

Unusual Bird Records for Ohio.—The following observations were made at South Bass and Starve islands, which are part of the western Lake Erie archipelago. These islands are situated about four miles north of the Ohio mainland and are part of Ottawa County, Ohio. South Bass has an area of about 2.6 square miles and Starve an area of 0.6 of an acre. Both islands have much exposed limestone bed-rock.

Branta bernicla hrota, American Brant.—At daybreak on November 7, 1950, while on Starve Island watching a huge southward movement of waterfowl I heard the honk of a goose and saw a Brant sitting upon the water. I later succeeded in collecting it, and it proved to be an adult male as indicated by the wing pattern, large penis, and lack of a bursa of Fabricius. It was rather thin, weighing 1040.0 grams. The belly feathers were very light colored, and the whitish area on each side of the neck rather small. The skin is No. 7940 in the Ohio State Museum. The only other extant Ohio specimen of which I am aware, is also in the Ohio State Museum and is labelled "Lake Erie, Nov. 10, 1874."

About 7:00 A.M. on May 1, 1955, while observing a mated pair of Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), which were courting and feeding in the shallows near South Bass Island, I saw a Brant fly from adjacent Starve Island to alight with the Mallards and to begin feeding upon filamentous algae. This Brant had a very pale belly which contrasted sharply with the black breast; the short bill and whitish areas on the sides of the neck were plainly evident. I watched the bird for approximately an hour, sometimes at a distance of 60 feet. During this period it was inadvertently flushed six times by passing planes and boats. When flushed the last time, it and two Black Ducks (*Anas fulvigula*) flew southward together toward the mainland.

Histrionicus histrionicus, Harlequin Duck.—During a northwest blow on the early morning of November 2, 1951, I was in a boat about 100 feet from Starve Island watching the largest southward flight of waterfowl which I had witnessed about the islands in the last ten years. While identifying some of the ducks and geese as flocks of them flew past me in a continuous procession, I saw a small duck flying high in the air. When it was about to pass me, it turned abruptly and headed towards my boat. Recognizing it as a Harlequin Duck I collected it. The bird weighed 507.4 grams and was very thin; its alimentary tract was empty except for 15.0 grams of fine gravel in the gizzard. The condition of the tail feathers, large bursa of Fabricius, syrinx, testis, and rather undeveloped penis indicated that it was a juvenal male; its plumage was superficially similar to that of the female. The following description is given because of the scarcity of such descriptions of fall juvenals in the literature: Dorsal surface of upper mandible light blue except for the nail which was tipped with clear yellow; ventral surface of lower mandible pale blue except for the yellowish gular area; irises yellow-brown; tarsi bright greenish-yellow; dorsal surface of toes yellow and greenish-yellow except the joints which were dusky; dorsal webbing and entire ventral surface of foot and hind toe dusky. The skin is deposited as No. 7982 in the Ohio State Museum. Donald J. Borror (A check-list of the birds of Ohio. Ohio Journ. of Sci., 50: 10, 1950) placed this species in the hypothetical section because of a lack of a preserved specimen. There are a few published sight records.

Falco rusticolus, Gyrfalcon.—At approximately half an hour before sunset on November 26, 1951, while crossing a large field on the northern end of South Bass Island, I saw a large hawk approaching from the direction of Middle Bass Island. As the bird passed me about 200 feet away, it turned and circled once, giving me abundant opportunity to note its specific characteristics, which were those of a

Gyr Falcon. This bird differed from the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) in its notably larger size, in the more triangularly-shaped wings, which seemingly were very broad at their bases, in the more uniform coloration, which was whitish and mottled with grays, not browns, in lacking the well-defined "moustachios" so characteristic of the Peregrine, and in the slower wing beat. The Gyr Falcon's coloration was markedly similar to that of the painting of *Falco rusticolus gyrfalco* on Plate 50 in E. H. Eaton's "Birds of New York" (1914, pt. 2. Albany). Its huge size was aptly demonstrated when, in flying towards Peach Point, the hawk pursued an adult American Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*), the size of the latter appearing to be only slightly larger than that of the hawk.

