

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

A Quarterly Journal of Bird Sightings from the Cleveland Region

SINCE 1905

VOLUME 102 NUMBER 1



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

2002 Common Eider...Is THIS
the Rest of the Story? Page 15

DECEMBER 2005, JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2006

The Cleveland Bird Calendar

Winter 2005–2006

Volume 102 Number 1

ISSN 1557-8798

Editor: Kevin Metcalf

Editorial Consultants: Ray Hannikman

Larry Rosche

Copy Editor: Clyde E. Witt

Design Director: Susan Jones

KBC Webmaster: Delores Cole

Contributors: Dwight Chasar

Ray Hannikman

The Cleveland Bird Calendar was founded in 1905 by Francis H. Herrick of the Western Reserve University. It is published quarterly by the Kirtland Bird Club and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

The purpose of the Calendar is:

- To provide information on the movement of birds through the Cleveland region;
- To monitor population densities of resident birds;
- To help determine patterns of vagrancy for rarely encountered species.

Readers are encouraged to make every effort to identify and help preserve sensitive habitats and migrant stopover points.

A **subscription** to *The Cleveland Bird Calendar* is a benefit of Kirtland Bird Club membership:

\$28 - Couple, \$17 - Single, and \$8 - Student

Mail your payment to:

Mary Anne Romito, Kirtland Bird Club
4310 Bush Ave; Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Subscription only is \$12 per year. Contact Carol Camillo, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History at 216 231-4600 to subscribe or for an address change.

Cover photo: Albino Tufted Titmouse; Photographed by Jim and Maureen Lindway in Brecksville, Ohio.

Kirtland Bird Club Board, 2005–2006

Delores Cole

President and Webmaster

Lisa Chapman

Vice President

Mary Anne Romito

Treasurer

Tom Romito

Recording Secretary

Lou Gardella

Corresponding Secretary

Kevin Metcalf, *Editor*

Cleveland Bird Calendar

Ed Pierce

Van Trip Leader

Karin Tanquist

Van Trip Coordinator

Paula Lozano

Local Trip Coordinator



Readers are encouraged to submit field reports, artwork, papers and photographs to Kevin Metcalf. Send reports to 12459 Fowlers Mill Rd., Chardon, Ohio 44024.

OR e-mail: skermetcalf@earthlink.net.

We welcome your participation. All reports are archived at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Due dates for seasonal field reports are as follows:

Winter SeasonMarch 10

Spring SeasonJune 10

Summer SeasonSeptember 10

Autumn Season.....December 10

Seasonal report forms are available at::

www.kirtlandbirdclub.org/cbc/cbc.htm

Rare Bird Hotline: 216-556-0700 Sponsored by the Kirtland Bird Club, this number may be called to learn of and to report recent bird sightings. In cases of extreme rarities, please alert the editors or the Web site as soon as possible.

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

A Quarterly Journal of Bird Sightings from the Cleveland Region

WINTER

DECEMBER 2005, JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2006

Volume 102

Number 1

On the Inside...

<i>Overview of the Season</i> by Kevin Metcalf.....	1
<i>The Weather</i> by Dwight Chasar	2
Seasonal Report.....	3
<i>Headlands Beach State Nature Preserve and Vicinity</i> by Ray Hannikman.....	8
<i>Population Status of Flycatchers in Summit County</i> by Dwight Chasar.....	13
<i>The 2002–2003 Fairport Harbor Common Eider</i> by Kevin Metcalf.....	15
<i>Summary of Area Christmas Bird Counts</i> by Kevin Metcalf.....	17
<i>Bald Eagle Nest in Cuyahoga County</i> by Dwight Chasar	19
About the Authors	20
Field Contributors List.....	20

You and Your Friends are Invited...

The Kirtland Bird Club welcomes you to its monthly meetings
– the first Wednesday of each month, except July and August – at 7:30 PM at
The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Or, join a field trip to one of the local birding hot spots.

See the Web site for the up-coming meetings, programs and trips;

www.kirtlandbirdclub.org.

Winter 2005–2006

Overview of the Season

by Kevin Metcalf

The Winter of the Future?

Winter this year was mercifully short. In December 2005 the air was filled with snowflakes, however, by the end of January that blizzard of white over Lake Erie consisted not of snow, but of gulls. After last winter's record snowfall, and a very cold and snowy December 2005, it was a great relief to most of us that January and February did not live up to their respective billings. Remarkably, I found myself holding a Green Frog (*Rana clamitans*), caught in a ditch on a snowless January 1st, Burton, Christmas Bird Count. In January and early February several species of flowers could be found blooming, including Common Chickweed, Purple Dead-nettle, Common Groundsel, Common Dandelion, English Daisy and Skunk Cabbage. Turkey Vultures were fairly widespread by the end of January and spring seemed to be on its way.

In the Cleveland area many birders look forward to winter for the gull watching. This season did not disappoint in terms of variety and numbers, though the real cold weather gulls such as Glaucous, Iceland, and Thayer's were found in smaller numbers than we have come to expect in recent years. Some good gull watching came early with the most brutal of this winter's weather around 18 – 22 December, while early February produced clouds of Bonaparte's Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls. The numbers of Ring-billed, Bonaparte's, and other small gulls were probably the result of a relatively mild winter and ice-free Lake Erie. Ice cover on Lake Erie tends to bring us large gulls, such as Herring and Great Black-backed, and push out the smaller species from the region.

A summary of gulls with highest daily reported numbers, Winter 2005 – 2006:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number Reported</u>	<u>Date</u>
Laughing Gull	(1)	21 – 22 January, 25 February
Franklin's Gull	(2)	7 January
Little Gull	(7)	7 February
Black-headed Gull	(1)	7 January
Bonaparte's Gull	(10,000)	5 February, 7 February
Mew Gull	(1)	23 January
Ring-billed Gull	(70,000)	7 – 11 February
California Gull	(1)	30 December, 22 & 26 January
Herring Gull	(5,500)	17 December (Cleveland CBC)
Thayer's Gull	(2)	1 January, 25 January
Iceland Gull	(1)	several dates
Lesser Black-backed Gull	(4)	10 – 17 December
Glaucous Gull	(3)	28 January
Great Black-backed Gull	(700 – 1,000)	17 – 20 December
Black-legged Kittiwake	(1)	17 December, 1 January

The other noteworthy aspect of winter 2005-2006 was the good showing of some short distance migrants, sometimes referred to as “half-hardy” species. Gray Catbirds were found at several locations. Eastern Phoebes, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Chipping Sparrows, Field Sparrows and Fox Sparrows were all found in higher than expected numbers. Contrarily, blackbirds, cowbirds and grackles for the most part did not linger.

Observers in the region once again were disappointed with the numbers of ducks. The lack of Common Mergansers was in stark contrast to last winter’s flocks in the Central Basin of Lake Erie. Winter finches were basically no-shows, and the only highlight for many feeder watchers was the consistent appearance of Red-breasted Nuthatches. A variety of owls were noted this winter, with widely viewed Snowy Owls showing up conveniently next to lakefront gull watching locales, which also hosted Northern Gannets.

With global warming now being accepted by most scientists as the new reality, maybe we are seeing the winter of the future here in Northeast Ohio. Maybe we will get used to seeing winter Gray Catbirds and we will be watching thousands of wintering Bonaparte’s Gulls instead of Herring Gulls. One thing is certain: Birds and their populations are ever changing and if change in the air, birds will be among the first to respond.



See you in the field,

*~ Kevin,
Editor*

Weather Report

by Dwight Chasar

December: Temperatures averaged 27.4°, 3.7° below normal. The high was 51° on the 28th and the low was 1° on the 8th. Lake Erie water stood at 44° on the 1st and fell to 34° by the 31st. Snowfall totaled 21.0 inches and the greatest depth was 8.0 inches on the 13th. Precipitation was distributed over 16 days, totaling 2.04 inches, 1.10 inches below normal. The greatest fall in any 24 hour period was 0.29 inches on the 1st and 2nd.

January: Temperatures averaged 38.6°, 12.9° above normal. This was the third warmest January on record for Cleveland. The high was 60° on the 13th and the low was 21° on the 27th. Lake Erie was at 34° by the end of the month. Snowfall totaled only 4.6 inches while the greatest ground depth was 1 inch on the 18th and 19th. Precipitation was distributed over 15 days to total 1.92 inches, 0.56 inches below normal. The greatest fall in any 24 hour period was 0.61 inches on the 17th and the 18th.

February: Temperatures averaged 30.5°, 2.1° above normal. The high was 61° on the 16th and 17th and the low 5° on the 19th. Lake Erie dropped to 33° by the end the month. Snowfall totaled 16.9 inches, with the greatest depth 8 inches on the 9th. Precipitation totaled 2.80 inches, .51 inches above normal and occurred over 15 days. The greatest 24 hour fall was .84 inches on the 4th and 5th.

Seasonal Report

Underline denotes unexpected species in the region

HBSNP – Headlands Beach State Nature Preserve

MMSNP – Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve

CVNP – Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Snow Goose – A “blue” morph was at Whiskey Island, Cleveland on 10 December (GBe). Another was in Medina County 17 December (TMR). Six were recorded on Christmas Bird Counts.



Ross's Goose
Wellington Reservoir
Photo by Sue Snyder

Ross's Goose – One was found 9 January along Wolf Road in Bay Village, Cuyahoga Co. (LRi, CC, BD). A first winter plumaged white morph was at Wellington Reservoir, Lorain Co. 28 – 29 January (DJH, SS).

