

## COMMENTS ON THE SEASON

By Craig Caldwell

This was a hot, dry summer in most of Ohio. Temperatures were above normal in June, part of a trend that made the month among the 10 warmest for the lower 48 states as a whole. On 28 and 29 Jun, 16 stations in the western third of the state tied or exceeded their previous daily records with readings up to 107°. July was the second hottest on record in Ohio and the hottest ever for the lower 48.

Statewide, June was among the driest 10% of the more than 100 years with data. Almost the whole state had below-average rainfall, with some areas having as little as 20% of the norm. Paradoxically, a few pockets had up to three times their normal June rain, but they were too few and too small to affect the statewide results. July was similar, though it was only (only!) about the 25<sup>th</sup> driest. A few counties in the central west had as little as 10% of their precipitation norms, and most of the rest of the state ranged from 50 to near 100% of normal. The Ohio Valley and parts of the inland northeast, however, had up to double their previous average rain. Nevertheless, no new rainfall records were set in either month, a marked contrast with last summer which saw many new highs. Weather data are from the National Weather Service (<http://water.weather.gov/precip/>) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/temp-and-precip/maps.php> and <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/extremes/records/>).

Several contributors commented that the season appeared to be a week or two advanced compared to what we consider usual. The spring vegetation timing was advanced and many species' migrations began and peaked earlier than normal, so summer was a continuation of that pattern. The heat and lack of rain quickly reduced our already minimal shorebird habitat; Rob Harlan noted that the Bellevue "sky ponds" were dry by mid-Jun. Shorebirds' dates of last departure northbound and first southbound arrivals, however, mostly followed their historical patterns.

A few more waterfowl than usual lingered to contradict the above trend. Common Mergansers have settled in as breeders in a couple of locations, a very recent addition to Ohio's list of regular nesters. James F. Yoder and Levi A. Yo-

der made separate pilgrimages to Mohican SP and SF in Jun and tallied large numbers of many thrush and warbler species. You will see them cited repeatedly in the Species Accounts. An area called The Bowl, in **Harrison**, hosted a fine variety of grassland birds; unfortunately public access is limited to its perimeter.

About 300 bird species are either residents, breeders, regular migrants, or regular winter visitors; I call this Ohio's Core List. Over 100 other species are infrequent visitors (some with only a single record). They, with all the species which have never appeared in the state, constitute the Review List, which is maintained by the Ohio Bird Records Committee (OBRC). The Committee and this editor urge birders to report all sightings of Review List species, of Core List species found at unusual times, of nesting by birds previously not known to nest in the state, and of course sightings of birds never before found in Ohio. Information on how to document rarities is available at <http://www.ohiobirds.org/records/documentation.php>.

The following section contains accounts for 238 species, one hybrid, and one genus. The OBRC received or downloaded documentation for seven review species. Records for three of them were accepted and reports of the other four are in process. Four review species (White-face Ibis, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Fish Crow, and Common Raven) had reports which were not documented for the Committee.

Taxonomic order and nomenclature follow the *Check-List of North American Birds*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition (1998) as updated through the 53rd Supplement (2012). This document is published by the North American Classification Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union and is available at <http://www.aou.org/checklist/north/print.php>. County names are in bold italics. Locations whose counties are of the same name, for example Ashtabula (city) and Delaware Wildlife Area, usually do not have the counties repeated. County names for sites described in Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus are also omitted. Shortened names and a few sets of initials are used for locations and organizations which occur repeatedly; these abbreviations are listed here. The term "*fide*" is used in some citations; it means "in trust of" and is used where the reporter was not the observer.

## Abbreviations:

BBS = the North American Breeding Bird Survey, a joint project of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Canadian Wildlife Service.

The Bowl = a limited-access area near the **Harrison** airport.

CMNH = Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Conneaut = the mudflats on the west side of Conneaut Harbor, **Ashtabula**, unless otherwise noted

CP = County Park

CPNWR = Cedar Point National Wildlife Refuge, **Lucas**

CVNP = Cuyahoga Valley National Park, **Cuyahoga** and (mostly) **Summit**

Darby Creek = Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park, **Franklin**

East Fork = East Fork State Park, **Clermont**

eTT = eBird Trail Tracker data entry kiosk, usually at National Wildlife Refuges

Fernald = Fernald Preserve, **Butler** and **Hamilton**

Funk = Funk Bottoms Wildlife Area, **Ashland** and (mostly) **Wayne**

Headlands = Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve, Headlands Beach State Park, and adjoining waters, **Lake**

Holden Arboretum = **Lake**, except for its Stebbins Gulch unit in **Geauga**

Hoover NP = Hoover Nature Preserve, **Delaware**

Hoover Reservoir = the northern 80% is in **Delaware**, but the dam is in **Franklin**

Kelleys Island = Kelleys Island and adjacent waters, **Erie**

Killbuck = Killbuck Marsh Wildlife Area, **Holmes/Wayne**

Killdeer = Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area, **Wyandot**

Lake Hope = Lake Hope State Park, **Vinton** (It's surrounded by Zaleski State Forest)

Lorain = the dredge spoil impoundment east of downtown, **Lorain**, unless otherwise noted

Magee = Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, **Lucas** and **Ottawa**

Maumee Bay = Maumee Bay State Park, **Lucas**

Metzger = Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area, **Lucas**, unless otherwise detailed

m. obs. = multiple observers

Mohican = Mohican State Forest and State Park. Many trails cross the boundaries so some reports include sightings from both.

Mohican SF = Mohican State Forest, **Ashland**

Mohican SP = Mohican State Park, (mostly) **Ashland** and (slightly) **Richland**

MP = Metro Park or MetroPark, depending on jurisdiction

NC = Nature Center

NF = National Forest

NP = Nature Preserve (except as part of CVNP)

Oak Openings = Oak Openings Preserve MetroPark, **Lucas**

ONWR = Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, **Lucas** and **Ottawa**

Sandy Ridge = Sandy Ridge Reservation, **Lorain**

SF = State Forest

Shawnee = Shawnee State Forest, **Scioto**, unless otherwise noted

Shawnee Lookout = Shawnee Lookout County Park, **Hamilton**

SNP = State Nature Preserve

SP = State Park

Springville Marsh = Springville Marsh State Nature Preserve, **Seneca**

WA = Wildlife Area

Winous Point = Winous Point Shooting Club, **Ottawa**

Zaleski = Zaleski State Forest, **Vinton**

## Errata:

The Golden Eagle account in the Spring 2012 issue erroneously included a **Richland** sighting.

The Lesser Black-backed Gull entry in the Spring 2012 issue omitted the date of the last sighting. It was 01 May.