An hour later Mr. Melvin Cover brought me a still-warm, limp Black Duck (*Anas fulvigula*) which he had found 15 minutes previously lying on the causeway at Peach Point, a neck of land separating Lake Erie from Terwilliger's Pond. The duck was a male weighing 1220 grams. An autopsy disclosed that a blow, delivered from above, had struck the duck in the middle of its back near the junction of the dorso-lumbar and sacral vertebrae, fracturing the fused vertebrae and driving two fractured portions into the kidneys, cutting some large blood vessels which produced an abdominal hemorrhage. I have examined over a dozen other birds immediately after falcons had killed them and have found similar fractures; I therefore conclude that the Black Duck had been struck by the closed feet of a falcon, presumably the Gyr Falcon which I had seen flying towards Peach Point.

I searched the fields and shores between November 27 and 30, finding a female Common Golden-eye (*Bucephala clangula*) and four female Ring-necked Pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) which had similarly broken vertebral columns and much of their flesh removed in a characteristic fashion by an avian predator. No Peregrine Falcons or large owls had been seen during the previous month, and it is highly possible that these birds were killed by the Gyr Falcon.

Borror (*op. cit.*: 3) notes three sight records for Ohio, which are published and mentions two specimens, collected in the state and preserved in museums.

Larus argentatus leucopterus, Greenland Herring Gull (formerly known as Iceland Gull).—During the latter part of February, 1946, several hundred fish shanties were located about a half of a mile west of South Bass Island on the ice-covered lake. Fishermen in these shanties threw their unwanted small fishes and discarded portions of larger ones upon the ice, this refuse attracting many gulls which fed upon it. While in my shanty on February 24 and while throwing food to individuals of four species of gulls in order to take notes upon their calls, I saw an immature Greenland Herring Gull alight among the feeding birds, remaining approximately two hours. This immature was only slightly larger than the five Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) with which it associated and was definitely smaller than the six Glaucous Gulls (*Larus hyerboreus*) which were also present. Its plumage was very buffy and similar to the color of a Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*); the basal third of its small bill (quite small when compared with the much larger bills of the Glaucous Gulls) was yellowish, the remainder black; its wings were more pointed than were those of the Glaucous Gulls and the wing beat more rapid; its voice was different from the voice of any other gull present. Excellent opportunities to closely observe this bird were had because whenever I placed a fish on the ice just outside of the shanty door the gull would approach and eat it. Borror (*op. cit.*: 11) has rightly placed this form in his hypothetical list because of lack of a specimen captured in Ohio.

Larus argentatus thayeri, Thayer's Herring Gull.—Parts of February 25 and 26,

1946, were spent in the above-mentioned fish shanty recording the call notes of the American Herring, Glaucous, Ring-billed, and Great Black-backed (*Larus marinus*) gulls. By February 26, I believed that I could recognize by voice alone any individuals of the above-mentioned four gull species. Then at noon I heard an unrecognized call and peering out of a shanty window I saw an immature gull whose plumage somewhat resembled that of an immature Glaucous Gull except that it was a darker brown; it was smaller in size than any of the three immature and three adult Glaucous Gulls present and was about the average size of a Herring Gull; its plumage was not as dusky as were those of the immature Herring Gulls. Greatly puzzled, I collected the bird. It was a very fat female weighing 1017 grams; its irises were brown flecked with golden; the tarsi were silvery-gray with some buffy. Its skin is No. 114,587 in the Museum of Zoology of the University of Michigan.

Because of a lack of comparable material at the museum, identification of this specimen remained in doubt until 1950 when Dr. C. O. Handley, Jr. compared it with specimens in the U. S. National Museum and discovered that it was an immature *ihayeri*. This subspecies of the Herring Gull has not been previously recorded for Ohio.

