eastward, with nearly 1300 in Lorain 14 Jan (J. Pogacnik), ~900 in Cleveland on 24 Jan (K. Metcalf), and 1040 at Avon Lk 18 Feb (Fazio).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** The E. 72<sup>nd</sup> St bird in Cleveland stayed through 12 Dec (G. Miller).

**Common Tern:** One straggled by LSR on 8 Dec (J. Pogacnik).

**Long-eared Owl:** G. Leidy had one at Dike 14 on 14 Dec, the Toledo CBC another the following day, and J. Pogacnik birds on 19 Dec and 12 Jan in Lake. One was at ONWR 21 Dec (J&J Volker) through 3 Jan (D. Frisk), J. Grabmeier found one at Lake La Su An WA in Williams 28 Dec, G. Miller one at KPWA 3 Jan (where T. Archdeacon found five 16 Jan), and K. Schieltz (fide R. Schieltz) another in Darke 14-20 Feb.

**Short-eared Owl:** First found at KPWA 9 Dec (R. Troutman), peaking at only three on 3 Feb (D. Graham). Birds at the VOA in Butler peaked at four on 16 Jan (S. Reeves). Five were at BIWA on 16 Jan (T. Archdeacon). The high count was six near Elkton in Columbiana 19 Jan (B&D Lane). One was in Warren on 21 Feb (A. Morrison).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Only one at a time could be found at KPWA 3 Jan (G. Miller) through 3 Feb (D. Graham). One stayed put in Delaware 20 Dec-6 Feb (J. Fry), and another was reliable at Gilmore Ponds, Butler 2 Feb-eop (M. Busam, m obs).



White-winged gulls put on a show at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street in Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, this season. This second-winter glaucous gull was digiscoped there by Joe Hammond on 25 January 2003.



**Rufous Hummingbird:** Unprecedented were eight from the previous period: the *Carroll* fem through 5 Dec (**D. Reed** fide **S. Snyder**), the *Franklin* fem through 6 Dec (**S. Langendorfer**), the *Hamilton* male through 8 Dec (**G&K Rodocker**), the *Clermont* fem through 28 Dec (**C. Johnson**), the *Wooster* fem through 4 Jan (**S. Snyder**), the *Adams* fem through 8 Jan (**C. Bedel**), the *Kidron* male through 14 Jan (**R. Vandersall**), and the *Logan* fem setting a state record for late stay of 18 Jan (**D. Daniel**).

**Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird:** A hatch-year male remained in *Madeira*, *Hamilton* through 29 Dec (fide **A. Chartier**).

**Hummingbird sp.:** Videotape from 21 Jan of a hummingbird in *Oak Hill*, *Jackson* was further unidentifiable; the bird had been present "all fall" (**M. Ball**).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Plentiful this season, likely as a result of a good mast crop, especially red and pin oaks and beech. High count 10 in *Clermont* 15 Dec (**J. Hays**). This season's CBCs amassed 293 birds, versus 154, 115, and 198 for the previous three.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Plentiful as well. Twenty-two reported, mostly in the southern half of the state, with the northernmost in *Lakewood* 21 Jan (**S. Wright**).

**Eastern Phoebe:** Reports after mid-Dec came only from the southernmost reaches of the state, and none from Jan there, but remarkable was a new late record for the Toledo area set by one seen near the airport on 5 Jan (**M. Anderson**).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Seen by m obs during the period, the KPWA individual was last reported by **R. Schieltz** et al. on 5 Jan.

**Northern Shrike:** Somewhat less numerous this winter, reported in nine counties as far south as *Wyandot* (29 Jan **J. Brumfield**) and *Holmes* (24 Feb **L. Yoder**).

**Blue Jay:** 108 on the 5 Jan ONWR CBC was a record high locally.

**American Crow:** 12,000 were in Springfield for the Clark CBC, and 25,000 counted at the Cincinnati roost 23 Jan (**F. Renfrow**). The 1999-2000 Ohio CBCs counted 69,079, the 2000-01 CBCs 68,959, last year's 71,013, and this year's 39,978.

**Horned Lark:** High counts included a flock of 455 in *Sandusky* 6 Jan (**V. Fazio**) and ~1300 in western *Hamilton* on 15 Feb (**P. Wharton**).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Fourteen reported, nearly all from areas where this scarce breeder nested. The CBCs totaled 59 reports, vs. 433 last winter.

**Brown Creeper:** High single-location counts came mostly from Jan, topped by 6-7 at the Greenlawn Dam in Columbus on the 15<sup>th</sup> (**R. Thorn**); this winter's CBC numbers far outdistanced recent ones with 518.

**Carolina Wren:** The ONWR CBC reported a local record-high 24 birds on 5 Jan. Many reporters remarked on this species' ability to survive in deep snow during this season.

