The second is that there is still the competition for room and for food, during the breeding season, that must have occurred in the south-east during the Glacial Epoch and later, thus forcing individuals to seek new regions if they were to survive and propagate in the struggle. And the third grows out of the last: the northward ranging individuals of the species, because of their daring in seeking unfamiliar breeding grounds, possess characters that make them more efficient and more resistant to the colder climate of the north. It seems to be a general rule that the north-ranging individuals of a species are larger and longer of wing than are the southern ranging individuals. [*The MS ends here.*]

[3] This is an intriguing trio of species to mention for this purpose. Lawrence Hicks (*Distribution of the Breeding Birds of Ohio*, 1935:178) does remark of the sparrow that "it seems reasonably certain that this species has invaded the state from the south and southwest during the last half-century." He treats the grosbeak only in a table that shows it as a possible breeder in West Virginia. Only in 1940 did Hicks announce the first blue grosbeak breeding record, in Adams County (*Auk* 62(2):314), where he says "...Jones...did not list the Blue Grosbeak as an Ohio bird," but see Jones (1903:227). Of the bunting Hicks has nothing to say. Jones, in *The Birds of Ohio: A Revised Catalogue* (1903), in the context of saying "...there has been a very perceptible movement of many species northward or north-eastward during the past two decades," asserted "[t]here is some indication of an invasion of the Blue Grosbeak and Nonpareil [another common name for *Passerina ciris*] soon [15]." Later in the same work [227] he mentions that E. L. Moseley had reported a painted bunting from Sandusky but it was likely an escaped cage bird (apparently it was another that appeared in Moseley's USDA bird reports for 18 May 1907, "1/4 mi. n. of Mill Hollow, e. bank of Vermilion River"). Where Jones found his evidence that painted buntings were regular summer residents of southern Ohio is a mystery.



# Short Note: The Percentage of Adult American Herring Gulls in Cleveland having one vs. two Subapical Spots

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The number and size of subapical spots on the wingtips of large gulls is often used as an aid for separating species, subspecies, and age classes. Field guides to North American birds have consistently depicted adult American herring gulls *Larus argentatus smithsonianus** with two subapical spots - one on the longest, outermost primary (P-10) and another, usually smaller, on the adjacent second-longest primary (P-9). These spots are usually surrounded by black, and are often called "mirrors" by birders.

As recently as Sibley's 2000 guide, there has been no mention of variability in the number of subapical spots in adult American herring gulls. In 2001 Bruce MacTavish and Lars Jonsson noted that 90% of adult-plumaged herring gulls in the Niagara region lacked a subapical spot on P-9. This is unlike herring gulls found in Newfoundland, where <15% lack a P-9 mirror (Adriaens and Mactavish, 2004) and along the East Coast from Massachusetts to Virginia, where 20-30% are estimated to lack this mirror (Olsen and Larsson, 2003).

I was unaware of these observations when I began to notice that a high percentage of otherwise adult-plumaged herring gulls in Cleveland displayed only one subapical spot. Beginning in 2003, I often spent several hours a day between January and March studying adult herring gull wingtip patterns, mostly at E. 72nd Street on the Cleveland lakefront. In many cases I videotaped the gulls and later reviewed the video to determine the wingtip patterns. I also examined specimens in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. From my sample of 114 adult-plumaged herring gulls, 82 (71.9%) had only one subapical spot. I took care to make sure that the birds I studied were in fully adult plumage, with pure white tails and clear adult gray mantles.

Percentage of adult-plumaged herring gulls in Cleveland (winter and early spring) lacking a subapical spot on P-9 ("one-spotters")

2003: 8 of 11 (72.7%)
2004: 11 of 17 (64.7%)
2005: 60 of 82 (73.17%)
CMNH collection: three of four adults from Cuyahoga. and Lake Counties. (75%)
(Four additional local specimens in CMNH were molting the primaries when collected, so the presence of subapical on P-9 was not determined.)

More observations of variation in wingtip pattern on the breeding grounds might help us determine the origins of herring gulls wintering in Cleveland. "One-spotters" might dominate in either the Midwest or Western Arctic breeding populations. These observations also demonstrate the pitfalls of applying European-based identification literature to North American gulls. Since 1982, Peter J. Grant's work on gull identification has been the standard reference for American gull watchers.

However, this has led to many misconceptions in techniques for aging third-winter and adult herring gulls based on primary pattern and other features. Even with a common species like herring gull, we still have a lot to learn.

*American herring gull has been split from the European herring gull by European ornithologists, with the scientific name *Larus smithsonianus*. There is no word whether this split may be accepted by ornithologists on this side of the pond sometime in the future.

**Acknowledgment**

Special thanks to Dr. Timothy Matson for allowing me to view the study skins of herring gulls in the Cleveland Museum of Natural History's collection. *Thanks to the Cleveland Bird Calendar for permission to reproduce this article.*

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This is a "typical" wingtip pattern of an American herring gull *Larus argentatus smithsonianus* from the Cleveland Lakefront, in January 2005. Note the large subapical spot on P-10 and the lack of a spot on P-9. This bird had a pure white tail and unmarked, adult gray mantle. Photo by Kevin Metcalf.



# Short Note: Banded Henslow's Sparrow in Butler County

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On June 16, 2005, I photographed a Henslow's Sparrow at the Voice of America Park, Butler County, Ohio. I did not notice the bird was banded until reviewing my photographs later in the day. Unfortunately the metal band on the bird cannot be read in the photos. This bird has been found singing at the same perch on a number of occasions. I personally observed it singing from a perch about 50 feet away 4 days later. It had been displaced from its normal spot by a group flying radio-controlled gliders. The bird appears to be a member of a breeding colony. Up to eight individuals have been seen by observers during the months of May and June. Henslow's Sparrows have been confirmed at this site every year since 2002 according to Ned Keller's database of Cincinnati bird sightings (http://cincinnatibirds.com/database/select.php). The species may have been found at the site previously but it was a Voice of America site from 1944 to 1994 (http:www.ohiobirds.orgnews.php?News_ID=79).

No one has been banding this species at the site and the two closest banding programs of which I am aware are at the Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Indiana and The Wilds in southeastern Ohio. Both of these sites have been contacted with assistance from Mike Busam and Bob Foppe and both indicated that the bird was not banded as part of their programs. I have sent an email to the Bird Banding Lab at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center describing the bird and bands but have received no reply as yet. When viewed from the front the bird has a single metal band on the left leg along with a single orange band above it and two orange bands on the right leg. The photo shows details of the bands.

The bird was still present as of 8/8/2005. In addition a juvenile was in the same area (within 20 ft). My attempts to track down the bander resulted in the following e-mails from Brian Davidson.

Email 1: "I have a bird that MIGHT match that description. On 05/09/2005 we banded an ASY male Henslow on the Turner (Gritton)property with the color combination O/Aluminum (R) - O/O (L). Its USFW Band # was 1771-19392. The color combination (although not the order) is correct. When we viewed the photos, my wife and I could make out 39 under the 1771 portion of the aluminum band. From our data and the available photos we can't conclusively say that we banded that bird."