

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	Please send all reports to: Bill Whan 223 E. Tulane Road Columbus, OH 43202 billwhan@columbus.rr.com
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On the Cover:

William Hull captured the best photos of Ohio's first sooty tern, including this one showing the diagnostic underwings and facial markings, on 15 July at East Fork Lake in Clermont County.

Summer 2005 Overview and Reports

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Unusually hot and dry, the summer produced predictable effects on birds and bird sightings. Cleveland got few cool Lake Erie breezes, with temperatures ranging far above average, by 6.2°F in June and 3.3° in July. Having started out ahead of average rainfall, the Columbus area had fallen behind by 4.22 inches by summer's end, and all areas of the state ended well in deficit for the year to date, with the north-central counties (from Lucas to Lorain and one tier to the south) suffering least. Water levels at municipal reservoirs, the first among them Hoover in Delaware county, fell enough by summer's end to expose mudflats for migrant shorebirds. Lake Erie levels declined a bit below long-term means by 1 July, exposing a few foraging areas and roosts for larids and shorebirds along natural shorelines in the western basin. The passage of the remnants of Hurricane Dennis in mid-July finally brought Ohio at least one storm-driven southern pelagic species.

We had fewer than usual waterfowl reports, and certainly the number of odd species hanging around diminished. Some waterbird trends seem interrupted, at least temporarily: cormorants, for example, seemed down in numbers. Shorebird numbers would have been far more meager without the habitat contributions of ONWR and beleaguered spots like Conneaut Harbor; their total of 28 species for the summer was the highest since 1999. What in spring was perceived as a dearth of hummingbirds became hordes as wild nectar supplies diminished. Spring's trend of late arrivals and departures of passerines continued, with many flycatchers, warblers, etc. passing through well into June. Recent trends in which species once far more common in the south—summer tanager, blue grosbeak, northern mockingbird, for example—have become routine farther north, and a tendency for a few more northern species to be reported south of their normal ranges—alder flycatcher, for example, or blue-headed vireo—seemed accentuated this summer; it seems the former are widespread and caused by recent climate change, but the latter more sporadic changes may perhaps represent better coverage by more observers.

Nine reports of review species were well above average for a short summer season: glossy ibis, four separate white ibis sightings (as many as we'd accumulated in the previous 25 years), a parasitic jaeger, a first state-record sooty tern, and two sightings of scissor-tailed flycatchers. In other news, the Division of Wildlife declared victory and halted its trumpeter swan introduction project, having achieved 17 confirmed nests this year, one more than the 16 targeted in 1996. No more swans remain in the pipeline, and only monitoring of the existing population will be carried out from now on. A third of the 100+ trumpeters in the project no longer wear neck collars, and existing collars will continue falling off without replacement. Releases of swans have been most successful in the western Lake Erie marshes; other populations have diminished, or even been extirpated, such as at Killbuck Marsh WA.

We're considering regularly dedicating a paragraph of the Overview to victories and defeats for bird habitats in Ohio, and invite well-documented submissions from readers. This time, for example, we might mention on the plus side Governor Taft's veto of provisions that would have allowed developers to circumvent current

restrictions in the mitigation requirements for wetlands destruction in Ohio. On the other side, the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves is taking some heat for apparently destructive "improvements" at their properties at Conkle's Hollow and Headlands Beach; a site at Killdeer Plains WA that last year hosted successful nests by king and Virginia rails and soras was barren this year after the installation of a drain, apparently because for several days a couple of inches of water lay on a seldom-used county road. And the planned dredging of Conneaut Harbor seems likely to obliterate an important stopover sight for migratory birds. It seems unwise to expect significantly better protection for the full range of wildlife species in Ohio until we are willing to devote some big money—tax money—to the cause.

A word about the Reports for our many new subscribers. Space is limited, and we cannot use it to re-verify over and over again what is already known about the normal ranges and numbers and migratory schedules of Ohio's birds. These facts you can find in standard references like the OBRC Checklist of the Birds of Ohio, or Peterjohn's *The Birds of Ohio*. Therefore you will often find in the Reports interesting deviations from the norm, deviations that might indicate important trends (climate change, habitat availability, population changes, etc.) or perhaps just the play of chance that makes birding so fascinatingly unpredictable.

For the Record

Omitted in the last issue was the earliest sighting of Connecticut warbler for the spring, from **Scioto Trail SF** 12 May (J. Dunn *vide* R. Harlan).

Omitted spring 2005 sightings of species unusual at that season included two black scoters 15-17 Mar near **Coshocton** (Merle Schlabach), two stilt sandpipers in **Holmes** 17 Apr (Monroe E. Weaver), and a snowy owl in Guernsey 11 Mar (Melvin Weaver). The latter observer also found an early laughing gull at **Charles Mill Lk** 22 Mar.

The Reports follow the nomenclature and taxonomic order of the 7th edition of the *AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998), including the 46th Supplement (July 2005). 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: ad=adult; alt=alternate (breeding) plumage; BCSP=Buck Ck SP in *Clark*; BIWA=Big Isl WA in *Marion*; BSBO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CCE=Crane Ck estuary in ONWR; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley Natl Pk in *Cuyahoga* and *Summit*; Dike 14=the Gordon Park impoundment in Cleveland; EFSP=East Fork SP in *Clermont*; eop=end of the period, in this case 31 Jul 2005; EHSP=East Hbr SP in *Ottawa*; fide="in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; GAAS=Greater Akron Audubon Society Summit County Bird Count (10-19 June, reported by D. Vogus and A. Chasar); Gilmore Ponds is in *Butler*=Grand Lk St Marys in *Mercer/Auglaize*, HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in *Lake*; HBSNP=Headlands Beach SNP in *Lake*; HWSP=Hueston Wds SP (*Butler/Preble*); imm=immature; Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh WA in *Wayne/Holmes*; KPWA=Killdeer Plains WA in *Wyandot*; LSR=Lakeshore Reservation (MP) in *Lake*; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in *Ottawa/Lucas*; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in *Lucas*; MP=Metropark; 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/Lucas*; ONWRC=monthly bird census at ONWR; PCWA=Pickerel Ck WA in *Sandusky*; ph=photograph, Res=Reservoir; Res'n=Reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley WA in *Greene/Warren*; WA=Wildlife Area.

Summer 2005 Reports

Snow goose: Two remained from the previous period: a blue-phase bird at **Conneaut** last reported 25 Jun (B. Coulter) and one near **ONWR** in *Ottawa* through the period (m obs).

Mute swan: Showing some disquieting increases in numbers recently, witness 48 tallied on the GAAS June 10-19 in *Summit* alone.

Gadwall: Two were found by the 5 Jun **ONWRC**.

Blue-winged teal: Reported in normal numbers, for example 27 on the 5 Jun **ONWRC**, and three at **MWW** 17 Jul (L. Peyton).

Northern pintail: A lone drake paddled **ONWR** 18 Jun (S. Snyder).

