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Autumn 2004 Overview and Reports
by Bill Whan ................................................................. 1

Further Afield
by Robert Harlan .......................................................... 22

Early Ohio Ornithologists: John Maynard Wheaton
by Bob Glotzhober ........................................................ 29

Fifty Years of Spring Migration in Lorain County: Lynds
Jones’s Notes, 1896-1945
by Bill Whan ................................................................. 32

Fourteen Years of Raptor Records for Ohio
by Lawrence Hicks .......................................................... 36

Swimming in the Black-crowned Night-Heron
by Christopher A. Distel .................................................. 38

The Ohio Cardinal
2338 Harrington Road
Akron, OH 44319
Autumn 2004 Overview and Reports

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The world's ten warmest years in recorded history have all occurred since 1990, with 2004 ranking fourth; this October ranked as the warmest ever.

Inuitut tribes living north of the Arctic Circle were puzzled this year by the appearance of insects they’d never seen; it turned out they were the wasps known as yellowjackets. Here in Ohio, August was actually cool—2.9 degrees below normal—but the months that followed were warmer than average, with November 2.5 degrees up. October and November were wet, with rains running about an inch above normal statewide, due in large part to the effects of hurricanes to our south.

Warm weather and open water up north kept waterfowl and the scarcer gulls away until quite late in the period, and encouraged some perching birds to linger with the persistence of insect prey. Several observers noticed that insects inhabiting “flags” of dead leaves in trees affected by periodical cicadas this summer had attracted unusual numbers of migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Three big storms out of the southwest in November raised hopes of rarities, as did deep snow in the western mountains. Fluctuations of various seed crops in Canada brought good numbers of pine siskins, purple finches, and red-breasted nuthatches, but there were few signs that grosbeaks or crossbills were to follow suit. Great gray owls, boreal owls, and northern hawk owls in record numbers invaded areas to our north, but did not reach Ohio.

With many reservoirs and impoundments full, shorebird reports were mostly restricted to Conneaut Harbor, Berlin Reservoir, and Ottawa NWR (which commendably and successfully managed a couple of impoundments for migrant shorebirds this fall). Meanwhile, a seemingly unproductive locale on Findlay Reservoir #1—wide slopes of riprap, deep water, and narrow gravel pipes—produced shorebirds of fifteen species during two weeks—all without a square foot of shallow water or mudflats.

Two individual birds—a prairie falcon and a rufous hummingbird—both rarities from the West, made history by showing up in the same spots in the same county—Muskingum—for the second consecutive fall season. As a friend reminded us, this site fidelity makes it look foolish to call these birds “lost.” Eleven other review species were reported this fall: Ross’s goose, western grebe, Plegadis ibis (6), yellow rail, piping plover, black-necked stilt (4-5), least tern, white-winged dove, varied thrush (2), Kirtland’s warbler, and Harris’s sparrow. The newly-split cackling goose seems unlikely to receive review species status, as increasing scrutiny of Canada goose flocks by birders yielded reports of no fewer than thirteen of these diminutive high-Arctic breeders in their “inaugural” migration. Merlins added two more older urban cemeteries to their chosen haunts during the season. Several six-figure flocks of blackbirds were reported.

Vol. 28, No. 1  Autumn 2004

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.

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Winter (Dec.-Feb.)—March 25
Spring (Mar.-May)—June 25
Summer (June-July)—August 25
Autumn (Aug.-Nov.)—December 25

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Finally, we announce a slight change in style. Because readers have persuaded us that when scanning for salient information they are better served by bold-faced names of locations rather than of observers, we have changed our practice.

Corrigenda:

—Charles Bombaci’s article on prothonatary warblers was headed by an erroneous e-mail address; it should be charlesbombaci@ad.com

—5 July 2004’s sedge wren record came from the VOA site, not Gilmore Ponds.

—In our spring 2004 issue, the first gnatcatcher date should’ve been 17 Apr 2004 rather than 17 Mar.

—Please correct the table accompanying Craig Holt’s piece on Conneaut in the previous issue, Vol 27 p. 161: remove symbols indicating December records for sanderling, semipalmated sandpiper, and western sandpiper.

—Finally, there has been no change in the scientific name of the green heron Butorides virescens; we mistakenly referenced the old scientific name of this species, since attributed to the striated heron of the Neotropics.

For the Record:

—Hermit thrush: Fourteen were detected at Mohican SF 27 Jun 2004 (G. Cowell, T. Leslie), where the species is known to nest.

—Cliff swallow: Having heard no October date for this species was in the published literature, D. Overacker was able to offer the following dates to the record: 3 Oct 1993, two at GLSM; 12 Oct 1997 at BCSP; and 26 Oct 1997 at BCSP.

—Double-crested Cormorant: L. Rosche reported that at least seven pairs nested, with several young present, during the summer of 2004 at Lake Rockwell in Portage.

Study of unpublished manuscripts of Edwin L. Moseley regarding the Sandusky area found the following noteworthy information:

—5/20/1893: “The first unaged mocking bird I ever observed in the north.”

—11/28/1910: “Brünich’s Murre at Cedar Point.” In yearly report to USDA, “Birds Observed at Station” (Sandusky). Apparently a new record, the only one for 1910.

—4/18/20/1904: “two Eurasian Wigeons brought to taxidermists” (cp Deane, Ask 22(2):206)

—12/1-3/1907: “Sandusky, Brünich’s Murre.” (extends existing record by two days)

—3/18/1907: “Barrow’s Goldeneye, Sandusky.”

The Reports follow the nomenclature and taxonomic order of the 7th edition of the AOU Checklist of North American Birds (1998), including the 45th Supplement (July 2004). 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 in the Reports. 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: ad=adult; al=alternate (breeding) plumage; BCSP=Buck Ck SP in Clark; BIWA=Big Iwa W in Marion; BSSO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CCE=Crane Ck estuary in ONWR; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley Natl Park in Cuyahoga and Summit; DIY=the Gordon Park impoundment in Cleveland; EFSP=East Fork SP in Clermont; eop=end of the

The Ohio Cardinal

Summer 2004 Reports

Greater white-fronted goose: Some of the same birds may have been involved in sightings of one at MBSP (T. Kemp) 7 Nov, four at CPNWR 21 Nov (E. Tramer), two at MBSP 26 Nov (J. Grabmeier), and five there 29 Nov (N. Bixler). Elsewhere, G. Stauffer came upon four at Pickerington Ponds 27 Nov.

Snow goose: Unaccustomedly early was one over the CVNP 19 Sept (B. Roach, ph), and about sixty singly or in small groups were reported in northern locales over the ensuing month. Bixler brought more, with 11 for the ONWR census on the 4th, on 14 Nov 1500-2000 flying over Findlay (B. Hardste), then on the 29th “hundreds” in a field near ONWR (60% blue morph) noted by N. Bixler.

Ross’s goose: One observed at Ravenna (Portage) on 10 Oct. Details with the OBRC.

Autumn 2004 Overview and Reports

period, in this case 30 Nov 2004; EHSP=East Hbr SP in Ottawa; fide “in trust of” said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; Gilmore Ponds is in Butler; GLSM=Grand Lk St Marys in Mercer/Auglaize; HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in Lake; HSBNP=Headlands Beach SNP in Lake; HWSP=Hueyton Wds SP (Butler/Prewitt); imm-immature; Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh WA in Wayne/Holmes; KOPA=Killdeer Plains WA in Wyandot; LSR=Lakeshore Reservation (MP) in Lake; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in Ottawa/Lucas; MBSP=Mauqueen Bay SP in Lucas; MP=Metropark; m Obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in Hamilton; NCR=North Chagrin Res’n in Cuyahoga; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ODOW=Ohio Division of Wildlife; ONWR=Ottawa NWR in Ottawa/Lucas; ONWRC=monthly bird census at ONWR; PCWA=Pikcerl Ck WA in Sandusky; ph=photograph, Res=Reservoir; Res’n=Reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SYVA=Spring Valley WA in Greene/Warren; The Wilds=large grasslands managed for exotic quadrupeds in Muskingum; VOA=the former Voice of America property in Butler; WA=Wildlife Area.

Brant: A single bird found in Rocky River 22 Oct (M. Stez) was followed by 10 in adjacent Lakewood (M. Egan) the following day, then 11 (P. Lozano) a day later, diminishing to five by the 29th (Lozano). Most of a group of five at HBS 23 Oct (L. Rosche) were eventually killed by hunters. J. Pogacnik had a flock of 10 passing LSR 24 Oct.

Cocking goose: As predicted, new vigilance found it to be rare-uncommon among southbound migrants. First noted 15 Oct in Cleveland (B&D Lane), then in Lake Twp in Stark (19 Oct, K. Miller) through at least 31 Oct (N. Bixler). On 13 Nov six passed LSR in Lake (J. Pogacnik) when another was found near Springfield (B. W.,) and four stayed a couple of days at Castalia beginning 20 Nov (Pogacnik).

Mute swan: This potentially harmful invasive species was found in normal numbers in its Sandusky Bay winter stronghold, with 106 counted there 23 Nov (V. Fazio), though as many as 70 at Mogadore Res in Portage (L. Rosche) 19 Oct was a little alarming.

Tundra swan: Reported entirely in Nov, 2600+ came in two pulses. The first probably contained Ohio’s small wintering population in a protracted movement from the 4th through the 13th, led by 211 for the census at Ottawa NWR 4 Nov. After a week’s pause, over 2200 passed through on their way to the mid-Atlantic wintering grounds 21-23 Nov, with a high count of 600+ at Lk Rockwell the 22nd (L. Rosche). Full moon was 26 Nov.

Vol. 28, No. 1  Autumn 2004
Wood duck: KPWA harbored 45 females and young on 28 Aug (R. Semper), but many more resorted to Magee Marsh, with 375 on 19 Sep and 272 on 17 Oct (H&S Hiris).

Gadwall: First reported at Ottawa, with 22 on 5 Sep (CNWRC), and big aggregations later counted at Magee with 272 on 17 Oct (H&S Hiris), CPNWR with 2012 on 21 Nov (E. Tramer), and 430 at Medusa Marsh 23 Nov (V. Fazio).

American wigeon: The census had one on 1 Aug, eight on 5 Sep, 476 on 3 Oct, and 111 on 4 Nov at Ottawa NWR. The high count was 959 at CPNWR 30 Oct (E. Tramer).

American black duck: A few were reported early on, such as one 29 Aug in Columbus (R. Thorn), or in the western Lake Erie marshes 1 Oct (D. Overaker), but high reported counts reached only 250+ at Port Clinton 20 Nov (V. Fazio).

Mallard: Larger numbers of migrants appeared only late in Nov, with 3100+ at Port Clinton 20 Nov (V. Fazio) and 3710 for the Ottawa NWR census of 4 Nov.

Blue-winged teal: Four were at a Findlay Res 10 Aug (B. Hardsey). Departed early as usual: the Ottawa NWR census found 651 on 5 Sep just after the start of the fall season, then 84 on 3 Oct, then none in Nov. Late birds included two at Medusa Marsh 23 Nov (V. Fazio) with one remaining there 25 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Northern shovelers: Few found, or at least reported. The Ottawa NWR census produced 13 on 5 Sep, 24 on 3 Oct, and 50 on 19 Nov. On 2 Oct 25 were near Columbus (R. Thorn).

Northern pintail: An oddball showed up at Conneaut 5 Sep (R. Rickard), and two at Pickerington Ponds 8 Sep (R. Thorn). The Ottawa NWR census found only 13 on 3 Oct and 43 on 4 Nov; one hopes the 52 counted at CPNWR 21 Nov more accurately reflected its true abundance this fall.

Green-winged teal: Scarce outside the western lake marshes, with larger counts of 520 for the Ottawa NWR census 3 Oct and 315 there 23 Nov (V. Fazio). Hancock had 45 on 21 Sep (B. Hardsey).

Canvasback: Trickled in, with a first report from Berlin Res 25 Oct (B. Morrison), and no double-figure reports during the period.

Redhead: Two drakes splashed down in the Shaker Lks 20 Oct (R. Rickard), but two-figure numbers came only on 6 Nov, with 50 at Wellington Res (K. Ostermiller).

Ring-necked duck: Individuals perhaps sick or injured continued in Holmes through 7 Aug, and at Metzger Marsh 21 Aug (both S. Snyder). At Camp Dennison in Hamilton, B. Foppe counted 13 on 4 Oct, 61 on 24 Oct, and 455+ on 19 Nov. At Mogadore Res 14 were present 19 Oct, with 360 by 14 Nov (both L. Rosche).

Greater scaup: Not expected in big numbers before December, and did not disappoint, with a first report from Avon Lake 4 Nov (V. Fazio) and a high of 14 at LSR in Lake 14 Nov (J. Pogacnik). Hancock rarely has them, but 15 were near Findlay 25 Nov (B. Hardsey).

Lesser scaup: Quite poky during this mild fall, with high counts of only 125 at Port Clinton 20 Nov (V. Fazio) and 298 at Caesar Cr SP 22 Nov (B. Foppe).

Surf scoter: First reported were two in Lucas 9 Oct (J. Pogacnik); the same observer tallied 21 during daily lakeshore censuses at LSR in Lake, with a high of 89 on Bradstreet Ldg and nearby Rocky River Pk. Remaining a hot spot, with 22 reported during Nov, the high eight 26 Nov (P. Lozano, m.obs. Fifteen reported at Caesar Cr SP during Nov, with a high of seven at 24th (L. Gara, m.obs). Other Nov reports came from Upper Sandusky (R. Counts, three), Lima (D. Dister, four), Alum Creek Res (R. Thorn), MBSP (E. Tramer, three), and Crane Creek SP (the seasonal high of 11 on the 14th, G. Leidy).

White-winged scoter: Once the commonest, now the scarcest scoter, with only four singles; 6 Nov at BCSP (D. Overaker), 7 Nov at Caesar Cr SP (J. Lehman), at LSR in Lake 9 Nov (J. Pogacnik), and at SVWA 27 Nov (L. Gaylor).