Cackling Goose – Two were reported from a field north of Perry Schools, Lake Co. 3 January (JP). This species, once considered a subspecies of Canada Goose, requires documentation sent to the Ohio Bird Records Committee.

Canada Goose – Wintering birds are

primarily of the subspecies *Branta canadensis maxima* or “Giant” Canada Goose. Lesser numbers of *B. c. interior* could also be found throughout the winter season. Counts of 2,500+ at Lake Phippen 15 December – 15 January (LR) and 846 at Ira Road, CVNP 12 December (TMR) give some indication of the abundance of this species.

Mute Swan – An Estimated 50 at Clague Park, Cuyahoga Co. 16 January (CC). This species was also reported at E. 55/72nd Street (LD, RR) throughout much of the winter.

Tundra Swan – Twelve were seen from Lakeshore Metropark 3 December (JP), while 14 flew over Akron the next day (GBe). Four were at LaDue Reservoir, Geauga Co. 6 December (LGi). The largest movement through the region this season occurred on 12 December with 30 seen at Sims Park, 30 at E. 72 Streets in Cleveland, 45 at Euclid Beach (RH), ~60 at Pepper Pike (RR) and 11 at CVNP (TMR). Afterwards, seven were at Kent 18 December (LR). The only January report was of two at Caley Woods Reservation, Lorain Co. 22 January (BAT).

Wood Duck – One was found on the Lakewood CBC 31 December (fide NH). A first winter male that had still not attained full alternate plumage, probably indicating it was from a late season brood, showed up at North Chagrin Reservation, Cuyahoga Co. 8 – 9 January. Another male — or the same one that had completed its molt into alternate plumage — showed up there on 15 February (KM). More returned to the region by 22 February (LR) and 26 February (BD).

Gadwall – Four were found on area Christmas Bird Counts. Nine returned to Lake Phippen 9 February (LR). The

species became fairly widespread by end of February (m.obs.)

American Wigeon – Not many reports received. Only two reported on Christmas Bird Counts in the region. One was along the Cleveland Lakefront 18 December (NA), and one was at Clague Park, Cuyahoga Co. on 8 January (EBr). As usual, sightings increased in late February with the beginning of northbound migration for the species, such as three along the Cleveland Lakefront 19 February (NA).

Eurasian Wigeon – One drake was at the border of our region at Walborn Reservoir, on the Portage/Stark Co. line 27 February (SJa, BM m.obs.)

American Black Duck – Christmas Bird Counts aside, the maximum single day count received was of 17 at Wingfoot Lake, Portage Co. 22 – 30 January (GBe), while 16 were at North Chagrin Reservation, Cuyahoga Co. on 27 January (KM). Ten were at Fairport Harbor 8 February (LR) while up to four were at Station Road, CVNP 2 January (DAC).

Mallard – Widespread and numerous, a representative count was of 524 from the areas around Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and Brookside Park (TMR).

Northern Shoveler – Nine were at Summit Lake, Akron 9 January – 9 February, while 34 arrived there 27 February (GBe). Shovelers returned to Sandy Ridge Reservation, Lorain Co. by 23 February (CC).

Northern Pintail – Two were at Springfield Lake 9 February (LR), while one returned to Sandy Ridge Reservation 23 February (CC).

Green-winged Teal – This species returned to Summit Lake by 27 February (GBe).

Canvasback – Up to 480 noted flying east past Lakeshore Metropark on 7 December (JP) while the seasonal high count for the HBSNP-MMSNP area was only 10 on 14 December (RH). Very few found along the Lake Erie shore in mid-winter, with DJH noting that they finally found four 20 February. By the end of February, became fairly widespread in the region, in small numbers.

Redhead – One spent the winter at Summit Lake (GBe). Otherwise, Wellington Reservoir was the only reliable spot for the species in mid-winter, with 18 there 11 January (VF) and 40 on 28 January (DJH). Five were at Mogadore Reservoir 30 January (GBe). The seasonal high count was of 350 at Wellington Reservoir 25 February (RSH). Other good counts of returning spring migrants included 75+ at Turkeyfoot Lake, Summit Co. on 26 February (GBe), 40+ at West Branch State Park on 27 February (LR) and 15 at HBSNP on 28 February (RH).

Ring-necked Duck – Counts ranged from 96 to 117 at Wellington Reservoir on 11 January (SZ, VF) with 60 there on 28 January (DJH). Spring migrants became widespread by 25 February, with late season high counts of 190 at Mogadore Reservoir on 26 February (GBe) and 165 at Lake Phippen on 28 February (LR).

Greater Scaup – No large concentrations of this species were noted this winter. For example, a mid-winter report of only one along the Cleveland Lakefront 23 January (DJH). High count of 20 at Fairport Harbor 8 February (LR), apart from Christmas Bird Count totals.

Lesser Scaup – Daily high counts of only 20 – 30 were received from a few locations, such as Sims Park (CC),

HBSNP (RH) and the Cleveland lakefront (DJH). Inland, a pair at Lake Phippen 15 January – 11 February (LR).

Eider Species – An eider flew past Lakeshore Metropark on 3 December (JP).

Harlequin Duck – A female was seen from Lakeshore Metropark 7 December (JP). A male and female were along the Cleveland Lakefront 17 December (LR, JT, m.obs.). Two, female or immature, at Eastlake 22 January (AF) while two were reported from Fairport Harbor 18 February (EB).

Surf Scoter – One was at Lakeshore Metropark 3 December and three were there 7 December (JP). One at Sims Park 6 December (CC); five at Wellington Reservoir 11 January (VF). A striking adult male was at West Branch State Park 27 February (LR).

White-winged Scoter – One was at Sims Park 5 December (NA). One in either female or immature plumage at the Lakefront near E. 72 Street 6 – 8 December (DJH, DL, PL). Two were at Eastlake 22 January (AJF).

Black Scoter – A seasonal high count of 17 came from Sims Park on 3 December (PL, PCh). The species remained there in lesser numbers through 8 January (NA, RR), returning on 14 February. Other reports included one at Whiskey Island, Cleveland 10 December (GBe), two along the Cleveland Lakefront 1 January (JP), one at Wellington Reservoir 11 January (VF) and one at Fairport Harbor 18 February (EB).

Long-tailed Duck – One was seen at Lorain Harbor on 3 January (SSn) and a female was at the mouth of the Rocky River, Cuyahoga Co. on 15 January (BAT). A male entertained observers at Fairport Harbor 22 January – 21 February (DJH, LR, m.obs.).

Bufflehead – High counts of 30 at Fairport Harbor 8 February (LR) and

24 along the Avon to Bay Village lakefront 31 December (CC).

Common Goldeneye – Maximum of 50-75 along the Cleveland lakefront between Gordon Park and Burke Lakefront Airport (m.obs.) and at Sims Park (NA). Other counts included 30 along the Avon to Bay Village Lakefront 31 December (CC). Twenty was a good inland count at West Branch State Park 27 February (LR) while 17 were at Springfield Lake, Summit Co. 14 January (GBe).

Hooded Merganser – The highest mid-winter count reported was of 27 at Summit Lake on 14 January (GBe). Fourteen were at Lake Phippen on 3 January (LR). One was found throughout the season in the HBSNP-MMSNP area (RH). The species became more widespread by the end of February.

Common Merganser – In great contrast to last winter, when thousands could be found along the Lake Erie shore, the high count reported this winter was of 233 from Lakeshore Metropark on 7 December (JP). Up to 30 spent the winter along the Cuyahoga River north of Lake Rockwell (LR). A high count of only three at HBSNP on 8 December (RH). Seventeen were found at Mentor Lagoons on 1 February (LR).

Red-breasted Merganser – High counts reported were of 5,043 from Lakeshore Metropark on 3 December (JP) and 2,000 at Eastlake on 6 December (CC).

Ruddy Duck – Good counts of 100+ at Huntington Reservation, Cuyahoga Co. on 10 December (EB) and 70 at HBSNP-MMSNP area 8 December (RH). Later in the season, representative counts were of 30 at Whiskey Island 15 January (BAT), 27 at Wellington Reservoir 11 – 22 January (VF, BAT) and 33 at Summit Lake 9 February (GBe).

Wild Turkey – One Christmas Bird Count party found a flock of 77 in Auburn Twp., Geauga Co. (LGi). Another high count was of 38 in CVNP 23 February (LD); three seen in the MMSNP area 12 January (RH)

Red-throated Loon – One spied from Lakeshore Metropark 10 December (JP).

Common Loon – Up to eight seen from Lakeshore Metropark (JP) and four along the lakefront at Rocky River 3 December (PL, SWa, and m.obs). One remained to 14 December at HBSNP (RH).

One was in Fairport Harbor 29 January (SBC). Singles returned by 21 February to Sims Park (NA), 26 February at HBSNP (RH) and 26 February at Mogadore Reservoir (GBe).

Northern Gannet – First arrived in the region in late November. At least two first winter plumaged gannets were observed throughout December and January along Lake Erie from Lake County to Lorain County. Observers described one bird as paler than the other, while one had some flight feathers missing. Most sightings occurred at the Eastlake Power Plant

usual inland in January, one was at Wellington 28 January (DJH).

Great Blue Heron – As is typical, the species remained throughout winter, though singles mostly reported from any given location. Up to 20 counted in the HBSNP-MMSNP area 2 February (RH). Six were in Kent 18 December (LR). Some were returning to the nests at Station Road, CVNP by at least 23 February (DAC). A nesting site, discovered in 2004, along the Black River north of Lodi now has 13 nests (FD).

Black-crowned Night-Heron – Up to 88 stuck around to 1 January at the traditional Merwin Street roost along the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland (PL, m.obs.). The species was also reported from Lorain Harbor (JP).

