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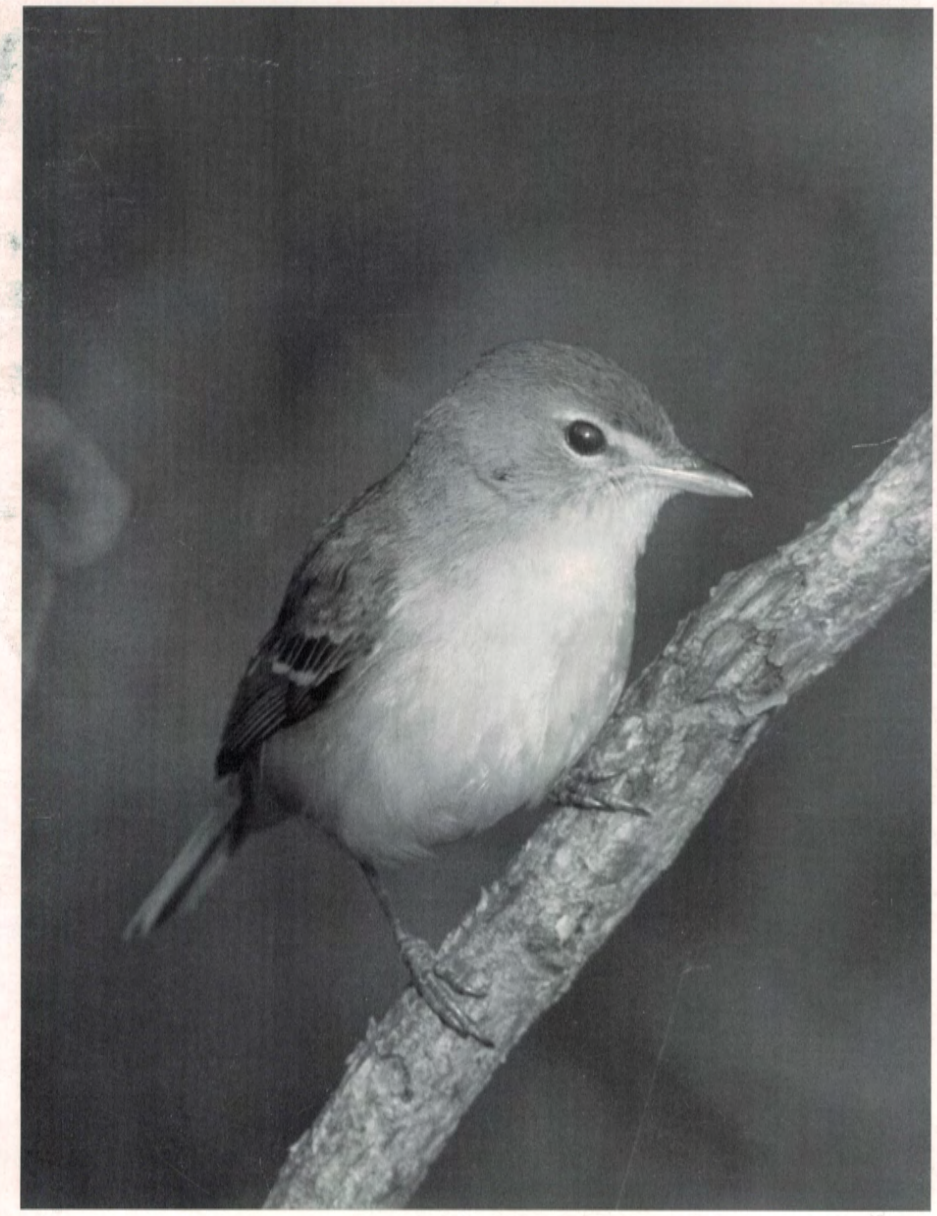
Spring 2003



The Ohio Cardinal is a quarterly publication devoted to the study and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife.

The Ohio Cardinal exists to provide a permanent and timely record of the abundance and distribution of birds in Ohio; to help document the occurrence of rare species in the state; to provide information on identification of birds; and to provide information on birding areas within Ohio.

The Ohio Cardinal invites readers to submit articles on unusual occurrences of birds, bird distribution within the state, birding areas in Ohio, identification tips, and other aspects of ornithology. Bird reports and photographs are welcome from any area of the state. Report forms are not a necessity but will be supplied upon request. Unusual species should be documented, and forms to do so are available upon request from the Editor, Publisher, and Records Committee Secretary.

Seasonal Report Due Dates	Please send all reports to:
Winter (Dec.-Feb.) - March 25 Spring (Mar.-May) - June 25 Summer (June-July) - August 25 Autumn (Aug.-Nov.) - December 25	Bill Whan 223 E. Tulane Rd. Columbus, OH 43202 danielel@iwaynet.net

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The Ohio Cardinal

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On the Cover: This Bell's vireo was photographed along the Heritage Rail-Trail adjacent to The Homestead Park in Franklin County on 21 May 2003 by Bob Royse.

Spring 2003 Overview

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This spring's weather played a part in several widely-noticed events. The cold winter hemmed in some remarkable assemblages of waterfowl at inland sites (especially along major rivers), and of larger gulls along the Lake Erie shore during a chilly first half of March. Most memorable among water birds were red-necked grebes, whose numbers set records statewide from the beginning of the period through early May. Later, turbulent weather to our south, with record numbers of tornadoes (562 in May, versus 399 for the previous record high, and weather conditions on 12 of the first 15 days of May characterized as "severe" by meteorologists), bottled up migrants until they exploded 10-12 May in concentrations that had even veterans' jaws dropping. A chilly and rainy latter half of May—reminiscent of last year's—slowed things down noticeably, delaying some Neotropical migrants (20 warbler species still at Magee on 28 May is pretty unusual), as well as causing some mortality among nesting birds.

As for other species, American white pelicans and golden eagles continued their recent regional increases. Though 29 species were reported, a dearth of suitable mudflats kept most shorebird numbers low. "Grasspipers" like golden-plovers and pectoral sandpipers, however, had a field day, with some enormous numbers reported. Our first confirmed loggerhead shrike nest since 1999 was found. Woodland thrushes seemed eerily hard to find this spring.

Ten review species were reported, all documented for the records committee: tricolored heron (2), glossy and white-faced ibises, Ross's goose (3), piping plover (2), western gull, least tern, loggerhead shrike (2), Townsend's solitaire, and Smith's longspur. If accepted, the gull would be a first state record, and the longspur the first in a dozen years.

The Reports follow the taxonomic order of the 7th edition of the *AOU Checklist of North American Birds* (1998), including the 42nd (July 2000) and 43rd (July 2002) Supplements. Underlined names of species indicate those on the OBRC Review List; documentation is needed to add reports of these species to official state records, or to attributed records herein. When supplied, county names appear *italicized*. Unless numbers are specified, sightings refer to single birds. Abbreviations, conventions, and symbols used in the Reports should be readily understood, with the possible exceptions of the following: BCSP=Buck Creek SP in *Clark*; BIWA=Big Island WA in *Marion*; BSBO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CPNWR=Cedar Point NWR in *Lucas*; CPNWRC=monthly CPNWR census; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley National Park in *Cuyahoga* and *Summit*; Dike 14=Gordon Park impoundment in Cleveland; EFSP=East Fork SP in *Clermont*; EHSP=East Harbor SP in *Ottawa*; eop=end of the period, in this case 31 May 2003; fide="in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; GLSM=Grand Lake St. Marys in *Auglaize* and *Mercer*; HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in *Lake*;

HDSNP=Headlands Dunes SNP; HWSP=Hueston Woods SP in *Preble* and *Butler*; Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh WA in *Wayne*; KPWA=Killdeer Plains WA in *Wyandot*; LSR=Lakeshore Reservation in *Lake*; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in *Ottawa* and *Lucas*; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in *Lucas*; Metzger=Metzger Marsh WA in *Lucas*; MP=Metropark; m obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in *Hamilton*; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ONWR=Ottawa NWR in *Ottawa* and *Lucas*; ONWRC=monthly ONWR census; PCWA=Pickerel Creek WA in *Sandusky*; PP=power plant; Res=Reservoir; Resn=Reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley WA in *Greene* and *Warren*; WA=Wildlife Area; ~=approximately.

Corrigendum

The 29 Dec 2002 Lincoln's sparrow in Cincinnati was found by **D. Brinkman**.

For the Record

Here are noteworthy reports from earlier dates that for one reason or another escaped our notice:

Red-throated Loon: One barely made it into last winter's season, at Eastlake PP 28 Feb 2003 (**C. Holt**).

Brown Thrasher: One apparently over-wintered at Mentor Marsh SNP (**E. Bacik** et al.).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Very unusual was one resorting to a *Logan* feeder 25 Jan-1 Feb 2003 (ph, **T. Shively**).

Lincoln's Sparrow: One was repeatedly seen at a feeder at Wolfcreek Environmental Center in *Medina* 29 Nov 2002 through 23 Feb 2003 (**D. Bertsch** of the WEC staff).

This red-headed woodpecker represented one of four different species of woodpeckers seen on the morning of 11 March 2003 at North Chagrin Reservation in Cuyahoga County. Photo by Gary Meszaros.

Spring 2003 Reports

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Red-throated Loon: Perhaps a single bird was involved at Eastlake 28 Feb and 2 Mar (**C. Holt**) through 22 Mar (**K. Metcalf**, m obs). **J. Fry** saw one at Lk Logan, *Hocking* 21 Mar, and **S. Zadar** another at E. 72nd St in Cleveland 14 Apr.

This red-throated loon posed for photographs at Eastlake Power Plant in Lake County on 16 March 2003. Photo by Gary Meszaros.

Common Loon: One cruised Newell's Run in *Washington* as early as 1 Mar (**B. Placier**). An astonishing 611 flew by LSR 5 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**), an all-time spring record. At least seven persisted into May, with birds in alternate plumage 17 May at Hoover Res (**C. Bombaci**) and 26 May at Lake La Su An WA in *Williams* (**J. Grabmeier**).

Pied-billed Grebe: One was at Lk Rockwell 1 Mar (**B. Bolton**), seven in the Great Miami R in *Butler* 2 Mar (**M. Busam**), and 20 at Camp Dennison in *Hamilton* 16 Mar (**B. Foppe**). **P. Lozano** noted a female with three downy young 27 May at Sandy Ridge MP.

Horned Grebe: Present from 1 Mar (Avon Lake, **J. Brumfield**) through 15 May (near Wooster, **S. Snyder**). An unusually high count was 50 at BCSP 23 Mar (**D. Overacker**).

Red-necked Grebe: The past winter's only red-necked grebe staged a remarkable stay at Camp Dennison in *Hamilton* 4-12 Jan. During the first week of the spring season, however, it became clear we were to witness a major influx reminiscent of the spring of 1994's. Rob Harlan treated that event in these pages (17(3):75-79) in detail, estimating 100+ individual birds statewide during the period 1 Feb-9 May 1994, based on reports from 24 counties. The high count of 28 birds came from Newell's Run in *Washington* on 14 Feb 1994.

This spring, an estimated 190+ individuals were reported, from at least 38 Ohio counties (*Allen* [1 bird], *Athens* [3], *Auglaize* [1], *Butler* [1], *Clark* [1], *Clermont* [1], *Cuyahoga* [5+], *Delaware* [1], *Erie* [1], *Fulton* [1], *Geauga* [1], *Greene* [3+], *Guernsey* [1], *Hamilton* [4+], *Hocking* [1], *Huron* [2], *Jefferson* [10+], *Lake* [89+], *Licking* [2], *Lorain* [18+], *Lucas* [5], *Monroe* [2], *Montgomery* [1], *Morrow* [2], *Muskingum* [1], *Ottawa* [1], *Pickaway* [2+], *Portage* [3], *Preble* [1], *Richland* [9], *Ross* [1], *Scioto* [1], *Stark* [2], *Summit* [2+], *Trumbull* [1], *Washington* [4], *Wayne* [4], and *Wyandot* [1]). The birds started showing up on the very first day of the season, with one in Newell's Run in *Washington* (**B. Placier**) and 18 at Avon Lk PP (**J. Brumfield**). The high count was 61 birds (**L. Rosche, T. Beal**), nr Eastlake PP 12 Mar. Later, the ONWRC had four breeding-plumaged birds 4 May, and **S. Edinger** the last two, one advanced in molt, in Athens 8 May.

In 2003 more observers were afield, and communications easier (60+ observers contributed to our 90+ reports), so comparisons as to the magnitudes of the incursions are difficult. In his summary, Harlan compared 1994's 100+ birds with only ~250 recorded in the entire previous history of Ohio ornithology, suggesting the 1994 phenomenon might have been unique at the time.

Since1994, *Podiceps grisegena* reports remained fairly normal in Ohio, averaging fewer than two per winter season and fewer than five per spring—until 2003. Observers across the eastern US, south as far as the Carolinas, noted abnormally high numbers of red-necked grebes Feb-May this year.

On 28 Feb, 206 red-necked grebes appeared in the harbor at Dunkirk, NY, farther east along the Lake Erie shore. The next day only fifty were to be found, but that is the day they started to appear in Ohio. By 10 Mar, 717 grebes had been reported in 39 PA counties, and by 4 Apr in 52 counties for a total of ~900 birds. In some eastern states, a few grebes in full alternate plumage hung around well into May, and even into Jun. Ohio's latest report came from 8 May, just a day earlier than that of 1994. Unlike in 1994, we had no reports of grebes grounded by severe weather, only birds taking advantage of open Lk Erie water near power plants early on, then in larger rivers and reservoirs, sometimes in small ponds and quarries, after the general thaw. After warm temperatures dominated ~mid-Mar, most records were of single birds in inland counties, with a high count of only three at one location (*Greene*, 5 Apr, **S. Reeves**).

The most often heard explanation (see, for example *Field Notes* 48(2):173) for these periodic incursions posits the displacement of wintering grebes from the Great Lakes by ice. This hypothesis needs more testing. There is no direct evidence that red-necked grebes winter far offshore in the Great Lakes. Nor do we (at least in Ohio) have data that correlate the presence of abnormally large numbers of red-necked grebes with each and every freeze-up. Surely 1994 and 2003 are not the only years in which some of the Great Lakes largely froze over; where are comparable records for grebe incursions in other years? Do the five published Ohio records of red-necked grebe for 1934, or the sixteen birds reported in 1959—both memorably cold winters—document under-observed major incursions?

There is another intriguing theory, which Alan Wormington calls "two-tier migration." Applied to the red-necked grebe, it envisions birds migrating from wintering grounds in the Atlantic to the lower Great Lakes early, from mid-February to late March. Here they tarry long enough to build up fat deposits and attain alternate plumage, then resume migration in time to take advantage of the thaw on the breeding grounds in late April through May. Wormington describes red-throated loons and horned grebes as employing similar but not identical strategies in the Great Lakes. Other Canadian observers say southbound grebes in fall may stop and stage to fatten and molt in Georgian Bay in August and September before resuming their southeasterly route (similar to that of tundra swans) to the Atlantic coast. Under the "two-tier" hypothesis, this spring's grebes arrived to find their customary Lake Erie staging areas choked with ice, and improvised by staging temporarily on open water until Lake waters opened in mid-March, with stragglers through the remainder of the period.

Eared Grebe: One visited Avon Lk PP 14 (**V. Fazio**) and 15 Mar (**W. Sarno**), and another Thurston SP (*Henry*) 29 Mar (**P. Chad**). One spent 29 Mar (**R. Hannikman** *fide* **H. Petruschke**) through 6 Apr (**L. Rosche**) at Fairport Hbr. Birds in alternate plumage were seen at Kelleys Isl 14 May (**Rosche**) and 16 May at Funk Bottoms (**E. Schlabach**).

American White Pelican: A passel of pelicans. Three at BCSP 8 Mar (**D. Overacker**) grew to four 27 Mar (**T. Shively**), with two remaining 29 Mar (**B. Heck**). Four were in Higginsport, *Brown* on 17 (**L. Brumbaugh**)-18 Mar (**C. Clingman**), **J. Holbrook** (*fide* **J. McCormac**) had two at Rocky Fk SP, *Highland* on 24 Mar, and **Z. Allen** four

Rocky Fork State Park in Highland County hosted these four American white pelicans for several days. Digiscoped photo by Jay Lehman on 27 March 2003.

there later that day, which remained 29 Mar (**B. Whan**). Simultaneously, four were found at Caesar Ck SP 29 (**J. Woolf**, **S. Reeves**)-31 Mar (**N. Smith**). Two touched down at La Due Res 30 Mar (**L. Rosche**). A young bird found at BIWA 13 Apr (*fide* **M. Misplon**) remained through the period (m obs). **S. Wright** saw seven in maneuvers over Sandusky Bay on 28 Apr. A bird seen passing Burke Airport in Cleveland (ph, **R. White**) 15 May perhaps was the one that floated in the channel off Pipe Ck WA 15 (**S. Young**) through 18 May (**G. Leidy**). Two sailed over Sandusky Bay 23 May (**S. Zadar**), with a duo, perhaps the same, at ONWR 26 May (**L. Gardella**).

Double-crested Cormorant: Canadian biologists estimate ~200,000 nesting in the Great Lakes. In 1990 none had re-established successful nests in Ohio, but by last year 2787 pairs were at ONWR's West Sister Isl, with smaller numbers at Turning Pt Isl in Sandusky and even fewer at GLSM. Non-breeders appeared at many reservoirs.

American Bittern: Reported at MWW 30 Mar-12 Apr (two, **F. Frick**), and at SVWA 16 (**J. Shrader**) through 22 Apr (**L. Gara**). At Magee 22 Mar (**M. Anderson**) through at least 8 May (**E. Snively**), three at Mallard Club Marsh WA 8 May (**B. Morrison**), at PCWA 11 (**P. Chad**) and 19 May (**D. Sanders**), and two for the CPNWRC 12 May. Seen at Sandy Ridge MP in *Lorain* 25 Apr (**M. Stetz**)-17 May (**C. Caldwell**).

Least Bittern: Reported at the customary spots, with two on the 12 May CPNWRC, one 18 May at Lorain (**G. Leidy**), two at Magee and singles at PCWA 19 May (**R&S Harlan**) and SVWA 22 May (**B. Powell**).

Great Egret: Early were birds at Rte 2 and the Portage R 17 Mar (**R&S Harlan**), at Cowan Lk SP 22 Mar (**C. Becker**), and at Shreve Lk 23 Mar (**S. Snyder**). Apparent non-breeders or deadbeat parents were at Mosquito Lk WA 26 May (**D. Hochadel**) and in Paulding the "end of May" (**D&M Dunakin**).

Snowy Egret: Seen as early as 15 Apr at Magee, with a peak there of five 28 Apr (both **V. Fazio**). Elsewhere, one was in Portsmouth 20 Apr (**B. Sparks**), one in Athens 22 Apr (**B. Placier**) with two there 8 May (**S. Edinger**), one at SVWA the same day (**D. Johnson**), and one at Prairie Oaks MP in *Madison* 23 May (**J. Fry**).