Black scoter: All reports from Nov: fifteen reported from the Rocky River shore, with a high of five the 22nd (P. Lozano, m.obs); eight from LSR in Lake, with a high of four 28 Nov (J. Pogacnik, A. Boone); seven from Caesar Cr SP, with a high of four 19 Nov (L. Gara, m.obs); three were at Crane Creek SP 14 Nov (G. Leidy).

Long-tailed duck: All reports came from Nov, with only two—a duo at HBSP the 14th (L. Rosche) and one in Lake the 29th (J. Pogacnik)—from Lake Erie waters. The seven others were of single birds at reservoirs or ponds, except for the high count of six at Deer Creek Res, Pickaway 13 Nov (L. Patterson).

Bolehead: Appeared inland at Upper Sandusky 3 Nov (R. Counts), and as usual by far the high count (though a modest one for the locale) came from the Lake Erie Islands, 586 from Kelcieys Island 20 Nov (V. Fazio).

Common goldeneye: Even later to show up than usual, first reported 26 Nov at HBSP (L. Rosche). A report of 250 at Mosquito Lk 30 Nov dwarfed all others (D. Hochadel).

Hooded merganser: Eleven at Medusa Marsh 17 Sep probably represented a family group or groups (P. McCoy). Larger numbers appeared in mid-Nov, with 25 on the 9th at Rocky River Pk (S. Walker) and ~250 at Hoover Res by 10 Nov (R. Thorn).

Common merganser: A female seen as early as 28 Aug at Conneaut Harbor (P. Lozano) was sick or injured, or perhaps part of the tiny breeding population recently discovered in that corner of the state. Sites hosting early migrants were led by Lake Rockefeller, with three there 21 Nov and 25 by 23 Nov (L. Rosche).

Red-breasted merganser: A lone female was seen at Metzger Res in Lima 22 Aug (D. Dister), and J. Pogacnik witnessed six passing LSR in Lake 29 Aug, but the first big movement of this abundant winterer came from the latter location 6 Nov, with 1228 birds. As with most other waterfowl, these mergansers peaked late, but numbers seemed normal. L. Rosche estimated 35,000 offshore between Lorain and Rocky River 27 Nov.

Ruddy duck: Two were at KPWA 8 Aug (R. Semper). The first big flock was of ~700, at LSA's Metzger Res 16 Oct (B. Whan), where the same number was reported 13 Nov (D. Dister). The high count of 1000 came from a favored resort, Wellington Res in Lorain, on 14 Nov (C. Rieker).

Red-throated loon: A good flight: all reports follow: 23 Oct at Caesar Cr SP (D. Overaker) through 25 Oct (L. Gara), Avon Lk 4 Nov (V. Fazio), 7 Nov LSR (J. Pogacnik), and four at Lake Due Res 11 & 13 Nov (L. Rosche), Rocky River Pk 13 Nov (J. Brunfield), LSR on 14 Nov (Pogacnik), 22 Nov Caesar Cr SP (D. Graham), two 26 Nov at LSR (Pogacnik), 26 Nov at BCSP (Overaker), 27 Nov at Killbourn Plains WA (R. Semper), 27 Nov at Nimiria Res in Summit (G. Bennett).

Common loon: Good numbers. The first report came from LSR in Lake, with one 17 Oct, where the lakefront high of 101 was made 26 Nov (both J. Pogacnik). More impressive numbers emerged inland, where E. Schlabach counted flocks in Holmes of 87 on 9 Nov, 64 on 12 Nov, and 105 on 26 Nov, and Ohio's high count came from Lawrence (1), where H. Slack and W. Argabright witnessed ~400 in flight from south to north (12 Nov).

Pied-billed grebe: Larger aggregations included 34 seen at Medusa Marsh 17 Sep (P. McCoy), 45 at Killbourn Plains WA 16 Oct (B. Whan), 50 at BCSP 7 Nov (D. Overaker), 28 on 14 Nov at Nimiria Res (G. Bennett), and 56 at EHSPP on 23 Nov (V. Fazio).

Horned grebe: Quite early was one at Cedar Pt NWR 26 Sep (E. Tramer). This did not presage good numbers, however, as the inland high was 15 at Hoover Res 15 Nov (A. Boone), and that for Lake Erie 78 on 17 Nov off the Rocky River shore (P. Lozano).

Red-necked grebe: An average (i.e. scanty) showing, with three reports: one at Harroon 6 Nov (B. Sparks), one at Upper Sandusky 12 Nov (R. Counts), and one at Springfield Lake near Akron 29 Nov (K. Miller).

Western grebe: This rarity was reported during Nov in Ontario, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois, so in retrospect that one should be
American white pelican:...Documentation is with the OBRC.

American white pelican: About average, with four birds. The Mahoning bird remained 7 Sep (C. Holt). An imm at Medusa Marsh from 26 Sep (L. Brumbaugh) through at least 17 Oct (S. Snyder) was seen by m obs. So was an imm at Indian Lk, Logan, from 21 Oct until it was found 9 Nov (T. Shively). S. Pawlowski spotted one of indeterminate age in flight at EFSP 7 Nov.

Double-crested cormorant: After three years of stable populations there, the number of breeding pairs at West Sister Island NWR increased 44.7% to 370 (±10%) this summer (ONWR report). Fifty at Knox Lk on 1 Aug (D. Plant) were among summering gatherings of immature birds, a number which swelled with migrants to 110 on 29 Sep (S. Snyder). Early migrants numbered 50+ at Van Wert Res (J. Perchalski) and 60 at Hoover Res (R. Thom) on 14 Aug. Two hundred were over Caesar Ck SP 30 Aug (L. Gara), and on 8 Sep 1200 visited Upper Sandusky Res (R. Counts). About 400 were seen in flight over The Wilds in Massingum 21 Nov (N. Smith). The customary untold thousands passed along the Lake Erie shore during the period (m obs).

American bittern: Sighting of a belted bittern came from Walnut Beach in Ashtabula 12 Aug (G. Lee), ONWR 21 Aug (B. Wihan), 5 Oct in a Tamarac wax field (E. Schlabach), and in Lees 9 Oct (J. Pogacnik). Lingerings in a mild fall were birds at ONWR (census of 4 Nov) and one at The Wilds 26 Nov (J. Tharp).

Cattle egret: Far from the Sandusky breeding site, two were seen at Conneaut 28 Aug (M. Vass) and north of Loudville 19 (D. Plant) through 23 Oct (S. Snyder). The species has abandoned West Sister Isl, but birds were seen in former haunts 8 Aug at Magee (J. Jensen), ONWR on 2 Oct (D. Overacker), and two nearby 30 Oct-3 Nov (B. Zwiebel). D. Morse intercepted three south-bounders at EFSP in Clermont 31 Oct.

Great egret: Their numbers at the West Sister Isl colony remained stable at 707 pairs ±10%. Scarcer in the NE, one at Conneaut 26 Aug-8 Oct (C. Holt) was remarkable, along with birds at Berlin Res 14 Oct and La Due Res 10 Oct, 21 Oct (two), and 21 Nov (L. Rosche). High count 236 on the 3 Oct ONWR census, with 59 there 4 Nov. On 12 Oct J. Koppa found 15 in Hamilton. Latest 30 Nov at Toussaint WA in Ottawa (V. Fazio).

Snowy egret: Fourteen nesting pairs were counted at W. Sister Isl (ONWR). High counts came from the western marshes, with 39 at Magee on 15 Aug (S&H Hiris) and 38 on the 5 Sep ONWR census. Elsewhere, one was at Killdeer Plains WA in 8 Aug (R. Semper), another at Conneaut 9 Sep (E. Schlabach, W. Shaffer), and a late bird at Sandy Ridge MP in Lorain 29 Oct (T. Fairweather).

Little blue heron: Out-of-the-way were an imm at HWSP 11 Aug (D. Russell) through 2 Oct (T. Ulhman), another in Lake 18 Aug (J. Pogacnik), and one 22 (S. Snyder)-28 Oct (E. Snively) quite late near Wooster. Despite rumors that nesting pairs had returned to W. Sister Isl, no record appeared in the official report; complicating matters were speculations that three egrets seen during the ONWR census of 5 Sep may have been hybrids involving this species. Barring conclusive documentation, these mysteries will remain unsolved, but closer attention next year might produce interesting results.

Green heron: The high count was of 13 at Knox Lk 28 Aug (S. Snyder), and warm weather encouraged singles to stay through 16 Oct in Columbus (R. Thom) and 30 Oct in Lorain (T. Fairweather).

Black-crowned night-heron: Interesting post-breeding roosts were noted in Aug, with four adults in Mahoning the 14th (B. Jones), and five in Columbus the 15th (M. Skinner). Numbers at the Shaker Lks in Cuyahoga varied from one to nine 1 Aug-22 Oct (L. Deininger). The high count was 19, at Magee 19 Sep (H&K Sires). Warm spots along the Lake Erie shore produced small numbers near the eop. The nesting colony at West Sister Island did not decline significantly, and was reported as 433 pairs ±159 (ONWR report).

Yellow-crowned night-heron: Seldom detected in migration, an imm was found at Big Island WA in Marion 5 Oct (J. McCormack).

Plegadis ibis sp: Six reports emerged, two with m obs and conflicting identifications; for the latter, a lot of documentation was produced, which we trust is with the OBRC. On 20 Oct, two dark ibises were reportedly seen overhead north of Newark. On 24 Oct, another ibis was found and well photographed at Medusa Marsh. At Ottawa NWR, a dark ibis was seen by the census team on 4 Nov. Another Plegadis ibis, discovered at Columbia Reservation in Lorain 13 Nov, was studied by m obs through 22 Nov. Finally, a dark ibis was described from EHS on the late date of 20 Nov.

Black vulture: Numbers near traditional areas included 25 on 19 Sep at Shavnee Lookout in Hamilton (L. Peyton) and a flock of 63 in Adams 16 Nov (P. Wihan). Farther afield, J. White found five at the Columbus Zoo on 1 Sep, D. Weber nine in Athens 6 Nov, and J. Larson located 38 at a new Knox roost 24 Nov.

Turkey vulture: In Holmes, 365 migrants on 19 Sep was a good count (J. Miller). Late migrants scaled through the eop in many locales. Large roosts included 512 on North Hill in Athens 31 Oct (B. Wihan) where only 83 had roosted 5 Sep, and 200+ at Deer Ck SP 3 Nov (J. McCormac). Many persisted through the eop.

Osprey: The western marshes have been pretty much devoid of August ospreys for many years, but one haunter Pickerel Creek WA early this fall (e.g., 8 Aug, C. Caldwell), probably from the Reethaven WA nesting pair. Late birds included one at The Wilds, Massingum (P. King) and one at LSR in Lake (J. Pogacnik), both 26 Nov.

Bald eagle: Continues to proliferate, chiefly because its less-than-choosy diet is not so contaminated. In Columbus, one was seen devouring a red-tailed hawk on 2 Oct (B&K Lane), and in Wyandot five young birds gathered at a deer carcass 22 Nov (M. Mispon).

Northern harrier: Hints of local breeding came from three jv on 7 Aug, and three jv and two adults in n. Wyandot 22 Aug (R. Counts), a jv at KIPWA on 8 Aug (R. Semper), one in Defiance 14 Aug (J. Yochum), two way down in Crown City WA 11 Aug (K. Kazieniszki), and an adult male at The Wilds on 25 Aug (K. Carlsen).

Northern goshawk: J. Klug reported one in Toledo 6 Nov (fide G. Links), and Links one in Toledo 8 Nov. H. Petruschke observed an adult in Lake 12 Nov. T. Shively spotted an adult near Bellefontaine in Logan 15 Nov, and on 19 Nov Leanne Brown photographed an adult in a western Montgomeray backyard.

Broad-winged hawk: Many seem to evaporate upon crossing the border from the Michigan hawk-watch towers, but S. McNamee still managed to see 800-400 over Toledo on 11 Sep.

Red-tailed hawk: E. Schlabach reported the very scarce light-morph "Harlan's" form, an adult seen near Sugar Creek in Holmes on 16 Oct, and wondered if it might be the same individual he'd seen in the general area on 11/18/1990.

Rough-legged hawk: Early reports came 9 Oct from BFA (light morph, J. McCormac), 15 Oct from N.
Chagrín Res'n (K. Metcalf), and 16 Oct from Lucas (E. Tramer). The high count was 30 at The Wilds 14 Nov (J. Kuenzi).

Golden eagle: Toledo-area sightings came from 6 Nov (two, M. Anderson) and 7 Nov (two, E. Tramer). A. Parker reported the first return to The Wilds 14 Nov, where eagles were not as easy to relocate this fall, but on 26 Nov reports were received of one (J. Tharp) and two birds (S. Brown), more than were reported last fall.

Merlin: Thirty-two reported. On the odd date of 10 Aug, one appeared in urban Columbus, only a few hundred yards from Union Cemetery (A. Boone, ph), and remained faithful to the spot through 17 Sept for m Obs. This merlin, or one indistinguishable from it, returned to the same perch for a brief stay 15 Nov (C. Capoette, ph). In this same period, R. Royse reported another merlin at Conneaut 14 Aug, which by itself would have been a record early date. Seven were reported from the southwest, led by four at MWW 24 Oct (B. Hull). All other merlin records came in Nov, most significantly when on 2 Nov male and female merlins returned to Calvary Cemetery in Cleveland (L. Gardella) and a probable male to Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati (L. Brumbaugh). The Cleveland birds persisted through the cove, but the Cincinnati bird seemed lost, until B. Zimmerman photographed a male and a female at St. Joseph's Cemetery in Cincinnati on 20 Nov, which stayed through the cove. The other records, of routine Nov migrants, pale beside the preceding remarkable events.

Prairie falcon: On 13 Nov, a bird trip led by naturalist Al Parker of The Wilds discovered one, almost certainly the individual that established an unprecedented record by spending last winter at this location through 19 Mar. Always elusive, this adult was nevertheless seen there by m Obs through the cove.

