

	Tiffin 12/16/2006 (11)	Toledo 12/17/2006 (3)	Trumbull County 12/17/2006 (28)	Wellington 12/30/2006 (26)	Western Hamilton County 12/23/2006 (63)	Wilmet 12/15/2006 (32)	Wooster 12/23/2006 (31)	Youngstown 12/16/2006 (34)	Total	Circles, Count Day	Circles, Count Week
House Wren	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	6	4	4
Winter Wren	2	13	---	---	3	4	1	---	101	32	35
Marsh Wren	---	1	---	---	---	1	2	---	7	6	6
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3	22	32	2	54	205	129	18	3287	62	62
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	---	---	---	---	2	4	---	---	45	24	24
kinglet sp.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	1	1
Eastern Bluebird	62	cw	94	87	82	373	126	33	6122	62	63
Hermit Thrush	2	4	---	---	4	2	1	---	208	29	29
American Robin	49	855	17	25	4622	294	223	94	36310	64	64
Gray Catbird	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	12	9	9
Northern Mockingbird	---	4	---	---	62	90	13	8	1138	46	46
Brown Thrasher	---	cw	---	---	1	1	---	---	7	6	8
European Starling	2154	11065	1690	3797	40529	2986	2048	539	231897	64	64
American Pipit	3	---	---	---	---	43	1	---	314	11	11
Cedar Waxwing	---	31	8	---	1	32	1	20	1122	36	36
Yellow-rumped Warbler	---	---	5	14	6	60	---	---	957	39	39
Pine Warbler	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	2
Common Yellowthroat	---	3	---	---	---	---	2	---	9	6	6
warbler sp.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	1
Western Tanager	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	1
Eastern Towhee	---	---	1	---	40	47	6	3	708	43	44
American Tree Sparrow	82	750	241	21	27	550	406	44	10537	64	64
Chipping Sparrow	---	4	---	---	---	1	---	---	50	11	11
Field Sparrow	1	1	---	---	16	7	---	---	440	37	37
Vesper Sparrow	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	1
Savannah Sparrow	---	3	---	---	---	4	1	---	32	8	8
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	1
Fox Sparrow	---	7	---	---	1	2	---	---	62	25	25
Song Sparrow	26	247	46	23	261	739	165	31	9998	64	64
Lincoln's Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	1
Swamp Sparrow	1	151	4	---	6	---	24	1	726	46	46
White-throated Sparrow	3	78	11	8	775	215	46	10	8640	58	58
White-crowned Sparrow	---	146	5	2	37	557	58	6	3542	50	50
sparrow sp.	---	---	---	---	---	3	---	---	80	5	5
Dark-eyed Junco	229	392	197	234	437	1092	369	99	20457	64	64
Lapland Longspur	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1396	10	10
Snow Bunting	---	---	---	---	---	1	9	---	133	8	8
Northern Cardinal	216	377	229	141	710	1092	363	111	20973	64	64
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	1	1
Indigo Bunting	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	1	1	1
Red-winged Blackbird	202	6160	---	163	58	3466	251	---	52173	40	41
Eastern Meadowlark	37	cw	---	2	---	10	2	---	272	23	25
Rusty Blackbird	---	146	4	---	14	92	---	---	412	19	19
Common Grackle	1	676	---	187	141	11576	16	1	78446	40	41
Brown-headed Cowbird	5	1405	---	202	---	1585	8	---	4836	34	36
blackbird sp.	---	---	---	---	---	4694	2	---	13332	8	8
Baltimore Oriole	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	1
Purple Finch	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	43	11	13
House Finch	47	225	117	39	100	217	46	13	5814	64	64
Pine Siskin	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	9	33	6	6
American Goldfinch	137	389	114	83	235	500	160	66	12239	64	64
Evening Grosbeak	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4	2	2
House Sparrow	1309	890	232	289	663	1483	305	138	29294	64	64
total species	56	90	65	56	69	81	80	55	155		
total individuals	7724	37149	10969	9649	63925	42429	10352	4511	1008280		
observers	29	---	9	31	31	69	27	12	1638		
party hours	29.75	---	61.00	123.50	84.00	187.00	91.75	30.50	4211.25		

Winter Birds of Kelleys Island, Ohio 2006-2007

by H. Thomas Bartlett

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Beginning in November of 1997, I have been conducting a monthly bird census on Kelleys Island for the Kelleys Island Audubon Club. Over that period the census has missed only two months, January and February 2000. Thus, for the most part, on at least three days each winter data have been systematically collected on birds using the island. In addition, Lee and Sandy Tkach live on the island and keep me posted on what they are seeing. This past winter things changed somewhat. OK, they changed a lot. First, last June I retired from teaching after 30-plus years. Second, Bill and June Campbell gave me free use of their island condo for the winter. Not being one to insult the Campbells' generosity, I chose to use the condo for 21 out of 90 days this past winter. As a consequence the amount of data collected this past season increased greatly.