Turkey Vulture – There is little doubt that this species has successfully wintered in the region for the past couple of years, at least as far north as Medina Co., with the area around Hinckley Reservation being the hot spot. Up to nine were in Hinckley on 15 January (HJK-R) while one was seen not far away near Rte. 3 and I-271 the same day (JW). Another was seen on 15 January in CVNP (SBC). One was at Lodi, Medina Co. 19 January (LD). Elsewhere in the region, one was over Wingfoot Lake, Portage Co. 28 January (GBe) and two over Mill Stream Run Reservation the same day (GL). A group of seven kettled over Munson Twp., Geauga Co. on 30 January (EM). One was over Sagamore Hills 11 & 18 February (DAC), one was over CVNP 23 February (LD), two in Geauga Co. 25 February (AF) and one at Eastlake the same day (DAC). Became widespread and common thereafter.

Bald Eagle – A pair enlarged a Great Blue Heron nest at the heronry north of Station Road in Brecksville Reservation of Cleveland Metroparks, creating a stir in mid January and February (LD, m.obs.). See article, page 19.



Photo by Kevin Metcalf

Northern Gannet
Eastlake Power Plant — December, 2005

Pied-billed Grebe – Easily found this winter along the Cleveland lakefront east to Fairport Harbor (DJH, RH, m.obs.) and on some Akron area lakes (GBe, LR). A very impressive high count of 50 was tallied at Wellington Reservoir on 28 January (DJH). Other representative counts included seven at Summit Lake 30 January (GBe) and 17 along the Cleveland Lakefront 21 February (DJH).

Horned Grebe – A maximum of 13 counted along the Lake Erie shore from Avon to Rocky River on 31 De-

“hot waters” and near E. 72 Street, Cleveland. The first sightings for the season came 8 December at E. 72nd Street (TL, DJH, m.obs.) and 14 December at Eastlake. There was one sighting at Lorain Harbor 7 January (JP). The species was last noted 12 February at Lakeside Yacht Club near Cleveland Public Power (BD, DAC).

Double-crested Cormorant – An impressive winter tally of 18 at Whiskey Island, Cleveland on 5 January (DJH). Three were at Lorain 8 January (DJH) and one at Avon Lake Power Plant 22 January (BAT). Un-



Photo by Robert Roach

Double-crested Cormorant
Wellington Reservoir — January, 2006

This is apparently the first Bald Eagle nesting attempt in Cuyahoga County since the decline of this species in the 1900's. Later in the season the nest was abandoned. Other sightings of this species are too numerous to list, with locations including the HBSNP-MMSNP area (RH), Summit Lake (GBe), Nimisila Reservoir (GBe), Lake Phippen (LR), LaDue Reservoir (m.obs.), Munson Twp. (m.obs.) and Lake Rockwell (LR) with at least five different birds at the latter location. Maximum single location count of six at Tinker's Creek State Nature Preserve (FL).

Northern Harrier – Scattered reports of single birds, with adult males making up a higher than expected number of sightings. Locations included CVNP, Palmyra Twp., Portage Co., the Cleveland lakefront, Mantua Twp., Portage Co., Middlefield Twp., Geauga Co.

Sharp-shinned Hawk – Singles reported from South Russell, Geauga Co. 5 December (LGi); Jaite, CVNP 11 December (DAC), Medina Co. 17 December (TMR); Auburn Township 1 & 7 January (LR), Boston, CVNP 2 January (DAC), the HBSNP area 10 January (RH), Brecksville Reservation 11 January (LD), Kent 14 January (LR) and South Chagrin Reservation 30 January (LD). To this editor, the ratio of Sharp-shinned Hawks to Cooper's Hawks reported on some area Audubon Christmas Bird Counts ap-

pears too high in favor of Sharp-shinned Hawk, and more of these *Accipiters* should probably be left unidentified to species.

Cooper's Hawk – Widespread and common, with numerous reports. This species has adapted well to suburban living, preying on birds at feeding stations (DR, m.obs.)

Red-shouldered Hawk - Found throughout the region in winter, including urban areas, such as one noted in Beachwood 26 January (DJH). Counts included a good tally of nine in Kent 18 December (LR).

Rough-legged Hawk – A high count was of 14 reported from the Middlefield area 25 February (AF). Two or more seen at Burke Lakefront Airport, Cleveland. Singles noted from other scattered locations including CVNP (PC), the HBSNP-MMSNP area (RH), Long Lake, Summit Co. (GBe) and Parkman, Geauga Co. (LR).

Red-tailed hawk – Consistently the most numerous raptor found on regional Christmas Bird Counts, aside from the Wellington CBC, where American Kestrels outnumbered them.

American Kestrel – Three in the Fairport Harbor area 5 January (LR), One to two noted by observers at the following locations: Lorain, Richfield, Euclid, Bedford Heights, Burke Lakefront Airport, Kent, Mantua Twp., Hiram Twp., Lodi, and Middlefield. One was perched near Forest City Yacht Club in Cleveland on 23 December dining on a fish (DJH). Some observers felt this species was up from the past few years, after perceived declines in the region.

Merlin – One was seen consistently at Lakeview Cemetery, with dates spanning 14 December through at least 4 March (DJH, PCh). Up to three at the Calvary Cemetery, Cleveland (LGA, BF, PL, m.obs.). One was at another "traditional" location at the Cuyahoga Community College West campus 22 February (GL). Unexpected was a sighting at Euclid Creek Reservation, Cuyahoga Co., 26 February (LD); one on the Lakewood CBC 31 December (NH).



Photo by John Pogacnik

Northern Gannet
Eastlake Power Plant — January, 2005

Peregrine Falcon – One was at HBSNP 22 December (RH). Many other sightings in urban areas derived from the hacked “city” peregrines.

Virginia Rail – One was found on the Lakewood Christmas Bird Count, 31 December, at Lake Abrams, Cleveland Metroparks (CR, *fide* NH).

American Coot – A winter maximum of 271 counted at Wellington Reservoir 11 January (VF) with 200+ still there 22 January (BAT). An estimated 120 wintered at Summit Lake (GB). Singles found through period in the HBSNP-MMSNP area (RH), while one was in Rocky River Reservation 26 February (BD).

Killdeer – One was somewhat late at Ira Road, CVNP on 12 December (TMR) while another was found in Middlefield the next day (LGi). Two returned to the Middlefield area by 25 February (AF).

Purple Sandpiper – One was seen through 26 December at HBSNP (GM, RH, m.obs.). Another was noted at Eastlake 11 December (JT).

Western Sandpiper – Two probable Western Sandpipers (*Calidris mauri*) were seen on Berlin Reservoir NW of S.R. 224, with a Dunlin present for comparison, on 5 December (BM). They were described as about “two inches smaller” than the Dunlin with “black legs and uniform gray upper parts”, with the beaks appearing “slightly down turned at the tip.” Further, the observer stated that they appeared long-legged and spent much of the time in the water. Western Sandpiper is the most likely small Calidrid to occur this late in Ohio. Ohio’s latest published date for this species is December 14, 1984 in Cleveland (Peterjohn, 1989).

Dunlin – The species was somewhat tardy at Berlin Reservoir, seen NW of the SR 224 bridge 5 December (BM).



Photo by John Pogacnik

Laughing Gull

Lorain Harbor — February 25, 2006

Red Phalarope – One was seen at Eastlake on 11 December (JT).

Pomarine Jaeger – Two were seen from Lakeshore Metropark 10 December, while one was seen harassing Bonaparte’s Gulls at that location 20 February (JP).

Jaeger Species – Two unidentified jaegers were seen flying low to the west from Rocky River City Park on 3 December (BF, PL, BW, SWa) and one was there 8 December (PL). One was also reported on the Mentor Christmas Bird Count.

Laughing Gull – An adult popped up 21 – 22 January at E. 72nd (JT, DJH, m.obs.) and 25 February at Lorain Harbor (JP). On the latter date it was sporting breeding plumage.

Franklin’s Gull – One was reported from Lakeview Park, Lorain on 30 December (EB), then two first winter plumaged birds were at Lorain Harbor 7 January (JP). One flew past Lakeshore Reservation 22 January (JP).

Little Gull – An adult was in the Fairport Harbor area 28 December – 1 January (LR, m.obs.). Two were at the

Avon Lake Power Plant on 11 January (SZ). An adult also seen consistently at E. 72nd 20 January – 12 February (BD, CC, RR, BAT, m.obs.). A second-winter plumaged bird was there 22 January (DJH, LR) and two adults found there 5 February. A maximum of seven (six adults and one 2nd winter) at Fairport Harbor 7 February (LR).

Black-headed Gull – One adult was reported from Lorain Harbor 7 January (JP).

Bonaparte’s Gull – Incredible numbers, with 10,000 estimated 5 February along the Cleveland Lakefront (LR); 8,500 estimated at Fairport Harbor 25 January (RH) and 10,000 there 7 February (LR); another estimate of 6,000 at E. 72nd Street on 11 February (DJH); ~2,000 – 3,000 estimated at E. 72nd Street in late January (BAT, m.obs.); these numbers may be unprecedented for mid-winter, at least in our collective memory.

Mew Gull – A very experienced observer reported a first winter Mew Gull from Eastlake on 23 January (JT). It was not seen thereafter. This

Winter birding involves toughing it out against the elements — wind, snow, slush, cold — but those who seek the season’s birds have a way of enjoying and finding good birds. At Headlands Beach State Nature Preserve winter 2005–2006 was dominated by unprecedented local numbers of gulls. Literally tens of thousands of Ring-billed Gulls and Bonaparte’s Gulls blanketed the open waters of Fairport Harbor and Lake Erie in the last half of January and early February. For days on end, from thousands of fluttering white shapes at the horizon to teeming multitudes closer to shore, gulls remained in the moderate weather of late January. Lucky observers found up to six Little Gulls and occasional Glaucous and Iceland Gulls.