Wild turkey: Despite ups and downs in population, the range of the turkey continues to expand in Ohio, largely due to continuing reintroduction. E. Tramer had this to say: "Continues to increase and spread in the

King rail: The obliging family at Prairie Oaks MP in Madison was seen through mid-Aug, with one chick noted the 14th (L. Brumbaugh). A more successful pair at Killdeer Plains WA (Marion/Wyanot) produced five healthy young, photographed 14 Aug (R. Sempier). The last reported was in Tuscarawas 13 Oct (D. Sanders).

Virginia rail: Birds seen at Funk WA 12 Aug (W. Sarro) and five at KPWA on 14 Aug (R. Sempier) were likely local nesters. Elusive as migrants, and R. Royse (11 Sep at Conneaut) and J. Pogacnik (9 Oct at Lucas) were lucky to see them. An injured bird in Findlay was last seen 29 Oct (B. Hardesty).

Sora: Generally not hard to detect in fall in good habitat, but no large numbers reported this time.

Common moorhen: A sign of healthy marshes, two ad and young were at Killbuck, 12 Aug (W. Sarro), then two with five young 18 Aug (S. Snyder). At ONWR, the census found 12 on 1 Aug and 35 on 5 Sep. Seventeen were at Magee on 15 Aug (S&H Hiris), and four adults with apparent young at Killdeer Plains WA 28 Aug (R. Sempier).


Sandhill crane: Cranes from summer were reported this fall in Geauga and Wayne, and three early migrants showed up in Hamilton 29 Oct (T. Uhlman). Fewer than 20 were seen during the subsequent week, but after a full 800+ were seen on eleven Nov occasions, all in the western third of the state; a schedule similar to that adopted by tundra swans season this year. The high count was 170 on 26 Nov at MWW (N. Keller). Four that arrived 8 Nov (B. Royse) roost nightly on the Fayette end of Deer Cl Res, reliable through the cove.

Black-bellied plover: Down somewhat, their first arrival rather late, with four ad at Conneaut 14 Aug (B. Royse). High count only 14, at Berlin Res 20 Oct (K. Miller). The last to depart came on 19 Nov at Burke airport in Cleveland (P. Lorenz).

American golden-plover: First noted at Conneaut, with two on 21 Aug (B. Whan); subsequent counts were no larger until 72 at a Findlay Res 26 Sep (R. Counts). High count - 100 at Big Isl WA 9 Oct (J. McCormack). Last reported 8 Oct at Conneaut (B. Royse).

Semipalmated plover: Numbers were down, with one double-figure count: 12 at Conneaut 18 Aug (C. Holt). Last seen were two at Berlin Res 20 Oct (K. Miller).

Piping Plover: One was photographed late in Galia 10 Oct; details with the OBRC.

Black-necked Stilt: Their remarkable presence continued, with one 11-16 Oct a first record at Pickerington Ponds in Franklin, two at Ottawa NWR 11 Oct and one there 17 Oct; details are with the OBRC.

American avocet: A surprising 40 reported, with a high of ten adults at Conneaut 10 Aug (B. Whan). Seen in

Vol. 28, No. 1  Autumn 2004

2004 Overview and Reports

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Jim McCormac shot this stunning, intimate portrait of the prairie falcon at The Wilds in Muskingum Co. 19 November 2004.
Van Wert, Madison, Lake, Sandusky, and Lucas, with 27 from Conneaut Harbor over the season. Last seen 3 Oct at HBSP (L. Rosche).

Greater yellowlegs: The high count of 75 came on 1 Aug at GRWA (D. Hochadel), and the last seen was at Huron 28 Nov (J. Watts).

Lesser yellowlegs: Sixty were with their larger congener at GRWA on the first day of the period (D. Hochadel). The first reported juviale was early at Conneaut 14 Aug (B. Royse). High count of 60 at Ottawa NW 3 Oct (census team), and several Nov records culminated with three at BCSF on the 13th (B. Whan).

Solitary sandpiper: At GRWA on 1 Aug the high count of 25 was made by D. Hochadel. Bringing up the rear was a single bird at Pleasant Hill Lk 23 Oct (S. Snyder).

Willet: Only six: Two ad at Conneaut 10 Aug (B. Whan), 12-15 Aug at Cowan Lk (L. Gara), and 13 Aug at Burke Airport (G. Leidy), 21 Aug at ONWR (B. Zwiebel), and one at Pipe Creek WA 26 Aug (Whan).

Spotted sandpiper: Again, the high count came from GRWA on 1 Aug (D. Hochadel), with only 10. Didn’t stay long either, with the last report from Berlin Res 20 Oct (K. Miller).

Upland sandpiper: Presumably migrants were one along Girdham Rd in the open openings 2 Aug (M. Anderson) and two in Holmes 1 Sept (S. Snyder).

Whimbrel: Two touched down at Conneaut 10 Aug (B. Whan), whereas others were found 21 Aug (M. Vass), 24 Aug (B. Finkelstein), 2 Sep (R. Royse), 11 Sep (R. Royse) and 18 Sep (G. Meszaros). One stalked the Crane Creek SP beach 21 Aug (B. Zwiebel), the census team at Ottawa found one 5 Sep, and E. Schlabach another at Huron 9 Sep.

Hudsonian godwit: An adult graced Conneaut 20 Aug (W. Shaffer), but Conneaut did not hog the sightings of this species, which showed up at ONWR 21 Aug (Ad. B. Whan), then two there 18 Sep (S. Snyder, m obs), then two 2 Oct (census team), then three 9 Oct (J. Pogacnik), then one 4 Nov (census team) that lingered through 7 Nov (E. Tramer). Elsewhere, B. Morrison found a juv at Berlin Res 12 Oct.

Marbled godwit: Decent numbers, all from Ottawa NW. Six were there 10 Aug (B. Whan), then three on 5 Sep (census), two 18 Sept (C. Caldwell), three 5 Sep (census), one 3 Oct (census), then two 4 Nov (census), with probably the same two there 7 Nov (E. Tramer).

Ruddy turnstone: The beach-like setting at Conneaut attracted four ad 14 Aug (B. Royse), a remarkable 28 adults 18 Aug (C. Holt) one 20 Aug (J. Jones), two 21 Aug (M. Vass), two juv 26 Aug (Holt), five juv 10 Sep (Royse), and eight 9 Sep (W. Shaffer). Elsewhere, B. Zwiebel had one at the Crane Creek SP beach 21 Aug, D. Dister and at Metzger Res in Lima 22 Aug, D. Overacker one on the Buck Creek SP beach 4 Sep, and W. Counts two puzzling out the rip-rap at Findlay Res on 21 Sep.

Red Knot: As has been typical lately, most knots were counted at Conneaut in brief touch-downs, this fall 20 of them on eight occasions between 20 Aug (J. Jones) and 14 Sep (four, B. Royse). Three reports came from the western marches: one 21 Aug at ONWR (S. Snyder), three there 18 Sep (R. Rogers), and one at CPNR 10 Oct (E. Tramer).

Sandpiper: Another beach-lover, 220 were counted at Conneaut Harbor from 4 Aug (ten, M. Vass) through 30 Sep (a “near basic” bird, B. Royse), with the state high count of 95 there on 10 Sep (Royse). Fewer than 20 were found at state park beaches and similar settings elsewhere, the latest of them one early at Hoover Res 19 Oct (A. Boone) and six at Berlin Res the following day (K. Miller). Juveniles seemed down.

Semipalated sandpiper: Normally among the most numerous of our sandpipers, this species had a high count of 100+ at Conneaut on 26 Aug (C. Holt), but no other numbers nearly this large later. One was reported to have stayed at ONWR 4 Nov (census team) and 7 Nov (E. Tramer), surpassing last year’s record-late 2 Nov occurrence.

Western sandpiper: Commendably enough, many observers tend to solve ID problems involving this and the previous species by calling them all semipalatated unless they show a diagnostic western-type bill. While any errors this causes will slightly overestimate the number of the more common species, it would be worse to err on the other side and greatly underestimate the number of the rarer. Still, since sexual dimorphism largely controls bill structure, it seems reasonable to assume this practice may misidentify as many as half of westerns as semipalatateds.

This fall, after not a single report of this species in July, no adults were reported in the fall season. Twenty-three reports were received, involving a total of 29 westerns. The first came from 14 Aug, a juv at Conneaut (B. Royse). The high count was of three birds, at Indian Lake, Logan, on 13 Sep (T. Shively), and the latest was of a single bird at Toussaint WA on 23 Nov (V. Fazio).

Least sandpiper: Seemed down in numbers overall. The high count was 61, on the ONWR census on the first day of the season; the census was 32 in Sep, 18 in Oct, and none in Nov. The latest were three at BCSF, where the new high in the past 6 Nov (D. Overacker). This species also may have borne out warnings of a sub-par breeding season in the Arctic.

White-rumped sandpiper: With no July returns noted, the first fall bird was reported 16 Aug at Prairie Oaks MP (J. Lehmkuhl). Groups of five were seen in Galloia 20 Aug (first local record for this month) and at ONWR the following day (census). B. Royse noted one at Conneaut 11 Sep in basic plumage. The high count was also the latest, 18 birds at Berlin Res 20 Oct (K. Miller).

Baird’s sandpiper: Seventy-five reported, all whose ages were reported juveniles with the exception of two adults rather late on 12 Aug at Conneaut (G. Leidy). First reported 5 Aug at Caesar CK SP (L. Gara), but through the next two months Conneaut and ONWR dominated reports. The high count of 11 came from the former on 23 Aug (B. Royse), and seven from the latter 30 Aug (N. Smith). In a mild fall, one was found as late as 11 Nov, at HBSP (L. Rosche).

Pectoral sandpiper: The high count was 50, at Englewood Pk in Dayton 8 Aug (N. Smith). For Sep, when hordes of juveniles are scheduled, 20 reports totaled only 99 birds. This high-Arctic breeder may have had a bad season, as Oct reports peaked at only 31 birds, at GLSM the 10th (B. Whan). The ONWR census found the latest reported, six on 4 Nov.

Purple sandpiper: Unlike other shorebirds, the narrow niche for this one—rocky habitats along the Lake
Erie shore—is stable or increasing. All the same, we had but one record: four birds briefly at the Mentor Headlands lighthouse 28 Nov (G. Meszaros et al.). We had reports of nine, on six occasions, last year. Too few to draw any conclusions of course, but this is another High-Arctic nester...

Dunlin: Dunlins undergo a complete prebasic molt in the Arctic, so we seldom see any in breeding plumage in Ohio in fall, nor many dunlins at all before September. The appearance of birds with breeding plumage on 8 Aug (Pickeral Creek, C. Caldwell), 14 Aug (ONWR, R. Hinkle), and 15–16 Aug (Conneaut, S. Cagan and Caldwell) was very unusual and possibly evidence for problems on the breeding grounds. Numbers of juveniles seemed OK, however, with reports of numbers such as 850 at Berlin Res 20 Oct (K. Miller), 480 near Sheldon Marsh 6 Nov, and 1100 and 1200 at ONWR 4 Nov (census) and 11 Nov (W. Whan) respectively.

Stilt sandpiper: Appeared in late July, and later in decent numbers, and unlike many other shorebirds less restricted to Conneaut and ONWR. High counts were of 40 at ONWR 21 Aug (S. Snyder) and 40+ at Medusa Marsh 26 Sep (L. Brumbaugh). The last reported was one at BCSP 6 Nov (D. Overacker).

Buff-breasted sandpiper: Mostly a normal year, with reports—all juveniles, nearly all single birds—from Knox, Williams, Ashtabula, Lucas, and Hancock. Reports from the latter county at Findlay Res #1 were the story. This location often produces small numbers of this species, but this year it was marked, peaking on 23 Sep with nine (B. Sparks), 24 Sep with 20 (R. Counts), and 10 on 26 Sep (L. Brumbaugh), with two remaining as late as 5 Oct (H. Hard). The auto tour at Ottawa NWR on 18 Sept. 2004. Photo by Jay Lehman.


Short-billed dowitcher: Adults continued to move through the period, among them 202 at Ottawa NWR 1 Aug (census) and 90 in Tencanawas the same day (E. Schlabach), but were replaced by juv. “hundreds” of them at ONWR by 14 Aug (M. Bolten).

Long-billed dowitcher: First reported in the form of three adults arrived at Ottawa NWR on 14 Aug (M. Bolten), then eight there 21 Aug (W. Whan). Reports in small numbers of juveniles came from the NW: Paulding, Erie, Williams, Lucas, Ottawa in Sep and Oct, with one from the east, in the Portage area of Berlin Res 14 Oct (L. Rosche), and groups of five and six 6 and 9 Sept at MWW (N. Cade et al.) in the southwest. The survival of the unique staging population in the NW seems evermore tenuous: since the eradication of habitat at Metzger Marsh WA eight years ago, a band of ~100 has spent several autumn weeks undergoing a complete molt at ONWR before returning south, some as late as mid-Nov. This year, slightly higher Lake Erie levels made their staging areas in the Crane Creek estuary unusable, and small numbers seem to have been able to take advantage of moist-soil units newly managed for shorebirds by ONWR, but no great concentrations were noted: the census team found nine on 5 Sept, 26 on 3 Oct, and only three on 4 Nov. Some reason for hope was the discovery of a flock of 40 (the seasonal high count) at adjacent CPNWR 10 Oct (E. Tramer). The last long-bill was reported from the Crane Creek estuary on 7 Nov during a period of wind-induced low water (Tramer).

Wilson’s snipe: High count was ~20 at Big Isl WA 6 Oct (N. Smith), and the latest were seven near Wooster 27 Nov (S. Snyder).

Wilson’s phalarope: One was seen on the 1 Aug ONWR census, and another on 5 September’s. An ad basic bird was early at Prairie Oaks MP 12 Aug (J. Watts). Later at Ottawa NWR, two birds were reported on 14 Aug (R. Hinkle), 21 Aug (S. Snyder), 28 Aug (B. Whan), and 30 Aug (N. Smith). A molting juv spent 28 Aug-2 Sep in Williams (J. Yochum).