Little Blue Heron: An adult appeared in NW *Coshocton* 18 Apr (**L.E. Yoder**). At Magee, another adult stayed 4 (**G. Miller**) through 9 (**D. Overacker**) May. Another adult stalked SVWA 31 May (**S. Reeves**).

Tricolored Heron: Details of a 16 Apr report from *Cuyahoga* are with the OBRC. One from 24 Apr at Newell's Run backwater in *Washington* was described, including photo, for the OBRC as well.

Cattle Egret: A migrant was in *Stark* 5 Apr (**C. Fenstermaker**). Sandusky roosters were often spotted in the area, such as 23 on 12 May (**K. Mock**). More unusual were 14 May birds at LSR (**J. Pogacnik**) and at Gilmore Ponds, *Butler* (**B. Lacker**).

Green Heron: Arrived on schedule 17 Apr in *Hardin* (**E. McElroy**) and at Walborn Res (**B. Morrison**), and the 19th near Killbuck (**S. Snyder**) and at SVWA (**S. Reeves**).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: **P. Lozano**'s assiduous monitoring of the Merwin St roost in Cleveland yielded 10 birds on 10 Mar, 39 on 3/27, 44 on 3/29, 92 on 3/30, 93 on 1 Apr, 99 on 4/3, 154 on 4/5, 140 on 4/6, 166 on 4/7, 175 on 4/8, 180 on 4/9, 230 on 4/10, 165 on 4/14, 112 on 4/16, and 68 on 4/24. Elsewhere, of interest were 15 at PCWA 18 May (**J. Hammond**) and two in *Williams* 26 May (**J. Grabmeier**).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: Once again reported only from Columbus, where birds arrived 26 Mar, with four adults and four nestlings by the eop (**A. Paschall**).

Glossy Ibis: A breeding-plumaged adult was reported feeding close to a road just south of Applecreek in *Wayne* 16 May; details are with the OBRC.

White-faced Ibis: On 17 May an alternate-plumaged bird was seen skulking at PCWA, where it was refound 19 May. Details are with the OBRC.

Black Vulture: **S. Corbo** counted 75 over Camp Dennison, *Hamilton* 1 Mar, and **L.E. Yoder** two in *Coshocton* 8 Mar. On 17 Mar 200+ soared in Clermont (**L. Brumbaugh**). April sightings included one in *Ross* the 9th (**J. McMahon**), 22 in Shawnee SF the 19th (**J. Shrader**), and 35+ near Clear Ck MP in *Hocking* 21 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Turkey Vulture: Certainly migrants were one in Columbus 7 Mar (**B. Royse**), and two in *Summit* 9 Mar (**K. Mock**). **V. Fazio** reported good numbers of 214 at Magee on 17 Mar, 747 at MBSP the following day, and 587 at Magee 24 Mar.

Cuyahoga County's North Chagrin Reservation hosted this greater white-fronted goose on 12 March 2003. Photo by Gary Meszaros.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Reports came of five at Camp Dennison 1 Mar (**S. Corbo**), one at Gilmore Ponds 8 Mar (**A. Oliver**), one at N. Chagrin Resn (**K. Metcalf**) 12 Mar, one 18-20 Mar near Wooster (**S. Snyder**), and one in Mantua Twp, *Portage* 19 Mar (**L. Rosche**).

Snow Goose: The ONWRC tallied 29 (15 blue) over-wintering birds 2 Mar, and a flock of 35 on 17 Mar at Magee (**V. Fazio**) may have been the same one. Thirty-two birds were scattered across the state in ones and twos (in *Franklin*, *Clinton*, *Adams*, *Clermont*, *Clark*, *Scioto*, *Lake*, *Preble*) the first half of Mar; the latest report came from BIWA, a single bird 20 Apr (**C. Bombaci**). High count of transients five in *Ross* 9 Mar (**J. McCormac**).

Ross's Goose: Two visited HWSP 7-9 Mar (**D. Russell**), accepted OBRC. For one at Lks Pippen and Rockwell in *Portage* 18-20 Mar (ph) details are with the OBRC.

Tundra Swan: Migration continued through Mar, with over 5200 reported in the migratory path ESE through the northern part of the state during the period. High count ~500 Funk Bottoms 17 Mar (**B. Burnett**). The only Apr report, of 122 birds, came from the wintering area by the ONWRC.

Whooper Swan: One visited Hebron Fish Hatchery in *Licking* 16 Apr (ph **J. Stafford**). Though the bird appeared wary and showed no obvious signs of captivity, chances of wild origin are likely close to zero. Details are with the OBRC.

Causing quite a bit of surprise, this whooper swan appeared at the Hebron Fish Hatchery on 16 April 2003. Photo by Jim Stafford.

Wood Duck: None reported wintering, so 16 in Dayton 7 Mar may have been first arrivals (**N. Smith**). Birds appeared the same day in the Cleveland area (**K. Metcalf**).

Gadwall: **J. McCormac** had 100+ in *Scioto* 9 Mar. Seventy-six were off MBSP 18 Mar, then 165+ at KPWA 27 Mar (**V. Fazio**). The 6 Apr ONWRC counted 335, and one lingered 15 May at PCWA (**G. Links**).

Eurasian Wigeon: Drakes were found at Berlin Res 12 (**B. Morrison**)-15 Mar (**J. Brumfield**), at Benton/Carroll Rds south of Magee 28 (**G. Links**)-31 Mar (**G. Klug** *fide* **V. Fazio**), and near Upper Sandusky 30 Mar (**R. Counts**)-3 Apr (**T. Daley**).

American Wigeon: With the first 16 migrants at EFSP in *Clermont* 5 Mar (**H. Armstrong**), their numbers peaked statewide the fourth week of the month, with a high count of 1500+ at Metzger the 24th (**G. Links**). BIWA still harbored 105+ on 17 Apr (**V. Fazio**), and one lingered 15 May at PCWA (**Links**).

American Black Duck: Trickled in, with four at Lk Rockwell 1 Mar (**B. Bolton**), and 50+ on 5 Mar and 80 on 7 Mar at EFSP (**H. Armstrong**). Funk held 55 on 20 Mar (**S. Snyder**). The ONWRC had two on 2 Mar, then 137 on 6 Apr. One tarried 10 May at ONWR (**J. Hammond**).

Mallard: **H. Armstrong** counted ~1300 as early as 7 Mar at EFSP.

Blue-winged Teal: Seen earliest in the south, with one 8 Mar at BCSP (**D. Overacker**), 3 drakes 9 Mar in Portsmouth (**J. McCormac**), and one in Athens 10 Mar (**B. Placier**). By 23 Mar three were at HBSP (**L. Rosche**). High count 470+ at BIWA 17 Apr (**V. Fazio**). On 24 May **T. Shively** noted seven pairs, some with young, at Mercer WA.

Northern Shoveler: No earlier than the other ducks, with first report of eight 8 Mar at BCSP (**D. Overacker**). At KPWA 105 were present by 27 Mar (**V. Fazio**), and the ONWRC counted 202 on 6 Apr. **T. Shively** noted two pairs with three downy young at Mercer WA on 24 May.

Northern Pintail: Eight arrived 8 Mar at BCSP (**D. Overacker**), 75+ in *Scioto* 9 Mar (**J. McCormac**), and 120 the 11th in *Franklin* (**J. Watts**). **V. Fazio** tallied 355 at KPWA 27 Mar and 192 at BIWA 17 Apr. High count 500+ among Funk's throngs 21 Mar (**B. Morrison**).

Green-winged Teal: **J. Estep** noted the first, a pair at Hoover Res 7 Mar. Numbered 214 at KPWA 27 Mar (**V. Fazio**). The ONWRC had 493 on 6 Apr, then seven on 4 May. Other May individuals included a drake at Funk the 12th (**S. Snyder**) and a bird at PCWA the 15th (**G. Links**). **D. Sanders** observed an alt male "Eurasian" form (*A. c. crecca*) at ONWR 6 Apr.

Canvasback: Small numbers lingered inland from winter, such as among 45 at Camp Dennison 9 Mar (**A. Oliver**), but 110 in *Scioto* the same day (**J. McCormac**), 30 in *Fairfield* 11 Mar (**J. Watts**) and 89 on the 2 Mar ONWRC were migrants. Frozen Lk Erie waters through much of Mar kept the high count at 92, at MBSP the 18th (**V. Fazio**).

Redhead: Like the previous species, mostly overleaping frozen water, with a high count of 400 in *Scioto* 9 Mar (**J. McCormac**). Somehow 220 found liquid at Mosquito Lk WA the same day (**D. Hochadel**). A drake dawdled at Medusa Marsh 19 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Ring-necked Duck: Again, a few had wintered in spots, but flocks in the hundreds developed at reservoirs through Mar, culminating in a high count of 750+ at Berlin Res on the 25th (**B. Morrison**).

Greater Scaup: Having wintered in many locations, migration was prolonged. The high count was 259 on the 18 Apr Kelleys Isl census (**T. Bartlett**), and 20 were at EHSP 30 Apr (**G. Links**). Noteworthy May records included one in Lorain the 11th (**J. Pogacnik**), one at Funk 13-17 May (ph, **S. Snyder**), and two on the 15th at PCWA (**Links**).

Lesser Scaup: 9 Mar in *Scioto* brought 770 (**J. McCormac**), and numbers swelled later in Mar, with ~1500 off HBSP the 23rd (**L. Rosche**) and ~3000 off MBSP the 28th and 2300+ on 16 Apr (both **V. Fazio**). **G. Leidy** reported two at Lorain 18 May.

Harlequin Duck: A female discovered 2 Mar at Eastlake (**C. Holt**) remained through 8 Mar (**H. Petruschke**, m obs).

Surf Scoter: Twenty-two reported, with one at Avon Lk PP 1 Mar (**J. Brumfield**) and the latest 18 May at LSR (**J. Pogacnik**). Records in *Lorain*, *Cuyahoga*, *Lake*, *Licking*, *Franklin*, *Ottawa*, and *Portage*. High count five at La Due Res 28 Apr (**C. Holt**).

White-winged Scoter: Thirty-two reported, with two at Avon Lk PP 1 Mar (**J. Brumfield**), and the latest two in Bucyrus 19 Apr (**R. Counts**). High count 12 at Eastlake 14 Mar (**G. Meszaros**). Records in *Lorain*, *Montgomery*, *Washington*, *Hamilton*, *Lake*, *Scioto*, *Clermont*, *Crawford*, and *Lucas*.

Black Scoter: All reports: 1 Mar Cleveland (**J. Pogacnik**), 2 Mar LSR (**Pogacnik**), female 2 Mar Eastlake (**L. Rosche**), 14 Mar Eastlake (**R. Rickard**) and female Eastlake 15 Mar (**S. Zadar**), two 15 Mar Avon Lk PP (**Zadar**), 2 Apr Cleveland (**K. Metcalf**), male offshore ONWR 11 May (**P. Rodewald**).

Long-tailed Duck: ~Sixteen reported, from *Trumbull*, *Lake*, *Cuyahoga*, and *Allen*. First reported were three in Mosquito Lk 9 Mar (**D. Hochadel**), the latest a male in Bresler Res near Lima 25 Apr (**D. Dister**). High count five at LSR 30 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**).

Bufflehead: Larger counts 100+ in *Cuyahoga* 6 Mar (**L. Gardella**), 110 at Eastlake 12 Mar (**L. Rosche**), and 352 near Kelleys Isl 18 Apr (**T. Bartlett**). Latest reported was a lone drake at ONWR 10 May (**J. Hammond**, m obs).

Common Goldeneye: A few wintered south, and were found into the period. At Eastlake 220 were present 12 Mar (**L. Rosche**), and ~350 at Avon Lk PP 16 Mar (**C. Warren**). Three remained off Kelleys Isl 18 Apr (**T. Bartlett**) and one off LSR 11 May (**J. Pogacnik**).

Hooded Merganser: No large numbers reported, with 40 at EFSP 7 Mar (**H. Armstrong**). Females with young were at Killbuck 17 May-eop (**S. Snyder**), and three with 24+ young at ONWR 28 May (**P. Lozano**).

Common Merganser: One remained as late as 30 Apr at EHSP (**G. Links**).

Red-breasted Merganser: At LSR, 3480 passed 23 Mar, then 143 on 11 May (**J. Pogacnik**). Other May records came from Shreve Lk the 5th (**S. Snyder**), 30-40 near Kelleys Isl the 16th (**K. Metcalf**), 18 the 18th at LSR (**Pogacnik**), the 24th at BCSP (**D. Overacker**), and a female at Hinckley Lk, *Medina* 28 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Ruddy Duck: Twenty-plus were at EFSP 5 Mar (**H. Armstrong**). S. Zadar had 200+ at Lk Medina 19 Apr, **H&S Hiris** 1434 at Magee 20 Apr, and **L. Rosche** 300 at Mogadore Res 27 Apr. The 4 May ONWRC had 47, **S. Snyder** an alt male at Shreve Lk 21 May, **F. Frick** 2 at MWW 24 May, and **P. Lozano** 11 at Sandy Ridge MP 27 May.

Osprey: The ODOW reintroduction project has already exceeded its 2010 project goals, with 22 nests and 31+ nestlings this spring. Ospreys established three new nests, in *Delaware*, *Mahoning*, and *Tuscarawas*. Interestingly, the success of Ohio's project is increasingly due to infusions of apparently wild (or at least unmarked) birds; only 10 of the current 22 nests involve marked birds (**D. Sherman**). A similar project was launched this year to re-establish the species in Indiana.

Bald Eagle: ODOW monitors counted 88 Ohio nests, 59 of them successful, and 105 young surviving ≥4 wks. Noted were 12 new pairs, the southernmost in *Morgan*.

Northern Harrier: High count of migrants 13 at MBSP 15 Mar (**E. Schlabach**). Of interest during breeding season were a male in *Marion* 30 Apr (**B. Whan**), one at Dike 14 and one at HBSP on 10 May (both **G. Leidy**), a pair constructing a nest at Mosquito Lk WA 26 May (**D. Hochadel**), and single individuals on 31 May in *Gallia* (**J. Fuller**) and *Coshocton* (**L. Deininger**).

Northern Goshawk: An ad was at LSR 24 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**), when another was at Magee (**V. Fazio**). **B. Morrison** observed one in *Stark* 2 Apr.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Healthy. At MBSP 86 passed over on 15 Mar (**E. Schlabach**). Seven were in the air at once over CVNP the same day (**D. Chasar**).

Broad-winged Hawk: Moved on schedule. One was in Shawnee SF 15 Apr (**B. Royse**), and one in *Portage* 18 Apr (**B. Bolton**). **E. Schlabach** counted 116 over *Holmes* on 19 Apr, and **B. Murphy** 153 over Lakewood 20 Apr. On 28 Apr, **V. Fazio** tallied 313 over Magee, with a single kettle of 277 birds.

Red-tailed Hawk: Single dark morphs passed over MBSP 18 Mar and Magee on 28 Apr (**V. Fazio**). An 80% albino nested near Walborn Res during the period (**B. Morrison**).

Rough-legged Hawk: High count six at The Wilds, *Muskingum* 10 Mar (**L. Brumbaugh**). The latest to depart was at KPWA 26 Mar (**R. Sempier**).

Golden Eagle: Wintering birds at The Wilds consisted of an ad and two imm (15 Mar, **B. Conlon**), where the last sighting was of an ad and an imm 20 Mar (**J. Benedetti** et al.). Migrants spied included an ad at MBSP 15 Mar (**E. Schlabach**), an imm in *Lake* 14 Apr (**D. Seman**), an ad in NW *Coshocton* 19 Apr (**L.E. Yoder**), and an imm at Magee 21 Apr and a sub-ad there 28 Apr (**V. Fazio**).

Merlin: Twenty-nine reported. As many as four were observed at Calvary Cem in *Cuyahoga*, with a tercel apparently wintering 11 Dec through 31 Mar (**L. Gardella**, m obs). The latest report came from Mallard Club Marsh WA on 13 May (**L. Rosche**).

These two bald eagles surveyed Turtle Creek Wildlife Area in Ottawa County on 15 March 2003. Photo by Gary Meszaros.

Peregrine Falcon: The ODOW introduction project reported 12 successful nests, with 30 young banded statewide. New field mark: an ad with a satellite antenna attached to its back was flying west along the shore at ONWR 30 Apr (**P. Rodewald**).

King Rail: Few reports. The CPNWRC found one as late as 15 May (**G. Links**).

Virginia Rail: As expected. Wintering birds at SVWA numbered 2-3 on 16 Mar (**L. Theriault**).

Sora: First noted at MWW 5 Apr (**F. Frick**), seven were at SVWA 17 Apr (**J. Shrader**).

Common Moorhen: Three at Magee 20 Apr grew to seven 18 May (**H&S Hiris**) and two at Killbuck 21 Apr to four 14 May (**S. Snyder**). Five BIWA 9 May (**D. Horn**). High count seven 4 May ONWRC. One was seen at Mosquito Lk WA 30 May (**D. Hochadel**).

American Coot: Fifteen toughed it out at Avon Lk (**J. Brumfield**) and 150-200 at Camp Dennison in *Hamilton* (**S. Corbo**), both on 1 Mar. High count 2600+ BIWA 17 Apr (**V. Fazio**).

Sandhill Crane: ~250 reported, mostly in Mar in the western counties. As many as four were repeatedly reported from the NW marshes 28 Apr (**V. Fazio**) through 19 May (**R&S Harlan**, m obs). Seven the maximum reported from the Killbuck area 5 Apr (**S. Snyder**), with several through the eop, with a frequent duo in *Mahoning* 17 May (**B. Jones**).

Black-bellied Plover: Two arrived at ONWR 17 Apr (**E. Snively**), and plovers appeared in ones and twos through 26 May (*Wyandot*, **R. Counts**), with two large concentrations noted in *Lucas*: 115 over Whitehouse 10 May (**M. Anderson**), and ~150 in a Jerusalem Twp field 17 May (**D. Russell**).

American Golden-Plover: A good flight began on 27 Mar with four at KPWA (**V. Fazio**) and ended 3 May with 15 between Columbus and SVWA (**J. Hammond**). In the interim, reports came of 7500+ birds in fields in western counties, the high count a near-record ~4100 in *Marion* s. of KPWA 23 Apr (**M. Bolton**).

Semipalmated Plover: First two in *Scioto* 26 Apr (**B. Whan**), the last six at SVWA 30 May (**S. Reeves**). High count ~100 at PCWA 15 May (**G. Links**).

Piping Plover: Two were photographed 3 May along the beach of Magee WA; details are with the OBRC.

American Avocet: Only two, at Paulding Res 29 Apr (**D&M Dunakin**).

Greater Yellowlegs: Quite early was one 3 Mar on the Little Miami floodplain (**S. Hedeen**). Ninety at Funk 14 Apr (**S. Snyder**) was a good count, though short of the highest of 120 at BIWA 23 Apr (**M. Bolton**).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Earliest were 14 at BCSP 16 Mar (**E. Snively**). Many double-figure reports ensued in Apr, the highest of 80 at BIWA on the 23rd (**M. Bolton**). **J. Yochum** reported one in *Williams* as late as 30 May.