First, some background on Kelleys Island derived from the Kelleys Island Audubon Club's Web page <http://www.kelleysislandnature.com/default1.htm>. This is the largest of the United States islands in Lake Erie, at about 3000 acres and 18 miles of coastline. It is also the easternmost US island, located about 4.5 miles north of the Marblehead peninsula. Like the other islands, it is primarily what remains from an old Devonian limestone ridge left over from the last glaciers over 12,000 years ago. Among the island's tourist attractions are glacial grooves left from that event. Because of the alkaline nature of its soil, the island hosts numerous plants and animals unusual in the region. Its location also makes the island a major stopover for migrating birds and insects in spring and fall. Kelleys Island is listed as an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society for good reason. It is a remarkable staging area for buffleheads and American goldeneyes in season, and it has long been known for its high winter concentrations of golden-crowned kinglets, hermit thrushes, yellow-rumped warblers, and white-throated sparrows. More recently, it has been noted for wintering long-eared and northern saw-whet owls.

It appears this may have been an atypical winter, bird-wise, for the island. Weather-wise, December and January were abnormally mild, with February changing back to winter. In fact, data show this past February was one of the coldest on record. Waters around the island during the first two months were open, but quickly froze over in February. It was interesting to note that during warm sunny days in December, hermit thrushes, American robins, song sparrows, and white-throated sparrows were singing typical breeding songs early in the morning. The February count was typically very quiet and cold.

As has happened in most of the past 10 years, the island was censused over the third weekend of each month: 17 December, 20 January, and 23 February. Historically, during those winter census routes, a total of 105 species of birds has been observed, but the average has been 65 species observed on the routes during the winter months. A total of 92 species has been observed over the 10 years of censusing during December, with an average per year of 48. This year, December had 60 species. January has had 77 species observed, with an average per year of 39; this year, 44 species were observed. February has had

75 species observed, with an average of 39; this year 41 species were observed. Over this winter, census routes recorded 70 species plus one hybrid and one race. The total number of species observed for the winter of 2006-2007 came to 92. Of these 92 species, 33 were observed at least once on each visit to the island. In addition, nine more were missed on only one visit. Nineteen species were observed on only one visit. It appears the number of species using the island this winter, at least during the first two-thirds of the season, was above the norm.

Species observed during the winter of 2006-2007

Canada goose	Mourning dove
Tundra swan	Eastern screech-owl
Gadwall	Great horned owl
American wigeon	Long-eared owl
American black duck	Northern saw-whet owl
Mallard	Belted kingfisher
Mallard X black duck	Red-bellied woodpecker
Canvasback	Yellow-bellied sapsucker
Redhead	Downy woodpecker
Greater scaup	Hairy woodpecker
Lesser scaup	Northern flicker
Harlequin duck	Blue jay
Surf scoter	American crow
White-winged scoter	Horned lark
Black scoter	Black-capped chickadee
Long-tailed duck	Red-breasted nuthatch
Bufflehead	White-breasted nuthatch
Common goldeneye	Brown creeper
Hooded merganser	Carolina wren
Common merganser	Winter wren
Red-breasted merganser	Golden-crowned kinglet
Ruddy duck	Ruby-crowned kinglet
Ring-necked pheasant	Eastern bluebird
Red-throated loon	Hermit thrush
Common loon	American robin
Pied-billed grebe	Northern mockingbird
Horned grebe	European starling
Double-crested cormorant	American pipit
Great blue heron	Cedar waxwing
Turkey vulture	Yellow-rumped warbler
Bald eagle	Eastern towhee
Sharp-shinned hawk	American tree sparrow
Cooper's hawk	Song sparrow
Red-tailed hawk	Swamp sparrow
Golden eagle	White-throated sparrow
Merlin	Dark-eyed junco
Sandhill crane	"Oregon" junco
Killdeer	Snow bunting
Purple sandpiper	Northern cardinal
American woodcock	Red-winged blackbird

Bonaparte's gull	Rusty blackbird
Ring-billed gull	Common grackle
California gull	Brown-headed cowbird
Herring gull	Purple finch
Iceland gull	House finch
Great black-backed gull	American goldfinch
Rock pigeon	House sparrow

Notes on rare/uncommon sightings

Harlequin duck: A pair was found and photographed on the SW side of the island 20 Jan during the census. John Pogacnik reported a pair earlier in the month on the NE side of the island. Harlequin ducks have been rarely reported off the island in the past during winter months; this appears to be the latest date for them.

Ring-necked pheasant: An adult male was observed on the Sheele Preserve on 11 December. In the early years of the census, it was not unusual to find a pheasant on the island, but they have not been recorded since 2003. It is likely this was a released bird.