Green-winged teal: At **ONWR**, P. Rodewald found five 14 Jun and four 16 Jun, while the 3 Jul **ONWRC** tallied 13. Two were at **CPNWR** 17 Jul (E. Tramer).

Ring-necked duck: A lone individual haunted **MWW** 7 Jun (B. Foppe) through 23 Jul (J. Lehman).

Lesser scaup: Perhaps wounded, one was seen at a pond in **Hancock** 7 and 14 Jun; it was joined by another 28 Jun (*vide* B. Hardesty).

Bufflehead: A forlorn drake, present since spring, stayed through at least 25 Jun (B. Coulter) in **Conneaut Harbor**.

Common goldeneye: B. Stanley reported a female at **EFSP** 28 Jun.

Hooded merganser: Bred sparingly. The **ONWRC** found nine, including four young on 6 Jun, and 12 including 10 young 3 Jul.

Common merganser: Significantly, an adult and six chicks were seen in **Little Beaver Creek** in *Columbiana* 5 Jun, where this species has become an admittedly isolated but regular nester in recent years.

Red-breasted merganser: Two were tardy 4 Jun at **LSR** in *Lake* (J. Pogacnik).

Ruddy duck: Just one tarried at **CPNWR** by 18 Jun (E. Tramer).

Common loon: Quite a few lingered through mid-Jun at reservoirs. One seen at **Nimisila Res** in *Summit* 26 Jun (S. Brown) was around 10 Jul (R&S Harlan), and a first-summer bird stayed at **Mosquito Res** in *Trumbull* 12 Jul (C. Holt). Their enigmatic presence at **Alum Ck Res** in *Delaware* continued, with three basic-plumaged birds 9 Jun (R. Thorn), one on 21 Jun (R. Schroeder), and two on 15 Jul (Thorn).

Pied-billed grebe: Bred in many suitable spots, with a maximum of 13 including three young for the 5 Jun **ONWRC**. An imm was in a small pond in **Dorset Twp, Ashtabula**, 30 Jul for an out-of-the-way record (J. Heflich).

American white pelican: Continues to show up more often, with one at **Lorain** 3 Jun (ph, J. Pogacnik), one at **Sheldon Marsh** 23-24 Jun (C. Coffman *vide* S. Young), two at **Mogadore Res** 25-28 Jun (G. Bennett), possibly last year's bird returning to **Mill Creek Wildlife Sanctuary** in **Mahoning** 15 Jul (B. Jones); one near **Bloomville** 17 Jul was a first **Seneca** record (T. Bartlett). Strange things continue to happen with the population; at the continent's largest breeding colony, at Chase Lk, **South Dakota**, in excess of 16000 adults abandoned the site during the breeding season after over 8000 chicks died, mostly during June.

Double-crested cormorant: Nested at **West Sister Island**, **Turning Point Island**, **Grand Lake St Marys**, and **Lake Rockwell**. Reports overall, including those of non-breeders from many inland reservoirs, seemed down, without offering any real evidence of a downturn.

American Bittern: Detected at **Ottawa** 5 Jun (ONWRC) and at **Metzger Marsh** 14 Jun (C. Knoll).

Least bittern: A few more reports than usual, but we know relatively little about how many of these remain; we do know they are down, as accounts of a hundred years ago (see Jones's account in last winter's issue with 50 at **Buckeye Lk**, or counts of 14 nests at relatively tiny **Calumus Marsh** in the 1890s) show. Two were in **MWW** 19 Jun (A. Scruggs), one remained at **Metzger Marsh** 26 Jun (C. Spagnoli), the **ONWRC** had one 3 Jul, one called at **Possom Ck MP** in **Montgomery** 18 Jun (D. Dister), a juv was at **Conneaut** 12 Jul (C. Holt), and one at **Walnut Beach** in **Ashtabula** 18 Jul (S. Zadar).

Great blue heron: Normal numbers, though 75 in **Ottawa NWR** 16 Jun seemed a pretty good crowd away from a rookery (P. Rodewald).

Great egret: Large gatherings included 221 at **Ottawa NWR** 16 Jun (P. Rodewald), 100 in **Sandusky** 18 Jun (D. Overacker), and ~90 at **Medusa Marsh** 4 Jul (C. Caldwell). One at **SVWA** 16 Jun was odd (L. Gara), as were five at **Glacier Ridge MP** in **Union** 24 Jun (J. Watts). T. Fairweather reported 24 or more all summer long at **Sandy Ridge MP** in **Lorain**; 12 were of interest in **Mahoning** 12 Jul (B. Jones), as were 14 at the **Thomas wetlands** in **Paulding** 28 Jul (M&D Dunakin).

Snowy egret: Twelve found by the 3 Jul ONWRC were likely nesters from **West Sister Island**. Were numbers of up to eight at **Medusa Marsh** this summer (m obs), and even larger numbers last summer at **Pickereel Ck WA**, making a shorter commute from **Turning Point Isl** in **Sandusky**?

Little blue heron: Again, there were unconfirmed rumors of renewed breeding on **West Sister Isl**. Probably unrelated were immature wanderers at **Caesar Ck** 22 Jul (S. Egleston), **Dayton** 26 Jul (*vide* J. Arnold), and **Paulding**'s first record 29 Jul (D&M Dunakin).

Tricolored heron: The Swedish Birding Team lucked into one at **Conneaut** on the Ohio leg of their North American tour on 5 Jun (ph). Not the first county record, as our only specimen was collected in **Ashtabula** in 1954.

Cattle egret: No reports were received this season, even from the vicinity of the only known breeding colony, in **Sandusky**.

Green heron: Seen in healthy wetlands statewide. Four downy young were at **Long Lk** in **Summit** on 12 Jul (S. Brown).

Black-crowned night-heron: Twenty-four were a good find at **CPNWR** on 18 Jun (E. Tramer), as was even a single adult in **Chillicothe** 20 Jun (D. Hess). Early to arrive was one at the **Shaker Lks** 29 Jun (L. Deininger). Present in the other usual spots, but the big news was eight pairs who newly constructed nests in a sycamore on an island in **Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery** (m obs), where by 27 Jul thirteen young were counted (J. Hays). Among other things, this underlines the importance of large old cemeteries as refugia for birds in the urban landscape.

Yellow-crowned night-heron: The small **Columbus** colony consisted of two nests, one fledging five young (maximum for the species) by late Jun and the other three by mid-Jul; one of the parents of the latter was an immature bird (m obs). The last evidence of their presence was fresh guano in the roadway on 28 Jul (A. Paschall).

White ibis: A highlight of the season was four brief observations in July of this southern wader, doubling the number of Ohio sightings over the past quarter century. One immature was at Ira Rd. in the **CVNP** in **Summit** 9 Jul (ph), another along **Little Walnut Ck** in **Franklin** 19 Jul (ph), another along **Darby Ck** in **Franklin** 25 Jul (ph), and yet another in **Fairborn, Greene** the following day (m obs). The dates and locations do not rule out that a single bird was involved, however the photos seem to show some plumage differences between at least two of them. These records are with OBRC members, who deserve an ID breather like this.