Larus atricilla, Laughing Gull.—A climatic cold front moving in a southeasterly direction passed over South Bass Island about noon on September 12, 1953. By 3:00 P.M. the wind had increased in velocity to an average of 35 m.p.h. and gusted at over 45 m.p.h., and these winds forced more than 700 Herring and Ring-billed gulls to seek shelter about the lee of the island. While watching these gulls in the expectation of seeing a Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*), a species which sometimes is present at this season during a northwest blow, I saw a gull about the size of a Franklin's but with the dark breast and other characteristics of a Laughing Gull. This bird was flying shoreward toward a huge flock of gulls and disappeared among them. From its method of flight it appeared to be quite exhausted. Further efforts to relocate this bird were of no avail until the morning of September 14, when walking along the beach Professor and Mrs. John B. Titchener saw a solitary bird, sitting with its head tucked down as if it were asleep. But upon approaching closer they found it to be dead, apparently having died only a few minutes previously because its body was still limp and warm. They immediately brought the bird to me. Its skin is No. 8063 in the Ohio State Museum. The bird, a juvenal female, was extremely emaciated, weighing only 219.5 grams; its alimentary tract was empty except for an undigested, small crayfish and fragments of six Coleoptera which Professor Josef N. Knull identified as *Drasterius dorsalis* (Say). Its feet and bill were black.

Strix nebulosa nebulosa, Great Gray Owl.—At daylight on October 30, 1947, while nearing Starve Island in a boat, I saw a flock of about a dozen Herring Gulls circling above a large tree on the island and harassing a Great Gray Owl, which was perched on a limb of the tree near the trunk. This owl's plumage was predominantly dusky, not brownish as are the plumages of the Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus virginianus*); the streakings on neck and upper breast were vertical, not barred as are Northern Barred Owls (*Strix varia varia*); the huge, globular-shaped head contained large facial disks; the irises were yellow; the tail appeared to be far longer in comparison to body length than are the tails of Horned, Barred, and Snowy (*Nyctea scandiaca*) owls and was almost twice the length of the tails of the Herring Gulls; and the ventral surface of the tail was barred and the distal end rounded. When I had approached to within 200 feet of the bird, it left the tree and flew past me, whereupon I was able to note that its round-tipped wings were much wider and

apparently somewhat longer than were the wings of the Herring Gulls and that there was a darkish area in their centers near the bases of the primaries on the underside of each wing. Borror (*op. cit.*: 11) has placed this species in his hypothetical list of Ohio birds because of a lack of a preserved specimen.

Corvus corax, Common Raven.—On the morning of January 20, 1946, while I was walking westward over the ice-covered lake from South Bass Island towards a colony of fish shanties, I observed for five minutes a Raven which was alternately soaring and flapping, and occasionally croaking, as it circled about the shanties. Comparisons were made between it and six Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) which were nearby. I again saw a Raven on February 16 and on March 6, and on each occasion the bird was flying from South Bass Island towards Middle Bass Island. On each of the three occasions the characteristics of this distinctive species were noted, and especially the wedge-shaped tail, soaring flight, and croaking voice. The Raven apparently was extirpated from Ohio as a permanent resident about 50 years ago.

Parus hudsonicus hudsonicus, Brown-capped Chickadee.—In a Red Cedar (*Juni-perus virginianus*) woods on South Bass Island on November 19, 1951, Frank J. Ligas and I found a flock consisting of seven Black-capped Chickadees (*Parus atricapillus*) and two Brown-capped Chickadees. I collected and made skins of both of the latter. One of these, a female weighing 11.5 grams, is No. 130,037 in the Museum of Zoology of the University of Michigan; the other, a male weighing 11.9 grams, is No. 7983 in the Ohio State Museum. There were goodly flights of Black-caps through the western Lake Erie region that autumn.

In the same woods on December 6, 1954, Mary A. Trautman and I found a Brown-cap associating with a flock of ten Black-capped Chickadees. It was a male, weighing 10.9 grams, and is No. 9392 in the Ohio State Museum. A large flight of unprecedented size of Black-caps occurred during this autumn throughout the western Lake Erie Region.

Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne has identified the three Brown-caps as belonging to the subspecies *hudsonicus*.