Red-necked phalarope: First reported were two at ONWR 28 Aug (D. Sanders), with one at Conneaut 2 Sep, one at MWW 9 Sep (F. Frick), one at ONWR 18 Sep (C. Caldwell), and one at ONWR 20 (D. Overacker) and 3 (census) Oct.

Red phalarope: The first came to Mallard Club Marsh 9 Oct (J. Pogacnik). Three were among those at HBSP in Oct on the 15b (L. Rosche), with one still there the 31st (M. Rohr). The last was a flyby at LSR 6 Nov (Pogacnik).

Laughing gull: At least twelve individuals reported, nine from inland reservoirs, the first from Caesar Creek SP 30 Aug (L. Gara), the latest quite late from 28 Nov at Huron Harbor (J. Watts). Staying there were an immature at EFSP 30 Sep (D. Morse) through 17 Oct (L. Brumbaugh), and one at Berlin Res 12-26 Oct (B. Morrison) that was likely a first local record.

Franklin’s gull: Seven of eight reported spent time at inland reservoirs, the first 25-29 Sep at Pleasant Hill Lk, Richland (S. Snyder), the last of two birds at Caesar Creek SP 11 Nov (N. Cade).

Little gull: Hard to find. A first-year bird was along the Cleveland lakefront 6 Nov (G. Leidy, and another at LSR 26 Nov, where an adult appeared 28 Nov (both J. Pogacnik).

Bonaparte’s gull: Two birds, in alt and basic plumage, were at Caesar Creek SP 9 Aug. A leucistic adult was photographed at Conneaut 14 Aug (B. Roies), Numbers increased on the lakefront in Nov, when on the 28th 20 were in Cleveland (V. Fazio), and later in the month numbers began to appear inland, with 1000 (including only one first-winter bird) at Hoover Res 15 Nov (A. Boone), an unprecedented ratio of Bonaparte’s to ring-billeds at Caesar Creek SP of 3000 to 18 Nov (B. Powell), on 27 Nov 50 at Tappan Res in Harrison and 100+ at Leesville Lk in Carroll (both D. Kramer), and 550 at Mosquito Lk 15 Nov (C. Holt). At the Lake Erie shore 28 Nov, J. Pogacnik counted 11,073 passing LSR, and B. Whan estimated 23,000 in the Lorain Harbor, nearly all adults, 5600 passing by were carefully observed, of which only seven or eight were immature birds.

Herring gull: In a local tradition, flocked to an inland feast of gizzard shad at Station Rd. in the CVNP on 1 Nov (D. Chasar).

Thayer’s gull: Only one report, a first-winter bird at Port Clinton 20 Nov (V. Fazio).

Lesser black-backed gull: Fourteen reported, most along the Lake shore, but one stood out at Oberlin Res 13 Oct (L. Rosche), as did a second-winter bird at Springfield Lk near Akron 24 Nov (K. Miller).

Glaucous gull: An adult ventured into our comparatively warm climate 28 Nov in Toledo (G. Links).

Sabine’s gull: Typical one-day wonders were immatures at MBSP 1 Oct (D. Overacker), another 15 Oct at Caesar Creek SP (L. Gara), and one passing LSR on a delayed schedule 26 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Black-legged Kittiwake: A juvenile passed LSR in Lake 6 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Caspian tern: A normal season, though a flock of 22 inland at Springfield Lk near Akron 21 Aug (G. Bennett) was of interest, as were four as late as 29 Oct at EHSP (V. Fazio).

Common tern: Inland numbers reached 35 on 8 Sep at EFSP (D. Morse) and 20 at Caesar Creek SP the following day (L. Gara), with the latest a juv at Indian Lake SP 16 Oct (B. Whan). ONWR numbers were the largest, with 253 on 1 Aug and 500 on 5 Sep, but none in Oct, when terns were found farther east, such as 85 at EHSP on the 29th and 24 in Cleveland 5 Nov (both V. Fazio). The last was in Cleveland 29 Nov (R. Rickard).

Forster’s tern: Seen at Conneaut early, with 15 on 18 Aug (C. Holl) and 45 on 15 Sep (B. Roies). Later seen more often in the west, as on 29 Oct when 18 were at Medusa and 75 at EHSP (V. Fazio). High count only 250, for the ONWR census on 5 Sep; latest date only 6 Nov at Sheldon’s Marsh (B. Whan), with 35 birds.
Least tern: This rarity was seen once, on 19 Aug at MWW. Details with the OBRC.

Black tern: After large movements in late July, the following occurred on 1 Aug alone: three at Caesar Ck SP (L. Gara) and three others there (J. Konst), one at Alum Ck Res (R. Thorn), one at Prairie Oaks MP (R. Thorn), eight at Buckeye Lk (J. Estep), and four for the ONWR census, for a total of 20. Thirty-eight turned up thereafter, with a high count of nine at KPWA 28 Aug (R. Sempier) and the latest bird at Conneaut 1 Sep (B. Reyes). Of 26 reports, only three from the Lake Erie shore, which included individuals from the precious last breeding spot at CPNW.

White-winged dove: One was reported coming to a feeder in Rootstown, Portage, on 16, 17, and 19 Aug. Details are with the OBRC.

Black-billed cuckoo: Latest reported in Toledo 15 Sep (R. Nirschi).

Yellow-billed cuckoo: The highest count was six, at KPWA 12 Sep (R. Sempier), and the last was reported 30 Oct in Holmes (E. Schlabach).

Barn owl: Unusual at KPWA (despite so much likely-looking habitat) was one there 19 (J. Kuentzel), 27 Nov (M. Packer). ODOW monitored a rack 56 active nests this year statewide, with a record 44 successful and 202 young fledged (K. Shipley).

Long-eared owl: Tricked in as usual, with only two fall reports, a bird on Kelleys Isl 21 Nov (T. Bartlett), and one 29 Nov at ONWR (J. & J. Volker).

Short-eared owl: Sighted at Dike 14 on 17 and 23 Oct (S. Zadar). K. Phillips noted 3-5 at the VOA on 14 Nov. N. Smith found 22 at The Wilds 18 Nov.

Northern saw-whet owl: The banding operation in Ross found the first, six of them, on 24 Oct. All other finds (six in all) came from Nov, the last from J. Volker of one at ONWR 29 Nov. Far more common as a migrant than our meager sightings can attest.

Common nighthawk: While declining in unnatural urban settings as nesters in Ohio, nighthawks still delight us in migration. After two flocks of 8-12 likely migrants in Franklin 4 Aug (D. Sillick), the passage peaked statewide late in the month and early in Sep, with noteworthy numbers 419 in Franklin 23 Aug (B. Whan), 85 in Holmes 28 Aug (E. Schlabach), 265 in Clermont 29 Aug, 238+ in the CVNP 6 Sep (P. McCoy), and a local-record 388 in Lawrence 10 Sep (H. Slack). Late were four over Akron 10 Oct (J. Brumfield), and in Hamilton seven 15 Oct and one 27 Oct (both W. Hull).

Chimney swift: Urban roosts have become fashionable spectacles, especially in greater Columbus, where in excess of 8000 were reported 16 Aug-8 Oct, nearly all from old school chimneys. From Kent, where Ralph Dexter conducted so many studies of this species (a chimney swift appears on the official seal of Kent State University), came a report of 55+ on 17 Aug (G. Bennett). Very late, almost record late, were ten in Fairfield 5 Oct (J. Watts) and one in Marion 6 Nov, then two 8 Nov (both R. Sempier).

Ruby-throated hummingbird: Adult males skedaddle first, and the latest reported were in Greene 2 Sep (C. Beckman) and in Licking 11 Sep (J. Watts). Four other ruby-throats persisted into the next month, the latest of them a female reported 18-24 Oct north of Dayton (C. Hawley).

Rufous hummingbird: Five were reported, but more records may well emerge as colder weather finally makes feeders attractive. An ad female appeared at a Ross feeder that hosted an imm/female in fall of 2003; the latter was never banded, but a returning bird is a possibility (L. Reed & Trimmer, A. Charter, ph). One male in Marysville 26-27 Sep was photographed (D. Snapp). On 10/1, M. Wise (B. Charter) found an adult male at her Muskingum feeder; Charter captured this bird, and found it to be the immature male he'd banded at this same feeder 20 Nov last year—an extraordinary event; it remained through the eop. An adult male showed up 3 Oct at a feeder in Akron (J. D. Darrell, ph), and persisted through the eop. An adult female showed up in Hamilton in early Oct, staying through the eop (A. Charter, ph).

Yellow-billed sapsucker: A nice flight, with high counts of six 26 Sep at CPNW (E. Tramer) and eight at HBSP the same day (L. Rosche). The last reported up north came from 13 Nov in the dense confines of Secrest Arboretum in Wayne (S. Snyder).

Olive-sided flycatcher: Fifteen reports spanned 14 Aug to 16 Sep, with the latter date sporting the high count of two, at Oak Openings MP in Toledo (E. Tramer).

Eastern wood-pewee: This common breeder bid us farewell at the late date of 24 Oct, with one banded at Navarre (BSBO).

Yellow-bellied flycatcher: Thought to be our most easily identified Empidonax flycatcher, especially among silent fall birds, so most often reported. One was netted at Springville Marsh WA in Seneca as early as 22 Aug (T. Bartlett), and the last report came from Navarre, with a bird banded 2 Oct (BSBO).

Acadian flycatcher: One was calling 29 Aug at Hoover Res (R. Thorn). Last reported was one netted at Navarre 5 Oct (BSBO).

Willow flycatcher: One was in Columbus as late as 7 Sep (R. Thorn).

Least flycatcher: Last reported at Hoover Res 15 Sep (R. Thorn).

Eastern phoebe: Two at Mosquito Ck 24 Oct (C. Babjak) and one in Lakewood Pk the following day (P. Lozano) were rather late, more so one 14 Nov in Clermont (B. Poppe).

Great crested flycatcher: Latest reported in Lakewood 18 Sep (P. Lozano).

Eastern kingbird: Fifty-plus were at Killdeer 28 Aug (R. Sempier), and one in Paulding 20 Sep recorded a record late date locally, but only one 8 Nov in s. Toledo (G. Links) is probably a record late date for Ohio.

Northern shrike: Twelve reported, with the highest count also the farthest south: birds in Wyandot included an imm at KPWA 20 Nov (R. Schielitz et al.), an adult there the following day (N. Smith), and another further north 16 Nov (R. Counts).

White-eyed vireo: Very late ones tend to be immatures, as was one in Pearson MP in Lucas 26 Nov (P. Chad).

Yellow-throated vireo: Hardened south in numbers, with eight at Shawnee Lookout in Cincinnati 19 Sep (L. Peyton) and five the next day in Coshocton (E. Schlabach).

Blue-headed vireo: High count five, on Kelleys Isl 18 Sep (P. McCoy), with a late one in Paulding 5 Nov (M. Dunakin).

Philadelphia vireo: Widely reported, with a high of four on Kelleys Isl 18 Sep (P. McCoy), and a late bird at Navarre 4 Oct (BSBO).

Red-eyed vireo: Running a bit late was one at Navarre 24 Oct (BSBO).

American crow: Widespread was the feeling that crow numbers are rebounding; we'll see if the CBC supports this. D. Chasar, for example, reported a low in crow numbers for last fall's CVNP census of 159; this fall they were up to 392. Optimistically, such increases could mean the West Nile virus has done its worst to crows, and the remaining population, now immune, is rapidly filling territories left by those who succumbed.


Purple martin: On schedule, with roosts in Hamilton of ~500 on 15 Aug (J. Hays) and 22 Aug (L. Peyton).

Tree swallow: About 2500 gathered at Mentor Lagoons 19 Sep (L. Rosche), and a long-delayed migrant was at EHSHP on 20 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Northern rough-winged swallow: A first for the Sep CVNP census was 59 on the 11th (D. Chasar). Not usually a flopper, 100+ at MWF on 19 Sep were of interest (L. Peyton).

Bank swallow: A juv was late at Mentor Lagoons 7 Oct (L. Rosche).
Cliff swallow: Ninety were found for the 1 Aug ONWR census. J. Watts reported an enormous gathering of 1500 at Charlie’s Pond in Pickaway 12 Sep, scene of another large flock at this location 7 Sep 2000.

Barn swallow: Two tarried at Deer Creek Res through 16 Oct (B. Royse).

Red-breasted nuthatch: Unusually widespread, with the high count of eight coming from birdy Van Wert on 14 Nov (J. Perchalski). The banders at Navarre netted a local record 34 this season (BSBO).

Brown creeper: Six haunted Mogadore 7 Nov (G. Bennett) for the high count.

House wren: Unexpected along the lakefront, 18 were found at Dike 14 in Cleveland 10 Oct (S. Zadar).

Winter wren: Poured through HBSP on 21 Oct, when L. Rosche counted 35; the following day a local season-high 11 were banded at Navarre (BSBO).

Sedge wren: Detected at Cowan Lk Sp 5 Aug (B. Powell), when mowing of field elicited others in Wayne (S. Snyder). Four were singing at Caesar Creek Sp 6 Aug (L. Gara), two were in Wyoming 7 Aug (R. Counts), and five heard at the VOA property in Butler 9 Aug (M. Busam). The ONWR census found a migrant 5 Sep, R. Thorn two in Columbus 25 Sep, and S. Zadar another at Dike 14 in Cleveland on 5 Oct.

Marsh wren: The census at ONWR found 26 there on 1 Aug. E. Slabach noted a migrant in Tuscarawas 5 Oct, and one was still singing at CPNWR 21 Nov (E. Tramer).

Ruby-crowned kinglet: Seemed late. The high count was 125 at HBSP 21 Oct (L. Rosche), the day on which the Navarre banders caught a season-high 48. One at Alum Creek Res (R. Thorn) and three on Kelleys Isthmus 21 Nov (T. Bartlett) were the last reported.

Varying thrush: One appeared briefly in a SE Williams yard on 1 Oct (pB). Another was photographed on a few visits to a NE Medina feeder late in the season, and persisted into the winter period. Documentation is with the OBRC.

Gray catbird: Mild weather induced some late stays, such as through 14 Nov in Gahanna (R. Thorn), 25 Nov in Akron (G. Bennett), and 27 Nov at Hoover Res (M. Packer). BSBO banded a local record 454 at Navarre this season.