Glossy ibis: Perhaps stragglers from the mini-invasion of *Plegadis* ibises of spring were three spied at **Ottawa NWR** 5 Jun by the census team. One was reported just across the border in **Pte Mouillee** on 1 Jul as well.

Black vulture: The most noteworthy sighting was of a roost of 75+ near **Chillicothe** 29 Jul (D. Hess).



Seen along Darby Creek in SW Franklin Co on 25 July was this immature white ibis. Photo by Anthony Sasson

Bald eagle: The high count was 18 at **Pickerel Ck WA** 23 Jun (C. Caldwell).

Northern harrier: Perhaps when the new Breeding Bird Atlas starts collecting data next year we will have a clearer idea of how many harriers nest in the state. For now we mostly have to infer their status. Sightings of single birds on the west side of **Ottawa** persisted through the period (m obs), and birds were repeatedly seen west of **Findlay** in good habitat (as on 19 Jul, B. Hardesty). G. Meszaros did confirm nesting at Mosquito near **Mosquito Lk** in **Trumbull**.

Red-shouldered hawk: A hint of their current abundance in appropriate habitat in the NE is provided by J. Pogacnik's count of 20 birds observed in 17 areas of the **Lake** park system.

King rail: Gratifying was the June discovery of three pairs sharing a marsh at **Ottawa NWR** (S. Cummings, ph), where the census team refound at least two on 3 Jul, for their first record since 1986. A pair was at **Pickerel Ck WA** 22 Jun (S. Zadar), m obs found a pair had returned to last year's **Pickaway** locale, and a bird at **Germantown MP** in **Dayton** found 7 Jul (S. Egleston) remained at least through 23 Jul (N. Cade).

Virginia rail: Some idea of this species' current abundance at **ONWR** comes from T. Kashmer's spring report of banding 138 there by 5 Jun (*vide* E. Pierce). A breeding bird survey at **Pickerington Ponds** in **Fairfield** yielded four (M. Albin), and a wetland survey at **Killbuck WA** five (S. Snyder).

Common moorhen: Skimpily reported—the **ONWRC** of 3 Jul had but two—with a high count of 4 ad, two imm, and two very young birds in NW **Holmes** 23 Jul (S. Snyder).

Sandhill crane: Present near the traditional **Killbuck WA** nesting area through the period (m obs), with a pair near **La Su An WA** in **Williams** on 28 Jul (T. Kemp) where a nest is often found. A pair from the spring was seen and heard into Jul at **SVWA** in **Warren/Greene** (m obs), but no confirmation of nesting was reported. Two cranes nested within sight of a busy pathway at **Sandy Ridge MP** in **Lorain**; the nest, the third in the past three years there, failed like its predecessors.

Black-bellied plover: With northbound migrants last reported 5 Jun by the **ONWRC**, this species was as usual quite scarce through the period.

Semipalmated plover: Reports pretty much spanned the period, with birds seen in **Lorain**, **Butler**, **Ashtabula**, **Lucas**, and **Ottawa** counties in June, staying as late as the 18th at **CPNWR** (E. Tramer). Presumably returnees were four at **Pickerel Ck** 4 Jul, one at **Conneaut** 11 Jul (C. Holt), and two there 16 Jul (P. Lozano).

Killdeer: Fifty migrants at **Conneaut** 16 Jul was the first report of a large gathering (P. Lozano), with later counts of 600+ in **Hardin** 27 Jul (R. Counts) and 541 at **Englewood Pk** near **Dayton** 30 Jul (D. Dister).

American avocet: Twenty-three reported, the earliest one at a **Findlay** reservoir 30 Jun (B. Hardesty). High counts were ten at **Conneaut** 17 Jul (J. Pogacnik) and six at **Hoover Res** in **Delaware** 29 Jul (J. Sauter).

Greater yellowlegs: The first three returnees reported 4 Jul at **Pickerel Ck WA** (C. Caldwell); the high count was 50+ there on 24 Jul (M. Busam).

Lesser yellowlegs: A southbound adult touched down as early as 24 Jun at **Conneaut** (B. Coulter), and juveniles prevailed by the end of the period.

Solitary sandpiper: Curious was one at **ONWR** 16 Jun (P. Rodewald); this sort of occurrence contributed to the former perception that this species bred in the state. Modern authorities deny this, as its breeding range lies several hundred miles to our north, where solitaires lay eggs in the discarded tree nests of other species. It is still hard to explain the testimony of so solid a reporter as J. M. Wheaton (1882) of Columbus, who wrote: "I have seen the Solitary Sandpiper here during all the summer months, and once found the young in the care of their parents, on the borders of a small pond, in a pasture surrounded by woodland, four or five miles south of this city." This season, the high count belied the species' name when D. Dister found 59 at **Englewood Pk** near **Dayton** on 30 Jul.

Willet: Twenty-six reported, with one a flyby at **HBSNP** 13 Jul (K. Metcalf), and four inland at a flooded field in **Hardin** 27 Jul (R. Counts); the other 21 were seen on eight occasions at **Conneaut**, beginning with an adult 24 Jun (B. Coulter), and the high count of eight seen 18 Jul (L. Hays).

Spotted sandpiper:

Hatchlings were noted 12 Jun in **Mahoning** (B. Jones) and 13 Jun in **Lorain** (P. Lozano).

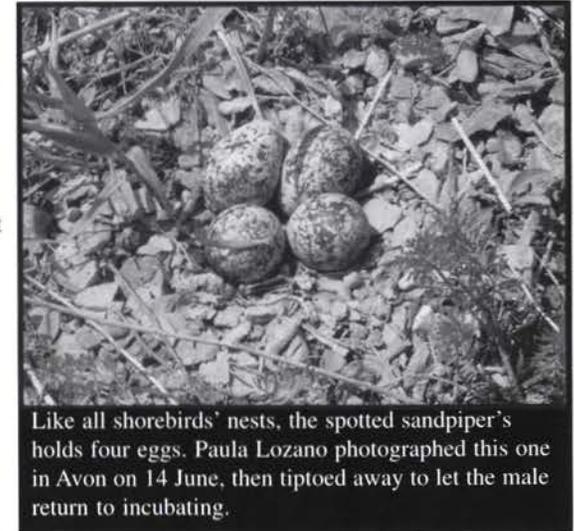
Upland sandpiper: Went unreported from some traditional nesting sites, and reported from others, as two at the **Springfield** Airport 6 Jun (D. Overacker) and three in **Denmark Twp** in **Ashtabula** 17 Jul (J. Heflich).

Whimbrel: A single report, a single bird, at **Conneaut** 18 Jul (ph, L. Hays).

Hudsonian godwit: Not a bird we expect in summer, but Ohio's fourth June record came on the 14th and 16th for OSU researchers at **ONWR** (P. Rodewald).

Marbled godwit: Good and early at **Conneaut** on 24 Jun was an adult (B. Coulter).