Solitary Sandpiper: Early was one in *Pike* 3 Apr (**P. Whan**). On 29 Apr 22 gathered at Gilmore Ponds (**S. Reeves**) and 22 at Killbuck 4 May (**G. Miller**), with 20 counted on the ONWRC of the latter date. Last seen at Sandy Ridge MP in *Lorain* 27 May (**P. Lozano**).

Willet: A remarkable 25 reported, an even more remarkable 15 of them inland. One *Scioto* 26 (**B. Sparks**)-29 Apr (**B. Royse**), two Lk Logan in *Hocking* 2 May with one there 6 May (**J. Fry**), two in Jerusalem Twp *Lucas* 7 (**C. Tucker**)-8 May (**P. Rodewald**), one at Magee 9 May (**S. Snyder**), two at Lorain 11 May (**J. Pogacnik**), one nr Medusa Marsh 11 (**D. Linzell**)-14 May (**G. Links**), nine (**S. Reeves**) then 11 (**L. Gara**) at Caesar Ck SP 12 May, three at Magee 14 (**T. Simmons**)-16 May (**R. Nirschl**), one at HWSP 15 May (**C. Betrus**), and one at Conneaut 21 May (**J. Sedransk**).

Spotted Sandpiper: Early at EFSP 30 Mar (**B. Stanley**). High 13 at Cowan Lk SP 3 May (**L. Gara**).

Upland Sandpiper: Two pairs were seen in fields in Jerusalem Twp, *Lucas* through the period (**G. Links**, m obs). **C. Holt** reported a May pair in Dorsett Twp, *Ashtabula*.

Whimbrel: Fly-by reports came from Lorain (**G. Leidy**, 18 May), from LSR (11 birds, **J. Pogacnik**, 26 May), and from Crane Ck SP beach 26 May (**C. Caldwell**).

Hudsonian Godwit: A rare spring migrant, a female was along the entry road at ONWR 4 May (**L. Gardella**, m obs).

Ruddy Turnstone: Two were at Funk 12 May (**S. Snyder**). About 100 worked a Jerusalem Twp field 17 May (**D. Russell**), and "hundreds" the Crane Ck SP beach for the midge hatch 24 May (**R. Nirschl**), with 45 remaining the 28th (**P. Lozano**).

Red Knot: One was at Conneaut 12-13 May (**C. Holt**). Another joined flocks of dunlins for the Magee midge fiesta 24 (**R. Nirschl**) to 26 May (**L. Gardella**).

Sanderling: Sparse as expected, with singles at HBSP 20 May (**L. Rosche**), among the flocks at Magee 25 May (**D. Sanders**), and 30 May in *Williams* (**J. Yochum**).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Late, with scanty numbers. One was at SVWA 18 May (**S. Reeves**), and the high count only 17 in *Williams* 30 May (**J. Yochum**).

Western Sandpiper: **R. Counts** found one at a reservoir near Upper Sandusky 25 May.

Least Sandpiper: Two at BCSP 1 Mar (**C. Buechele**) could only have wintered at this traditional location. Migrants were at Turtle Ck by 28 Mar (**V. Fazio**), but mudflats were hard to find. High count ~150 in *Williams*, of all places (**J. Yochum**, 15 May), and two lingered through 30 May at SVWA (**S. Reeves**).

White-rumped Sandpiper: First report from SVWA 4 May (**J. Stenger**). One was at Conneaut 12-13 May (**C. Holt**). A couple haunted the isolated mudflats at Pipe Ck WA 16 (**E. Schlabach**) through 25 May (**D. Sanders**). On 20 May **J. Fry** had one at Pickerington Ponds, *Franklin*. Found in small numbers through the rest of the period.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Damp fields were plentiful, as were pectorals. Over 18,000 birds reported, with four four-figure and 23 three-figure counts. First were 25+ at SVWA 14 Mar (**S. Reeves**), with high counts of ~1100 in n. *Wyandot* 11 Apr (**R. Counts**) and at BIWA of ~6100 on 23 and ~2100 on 27 Apr (both **M. Bolton**).

Dunlin: First reported early by the 6 Apr ONWRC, where 2097 later found a sliver of habitat 28 Apr (**S. Zadar**). Elsewhere often seen in bewildered flocks overhead looking for a place to dine, ~2000 dominated the midge-maddened throngs at Magee 24 May (**R. Nirschl**), actually venturing by the hundreds into the busy parking lot 25 May (**P. Gardner**). On 30 May 17 lingered at SVWA (**S. Reeves**).

Stilt Sandpiper: Always scarce in spring, two in nuptial finery tarried in *Wayne* 17 (**S. Snyder**, ph) through 22 May (**E. Snively**).

Short-billed Dowitcher: High count ~150 nr Bryan in *Williams* 15 May (**J. Yochum**). First at KPWA 30 Apr (**J. Hammond**), the latest nr Upper Sandusky (**R. Counts**) 26 May. One at ONWR 25 May (**D. Sanders**) was the only report from the w. Lake Erie marshes. Among fewer than 30 others inland, high counts were 15 at Funk 14 May (**E. Schlabach**) and five in *Mahoning* 17 May (**B. Jones**).

Long-billed Dowitcher: Rare in spring, one at SVWA on 10 Apr lacked orange tones below, but had fresh scapulars and wing coverts (**S. Reeves**).

Wilson's Snipe: One 3 Mar in *Hamilton* may have over-wintered (**S. Hedeen**). Twenty migrants were in *Scioto* 15 Mar (**B. Sparks**), 25 in Oxford 11 Apr (**D. Russell**), and 41 in Mantua Twp in *Portage* 13 Apr (**L. Rosche**) for the high count. **D. Hochadel** noted courtship flights as early as 23 Mar in *Trumbull*, with 15 flushed from meadows 27 Apr.

American Woodcock: First noted 1 Mar (**C. Bedel** *fide* **P. Whan**) in *Adams*, eight were at Gilmore Ponds 4 Mar (**M. Busam**). High 10 at Jaite, CVNP 16 Mar (**D. Chasar**).

Wilson's Phalarope: An ad female was at SVWA 7 May (**S. Reeves**). Two were at the Funk Bottoms 14 May (**E. Schlabach**), three near Bryan in *Williams* 15 May (**J. Yochum**), and one at Pipe Ck WA on 27 May (**M. Warren**).

Red-necked Phalarope: A female was in a *Williams* wetland 19-22 May (**J. Yochum**), three (two females) at Pipe Ck WA 23 May (**D. Linzell**), a female at Funk Bottoms 23 May (**S. Snyder**), and a female and a male near Upper Sandusky 26 May (**R. Counts**).

Laughing Gull: An ad was at Lorain 5 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**), another at BIWA 17 Apr (**V. Fazio**), another in Hebron, *Licking* 9-10 May (**C. Dusthimer**), and yet another near Toussaint WA 17 May (**E. Durbin** *fide* **G. Links**).

Franklin's Gull: An ad with pinkish underparts was at the GLSM fish hatchery 22 Apr (**M. Misplon**).

Little Gull: The first open water at LSR brought an ad 22 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**), then perhaps the same to HBSP 23 Mar (**L. Rosche**). LSR hosted another 19 Apr (**Pogacnik**).

Bonaparte's Gull: **K. McDonald** spotted one in *Hamilton* 7 Mar, **D. Overacker** six at BCSP the following day, and by the 28th **V. Fazio** 600+ at Magee. **J. Pogacnik** counted 10,880 passing LSR 19 Apr. Two remained at PCWA 18 May (**J. Hammond**).

Thayer's Gull: On 1 Mar **J. Pogacnik** had a first-year, a third-year, and an ad at E. 72 St in Cleveland, variously seen by other observers over the next few days. **L. Rosche** found one at HBSP 6 Apr, and **Pogacnik** an ad at LSR as late as 26 Apr.

Iceland Gull: On 1 Mar, **J. Brumfield** picked out two at Avon Lake PP, and **J. Pogacnik** 8-10 at E. 72nd St in Cleveland. **L. Rosche** found four at HBSP 3 Mar. **Pogacnik** noted a single bird at LSR 2 Mar, and **Rosche** one remaining at E. 72nd St 7 Mar.

Ashtabula County's Conneaut harbor hosted numerous terns this spring. This Forster's tern was photographed there by Gary Meszaros on 15 May 2003.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Two were at E. 72nd St on 1 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**) and one on the 22nd (**K. Metcalf**). One was inland at La Due Res 30 Mar (**L. Rosche**). May birds included one at Lorain on the 11th (**J. Pogacnik**) and at Conneaut on the 12th (**C. Holt**).

Western Gull: Reported as this species, a second-winter bird at E. 72nd St in Cleveland was well photographed at close range 1 Mar. What was apparently the same individual was observed at Avon Lk PP 11 Mar. Details are with the OBRC.

Glaucous Gull: Six were counted at E. 72nd St and six at Avon Lk on 1 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**). Fifteen other reports (m obs) ensued along the Lakefront, with the final sighting an adult on 3 May at LSR (**Pogacnik**).

Great Black-backed Gull: High spring count 150 at Avon Lk 1 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**).

Black-legged Kittiwake: Very rare in spring, an imm was at LSR 19 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**).

Caspian Tern: First three reported at Rocky Fork SP 29 Mar (**J. Lennon**), one was in Cleveland the next day (**C. Spagnoli**). High count 119 at LSR 19 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**) and 62 was a noteworthy number as late as 12 May at Conneaut (**C. Holt**).

Common Tern: Small numbers were off the Crane Ck SP beach as early as 25 Apr (**V. Fazio**). Inland, 26 were seen nr Wooster on 16 May (**S. Snyder**).

Forster's Tern: First noted 6 Apr near Wapakoneta (**J. Hammond**) and in Cleveland (**S. Zadar**), migrants passed through mid-May. Unusual numbers from the northeast included 50 at HBSP on 8 May (**L. Rosche**) and 174 at Conneaut 12 May (**C. Holt**).

Least Tern: An adult in alternate plumage was reported from Metzger in *Lucas* on 17 May; details are with the OBRC.

Black Tern: Only twenty-four reported, nineteen from inland spots, ranging in time from 8 (*Paulding*, **D&M Dunakin**) to 30 May (*Williams*, **J. Yochum**). High count only three, at KPWA 17 May (**R. Sempier**).

Black-billed Cuckoo: First at Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati 4 May (**J. Stenger**), with eight more arrivals reported in the ensuing week as far north as Magee.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: First reported at Scioto Tr SF 27 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Barn Owl: On 4 May, at least nine pairs were known to be incubating eggs at nests in *Wayne*, *Holmes*, and *Tuscarawas* (**G. Miller**).

Long-eared Owl: KPWA birds lasted until 25 Mar (**R. Sempier**), but one in *Wayne* persisted from mid-winter through 14 Apr (*fide* **S. Snyder**). **S. Zadar** noticed one at Dike 14 in Cleveland 15 Mar. A migrant was at HDSNP 19 Apr (**H. Petruschke**). One found caught in barbed wire in *Clermont* 22 Apr was later released (**G. Fantetti**).

Short-eared Owl: Rodent numbers were low at KPWA this winter, where the last owl was seen 2 Mar (**M. Kraus**). One was at the VOA property in *Butler* 12 Mar (**J. Brown**). On 19 Apr, **S. Zadar** spotted one at Dike 14, and **H. Petruschke** another at HDSNP.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: One at KPWA lasted through 8 Mar (**S&R Harlan**), and the Gilmore Ponds bird from the winter was reported through 11 Mar (**L. Theriault**). One was at Magee 24 Mar (**R. Nirschl**), and one at Dike 14 in Cleveland 3 Apr (**S. Zadar**).

Common Nighthawk: First appeared over Cincinnati 29 Apr (**W. Hull**), where 45 were around by 8 May (**J. Brown**). Alarmingly absent in many traditional urban haunts.

Chuck-will's-widow: First *Adams* report 20 Apr (**J. Lehman**). Only one reappeared in *Hocking*, singing south of the previous stronghold 7 May (**P. Knoop** *fide* **J. Fry**).

Whip-poor-will: First heard were several in *Scioto* 11 Apr (**Z. Allen**). **P. Rodewald** recorded whips at ONWR 1 May, at Crane Ck SP 10 May, and at CPNWR 20 May.

Chimney Swift: Two were seen in NE *Holmes* on 15 Apr (**E.A. Yoder**) for the first. By the 27th, "thousands" were over Portsmouth (**B. Royse**).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: First seen 20 Apr, in *Clermont* (**F. Kidd**) and *Hamilton* (**J. Watkins**).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: One in Clear Ck MP 20-21 Mar (**J. Watts**) may have, and two in Columbus 26 Mar (**R. Thorn**) probably had, over-wintered. Fifteen to 20 migrants were at Magee 4 Apr (**G. Links**). One lingered on 10 May there (**D. Horn**).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: On the early side was one at ONWR 9 May (**B. Morrison** et al.). Numbers peaked with three birds reported around the state on 22 May, the last report coming from Winton Wds in *Hamilton* the following day (**S. Corbo**).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Early arrivals came to *Franklin* 20 Apr (**R. Thorn**), *Hamilton* 27 Apr (**J. Stenger**), Parma 28 Apr (**G. Leidy**), and Scioto Trail SF 30 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: In no hurry, the first was netted by BSBO at Navarre Marsh 10 May, but they were customarily plentiful thereafter through the period.

Acadian Flycatcher: Arrived 3 May, at BCSP (**D. Overacker**) and MWW (**A. Oliver**).

Alder Flycatcher: First reported in *Pickaway* 13 May (**G. Miller**). Territorial birds were at Hinckley MP in *Medina* 27-28 May (**R&S Harlan**) and two-three at Irwin Prairie SNP in *Lucas* 28 May (**G. Links**); on 30 May, two were at Shenango WA and five at Mosquito Lk WA in *Trumbull* (**D. Hochadel**).

This whip-poor-will obligingly posed for a photograph in Oak Openings Preserve Metropark in Lucas County. Digiscoped photo by Joe Hammond on 14 May 2003.

Willow Flycatcher: A calling bird was first at Irwin Prairie SNP on 9 May (**G. Miller** et al.); by the following day, three were to be found on the CVNP (**D. Chasar**).

Least Flycatcher: **D. Morse** discovered the earliest migrant 18 Apr in *Clermont*, and the high count was 20 on 16 May at Magee (**E. Schlabach**).

Eastern Phoebe: Though over-wintering was not confirmed this year, this durable species was first reported from *Hocking* 4 Mar (**J. Fry**).

Great Crested Flycatcher: First touchdowns were recorded on 20 Apr, in Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati (**N. Cade**) and at LSR in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**).

Eastern Kingbird: A bird in *Butler* 16 Apr (**M. Busam**) was earlyish. The high count was a swarm of 43 at LSR in *Lake* 11 May (**J. Pogacnik**).

Loggerhead Shrike: A duo was reported from *Adams* 9 May, and nesting verified 13 May; details including photos are with the OBRC.

Northern Shrike: The latest in the NE hunted *Ashtabula* 23 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**). A bird at Spencer Lk WA, *Medina* was faithful through 16 Mar (**R&S Harlan**). One reported at Magee 3 Apr (**N. Bixler**) and at Crane Ck SP 4 Apr (**A. Spencer**).

White-eyed Vireo: First seen at Shawnee SF 15 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Bell's Vireo: One was at MWW 3 May (**H. Armstrong**). **D. Overacker** found two pairs near one another in a traditional location at BCSP on 16 May, and another singing male at a different BCSP location 30 May. **S. Richards** discovered a singing male at a park in Hilliard, *Franklin* 18 May; it remained through at least 27 May (**J. Meara**).

Yellow-throated Vireo: Arrived *Scioto* 15 Apr (**B. Royse**) and Magee 19 Apr (**C. Caldwell**).

Representing a very rare event these days, a pair of loggerhead shrikes nested in Adams County this year. This individual was digiscoped there by Jay Lehman on 9 May 2003.

Blue-headed Vireo: Heard and seen was a possible earliest-record male at Girdled Rd Resn in *Lake* 28 Mar (**J. Pogacnik**), an apparent overflyer. Another early individual was at Shawnee SF on 5 Apr (**B. Sparks**).

Warbling Vireo: Early arrival at Gilmore Ponds 18 Apr (**M. Busam**), and by 7 May 10+ were to be seen in Columbus (**R. Thorn**).

Philadelphia Vireo: First reported from Columbus 8 May (**J. Glover**), by 20 May six were netted at Navarre Marsh (BSBO), with three in Columbus 24 May (**P. Rodewald**).

Red-eyed Vireo: Appeared Shawnee 15 Apr, where 161 were counted 28 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Blue Jay: Seventy at EFSP 7 Mar were of interest (**N. Cade**). **J. Pogacnik** had 511 at LSR in Lake 11 May, then "several hundred" as late as 24 May. Magee observers during mid-May reported many migrant jays, most often paradoxically eastbound.

American Crow: If their numbers were reduced by WNV, they are bouncing back; **R. Thorn** reported "low numbers, but quite a few pairs, including many with 1-2 juveniles."

Purple Martin: Early scouts arriving during favorable weather included one at Winton Wds, *Hamilton* (**S. Corbo**) 21 Mar, and two in *Fairfield* 3 Apr (**J. Fry**).

Tree Swallow: Showed up first on 9 Mar, with two in *Scioto* (**J. McCormac**) and one in *Hamilton* (**S. Reeves**).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: **J. Brumfield** saw one in *Wayne* 22 Mar, **T. Bartlett** another 23 Mar in *Seneca*, and **D. Brinkman** two at MWW 25 Mar.

Bank Swallow: Cowan Lk SP hosted the first on 13 Apr (**D. Unger**). **J. Pogacnik** had 1092 at LSR on 11 May, by which time banks were spread across the Lk Erie shore.

Cliff Swallow: An apparent state record early arrival was a bird in Fredericksburg, *Wayne* 24 Mar (**A.A. Troyer** *fide* **E. Schlabach**). More arrived 14 Apr in *Holmes* (**W. Sarno**), where **P. Yoder**'s 394 nests were down from last year's 482. Nonetheless continued newly to colonize human structures statewide.

Barn Swallow: First reported *Seneca* 23 Mar (**K. Roush** *fide* **T. Bartlett**), with another in *Coshocton* 28 Mar (**L.E. Yoder**). High count 363 at LSR 11 May (**J. Pogacnik**).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Sparse. All reports: 2 Mar on the ONWRC, 9 Mar HWSP (**E. Baumgardner** et al.), 18 Apr *Franklin* (**R. Thorn**), 12 Apr nr Columbus (**B. Sparks**), 13 Apr two nests under construction Brecksville Resn (**D. Chasar**), two in the CVNP 10 May (**L. Rosche**), pair nesting Hocking Hills SP 19 May (**F. Renfrow**), one at Hinckley MP, *Medina* 27 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Brown Creeper: First two migrants reported by **G. Leidy** at the CVNP 5 Apr, who had the high count of eight in Parma 9 Apr. **D. Chasar** noticed a nest under construction near Station Rd in the CVNP 4 May; **S. Snyder** had a bird at Killbuck 25 May, and **J. Kuenzli** another at Hoover Res 29 May.

