

Ohio Records of the Yellow-headed Blackbird  
(*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

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The yellow-headed blackbird is a summer resident of marshes and sloughs of western and prairie provinces and states. It nests regularly as far east as eastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois. There are nesting records for Ottawa and Lucas Counties, Ohio (4) (13).

According to Peterson: "there have been numerous reports in the fall and winter east to the Atlantic coast." (20).

Although the yellow-headed blackbird has been observed annually at Lucas and Ottawa counties of Ohio within the last decade, it remains an accidental or casual species for the other 86 Ohio counties. In this paper I separate Lucas and Ottawa county records from all other Ohio records.

There are 90+ Ohio yellow-headed blackbird records (a single record may include more than one bird). Lucas and Ottawa counties, combined, have 42+ records. There are 11 Ohio counties that have single records: Athens, Columbiana, Delaware, Fairfield, Geauga, Hancock, Logan, Marion, Morgan, Pickaway and Tuscarawas. Counties with multiple records (more than a single record in the same or different years) are: Ashtabula (2), Cuyahoga (8), Erie (3), Franklin (6), Hamilton (2), Lake (2), Licking (2), Lorain (2), Lucas (13+), Mercer (2), Montgomery (4), Ottawa (29+), Richland (2), and Summit (2). The majority of the records are concentrated near population centers. This probably reflects the distribution of the observers rather than the birds.

There are 18 winter records of the yellow-headed blackbird. Six are from Lucas and Ottawa counties and the other twelve from central and southern Ohio locations. Nine of these records are of birds at feeders.

There are 40 spring records. Thirty-three are of birds seen at counties along or near Lake Erie which includes 25 records from Lucas and Ottawa counties.

There are a few records of yellow-headed blackbirds summering in Ohio. In 1873, at Groveport, Franklin county, one pair summered and possibly nested (21). One adult pair plus 3 juvenile birds were observed at Metzger Marsh from late April until August, 1938 (4). A yellow-headed blackbird nest with four eggs was found at Metzger Marsh in 1940, with one juvenile bird collected, for scientific purposes, in July of 1940 (4). An adult male stayed at Burke Airport, Cleveland, from 22 May through 3 July 1960 (17). Five birds stayed at Magee Marsh from 18 May through 9 July 1961 (4). Two territorial males were observed in Lucas county from 11 May through June of 1980 (18).

There are fifteen autumn records. Eleven are of birds seen at counties along or near Lake Erie.

Prior to 1930, there are about eight acceptable Ohio yellow-headed blackbird records (12). There were 12 records in the 1930s, 10 records in the 1940s, 3 records in the 1950s, 19 records in the 1960s, 31 records in the 1970s and 10 records so far in the 1980s. This increase since 1960 is probably due to the increased number of competent observers.

Ohio Yellow-headed Blackbird Records  
(Exclusive of Lucas and Ottawa County Records)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Source</u>
1873 Summer	Groveport (Franklin Co.)	1 pair possibly nested	(21)
1896 Oct. 9	Oberlin (Lorain Co.)	6 birds	(13)
1903 or prior	McConnellsville (Morgan Co.)		(13)
1903 or prior	Sandusky (Erie Co.)	1 bird collected	(13)
1925 Feb. 26	Franklin County		(10)
1931 Mar. 8	Columbus		(12)
1933 Feb. 26	O'Shaughnessy Res. (Delaware Co.)	2 birds	(12)
1934 May 11-12	Erie County	1 male	(12)
1936 Mar. 8	Grand Lake St. Marys (Mercer Co.)	22 birds	(12)
1936 Aug. 21	Cleveland	female or imm.	(8)
1937 Apr. 5	Pymatuning Res. (Ashtabula Co.)	2 birds	(12)
1938 Mar. 12	Indian Lake (Logan Co.)	3 birds	(12)
1938 Mar. 28	Erie County	21 birds	(12)
1942 Mar. 11	Greencamp (Marion Co.)	9 birds	(12)
1946 1st half June	Hancock County	2 singing males	(20)
1946 August	North College Hill (Hamilton Co.)	hypothetical	(14)
1957 May 9	Barberton (Summit Co.)		(17)
1957 Oct. 23	Hebron NFH (Licking Co.)	1 adult male	(15)
1959 Sept. 3	Ashtabula County	adult male & female	(3A)
1960 May 22 - Jul.3	Burke Airport (Cuyahoga Co.)	adult male	(17)
1961 June 3-4	Burke Airport		(16)
1961 or 1962 July	Fernald (Hamilton Co.)		(11)
1962 Apr. 26	Willoughby (Lake Co.)		(17)
1962 May 10	North Chagrin Res. (Cuyahoga Co.)		(17)
1962 Spring	Grand Lake St. Marys		(6)
1962 June 1	Geauga County		(17)
1962 June 1	"Near Cleveland"	same report as Geauga County above?	(3B)
1962 Oct. 15	Lisbon (Columbiana Co.)		(15)
1963 Sept. 29	Hebron NFH	adult male	(15)
1964 Jul. 25-26	Gnadenhutten (Tuscarawas Co.)	5 birds	(15)
1966 May 14	Lakewood Park (Cuyahoga Co.)		(17)
1967 Spring	Centerville (Montgomery Co.)	female	(9)
1969 Winter	Kettering (Montgomery Co.)	male	(9)
1971 Mar. 16	Mansfield (Richland Co.)	adult male	(1A)
1971 Oct. 24	North Chagrin Res. (Cuyahoga Co.)	female	(7)
1973 Sept. 10	Mentor Headlands (Lake Co.)	imm. male	(7)
1973 Sept. 13	White City (Cuyahoga Co.)	imm. male	(7)
1974 Feb. 26	Columbus	male, remained to Spring	(17)
1976 Dec. 19	Pickaway County	adult male	(2)
1979 Jan. 3	Nelsonville (Athens Co.)	female	(5)
1979 Jan. 3-13	New Albany (Franklin Co.)	imm. male	(5)
1979 Sept. 28	F.A. Seiberling Nature Center (Summit Co.)	adult male	(5)
1979 Oct. 30	Oberlin Reservoir (Lorain Co.)	adult male	(22)
1979 Winter	Centerville (Montgomery Co.)	female	(9)
1980 Dec. 20 to Feb. 4	Englewood (Montgomery Co.)	female	(9)
1981 Jan. 9	Blacklick Metro. Park (Fairfield Co.)	adult male	(18)
1981 Jan. 1st wk. thru 17th	Mansfield	imm. male	(18)
1981 Jan.21 - Feb. 9	Worthington and Upper Arlington (Franklin Co.)	adult male	(18)