Ruddy turnstone: Late migrants were five on 5 Jun for the **ONWRC**.



Like all shorebirds' nests, the spotted sandpiper's holds four eggs. Paula Lozano photographed this one in Avon on 14 June, then tiptoed away to let the male return to incubating.

Red knot: An individual in basic plumage was seen on 6 Jun at **ONWR** (K. Kaufman), and five there on 9 Jul completed the summer book on this species (M. Bolton).

Sanderling: All reports came from **Conneaut Harbor** in July, with five there the 18th and six the 19th (both L. Hays), six on the 23rd (M. Vass) and 22 the 26th (W. Shaffer).

Semipalmated sandpiper: Northbound birds lasted until 14 Jun, with a singleton at **ONWR** (P. Rodewald), and nine were still down in **Tuscarawas** on the 6th (E. Schlabach). No sign of returning birds till 12 Jul, with two at **Conneaut** (C. Holt).

Least sandpiper: Two lingered as late as 4 Jun, at **Sandy Ridge MP** in **Lorain** (J. Brumfield). Returnees showed up in the form of five on 2 Jul at **Hinckley Lk** (*vide* Brumfield), and were soon general, with 30 at **Pickrel Ck WA** by the 4th (C. Caldwell).

White-rumped sandpiper: Usually the last peep to pass through, dozens were seen inland in June, culminating in two seen 18 Jun near Lake Erie at **ONWR** (C. Pierce). One at **Conneaut** 25 Jun could have been headed either way (B. Coulter).

Baird's sandpiper: Did not show up until late, but three adults at **MWW** 24 Jul were a nice find (J. Stenger). One was at **Conneaut** 28 Jul for G. Meszaros.

Pectoral sandpiper: Bringing up the rear was a "drab-looking" individual in **Butler** quite late on 5 Jun (M. Busam).

Dunlin: Laggards sighted at **ONWR** included two for the 5 Jun **ONWRC** and another 14 Jun (P. Rodewald); every year recently, **Ottawa** has hosted one or two alternate-plumaged birds apparently lacking the oomph to go farther.

Stilt sandpiper: First arrivals included one at **West Branch SP** 14 Jul (L. Rosche), one at **Conneaut** 16 Jul (P. Lozano), and one at **Huron** 26 Jul (S. Zadar).

Short-billed dowitcher: Arrived in numbers only in mid-Jul, with 31 at **West Branch** 13 Jul (G. Bennett); the high count was ~200 at **ONWR** on the 16th (P. Gardner)

Long-billed dowitcher: Earlyish were ~10 at **ONWR** 16 Jul, all adults visibly in molt (P. Gardner).

Wilson's snipe: Quite possibly a local breeder was one in **Ashtabula** 18 Jul (J. Heflich). Likely the first migrant was one at **MWW** the 27th (F. Frick) through the 31st (J. Lehman). One was reported on the **Summit** summer count of 10-19 June.

Wilson's phalarope: Singles were reported at **ONWR** 29 Jul (B. Whan) and at **Sandy Ridge MP** 31 Jul (P. Lozano).

Red-necked phalarope: An early arrival was an alternate-plumaged female at **West Branch SP** 13 July (G. Bennett).

Parasitic jaeger: A worn subadult bird was observed at **Conneaut** 17 Jul, the same day one was reported just to the east in Pennsylvania's Erie Co. This bird's presence, which would be among Ohio's earliest fall migrant records, may have been influenced by the passage of the remnants of Hurricane Dennis.

Laughing gull: **Conneaut** hosted two first-summer birds 24 Jun, one alive and one dead (B. Coulter). Also along the Lake were an adult at **Catawba** 13 Jul (N. Bixler), a juv at **Conneaut** 17 Jul (J. Pogacnik), and a first-year bird near **Kelleys Island** 27 Jul (D. Horn). Inland, J. Fry found another at **Lake Logan** in **Hocking** 19 Jul.

Bonaparte's gull: Seven second-year birds were at **ONWR** 16 Jun (P. Rodewald). Returning in force, ~2200 were headed east along the shore there on 29 Jul (J. Sauter).

Herring gull: In a reprise of last summer's first record, up to five nests were constructed in Gallia, with three hatch-year birds noted the first week of Jun, but all nests failed about that time, probably due to predation (H. Slack).

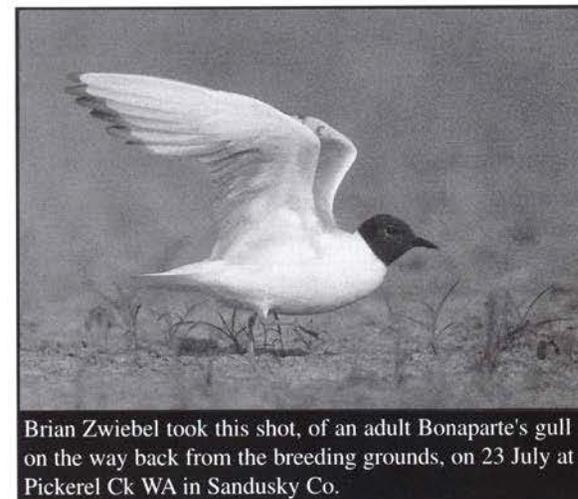
Newspaper reports of a large nesting colony atop a factory in **Shelby, Richland**, could not be verified, but are being followed up.

Great black-backed gull: Single-digit numbers were reported by m obs at **Conneaut** throughout the period.

Caspian tern: Unusually early presumed migrants were two at **Mogadore Res** 25 Jun (G. Bennett) and one far to the south at **Winton Woods** in **Cincinnati** 3 Jul (J. Stenger). C. Holt noted the first juvenile, at **Conneaut** on 12 Jul, after which they became common along the lakefront.

Common tern: With the placement of ten nesting platforms at **ONWR**, the census team found 84 present on 5 Jun. Augmented by juveniles and arriving migrants from elsewhere, the high summer count of 200+ came on 29 Jul at **ONWR** (B. Whan).

Forster's tern: Not often seen during the breeding month of June, one was feeding over Lake Erie near **CPNWR** on 18 Jun (E. Tramer), and another was reported from a **Fostoria** reservoir 21 Jun (B. Hardesty).



Brian Zwiebel took this shot, of an adult Bonaparte's gull on the way back from the breeding grounds, on 23 July at Pickrel Ck WA in Sandusky Co.

Sooty tern: The passage of Hurricane Dennis, degraded to a tropical disturbance, in mid-July offered hope of pelagic birds as waifs. On 12 Jul, D. Morse went out looking, and saw an adult of this species over the Ohio River—hence in Kentucky—from **Clermont County**, and the following day found it or another adult soaring over **East Fork Lake**. This bird, never seen to alight except to take a few brief splashes as if bathing, engaged in quite stereotyped and predictable behaviors there from 13 to 19 Jul for m obs. A long-overdue first state record. See report in this issue.

Black tern: Difficult to cover this summer. Interesting were reports of a juv 2 Jun (R. Asamoto) and a basic-plumaged bird 11 Jun (D. Dister) at **Englewood MP** near **Dayton**.

