

REPORT OF OHIO RECORDS COMMITTEE

The following is a summary of those documentations received and reviewed by the Committee for Spring 1981 which were not accepted by a majority (3) of the Committee.

GOSHAWK. One, Reading, Hamilton Co., 27 March 1981. Bird described as immature. Description does not eliminate a female Cooper's hawk. No mention of eyestripe (may not have been seen or may not have been definitive).

Editor's note: Only one plumage characteristic considered diagnostic on immature goshawk by Raptor Information Center, Cape May, New Jersey: definitely streaked undertail coverts which appear essentially as a continuation of the streaking of the belly.

GOSHAWK. One, St. Mary's, Auglaize Co., 28 March 1981. Description given of an adult bird but eyestripe not mentioned. No size comparison given. Description of color does not eliminate other species. No description of tail color or breast color. Description has insufficient details to permit verification.

GOSHAWK. One, 1-75, Lima-Wapakoneta, 15 April 1981. Description of behavior contrary to usual behavior for species (sitting in tree in woods at edge of interstate). Viewing conditions not optimal (no binoculars while driving at presumably 55 MPH along interstate). No description of size comparison or was bird seen in flight. Description of color "grayness" does not eliminate blue-gray of other species. Description (although of an adult with a pronounced eyestripe) has insufficient details to permit verification of this rare and difficult to identify species in such unusual circumstances.

FERRUGINOUS HAWK. One, ONWR, Ottawa Co., 7 April 1981. Observer submitted record for comment by others realizing that he could not be positive that the bird was not a red-tail. Two members of the committee saw the bird and believe it to be an odd-plumaged red-tailed hawk. The lower breast and belly weren't pure white but were lightly streaked with brown (not the characteristic of an adult ferruginous). In response to the observer's question concerning the profile or shape of this bird, while there are general differences between redtails, rough-legs and ferruginous, these species can appear to be identically shaped depending upon a variety of factors. Shape is not a definitive field mark for these species.

PEREGRINE FALCON. One, Crane Creek SP, Ottawa Co., 15 March 1981. Bird not seen flying, only perched, 130 to 150 yards away. Bird described as an immature. Merlins and kestrels have dark eyes. Description does not adequately eliminate other buteos or accipiters.

MERLIN. One, Crane Creek SP, Ottawa Co., 15 March, 1981. Body shape and flight pattern not described. Description does not eliminate kestrel.

YELLOW RAIL. One, Crane Creek SP, Ottawa Co., 6 April 1981. White wing patches not seen. Sighting is two weeks earlier than any other record. Habitat unlikely. Sora's give a "tick" call when alarmed. (Throw a stone during migration into any sizeable marsh area and you will get several "ticks" in response.) Description does not eliminate sora.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER. Four, Winous Point, Ottawa Co., 29 May 1981. Many "peeps" have the scaly back pattern. The head and chest aren't buffy on a Spring Baird's (see cover photo of American Birds, Vol. 35, No. 2). Baird's are not generally buffy in the Spring (only Fall juveniles are buffy and this plumage is molted in the late Fall/early Winter). Description also does not eliminate Spring sanderling.

RUFF. One, ONWR, Ottawa Co., 21 May 1981. Characteristic shape of bird (plump almost plover-like body with a long and thin neck) not mentioned. Instead size compared to lesser yellowlegs, a species that doesn't appear like ruff. Lighting poor (sun directly behind bird at 9:15 A.M. on refuge entrance road some 180 yards from road). Record needs corroboration from another observer, photograph or more detailed description.

LAUGHING GULL. One, Crane Creek SP, Ottawa Co., 27 and 28 March 1981. The bird described had the head and tail of a first-year bird and the wings of an adult. No laughing gull has that plumage. Bird described with "winter" head so "hood" differences immaterial. However, Franklin's head not much darker and less extensive in full breeding plumage. Description lacking sufficient details for verification.