Winter Wren: Probable migrants were in *Hamilton* 16 Mar (**D. Brinkman**), and two in Columbus 27 Mar (**P. McSweeny**). The BSBO captured one at Navarre Marsh 12 May.

Sedge Wren: The VOA property in *Butler* hosted one as early as 30 Apr, with six there 21 May (**M. Busam**). Singletons were detected at the SVWA 8 May (**J. Perry**), KPWA 16 May (**G. Stauffer**), and Funk Bottoms 17-30 May (**S. Snyder**); on 30 May, two others were nr Berlin Res (**B. Morrison**).

Marsh Wren: Three were heard at SVWA 16 Apr (**J. Shrader**). The high count was only seven, at Magee 25 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: A high count of 55 came from Columbus 11 Apr (**B. Royse**), and persisted through 11 May at Lk Rockwell (**L. Rosche**). One was at the usual nesting area at Hinckley MP, *Medina* 28 May (**S&R Harlan**).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Early at Magee 24 Mar (**V. Fazio**). On Kelley's Isl, the 18 Apr census counted 80 (**T. Bartlett**). A straggler was at Magee 25 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: First detected in *Clermont* 30 Mar (**N. Cade**), their numbers had swelled to 126 in *Scioto* by 15 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Townsend's Solitaire: One was discovered at the Shaker Lakes 4 Mar (**L. Deininger**), and seen by m obs through at least 12 Mar (**J. Lehman**). The sixth accepted Ohio record.

Veery: Late like most of the thrushes, first reported 1 May at Navarre (BSBO). Still, at times the only thrush seen at migrant traps, with 12+ at Magee 10 May (**J. Brumfield**).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Must have largely overflown the state, as few were detected. One sang at Gilmore Ponds 19 Apr (**M. Busam**) for an unusually early record. High count was only three, n. of Columbus 15 May (**P. Rodewald**). Last seen *Holmes* 29 May (**E. Schlabach**).

Swainson's Thrush: Apparent overflights occurred in Whitehouse, *Lucas* 20 Apr (**M. Anderson**) and at Navarre Marsh the following day (BSBO). Observed numbers were noticeably depressed, with a high count of 12+ at Magee 15 May (**J. Brumfield**).

Hermit Thrush: One was early, or had over-wintered, in Zanesville 14 Mar (**B. Whan**). The BSBO netted one at Navarre 14 Apr, and by the 19th **G. Leidy** was to have 10 in Parma. High count 33 at Magee 28 Apr (**V. Fazio**).

Wood Thrush: Arrived 15 Apr in Shawnee SF (**B. Royse**), with a local record high count of 40 for the CVNP census of 10 May (**D. Chasar**).

Gray Catbird: One in *Hocking* 19 Mar could have over-wintered (**D. Horn**), but one in *Clermont* 12 Apr was on a migrant's schedule (**D. Morse**).

Remaining elusive for many photographers at Cuyahoga County's lower Shaker Lake area, this Townsend's solitaire provided Ohio with its sixth record. It was finally captured on film by Bob Finkelstein on 8 March 2003.

Northern Mockingbird: As usual, reported in greater numbers at higher latitudes each year, e.g., one unusual in n. *Trumbull* 19-20 Apr (**D. Hochadel**).

American Pipit: Some apparently over-wintered, but 50 at KPWA 26 Mar (**R. Sempier**) were migrants. At Hebron, *Licking* from six to 20 were regularly found 1 Mar through 17 May (**C. Dusthimer**), and one was at HBSP the latter date (**L. Rosche**). High count 75+ in *Tuscarawas* 8 Apr (**E. Schlabach**).

Cedar Waxwing: Not reported widely until May this year. High count "hundreds" at Magee 25 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Blue-winged Warbler: Two arrived at Shawnee SF 14 Apr (**R. Royse**), and another was at Cowan Lk SP the following day (**E. Roush**). The CVNP census tallied a local record 128 on 10 May (**D. Chasar**).

Golden-winged Warbler: Thirty-two reported overall, from 29 Apr in *Darke* (**S. Miller** et al.) to the eop, with most 1-10 May. High count three 10 May CVNP (*fide* **D. Chasar**).

Hybrids of above: "Brewster's" warblers—a bird at Magee (**R. Nirschl**) and a male banded at ONWR 1 May (**P. Rodewald**), one at Shaker Lakes 3-4 May (**B. Finkelstein**), one in *Holmes* 8 May (**M. Yoder** *fide* **E.A. Yoder**), one banded at CVNP 8 May, then recaptured in breeding condition 16 May, with a different individual banded 23 May (**G. Fowler**), and one discovered in *Perry* 16 May (**L. Andrews**). "Lawrence's" warblers—**D. Johnson** found one at Novak SNP in *Portage* 6 May, then another there 19 May that persisted through 21 May (**M. Tenney**). One was in Parma 2-3 May (**S. Zadar**).

Tennessee Warbler: One at Magee 21 Apr was an early overflight (**V. Fazio**), as was one singing in Columbus 28 Apr (**J. Kuenzli**). Seventeen at Shawnee SF (**B. Royse**) on 30 Apr were still earlyish.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Often arrives earlier, but this year the first report came from 30 Apr in *Hocking* (**J. Fry**). The high count was of four birds banded at ONWR on the extraordinary migratory day of 10 May (**P. Rodewald**).

Nashville Warbler: Early reports came from *Delaware* 19 Apr (**R. Thorn**), nw *Coshocton* 20 Apr (**L.E. Yoder**) and Navarre Marsh (BSBO) 22 Apr. High count 12 on 10 May in *Tuscarawas* (**E. Schlabach**).

Northern Parula: A singing male was repeatedly heard by two observers familiar with the species in *Washington* 28 Mar (**H. Nagy**). Another very early individual was in *Adams* 4 Apr (**P. Whan**). High count 10 at Magee 17 May (**R&S Harlan**).

The lower Shaker Lake area of Cuyahoga County produced this stunning golden-winged warbler in early May. Photo by Laura Gooch on 4 May 2003.

Yellow Warbler: First reported from Shawnee SF 15 Apr (**B. Royse**), one had reached N. Chagrin Resn in *Cuyahoga* by 20 Apr (**K. Metcalf**). On 10 May, a total of 159 at the CVNP was a local record (*fide* **D. Chasar**).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Two were in the Shawnee SF 30 Apr (**B. Royse**), and their numbers peaked on schedule, with a high count of 25 on 19 May at Magee (**R&S Harlan**), and a few remaining through the eop.

Magnolia Warbler: Present as a migrant from 26 Apr at Shawnee Lookout in *Hamilton* (**N. Cade**) through the eop, with a high count of 20 at Magee on 19 May (**S&R Harlan**). Likely staying to nest were three males at Conkle's Hollow on 19 May and another at Ash Cave (both in *Hocking*) on 20 May (both **F. Renfrow**).

Cape May Warbler: First reported in *Wayne* 4 May (**G. Miller**), last in *Coshocton* 24 May (**E. Schlabach**), numbers peaked at 10 on 11 May at Magee (**R&S Harlan**).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 30 Apr brought one to *Licking* (**T. Nickerson**) and two to Scioto Trail SF (**B. Royse**). Ten were at HBSP on 20 May (**L. Rosche**).

A "Brewster's" warbler joined the ranks at Cuyahoga County's lower Shaker Lake area this season. Photo by Laura Gooch on 4 May 2003.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: The ONWRC racked up 173 on 4 May. On 16 May, five were still at Winton Wds, *Hamilton* (**S. Reeves**). The last spring record was a bird banded at Navarre by BSBO 28 May. A female of the western "Audubon's" race was found in *Franklin* 4 Apr, with details to the OBRC, and would be a fourth or fifth state record.

Black-throated Green Warbler: Exceptionally early was one photographed in *Fairfield* 28 Mar (**T. Sheley** *fide* **M. England**); three were in Shawnee SF 6 Apr (**B. Royse**). The CVNP census tallied a record 42 on 10 May (*fide* **D. Chasar**).

Blackburnian Warbler: The earliest to appear was at Metzger on 28 Apr (**J. Sawvel** *fide* **V. Fazio**). Three singing males at Conkle's Hollow in *Hocking* 19 May (**F. Renfrow**) were probably on territory.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Arrived in *Ross* 2 Apr (**K. Sieg**), in *Adams* 4 Apr (**P. Whan**), and way up in LSR on 14 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**). In Shawnee SF, 59 were present 14 Apr, and 82 on 15 Apr (**B. Royse**). One was a good find at Magee 11 May (**R&S Harlan**). **D. Chasar** discovered a nest near Station Rd in the CVNP 15 May.

Pine Warbler: One was photographed at a suet feeder on a cold 7 Mar day in *Adams* (**P. Whan**), and it was not till 15 Mar at Shawnee SF that another was found (**J. Hammond**). High count 13 at Zaleski SF on 3 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Prairie Warbler: A possible early-record individual was heard and seen in *Adams* 22 Mar (**P. Whan**). Another was in Fairfield 28 Mar (**T. Sheley** *fide* **M. England**), and the high count came from *Adams*, as always—45 on 20 Apr (**J. Lehman**). Farther north than most were one netted at Navarre Marsh 21 Apr (BSBO), one in *Lucas* 30 Apr (**M. Anderson**), and two in *Columbiana* 7 May (**B. O'Toole**).

Palm Warbler: Quite early was one at the CVNP 29 Mar (**F. Dinkelbach**). Peaked in early May, with 125 on the 4 May ONWRC, and 60+ there 5 May (**M. Bakermans** *fide* **P. Rodewald**). Individuals of the much yellower eastern race *D. p. hypochrysea* were seen 20 Apr at LSR (**J. Pogacnik**) and banded at Navarre 22 Apr (BSBO).

Bay-breasted Warbler: Arrived a bit late across the northern counties 10 May, though a pioneer was in *Franklin* 1 May (**R. Thorn**). High 20 at Magee 19 May (**S&R Harlan**).

Blackpoll Warbler: First reported from *Hocking* on 1 May (**J. Fry**), by 20 May 20+ could be found at HBSP (**L. Rosche**). Present through the eop.

Cerulean Warbler: First noted 15 Apr at Shawnee SF, where there were 48 by 4 May (**B. Royse**). Two males were at ONWR 1 May, and one at MBSP 13 May (**P. Rodewald**). 11 May brought one to Magee (**R&S Harlan**), while a pair was building a nest in the CVNP the same day (**D. Chasar**).

Black-and-white Warbler: Arrived early, at least at Shawnee SF, with two on 6 Apr and nine by 14 Apr (**B. Royse**).

American Redstart: At Shawnee SF, seven were around on 15 Apr, and by 28 Apr 106 were tallied at Scioto Trail SF (both **B. Royse**). Migrants passed through the eop.

Prothonotary Warbler: First at Tar Hollow SP 20 Apr (**C. Barnett**), by 6 May 14 males were at Hoover Res (**C. Bombaci**). At Magee, two were seen 29 May (**D. Friedman**).

Worm-eating Warbler: First found at Shawnee SF 15 Apr (**B. Royse**), with males heard at most stops in appropriate habitat 26 Apr (**B. Sparks** et al.). Many records north of their customary haunts, with two at Magee 25 Apr (**V. Fazio**) and one there 28 May (**D. Friedman**), one at Mentor 29 Apr (**L. Rosche**), one in Parma 1 May (**S. Zadar**), one in *Columbiana* 7 May (**B. O'Toole**), one way out in *Paulding* 10 May (**M&D Dunakin**), and one at Spencer Lk WA, *Medina* 17 May (**J. Brumfield**).

Ovenbird: Arrived 14 Apr at Shawnee SF, where 70 were present 19 Apr and 104 on 28 Apr (all **B. Royse**). Forty or more migrants were at Magee 10 May (**J. Brumfield**).

Northern Waterthrush: Appeared 26 Apr in *Highland* (**D. Overacker**) and at Navarre Marsh 30 Apr (BSBO). High count seven, at Magee 19 May (**S&R Harlan**).

Louisiana Waterthrush: First reported from the Cincinnati Nat Ctr 23 Mar (**B. Lacker**) with another in *Ross* 24 Mar (**K. Sieg**). High count 18 on 14 Apr at Shawnee SF (**B. Royse**).

Kentucky Warbler: Three noted first at Shawnee SF 19 Apr (**J. Shrader**), where 20 could be heard 3 May (**B. Royse**). One was a surprise in *Paulding* 1 May (**M&D Dunakin**), as was another that flew into BSBO's nets at Navarre 6 May.

Connecticut Warbler: Several dozen reported, none nearly so early as a male banded at ONWR 10 May (**P. Rodewald**). The high count came from Magee, with three on the more expected date of 19 May (**R&S Harlan**).

Mourning Warbler: First reported 8 May at Magee (**E. Snively**), their numbers peaked there at seven on the 19th (**S&R Harlan**). A male at Walborn Res in *Stark* 7 May oddly continued singing through 31 May (**B. Morrison**).

Common Yellowthroat: Seen in *Pike* 17 Apr (**Z. Allen**) and in *Coshocton* 20 Apr (**L.E. Yoder**). The CVNP census of 10 May found a local record 222 (**D. Chasar**).

Hooded Warbler: Appeared 15 Apr at Shawnee, where 61 could be heard the 28th (**B. Royse**). One was at Sheldon Marsh 24 Apr (**P. Dwight**), another at Navarre 1 May (BSBO), and one at Metzger 16 May (**J. Hammond**). A local record 61 were tallied for the 10 May CVNP census in *Cuyahoga* and *Summit*.

Wilson's Warbler: First reported as banded at Navarre by BSBO 4 May, then seen through the period, with a high count of 20 at Magee 25 May (**S&R Harlan**).

Canada Warbler: First migrants not reported until 10 May at Magee (**J. Brumfield**), when another bird was banded at Navarre (BSBO). Curiously, a fledgling was out of place in Washington TWP, *Clinton* and early on 24 May (ph and other details to OBRC).

Yellow-breasted Chat: First reported from Shawnee SF 23 Apr (**B. Royse**).

Summer Tanager: Arrived quite early 18 Apr in *Clermont* (**B. Lacker**). Three were at the Oak Openings 6 May-eop (**M. Anderson**), one at Magee (**J. Brumfield**) and one at ONWR (**L. Rosche**) 15 May, and one banded at ONWR 20 May (**P. Rodewald**).

Scarlet Tanager: Also early, with the first reported 15 Apr at Shawnee SF (**B. Royse**).

Eastern Towhee: A healthy 84 were counted for CVNP's census 10 May (**D. Chasar**).

American Tree Sparrow: The ONWRC tallied 254 on 2 Mar. Late were a 12 Apr bird in BSBO's nets at Navarre, one at N. Chagrin Resn the next day (**K. Metcalf**), and a true laggard at Dike 14 in Cleveland on 1 May (**S. Zadar**).

Chipping Sparrow: Migrants appeared in *Clermont* 20 Mar (**M. Wessel**), *Athens* 25 Mar (**L. Andrews**), *Lucas* 29 Mar (**M. Anderson**), and *Lake* 30 Mar (**L. Rosche**).

Clay-colored Sparrow: First discovered at a S. Euclid feeder 3 May (**B. Finkelstein**) then in Willoughby 6 May (**N. Anderson**). Five were seen on the big migration day of 10 May: two at HBSP (**G. Leidy**), one at Magee (**T. Bartlett**), one at LSR (**J. Pogacnik**), and a singing male in Norton, *Summit* (**R&S Harlan**).

Vesper Sparrow: In *Clermont* by 25 Mar (**B. Stanley**), in *Pickaway* 29 Mar (**B. Conlon**), and in *Lake* 30 Mar (**L. Rosche**). Nine at N. Chagrin Resn 6 Apr (**K. Metcalf**).

Lark Sparrow: Arrived at the Oak Openings 29 Apr (Toledo MP staff). **G. Links** glimpsed a migrant just west of PCWA the following day.

Savannah Sparrow: One in *Fairfield* 2 Mar may have wintered locally (**J. Watts**). The high count was 24 on 1 May at Dike 14 in Cleveland (**S. Zadar**).

Grasshopper Sparrow: One was in *Franklin* by 20 Apr (**R. Thorn**), then *Stark* by 24 Apr (**W. Sarno**), and six at Crown City WA on 27 Apr (**B. Royse**). Returned to the Oak Openings 1 May (**G. Links**), and one was banded at ONWR 2 May (BSBO).

Henslow's Sparrow: First reported from the VOA fields in *Butler* 23 Apr, where 10 were on station 28 May (**M. Busam**). **J. Grabmeier** counted 25 in *Williams* 26 May.

Fox Sparrow: First reported 6 Mar from *Harrison* (**D. Smith**), they peaked at ~70 at Magee on 5 Apr (**G. Links**). Last reported 12 Apr at the CVNP (**D. Chasar**).

Grassland species were plentiful at the VOA grounds in Butler County this season. This Henslow's sparrow was digiscoped there on 29 April 2003 by Bill Hull.

Song Sparrow: **N. Cade** saw 65 at EFSP 7 Mar, and **J. Pogacnik** 90+ at LSR 24 Mar.

Lincoln's Sparrow: First 28 Apr at Magee (**V. Fazio**); 1 May brought 20 to Magee (**R. Nirschl**) and 16 to Dike 14 (**S. Zadar**). The latest report from *Hocking* 22 May (**J. Fry**).

Swamp Sparrow: Several sang in balmy weather 27 Mar at Killbuck (**W. Sarno**).

White-throated Sparrow: The ONWRC of 4 May tallied 102, with several times that number at Magee on 10 May (m obs). Last reported at Navarre 28 May (BSBO).

White-crowned Sparrow: **P. Rodewald** reported a "very heavy flight on 1 May with literally hundreds in vegetation along the roads at ONWR" (where **A. Boone** *fide* **J. Kuenzli** counted ~400 that day), and **S. Zadar** 200 at Dike 14 on 3 May. Last reported 23 May at Navarre (BSBO). **K. Metcalf** had a *gambelii* bird at N. Chagrin Resn 3 May, and **Rodewald** banded two, one 13 May at ONWR and one 20 May at CPNWR.

Dark-eyed Junco: Larger numbers included 100+ in *Scioto* 5 Mar (**B. Royse**) and 150 at KPWA 25 Mar (**R. Sempier**). Odd was a male 14 May on territory in suburban Orange, *Cuyahoga* in a "perfectly flat residential area with old conifers" (**R&S Harlan**).

Lapland Longspur: A flight of ~7400 over MBSP 16 Mar (**V. Fazio**) is Ohio's second-largest count, next to **H. Mayfield**'s "crude estimate" of 10,000 in Toledo 1 May 1949. Also from the Toledo area were this spring's final four, seen over Whitehouse during the huge migrational movement of 10 May (**M. Anderson**). Few near KPWA this season.

Smith's Longspur: On 8 Apr, an adult male was repeatedly observed by m obs near Sugarcreek in *Tuscarawas* in an agricultural field. Details are with the OBRC.