Walks along the Zimmerman Trail and Mentor Lagoons produced Winter Wren and Golden-crowned Kinglet and close encounters with Pileated Woodpeckers. It was a satisfying, if not rarity-filled, winter birding time for me.

would be the first January record of this species from the region and it is a review species for Ohio. Another Mew Gull was reported just outside the region at Huron Harbor 15 January (SZ).

Ring-billed Gull – a count of up to 35,000 estimated 25 January at Fairport Harbor (RH), topped by an estimate of 70,000 there on 7 February (LR); greater than 10,000 estimated at Lorain Harbor 9 February (CC); another estimate of 50,000 along the Cleveland Lakefront 11 February (DJH); LR noted his “first inland flock” of this winter, totaling 150 birds at West Branch SP 12 February.

California Gull – This species is now expected annually in the region, though to find one is still exciting and they generally occur singly. An adult was at E. 72 Street on 30 December and 22 January (RH, LR, DJH) while another was at Lorain 26 January (SZ).

Herring Gull – Up to 2,000 estimated 25 January at Fairport Harbor (RH)

Thayer's Gull – One or two adults at E. 72 Street 1 January (JP). One was found at Fairport Harbor 25 January (RH); and another first winter plumaged bird at E. 72 Street 22 – 28 January (AF, BAT, DJH).

Iceland Gull – First and second winter plumaged birds were at Eastlake 21 – 22 December (DJH, KM). Another immature was at E. 72 Street 30 December – 1 January (RR, m.obs.). A second winter bird was at E 72 Street on 1 January and 9 – 11 February (JP, CC, RR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull – Up to four counted at E. 72 Street 10 – 17 December (DAC, LR, m.obs.). One or two reported from various lakefront

locations, with dates spanning 8 December to 9 February (DJH, CC, m.obs.). Most were adults or first winter plumaged birds, with at least one second winter and one third winter observed (LR).

Glaucous Gull – First reported from Eastlake 6 December (JB). This species was present at E. 72 Street from 14 December (HC, PL, DL) through 11 February (DJH), including two adults and a second year on 28 Janu-



Photo by John Pogacnik

Can you find the California Gull AND Glaucous Gull in this photo?

Cleveland Lakefront — December 2005

ary (DJH). One was also at Fairport Harbor 15 January (RH, LR).

Great Black-backed Gull – We seem to get our highest numbers of this species during the most brutal weather of winter. The high counts came relatively early in the season with 700 – 1,000 estimated in Cleveland 17 – 20 December (LR, FL). Other high counts included 150 at Fairport Harbor 25 January (RH), 200 at E. 72 Street 3 February (BAT) and 400 in there 11 February (DJH).

Great Black-backed X Herring Gull hybrid – One reported at Eastlake 6 December (JB) and another believed to be this hybrid at E. 72 Street in mid December (DJH).

Glaucous X Herring Gull – One probable “Nelson’s Gull” reported from E. 72 Street in mid December (DJH).

Black-legged Kittiwake – One first winter plumaged bird was found along the Cleveland Lakefront 17 December (JP, LR, m.obs.) with another sighting at Fairport Harbor 1 January (JP).

Mourning Dove – This is one of our most abundant and easily seen species throughout winter.

Eastern Screech-Owl – Reported from Bedford Reservation, Cleveland Metroparks (JB).

Great Horned Owl – One was calling in Sagamore Hills 2 January (DAC), another noted in Highland Park Cemetery, Shaker Heights 22 – 24 January (FD), one on a nest in Boston Heights by 26 February (DAC); one in Kent (LR); A pair successfully nested at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, later fledging young in March (m.obs.)

Snowy Owl – First sighted in the region at Lorain Harbor 28 December (SZ). Up to three reported along the Cleveland Lakefront, including a very white bird felt to be an adult male.

Sightings primarily from Burke Lakefront Airport to the outer breakwall at E. 72 Street. First sighting at the latter location was 22 January (DJH, SZ m.obs.). Afterwards was seen by many observers through the end of the period. The species was also reported from the Lorain County Airport off of Russia Road 4 – 18 February (JD, DDS) and at Hopkins Airport, Berea (HJK-R).

Barred Owl – Reported from Shaker Lakes (LD), North Chagrin Reservation (LD) Chagrin River Park (AF) and Brecksville (DAC).

Long-eared Owl – Initially one and then two discovered at Caley Reservation, Lorain County Metroparks 11 January – 12 February (SZ, CC, BD, BAT, m.obs.). One also at Chagrin River Park, Lake Co. on 22 February (JT).

Short-eared Owl – Up to three at Burke Lakefront Airport noted 30 January – 26 February (DJH, PL, BD, JS) while one was at the old Richfield Coliseum site in the CVNP 12, 16 February (KT, PC).

Northern Saw-Whet Owl – One was found dead along Rte. 87 near West Woods, Geauga Park District 20 January (DB).

Rufous Hummingbird – The immature male at Wadsworth, Medina Co. remained from the fall season through at least 5 December (EC, RSH)

Belted Kingfisher – A good count of five in Kent 18 December (LR). Mostly singles reported from other scattered locations along rivers, such as the CVNP in January (DAC, BAT).

Red-headed Woodpecker – Not widespread despite a big mast year for Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) and to a lesser extent White Oak (*Quercus alba*). Reports of 1 – 2 from Eastlake (CC), CVNP (DAC), Bath Nature Preserve (JW, JB) and Rocky River Reservation.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – One in Twin Lakes 1–7 December, Lake Rockwell 9 December (JW, LR), three in Kent on 18 December (LR) and one the same day in CVNP (TMR). One also in Lake View Cemetery 21 February (DJH); one in CVNP 29 Jan (PC).

Red-bellied Woodpecker – Counts of up to six per day by single observers typical in the HBSNP-MMSNP area, CVNP and other locations (RH, TMR)

Downy Woodpecker – Widespread and common, with daily counts from single observers typically of 2 – 5. High counts, other than on the Christmas Bird Counts, of 10 along the CVNP Towpath (MR, m.obs.). One in Brecksville throughout the winter showed a washed out pale beige and brownish coloration but otherwise typical pattern – probably a leucistic individual (BAT).

Hairy Woodpecker – Common but typically not as numerous as downy at most locations, with one – three providing typical daily counts (TMR, m.obs.).

Northern Flicker – High count of 15 at the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site 26 January (LR). Seven noted along the Rte 303 – Rte. 8 Bike Path, CVNP on 18 December in 4hrs. 10 min. of observation (FL), while the same number was achieved in 1.5 hours of observation in the CVNP 23 January (PC); Five also found along the CVNP Towpath 29 December (MR, m.obs.). Otherwise found at scattered locations, with reports typically of 1 – 3 from a given site (BAT, TMR m.obs.).

Pileated Woodpecker – One or two provided typical daily counts in wooded areas (m.obs.).

Eastern Phoebe – Very unusual was that the species was recorded each of our winter months this year. One lingered at Lower Shaker Lakes 26 December – 8 January (JWe, LGo) One

was at Chagrin River Park, Lake Co. 12 January (JP) and another in Cleveland near Merwin Street 12 February (RSH).

Northern Shrike – One was at Jaite, CVNP, with sightings spanning the period of 11 December – 1 February (DAC, m.obs.); One adult also at the Bath Nature Preserve, Summit Co. at least 22 December – 5 January (WMC JB, m.obs.) Another was in Kent 18 December (GC, LR).

Blue Jay – Seemed to be more numerous than usual in some areas. Daily counts by single observers usually ranged from 5 – 20 at a given location (FL, m.obs), with up to 100 by parties out all day on Christmas Bird Counts (LR).

American Crow – Representative counts included up to 18 in the HBSNP-MMSNP area (RH), 15 in Boston Heights (DAC) and 155 in the Kent area 18 December (LR). Numbers increased in late February, with a flock of 70 at one location in Munson Twp. on the 28th (KM).

Horned Lark – Locally common in agricultural areas, the high count reported was of 100 in Mantua Twp. 18 February (LR). Seventy-five were along Hayes Road, Middlefield Twp. 15 January (LGi), while 50 were there 25 February (AF). Other counts included 43 at Caley Reservation, Lorain Co. 14 January (EB) and 12 –15 at Burke Lakefront Airport 12 February (DAC). The species was also present in the Lodi area in February (FD). An odd report was of three feeding with European Starlings in a grassy patch in downtown Cleveland 16 February (CW).

Black-capped Chickadee – Indicative were the 109 in Kent on 18 December, recorded by Christmas Bird Count participants (LR). Other representative counts included 41 tallied in the CVNP on 29 January (PC).



Photo by Maureen Lindway

Albino Tufted Titmouse
Brecksville — Winter 2006



Photo by Scott Wright

Red-breasted Nuthatch
December 2005

Tufted Titmouse – Up to 50 in Kent 18 December considered low (LR). An all white individual with pink legs and bill (but a dark eye) visited a feeder in Brecksville from 10 December onward (JML).

Red-breasted Nuthatch – Widespread and easily seen this winter, with daily counts of 6 – 8 at Rocky River Reservation (BD) and North Chagrin Reservation (KM). Many feeding stations hosted 1 – 2 all winter (DAC, LGi, m.obs). Numbers found on local Christmas Bird Counts included 20 in Cleveland.