Lucas and Ottawa County Yellow-headed Blackbird Records

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Source</u>
1936 May 21	Magee Marsh	one pair	(4)
1938 late Apr.-Aug.	Metzger Marsh	one pair plus 3 juv.	(4)
1939 Mar. 23	Port Clinton (Ottawa Co.)	6 birds	(12)
1939	Lucas County	one pair	(12)
1940 May 18	Metzger Marsh	nest with 4 eggs	(4)
1940 May 30 - Jun.10	Bono (Lucas Co.)	male defending terr.	(4)
1940 July 21	Metzger Marsh	1 juv. collected	(4)
1941	Metzger Marsh	1 pair	(4)
1941 Apr. 4	Port Clinton (Ottawa Co.)	1 bird	(12)
1944 Mar. 24	Reno Beach (Lucas Co.)	12 birds	(12)
1947 Oct. 22	Lucas Co., western	25 birds	(4)
1960 May 3-Jun. 15	Magee Marsh	1 pair	(4)
1960 Jun.8 - Jul. 8	Winous Point Marsh	female & imm. male	(4)
1961 May 18 - Jul. 9	Magee Marsh	5 birds	(4)
1964 May 17	Port Clinton	male	(16)
1966	Magee Marsh		(16)
1970 May 10	ONWR	female	(16)
1971 May 8	ONWR		(16)
1972 Jan. 15	Ottawa County		(16)
1972 May 4- 10	Ottawa County		(16)
1973 Apr. 25-May 5	Magee Marsh	2 males - 1 female	(16)
1974 Apr. 27-May 28	Magee Marsh	5 birds	(18)
1975 May 15-18	Ottawa County		(16)
1976 May 28-Jun. 10	Magee Marsh	male	(16)
1977 Mar. 6	Waterville	at feeder	(16)
1977 May 6-10	ONWR		(16)
1977 Jun. 15-Jul.	Navarre Marsh		(16)
1977 Sept. 24	ONWR	2 birds	(16)
1978 May 7	Ottawa County		(16)
1978 June 23	Ottawa County	3 birds	(16)
1979 Apr. 13-May 4	Ottawa County		(16)
1979 June 2	ONWR	7 males & 1 female	(16)
1979 June 2	Lucas County	2 territorial males	(5)
1979 June 24	ONWR	male collecting nest material	(16)
1979 Oct.25-Dec. 2	Danbury Twp. (Ottawa Co.)	1 male & 1-3 females	(5)
1979 Dec. 16	Cedar Point Marsh	3 birds	(16)
1980 Jan. 1-Feb. 8	ONWR	1 male - 1 female	(5)
1980 Jan. 1	Lucas County	imm. male	(5)
1980 Aug. 29	ONWR	female	(18)
1980 May 14-Jun.16	Magee Marsh and ONWR	1 pair	(18)
1980 May 11 -June	Lucas County	2 territorial males	(18)
1981 Jan. 29-Feb, 6	Magee Marsh	adult male	(18)

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