Snow Bunting: Last reported 8 Mar, in *Paulding* (**D&M Dunakin**).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A migrant was early at Camp Dennison in *Hamilton* 10 Apr (**B. Foppe**). Nesting in *Hocking* 4 May (**J. Watts**) and in *Logan* 6 May (**T. Shively**). By 10 May, 89 were in the CVNP for the local census (**D. Chasar**).

Blue Grosbeak: The first reported was a male in Clear Ck MP in *Hocking* 2 May (**J. Fry**), then one was found at Crown City WA 3 May (**B. Royse**); the latter observer found a pair in *Pickaway* 8 May (nested with 3 young in June, **T. Shively**). A second-year male was banded at Navarre Marsh 11 May (BSBO). A female was at Caesar Ck SP 12 May (**S. Reeves**), and the first report from *Adams* came the following day (**G. Miller**). A male was at LSR 14 May (**J. Pogacnik**), and a pair in Starr Twp in *Hocking* 29 May (**L. Andrews**).

Indigo Bunting: A wintering male persisted at **N. Keller**'s feeder through at least 19 Mar, and **Keller** also reported the first migrant, at MWW 27 Apr.

Dickcissel: Premonitory appearances: one in *Paulding* 30 May (**D&M Dunakin**), and 31 May in *Butler* (**P. Wharton**), with 15+ at Crown City WA in *Gallia* (**J. Hammond**).

Bobolink: The VOA had its first 23 Apr, then 30+ by 13 May, and 41 by 22 May (**M. Busam**). The first noted at ONWR came on 30 Apr (**P. Rodewald**).

Eastern Meadowlark: Fifty were at *Butler*'s VOA grasslands 12 Mar (**J. Brown**), and the observed number among breeders leveled out at 34 there 22 May (**M. Busam**).

Western Meadowlark: At ONWR, what was probably a single male was noted 29 Apr and 5, 6, and 10 May (**P. Rodewald**, m obs). Two were discovered 30 Apr, one on Buena Vista Rd in *Hocking* (**B. Morrison** et al.) and one near Whitehouse, *Lucas* (**E. Tramer**).

Rusty Blackbird: High count 50, in *Geauga* 30 Mar (**K. Metcalf**). Quite late was a male banded at CPNWR 20 May (**P. Rodewald**).

Brewer's Blackbird: Groups of five and 12 were in Jerusalem Twp, *Lucas* 22 Mar (**G. Links**). **B. Morrison** had two in Hartville, *Stark* with a flock of grackles and rusties 31 Mar. Unexpected was one that provided prolonged looks at LSR 24 May (**J. Pogacnik**).

Orchard Oriole: Arrived 23 Apr at Shawnee (**B. Royse**). The high count was 10+ at Kelleys Isl 16 May (**K. Ketcalf**).

Baltimore Oriole: Earliest in *Tuscarawas* 15 Apr (**E. Schlabach**), with a high count of 164 at LSR 10 May (**J. Pogacnik**).

Purple Finch: Sparse. **J. Fry** had one in *Hocking* 9 Mar, and one was in *Adams* 27 Mar (**P. Whan**). High count four on the CVNP census 10 May (**D. Chasar**). One was in Akron 15 May (**R&S Harlan**), a male at Hartville in *Stark* 26 May (**B. Morrison**), and males on territory at two Mosquito Lk WA sites 30 May (**D. Hochadel**).

Pine Siskin: Very scarce, with two at LSR 11 May (**J. Pogacnik**) and one at pine-free PCWA 19 May (**S&R Harlan**).

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Further Afield

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It's official—for aficionados of nesting birds, the summer season is too danged short. Here in northern Ohio, nesting studies are productive from the last week of May through the first week or two of July. Although seemingly never as popular as migrational birding, breeding season birding has, over the years, seemed to run hot and cold. Oologists, mostly in the form of men and boys scouring the countryside hunting for eggs and nests for their personal collections, ruled the roost from the mid-1880s through the mid-1930s, when their hobby fell out of favor. Also in the mid-1930s, but perhaps on a nobler basis, Lawrence E. Hicks distilled the combined knowledge of "the five score ornithologists of the state" in his 1935 *Distribution of the Breeding Birds of Ohio* (Ohio Biol. Surv. Bull. No. 32, 6(3):125-190). Many birders would conduct local nesting studies in the interim, but the next intensive statewide effort wasn't attempted until Ohio's breeding bird atlas project began collecting data in 1982, continuing through 1987. In all, some 500 volunteers provided 30,000 hours of data collection for this cause. It doesn't seem conceivable that 21 years have passed since data collection began, but such is the case. After six years of atlassing efforts, nesting season studies understandably tapered off somewhat through the 1990s. But I sense a renaissance of sorts today, with more and more birders picking up the nesting season torch. This is very good news for me, a dedicated summer birder. I usually don't need much of an excuse to go birding in the summer months, but this year, I came up with two.

It is a matter of fact that some areas are birded much more intensively than others. No news flash here. But as a compiler of birding records, anecdotes, and other miscellaneous detritus, this has been especially apparent to me. Back in the early 1990s, I was working on a project that studied published Ohio rare bird records. During the early portions of the project, I kept track of which of Ohio's 88 counties were represented by these records, and I was, for some reason, particularly interested in which county seemed to produce the fewest records of rare birds. I found out. To this day, virtually no bird reports of any kind emerge from this particular county. Not even one Christmas Bird Count circle overlaps its borders. It is clearly a very seldom-birded area. With that kind of history, I knew I needed to go there and sample it for myself.

But it wouldn't be any fun to just announce the county in question. Rather, I thought it might be more interesting to offer this short list of facts regarding our mystery county, and let you ponder the possibilities:

- It is located in southeast central Ohio.
- Its population, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, stands at 15,180 (down from 28,351 in 1850, 27,031 in 1900, and 15,362 in 1950).
- It ranks as the fourth least-populated county in Ohio.

- Of its 292,459 acres, 220,288 are wooded and 798 are urban.
- It has zero TV stations, zero radio stations, and its zero daily newspapers boast a circulation of zero.
- It has seven registered physicians. Its zero hospitals contain zero beds.
- It has zero Interstate miles, zero Turnpike miles, and zero U.S. Highway miles.
- According to a glossy tourist brochure we picked up, a local feed store carries "a full line of Purina Chows."
- Its county seat, Woodsfield (population 2,598), supports the only McDonald's restaurant in the county. This actually one-ups Vinton Co., which still has high hopes for its first.
- The major employer in the county is the Monroe County government.
- Established in 1813, it was named after then-U.S. Secretary of State James Monroe, even before he became our fifth President.

Is it Monroe County? Why, yes it is. Situated along the Ohio River in one of Ohio's several "Little Switzerlands," it is actually very pretty, and very dominated by a landscape of heavily wooded hillsides cut by numerous small streams. Unlike in many areas, where birders need to seek out a good patch of habitat, my wife Sandy and I found good habitat virtually everywhere we looked as we crisscrossed the county this past June 1. If one can view monotony as a good thing, it was that; out of 86 likely nesting species we found, fully 51 seemed numerous enough to be thought of as Common, due in large part to the abundance of certain habitats. For comparison, *The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas* (Peterjohn and Rice 1991) reported from 92 to 94 Confirmed or Probable nesting species in the county, while Hicks in 1935 tallied 95 nesting species. Not much changes in Monroe County, it seems.

Hayfields predominated on the cleared ridge tops, but for some reason these did not seem to attract many grassland birds, and we did poorly with this group. Strip-mines have barely made an impact in Monroe County, further diminishing opportunities for grassland specialists. Meadowlarks were aplenty, however, and we were quite surprised by several vesper sparrows in an Ohio habitat unusual in our experience—a gravel lane cutting through an ungrazed pasture with woody margins. Perhaps this habitat is more reminiscent of those favored by Vespers when the species was much more numerous and widespread in the state, back in Hicks's day.

Obviously, woodland species were the most prevalent, although edge species were also quite numerous. I doubt I have ever found more orchard orioles in a single day in Ohio, as we tallied no fewer than 30. One particular tract of wooded habitat was especially appealing—119-acre Piatt Park, administered by the Monroe County Park District. Piatt Park features a deep hemlock ravine with a stream, caves, trails, and even a boardwalk. Although this park is very reminiscent of portions of Hocking County, we were surprised that the only so-called "northern nesters" we could turn up were northern parulas; based on the quality of the habitat, I would have guessed that at least blue-headed vireos and black-throated green warblers would also have been present. The *Breeding Bird Atlas* also failed to find

these species there. This lack of "northern nesters" makes little sense to me, with the habitat apparently so well suited to them; I suspect they must make a home here, at least in some years. Perhaps someone should propose this site for a blue-headed vireo introduction project. Then again, perhaps not.

Several spots along the Ohio River also looked very productive. Two large embayments (clearly depicted in your *DeLorme Atlas and Gazetteer*) must get their share of good birds in migration when water levels fluctuate. On June 1, with water levels high, we found all of Ohio's nesting swallow species, plus an unexpected adult bald eagle.

Did I mention Bewick's wren, Swainson's warbler, or Bachman's sparrow? Well, we had none of those, although in a county as underbirded as Monroe, who knows what surprises may remain. Monroe County may be a bit out of the way, but it's surely worth a look. Once you get there, just remember to report what you find!

My second goal this summer was to develop a roadside nesting season survey, patterned (extremely) loosely on the USGS's North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). Very briefly, a BBS route consists of 50 precise three-minute stops along a predetermined 24.5-mile roadside route, in which all likely breeding species are tallied, individual by individual. As of 2002, Ohio hosted 68 such routes, a small fraction of the 4449 routes scattered across the U.S. and Canada. Combined, these routes provide some of the best data available for describing long-term avian population trends on a continent-wide scale. For serious birders, the BBS is a great way to channel your energies for a good cause. Actually, in 2002 only 46 of 68 Ohio routes were taken, so many more volunteers are needed. For further details on Ohio routes, contact state coordinator Scott Hull at (740) 747-2525, extension 23, or at <Scott.Hull@dnr.state.oh.us>.

It has been my privilege to run the Pittsfield BBS route (located in Lorain, Huron, and Ashland counties) for over 10 years now. While always acknowledging the importance of consistency in maintaining exact stops from year to year, and strict study guidelines, I have nonetheless found official BBS routes somewhat restrictive, and a bit too time-consuming, given that a route typically takes from four to five hours to complete.

So, after a bit of experimentation, I came up with a form of "BBS Lite," designed to taste great and be less filling—less restrictive and easier to run before work or school. In truth, this survey is intended to be more a challenge than any real gauge of population levels. Basically, it is a 10-mile roadside route with a two-hour time limit, in which one counts only the number of species, rather than the numbers of individual birds. At the very least, this would give us some idea of which areas of the state have the richest roadside species diversity. Which 10 miles of Ohio roadside can claim the most species?

Despite much grumbling from the underworked and grievously overpaid *Ohio Cardinal* marketing gurus, who are always looking for ways to cash in on a catchy acronym, I have chosen to name this survey the "Further Afield Two-Hour Extreme Avian Derby", or FATHEAD for short. Its six rules are as elegant as its name. 1) Each roadside route is plotted entirely by your choice, anywhere in the state. 2)

Each route must be exactly 10 miles in length, with no backtracking or retracing allowed. 3) Each route must be run in exactly two hours, and you must have completed the entire 10 miles at the two-hour mark. 4) You may stop anywhere you like along the route, for as long as you wish, keeping in mind the two-hour limit. This allows a more thorough sample of any particularly birdy habitats, and likewise, allows one to give only a cursory glance at sub-par habitats (such as 99% of Van Wert County, for instance). One problem I consistently run into on my Pittsfield BBS route is noise—not from traffic on the roads, but rather from the many trains that pass through the area. When one of the 50 official predetermined stops is near an active train route, the noise completely blots out any avian song, and essentially wastes the three minutes at that stop. Perhaps equally confounding, even if you don't actually see or hear a train at the moment, you can always tell they're lurking somewhere nearby, from all the tracks they've left behind. Sorry. 5) Since these are roadside routes, you may park anywhere along your route, but you may walk only a stone's throw from your vehicle. If you are unsure exactly how far you can throw a stone, you will want to practice beforehand. You may also wish to consider throwing at someone else's vehicle rather than at your own. I learned this the hard way. 6) Routes should be run from late May to early July, to avoid migrants. That's all.

During this season, I ran seven routes: in the Hinckley Metropark and northeastern Medina County area May 28 (74 species); the Overton Ponds area of Wayne County June 14 (66 sp.); the Lake Rockwell area of Portage County June 16 (61 sp.); the Chippewa Lake area of western Medina County June 21 (69 sp.); the Mohican State Park area of Ashland County June 22 (82 sp.); Riverview Road in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) in southern Cuyahoga and northern Summit counties June 24 (64 sp.); and the Oak Hill area of the southern CVNP June 29 (71 sp.). These seven routes combined for 105 species, which seems reasonable, but also leaves considerable room for improvement.

Scouting pays dividends on these routes; on my less familiar routes, I tallied fewer species. Knowing an area thoroughly helps to determine how long you may wish to stay at any given spot, waiting for a staked-out rarity to appear. Of course, a wide variety of habitats is critical, but so is birdability—heavily-traveled routes are simply much harder to bird than those with little traffic, even if there are safe places to pull off the road. Even though my Riverview Road route, which cuts through the heart of the CVNP, has plenty of pull-offs, the noise from the volume of traffic was a real problem. On weekday mornings, Riverview Road serves as a north/south commuter flume, where motorists feel somehow cheated if they are not able to take every turn on two wheels. My lower species tally on this route reflects this fact of life.

All in all, the birding was very good and generally much more relaxed than on an official BBS route, which was what I had hoped. Hinckley hosted a golden-crowned kinglet (at one of Ohio's few traditional nesting sites), plus chestnut-sided and black-throated green warblers; although I missed them on count day, two red-breasted nuthatches were also present on this route this summer. The chickadee

saga was as interesting as always on the Overton route, which crosses the boundary for both of our nesting species. Several black-cappeds were found north of town, but only Carolinas could be found south of town. An osprey nest was obvious at Lake Rockwell, and herring gulls were also potential nesters there. The rural Chippewa Lake route provided a least bittern, cliff swallow, and prothonotary warbler, all real surprises for Medina County. The 82 species found on the Mohican route may prove to be tough to top; although I feel that this particular route could come up with more than 82 species on the right day, other potential Ohio routes might have a difficult time besting that mark. Certainly a carefully planned Hocking Hills route has a chance, and perhaps so does a meticulous Oak Openings route; regardless, I don't think a better mark will come easily. Prove me wrong. Goodies at Mohican included red-breasted nuthatch (three sites), hermit thrush, magnolia and Canada warblers, and dark-eyed junco (two sites). The Riverview Road route provided plenty of traffic, plus a yellow-throated warbler in someone's front yard. At the more peaceful Oak Hill area of the CVNP, interesting finds were two alder flycatchers, two more red-breasted nuthatches, brown creeper, and my first summer Summit County record of pine warbler, again in someone's front yard. They have good front yards there.

But what about other areas—can a good marshland route be devised? Perhaps something combining Big Island WA with Killdeer Plains. How would Adams County fare? A route through the eastern half of the CVNP should theoretically outproduce the two routes I ran there this season, now that I think about it. The key is to remember that the tough species must be readily findable from the road. Combine that with a variety of habitats, and you've got yourself a contending route. Please excuse me for a moment, I must check to see if a reasonable 10-mile Hocking Hills route can be made to stretch from Clear Creek Road to the northern tip of Lake Logan. Now where's my DeLorme…

These Caspian terns graced the beach at Caesar Creek State Park in Warren County on 21 April 2003. Photo by Jay Lehman.

Molt Strategies in Adult Dowitchers: Criteria for Field Identification in Fall Migration in Ohio

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In the shorebird world, there are many clear and simple identifications that leave a birder feeling confident and well informed. There are also species groups frustrating enough to make one feel a distinct contempt for all avian life, and tempted to throw scope and binoculars into the mud in order to pursue a more unambiguous hobby—say, the field identification of teneral *Lestes* damselflies. The dowitchers form one such group.

Historically, the taxonomy of the genus *Limnodromus* has been tricky, going through a series of lumps and splits until 1950, when two distinct species were recognized: the short-billed dowitcher *L. griseus*, and the long-billed dowitcher *L. scolopaceus* (Pitelka 1950). Further complicating matters are three recognized subspecies of short-billed dowitchers. Nominate *L. g. griseus* migrates through the Atlantic coastal region, *L. g. hendersoni* is a more Midwestern breeder and migrant, and *L. g. caurinus* dwells in the Pacific coastal region. Fortunately for Ohio birders, only *hendersoni* regularly occurs in the Buckeye State. Unfortunately for Ohio birders, this is the subspecies of short-billed dowitcher most closely resembling the long-billed dowitcher in appearance. Thus, identification of Ohio dowitchers by plumage alone is seldom a matter of dull routine, in the field or even in the hand.

The various plumages of dowitchers have been treated in depth in several papers and field guides, such that despite the difficulties birders now have the resources available to separate most birds reliably. As fine as these articles are, however, important points of identification can remain confusing, even with the bird in hand. One author's "broken barring" can be another author's "wide spotting." "Dull rufous" can look all too similar to "dark salmon." The only good way to learn to identify dowitchers is to study them carefully in the field, take good notes, and establish one's own concepts compatible with the literature. One may even discover a reliable field mark no one has ever noticed or adequately treated heretofore. One emerging field mark in dowitcher identification is state of molt during the autumn migration.

It has been asserted in several recent publications that long-billed dowitchers undergo a complete molt during migration, while short-billed dowitchers, like most other shorebirds, do not molt until they reach the wintering grounds. Birders will find this information useful, but may wonder why this distinction is untreated, or even seemingly contradicted, in many respected sources on the genus *Limnodromus*. This paper will examine molt in Ohio dowitchers more closely, and attempt to clear up some of the potential confusion in the literature. Although the

information presented here may be applicable elsewhere, much of it may be unique to Ohio and neighboring states. Readers in other regions wishing to tackle this subject should use this article as a stepping-stone for their own observations and research.

Shorebird Molt: A General Overview

Because the long-billed dowitcher's molt strategy is so unusual, even by contrast with its congener, it may be worth reviewing the fundamentals central to studying molt in any species. The importance of a knowledge of molt cycles and age classes cannot be overestimated when attempting to identify the harder groups of shorebirds. At times during fall migration, birds in juvenal, adult, and varying degrees of transitional plumages may be present side by side, making a single-species flock look surprisingly diverse. Couple this with normal variations among individuals of a given age and species, and things on the mudflat can get pretty confusing. A working knowledge of molt and aging first allows for proper identification as to age, which tremendously narrows down the possibilities for species identification. When identifying western and semipalmated sandpipers in fall, for example, the difference between adults and juveniles of the same species can be greater than the difference between different species of the same age.