Reports of 63 other birds 5 Jun-29 Jul came from the western Lk Erie marshes. ONWR staff offered second-hand reports that this species had bred in both **CPNWR** and **ONWR** this year, but **CPNWR** census team members could find none in 5 hours spent looking 18 June. P. Rodewald did have a single bird there 14 Jun. Seven other Jun reports came from **Metzger Marsh** and **ONWR**, as well as three the first week of Jul at the latter location. On 17 Jul, the **CPNWR** census team found the seasonal high count of 37 there, but these were all adults. Based on our information, breeding in the area is unconfirmed, though certainly possible and even suspected. On 29 Jul, 12+ birds, adults and birds of the year, were seen in **ONWR** (B. Whan), but all but one were moving with migrating Bonaparte's gulls.

Black-billed Cuckoo: By most accounts good numbers were present, with a high count from single site of three at **Sandy Ridge MP** 4 Jun (J. Brumfield). Observers also noted them in areas where are generally absent, such as in a **Columbus** suburb 22 Jun (R. Thorn).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Noticeably up in numbers, though apparently not everywhere. R. Thorn said of his Columbus-area territory that the species was "literally everywhere this year, in any possible appropriate habitat," but also reported none in a day at **CCMP** in **Hocking**, where the species regularly breeds (the MP breeding bird survey did report both cuckoo species there eventually). Good numbers included 12 seen—not just heard—around upper **Hoover Res** on 13 Jun (C. Bombaci), and 10 on the **Kelleys Isl** census of the 18th (T. Bartlett). E. Pierce regarded the ONWRC's numbers of 16 on 5 Jun and 21 on 3 Jul as only about average. An observer of the **Youngstown** peregrine nest reported 14+ cuckoos taken by the falcons by the second week of Jul (J. Lucas *vide* C. Babyak); it is possible that cuckoos are a favorite prey of falcons, being rather slow and clumsy fliers like their cousins the anis and roadrunners.



This pair of nesting herring gulls, photographed 26 May at their nest by Jim McCormac, was part of the second consecutive known small colony of this species at the Gavin power plant along the Ohio River in Gallia County.

Ruby-throated hummingbird: After widespread dismay about low numbers early in the period, by the end those who feed hummingbirds were elated to find high ones.

Yellow-bellied sapsucker: Nesters are under-reported, but J. Pogacnik did report a breeding bird survey of the **Lake** metroparks, where 8 were observed at seven different locations, with three nests confirmed.

Pileated woodpecker: E. Tramer confirmed breeding in **Oak Openings MP** in **Toledo** on 19 July when he observed an adult pair with a recently-fledged female begging for food, commenting, "[a]lthough pileateds have been seen occasionally in Lucas Co. on and off for years, there seem to be no confirmed nesting records for more than a century—perhaps going all the way back to the clearing of the Black Swamp in the 1870s!" Rare elsewhere in the NW counties, single birds were seen in two different spots in **Hancock** this season (*vide* B. Hardesty).

Olive-sided flycatcher: The latest reported of this late migrant appeared 4 Jun in **Columbus** (R. Thorn).

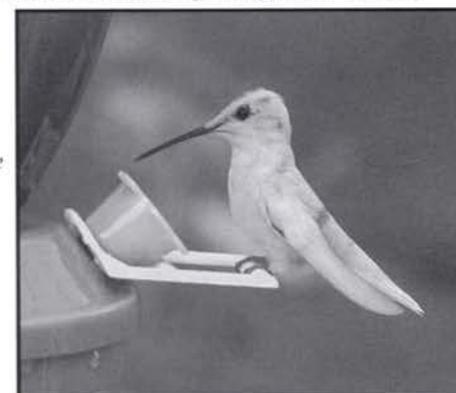
Yellow-bellied flycatcher: Later reports included one 1 Jun at **LSR** (J. Pogacnik), one on the 5 Jun **ONWRC**, and one 7 Jun in **Hancock** (B. Sams *vide* B. Hardesty).

Acadian flycatcher: Three eggs were being incubated 9 Jun in **Geauga** (K. Metcalf). Five were still vocalizing 30 Jul at **Alum Creek SP** (R. Thorn).

Alder flycatcher: This species needs more attention. It can easily go undetected, and it seems its range in Ohio is not well understood. It breeds across the north, witness one at **Magee** 2 Jun (A. Boone), and had a number of territories in damp brushy spots in the **Oak Openings** (E. Tramer), one in **Springfield Twp** in **Summit** 25 Jun (R&S Harlan), five territories near **Mosquito Lk** in **Trumbull** 28 Jul (G. Meszaros), with eight pairs found in the summer survey of the **Lake** metroparks (J. Pogacnik). At **Cedar Bog** down in **Champaign**, two were singing and one calling on 8 Jun (J. McCormac), with one found there 10 Jul (D. Overacker), several were detected at a fen in **Logan** later that month (McCormac), and one at **CCMP** in **Hocking** 9 Jun was two by 26 Jun for a first park record.



Scott Wright took this photo of one of Cleveland's Terminal Tower falcons celebrating the acquisition of a yellow-billed cuckoo on 6 June.



This leucistic hummingbird, with just a few dabs of dark pigment visible, frequented the backyard of Gary and Cinda Carson in North Canton this summer. Photo taken there on 29 July.

Willow flycatcher: Said to be especially numerous, sometimes occurring in seemingly semi-colonial groups in habitat; the 5 Jun ONWRC found 17, and G. Bennett had 15 at **Berlin Lk WA** 22 Jun.

Least flycatcher: Mostly a northern nester, where J. Pogacnik found 11 in 10 areas during the breeding season at the **Lake** metroparks, and one on the **Kelleys Isl** census of 18 Jun (T. Bartlett). While one at **BCSP** in **Clark** may have been a late migrant (D. Overacker), four were singing in a single large field at **CCMP** in **Hocking** 6 Jun (J. Watts), where two remained 25 Jun (D. Sanders); one was vocalizing in **Columbus** 16 Jul (R. Thorn).

Eastern kingbird: Twenty-six for the ONWRC of 5 Jun became 35 for that of 3 Jul.

Scissor-tailed flycatcher: Pretty unmistakable adult birds were well but briefly seen in SW **Crawford** 18 Jun and NE **Knox** on 25 Jun. It is possible the same individual was involved in both sightings. Details are with the OBRC.

Bell's vireo: Apparently did not reappear by 5 Jun at the traditional **BCSP** site (D. Overacker). A pair at **Gilmore Ponds** in **Butler** 5 Jun (M. Busam) was last seen 11 Jun (B. Foppe), then a singing bird was found 25 Jun (J. Lehman), and 4 Jul (A. Oliver) until missed 17 Jul. N. Cade found one at **Twin Ck MP** in **Montgomery** 23 Jul.