Brown thrasher: Like catbirds, extended their stays this fall, with one up in central Ohio as late as 13 Nov in Gahanna (R. Thorn).

American pipit: E. Tramer observed one in Oak Opening MP on 1 Sep—which may be a new early fall date for the Toledo area. R. Counts found 25+ at a Findlay reservoir 21 Sep, and 80+ the following day there. L. Yoder counted 120 in Coshocton 27 Nov, and north of Alum Creek Res A. Boone found 300+ on 29 Oct, and small numbers persisted locally through the rest of the season.

Cedar waxwing: Good berry crops brought waxwings, with the highest reported number 500+, in Columbus 13 Nov (D. Nappier).

Blue-winged warbler: Four were in Hancock 7 Sep (B. Harder), and a tardy one was discovered in Holmes 18 Oct (E. Slabach).

Golden-winged warbler: Only four migrants reported: one 7 Sep in Paulding (D&M Dunakin), and on 18 Sep one in Bowling Green (B. Cullen) then two in Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati (N. Cade).

Tennessee warbler: One was caught in nets at Springville Marsh in Seneca 22 Aug (T. Bartlett), and quite late was one seen in Columbus on 16 Nov (R. Thorn). The high count was 70 at Spring Grove Cem 18 Sep (N. Cade).

Orange-crowned warbler: Widely reported in the first half of October, one was seen as late as 6 Nov at Winton Woods in Hamilton (N. Cade).

Nashville warbler: Forty were around at HBSP on 23 Sep (L. Rosche), and by 1 Nov one could still be found at Gilmore Ponds in Butler (M. Busam).

Northern parula: One was still in song in Bowling Green 2 Sep (P. Chad), and six could be found at Dike 14 in Cleveland 14 Sep (S. Zadar). Three remained at Rocky River MP 6 Oct (R&S Harlan).

Yellow warbler: One tarried through 9 Oct at Big Island WA (J. McCormac), but one 7 Nov at CPNWR was close to a record late date for the Toledo area (E. Tramer).

Magnolia warbler: The high count was 45 at HBSP on 19 Sep (L. Rosche).

Cape May warbler: Some good local Oct numbers, led by 25 at Spring Grove Cem the 18th (N. Cade); also from Cincinnati was the latest reported, 29 Oct (F. Renfrow).

Black-throated blue warbler: High count 10 at HBSP 19 Sep (L. Rosche), and none later than 24 Oct (Cuyahoga, S&R Harlan).

Black-throated green warbler: Sixteen were in Coshocton 29 Sep (E. Slabach), and the latest reported came from Navarre on 24 Oct (BSBO).

Blackburnian warbler: On time, arriving Franklin (R. Thorn) and Magore (S. Stockford) 26 Aug. N. Cade counted 15 in Hamilton 18 Sep, and E. Slabach found a late one in Holmes 11 Oct.

Yellow-throated warbler: An inconspicuous migration, with the first report 26 Aug in Franklin (R. Thorn). A Sep 1 bird in Cincinnati frequented Austrian pines, not sycamores (F. Renfrow). Last reported from MWW on 25 Sep (N. Cade).

Pine warbler: Ten, three still singing, were in Cincinnati 26 Sep (F. Renfrow), and latest among four Nov reports was an imm female in Holmes the 23rd (E. Slabach).

Kirtland’s Warbler: A female was described 25 Sep in Lake, details with the OBRC.

Prairie warbler: Migrants were noted first 21 Aug in Washington (J. Zickefoose) and last at Gilmore Ponds 25 Sep (M. Busam).

Palm warbler: No Nov reports, but plenty in late Oct, the latest at Dike 14 in Cleveland the 25th (B. Finkelstein); a day earlier there a “yellow” individual was present (S. Zadar).

Bay-breasted warbler: No remarkable numbers, with the last reported 19 Oct at Navarre Marsh (BSBO).

Blackpoll warbler: L. Rosche counted 30 at HBSP 19 & 23 Sep, and P. McCoy 46 on Kelley’s Isthmus 17 & 18 Sep. Last reported 24 Oct, from Navarre (BSBO).

Cerulean warbler: Late migrants were observed 20 Sep in Coshocton (E. Slabach) and 25 Sep at MWW (N. Cade).


American redstart: Thirty were tallied at HBSP 19 Sep (L. Rosche), and the latest found 17 Oct at Navarre (BSBO).

Prothonotary warbler: Local breeders remained at the Hoover Res colonies as late as 14 Aug (R. Thorn).

Worm-eating warbler: Migrants were detected 18 Sep at Spr Grove Cem in Cincinnati (N. Cade) and in Vol. 28, No. 1 Autumn 2004.
Hancock 21 Sep (B. Sams).
Northern waterthrush: A migrant appeared at Station Rd in the CVNP 5 Aug (D. Chasar). Late was one on 1 Nov near Swan Creek in Lucas (G. Links).
Louisiana waterthrush: R&S Harlan found a migrant at Columbia Wds Pk in Medina 20 Aug.
Kentucky warbler: Last reported 18 Sep at Shawnee Lookout in Cincinnati (L. Peyton). One on the 5 Sep ONWR census was a surprise.
Connecticut warbler: First of migration on Public Square in Cleveland 30 Aug (S. Wright), and last noted at MWW 25 Sep (N. Cade).
Mourning warbler: One was banded in Ross 19 Aug (K. Sieg). Last reported from Coshocton 29 Sep (E. Schlabach).
Common yellowthroat: Twenty-plus were in Butler 18 Sep (M. Busam), and one remained in Tuscarawas 27 Nov (E. Schlabach).
Hooded warbler: G. Bennett noticed a pair in Akron 8 Sep, and a male was singing repeatedly in Stark 24 Sep (S. Jackson). E. Schlabach observed one 18-22 Oct in Holmes.
Wilson's warbler: Arrived at Magee 26 Aug (S. Stockford), and last seen at NCR in Cuyahoga 21 Oct (K. Metcalf).
Canada warbler: T. Bartlett netted one at Springville Marsh, Seneca on 22 Aug. The high count was but two, at Magee 18 Sep (S. Snyder).
Yellow-breasted chat: Adults with two young were at MWW 1 Aug (L. Brumbaugh), and one was in Beaver Creek 15 Oct (N. Smith).
Summer tanager: The last of the Oak Openings birds was seen 23 Sep (E. Tramer), and four were in Cincinnati two days later (B. Foppe). R. Thorn heard one in Columbus 27 Sep.
Scarlet tanager: A straggler was at Pipe Creek 9 Oct (G. Bennett).
American tree sparrow: Early birds arrived in Paulding 3 Nov (D&M Dunakin) and in Washington 10 Nov (J. Zickefoose).
Chipping sparrow: Forty-five lingered at Dike 14 in Cleveland 29 Oct (S. Zadar), and one as late as 6 Nov at the Shaker Lks (V. Fazio).
Clay-colored sparrow: Five reported, the first in Logan 1 Oct (T. Shively), the last 25 Oct at BSIP (J. Kuenzi). The field sparrow: Fifteen were banded during three hours in Ross 1 Oct (K. Sieg). L. Rosche counted ten at HBSP 12 Oct.
Vesper sparrow: A last migrant was seen in Butler 7 Nov (M. Busam).
Lark sparrow: Last noted in the Oak Openings MP breeding grounds 23 Aug (E. Tramer). Apparent migrants included a jun netted n. of Chillicothe 4 Sep (D. Hess) and one totally unexpected at the Shaker Lks 10 Sep (C. Distel).
Savannah sparrow: Big numbers included 80+ in one Wyandot field 5 Sep (R. Counts), 100+ in Hancock 22 Sep (Counts), 40 on 5 Oct in Tuscarawas (E. Schlabach), and 25 at Dike 14 in Cleveland on 23 Oct (S. Zadar).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed sparrow: Four were well seen by a group in Darke 25 Sep (S. Miller). D. Kuehne photographed one captured for banding at MWW 9 Oct, and another there 15 Oct (J. Kuenzi). At least two crept through the vegetation at Conneaut 3 Oct (J. Pogaczynski), and the same observer detected three at Arcola Ck on the 6th. Three were reported from a wet field in Tuscarawas 5 Oct (E. Schlabach) with one remaining 12 Oct, for a first county record and apparently also a first for unglaciated Ohio.
Fox sparrow: High count was seven, at Alum Ck 8 Nov (R. Thorn). One was at NCR 20 Nov (K. Metcalf), and another stayed through the early in Lucas (E. Tramer).
Lincoln's sparrow: First seen in Paulding 25 Sep (D&M Dunakin), a surprising 19 were banded from a single field in Ross 1 Oct (K. Sieg), with 10 counted at Gilmore Ponds 3 Oct (M. Busam) and 14 at Dike 14 the 23rd (S. Zadar).
Swamp sparrow: M. Busam reported 100+ at Gilmore Ponds in Butler 23 Oct.
White-throated sparrow: One seen 30 Aug at LSR (J. Pogaczynski) could have bled locally, for the next report came from Gravelly 29 Sep (S. Woolard) and 30 Sep at Alum Ck (B. Shively). The 3 Oct ONWR census tallied 140.
Harris's sparrow: One reported from Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati 28 Nov was not refound.
Details to the OBRC.
White-crowned sparrow: First reported at NCR 24 Sep (K. Metcalf), the high count was 400+ at Dike 14 on 12 Oct, deemed a "poor showing" by local guru S. Zadar.
Dark-eyed junco: K. McDonald reported the first, near Cincinnati on 29 Sep. At Dike 14 and adjacent Gordon Pl in Cleveland 8-30 were around on 26 Oct (S. Zadar).
Lapland longspur: One had arrived for the 3 Oct ONWR census, but more interesting were seven as far east as HBSP 12 Oct (L. Rosche). High count 200+ in Wyandot 12 Nov (R. Counts).
Snow bunting: First noted at the old Coliseum site in Summit was a single bird 19 Oct (C. Roberts); by 29 Oct 10+ could be found in Delphos (J. Yochum) and widespread thereafter. Two reached southern Ohio at EFS 29 Nov on M. (Wessel), and the species showed up with purple finches and pine siskins as far south as Florida this year.
Rose-breasted grosbeak: Twelve were at Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati 18 Sep (N. Cade), and reports came in of birds in Washington on 10 Nov (J. Zickefoose) and Clermont on 14 Nov (M. Wessel).
Blue grosbeak: A group of three was in the Chillicothe area 4 Aug (D. Hess), one at Prairie Oaks MP 7 Aug (N. Cade), two in Clermont on 9 Aug (B. Stanley), and a female in Sugar Creek, Tuscarawas 14 Aug (E. Schlabach) through 30 Aug (R. Schlabach, Jule E. Schlabach).
Dickcissel: Seven appeared for the 1 Aug ONWR census, and an errant bird touched down at HBSP 23 Oct (L. Rosche).
Bobolink: R. Counts's surveys revealed breeding successes at CRF lands, with 200+ in Jackson Twp in Hardin 7 Aug, a majority of juveniles or adults already in molt, and 120 (60% hatch-year birds) in Wyandot on 16 Aug, where he estimated 100% breeding success among 25-30 territorial males. M. Busam
monitored birds at the VOA site in Butler, finding 200-300 there 9 Aug. E. Schlabach had a site in Holmes with 210 on 29 Aug and another with 1,600 on 5 Sep; at another Holmes site, J. Miller had 233 on 6 Sep. How well they do when we don’t mow early……


Rusty blackbird: By all accounts this species is in a serious population decline, which may not be readily noticeable in Ohio. First report came from NCR on 30 Sep (K. Metcalf), and 70 were in Columbiana on 5 Nov (B&D Lane), then 120 in Lucas/Ottawa 30 Nov (V. Fazio).

Brewer’s blackbird: T. Shively reported three from Auglaize 14 Oct.

Orchard oriole: B. Stanley found four juvs in Clermont 9 Aug. E. Schlabach observed a group of 24 on 7 Aug in Sugarcreek in Tuscarawas; 20 remained on Aug 14, then 11 on 21 Aug, and a single bird on 30 Aug.

Baltimore oriole: E. Tramer reported the following: “A flock of 30 was feeding with a large number of other birds in an oak grove in Oak Openings Preserve on Aug 16. This feeding aggregation included many bluebirds and waxwings, at least six Scarlet Tanagers and an Orchard Oriole, as well as chickadees, titmice and nuthatches. There must have been an insect outbreak at this spot; the heavy avian activity continued there through Aug 23.”

Purple finch: Widely reported this season. Two were in song 30 Sep at NCR (K. Metcalf), four were in Montgomery 1 Oct (N. Smith), five in Holmes 26 Nov (E. Schlabach), and 15 at MWW 25 Nov (W. Waughman), etc.

Red crossbill: No reports.

White-winged crossbill: One came to a Logan feeder 14 Oct (T. Shively), and an adult male did likewise near Urbana for a day on 15 Nov, fide J. Konsh (ph).

Common redpoll: A few reports came from lakefront locales in Nov, with a high count of 10 in e. Toledo the 20th (G. Links).

Pine siskin: The first fall bird was reported by the 3 Oct ONWR census team. Many reports came later from across the state, with a high count of ~200 at LSR 14 Nov (J. Pogacnik). Generally fickle, though at least 10 to 20 remained in rnr Cushon from the latter date for at least a month (L. Yoder).

American Goldfinch: Unusually abundant according to several observers. The CVNP survey produced 372 on 11 Sep, and J. Pogacnik had 1000+ at LSR 14 Nov.