Molt cycles are useful to know for the sake of identification, but are made still more fascinating by the role they play in a species' natural history, biology, and conservation. Molt is a metabolically demanding process, with increased energy requirements of 10-25%, depending on the climate (Cech et al. 2001). Thus, birds need more abundant food sources to undertake molt, which for most shorebirds means shallows and mudflats teeming with tasty invertebrates. Molt also can impair flight efficiency, as missing wing feathers compel a bird to beat its wings faster. Therefore most birds do not molt heavily during migration, as the energy requirements for sustaining migration and growing new feathers simultaneously would be far too great. There are, however, exceptions to this generalization. Recognizing that a few shorebird species do molt on migration, or use known stopover areas to complete molt during migration, is crucial to conservation applications such as proper wetlands management. In a quickly developing and evermore crowded world, the preservation of biodiversity hinges on such delicate intricacies.

Nearly all our shorebirds are medium- to long-distance migrants, breeding as far north as the high Arctic and wintering as far away as the limits of ice-free land in the southern hemisphere. They have evolved a rigorous schedule of breeding, migrating, and molting, each species' agenda varying with the particulars of its ranges, prey selection, and reproductive requirements. A typical schedule of plumage progression among shorebirds looks like this:

- Late spring to summer: Chick hatches, emerges from the egg with a covering of natal down. This briefly-held plumage is worn only close to the nest.
- Summer: The first full set of feathers, the juvenal plumage, comes in. Because of the stress of growing them all at once, juvenal feathers are smaller and weaker than adult feathers (Hayman et al. 1993). Scapulars smaller and more rounded than those of older birds will reveal neat rows of wing coverts that on adult birds would often be obscured by longer, looser scapulars. In many species juvenal upperparts feathers are edged in bright buff, white, or rufous, creating a distinct scaly appearance. Juvenal plumage in nearly all species is worn during migration and not replaced until birds reach the wintering grounds. The exceptions in our region are purple sandpiper and dunlin, which undergo prebasic molt close to the breeding grounds (Pittaway 1999). Among migrants, the fresh, uniform, and bright appearance of juveniles sets them apart from adults.
- Fall: Upon arrival on the wintering grounds, juveniles of most species undergo prebasic molt, usually partial and involving only head and body feathers and a varying amount of scapulars and coverts. First-winter birds can often be identified as such by retained flight feathers, tertials, or coverts.
- Spring: First-winter birds molt into first-summer plumage. For many species this is the most poorly understood and variable plumage, ranging in overall appearance from essentially basic to nearly full alternate. This molt is usually partial, so by late summer flight feathers are a whole year old, and thus extremely worn, faded, and tattered. Often, birds stay on or near the wintering grounds during their first summer, while others may migrate like adults to the north.
- Fall: All birds, immature and adult, undergo a complete molt into definitive (adult) basic plumage. This molt, as stated earlier, is usually completed on the wintering grounds, although adults of many species, such as semipalmated, western, white-rumped, and stilt sandpipers display conspicuous contour feather molt during migration, with fresh gray scapulars and coverts showing up strongly against worn and faded alternate feathers. Aside from long-billed dowitchers, discussed in more detail later, only avocets, stilts, and Wilson's and red-necked phalaropes molt flight feathers on migration (Paulson, pers. comm.). Greater yellowlegs may initiate flight feather molt before migration and suspend it until after migration is completed (Cech et al. 2001), and as stated, dunlin and purple sandpiper complete prebasic molt before migration (Pittaway 1999). Otherwise, flight feather molt in shorebirds occurs on or near the wintering grounds.
- Spring: Birds acquire alternate (breeding) plumage through a partial molt, completed by the time a bird reaches the breeding grounds. Although there are fewer plumage types to grapple with in spring, there is no lack of variation. On a trip to Homer, Alaska this May, the author noticed that the vast majority of dunlins present were in full alternate plumage, while a larger percentage of western sandpipers still had basic feathers remaining and alternate feathers not fully grown in.

As stated, the above molt schedule is typical, and there are certainly other exceptions besides the ones noted above. Also, individual variation should never be neglected. With the basic principles of shorebird molt in mind, we can return to the study of dowitchers and their unique molt strategies.

Evidence for Long-billed Dowitcher Staging and Molting in Ohio

In both species of dowitchers, as in many other shorebirds, southbound adults migrate well before the juveniles. Short-billed dowitcher adults arrive in Ohio in late June through early July, with numbers peaking in mid- to late July and tapering off by mid-August, when the first juvenile short-bills arrive (Peterjohn 2001). Juveniles peak in mid- to late September, and nearly all are gone by early October. Short-billed dowitchers are most numerous in the marshes of northwestern Ohio, with numbers occasionally exceeding 1000, and are common but less abundant elsewhere in Ohio (Peterjohn 2001).

The long-billed dowitcher is a later autumn migrant and although often numerous in Lucas and Ottawa counties of northwestern Ohio, it can be difficult to find elsewhere in the state. Adults appear by late July, peak by the end of August, and may stay in numbers through September and October. Juvenile long-billed dowitchers do not reach the state until September, peak during October, and remain through November (Peterjohn 2001).

The fall migration of long-billed dowitchers brings us to the more interesting characteristics of the species and to the heart of this article. Long-billed dowitchers are unique among North American shorebirds in that adults are known to migrate to staging areas during fall migration, then to undergo a complete molt before continuing their migration. As stated above, while some other shorebirds may undergo a limited amount of body molt during fall migration, they do not initiate flight-feather molt until they reach the wintering grounds.

The only published references to the staging and molting of Ohio long-billed dowitchers are Dunn (1999) and Peterjohn (2001), where the marshes of northwestern Ohio, especially Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area and adjacent Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, are described as probably the only Midwestern locale where long-billed dowitchers are known to stage to molt, and the only known staging area in the interior of North America east of the Mississippi River (Peterjohn, pers. comm.). Although Dunn did not publish until 1999, he and others were aware of the phenomenon during the 1980s and early 1990s (Peterjohn, pers. comm., R. Harlan, pers. comm.). Examination of seasonal ornithological publications treating Ohio reveals many records of long-billed dowitchers numbering in the hundreds in marshes throughout northwestern Ohio in the late 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, including 400 adults at Metzger in August 1991 (Harlan 1991), 250 on 29 August 1992 at Metzger (Harlan 1992), 300 in September 1988 along "western Lake Erie" (Peterjohn 1989), and 370 on 12 October 1983 (Peterjohn 1984). These September and October flocks may contain many basic or transitional adults, but 365 birds present at Ottawa on 4 November 1990 (McKinney & Thomas 1990) and 125 birds at Metzger on 10 November 1990 (Kemp 1990) were assuredly mostly juveniles.

The staging of birds at Metzger Marsh continued until 1996, after which a newly constructed dike eliminated suitable shorebird habitat (Dunn 1999, Harlan, pers. comm., Peterjohn, pers. comm.). Whether the hundreds of birds that used the habitat at Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area have relocated to other areas in northwest Ohio is unknown, but large numbers still occur at adjacent Ottawa National

Wildlife Refuge and at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area nearby in southern Michigan, as well as smaller numbers along the Toussaint River (M. Bolton, pers. comm.). Interestingly, the largest flocks of birds at these locations since the flooding of Metzger Marsh have been observed from mid-September through October, with few records from August (Bolton, unpubl. data). If they are adults, then certainly many of them have molted into basic plumage; but if they are juveniles, then perhaps the staging of adult dowitchers in Ohio was a short-lived phenomenon and the adults that staged at Metzger were unable to relocate.

Further evidence of long-billed dowitchers molting in northwestern Ohio is available upon examination of specimens at The Ohio State University. The author examined skins of 13 adult long-billed dowitchers and nine adult short-billed dowitchers, all collected in Ohio. Of the 13 adult long-bills, 10 were collected in the first half of August in Sandusky, Ottawa, or Lucas counties. Of these 10 August dowitchers, two were in full, worn alternate plumage and the rest were in varying degrees of body and wing molt. It is evident from these specimens that body molt starts on the crown and face and continues throughout the nape, throat, mantle, scapulars and coverts. Thus, the heads of the birds are completely gray, the upperparts are usually patchy gray and dark brown (the result of a mixture of alternate and basic feathers) and the breast and belly are still deep pinkish-red. More importantly, two of these August birds had missing or growing primaries. Of the remaining three adult long-bills, two were from mid-October and were in complete basic plumage. The last bird was from early September and was in nearly complete basic plumage except for a few alternate rufous feathers on the sides of the breast and one alternate scapular. This sample indicates that long-billed dowitchers in Ohio may initiate body and wing molt in August, molt that continues through September and is largely complete by October.

Conversely, the nine adult short-billed dowitchers examined, dating from late July and early August, showed no molt, except for one bird that showed whitish feathers coming in on the belly. Other birds showed whitish areas on the breast and belly, but these areas appeared to be the result of wear or damage to the specimen, rather than molt. Also, many birds had extensively basic lesser and median coverts, as well as smaller amounts of basic greater coverts and scapulars. Due to the large amount of wear on these feathers, the author, as well as other researchers (C. Putnam, pers. comm.) feel that these are basic feathers from the previous year's molt that were never replaced in spring by the prealternate molt. These old basic feathers are often extremely tattered as well as very pointed due to the pattern of wear, and will be replaced by new basic feathers later in the year, presumably on the wintering grounds. It should be noted that some of the more protected coverts, especially the lesser coverts, experience less wear and thus can be very similar to fresh basic feathers. This can be confusing even with a bird in the hand, so it is a potential pitfall in the field. Those who find short-billed dowitchers with extensively gray coverts must examine the bird very carefully to try to determine if these coverts are, indeed, from the previous year's molt.

Discussion of Dowitchers in Ohio

It is well established that long-billed dowitchers have staged and molted in Ohio and hopefully continue to do so, but that does not mean that the issue is free of confusion or completely resolved. For example, do long-billed dowitchers stop in one particular location to initiate, undergo, and complete their molt, or do they initiate molt in one location and complete it throughout the rest of their migration? Dunn (1999 and pers. comm.) suggests that birds require a long-term stopover area to initiate and complete molt, based on observations that birds occurring in less established habitats for shorter periods of time are in largely alternate plumage and certainly have not yet begun flight-feather molt. Supporting this theory is the fact that most long-bills passing through Ontario, where there is apparently little suitable staging habitat, are not in wing or heavy body molt and most likely fly to other staging areas, such as in Ohio or the Atlantic coast, to undergo molt before traveling to the wintering grounds (Pittaway, pers. comm.). Some long-bills in passage through Ontario are, however, in heavy body and wing molt (Pittaway 1999); these are presumably birds that find enough food and habitat to stay for extended periods (Pittaway, pers. comm.). However, one cannot be absolutely certain until a large-scale study is done with a large group of staging long-billed dowitchers to determine how much turnover there is in a flock over a given period of time. If there is a large amount of turnover, then long-bills may indeed be able to migrate actively while molting (an even more unusual phenomenon) but if the membership of the flock is constant, then presumably the birds require a long-term stopover site to complete the molt before moving on. If this is the case—and so far it appears to be—then the long-bills that formerly staged at Metzger would be forced either to find a nearby staging area (such as Ottawa NWR or Pte. Mouillee) or overfly the state entirely. The extent to which the conversion of Metzger Marsh to a flooded diked impoundment has affected the overall populations of long-billed dowitchers is unknown, but in any case the staging of long-billed dowitchers is an unusual feature of Ohio's biodiversity that should be protected for its unique status in the Midwest as a resource for these birds.

Observers in other parts of Ohio, away from the traditional staging grounds, may be able to contribute valuable information about this phenomenon as well. If observers note and report the state of molt of every dowitcher they see, then we should have a clearer picture of exactly what is happening. If all long-billed dowitchers seen in short-term situations away from northwest Ohio are in full alternate or basic plumage, than it can be assumed that the birds require a long-term, dependable stopover site to molt. It would seem counterproductive for a bird that can't migrate with missing flight feathers to begin molting primaries or large patches of body feathers on a mudflat that could quickly dry up or flood (Dunn 1999). If, however, long-bills are seen away from northwestern Ohio with missing flight feathers, than perhaps they are able to molt these during active migration. This is unlikely, but possible. Body molt should be noted as well, as birds in extensive body molt are usually molting flight feathers simultaneously (Pittaway, pers. comm.), although flight-feather molt has been noted before body molt has

commenced (Takekawa and Warnock 2000). Flight-feather molt is easily seen when birds take flight and gaps in the wings are visible (Dunn, pers. comm.). Finally, it would be helpful if birders in nearby Midwestern states could be aware of all of the above considerations.

Dowitchers Outside Ohio

In the United States outside of Ohio, long-billed dowitcher staging has been noted, among other places, in Idaho (Paulson 1993), Montana (Dunn 1999), Nevada, Utah, Kansas, and North Dakota (Takekawa and Warnock 2000), southern California (Dunn, pers. comm.), Delaware (Dunn 1999) and elsewhere on the east coast (M. O'Brien, pers. comm.). Paulson also noted many long-billed dowitchers in extensive wing molt from Washington and Oregon, including wing molt in a large number of specimens (pers. comm.). However, wing molt in the Pacific Northwest, California, the east coast, or the southern states may not necessarily carry the same implications as it would in the Midwest, as dowitchers are known to winter in all of those regions. Wing and body molt, for example, can be seen in both species in the mid-Atlantic states in late August (O'Brien, pers. comm.). To complicate things further, first-summer birds are more prevalent in areas on or near the wintering grounds, and these birds often begin flight-feather molt earlier (O'Brien, pers. comm.).

Ignoring areas on or near the wintering range of either species makes things far less complicated, but there are still intricacies in the timing and location of dowitcher migrations throughout the interior of the United States that are unknown to this author, and consequently this paper will not attempt to generalize. However, forthcoming papers by University of Montana graduate student Caleb Putnam should help by applying concrete evidence to questions still ridden with speculation. Putnam examined hundreds of fall adult dowitcher specimens from the interior of the North America, finding long-billed dowitchers commonly in wing molt, while finding no evidence of wing molt in short-billed dowitchers (Putnam, pers. comm.). It would be tremendously helpful if such an exhaustive specimen review could be followed by an equally thorough banding study of migrating birds.

Sorting Out the Literature

So, the reader may be saying, long-billed dowitchers are known to molt on migration and short-bills don't, then what's all the fuss? Let us consider the following quotations from a series of well-known sources. Each is presented respectfully, and the intention is not to point out any error made by the author or authors, but to accurately portray the ongoing debate as well as show how confusion can arise simply from the structure of a sentence. Each quotation is followed by commentary in an attempt to sort out the information.

1) "…*scolopaceus* [long-billed dowitcher] often retains its breeding plumage longer than either *griseus* or *hendersoni*. Many, if not most, long-bills reaching the Atlantic coast in mid-August are still in this plumage; they are easily separated from short-bills, which by this time are decidedly gray. Replacement of the head

feathers apparently takes place early in *scolopaceus*' postnuptial molt. The result is that adult long-bills in late August take on a very *gray-faced*, red-bellied appearance, which is distinctive" (Jehl 1963).

This statement is especially important because information in several subsequent papers is based largely upon Jehl's extensive studies of dowitchers in New Jersey. Kept in the appropriate context, his statement is not necessarily definitive, as it applies only to dowitchers on the East coast. The short-billed dowitcher is known to winter on the East coast, and it arrives there much earlier than long-billed does, so it would make sense that it would start its molt earlier. The staging and molting in northwestern Ohio is not a recent phenomenon; the specimens at Ohio State University (see above) were collected between 1936 and 1972, with several collected in the late 1950s, around the time Jehl was conducting his studies. Therefore, the fully alternate long-billed dowitchers Jehl observed must have overflown Ohio and other locales directly to New Jersey. Perhaps the birds that stage and molt in Ohio follow a different migration route to more southerly wintering grounds, rather than flying to the mid-Atlantic states in basic plumage. Only a large-scale banding or radio-telemetry study could determine this.

2) "By mid-August many Long-billed Dowitchers are in moult, being a mixture of red, gray and black…Moult in Longbills is later than in Shortbills…Yet the head and neck can be moulted rather early…Tertials and a few scapulars appear to be the last breeding feathers retained by Longbills.

"Late in summer, beginning in mid-July, [adult short-billed dowitchers] can begin to moult. Body feathers are lost in a different sequence than on Longbills; scapulars and underpart feathers are molted in an uneven pattern. Therefore, many individuals begin to lose their solidly colored underparts early-on" (Jaramillo et al. 1991).

This statement was based largely on Jehl (1963). Away from the wintering grounds, in the interior of North America (the above article was intended to describe the situation in southern Ontario), short-bills do not molt earlier than long-bills, and probably do not undergo such extensive body molt. Pittaway later retracted the above statement, saying, "During the mid-1990s I began to realize that southbound *hendersoni* were not molting in Ontario" (pers. comm.).

3) "In Long-billed Dowitcher, the post-breeding moult begins in early July. Moult in Long-billeds tends to begin with the neck and head, a few scapulars and the rear flanks. They retain the reddish underparts for some time after the moult has started, but a dowitcher displaying a white rear flank patch could well be a Long-billed in the first states of moult. In *hendersoni*, and probably also *griseus*, the underparts and scapulars are often the first feathers to be moulted, so birds appear patchy below from late July onwards" (Henshaw and Jaramillo 1995).

There is not necessarily anything contradictory about this statement, but observers should be aware that gray areas on the upperparts of short-billed dowitchers may be the result of retained basic feathers from the previous year's molt, rather than newly-molted feathers (see above).

4) "The molt from alternate to basic begins in late July and is complete by early September for Short-bills; Long-bill molt begins in early to mid-August and is usually complete by mid-September" (Wilds & Newlon 1983).

This statement is not incorrect if applied only to regions near the wintering grounds of short-billed dowitcher (i.e., the Atlantic coast). In Ohio, numbers of adult short-bills have passed their peak by late July and most are gone by mid-August, so the statement is irrelevant anyway. In this case, it is crucial to consider migration timing by including dates. Without dates, the quote could be misinterpreted as a blanket statement that short-bills molt before long-bills; in that case, it would imply for Midwestern birders that short-bills molt on migration. Had the authors mentioned location as well, it would have avoided potential confusion.

5) "Male [short-billed dowitchers] start molting head, face, and neck about 16 Jul on breeding grounds (females already departed). Adults in heavy body molt when they pass through Magdalen Is., Quebec, in mid-Jul and Aug…and in same time period along mid-Atlantic coast…Molt of body-feathering increases in intensity and molt of remiges begins as soon as birds leave breeding grounds. Along Atlantic coast, adult females may replace all but outer 3 primaries by 5-10 Aug, males all but the outermost primaries by 18 Aug. Primary molt typically completed 5-15 Sep. Some adults finish body molt by mid-Aug in New Jersey, but mid-Sep usual" (Jehl et al. 2001).

This quotation is from the *Birds of North America* account for short-billed dowitcher. The statement "molt of remiges begins as soon as birds leave breeding grounds" certainly does not apply to the *hendersoni* subspecies. To the extent it is accurate, perhaps it applies uniquely to the Atlantic *griseus* subspecies, based on the close proximity of its breeding grounds to its wintering grounds. As for adult females replacing primaries on the mid-Atlantic coast by the first half of August, these are most likely birds that winter in the region, but again, a banding study would prove valuable in establishing this.