Ammodramus bairdi, Baird's Sparrow.—Heavy rains fell about South Bass Island during the unseasonably warm (about 60° F.) night of April 21–22, 1951, preceding the arrival shortly before daybreak of an intense climatic cold front. At sunrise a dense fog prevailed which disappeared by 8:00 A.M., after which the temperature dropped rapidly, falling to slightly below 32° F. by mid-afternoon. As the fog began to dissipate there occurred the largest sparrow invasion which I have encountered on the island in more than a decade, and by 9:00 A.M. there were present thousands of Juncos (*Junco hyemalis*), hundreds of Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), and many dozens each of Grasshopper (*Ammodramus savannarum*), Henslow's (*Passerherbulus henslowi*), Chipping (*Spizella passerina*), Field (*Spizella pusilla*), Fox (*Passerella iliaca*), Swamp (*Melospiza georgiana*), and Song (*Melospiza melodia*) sparrows. At the time I was particularly interested in obtaining information upon the relative abundance of the various subspecies of Savannah Sparrows occurring in the island region, so was examining with field glasses all individuals which I encountered. While looking over a large, mixed flock of Savannah, Henslow, and Field sparrows I found a Baird's Sparrow which I was able to observe carefully for periods of between 1 and 3 minutes upon six occasions. I failed to find the bird after making an unsuccessful attempt to collect it. This bird had a broad crown-stripe of rich ochraceous-buff and the remaining parts of the head and neck were suffused with yellow-ochre. A necklace crossed the breast in the form of a narrow

band, which was composed of a series of sharply-defined, short, blackish streaks; this band was conspicuously narrower than were the breast bands of the associating Savannah Sparrows. The bird *did not* have yellow before and/or above the eye or a yellowish or pale crown-stripe as have the Savannahs, or the olive-green suffusion about the sides of the head and hind-neck as have the Henslow's, or the red-brown speckled hind-neck as have the Leconte's Sparrows (*Passerherbulus caudacutus*), or the gray crown-stripe, nape, and earpatch, or buffy sides as have the Sharp-tailed Sparrows (*Ammospiza caudacuta*), all species which I have seen in life in Ohio and elsewhere as I have Baird's Sparrow in the West. I know of no published sight record for Baird's Sparrow in Ohio.—MILTON B. TRAUTMAN, *Natural Resources Institute, Ohio State University, Columbus 10, Ohio.*

Ten-Year Life History of a Banded Chimney Swift.—From a group of 99 Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) banded in 1944 on the campus of Kent State University at Kent, Ohio, one individual was observed each year for ten consecutive years. This bird, a female banded with No. 42-196907, outlived all of the others captured during the first season of this study, and its life history as reported here is the longest one known in detail of any Chimney Swift on record. Since she was first captured as an adult, she lived for at least 11 years.

This bird was banded on June 18, 1944. She was living in air shaft D4 with two other swifts. One was a male and the other a female. It is not certain which female was the mate and which was a visitor. (Nesting of Chimney Swifts in threesomes has been described in detail by Dexter, 1952b.) No.-07 had been observed incubating the eggs, although this is no proof of parentage since visitors are known to assist the parents with their nesting labors. At night one bird sat on the nest while the other two usually roosted just below it. Occasionally two birds sat on the nest, especially when the weather was cool. The nest was situated 12 feet down on the west wall and contained 4 eggs which had been laid between June 15 and 18. The three swifts remained together throughout the nesting period. Hatching began after July 5 and all four were hatched by the end of three days. Within a week all nestlings had blue pin feathers. During the third week of July they were fledged, and they had left the shaft by July 25. Five days later the parents and their seasonal visitor again roosted in D4 for the night with four juveniles. One or two of these may have been their own offspring, but at this time the birds were moving freely from place to place each night for roosting, and residence in a certain place did not necessarily indicate the home nesting site.

On April 28, 1945, a single Chimney Swift returned to shaft D4. Others joined it, and on June 6 another threesome was trapped there. No.-07 was back with the other female (42-196906), but a different male (42-196905) had taken the place of the previous one which did not return. No. -05 left his former mate (42-196904) in air shaft A1 where she then mated with another male. These three in D4 nested together for the season, but once again it is not certain if -07 was the functional female or a visitor with the other two. At times before and after nesting two often roosted side by side and the other one by itself a short distance away. At other times all three roosted together in a group. This year the threesome produced five eggs in a nest 34.4 feet down on the south wall. Because they nested so far down within the air shaft, the nesting could not be easily observed.

These same three returned to D4 in 1946. Nest building was under way by May 29. Again they built on the south wall, but nearly a foot lower -35.3 feet down from the top. Egg laying began June 10. I was absent for the remainder of the nesting season and consequently no further details are known. The companion female (-06) was the last swift trapped in 1946. It was alone in D4 on October 5.