Evening grosbeak: One report, seven at LSR in Lake 11 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Contributors: We are indebted to the following individuals and organizations who contributed data to the reports: Matt Anderson, Wendell Argubrite, Hank Armstrong, Carole Babyak, Tom Barklett, Cindy Beckman, Gregory Bennett, Joe Bens, Ned Bixler, Michael Bolton, Charlie Bombaci, Aaron Boone, Lisa & Terry Bradley, David Brinkman, Jeff Brown, Lori Brumbaugh, Ben Brunfield, Gina Buckey, Mike Busgam, Greg Butcher, Neil Cadle, Steve Cagan, Craig Caldwell, Chris Caprette, Kyle Carlsen, Paul Chad, Allenchart, Ann Chasar, Dwight Chasar, Jeff Climie, Delores Cole, Bob Conlon, Sam Corbo, Rich Count, Colleen Coursin, Rich Cressman, Becky Cullen, Donna Daniel, Ken Davis, Julie Davis, Leo Deininger, Gary Dietz, Cheryl Dinkelbach, Fred Dinkelbach, Chris Distel, David Dister, Doug Dunakin, Micki Dunakin, John Edwards, Mike Egar, Dave English, Susan Evanoff, Jason Estep, Bob Evans, Ben Fambrough, Ginny Fantetti, Linda Fayerweather, Vic Fazio III, Bob Finkelstein, Bob Foppe, Frank Frick, Darlene Friedman, Jim Fry, Larry Gara, Lou Gardella, Paul Gardner, Louis Gaynor, Laura Gooch, Jeff Grabmeier, Darlena Graham, Dan Hadley, Joe Hammon, Betty Hardesty, Rob...
Further Afield

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In the cinematic world, sequels are often held in low regard. This notion is based on the idea that even a successful sequel would be merely derivative of the original. Of course, this hasn’t prevented Superman IV or Rocky 5; but perhaps this is why filmgoers have never been treated to potentially intriguing sequels such as My Fair Lady Rides Again, The Sound of Music II: Revenge of the von Trapps, and Really Gone With the Wind This Time, to name but a few. We are all the poorer without them.

But the same cannot be said about my most recent Further Afield column, which appeared in The Ohio Cardinal 27(4):152-157. Considering that the original column is already held in low regard, we therefore fear no repercussions and trust that a sequel or follow-up column can only serve to clarify any questions brought up by the original.

If you will recall, the original column was presented as a short 25-question quiz, based on quotations gleaned from the text of my favorite Ohio bird book, Milton B. Trautman’s classic The Birds of Buckeye Lake, Ohio, published back in 1940. I chose quotations that struck a chord with me based on their precision, their eloquence, and their historical value, and then asked my reader(s) to identify the 25 species from each, upon their logical assessment of the three choices offered for each. This follow-up column will attempt to examine why the correct answer was the best option for each question, and how the incorrect species could have been safely ruled out. Make sense? Assuming your answer is “no,” your best option now would be to locate your copy of the Summer 2004 issue on your Official Ohio Cardinal Shelving Unit and TV Stand, and follow along eagerly as we proceed.

Welcome back. In the original column, we asked readers to “determine the correct species through your knowledge of behavior, timing, abundance, and distribution. Some options are straightforward, others may require a bit of thought or puzzlement, while others are just stupid.” In addition to a basic understanding of a given species’ food and habitat preferences, one of the simplest tools to help separate the straightforward from the stupid is the May 2004 edition of the Ohio Bird Records Committee Checklist of the Birds of Ohio, by Dave Dister, Joe Hammond, Rob Harlan (hey, imagine that), Bernie Master, and Bill Whan. The bar graphs help to define the timing of migrations and relative abundances of Ohio bird species as is currently understood; of course, patterns typical of the 1920s and 1930s, when Trautman was gathering his data, may be slightly, or sometimes dramatically, different from today. Most will be pretty close. But rather than repeating the quotations used in the original quiz, I will save space by abbreviating Trautman’s thoughts (marked as MBT), and place them in italics. Let us begin with Question Number One:

1. MBT describes a dainty swimming bird that was not a habitual fish eater. It would produce diminutive quacks on Indian summer afternoons. Choose from: A. Bufflehead, B. Green-winged teal, or C. Common moorhen. Of the three choices, only the teal is much of a quacker. While buffleheads prefer to dine on invertebrates and fish, both the teal and the moorhen favor aquatic vegetation and invertebrates over fish. The Indian summer timing seems to better fit the teal, as moorhens have generally departed by early October. Green-winged teal is correct.

2. MBT describes the most numerous nesting heron, with 40-90 pairs nesting annually in the local cattail marshes. Choose from: A. Least bittern, B. Great blue heron, or C. Green heron. Today, we consider great blue and green herons to be much more common than least bitterns. However, since great blues are colonial tree nesters, and greens generally nest in brushy wetland margins, neither seems likely to be the correct choice. Only the bittern is a true cattail nester; here is an example of the drastic reduction in marsh nesting birds from the 1930s to today. Least bittern is correct.

3. MBT indicates that occasionally during winter ice storms, the tails of this species would freeze to the top rail of a fence. Once, he witnessed 11 tails left behind as the birds were flushed. Choose from: A. Mourning dove, B. Common grackle, or C. Brown creeper. Brown creeper is one of those stupid choices alluded to earlier; not only do they have fairly short tails, they very seldom congregate in flocks of 11 atop fence rails. The dove and the grackle are better options, but only the dove is particularly known for ice-induced tails of woe. Mourning dove is correct.

4. MBT notes 32 of these tiny birds migrating low over Buckeye Lake in the span of two hours on 1 September 1931. Choose from: A. Brown creeper, B. Ruby-throated hummingbird, or C. Golden-crowned kinglet. All three options are in fact tiny birds, and are migrants as well. But on this date the creeper and the kinglet would not yet have arrived in any numbers, and would be very rare at best. The hummingbird, however, would still be a common migrant in early September. Ruby-throated hummingbird is correct.

5. MBT reports that a survey of Onion Island on 9 June 1928 discovered 35 nests, only five of which contained eggs or young, the remainder being dummy nests. The nests were of the customary globular shape. Choose from: A. Baltimore oriole, B. Sedge wren, or C. Marsh wren. Baltimore oriole does indeed construct a fairly gloppy nest, but orioles are not known for creating dummy or false nests. Some wren species are, however, notorious for this behavior, although marsh wren seems more inclined to this activity than does sedge wren. Also, the fact that 35 nests were found on a single day certainly favors marsh wren over the generally rare sedge variety. Marsh wren is correct.

6. MBT tracks the most remarkable change in status of any bird during his study, erupting from 0 in 1922, to 8000 in a day in 1929, to 132,300 birds in one roost in 1935. Choose from: A. Brown-headed cowbird, B. House sparrow, or C. European starling. All three choices seem reasonable, as all are known for their exponential increases over the years. However, the native cowbird and introduced exotic house
sparrow were already common throughout Ohio by 1922. Conversely, the exotic starling was first noted in 1916, with the first nesting observed in 1920. Numbers quickly mushroomed, and to this day they are still on the abundant side. European starling is correct, if vulgar.

7. MBT meticulously describes the stomach contents of a bird collected on 11 November 1933. It contained mostly duckweed plants and smartweed seeds. Choose from: A. Northern shoveler, B. Common goldeneye, or C. Hooded merganser. The timing seems suitable for all three; also, as duckweed and smartweed are both wetland plants, any species of waterfowl may seem reasonable at first glance. The merganser, however, is very strongly piscivorous, and the goldeneye also strongly prefers a meaty diet over salad greens. Shovelers are indeed fond of invertebrates, but they also love a good salad, especially a splendid duckweed salad, topped with savory vinaigrette dressing, and with a frosted glass of skim milk on the side. Northern shoveler is correct, if snooty.

8. MBT recalls the beloved ‘partridge,’ which had become only a fond memory of the older men by the time of his study. Choose from: A. Ruffed grouse, B. Greater prairie-chicken, or C. Gray partridge. Choice B seems a likely candidate; however, this species was essentially a bird of the remnant prairie openings in northwestern and west-central Ohio, not the Buckeye Lake region of east-central Ohio. The exotic gray partridge was still being introduced into Ohio during Trautman’s study in the 1920s and 1930s, leaving only ruffed grouse as a viable alternative. Habitat destruction and hunting pressures helped to eliminate the local grouse population by about 1900, making ruffed grouse the correct choice.

9. MBT tallies 77 individuals of this heron on 9 August 1930. Choose from: A. Cattle egret, B. Little blue heron, or C. Yellow-crowned night-heron. On the surface, none of the choices seem plausible. Cattle egret was not even discovered in Ohio until 1958, which makes 77 of them in 1930 exceedingly unlikely. Today we recognize little blue heron as a rare species, but the yellow-crowned was presumably just as much a skulker and a loner in 1930 as it is today. It hardly seems reasonable that 77 yellow-crowns would allow themselves to be tallied in a single day; this then brings us back to the little blue heron. Although it may now be hard to conceive, during Trautman’s study this species was often a common late summer invader from the south. Astonishingly, the 1930 invasion accounted for no fewer than 115 individuals being tallied from across the state. Little blue heron is correct, if astonishing.

10. MBT describes the ‘wild, free scream’ of this hawk as they established their nesting territories in early March. Choose from: A. Red-shouldered hawk, B. Broad-winged hawk, or C. Chimney swift. It should be apparent that chimney swift is a remarkably poor choice, since it is not a hawk, it does not produce a wild, free scream, and it is still courting about the Amazon Basin in March. The other two options are at least hawks, and although both could be said to scream, I’d call the broad-winged’s vocalization more of a wild, free whistle than a wild, free scream. Also, since broad-winged don’t arrive in Ohio in any numbers until mid-April, this clinches red-shouldered hawk as the correct answer.

11. MBT reports that over 50 pairs of this species nested annually between 1922 and 1930, with nests found in a wide variety of habitats ranging from marshes, buttonbush swamps, wet prairies, and edges of marshy pools in swamp forests. Choose from: A. Red-winged blackbird, B. Common yellowthroat, or C. King rail. The variety of habitats appears suitable for the wide-ranging blackbird and yellowthroat, but 50 pairs spread over 44 square miles of the Buckeye Lake area seems far too small a number for these very common species. But king rail—in these numbers and with this range of nesting habitats? Amazingly, king rail is correct. Today, five pairs statewide would be considered a banner year.

12. MBT recounts that until 1900 this species was considered a game bird and was often used in the making of potpies. Choose from: A. Northern flicker, B. Red-winged blackbird, or C. Black vulture. Ah, vulture pie. Let’s quickly rule out that choice, except, perhaps, after a sumptuous meal of skunk flambe and a fine radish wine. More tastefully, you will recall the nursery rhyme “Sing a Song of Sixpence,” in which four and twenty blackbirds were baked in a pie. But this was a British tale, and the blackbirds were the common blackbird Turdus merula, a European member of the thrush family. They made a fine flicker pie at Buckeye Lake, at least back when the yellowhammer was considered a worthy opponent for area sportmen.

13. MBT collects an unusual gull on 7 November 1925, after strong northeasterly gales. It provided Ohio’s first specimen of the species. Choose from: A. California gull, B. Mew gull, or C. Black-legged kittiwake. Assuming that the northeasterly gales influenced the presence of this bird, we can presumably eliminate California gull, a species of western North America. The North American race of the mew gull Larus canus brachyrhynchos is also primarily a western species, although there is a slim chance that one of the European races, known as common gull, could also appear here. In Ohio, black-legged kittiwakes are often associated with strong northeasterly winds, and are presumably brought down to us from points to the north and east. Any of these tenuous suppositions can quickly be set aside, however, when we consider that Ohio’s first verifiable sighting of California gull wasn’t made until 1979, and that our first mew gull wasn’t recorded until 1981, some 55 years after Trautman collected his black-legged kittiwake.

14. MBT tells of an abundant nesting species, found especially in lowlands and along the shoreline. On 12 June 1928, he censused 218 singing males along one mile of shore; the birds sang a slowly drawn ‘sweet-cheer.’ Choose from: A. Acadian flycatcher, B. Alder flycatcher, or C. Willow flycatcher. Think “habitat,” and think “song.” Acadian flycatcher is a bird of mature forests, not typically found in bushy lakeshore lowlands. Its explosive peet-se song also helps to eliminate it from competition. Both alder and willow flycatchers, however, favor wet scrubby areas. The alder often prefers slightly wetter habitats in Ohio than does the willow, but this is only a general rule. The song of the alder, frequently described as fee-bee-o, consists of three syllables, while the song of the willow, a snappy fiz-bee, seems to better fit Trautman’s description of the song. Nesting willows are also much more common in Ohio than alders; 218 in only one mile effectively eliminates Alder, and boggles the mind. Willow flycatcher is correct.

The Ohio Cardinal

Vol. 28, No. 1  ♢  Autumn 2004  25
15. MBT tells of a migrant more common between 18 September and 25 October than at any other time of the year. Daily, 50-500 could be found, primarily in close-cropped fields. Choose from: A. Vesper sparrow, B. Horned lark, or C. Lapland longspur. This is tricky. First, the habitat seems suitable for all three options. We can eliminate the longspur, however, since it typically doesn’t arrive here in peak numbers until mid-November. Based on current status, the best choice would seem to be the lark, since only a relative few vespers are noted as fall migrants today. Our nesting race of horned lark *Eremophila alpestris pratensis* is indeed moving in numbers within this time frame, although we seldom pay them much attention. Believe it or not, the correct answer is actually vesper sparrow, which has certainly declined drastically since Trautman’s day. Habitat alterations, including the move to “cleaner” farming practices, have undoubtedly played a major role in the decline.

16. MBT relates that he did not find this species at all from 1922-25, but then discovered it to be a rare but regular, if secretive, transient and nester, especially from 1930-33. He attributed this not to an increase in the species, but to his newly acquired knowledge of its song and habits. Choose from: A. Lark sparrow, B. Le Conte’s sparrow, or C. Henslow’s sparrow. This one is fairly straightforward. Le Conte’s sparrow has never been known to nest in Ohio. Lark sparrows, although rare transients and nesters, are anything but secretive. The furtive Henslow’s sparrow is the correct answer; its skulking habits and insect-like song have undoubtedly caused many a birder to overlook its presence over the years.