Editor's note: Brooks Atherton in Birding, June 1978, as corrected in August 1978, states the differences between an immature laughing gull and an immature Franklin's gull:

"The immature Franklin's has a more petite head. Also, the Franklin's has a fairly clearcut black cap or hood that is absent in a Laughing. At the nape there is a distinct end to the Franklin's cap. In winter this is a good mark because you'll never see a Laughing with the immature wing pattern and a black cap. And the Franklin's breast, flanks, and sides are white. The tail is important. The Franklin's has a perfectly narrow, black tail band of even width that does not extend onto the white outer tail feathers. The Laughing has a broader, more blotchy, and uneven tail band that has black extending onto the outer tail feathers. The foreheads and bills are also different. Normally, the Franklin's has a white forehead between the cap and the bill, while the Laughing's forehead is grayer and dirtier-looking. The Franklin's bill is smaller and has no curve or hook like a Laughing's.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE. One, Crane Creek SP, Ottawa Co., 15 March 1981. Bird described as immature flyby at 125 yards distance. No other gulls mentioned as present for size comparison. No description of shared-off tail which is present in a kittiwake. Description has insufficient details without corroboration by photo, another observer or more detail.

BELL'S VIREO. One, Ashland Co., 19 May 1981. Voice not heard. Behavior atypical. Philadelphia, solitary and young white-eyed vireos not eliminated by description. In Spring, white-eyes can have a dusky gray iris that are not prominent especially at 100 feet. At that distance, the yellowish wash on the underparts would not be very noticeable on a Bell's but quite noticeable on a white-eye.

A View of The 1981 Spring Migration
Magee Marsh Wildlife Area

Mark Shieldcastle

Spring migration on the Crane Creek State Park-Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge complex had both spectacular highs and disappointing lows. The shorebird migration can only be described as disastrous and the waterfowl movement was less than expected. However, the hawk and passerine flights were fantastic. Shorebird habitat was about normal in the marshes with adequate flats at Ottawa, Cedar Point NWR, and the Navarre Unit of Ottawa. One possible explanation of the reduced flight is the more or less drought occurring in the marsh region. The result was little to no sheet water in crop fields. This caused a major reduction in overall habitat acreage and regional exceptability. Waterfowl stopover may also have been affected. Combined with an early ice breakup, it caused a more rapid migration.

Whatever the possibilities, the lesser scaup needs to be watched. Major reductions in their numbers have been noted the past two years. Ohio Division of Wildlife bandings on Ottawa and Magee: 700 in 1979, 60 in 1980, and 3 in 1981.

Accipiters and falcons showed excellent numbers with the same holding true for buteos with the exception of the broad-wing.

The small birds moved with every southwest wind and had three major movements. The first was an April 28 overflight dominated by the male yellow-rump warbler, male ruby-crowned kinglet, and white-throated sparrow but included overflight warblers such as worm-eating, hooded, and yellowthroated. The second movement and largest occurred on May 9th. This substantiates my previous two years banding data that the southwest wind that occurs between the 7th and 13th should not be missed. This flight was dominated by female yellow-rump, Cape May, ovenbird, goldfinch, white-throated sparrows, and veerys. The birds seemed to be dripping from the trees. The final major movement was May 23rd and rivaled the 9th. It was dominated by the magnolia warbler with good numbers of yellows, mourning, Wilson, canada warblers, female goldfinches, vireos, and flycatchers.

Overall, all species were well represented this year with no noticeable exceptions. Cuckoos, flycatchers and vireos appeared in normal numbers but peaked slightly late. Sparrows seemed up as a whole. White-crowns, white-throats, field, Lincoln, fox and songs were definintely up with swamps apparently down. Rose-breasted grosbeaks were extremely abundant with tanagers normal. The warbler movement was surely one of the best on record. Large increases were recorded in Nashvilles, parulas, Cape May, black-throated-blue, magnolias, chestnut-sided, ovenbirds, northern waterthrush, and canadas. The only species appearing possibly down were the orange-crown and bay-breasted.

An excellent spring was noted for gnatcatchers, catbirds, thrashers and winter wrens. However, house wrens were down. Thrushes as a whole were up with unbelievable numbers noted in veerys and wood thrushes.

Extremely strong southwest winds, influencing possibly displaced birds by Mt. St. Helens fall eruptions, may account for the occurrences of more western species such as the clay-colored sparrow and golden eagles.

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