6) "Adult [short-billed dowitchers] begin body molt soon after arrival [in the Pacific Northwest], underparts showing more and more white and then upperparts more and more gray. In northern part of region body molt essentially complete in some individuals by mid August" (Paulson 1993).

This statement applies only to *caurinus*, perhaps birds that winter in or near the Pacific Northwest region.

7) "Adult Long-billed may molt more rapidly than Short-billed in fall and typically look gray-headed (more so than Short-billed) while passing through [Pacific] Northwest. Molt into nonbreeding plumage begins in late August, and by late September many adult Long-billed are in virtually complete nonbreeding plumage" (Paulson 1993).

Paulson has rethought the statement (pers. comm.) that "adult Long-billed may molt more rapidly than Short-billed in fall," stating that migration timing may give the appearance of a different molt strategy. In other words, long-bills stick around in the Pacific Northwest to molt, whereas short-bills pass through too quickly for

observers to notice any molt. The same is true in Ohio: long-bills stay to molt during their migration, while short-bills do not molt until they reach the wintering grounds. How rapidly a molt is completed or even how early (see quotation number four above) is in fact irrelevant locally.

Clearly, the literature on dowitchers can be very confusing. It is important to pay close attention to the specific dates mentioned, and if possible, try to determine exactly to which region the author is referring. An author from the Atlantic coast, for example, may seem to generalize about all short-billed dowitchers, but may be influenced entirely by observations of local populations.

Elsewhere in the literature, little has been published on this subject. A recent study of dowitchers staging in Saskatchewan (Alexander & Gratto-Trevor 1997) mentioned primary molt in both species, but many, including one of the authors, have apparently questioned the ultimate validity of the species identifications during the study (B. Whan, pers. comm.). A DNA analysis of blood samples taken during the study is needed.

Conclusions, Final Questions, and Cautions

There is ample evidence to support the conclusion that any fall adult dowitcher undergoing heavy body molt and any wing molt in Ohio, and likely the rest of interior North America north of the wintering grounds, is certainly a long-billed dowitcher. However, it is also clear that not all long-billed dowitchers passing through Ohio are in molt, so a dowitcher in fully alternate plumage could be either species. The appearance of body molt should be approached with caution for reasons discussed above. There is little evidence for *hendersoni* short-bills undergoing more than a sparse amount of body molt, but several references have noted that *griseus* and *caurinus* may be in heavier body molt on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, respectively (see "Sorting Out the Literature"). Whether there is any subspecific difference in short-billed dowitcher molt strategy, or whether all differences are based on migration timing, needs further study. Birders on either coast cannot necessarily use molt alone as an identification criterion, as they may be too close to the wintering grounds, where either species may be molting. Timing of the molt, however, may prove useful (O'Brien, pers. comm.) in such cases.

The discussion above pertains to adult birds only. Dozens of Ohio specimens of juvenile long-billed dowitchers at the Ohio State University were in heavy body molt. Therefore, it is necessary first to identify a bird as to age. Juvenal-plumaged dowitchers are decidedly easier to identify, so any study of molt is incidental for them. Although quite unlikely in Ohio, first-summer birds molting into basic plumage could present further confusion.

Birders in Ohio and nearby states should more aware of the state of molt of dowitchers in passage, and take notes for publication in local journals. Birders should also pay close attention to habitats that may be used as staging grounds. Ohio has already lost one prime location; more losses in the future could be detrimental to the species.

Finally, even once we learn the particulars of molt in long-billed dowitchers and in all subspecies of short-billed dowitcher, we still have not answered the most interesting question of all: "Why?" Why do long-bills stage to molt on migration? What is it about the biology of the species that selects for this unique behavior? Does it have to do with prey selection, migration distance, or other factors? What percentage of the population stops during migration to molt, and what percentage flies directly to the wintering grounds? Are these different populations isolated on the breeding grounds? Have we overlooked other species that employ the same strategy? It may take an extensive study to answer these questions. But then again, it may not. Birders have keen eyes, observational skills that can't be learned in any classroom, good optics, natural curiosity, and most importantly, spend a great deal of time in the field. Dowitcher identification may seem like a task to some birders, but if one's observations are really worth something, it can become suddenly very interesting and consequential.

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Short Note: Wintering Merlins in Cuyahoga County

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In preparation for the 2002-2003 Ohio Winter Bird Survey, I would occasionally stop at Calvary Cemetery and nearby sandpit ponds, east of Cleveland's Miles Avenue and along the border with Garfield Heights in Cuyahoga County, checking for new arrivals. As I scouted the area in December, the birds seemed not as numerous as in the past. The cemetery was not very exciting, but that was soon to change.

On 11 December 2002, while driving the perimeter as usual, I observed a falcon. Thinking it was the American kestrel I had observed on other occasions, I turned the car around for a better view. Then ahead I noticed what seemed to be another falcon. I got out to make sure I was seeing two birds, not the same one that might have moved. There they were: two merlins *Falco columbarius*, a brown female/immature and a gray male! I was not to observe two merlins at once here again until 6 January 2003, the beginning of an almost daily winter merlin survey.

On 30 December at 5:04 pm, I observed the gray bird fly from what I had identified as the pre-roost tree (PRT) to the roost tree for the night. This was a very exciting evening, but was it to be a one-time event? The answer was no. Every night the gray bird resorted to this same tree, except for evenings when the local Cooper's hawks were around hunting.

On 6 January 2003, I observed the gray merlin chasing another, a brown one. The next day I observed the gray bird in his PRT (a pine) and the brown bird in a deciduous tree in Section 85 that later became her PRT.

The gray bird, the "restroom merlin," as he came to be called because his roost tree stood beside the cemetery's brick restrooms building, was observed each night except 10 February, when Cleveland experienced a sudden, severe snowstorm that came in from Lake Erie, producing whiteout conditions with 45-mph winds. I suspect that gray bird got caught out hunting and chose an emergency roost. I did leave early that night, so he may have come in later.

The next day I drove around the cemetery and saw no merlins. I headed back to the restroom area and there on top of the utility pole just outside the cemetery was the gray bird, eating a house sparrow! I had observed the merlins eating on only two occasions. This was also the day I observed a third merlin, also a brown female/immature. Not a routine visitor, this third bird showed up at the cemetery perhaps only three times a week.

On 23 February, after a weekend away birding, I made the usual drive around, looking for the merlins. To my astonishment, the gray bird's PRT had been cut down! I couldn't believe it! I continued driving around and finally found the gray bird in a tree above the roadway south of the former PRT. After a few days, he settled in another pine.

On 4 March, I noticed a change in the merlins' behavior. Both were changing preroost trees, and the brown bird was occasionally taking flights around in the northeast corner of the cemetery. The gray bird did not go to the usual roost tree this evening, instead flying in to a big oak. While I was trying to photograph him in the tree, the brown bird flew in. The brown bird was startled by a couple of camera flashes, and flew off.

The next significant event came on 6 March. The gray bird was in the PRT and the brown bird was roosting in the east side of Section 91. After driving around looking for other merlins, I returned to find the brown bird in the gray bird's PRT. Every few minutes, she would make a bowing motion and spread her tail feathers; then the gray bird would follow with the same type of bowing movement. Every other time they engaged in this behavior, the brown bird would give five or six chirping calls. This went on for 10 or 15 minutes. Finally, the brown bird flew off to her normal PRT. Had I observed courtship display?

Lou Gardella was able to chronicle and photograph the merlins that spent the winter and early spring in Cuyahoga County's Calvary Cemetery. This one was photographed on 4 March 2003.

On 18 March, while the gray bird and the brown bird were at their now-shared PRT, I observed yet another brown merlin, distinguishable from the others seen theretofore. This brought the total to four different merlins using the cemetery this winter.

The merlins became increasingly restless, straying more and more from the patterns they had been following for so many weeks. They were jumping from one PRT to another and taking flights around the cemetery, sometimes going far out but always flying right back. Was it time to go north, or even to nest?

The evening of 20 March brought a new development. I drove into the cemetery at the usual time and did not see any merlins. After a while, I went to look for the screech-owl that had been roosting in Section 11 on the west side of the cemetery. Taking the perimeter, I found no screech-owls, though I did locate the gray merlin. I returned to the east side, and there was the brown bird at the PRT. When I went back to check on the gray bird, he flew off and disappeared. Where did he go? Returning to the PRT, I found the brown bird had gone to roost. I suspect the gray bird had also.

On 25 March, I arrived later than usual and found the gray bird at his pine PRT. It was pouring rain but he perched there as if it were sunny and warm. It had been the brown bird's habit to sit in the PRT until well after dark. Now the gray bird was staying out later. The brown bird did not show that night or any night thereafter. She had apparently gone north. The last time I observed her was on 24 March at 6:28 pm.

On 31 March the day was cold. We had partly sunny skies, snow flurries, and a temperature of 34°F. I made my way over to the Cemetery at 6:30 pm. The gray bird was in the pine PRT as usual. I sat watching him, wondering what day would be the last I would see this magnificent creature. His coloring had changed over the winter. The blue-gray of his feathers had deepened, as had the yellow-orange in his feet and legs. He was indifferent to my presence, unlike his brown counterpart who had never been quite at ease with people walking around under the PRT. He had allowed me to photograph him in his roost tree from a very short distance. He had given me a winter of excitement. While others were huddled in their houses, we were outside. I sometimes wondered why the merlins would sit in the top of the trees on the coldest, windiest days, when they could have easily flown to the roost tree out of the wind. I could tell which side of the tree he would use just by observing the flag. He always chose the side of the trunk away from the wind. At 7:00 pm the gray bird flew to the roost tree, about seven feet up in the Scotch pine he had used since I first laid eyes on him. After a few minutes, I walked closer to watch him, knowing my days with him were numbered. I knew it was going to happen sooner or later…the end of the winter merlin survey was close.

The first day of April brought south winds. He too must have gone north.

Fourteen Years of Shorebird Surveys near Western Lake Erie by Michael R. Bolton and John Szanto

Here we present small but fascinating excerpts from a massive database of shorebird observations from northwestern Ohio and southeastern Michigan. This trove, now including over 700,000 sightings, has been accumulated continuously since 1989 in weekly field trips by John Szanto of Toledo and Michael Bolton of Columbus, and has never been published, in whole or in part. It comprises seasonal reports sent to the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences under the protocols of the International Shorebird Survey, and shared locally with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Ohio Division of Wildlife. Long-time field partners who self-effacingly describe themselves as birdwatchers and their method as opportunistic rather than scientific, Bolton and Szanto nevertheless have turned countless hours of dedicated field experience into a record of the area's shorebirds unmatched for breadth and continuity.

Areas covered within the region varied each season, though the most productive shorebird spots— Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (ONWR), Pointe Mouillée State Game Area in Michigan, and Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area in Ohio (at least until the latter's "improvement" in 1995) were most often covered. Bolton and Szanto are quick to say their censuses lack scientific rigor, but their valuable studies have been dedicated and prolonged in ways only enthusiastic amateurs can sustain. Rather than devoting reproducible coverage to the same locales, habitat types, or species, they are guided above all by their enthusiasm for shorebirds, whenever or wherever they may occur. Season by season they simply go where the birds are, or might be, identify them as to species, and count their numbers, including information on water levels, winds, disturbances, etc. for each location.

Untold hours spent afield over so many years lend special authority to their impressions. Asked about the most obvious decreases among species during the span of their work, they unhesitatingly cite that of the red knot, and mention that of sanderlings next. They regret the shortage of appropriate habitat for foraging migrant shorebirds in the region, especially in spring. Too often, they say, wildlife managers discipline the land into "teacups" of water, rather than "saucers"— shallower basins with gradients in depth and extensive muddy margins from which shorebirds and other organisms can benefit.

Asked about the best shorebird spot in the region, they nominate Pte. Mouillée, where actions taken by land managers to benefit shorebirds seem to have had a noticeable impact. This spot, it seems to them, may also be especially attractive to migrating shorebirds because of its location along a shoreline reassuringly parallel to their path. Similar factors may account for the huge numbers of migrant raptors following the same route in fall, relative to much smaller numbers seen only a few miles away in Ohio.

In their view, the most important change in observed shorebird numbers during the past decade has not arisen from any human intervention, but is part of a natural cycle. Lake Erie levels have fallen to near average in recent years, with positive effects on shorebird numbers, exposing foraging habitats at those few areas still open to natural fluctuations in water levels. During the past few years, numbers of birds counted in the undiked (hence susceptible to Lake levels) portions of the Clear Creek basin in ONWR have rivaled those at Pte. Mouillée in Michigan, and dwarfed those from other Ohio locations. Wind-driven fluctuations in water levels at remnant natural shorelines in the Western Basin are analogous to those of tides at coastal shorebird foraging sites, alternately recharging and exposing aquatic invertebrate prey.

Not included in their tables are sightings the pair has made during less formal forays, such as the sharp-tailed sandpiper observed on 2 December 1990 at Metzger Marsh, when bone-chilling winds were whipping snow by in horizontal streaks. Szanto and Bolton searched frantically for other birders nearby to witness this, Ohio's second record of the species, but everyone else was apparently warm at home on such a day. Another inhospitable December day found them staring in disbelief at a piping plover walking the ice of the frozen bay at Maumee Bay State Park.

Asked what lessons can be passed along from a decade and a half of observations, Bolton and Szanto urge birders to get out in the field as much as possible, and to leave roadside parking lots and viewing platforms to explore remoter and rougher habitats. Shorebirds, even huge numbers of them, can easily be overlooked, concealed from the casual eye in unexpected settings. Instead of regarding each species as a checkmark on a list, they urge us to go further, and report the birds' actual presence by getting an accurate count. Too many shorebirders, they say, are swept up by spring fever in May, but go afield less often in the heat of July and August, when favorable winds, lower Lake levels, a wider variety of species, and much increased overall numbers make shorebirding ultimately more satisfying. Confidence in identifying these birds comes only from repeated observations, which in turn come from taking every advantage of the chance to leave home to walk their haunts. What else in the way of advice would you expect from two shorebird addicts?

Limited space prevents us from presenting more than a tiny fraction of the hundreds of pages of these data made available to the *Cardinal*. We have chosen here tables of shorebirds counted by month (Table 1) and year (Table 2) over the entire history of surveys at all Western Basin sites, and a table of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge survey results by year (Table 3), largely because ONWR results represent over 62% of all shorebirds sighted during the period. Censuses were not regularly conducted anywhere in January and February, and these months are therefore not included.

We invite readers to study these data on their own, but cannot resist calling attention to a few trends of apparent interest:

- Overall numbers of birds seen have increased markedly in recent years, concurrent with more normal Lake Erie water levels, even though only a few sites are directly influenced by Lake levels, and despite the loss of Metzger Marsh WA as such. For example, note that ONWR sites averaged 8122 birds yearly during the first seven years of surveys and 50,787 yearly during the second seven years, when lower Lake water regularly exposed mudflats along Crane Creek and ONWR managers increasingly came to value the habitat requirements of shorebirds and other non-game species.
- Sightings have also increased significantly among commoner species better able to benefit from grasslands, drier margins of mudflats, and even some agricultural settings: American golden-plover, black-bellied plover, killdeer, and pectoral sandpiper.
- Large yearly swings in total numbers likely reflect short-term habitat availability. For example, when dike construction during 1994 at the Turtle Creek unit of Magee Marsh WA incidentally produced mudflats there, 64%+ of that year's surveyed shorebird numbers came from that site alone.

–Ed.

Table 1. 1989-2002 western Lake Erie shorebird survey results (by month) from Michael R. Bolton and John Szanto.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Black-bellied Plover	0	0	0	136	2,408	128	19	435	1,092	1,888	1,113	0	7,219
American Golden-Plover	0	0	0	2,102	2,828	2	6	102	389	221	67	0	5,717
Snowy Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Semipalmated Plover	0	0	0	139	11,702	405	212	3,533	1,999	128	0	0	18,118
Killdeer	0	0	80	1,372	2,240	863	14,994	13,305	7,936	3,005	455	1	44,251
American Avocet	0	0	0	27	14	0	4	16	14	3	2	0	80
Greater Yellowlegs	0	0	0	2,681	879	3	600	1,730	1,105	668	89	0	7,755
Lesser Yellowlegs	0	0	1	3,432	5,958	446	17,075	24,062	6,375	2,067	45	0	59,461
Solitary Sandpiper	0	0	0	13	247	32	73	61	3	3	0	0	432
Willet	0	0	0	7	45	4	4	17	5	5	4	0	91
Spotted Sandpiper	0	0	0	32	627	117	727	521	121	5	1	0	2,151
Upland Sandpiper	0	0	0	3	5	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	13
Whimbrel	0	0	0	0	328	2	1	0	7	0	0	0	338
Hudsonian Godwit	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	14	9	30	7	0	64
Marbled Godwit	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	16	9	5	1	0	38
Ruddy Turnstone	0	0	0	0	917	421	18	108	13	3	0	0	1,480
Red Knot	0	0	0	75	70	7	3	42	95	10	0	0	302
Sanderling	0	0	0	0	33	288	136	94	498	1,087	58	0	2,194
Semipalmated Sandpiper	0	0	0	1	9,751	3,239	14,024	29,113	5,073	112	0	0	61,313
Western Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	15	0	9	20	10	17	0	0	71
Least Sandpiper	0	0	0	144	11,976	238	10,635	5,911	957	312	8	0	30,181
White-rumped Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	162	183	4	47	48	44	7	0	495
Baird's Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	4	0	8	78	159	34	3	0	286
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	0	160	22,748	1,283	2	2,166	20,403	7,114	4,511	127	0	58,514
Dunlin	0	0	3	25,263	190,811	2,737	47	31	286	34,514	51,090	6	304,788
Curlew Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	0	8
Stilt Sandpiper	0	0	0	1	15	8	568	2,366	998	78	0	0	4,034
Unidentified *Calidris*	0	0	0	0	247	0	500	1,405	40	0	0	0	2,192
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	32	1	0	0	50
Ruff	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
Short-billed Dowitcher	0	0	0	39	3,097	91	18,843	11,443	2,831	109	0	0	36,453
Long-billed Dowitcher	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	196	684	2,741	572	0	4,201
Unidentified *Limnodromus*	0	0	0	3	4	4	0	0	882	625	100	0	1,618
Wilson's Snipe	0	0	13	852	8	0	14	56	72	227	50	2	1,294
American Woodcock	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Wilson's Phalarope	0	0	0	0	19	1	29	233	55	14	0	0	351
Red-necked Phalarope	0	0	0	0	19	0	2	76	65	1	0	0	163
Red Phalarope	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	0	0	0	0	10
Total Individuals	0	0	257	59,074	245,723	9,230	80,733	115,468	38,977	52,468	53,799	9	655,738
Total Species	0	0	5	21	32	26	30	34	31	29	18	3	36