**Winter Wren:** Fairly widespread through the period, with most birds to the south. Three were at Dike 14, however, on 3 Jan (**G. Leidy**), and two on 15 Jan and one on 19 Jan at Mosquito Res (**C. Babyak**).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** High single-point count 10 in *Cuyahoga* 4 Jan (**G. Leidy**).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** Jan reports included two in Rocky River the 12<sup>th</sup> (**N. Walesch**), one in Castalia the 13<sup>th</sup> (**J. Larson**), and one in *Pike* the 30<sup>th</sup> (**G. Miller**).

**Hermit Thrush:** Twenty-five reported outside of the CBCs was above average in a harsh winter. Not all were in the south, witness two in the CVNP 12 Jan (**D&A Chasar**), and one the following day in Castalia (**J. Larson**). Further south however, **J. Grabmeier**'s bird in Columbus 21 Dec was found dead 6 Feb.

**American Robin:** Most who mentioned the species regarded it as unusually abundant this winter.

**Gray Catbird:** The CBC total was 20 birds; for the previous three much milder winters the totals were eight, three, and four. The latest reported came from SVWA on 26 Jan (**J. Lehman**); there were no Feb reports.

**Northern Mockingbird:** Continued to be reported in steadily increasing numbers in the northern regions of the state.

**Brown Thrasher:** Ten reports other than the CBCs, mostly in southern counties, but one was in *Madison* 18 Jan (**B. Sparks**) and one at HBSP 16 Feb (**L. Rosche**).

**European Starling:** Their numbers constituted nearly 20% of all birds on the CBCs. They're declining in Europe, and we stand ready to supply replacements as needed.

**American Pipit:** This species may winter here more often than we detect it; snow cover this season may have concentrated them where they could more easily be found. The CBCs found 239 (vs. 108 last year, 59 the year before), and over-wintering seemed likely at least in *Fairfield*, where **J. Watts** had a flock of 33 on both 3 and 20 Jan.

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** A fifth winter Ohio record was a bird in *Holmes* 18 (**N. Lowe** et al.) through 19 Jan (**B. Morrison**). Subspecies was not documented, and photos seem inconclusive in this regard.

**Pine Warbler:** An extraordinary five birds were reported: in Columbus 9 Dec (**P. Gardner**), Findley SP 2 Jan (**B. Morrison**), 3 Jan Gordon Pk in Cleveland (**G. Leidy**), 3 Jan and previous ~two weeks in *Ross* (**B. Bosstic**), and also in *Ross* 30 Jan (**G. Miller**).

**Ovenbird:** A bird frequented a Columbus feeder 3-4 Dec (**D. Snapp**, ph) for a very rare record.

**American Tree Sparrow:** Normal in numbers and distribution. **L. Rosche** reported that "hundreds, if not thousands" wintered in *Portage*.

**Field Sparrow:** In good numbers, with counts highest from CBCs in the southernmost counties, as well as in *Holmes* and *Tuscarawas*.

**Savannah Sparrow:** Ragersville birders found 24 of the state's total of 28 for the CBCs. **B. Morrison** had one at KPWA 5 Jan and another 20-30 Jan in *Stark*. Two were in *Fairfield* 27 Feb (**J. Watts**).

**Fox Sparrow:** **R. Thorn** reported a very dusky-plumaged bird at Blacklick Wds MP in *Franklin* 4 Dec (later ph **P. Raver**) that appeared to be of one of the western races. Further north, one was in *Stark* 22 Jan (**P. Soehnlen**), one in *Parma* 15 Jan-eop (**D. Le Gallee**), and another in *Twinsburg*, *Summit* 16 Jan (**L. Rosche**).



This ovenbird was a little tardy in leaving Columbus, Franklin County. It frequented a feeder 3-4 December 2002 and was photographed by Doug Snapp.



**Lincoln's Sparrow:** One was satisfactorily documented for a rare record on the Cincinnati CBC 29 Dec (**J. Stenger**).

**Swamp Sparrow:** Found in good numbers in the southern counties and the Lk Erie marshes, and during Jan to the 26<sup>th</sup> at N. Chagrin MP (**K. Metcalf**) and on 2 Feb in the CVNP (**G. Leidy**).

**Lapland Longspur:** In fair numbers in the north, though large *Marion* flocks near KPWA failed to materialize. In the south, two were in *Preble* 26 Dec (**S. Reeves**) and w. *Hamilton* numbers peaked at five 15 Feb (**P. Wharton**). CBCs tallied only 208.

**Snow Bunting:** Resembled the previous species in occurrences. The southernmost report came from *Delaware*, with two on 25 Dec (**M. England**). **V. Fazio's** winter censuses found 140 in *Sandusky* 12 Jan, 315 in *Henry* on 14 Jan, and ~110 in *Wood* on 18 Jan.

**Red-winged Blackbird:** **L. Deininger** had 1000+ in *Wayne* on 9 Dec. Five singing males at MBSP 21 Feb (**V. Fazio**) were probably newly arrived.