Blue-headed vireo: On 18 Jun P. Coy found a territory in the **CVNP** in **Summit**, on 25 Jun M. Anderson an adult and fledgling in **Oak Openings MP** in **Lucas**, and R&S Harlan five males at **Hinckley MP** in **Medina** on 26 Jun. E. Tramer reported five territories in the **Oak Openings** during the period, J. Pogacnik 36 detected in 13 **Lake** MP areas during the season, and at the **CCMP** in **Hocking** J. Watts reported three summering pairs.

Warbling vireo: High count was 29 for the 3 Jul ONWRC.

Red-eyed vireo: Slower than usual to arrive in spring, numbers climbed steeply in June. A male was at the picturesque but hardly woody **Erie St. Cemetery** in downtown **Cleveland** on 4 Jul (S&R Harlan).

Blue jay: Like so many other species this year, seemed to move late. A. Boone noted some westbound along the Lakeshore at **Magee** as late as 2 Jun, and J. Pogacnik had 22 at his feeders along the shore in **Lake** on 4 Jun.

Northern rough-winged swallow: Early concentrations of this species included ~100 at **Sandy Ridge MP** 4 Jul (C. Caldwell) and 20 at **BCSP** on 9 Jul (D. Overacker).

Bank swallow: A flock at the **Conneaut** colony numbered 175 on 11 Jul (C. Holt).

Cliff swallow: The gate in the **Metzger** dike hosted a colony for the second year, now the largest in the **Toledo** area since 1949 with 90 birds, including 31 at 75 nests on 5 Jun for the ONWRC; for the 3 Jul census 52 were at the nests. The first migrants noted were up to 25 in **Mahoning** 25 Jul (C. Holt).

Red-breasted nuthatch: Suspected of nesting in many places: seen 4 Jun at **LSR** (J. Pogacnik), 5 Jun in **Hocking** (B. Placier), in **Berea** 21 Jun (N. Howell), three at **Hinckley MP** in **Medina** 26 Jun (R&S Harlan). A mated pair was spotted in **Oak Openings MP** in June (E. Tramer), and Pogacnik considered it a possible nester in the **Lake** MPs.

Brown creeper: In the north, J. Pogacnik found three in three areas of the **Lake** MPs during a breeding bird study, K. Metcalf had two singing 18 Jun in **Geauga**; G. Bennett had a pair at **Mogadore Res** 8 Jul. A pair nested at **Hoover Res** again this year, with copulation witnessed 2 Jun (R. Thorn) and young probably being fed 25 Jun (C. Bombaci).

House wren: The ONWRC found a healthy 51 on 3 Jul.

Sedge Wren: July sightings of this species probably involve second nestings, but are they by the same birds? The numbers seldom say so. This season, for example, a male was seen on territory in **Wyandot** 9 Jun (R. Counts), and three males found in **Lorain** 12 Jun (R&S Harlan); J. Pogacnik reported a nest in the **Lake** MPs at an unspecified date. Then 31 birds were reported in July, all but two in the second half of the month, with high counts of six singing males at **ONWR** 23 Jul (B. Whan) and a dozen or more at **KPWA** on the 30th (B. Sparks et al.). Other reports came from **Summit**, **Hamilton**, **Warren**, **Franklin**, **Fairfield**, and **Butler**.

Marsh wren: Good numbers included four at **Killbuck** 2 Jun (E. Snively) and 18 for the ONWRC 5 Jun.

Golden-crowned kinglet: R&S Harlan found three at **Hinckley MP** in **Medina** 26 Jun. The **Lake** MPs harbored one during the period (J. Pogacnik). T. Kemp discovered another in the **Maumee SF** 31 Jul.

Veery: Nested fairly widely as usual, as far south as **Hocking** (with several pairs in the **CCMP** 18 Jun, J. Watts). The GAAS reported 44 between 10-19 Jun in **Summit**.

Gray-cheeked thrush: Straggled as late as 3 Jun at **LSR** (J. Pogacnik).

Swainson's thrush: Tardy was one singing away in a **Columbus** suburb 8 June (R. Thorn).

Hermit thrush: **Hocking** hosted numerous nests as usual, with "many" at **Conkle's Hollow** 1 Jun (J. Grabmeier) and five territories found at **CCMP** during the month (J. Watts). Six nests were rated at least possible in the **Lake** metroparks during the season (J. Pogacnik).

Northern mockingbird: Just as white-throated sparrows are no longer regular summer residents of Ohio (see Lynds Jones's piece in this issue), this species has become so routine in the northern reaches of our state that observers no longer bother reporting it.

Blue-winged warbler: The GAAS of 10-19 Jun tallied 71 in **Summit**.

Northern parula: One just north of **Columbus** 10 Jun was an enigma (R. Thorn): pioneer or just lagging behind?

Hybrid parula X cerulean warbler: Reported as late as 15 Jun by original finder R. Nirschl in **Toledo**, this bird was probably last year's individual returned.

Yellow warbler: A measure of its abundance is the 211 counted on the census of ~four mi² **Kelleys Isl** on 18 Jun (T. Bartlett). J. Pogacnik noted the first migrant at **LSR** on 10 Jul. E. Schlabach found one inside a building in eastern **Holmes** 24 Jul.

Chestnut-sided warbler: Outside its established range, two territorial males sang at **Shawnee SF** 5 Jun (B. Sparks), one appeared for the **Slate Run MP (Pickaway)** breeding bird survey (A. Haslage), two were found 21 Jun in **Hancock** (D. Barker *vide* B. Hardesty), and singing males were at the **Kitty Todd preserve** in **Lucas** 10 Jun (E. Tramer) and in **Holmes** 12 Jun (L. Deininger).

Magnolia warbler: A number of late migrants passed through early in Jun, the latest a male the 9th at **HBSNP** (K. Metcalf). Four territories were found on the **CCMP** in **Hocking** (J. Watts), three males at **Hinckley MP** in **Medina** (R&S Harlan), and J. Pogacnik reported 21 in 11 areas for the breeding bird survey of the **Lake** metroparks.

Black-throated green warbler: In expected haunts, such as in hemlock gorges in **Lake**, J. Pogacnik located 33 during the breeding season, and the seven males R&S Harlan found at **Hinckley MP** were no great surprise. Some surprises of greater magnitudes included one in the **Oak Openings** 10 Jun (R. Nirschl), one singing in deciduous woods in **Scioto** 3 Jul (J. McCormac), a male on territory in deciduous woods in **Adams** 29 Jun (R. McCarty), a singing male in a **Columbus** suburb 17 Jun (J. Grabmeier), and L. Andrews's 10 Jun observation of surprising numbers "in **Perry County** within white pine stands and some mixed shortleaf/hardwood stands (no hemlock anywhere)."

Blackburnian warbler: Found at **Conkle's Hollow**, a known breeding locale, 5 Jun (J. Grabmeier), and at **Girdled Rd MP** in **Lake** during the period (J. Pogacnik); a male in the **Oak Openings** 5 Jul was interesting (P. Chad).