17. MBT describes the familiar nocturnal flight calls of some migrants of this species, which could be heard almost nightly by early July. Only occasional migrants could be heard after 10 September. Choose from: A. Yellow warbler, B. Lesser yellowlegs, or C. Yellow-rumped warbler. Choices A and B are both known as early fall migrants, but yellow-rumped warbler does not usually begin to reach peak numbers here until late September. While both yellow warbler and lesser yellowlegs are moving by early July, the warbler also ends its flights over Ohio quickly, with the vast majority having passed through by late August and early September. Good numbers of lesser yellowlegs are normally present through mid-October. Yellow warbler is correct.

18. MBT describes the feeding and display habits of a raptor, in which the male flew over a nest and dropped a prey item. The female then rose from the nest, turned on her back, and caught the prey in midair. Choose from: A. Cooper’s hawk, B. Northern harrier, or C. American kestrel. This behavior is a small portion of the classic display of the northern harrier. As Ohio’s nesting harriers have declined to a precious few, we now only rarely have the opportunity to witness this spectacle. Northern harrier is correct.

19. MBT describes another fall migrant, this one peaking in late September and early October. When he persistently worked the dense marsh vegetation, he found 25-37 individuals, although he believed 100-200 to be present. Choose from: A. Pied-billed grebe, B. Sora, or C. American bittern. The timing seems reasonable for all three choices, but Trautman’s wording that he “worked” the dense marsh vegetation suggests that he was actually amidst the vegetation, rather than just scanning the open water or watery edges. This seems to eliminate the grebe, but both the sora and the bittern would favor the cover of the vegetation. If we base our decision on today’s abundances, the uncommon sora would seem the better choice, as the bittern is now decidedly rare. However, the correct answer is American bittern. I recognize that there really is no good way to make this distinction, but I included the question, along with several other similar examples, to illustrate dramatic historical changes. For most of our marsh birds, that would represent a dramatic change for the worse.

20. MBT pinpoints the many field marks he used to identify this fall shorebird. These include the preference for deeper water than many of its kin, their slightly down-curved bills, and the presence of chestnut-red feathering on their shoulders, back, and wings. Choose from: A. Dunlin, B. Baird’s sandpiper, or C. Western sandpiper. We can eliminate the Baird’s due to its preference for the drier portions of mudflats. Both dunlin and western have downwardly curving bills, but most fall migrant dunlins seen in Ohio have very plain gray backs and wings. Western sandpiper fits the bill. Although still rare, and still a difficult ID, Trautman accurately described the many field marks of the western sandpiper, and in great detail, back in 1940.

21. MBT portrays a spring migrant which arrived in late March and peaked in mid- to late-April, with as many as 15 seen in a day. They preferred osage-orange hedges and brushy pastures. Choose from: A. American woodcock, B. Loggerhead shrike, or C. Bewick’s wren. Another toughie. Since the species in question arrives in late March, that seems a bit too late for the woodcock, which often arrives in late February or early March. However, the timing is appropriate for both the shrike and the wren; at least it was back when we had populations of both large enough to allow us to detect migrational patterns. Loggerhead shrike is correct, with their notable preference for osage-orange being the best clue provided.

22. MBT relates how his imitation of an Eastern screech-owl whistle could draw out many sparrows from brushy angles and weedy fields. Once accomplished, the species in question would perch in the open with crest elevated; as many as 42 were found in a day. Choose from: A. Lincoln’s sparrow, B. White-throated sparrow, or C. Grasshopper sparrow. Lincoln’s sparrow is a notorious crest-raiser, and is therefore among the most conspicuous of all sparrows. Migrant grasshopper sparrows don’t usually accumulate in numbers in Ohio, and they also sport a very flat-headed look. White-throateds are certainly flockers, and certainly respond vigorously to a screech-owl whistle, but they also aren’t especially known for raising their crown feathers. Moreover, a maximum of 42 seems too few for this very common species. Lincoln’s sparrow is correct.

23. MBT describes the loud, persistent song of this secretive late May migrant as ‘chip-a-dilly, chip-a-dilly, chip-a-dilly, quoit’. Choose from: A. Mourning warbler, B. Connecticut warbler, or C. Belted kingfisher. You’d be very wrong if you chose belted kingfisher, and you know it. Choices A and B, however, are both late May migrants, and both are secretive. Their songs are different though; the mourning’s
song, which for some reason is frequently heard as background music in television commercials, is often described as a burry churry, churry, churry, churry. The song of the Connecticut sounds more like a loud, ringing chip-a-dilly, chip-a-dilly, chip-a-dilly, quoit. Can you tell that I enjoy typing chip-a-dilly, chip-a-dilly, chip-a-dilly, quoit? Well, I do. Perhaps too much. Connecticut warbler is correct.

24. MBT witnesses a peculiar performance on 31 October 1925, when two whitish birds on a brown mudflat noticed a Cooper’s Hawk overhead. The whitish birds ran to a small patch of snow and remained motionless until the hawk had passed. Choose from: A. Piping plover, B. Sanderling, or C. American white pelican. If you chose the pelican, you probably also chose kingfisher for the previous question. The plover and sanderling are better choices, but most individuals of the rare piping plover would have already passed through between mid-July and mid-September. October 31 would be extremely late for the plover, but only marginally late for sanderling. Sanderling is correct.

25. MBT describes the fall nocturnal flight calls of another species, which peaked in August. He found the “puttie-puttie-puttie” notes of the southbound migrants as pleasing as the prolonged whistles of the species in spring. Choose from: A. Eastern meadowlark, B. Swainson’s thrush, or C. Upland sandpiper. We may not all find puttie-puttie-puttie sounds pleasing, but that is the problem. Instead, here is yet another case of a formerly common bird that has become quite rare today. Upland sandpiper is correct; neither the meadowlark nor the thrush produces the described vocalizations, and the August migration peak is also inappropriate for both, with the meadowlark peaking in October, and the thrush in September. We need more upland sandpipers—what a great bird.

That’s all I can stand. I hope this clears up any lingering questions concerning the original column. If not, let me know. And you really should try and track down Trautman’s The Birds of Buckeye Lake, Ohio, published in 1940 by the University of Michigan Press. It’s worth the effort, and as you can tell, Milt writes better than I. Much better.

Early Ohio Ornithologists:
John Maynard Wheaton, 1840-1887

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A number of years ago, as a fledgling employee of the Ohio Historical Society I was examining some of our bird study skins. While the OHS natural history collections are small compared to some other collections in Ohio, there are some interesting items among the 2300 or so bird specimens we maintain. As I went from drawer to drawer, I came upon one that held a sheet of metal, roughly 18 x 24 inches. One side was painted black, edged narrowly in gold, with gold letters reading “Doctor Wheaton.” It was obviously quite old and well worn. As I looked further, I noticed a number of the oldest specimens in our bird collection carried an extra label: “Wheaton Collection.” I have since learned that OHS has 100 birds from the Wheaton Collection in our facility, and has placed another 500 on long-term loan to the Ohio State University. In those early days, as a novice Ohioan I had no idea who this man was, but the doctor’s shingle and two folding insect nets tucked into a cabinet of bird specimens captured my curiosity. I have found out over the years that Wheaton was a truly fascinating man. He was one of Ohio’s premier nineteenth-century students of ornithology. Among the dozen or so works Wheaton published on birds, he is best known for his 1860 Catalogue of the Birds of Ohio, and his updated 1882 Report of the Birds of Ohio. But that is just the start of a look at his life and influence.

Wheaton was born in Columbus, Ohio on 18 May 1840. Even early in his youth he had a strong interest in birds as well as other animals. His father having died while he was quite young, his mother often had to reprimand him for not finishing work he had promised, instead spending his time in the woods.

Upon completing public schooling in Columbus in 1857, J. M. Wheaton entered Denison University in Granville. Denison had no gymnasium, but he got plenty of exercise from long walks in the countryside. Frequently he returned from such walks with insect or bird specimens collected along the way. In 1860 Wheaton graduated from Denison, and then joined the Starling Medical College, the forerunner of the University Hospitals at The Ohio State University.

Upon completing his studies at the medical college, Wheaton enlisted on 4 March 1865 at Camp Chase in Columbus as assistant surgeon to the 18th Ohio Volunteer Infantry to serve in the Civil War. At least one biographer suggests he was tempted to enlist earlier, but felt he would be more useful as a surgeon than a regular soldier. Wheaton’s tenure in the military was short. Lee’s surrender at Appomattox was just over a month away. He was mustered out on 21 September 1865, having served less than seven months.

After the war, Wheaton returned home and set up medical practice in his parents’ home on the northeast corner of Fourth and Oak Streets in Columbus. I found it interesting that he was born, raised, conducted his medical practice, stored his natural history specimens, and finally died all in the same house. His mother continued to live
there with him and his wife and son until her death in 1884. The house has long since been eradicated by modern downtown businesses such as the City Center Mall.

Wheaton soon joined the staff of the Starling Medical College as a “demonstrator of anatomy.” In 1867 he was promoted to professor of anatomy. He maintained his private practice in his home while on the staff at Starling. In 1876 he married Lida Daniels, and three years later she gave birth to their only child, Robert J. Wheaton. He continued his medical practice, his teaching, and his natural history studies until his death from tuberculosis on 28 January 1887, just a few months short of his 47th birthday.

When Wheaton returned from the Civil War to set up medical practice in his home, some space had to be renovated to accommodate his practice. When it was set up the way he wanted, one room was reserved for bird cases and a second room for butterflies, beetles, snakes, and other natural history objects. Osman C. Hooper, reminiscing about Wheaton some twenty years after his death, recalled the following:

Dr. Wheaton’s private office was a museum, in which at night he often worked late. Sometimes he slept in that back room, after hours of study, with living birds or reptiles as his companions. It is related of him that one night, while sleeping on the office couch, he was awakened by an extraordinary pressure on the bedclothes. Wondering what was the cause of it, he suddenly remembered a box of venomous snakes that had arrived that day from the West. While he slept, the reptiles had escaped and one of them had coiled itself upon him. It was an anxious moment, but he was equal to the emergency. Hastily throwing the covers over the snake upon him, he leaped to the middle of the floor and escaped to the adjoining room. There he secured a light and, returning, captured the snakes and restored them to their box…

I have not found much else about Wheaton’s interest in reptiles and insects. They were obviously at least secondary to his work with birds. Still, in the collection of the Ohio Historical Society we have not only many of his bird skins, but also two insect nests that he used during his life. When his son donated the bird specimens and other objects a few years after his father’s death, Robert commented that he and his mother still retained a butterfly collection at their home. The whereabouts of this collection is unknown.

Wheaton’s fascination with insects was carried into his publication in 1875 on the food of birds as related to agriculture. In this paper he not only mentions insects as a source of food for birds, but also notes how many of them also eat other insects. He comments that in fact these “beneficial” insects probably eat more “injurious” insects than birds, so that “the destruction of insects by birds sinks into comparative insignificance.” He further notes with regret that while the state legislators “have shown sufficient zeal in protecting birds” that they needed to set up a State Entomologist, as other states had done by that time.

Wheaton’s 1860 Catalogue of the Birds of Ohio was published in the same year as his graduation from Denison. This was no small work, and in it he expanded the 222 species of birds from Kirkland’s 1838 list with 63 additional records for Ohio. Twenty years later his updated Report added only another 13 species.

Despite the obvious effort and attention to detail reflected in the 1860 Catalogue, there are some comments that puzzle us today. One wonders if some of these reflect his youthful 20 years, or merely the general attitude of the day. Within the Catalogue he comments on the game laws recently (1857) enacted by the Ohio Legislature. These were the first significant game laws in Ohio — preceded only by various wolf bounties, the famous squirrel scalp tax of 1807 and an 1829 act to prohibit trapping of muskrats between May and October. There was no agency in charge of these laws until 1873; the first part-time wardens started in 1886, and the first full-time wardens not until 1901. Nevertheless, the 1857 laws offered what was then considered sweeping protection for numerous game and non-game animals. Wheaton commented on potential additions to these protections.

The yellow-hammer or flicker may be included and receive protection though its edible qualities certainly do not rank very high. The meadow-lark… though not strictly a game bird, is yet quite edible. The passerine pigeon needs no protection.

The 1882 Report on the Birds of Ohio not only added species newly discovered, but revised the nomenclature to reflect current work by national experts, and expanded information on the life history of the birds — mostly on his own field observations. Elliot Coues, C. Hart Merriam and other nationally known ornithologists praised Wheaton’s report for both his thoroughness and the quality of his writing.

Wheaton was one of the founders of the American Ornithologists’ Union. In addition to his accomplishments as an ornithologist, he was an esteemed physician and teacher and a dedicated and active member of his church. His influence has carried on after his death, and not just for the important publications on birds and the specimens he left behind. In central Ohio today one of the most noted organizations for both amateur and professional naturalists is the Wheaton Club, named in his honor. The constitution of this club, voted on at its first meeting on 14 February 1922, says that the “object of this club shall be to provide a means for the interchange of ideas among those interested in ornithology and related branches of natural history.” Dues at that time were $1.00 a year. Ten members were recorded as present at that first meeting, including prominent names in the natural history of Ohio as James Hine, James Hambleton, Robert Gordon, C.F. Walker and Edward S. Thomas. By March, Milton Trautman had also become a member. The Club continues to this day to promote the study of natural history. It serves as a fitting tribute to one of Ohio’s noteworthy ornithologists.

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Wheaton, John M. papers. 1871-1886. A small manuscript collection of about 1/4 cubic feet — most correspondence relating to the publication of his 1882 report.
MSS741, Archives of the Ohio Historical Society.
Fifty Years of Spring Migration in Lorain County
Lynds Jones’s Notes, 1896-1945

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Lynds Jones (1865-1951) is among our eminent ornithologists. He founded the Wilson Bulletin, one of North America’s leading ornithological journals, in 1888. At Oberlin College seven years later he became the first university instructor in ornithology in the United States. He later served as curator of Oberlin’s zoological museum. Along with hundreds of articles about birds, he published in 1903 The Birds of Ohio: A Revised Catalogue, which he described as a revision of Wheaton’s 1882 Report on the Birds of Ohio. Jones’s cataloguing formed the basis for The Birds of Ohio, a popular work published the same year by his student and colleague William Leon Dawson. To the latter work Jones contributed the introduction and an analytical key to the identification of Ohio’s bird species. Jones and Dawson were tireless field observers, and started the first systematic “big days,” traveling Lorain County by streetcar, rowboat, and on foot each spring to find birds, and challenging others to surpass their total numbers of species seen in a single day.