White-breasted Nuthatch – Seemed up according to some observers, with daily counts typically of 2 – 5 (TMR, m.obs.).

Brown Creeper – Reports up this year relative to last year. Five in CVNP 5 January (MR, m.obs.) and in Kent 18 December (LR). Four in Brecksville 15 February (DAC), with singles noted at other scattered locations, such as Huntington Reservation on 31 December (CC).

Carolina Wren – Still doing very well, with up to 20 in the Twin Lakes area 28 December (LR).

Winter Wren – One at Stewart Lake, near Kent 18 December (LR); one in the MMSNP area 23 December (RH); one along the Twinsburg Center Valley Bike Path 30 December (FL); one at Lakeshore Metropark 20 January (JP) one at Sagamore Hills 28 January (DAC); one at Mayfield Village Wetlands 12 February (RR).

Golden-crowned Kinglet – Reports scattered throughout the region, such as three in Kent 18 December (LR) and four in CVNP 15 January (FD)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet – More than expected in the region this winter, with seven on the Cuyahoga Falls Christmas Bird Count. One at Wildwood State Park along the Lake Erie shore 2 January (NA). One was associating with Golden-crowned Kinglets in CVNP about 1 mile south of Station Road 15 January (FD). Another reported the same day at Sandy Ridge Reservation (EBr).

Eastern Bluebird – High count for any given location was 25 at the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site on 26 January (LR). Other counts included 23 in CVNP 12 January (MR, m.obs.), 20 in Auburn Twp. 1 January (LR) and 12 at Furnace Run Metropark, Summit Co. 10 February (DJH).

Hermit Thrush – Two in CVNP 10 December (PC). One persisted to 23 December at Rocky River Reservation (KG, BD) with a few others remaining in the region at least to late December.

American Robin – Widespread and in good numbers throughout winter, though not as many as last winter. Two hundred estimated in the crabapple trees near Parmatown Mall on 6 February (BAT). Some other high counts included an estimated 100 – 200 at Jaite, CVNP 11 December (DAC) and 147 in Kent on 18 December (LR).

Gray Catbird – All reports: One at HBSNP 1 December (RH), one at Ira Road, CVNP 5 – 19 December (TMR), one at Wildwood State Park 4 January – 8 February (NA), one in Lakeshore Reservation, Lake Co. 20 January (PM, JP), one in Sagamore Hills 28 January (DAC), one at the Mayfield Wetlands, Mayfield Village 9 February (FL, KM). Five were found on area Christmas Bird Counts, including three on the Cuyahoga Falls count.

Northern Mockingbird – Area birders continue to be surprised to find this species so regularly. Now seemingly found throughout the region, but concentrated in suburban and urban areas. Reports too numerous to list. One interesting sighting was of one in the “middle of E. 49 Street, Cleveland, feeding on garbage with a flock of starlings” (DR).

Brown Thrasher – One was a good find on the Cuyahoga Falls Christmas Bird Count.

European Starling – An abundant species, the high count received was of 200 estimated in the Oak Hill area of CVNP on 5 February (DAC).

American Pipit – One at Avon Lake, Lorain 10 December (GBE) while an-

other was at Rocky River the same day (PL, PCh)

Cedar Waxwing – High counts included 43 in CVNP 1 December (MR, m.obs.) and 20 in Twin Lakes on 28 December (LR).

Yellow-rumped Warbler – A high count of 14 at Mogadore Reservoir 22 January (GBE); eight was a good tally in CVNP 27 January (DAC); six in Twinsburg 7 January (FL); three at Tinkers Creek State Park 15 January (FL); one probably wintered at Furnace Run Metropark, Summit Co., noted on 10 February (DJH).

Pine Warbler – Although this species was found in unusually good numbers in the southern part of the state, Pine Warblers did not get reported in our region this winter, unlike last winter.

Eastern Towhee – Typically 1 – 2 found at scattered locations, such as CVNP and Shaker Lakes (LD, FL, m.obs.).

American Tree Sparrow – Representative counts were of 30 at West Branch State Park 3 January (LR). Also, 25 throughout the winter at a Brecksville feeding station (BAT), 20 in the HBSNP-MMSNP area 6 December (RH) and 20 at Boston, CVNP 2 January (DAC).

Chipping Sparrow – Consistent with the occurrence of other half-hardy species this winter, one attended a Richmond Heights feeder 23 December – 18 February (NA, photographed), while another visited the Seiberling Nature Realm into February (WS, BSz). No details on the three reported from the Elyria-Lorain Christmas Bird Count, or the five on the Wellington Count, which would be extraordinary.

Field Sparrow – An incredible 11 were found by one group of observers in Kent on 18 December (LR). Other

reports included four at Jaite, CVNP 17 December (FL) and one at HBSNP 3 January (SSn).

Fox Sparrow – Lingering birds included one at North Chagrin Reservation 10 December (KM), one at a Richmond Heights feeder 16 December (NA), one on the Cleveland Christmas Bird Count at Lake View Cemetery 17 December (DJH), one in CVNP 18 December (FL) and one on the Lakewood CBC 31 December (*fide* NH). None reported in January, but one at Kent 10 February could have been a bit early for a northbound migrant (LR). The next sighting came from the Oak Hill area, CVNP on 26 February (DAC).

Song Sparrow – Up to 95 found in the Kent area by one Christmas Bird Count party 18 December (LR). The high count in the HBSNP-MMSNP area for the winter was only two (RH). A representative count in Jaite, CVNP was of and estimated 6 – 8 on 11 December (DAC).

Swamp Sparrow – Few reports were received after the Christmas Bird Counts ended, and some observers felt this species was down this winter. One was at Station Road, CVNP 2 January (DAC) and one at the Mayfield Village Wetlands 10 January – 14 February (RR, FL).

White-throated Sparrow – This species well outnumbered Song Sparrows at most locations this winter. Larry Rosche noted that it was “as numerous as any winter I can recall.” Representative daily high counts from single locations included 35 at the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site on 26 January (LR), 26 at Ira Road, CVNP 5 December (TMR), and estimated 15 – 17 in Oak Hill, CVNP 26 February (DAC) and 15 in Sagamore Hills 28 January (DAC).

White-crowned Sparrow – One was at E. 72 Street 16 December (FL) and another the same day at South Russell, Geauga Co. (LGi). Apparently the species was also easy to find in parts of SE Portage County this winter (*fide* LR).

Dark-eyed Junco – Seemed up this year to some observers, with a single location high count of 175 at the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site on 26 January (LR). Fifty noted in Medina County Parks on 17 December (TMR). Up to 30 in the HBSNP-MMSNP area 1 January (RH).

Lapland Longspur – Only report was of one seen in Middlefield along Hayes Road 15 January (LGi).

Snow Bunting – Five in the Middlefield area 15 January (LGi) and 21 there on 25 February (AF). One was at HBSNP on 3 January (RH, SSn).

Northern Cardinal – One of our most visible year round resident birds and seems as numerous as ever.

Red-winged Blackbird – January reports included one at Boston, CVNP 2 January (DAC), one in the HBSNP-MMSNP area 23 January (RH) and one at North Chagrin by 20 January. Red-wings were heard singing at the latter location by first week of February (KM). Many were returning by the end of February, with 56 at Tinkers Creek State Nature Preserve 22 February (FL) and 40 – 50 in Peninsula 26 February (DAC).

Rusty Blackbird – Two lingered in Jaite, CVNP, 11 December (DAC).

Common Grackle – One was locally unusual in Munson Twp., Geauga Co. 21 January (KM). Early February reports included one in Richmond Heights 5 February (NA) and one at Pepper Pike 7 February (RR). One was at Tinkers Creek State Nature Preserve 12 February (FL). A few

more trickled in after 20 February, with a high of only 20 estimated in Peninsula 26 February (DAC).

Brown-headed Cowbird – Only report from the HBSNP-MMSNP area this winter was of one on 6 December (RH). Five reported at Pepper Pike 16 December (RR) and 10 in Peninsula 26 February (DAC).

Purple Finch – A few reports from early in the season including two at CVNP 5 December (TMR). One was in South Russell, Geauga Co. 15 January (LGi).

House Finch – Up to 25 visited a Sagamore Hills feeding station 17 January, eliciting the note that this was the most at that location in a long time (DAC).

Common Redpoll – Reported only from Lakeshore Metropark 28 December and 5 February (JP).

Pine Siskin – Twenty-two reported on five Christmas Bird Counts in the region.

American Goldfinch – Representative counts included 32 in CVNP 5 December (TMR). Seemed up this winter in some locations.

Evening Grosbeak – Entirely absent again from the region. Apparently the only report of this species from Ohio was of three from an Ashtabula Co. feeder 8 February (TG, *fide* BW).

Exotics

Ring-necked Pheasant – One reported from the New Milford, Portage Co. on 26 February (GBe), one on the Burton Christmas Bird Count and five on the Wellington Christmas Bird Count. All birds were probably recent releases/escapes from local pen-raised stock.