Yellow-throated warbler: Eight were located in eight areas of the **Lake** metroparks during the season's survey (J. Pogacnik). Interesting was a male found in pines 10 Jul at the **Beach City Dam** in **Tuscarawas** (R&S Harlan).

Pine warbler: Beyond its SE strongholds, an adult with young were in **Hamilton** 26 Jun (F. Renfrow), one was near **Dayton** 23 Jul (N. Cade), a singing male in **Coshocton** 1 Jun-16 Jul (L. Deininger), a male at **Hinckley MP** 26 Jun and three at **Nimisila Res** 10 Jul (R&S Harlan), and a survey of 20 coniferous plantings at **Oak Openings MP** revealed 18 singing males and one fledgling in Jun (E. Tramer).

[Kirtland's warbler]: A record 1415 singing males in Michigan were reported, including 18 in five upper peninsula counties. No Ohio records at this season of course.

Prairie warbler: One was singing in the **Oak Openings** through 13 Jun, but no nesting was proved (E. Tramer); R&S Harlan found a male at the **Dundee** grasslands in **Tuscarawas** 10 Jul, one was near **Dayton** 23 Jul (N. Cade), and the GAAS of 10-19 Jun reported two in **Summit**.

Blackpoll warbler: Very late was one in **Big Ck Res (Cuyahoga)** 14 Jun (S. Zadar).

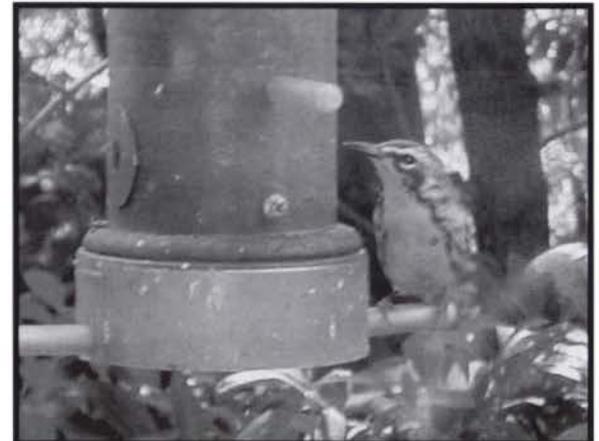
Cerulean warbler: Several observers, including J. Watts on behalf of the core range in **CCMP** in **Hocking**, remarked its numbers seemed up. J. Pogacnik found 50 in 20 areas of the **Lake** metroparks during a breeding bird survey.

Black-and-white warbler: Among unusual records were one in **Columbus** 26 Jun (R. Thorn) and one singing in **Englewood MP** near **Dayton** 10 Jul (D. Dister). A breeding bird survey in the **Lake** metroparks yielded 13 for J. Pogacnik.

American redstart: Rare in **Columbus** in summer, a male was at Griggs Dam 26 Jun (R. Thorn), and one was feeding a fledgling near the **OSU campus** 20 Jun (D. Shustack). On the downside, E. Tramer reported "a singing male in the **OOMP** through June was unusual; this has become a rare summer bird in the **Toledo** area, with few if any nesting pairs away from the **Maumee River corridor**."

Prothonotary warbler: C. Bombaci's **Hoover Res** project totaled 56 nests by 19 Jun, with some nests only 20 feet apart. The **ONWRC** had two birds on both 5 Jun and 3 Jul. J. McCormac reported four territories in **Mercer** 19 Jun. There was one possible nesting in the **Lake** metroparks during the period (J. Pogacnik).

Northern waterthrush: Evidently late, one was at **The Wilds** 5 Jun (T. Bartlett). Nesting was possible in one case, and probable in another, in the **Lake** metroparks this summer (J. Pogacnik); one was singing in the **Burton Wetlands** in **Geauga** 18 Jun (K. Metcalf).



This yellow-throated warbler visited Steve Shafer's feeder in Athens on 9 July, pecked ineffectually at the thistle seed, then decided to return to its normal diet.

Louisiana waterthrush: One was in **Columbus** 10 Jun (R. Thorn), and another in **Williams** 23 Jun (R. Nirschl). Another was in song as late as 28 Jul in **Hamilton** (F. Renfrow).

Kentucky warbler: T. Bartlett reported one found on the **Kelleys Isl** census of 17 Jul.

Connecticut warbler: The latest spring migrant reports came from **LSR** in **Lake**: a female on 1 Jun and a male on 3 Jun (J. Pogacnik).

Mourning warbler: Many reports in early Jun, the latest from the 5th at **BCSP** (D. Overacker), **MWF** (L. Peyton), and **Oak Openings MP** (E. Tramer). J. Pogacnik reported possible nesters during the period at **Erie Shores Golf Course** and **Girdled Road Res'n** in the **Lake** metroparks system.

Hooded warbler: The GAAS reported 126 in **Summit** 10-19 Jun. The first apparent migrant appeared at **LSR** on 10 Jul (J. Pogacnik).

Yellow-breasted chat: Three males were found on a BBS route in **Lorain/Huron** 12 Jun (R&S Harlan). High count 15 in **Adams** 25 Jun (D. Overacker).

Summer tanager: In the **Oak Openings MP**, R. Nirschl found birds at nine locations 9-10 Jun, and E. Tramer went so far as to remark that this species "may soon rival scarlet tanager in abundance" there. Another facultative advance by a southern species with climate change?

Clay-colored sparrow: Interestingly, R. Nirschl reported one in **Williams** 23 Jun.

Lark sparrow: The **Oak Openings** colony had four 12 Jun (C. Knoll), and M. Morgan reported one 19 Jun at the **Akron Sewage Plant** (fide L. Rosche).

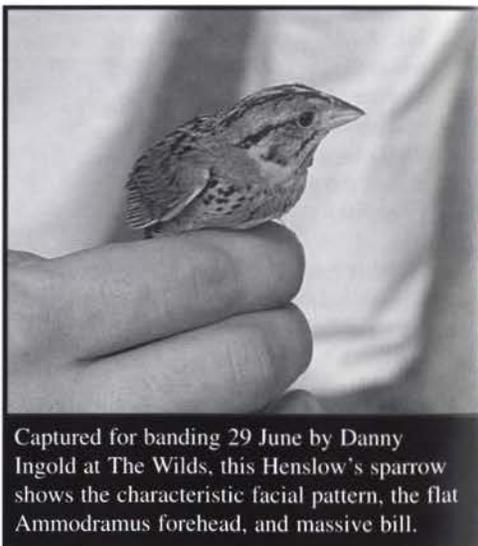
Grasshopper sparrow: R. Royle reported 100+ seen at **Tri-Valley WA** 4 Jul.

Henslow's sparrow: M. Busam reported eight at the **VOA** by 12 Jun, D. Patick had six at **Crown City WA** 19 Jun, and R. Royle 100+ at **Tri-Valley WA** 4 Jul.

White-throated sparrow: D. Horn reported one 11 Jun near **Ash Cave** in **Hocking**, in mesic forest with beech, maple, and hemlock, where one may have been present last summer). R&S Harlan witnessed a singing male in **Wadsworth** 2 Jul.