**Eastern Meadowlark:** Sadly scarce as usual lately, with a high count of 20 on 19 Feb in *Hardin* (**V. Fazio**).

**Rusty Blackbird:** As usual, more plentiful to the south, with high counts of 75+ at Gilmore Ponds, *Butler* on 1 Jan (**M. Busam**) and 80+ in *Clermont* 23 Jan (**D. Morse**). The farthest north were two in *Twinsburg*, *Summit* 16 Jan (**L. Rosche**).

**Common Grackle:** The high count was ~15,000 at Camp Dennison, *Hamilton* on 12 Jan (**J. Hays**).

**Purple Finch:** Unusually scarce. The Cincinnati CBC, for example, found not a one, though they'd recorded it on 54 of the 55 previous counts (**J. Stenger**).

**Pine Siskin:** Scattered reports totaled fewer than 40 statewide, the high count of four coming from the Cincinnati CBC (**J. Stenger**).


**House Sparrow:** The ONWR CBC fell short this year, finishing fourth (after three counts in Canadian prairie provinces) with only 4694 house sparrows. Some consolation came from their 132 birds per party-hour, highest in N. America for the species.

## Contributors

We are grateful to the following birders who reported observations during the season: Chuck Anderson, Matt Anderson, Thomas Archdeacon, Hank Armstrong, Mary Ball, Nick Barber, Brian Barchus, Anna Lea Berry, Tom Bartlett, Chris Bedel, Ken Beers, Greg Bennett, Dan Best, Jeff Brown, Lori Brumbaugh, Don Burlett, Susan Burt, Mike Busam, Jason Cade, Neill Cade, Craig Caldwell, Allen Chartier, Ann Chasar, Dwight Chasar, Liz Clingman, Tim Colburn, Bob Conlon, Sam Corbo, Rick Cottrell, Tim Cottrill, Rich Cressman, Chris Crook, Becky Cullen, Donna Daniel, Leo Deininger, David Dister, Laura Dornan, Marcus England, Dave English, Jason Estep, Bob Evans, Ginny Fantetti, Vic Fazio, Duane Ferris, Bob Finkelstein, Sam Fitter, Bob Foppe, Frank Frick, Dan Frisk, Jim Fry, Larry Gara, Paul Gardner, Jeff Grabmeier, Darlena Graham, Don Hadley, Joe Hammond, Betty Hardesty, Rob



The first day of the season was a good one in a Columbus, Franklin County, backyard. This fox sparrow was digiscoped there on 1 December 2002 by Joe Hammond.

Harlan, Jim Haw, Jeff Hays, Stan Hedeon, John Herman, Hank Hiris, Sally Hiris, Dave Hochadel, Judy Hochadel, Craig Holt, Jean Hoffman, Dave Horn, Cindy Johnson, Ned Keller, Ron Kolde, John Kuenzli, Bob Lane, Denise Lane, Jason Larson, Steve Lauer, Dave Le Gallee, Jay Lehman, Gabe Leidy, Tim Leslie, Greg Links, Doreene Linzell, Paula Lozano, Carol Lyle, Charlotte Mathena, Jim McCormac, Kathy McDonald, Kevin Metcalf, Greg Miller, Kevin Mills, Aimee Morrison, Ben Morrison, Donald Morse, Heather Nagy, Lach Ohman, Ann Oliver, Doug Overacker, Al Parker, Haans Petruschke, Ed Pierce, Ken Phillips, Bob Placier, John Pogacnik, Dale Reed, Scott Reeves, Frank Renfrow, Steve Richards, Richard Rickard, Bill Rinehart, Keith Robinson, John Rockenbaugh, Linda Romine, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Ed Roush, Larry Rosche, Mona Rutger, Dave St. John, Willie Sarno, Andrea Scheidler, Regina Schieltz, Ron Sempier, Paul Sherwood, Bill Shively, Troy Shively, Tim Smart, Elaine Snively, Su Snyder, Doug Snapp, Chris Spagnoli, Brad Sparks, Ernest Stahl, Bill Stanley, Jay Stenger, Michael Stetz, Sue Tackett, Rob Thorn, Dave Todt, Elliot Tramer, Roger Troutman, Melvin Troyer, Dick Tuttle, Tom Uhlman, Ruth Vandersall, Jack Volker, Janet Volker, Sandy Wagner, Suzanne Wagner, Norm Walesch, John Watts, Bill Whan, Pete Whan, Paul Wharton, Karen Wolters, John Yochum, Leroy Yoder. We gratefully acknowledge information received from the editors of *The Bobolink* and internet resources managed by Vic Fazio, Ned Keller, and Chuck Anderson. Special thanks to Allen Chartier for tireless labors and first-rate documentations for the season's hummingbird records. 



Unusual-appearing gulls were frequently encountered at E. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street in Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, during the big freeze this season. This beast, a possible adult glaucous gull X herring gull hybrid, was photographed there in January 2003 by Gary Meszaros.