Population Status of Flycatchers in Summit County

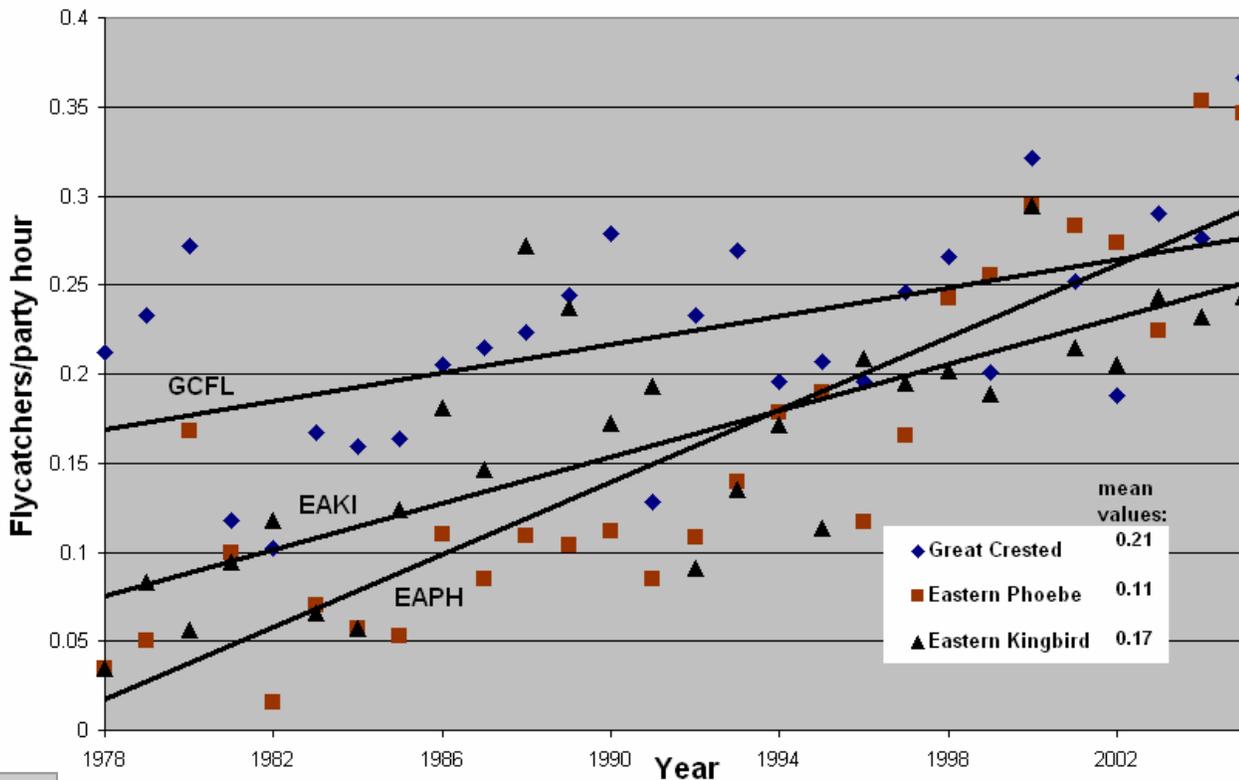
by Dwight Chasar

PLEASE NOTE: This story is repeated because the second chart was not included in its original publication in Volume 101 Number 4.

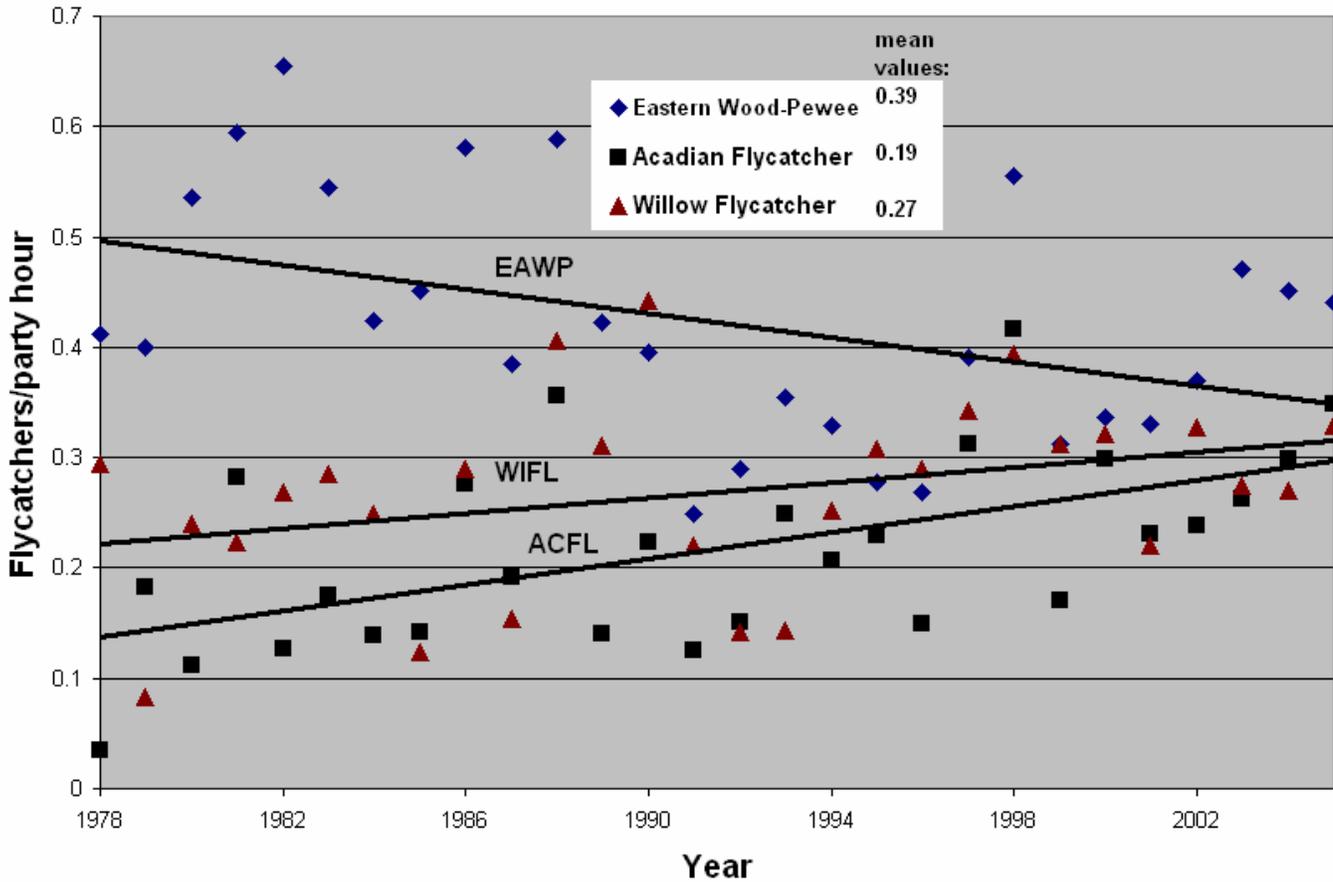
This is another in a continuing series of articles on the population status of nesting birds in Summit Co. (Chasar 2004). As in previous accounts, the data presented here for the family *Tyrannidae* are taken from the Greater Akron Audubon Society June Summer Bird Count. The data are plotted in the usual manner, i.e., birds/party hour vs. year. For each species, a linear trend-line, calculated by Excel, is used to represent the population trend. I show the mean values for each species on the graphs. The mean value (birds/party hour) is the number around which there are as many densities above and below it in the scatter of data points. The relative magnitudes of the means may reflect relative densities of the birds.

I have arbitrarily grouped the species by similar densities for graphing purposes. Of the six species whose population data are graphed, only the Eastern Wood-Pewee may be experiencing a population decline in Summit Co. Comparing the Summit Co. trends to those in Ohio (Earnst 1996) in general, while the Pewee is down and the Great Crested Flycatcher is up in Summit Co., the opposite is observed overall in Ohio. Otherwise, the other four species' trends are in similar directions for both Summit Co. and Ohio.

Flycatcher Population Trendlines



Flycatcher Population Trendlines



Data are sparse for both Alder and Least Flycatcher and therefore plotting and predicting a trend-line is tenuous at best. It would appear from the raw data, however, that the Least Flycatcher is observed less and the Alder Flycatcher more often in recent years compared to the earlier years of the census. An Olive-sided Flycatcher was observed in June of 1979, 1989 and 1995.

Chasar, D. 2004. Counting Birds. *Cleveland Bird Calendar*, 100(2):32.

Earnst, S.L. and B.A. Andres. 1996. Population trends of breeding birds of Ohio. *Ohio Biol. Surv. Misc. Cont. No. 3*.

The 2002 – 2003 Fairport Harbor Common Eider

by Kevin Metcalf



Common Eider, Fairport Harbor, November 2002, Photo by Kevin Metcalf

The Rest of the Story...?

On Sunday, November 3, 2002 Larry Rosche found a female Common Eider in Fairport Harbor, Lake County. This large sea duck had not been documented in Ohio since October 1978, when Ohio's only accepted record (Peterjohn, 1989) was discovered by Jim Hoffman in Cleveland. Needless to say, when word went out to the birding community, birders from all around Ohio came to see this wayward fowl. State listers rejoiced. After an absence of more than two decades, many thought they might never see this species in Ohio.

This particular duck parked herself in Fairport Harbor for almost two months, allowing detailed study. Birders watched her, photographed her, video-

taped her. She was seen diving in the shallows for food, preening, flapping, napping and doing just about anything an eider should do. Except—fly away.

One feature that was quickly noted was that the bird was missing a few flight feathers. Some speculated that this was some kind of molt. However, Common Eiders, like most waterfowl, drop all their flight feathers at once and go through a flightless period during the summer. The feathers re-grow basically as a unit, so there are not typically any gaps in the wings like we see in other groups of birds. Waterfowl can get away with this molt strategy because they can escape from predators by swimming rather

than flying. Nearly all land-based birds have a molt pattern of losing a few feathers at a time while always retaining the ability to fly. Since the missing flight feathers on the Fairport Harbor Common Eider did not represent part of the molt cycle, it had most likely lost them by some accident.