Table 2. 1989-2002 western Lake Erie shorebird survey results (by year) from Michael R. Bolton and John Szanto.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total
Black-bellied Plover	1,030	39	518	172	691	112	125	141	30	297	781	669	2,224	390	7,219
American Golden-Plover	372	11	79	0	326	168	107	1	0	70	1,868	2,172	533	10	5,717
Snowy Plover	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Semipalmated Plover	1,880	397	3,806	128	1,878	1,351	383	230	131	353	171	3,267	2,614	1,529	18,118
Killdeer	2,440	1,422	2,484	868	1,231	2,036	675	955	1,014	691	10,332	2,253	11,999	5,851	44,251
American Avocet	26	1	16	0	4	8	2	2	3	2	6	5	5	0	80
Greater Yellowlegs	485	312	839	241	323	464	455	251	340	510	614	1,128	1,102	691	7,755
Lesser Yellowlegs	11,441	2,506	9,507	610	863	4,302	824	1,231	2,813	1,494	5,173	4,770	9,041	4,886	59,461
Solitary Sandpiper	51	25	57	7	65	16	8	8	12	7	9	63	96	8	432
Willet	12	6	35	0	2	7	5	5	0	0	9	9	1	0	91
Spotted Sandpiper	335	258	322	65	178	144	47	125	79	37	100	119	223	119	2,151
Upland Sandpiper	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	2	13
Whimbrel	328	0	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	338
Hudsonian Godwit	23	2	1	2	5	2	0	0	0	0	7	4	6	12	64
Marbled Godwit	11	5	1	1	1	10	0	0	0	1	5	0	3	0	38
Ruddy Turnstone	648	22	128	93	185	245	0	40	7	26	4	31	30	21	1,480
Red Knot	106	2	11	0	7	14	0	0	0	31	77	16	38	0	302
Sanderling	238	12	87	0	8	88	25	164	0	137	117	179	1,132	7	2,194
Semipalmated Sandpiper	10,246	3,253	5,675	412	2,183	6,082	1,679	5,306	333	3,458	2,001	5,177	5,579	9,929	61,313
Western Sandpiper	8	7	22	0	7	12	1	0	4	1	4	1	3	1	71
Least Sandpiper	2,724	344	3,613	148	1,371	660	162	475	622	277	2,751	9,540	4,988	2,506	30,181
White-rumped Sandpiper	193	29	31	1	25	5	17	4	35	10	14	46	58	27	495
Baird's Sandpiper	56	9	23	2	10	34	3	2	0	42	35	3	53	14	286
Pectoral Sandpiper	5,781	455	10,609	246	669	4,099	2,685	450	666	2,421	3,875	3,863	18,921	3,774	58,514
Dunlin	27,521	5,323	12,904	3,386	20,618	2,589	15,574	19,331	12,357	7,623	20,945	37,205	61,660	57,752	304,788
Curlew Sandpiper	4	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Stilt Sandpiper	709	224	414	8	90	1,006	74	65	12	33	99	32	655	613	4,034
Unidentified *Calidris*	21	1,177	394	0	100	0	50	200	0	0	0	250	0	0	2,192
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1	1	4	0	2	20	0	4	0	10	0	6	2	0	50
Ruff	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	5
Short-billed Dowitcher	7,019	1,902	4,093	1,394	1,615	3,975	1,495	1,338	1,581	452	4,857	1,358	1,919	2,955	36,453
Long-billed Dowitcher	182	582	443	720	5	537	160	27	1	8	281	124	319	812	4,201
Unidentified *Limnodromus*	73	61	83	750	0	0	40	120	0	0	488	0	3	0	1,618
Wilson's Snipe	149	60	247	18	18	206	81	17	55	4	137	153	49	100	1,294
American Woodcock	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Wilson's Phalarope	135	73	51	2	6	18	1	6	2	4	0	1	4	48	351
Red-necked Phalarope	36	21	42	0	0	26	14	2	1	6	3	0	7	5	163
Red Phalarope	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Total Individuals	74,295	18,548	56,545	9,276	32,495	28,238	24,693	30,501	20,098	18,006	54,764	72,948	123,269	92,062	655,738
Total Species	33	32	33	22	32	28	25	26	21	28	28	29	30	25	36

This American woodcock allowed itself to be photographed at Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area in Wyandot County in March 2003. Photo by Ron Sempier.

Table 3. 1989-2002 Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge shorebird survey results (by year) from Michael R. Bolton and John Szanto.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total
Black-bellied Plover	137	17	243	156	134	13	8	81	17	61	781	572	2,210	389	4,819
American Golden-Plover	122	8	10	0	76	74	0	1	0	0	161	525	533	10	1,520
Snowy Plover	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Semipalmated Plover	113	70	634	54	948	153	94	130	122	46	121	2,540	2,604	1,514	9,143
Killdeer	521	662	745	628	983	573	183	563	689	161	9,876	1,654	11,620	4,991	33,849
American Avocet	25	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	2	0	6	0	5	0	43
Greater Yellowlegs	229	152	251	209	293	300	157	194	318	108	445	334	1,043	639	4,672
Lesser Yellowlegs	363	538	696	484	807	266	207	912	2,718	313	4,607	1,246	9,027	4,652	26,836
Solitary Sandpiper	17	12	35	6	61	16	4	8	12	1	5	52	96	6	331
Willet	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	9	1	0	19
Spotted Sandpiper	78	104	145	60	147	122	34	94	41	10	85	77	216	107	1,320
Upland Sandpiper	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9
Whimbrel	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Hudsonian Godwit	11	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	4	6	12	44
Marbled Godwit	4	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	14
Ruddy Turnstone	13	15	1	0	54	17	0	33	7	11	2	30	30	19	232
Red Knot	2	0	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	2	6	38	0	55
Sanderling	30	10	4	0	3	0	0	152	0	0	117	134	1,132	7	1,589
Semipalmated Sandpiper	761	305	192	8	1,265	79	30	4,460	284	17	1,586	512	5,578	9,658	24,735
Western Sandpiper	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	3	1	12
Least Sandpiper	133	135	188	71	642	61	47	352	263	8	2,465	8,063	4,921	1,624	18,973
White-rumped Sandpiper	8	1	3	0	4	0	0	4	35	0	10	32	58	27	182
Baird's Sandpiper	0	1	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	4	35	0	53	13	115
Pectoral Sandpiper	443	212	1,293	231	604	1,599	1,716	43	575	1,203	3,566	1,776	18,466	3,510	35,237
Dunlin	6,228	2,699	2,102	714	10,795	819	5,084	18,130	12,265	1,410	17,836	33,842	60,638	55,731	228,293
Curlew Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Stilt Sandpiper	46	20	0	1	89	0	0	65	3	0	99	11	655	613	1,602
Unidentified *Calidris*	21	125	64	0	100	0	0	200	0	0	0	0	0	0	510
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	8
Ruff	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
Short-billed Dowitcher	323	236	230	236	904	112	22	1,015	520	179	4,872	718	1,919	2,150	13,236
Long-billed Dowitcher	33	570	410	260	0	205	0	27	1	0	281	123	319	812	3,041
Unidentified *Limnodromus*	40	4	0	350	0	0	0	120	0	0	488	0	3	0	1,005
Wilson's Snipe	116	55	213	14	12	160	2	2	27	2	81	0	16	100	800
American Woodcock	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Wilson's Phalarope	10	2	4	0	5	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	4	45	78
Red-necked Phalarope	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	0	2	0	7	4	19
Total Individuals	9,828	5,959	7,467	3,486	17,953	4,578	7,588	26,596	17,905	3,534	47,352	52,264	121,208	86,636	412,354
Total Species	25	23	22	17	28	20	13	23	21	15	28	22	30	25	35

This Wilson's snipe was one of several utilizing a wet field in Scioto County this spring. Digiscoped photo by Joe Hammond on 15 March 2003.

Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee

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The Ohio Bird Records Committee exists to increase knowledge of Ohio's birdlife by validating records, maintaining archives for researchers of Ohio records of occurrences of rare bird species, and establishing the official list of Ohio bird species. The OBRC relies vitally on help from Ohio's field birders who send in details of their sightings of rare birds. Birds unsatisfactorily documented or not subjected to peer review by the Committee cannot be added to official Ohio records, nor will they be attributed in *The Ohio Cardinal*. The OBRC establishes the Review List, which includes all species encountered infrequently enough in the state as to require documentation (specimen, photo, sound recording, and/or full written descriptions from witnesses) for their inclusion in the scientific record. As customary for a spring issue of the *Cardinal*, the full Review List appears at the end of this report.

The OBRC does not review sightings as such, of course, only documentations of sightings. The Committee cannot decide if a given species was seen and correctly identified, but only if the documentation made available from those present at the sighting verifies, for the historical record, the species' occurrence at the time. All documentations received, together with Committee actions thereon, are archived for researchers. All these records—with the sole exception of the identities of Committee members on vote sheets—are available to the public upon request of the Secretary.

Current members of the OBRC are Micki Dunakin (Antwerp), Joe Hammond (Columbus), Rob Harlan (Parma Heights), Ned Keller (Cleves), Jay Lehman (Cincinnati), Greg Links (Temperance, Michigan), Jim McCormac (Columbus), Kevin Metcalf (Chardon), Sue Tackett (Brookville), Elliot Tramer (Whitehouse), and Sean Zadar (Parma Heights). A summary of actions taken since the last published report follows. Names of observers submitting acceptable documentation are supplied in each case.

Accepted Records

In order to be accepted, records require a minimum of nine accept votes from the 11-member committee.

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*—Lorain Harbor, Lorain County, 10 January 2003. Observer: John Pogacnik. This record comes right after last fall's invasion, and is the 16th record since 1980.

Ross's Goose *Chen rossii*—Montgomery County, 11-12 January 2003. Observer: David Dister.

Ross's Goose *C. rossii*—Hueston Woods State Park, Butler County, 7 March 2003. Observers: David and Jill Russell. Ohio now averages two or three reports annually, and this species may soon be removed from the review list.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*—Lakeshore Reservation, Lake County, 19 January 2003. Observer: John Pogacnik. There have been over 30 records in the last two decades, and this species may soon qualify for removal from the list of review species.

Mew Gull *Larus canus*—Eastlake, Lake County, 3 November 2002. Observer: Larry Rosche. The ninth record.

California Gull *Larus californicus*—Lorain County, 14 January 2003. Observer: John Pogacnik. There have now been over 30 records.

Least Tern *Sterna antillarum*—Conneaut Harbor, Ashtabula County, 19 August 2002. Observer: Dan Sanders. About the 18th record since 1980.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus*—Wooster, Wayne County, October–December 2002. This bird was visiting a feeder at the home of William Gerber, and was seen by many birders. It was caught, critical measurements taken, and banded on 7 December by Allen Chartier. Fall 2002 was unprecedented in Ohio for *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, with at least a dozen reports of which nine were proven to refer to rufous hummingbird.

Rufous Hummingbird *S. rufus*—Manchester, Adams County, October–December 2002. This bird was visiting the feeders at the home of Esta and Herman Carter, and was caught and banded by Allen Chartier on 13 December.

***Selasphorus* sp. hummingbird**—Batavia, Clermont County, most of November 2002. Visiting feeders at the home of Cindy and Rick Johnson, caught and banded by Allen Chartier on 29 November. This bird was thought to be an adult female, but most committee members felt that critical ID characters were ambiguous on this individual, and did not definitively eliminate the congener Allen's hummingbird.

***Selasphorus* sp. hummingbird**—Carrollton, Carroll County, 24 October–early December 2002. This bird was coming to the feeders at the home of J. D. Reed, who videotaped it. While the tape is adequate to determine genus, most members felt that a specific identification could not be made.

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi*—Shaker Lakes, Cuyahoga County, 4-12 March 2002. Discovered by Leo Deininger, this rare western stray—only Ohio's sixth record—was present but irregular for several weeks, and seen by many birders. Charles Spagnoli and Bill Whan provided documentation.

Yellow Rail *Coturnicops noveboracensis*—Tuscarawas County, 7 October 2002. Documentation from Robert Schlabach and Bruce Glick. Photographed. Fourteenth record since 1980. This bird was caught during a hayfield mowing operation and, incredibly, another yellow rail was caught in the same manner on this farm back in 1991.

Records Not Accepted

Documentations received for the following reports received fewer than six votes to accept, and were hence not accepted.

Bicknell's Thrush *Catharus bicknelli* –Navarre Marsh, Ottawa County, 28 October 2001. This record passed through three circulations without a decision; pursuant to OBRC bylaws it had to be deliberated on and a decision reached at our annual meeting, held on 12 April 2003. After lengthy discussion and a re-review of the photos, it was decided unanimously that the existing documentation couldn't be accepted. Even though the bird was caught during a banding operation, at least one key measurement was not taken, and no written description of the bird was attributed to an author. Subtleties of coloration—both plumage and bare parts—are important in differentiating this species (as currently regarded) from other thrushes, particularly gray-cheeked thrush, and this information was not available. We consulted several outside experts, who agreed with our decision. This record would not only have been a state first; it also would have been one of the latest reports from this latitude, and one of the westernmost records.

California Gull *Larus californicus*—Eastlake, Lake County, 3 November 2002. This record was reviewed from scanty details and a photograph poorly reproduced in *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*; documentation was unfortunately not provided directly to the committee. Based on the evidence, most members did not feel that other species of gulls could be safely eliminated. As with all records, we would welcome better quality documentation if made available.

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus*—Killdeer Plains WA, Wyandot County, 26 August 2002. Members offered several reasons for not accepting this report, including the description of the color of the upperparts, the extent of the breast band, and lack of description of head. It was felt that semipalmated plover was not ruled out, based on the description.

Records in Recirculation

Records are recirculated when they have received from the Committee between six and eight votes to accept, or if any member requests recirculation.

Ross's Goose *Chen rossii*—Lake Pippen, Portage County, 18 March 2003.

Western Gull *Larus occidentalis*—Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, early March 2003.

Records Pending Review

We await details on some of these reports.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*—Cuyahoga County, 16 April 2003.

Tricolored Heron *E. tricolor*—Washington County, 24 April 2003.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*—Wayne County, 16 May 2003.

White-faced Ibis *P. chihi*—Sandusky County, 18 May 2003.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*—Licking County, 16 April 2003.

Black Rail *Laterallus jamaicensis*—Holmes County, June 2003.

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus*—Lucas County, 3 May 2003.

Least Tern *Sterna antillarum*—Ottawa County, 17 May 2003.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*—Cuyahoga County, 11 May 2003.

Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler *Dendroica coronata auduboni*—Franklin County, 4 April 2003. While technically not a review species, this record is being reviewed at the request of the OBRC secretary, as there is a possibility of this subspecies being re-split from the "Myrtle" warbler at some point in the future. There are only 3 or 4 Ohio records of this western subspecies.

Smith's Longspur *Calcarius pictus*—Tuscarawas County, 8 April 2003.

Hoary Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni*—Wayne County, 19 February 1981. It was requested that we review this documentation, as the record precedes formation of the OBRC.

Notes from the OBRC Annual Meeting, Held 12 April 2003

Three new members were welcomed: Joe Hammond, Rob Harlan, and Sue Tackett. Thanks were given to outgoing members Dave Dister, Bernie Master, and Larry Rosche. Noted with sadness was the passing of member Cal Keppler of Youngstown, who was a great asset to the birding community and the OBRC. The committee unanimously agreed to retain McCormac as Secretary for another year.

The Secretary reported that in the preceding year the OBRC reviewed 54 records, accepting 46 (85%), not accepting four records, with four records still ongoing in re-circulation. Thanks to a generous grant from the Master Family Fund, the OBRC was able to complete a new annotated checklist of Ohio birds in 2002, and print 3000 copies. Almost all of these have been distributed free of charge to birders in all parts of Ohio and at least 14 other states. Three new species were added to the state list in 2002: Calliope hummingbird, Eurasian collared-dove, and garganey, bringing the state list to 412 species.

A motion made by the Secretary to reduce the size of the committee from the current 11 members to seven was approved unanimously, and the reduction will be phased in over the next few years.

...continued on next page

The Review List as of 1 June 2003

This list includes (1) any species with no accepted record for Ohio (not enumerated here), (2) any species for which the known frequency of occurrence in Ohio is not greater than two individuals per year over the past 10 years, or (3) any recorded species for which the known frequency of occurrence in Ohio over the past 10 years is greater than two, but fewer than three, records per year, and determined for the list by a vote of the OBRC. This list is reviewed yearly by the Committee; while no species has been removed from the Review List over the past year, three species (garganey, Eurasian collared-dove, and Calliope hummingbird) have been added to the list below based on accepted records during the past year.

Pacific Loon
Western Grebe
Black-capped Petrel
Leach's Storm-Petrel
Northern Gannet
Brown Pelican
Anhinga
Magnificent Frigatebird
Tricolored Heron
White Ibis
Glossy Ibis
White-faced Ibis
Roseate Spoonbill
Wood Stork
Fulvous Whistling-Duck
Ross's Goose
Trumpeter Swan
Cinnamon Teal
Garganey
Tufted Duck
King Eider
Common Eider
Barrow's Goldeneye
Swallow-tailed Kite
Mississippi Kite
Harris's Hawk
Swainson's Hawk
Gyrfalcon
Prairie Falcon
Yellow Rail
Black Rail
Purple Gallinule
Northern Lapwing
Snowy Plover
Wilson's Plover
Piping Plover
Black-necked Stilt
Spotted Redshank
Eskimo Curlew
Long-billed Curlew
Red-necked Stint
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
Curlew Sandpiper
Ruff
Eurasian Woodcock
Parasitic Jaeger
Long-tailed Jaeger
Black-headed Gull
Heermann's Gull
Mew Gull
California Gull
Ross's Gull
Ivory Gull
Royal Tern
Arctic Tern
Least Tern
Large-billed Tern
Thick-billed Murre
Black Guillemot
Long-billed Murrelet
Ancient Murrelet
Atlantic Puffin
Eurasian Collared-Dove
White-winged Dove
Common Ground-Dove
Smooth-billed Ani
Groove-billed Ani
Northern Hawk Owl
Burrowing Owl
Great Gray Owl
Boreal Owl
Calliope Hummingbird
Rufous Hummingbird
Red-cockaded Woodpecker
Black-backed Woodpecker
Gray Flycatcher
Say's Phoebe
Vermilion Flycatcher
Western Kingbird
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Loggerhead Shrike
Black-billed Magpie
Common Raven
Violet-green Swallow
Boreal Chickadee
Brown-headed Nuthatch
Rock Wren
Bewick's Wren
Northern Wheatear
Mountain Bluebird
Townsend's Solitaire
Varied Thrush
Sprague's Pipit
Bohemian Waxwing
Black-throated Gray Warbler
Townsend's Warbler
Kirtland's Warbler
Swainson's Warbler
Painted Redstart
Western Tanager
Green-tailed Towhee
Spotted Towhee
Bachman's Sparrow
Black-throated Sparrow
Lark Bunting
Baird's Sparrow
Harris's Sparrow
Smith's Longspur
Black-headed Grosbeak
Painted Bunting
Great-tailed Grackle
Bullock's Oriole
Brambling
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
Pine Grosbeak
Hoary Redpoll

Common terns were plentiful at Conneaut Harbor in Ashtabula County this spring. This one was photographed there on 15 May 2003 by Gary Meszaros.

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