White-crowned sparrow: A lingering migrant was singing at **HBSNP** 9 Jun (K. Metcalf).

Dark-eyed junco: An imm male was the last migrant at **LSR** 4 Jun (J. Pogacnik, who reported 102 at 22 **Lake** MP locations during the breeding season, including 34 at **Hell Hollow**). R&S Harlan had two males at **Hinckley MP** in **Medina** 26 Jun. K. Metcalf reported the first confirmed nest in **Munson Twp** in **Geauga** 7-9 Jun, in a hanging flower basket.



Captured for banding 29 June by Danny Ingold at The Wilds, this Henslow's sparrow shows the characteristic facial pattern, the flat Ammodramus forehead, and massive bill.

Rose-breasted grosbeak: The GAAS tallied 198 in **Summit** 10-19 Jun. One was singing in **Ross** 1 Jun (fide D. Hess), another was in **Hocking** 4 Jun (B. Placier) with a nesting pair at **CCMP** 6 Jun (J. Watts). Way down south, a pair found in **Athens** 6 Jun was on a nest by 9 Jun, which was found abandoned 23 Jun (D. Cohen, ph), and one was discovered in **Shawnee SF** in **Scioto** 3 Jul (J. McCormac).

Blue grosbeak: In **Lucas**, several were found in the **Oak Openings** and a singing male at **Kitty Todd preserve** throughout June (E. Tramer, R. Nirschl). Further south, a male was at the **VOA park** in **Butler** 10 Jun (J. Van Coney), a pair nested again in **Pickaway** (25 Jun, D. Sanders), five were found at **Crown City WA** 19 Jun (D. Patick), an imm at a **Dayton** park 23 Jul (N. Cade), a first-summer male was near the **Little Miami** 25 Jun (B. Lacker), a pair at **Twin Cks MP** in **Montgomery** 27 Jun (S. Egleston), two males 4 Jul and a female 7 Jul at **Tri-Valley WA** (B. Royle), and a pair in **Greene** 23 Jul (Egleston).

Dickcissel: A few arrived at overgrown weedy fields in **Wyandot** (R. Counts) and **Pickerington Ponds** (R. Thorn) as early as 4 Jun. Widespread later, with a high count of 20 in the **VOA park** 12 Jun (M. Busam). Mowing of fields—such as on 10 Jul in **Logan** noted by T. Shively—dispelled them. No systematic attempt to enumerate locations was possible, but even though dickcissels were reported missing from spots they'd occupied in recent years, reported from 26 counties, as far east as **Muskingum**, **Coshocton**, and **Summit**.

Bobolink: Reported in good numbers in the western unglaciated counties and at reclaimed strip mines (many at **The Wilds** in **Muskingum**) and isolated grasslands (e.g. **Denmark Twp** in **Ashtabula**) and fallow fields (e.g. in **Adams**) elsewhere.

Eastern meadowlark: Continues to flourish where it is allowed to, with 67 at the **VOA park** in **Butler** 12 Jun (M. Busam) and 46 in two MPs on **Columbus's** west side in Jul (C. Morrow). D. Overacker counted 20 in **Adams** on 25 Jun.

Western meadowlark: We received no reports of this species, which must often be missed.

Yellow-headed blackbird: A male was seen by the **ONWRC** 5 Jun where several birds of both sexes had been seen in May.

Rusty Blackbird: A male remained near **Sugarcreek** in **Tuscarawas** as late as 19 Jun, injured and apparently unable to fly (E. Schlabach).



Steve Shafer saw siskins at his thistle feeder in Athens well into June, and this one reappeared on 30 Jul for a photo and stayed into August.

Orchard oriole: S&R Harlan reported that on their BBS route in *Lorain/Huron* its numbers (nine) equaled those of Baltimore oriole on 12 Jun. Migrants were at **LSR** on 10 Jul (J. Pogacnik) and in *Tuscarawas* 30 Jul (E. Schlabach).

Baltimore oriole: The **Kelleys Isl** census found 51 on its four square miles on 18 Jun (T. Bartlett). First migrant showed up 10 Jul at **LSR** (J. Pogacnik).

Purple finch: Last seen at **LSR** 4 Jun (J. Pogacnik, who noted eight in seven areas of the *Lake* MPs during the period), with six recorded on the 10-19 Jun GAAS count in **Summit**, and a male in **Hinckley Twp** of *Medina* 26 Jun (R&S Harlan).

Pine siskin: Dilatory birds were in **Hancock** (W. Seiler *vide* B. Hardesty) 3 Jun and in **Lake** 4 Jun (J. Pogacnik). One to three sporadically visited an **Athens** feeder 22 Jun through the eop (S. Shafer).

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Further Afield

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*If you were a bird and you lived very high,
You'd lean on the wind as the breeze came by,
Say to the wind as it took you away,
"That's where I wanted to go today."*

*The Ballad of You & Me & Pooneil
Jefferson Airplane (Paul Kantner), 1967*

Sometimes, it's best to just go with the flow. Sit back, and enjoy the ride. Sooty terns and other hurricane-driven orphans live by this credo, and when they appear here in Ohio after a storm, they rather conveniently provide us with both the cause and the means of their vagrancy. But this isn't the case with most vagrants, whose dispersal patterns aren't so neatly gift-wrapped, and which don't offer us the tidy cause and effect that our logical brains desire.

Perhaps their orientation circuits are fried. Perhaps they stowed aboard a passing ocean liner, or hitched a last ride plastered to the grill of an eastbound eighteen-wheeler. For other vagrants, their arrivals just don't seem to make any sense at all. But do they *need* to make sense? Who are we to judge whether a rare bird's arrival in Ohio should or shouldn't be, or could or couldn't be?

As humans, we tend to search for understandable and predictable patterns. We're less comfortable with seemingly random occurrences. Sometimes, when a rarity seems too outlandish, or too inscrutable, or even too controversial, we shy away from it, and don't give it the attention it truly deserves. Let's attend to a certain red-naped sapsucker *Sphyrapicus nuchalis*, and let's do it now.

You know the one—near Mt. Hope in Holmes County, April 3rd through the 8th, 2005. And yes, I do believe that this bird was indeed a male red-naped sapsucker, not a yellow-bellied sapsucker *S. varius*, and not a hybrid. As such, it would represent a major record—a first for Ohio, and probably a first for eastern North America, north of the Gulf of Mexico. But this record has proven somewhat controversial, with some birders wondering if it might actually be an aberrant yellow-bellied, or a hybrid red-naped x yellow-bellied, or simply an unidentifiable sapsucker. All these views are worth examining.

After studying the bird for several hours on April 4 and 6, examining the many images of this individual on the internet, and perusing the available literature on the subject, I came to two Bold Conclusions: 1) that I would *allow* myself to come to a definite conclusion, despite the controversy, and despite what others might think; and that 2) if the bird looked like a red-naped sapsucker as the species is presently understood, then it *really* is a red-naped