In Fall 2005 I was discussing waterfowl with local veteran duck hunter and taxidermist Jon Verh of Richmond Heights. Somehow the subject of the 2002 Fairport Harbor Common Eider came up. John knew the story of the bird watcher's discovery of the Common Eider — and more.

John's son Tim is also a duck hunter. John relayed the following story to me, filling in some blanks:

In fall of 2002 Tim was hunting from the outer breakwall of Fairport Harbor with his brother-in-law. The hunting party next to them on the wall fired at *five* large brown ducks that were coming in. The hunters brought down four, however, the fifth got away. After some time, the other duck hunting party packed up and headed for shore. Tim and his brother-in-law also decided to call it quits. They all happened to be bringing in their boats at the same time. Tim got a chance to look in the other party's boat to see the four brown ducks that had been shot. Tim was not certain what they were at the time. He noted the large size, overall brownish color and yellowish legs and feet. Tim is an experienced hunter. He would have recognized any of the common species of ducks. These were different.

When Tim relayed the description of the ducks to John, John felt certain that what Tim had seen were

eiders, knowing that King Eider was the more likely species in Ohio. (John said he has taken two King Eiders in Ohio in his many decades of hunting the lakeshore.) Later, John heard about the discovery of the Fairport Harbor Common Eider. He felt that he knew the rest of the story. It must be eider number five.

John looked at the photos of the Fairport Harbor eider taken by John Pogacnik and said, what he saw in the photos was consistent with a winged bird. He thought the wad from a shotgun shell might have ripped some of the flight feathers right out, including the shaft. Fortunately for the eider, it meant the feathers were able to begin growing back immediately, because the whole feather was gone. If only part of the feather had been broken off, John explained, the bird would not replace the damaged feathers until the next molt cycle, which would take place the next summer.

There are a couple of details still missing from this story. John could not remember, years after the fact, what date Tim would have been out hunting, so we don't know the date that the four possible eiders were brought down. There are basically no other very large, all brown ducks with yellowish legs. I am convinced, after talking with John, that eiders were shot that season at Fairport Harbor.

Fortunately, the Fairport eider hen seemed to be doing well and remained in the area through January 13, 2003. After that we don't know what happened to her for sure. Oddly, the next fall another female Common Eider showed up at the very same place where the 2002 eider spent much of its time. Maybe she was still looking for her fallen comrades.

Christmas Bird Count 2005 – 2006

SPECIES	Ashstabula +	Burton	Cleveland	Cuyahoga	Elyria/Lorain	Lakewood	Mentor	Trumbull +	Wellington	Youngstown +	
Snow Goose						2		1		3	
Canada Goose	1647	3662	475	4123	2180	1360	726	5281	3630	3684	
Mute Swan		2		28				7			
Tundra Swan	5			7				1			
Wood Duck		2		2			1	1			
Gadwall	2			1						1	
American Wigeon							2				
American Black Duck	27	6	4	29			46	6	66	2	
Mallard	229	514	168	2515	352	1258	225	274	142	442	
Northern Shoveler	1		3				2				
Canvasback				2				11			
Redhead	2			1						3	
Ring-necked Duck				46				1		50	
Greater Scaup	325		1				1	11			
Lesser Scaup	8		4	28	16			2			
Scaup sp.							65				
Harlequin Duck			2								
Surf Scoter								1			
White-winged Scoter						7					
Black Scoter			4								
Long-tailed Duck								1			
Bufflehead	15		2	4	2	49		2		2	
Common Goldeneye	5		25	14	1	92					
Hooded Merganser	26			26		6	7			2	
Common Merganser	344		7			2	14				
Red-breasted Merganser	271		250	18	4	14	68				
Ruddy Duck	3		1	24			7			1	
Ring-necked Pheasant		1								5	1
Ruffed Grouse	1										
Wild Turkey	98	81		34				65	5	6	
Common Loon				1				2			
Pied-billed Grebe	1		4	8	1	1				1	
Horned Grebe							13				
Northern Gannet			1								
Double-crested Cormorant	8		2			15	1				
Great Blue Heron		2	1	45	6	4	6	1		2	
Turkey Vulture				1							
Bald Eagle	2	3	4	4	4			1	15	6	
Northern Harrier	1							1	5	3	4
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	2	1	10	2	2		3		1	
Cooper's Hawk	6	2	18	29	4	7	5	12	9	7	
Red-shouldered Hawk		23	8	35	1	0	2	13	2	5	
Red-tailed Hawk	33	31	21	105	23	17	8	37	18	27	
Rough-legged Hawk	1	2		1	1	1	1	6	2		
American Kestrel	10	2		6	7			1	4	28	3
Merlin			2	1			1		1		
Peregrine Falcon			1				1	1			
Virginia Rail							1				
American Coot	5		3	125	7	1	1		100	164	
Killdeer				1					1		
Wilson's Snipe			1								
Jaeger sp.								1			
Franklin's Gull						1					
Bonaparte's Gull	6		3300			18	4	451			
Ring-billed Gull	6337	1	7430	144	17014	3498	1853	9	3	1050	
Herring Gull	1348		5500	1	222	48	200				
Thayer's Gull			2								
Iceland Gull			1								
Lesser Black-backed Gull			3								
Glaucous Gull			1								
Great Black-backed Gull	163		650		140	13	35				
Black-legged Kittiwake			1								
Rock Pigeon	125	336	206	1058	302	443	74	269	263	74	
Mourning Dove	186	237	246	883	234	250	52	206	474	119	
Eastern Screech-Owl				8			0	1		1	

SPECIES	Ashtabula +	Burton	Cleveland	Cuyahoga	Elyria/Lorain	Lakewood	Mentor	Trumbull +	Wellington	Youngstown +
Great Horned Owl			1		10	1	1	1	3	1
Snowy Owl						1				
Barred Owl			1	1	3		1	1		1
Short-eared Owl									2	
Belted Kingfisher	1	1	3	3	16	2	5			2
Red-headed Woodpecker				1	3		3		23	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	14	57	81	326	42	53	32	43	29	24
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1	2	13	3					2
Downy Woodpecker	39	110	73	394	65	76	45	50	39	25
Hairy Woodpecker	16	27	22	83	3	19	11	6	1	5
Northern Flicker	3	18	7	68	14	2	6	12	4	5
Pileated Woodpecker	2	12	11	22	1	4	7	4	3	9
Northern Shrike					1					
Blue Jay	127	231	192	1076	163	151	159	194	120	93
American Crow	242	345	137	1062	58	37	103	84	132	721
Horned Lark		43								374
Black-capped Chickadee	152	377	185	1063	134	181	138	131	141	98
Tufted Titmouse	42	100	64	369	48	27	53	29	21	45
Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	8	20	72	5	20	8	2	18	4
White-breasted Nuthatch	34	106	76	397	58	62	42	51	28	40
Brown Creeper	2	2		25	3	6	5	2	3	
Carolina Wren	2	12	14	123	13	31	11	4	3	12
Winter Wren			1	3		2				
Golden-crowned Kinglet		6	4	43	6	12		10	2	3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				7						0
Eastern Bluebird	40	73	35	138	43	7	43	58	42	14
Hermit Thrush	1			3		0				
American Robin	38	52	519	1076	62	603	87	22	12	41
Northern Mockingbird			8		1	3				6
Gray Catbird	1			3				1		
Brown Thrasher				1						
European Starling	1788	1859	369	4537	6575	1503	2025	612	1840	485
Cedar Waxwing		8	75	87				91	8	5
Yellow-rumped Warbler				7	15			6		
Eastern Towhee	0		1	17				2	1	1
American Tree Sparrow	130	127	43	711	35	43	60	365	121	42
Chipping Sparrow *					3					5
Field Sparrow	4			14	3	1				1
Fox Sparrow	2		1	5		1				
Song Sparrow	6	17	23	354	20	24	7	46	54	36
Swamp Sparrow			1	14		1		10		2
White-throated Sparrow	14	18	117	712	56	58	20	39	40	10
White-crowned Sparrow	0			28				8	30	5
Dark-eyed Junco	289	209	300	1061	258	231	105	190	287	116
Snow Bunting	7									
Northern Cardinal	137	213	166	1117	133	153	107	171	177	60
Red-winged Blackbird	0			5	1	22	3			
Rusty Blackbird				1						
Common Grackle				30		8				
Brown-headed Cowbird		1		49		10	89			1
Purple Finch	2			15				4		
House Finch	112	272	102	508	113	339	56	113	69	39
Common Redpoll	7									
Pine Siskin	4		3	3		4	8			
American Goldfinch	118	528	164	1122	99	227	151	146	53	80
House Sparrow	174	252	306	1714	624	526	417	180	175	125
Total	14802	9994	21480	27879	29227	11661	7588	8982	8582	8174

* High counts of unusual species with no details submitted.- Editor
+ Christmas Bird Count outside the Cleveland Bird Calendar region.

Bald Eagle Nest in Cuyahoga County

by Dwight Chasar

By now, most everyone has heard about—and probably seen—the Bald Eagle nest in Pinery Narrows. This nest was in the Brecksville Reservation, Cleveland Metroparks, in Cuyahoga County and was legally viewed from the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Summit County, along the towpath north of the Station Road parking lot. CVNP volunteers staffed a viewing station from the towpath to assist interested visitors.

The question arose as to whether there was ever any previous nesting of Bald Eagles in Cuyahoga County. The Plain Dealer article (February 3, 2006) that publicized this nest suggested that this is the first Bald Eagle nest in Cuyahoga County in the last 70 years. I assume that piece of information was deduced from Hicks (1935), who in his discussion of breeding birds in Ohio, indicated the counties where the Bald Eagle had nested and Cuyahoga was not one of them. Since no one can recall any eagle nesting in Cuyahoga County since then, that gives the 70 years.