Red-throated loon: The only winter record is a single bird photographed just north of West Bay on 28 December 2006.



Tom Bartlett got this great shot of a late red-throated loon off Kelleys Island 28 Dec.

Turkey vulture: An immature bird was observed on the island during all of December, January, and most of February. This is the first wintering record for the species on the island.

Golden eagle: An immature bird was observed and photographed during the February census by Tom Bartlett and Sandy Tkach. This is the first winter record of this species on the island, and may well be the first record for the island overall.

Sandhill crane: Four individuals were observed flying onto the island in the early hours of 11 December from the north. This is also a first a winter record for the island.

Killdeer: Two individuals were found during the Christmas Count of 17 December by the Pogacnik group on the east side of the island.

Purple sandpiper: A single individual was found by Ross and Lisa Brohl on Long Point on 13 December. Four individuals were discovered at the same location during the 17 December Christmas Count; at least one was photographed. Purple sandpipers have rarely been reported on the island, and four individuals is easily the record number, as all other sightings have been of single birds. All previous records have occurred in November or December.

California gull: An adult was found and photographed in the north harbor during the Christmas Count of 17 December. This is the third record of California gull on the island during ten years of censusing.

Iceland gull: A second-year bird was observed in the north harbor during the Christmas Bird Count by John Pogacnik and all of the other counters. This is the census record for the island.

Long-eared owl: At least two individuals were observed on the island during December and early January. The most regular spot was Scheele Preserve.

Northern saw-whet owl: A high of seven calling birds was recorded on 28 December. During December, three birds were banded and two additional birds were recaptured. One of the recaptures had been banded on the island 9 November 2006. The other recapture had been banded by Canadian banders but the data has not yet become available.

European starling: A remarkable phenomenon involving this species was noted again this year. During early December, 20,000+ individuals were observed flying to the island from the mainland to feed. On 28 December, the flock grew to 110,000+, and was observed going to roost in the NW section of the island. These birds were feeding mainly on dogwood berries and poison ivy berries. By the middle of January, most of these berries were gone, leaving very little wild food for birds on the island.

“Oregon” junco: Two individuals of this race of the dark-eyed junco were observed during January. At the same time there were numerous observations of intergrade juncos between the “slate-colored” and the “Oregon” races. The “Oregon” race is not a rare occurrence in winter on the island. At least one has been observed in five out of the 10 winters of censusing.

Rusty blackbird: A single individual was observed in a wet area on the north side of the island on 24 January. This is the latest (earliest?) record for this species on the island, and also the first January record.

There is no doubt that more analysis of the data is necessary before any scientific conclusions can be drawn from the avian data presented here. Still, the mild nature of the early part of the winter of 2006-2007 seems to be reflected in the data listed, as is the more typical nature of the winter weather during February.



This 4 March 2007 photo of the spotted towhee discovered by Jan Dixon near Toledo was contributed by Robert Epstein.

In the first edition (1886) of the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list*, six towhees of the genus *Pipilo* were recognized. The fifth edition of the *Check-list* (1957) covered 16 recognized subspecies of just one of them, *P. erythrophthalmus*, then called the “rufous-sided towhee,” later in 1998 the “eastern towhee”; this is the common species in Ohio. Recognized as a separate species in 1886 was the “Arctic towhee” *P. maculatus*, which was later merged into *P. erythrophthalmus* as a subspecies *arcticus*, but recognized anew in 1996 as *P. maculatus*, the “spotted towhee.” Even though miraculously enough we still have six species after 120 years, it's easy to see the towhees remain in taxonomic flux. The old Arctic towhee, presently the spotted towhee, is distinctively marked, and Ohio now has five records.

On 39 Mar 1946, one was reported by C. Walker, G. Rea, and N. Thomson along the Scioto River in Delaware Co. See p. 11 of Borror, D. 1950. A Check List of the Birds of Ohio. *Ohio Journal of Science* 56:1-32. This author asked Thomson about the record five years ago; he recalled it well, and described the bird in detail. Tom Bartlett captured and photographed one at Springville Marsh in Seneca Co. on 4 May 1996. (H. T. Bartlett. 1996. A Spotted Towhee in Seneca Co. *Ohio Cardinal* 19:75-76). One visited the Klamm's feeder in Lakewood, Cuyahoga Co. 22-29 Oct 1998 (Rosche, 1998. *Cleveland Bird Calendar* 94(4):43). One was reported by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory as captured in Ottawa Co. 2 April 2000; it is recognized by Anderson et al. (2002. *Birds of the Toledo Area*).

Jan Dixon noticed and reported an adult of this species at her feeder in Holland, OH, just west of Toledo, on 28 Feb 2007; this individual was seen by me through at least 20 April.