Francis H. Herrick was the first scientist to study Bald Eagles in the wild. Herrick was the first biologist (1888-1929) on the Western Reserve University faculty (Cuyahoga County) and published many papers and books on his eagle work in Ohio. In one book (Herrick 1934) he presented a table of all the known eagle nests occurring in Ohio (and western Pennsylvania) from the late 1890s to the early 1930s. There was none reported for Cuyahoga. This then gives Cuyahoga County the last 100 years without a documented eagle nest.



Photo by Clyde E. Witt

Bald Eagle

Killdeer Plains — January 2006

I next consulted Wheaton (1882) and it was here that I hit pay dirt. Wheaton gave several references to the famous Jared Potter Kirtland's publications in the *Family Visitor*, where Kirtland described the nesting and breeding of a pair of Bald Eagles along the Lake Erie shore in Rockport in 1850. Rockport's name was changed to Lakewood in 1889 and lies in Cuyahoga County. Furthermore, that nest was "still occupied" in 1858 (Wheaton, p. 436). Thus, we might more accurately conclude that the Brecksville nest may well be the first eagle nest in Cuyahoga County in about the last 150 years, but alas, not the first ever.

Herrick, F.H. 1934. *The American Eagle. A Study in Natural and Civil History*. D. Appleton-Century Co, New York. pp 20-21.

Hicks, L.E. 1935. *Distribution of the breeding birds of Ohio*. Ohio Biological Survey, Bull. No. 32, 6(3):125-190.

Wheaton, J.M. 1882. *Report on the birds of Ohio*. Ohio Geologic Survey Bull. 4: 598-599.

About the Authors



◀ **Dwight Chasar**, former KBC president, leads bird walks in the CVNP year round and organizes/compiles the Spring and Fall CVNP bird censuses.



◀ **Kevin Metcalf**, current editor of Cleveland Bird Calendar and Naturalist with Cleveland Metroparks at North Chagrin Reservation.

Ray Hannikman, former editor of the CBC, began birding in 1970. Since 1994, most of his non-Ohio birding has been focused on South America – mostly Peru and Brazil. ▶

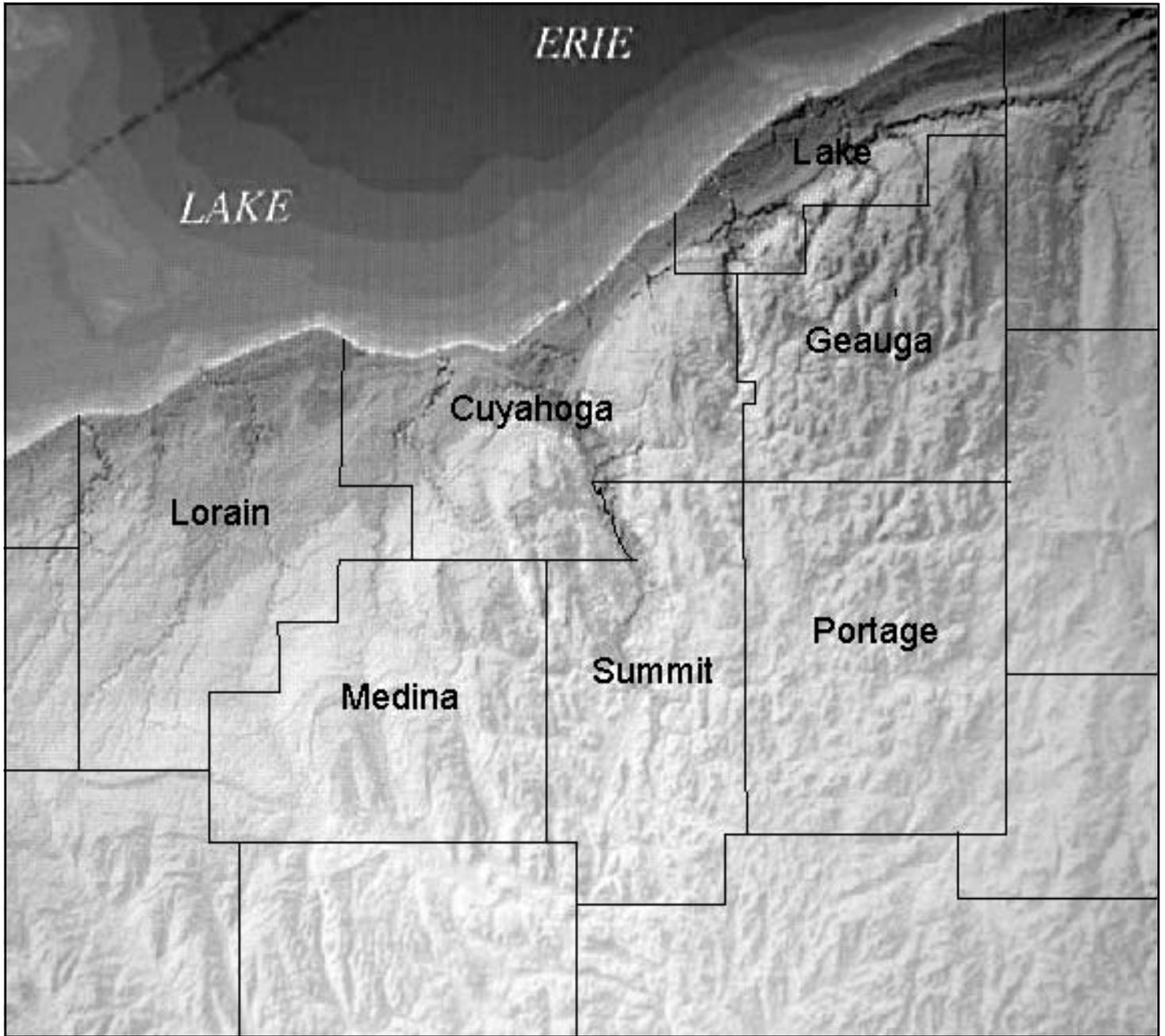


Thanks to Our Field Contributors...

Nancy Anderson (NA)
Emil Bacik (EB)
Gregory Bennett (GBe)
Dan Best (DB)
June Beyman (JB)
Brad Bolton (BB)
Erik Bruder (EBr)
Jennifer Brumfield (JB)
Lori Brumbaugh (LB)
Steve and Beth Cagan (SBC)
Craig Caldwell (CC)
Lisa Casamatta (LC)
Dwight and Ann Chasar (DAC)
Phil Chaon (PCh)
Sue Chester (SC)
Hans Clebsch (HC)
Delores Cole (DC)
Ernie Cornelius (EC)
Patrick Coy (PC)
Wayne Crouse (WC)
Greg Cudworth (GC)
Bill Deininger (BD)
Leo Deininger (LD)
Marilyn Diefendorff (MD)
Fred Dinkelbach (FD)
John Dunn (JD)
Lois Eckart (LE)
John and Ann Edwards (JAE)
Victor Fazio (VF)
Anders Fjeldstad (AF)
Bob Finkelstein (BF)
Lou Gardella (LGa)
Linda Gilbert (LGi)
Tom Glassburner (TG)

Laura Gooch (LGo)
Ken Gober (KG)
Ray Hannikman (RH)
Rob and Sandy Harlan (RSH)
Jim Heflich (JH)
Michelle Hendrick (MH)
Dick and Jean Hoffman (DJH)
Nancy Howell (NH)
Sally Isacco (SI)
Shari Jackson (SJa)
Hedy Jones (HJ)
Susan Jones (SJ)
Winnie Kennedy (WK)
Charles Klaus (CK)
Dan Kramer (DK)
Marian Kraus (MK)
Jay Lehman (JL)
Gabe Leidy (GL)
Dave LeGallee (DL)
Tom LePage (TL)
Jim & Maureen Lindway (JML)
Fred Losi (FL)
Paula Lozano (PL)
Amy Macak (AM)
Terri Martincic (TM)
Jim McCarty (JMCC)
Jim McConnor (JMc)
Bob McCullough (BMc)
Wilbur McQueen (WMc)
Evelyn Metcalf (EM)
Kevin Metcalf (KM)
Gary Meszaros (GM)
Ben Morrison (BM)
Pat Morse (PM)

Gary Neuman (GN)
Hope Orr (HOr)
Barb Partington (BP)
Ed Pierce (EP)
Tom Pinkowski (TP)
John Pogacnik (JP)
Mary Reinthal (MR)
Jim Reyda (JR)
Larry Richardson (LRi)
Richard Rickard (RR)
Craig Rieker (CR)
Bryn Roberts (BR)
Drew Rolik (DR)
Tom and Mary Anne Romito (TMR)
Larry Rosche (LR)
Hugh & Judy Kolo-Rose (HJK-R)
Joseph Sedransk (JS)
Doug and Dorothy Sheldon (DDS)
Su Snyder (SSn)
Chris Spagnoli (CSp)
Woody Stover (WS)
Bert Szabo (BSz)
Jerry Talkington (JT)
Karen Tanquist (KT)
Doug Vogus (DV)
Beverly Walker (BW)
Sam Walker (SWa)
Annette Webb (AW)
Jeff Wert (JW)
Julie West (JWe)
Bill Whan (BWh)
Clyde Witt (CW)
Scott Wright (SWr)
Sean Zadar (SZ)



*The seven counties of northeast Ohio included in the
Cleveland Bird Calendar region.*