In the background of Jones’s published work lay decades of field experience. He made Oberlin his home from 1890 until his death, during which time he kept copious records of bird observations made during innumerable field trips there and elsewhere in Lorain County. In many years records show he was out birding every day there from January through June. One hitherto unpublished distillation of his observations takes the form of 384 double binder pages covering the years 1896 through 1945, their contents arranged in a grid titled “Migration Record of [species name] at Oberlin, Ohio,” on which are entered in a small neat hand migration dates, numbers, and comments for 194 Lorain County species. His records for spring migration in these pages are far more numerous than those for fall.

The careful accumulation of so many sightings in one locale by an authority on field identification of birds offers a very reliable picture of bird migration at this latitude in Ohio. It can form the basis for useful comparisons with the timing of migrations in the present day, providing insight, for example, into questions about whether and how much climate change and other factors may have altered migration schedules and the status of certain species over the past 50-100 years.

These dates should be widely applicable across Ohio for true migrants. Thus, while yellow-bellied sapsuckers winter sparingly in a number of spots in the state, the first real wave of migrant sapsuckers from the south occurs statewide over a brief period, and most spring migrants headed for Canada take only a few days to pass through Ohio. One important deviation from Jones’s median dates for Lorain County will be most obvious in southern Ohio, among species that arrive much earlier there to breed—phoebes, gnatcatchers, some of the warblers, for example—and for these species Jones’s Lorain County median arrival dates may be weeks late, though his record early arrivals, probably representing overflights, may be much closer to normal southern Ohio arrivals.

Jones’s compilation may be used in many ways, but for our purposes we present it in calendar form rather than taxonomic order. The first date in each entry is the median arrival date as calculated by Jones from 50 years of observations, and then in parenthesis follows the earliest date on which he found each species as a migrant between 1896 and 1945. A number of these species—eastern bluebird, song sparrow, red-winged blackbird, mourning dove, belted kingfisher, eastern towhee, common grackle, American robin, etc.—though they winter widely in Ohio today, were regarded as rare in Lorain County in winter by Jones in the early part of the study period. He apparently made an effort to record only migrants throughout. With his data presented as they are here, we can look forward day by day this coming spring, as an observer during the period 1896-1945 would have, to the most likely date on which each species will show up as a migrant at Lorain’s latitude, and compare the extreme early dates on which each occurred there as recorded by Jones.

Not included are species—white-eyed vireo, lark sparrow, worm-eating warbler, etc.—Jones did not see frequently enough in Lorain County to provide comparable data. Some species now common—like double-crested cormorant or ring-billed gull—but very rare in Jones’s day do not appear either. Also omitted are birds that wintered in Lorain County—such as siskins, tree sparrows, junco—but could not easily be distinguished from migrants of these species from further south.

20 February: American crow (2/7/25)
22 February: American robin (2/7/25)
25 February: eastern bluebird (2/7/25)
26 February: song sparrow (2/8/25)
27 February: killdeer (2/8/25)
3 March: red-winged blackbird (2/12/38)
4 March: northern flicker (2/7/15), common grackle (2/6/45), eastern meadowlark (2/7/19)
6 March: canvasback (2/17/00)
7 March: mourning dove (2/8/27)
8 March: Canada goose (2/8/27&38)
9 March: common merganser (2/22/06)
10 March: American wigeon (2/14/37), American black duck (2/13/38), redhead (2/13/38)
11 March: mallard (2/13/38)
12 March: brown-headed cowbird (2/13/38)
14 March: rusty blackbird (2/12/38)
15 March: gadwall (2/16/41)
16 March: pintail (2/9/00), green-winged teal (2/16/41), eastern towhee (2/10/39)
20 March: lesser scaup (2/14/37), fox sparrow (3/3/23)
21 March: tundra swan (2/8/38), loggerhead shrike (3/2/19), turkey vulture
WHAN

(2/25/32), field sparrow (3/5/45)
22 March: hooded merganser (3/1/06), American coot (3/4/45), eastern phoebe (3/8/21&36)
23 March: bufflehead (3/4/39), northern shoveler (3/2/39), great blue heron (2/14/37)
24 March: greater scaup
25 March: ring-necked duck (2/16/41), red-breasted merganser (2/21/16),
American woodcock (3/4/32), vesper sparrow (3/13/21)
28 March: Wilson’s snipe (3/2/31)
31 March: pied-billed grebe (2/15/29)
2 April: chipping sparrow (3/18/45)
3 April: yellow-bellied sapsucker (3/5/35)
4 April: blue-winged teal (3/2/35), pectoral sandpiper (3/1/04), hermit thrush (3/12/32)
7 April: wood duck (3/8/42), ruddy duck (2/24/15), American bittern (3/15/25),
purple martin (3/21/43)
9 April: swamp sparrow (3/13/08)
10 April: Bonaparte’s gull
11 April: common loon (3/19/97), black-crowned night-heron (3/18/43), tree
swallow (3/14/04), upland sandpiper (3/22/04), ruby-crowned kinglet (3/15/45)
12 April: barn swallow (3/29/42)
13 April: greater yellowlegs (3/18/32), brown thrasher (3/21/35)
16 April: Louisiana waterthrush (3/28/04), savannah sparrow (3/21/03), white
throated sparrow (3/14/28)
18 April: osprey (4/5/34), spotted sandpiper (4/18/45), yellow-rumped warbler (3/16/45)
19 April: chimney swift (3/19/45)
20 April: common moorhen (3/30/00)
22 April: bank swallow (4/6/02)
23 April: green heron (4/6/13), American golden-plover (3/29/07), blue-gray
gnatcatcher (3/29/07), Henslow’s sparrow (4/10/15)
25 April: gray catbird (4/13/38)
27 April: red-headed woodpecker (4/10/31), marsh wren (4/21/01), bobolink (4/14/44&45)
28 April: solitary sandpiper (4/8/45), black-and-white warbler (4/30/20), wood
thrush (4/3/48), ovenbird (4/19/25)
29 April: Caspian tern (4/17/38), black-throated green warbler (4/8/45), palm
warbler (4/10/22), Baltimore oriole (4/4/43)

30 April: sora (4/11/08), Swainson’s thrush (3/29/45), warbling vireo (4/17/96),
cliff swallow (4/6/31)
1 May: northern waterthrush (4/16/44), lark sparrow (4/5/42)
2 May: common tern (4/7/23), Nashville warbler (4/17/35), blue-winged warbler
(4/19/14&25), veery (4/3/30), blue-headed vireo (4/17/02), American
redstart (4/7/39), white-crowned sparrow (4/12/42)
3 May: great crested flycatcher (4/17/38), yellow-throated vireo (4/20/14), whip
creeper (4/18/45)
4 May: scarlet tanager (4/14/43)
5 May: least flycatcher (4/11/03), American pipit (4/3/34), cerulean warbler
(4/26/42), magnolia warbler (4/19/29), Blackburnian warbler (4/19/42),
rose-breasted grosbeak (4/24/21&44)
6 May: black-throated blue warbler (4/27/96&23), chestnut-sided warbler (4/30/
33&42), sedge wren (4/26/25), indigo bunting (4/16/44)
7 May: black tern (4/27/43), orchard oriole (4/25/96)
8 May: eastern wood-pewee (4/26/15&42), orange-crowned warbler (4/19/42),
golden-winged warbler (5/1/16)
9 May: king rail (4/19/30), gray-checked thrush (4/26/44), pine warbler (4/17/42),
yellow-breasted chat (4/25/45), Cape May warbler (4/27/14&25), hooded
warbler (4/22/14)
10 May: bay-breasted warbler (4/29/25), Tennessee warbler (4/30/42), Lincoln’s
sparrow (4/4/42), prothonotary warbler (4/27/13)
11 May: least bittern (4/21/25), semipalmated plover (4/24/23), piping plover
(4/1/34), ruby-throated hummingbird (4/17/17&38), yellow-billed cuckoo
12 May: least sandpiper (4/16/28), Acadian flycatcher (4/26/15), northern parula
13 May: black-billed cuckoo (5/1/42), Canada warbler (4/28/96)
14 May: Kentucky warbler (4/27/04).

Here the spring migration record ends. Median and early arrival dates for later
migrants—such as among warblers mourning, Connecticut’s Wilson’s, and blackpoll—are
missing, and one hopes they will someday be found. Other interesting Lorain
County records in these papers involve a common redpoll 15 May 1929, a sanderling
10 June 1934, records of Kirtland’s warbler 9-11 May 1900 and 9 May 1904 and
2 May 1906, 45 lark sparrows during the span, a Lapland longspur 19 May 1931,
a second-hand report of trumpeter swan at Lorain 20 April 1891, 42 greater white
fronted geese 4 November 1907, and a short-eared owl 31 May 1932.

Acknowledgment

Students of Ohio’s ornithological history owe a debt to E. & S. Wood of Oberlin,
who rescued these and other valuable Jones papers from obscurity. Those from which
this article is derived will be donated to the Oberlin Archives at Oberlin College, in
whose care are many other Jones materials.

The Ohio Cardinal

Vol. 28, No. 1 • Autumn 2004
Fourteen Years of Raptor Records for Ohio

By Lawrence E. Hicks

Among papers of Lawrence E. Hicks (1905-1957) preserved at Ohio State University’s Museum of Biological Diversity is a single sheet presenting in tabular form the results of his yearly field observations of raptors as a youth from 1918 through 1931. The sheet is dated 26 March 1932. He says of the data it records that the “Field work has been done in each of the 88 counties during each of the last five years, in all, every township has been visited. Records before 1925 were limited to 20 to 40 counties each year.” Fourteen years, over a hundred thousand miles traveled, every township in Ohio visited—it is a feat unlikely to be duplicated, and worth study even if only to compare what we know, or think we know, today.”—Ed.

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Turkey Vulture | 461 | 896 | 691 | 1,284 | 920 | 1,230 | 6,904
Black Vulture | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Goshawk | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Sharp-shinned Hawk | 8   | 7   | 3   | 4    | 9   | 11   | 52
Cooper Hawk | 12  | 8   | 16  | 21   | 18  | 31   | 124
Red-tailed Hawk | 18  | 12  | 21  | 16   | 28  | 36   | 150
Red-shouldered Hawk | 9   | 11  | 14  | 11   | 10  | 18   | 73
Broad-winged Hawk | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Rough-legged Hawk | 2   | 0   | 1   | 0    | 3   | 1    | 8
Golden Eagle | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Bald Eagle | 1   | 0   | 1   | 0    | 1   | 0    | 5
Osprey | 1   | 0   | 0   | 1    | 0   | 0    | 2
Duck Hawk | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Pigeon Hawk | 0   | 0   | 0   | 4    | 0   | 0    | 4
Sparrow Hawk | 86  | 121 | 81  | 196  | 184 | 163  | 841
Barn Owl | 8   | 12  | 6   | 17   | 18  | 21   | 86
Screech Owl | 31  | 24  | 38  | 52   | 38  | 26   | 206
Great Horned Owl | 18  | 19  | 28  | 36   | 21  | 43   | 139
Snowy Owl | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Barred Owl | 8   | 6   | 4   | 2    | 1   | 4    | 19
Long-eared Owl | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1    | 0   | 1    | 2
Saw-whet Owl | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0
Short-eared Owl | 1   | 0   | 0   | 2    | 0   | 1    | 4
Marsh Hawk | 31  | 26  | 18  | 34   | 21  | 61   | 162

TOTALS | 697 | 1,142 | 923 | 1,679 | 1,273 | 1,648 | 7,676

[Continued on next page]
Swimming in the Black-crowned Night-Heron

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On 1 September 2004 at approximately 2000 hours, an adult black-crowned night-heron Nycticorax nycticorax was observed hunting from a low perch at Lower Shaker Lake in Shaker Heights, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The heron was bent in typical hunting posture (Kushlan 1978, Sibley 2000) for several minutes, after which it crouched and then entered the water. The bird swam to ~3 m from shore with its head and neck positioned in a sigmoid, grebe-like fashion and then circled back, reasumed its position on the perch, and apparently continued to hunt. Observations continued for seven minutes, during which the bird did not move. Its entire time in the water lasted less than one minute. At no point did the bird appear distressed or disoriented, but appeared to make a deliberate decision to enter the water, swim for a short period, and return to its perch.

Black-crowned night-herons are known to swim (Davis 1993), but the accounts of this behavior are relatively few, and most accounts describe a bird alighting on the water from flight. In one of the first accounts of swimming, Wetmore (1920) reported a black-crowned night-heron alighting on water (six feet deep) to eat a floating, dead salamander (Ambystoma sp.). After seizing the carcass, the bird rested a moment and flew away. While this was Wetmore's only descriptive account of the behavior, he noted that black-crowned night-herons kept floating dead salamanders to a minimum. Hoffman (1941) reported a black-crowned night-heron flying from a sandy shore, alighting on the water, and swimming back to shore three times. The bird reassumed a relaxed posture on the shore, and appeared to have no particular motivation for the behavior. White (1947) documented three separate instances in which black-crowned night-herons floated on the surface of the water. One appeared to be resting, one had been displaced from a perch and was swimming to a new perch, and one appeared to be wetting its plumage for moisture in nest incubation. Of these behaviors, resting on the water is closest to what I observed at Lower Shaker Lake, although none of White's observations offer an exact description of what I observed. Allsopp & Allsopp (1965) also reported two instances of black-crowned night-herons alighting on calm water. One of the birds appeared to secure food.

In previous reports of black-crowned night-herons swimming, Kushlan (1978), Hancock & Kushlan (1984), and Martinez-Vilalta & Motis (1992) described “swimming feeding” as a foraging behavior in this species, but did not provide details about the behavior. Kushlan (1973) defined swimming feeding as striking at nearby prey while on the surface of the water. I did not observe the heron at Lower Shaker Lake capturing prey before swimming or consuming anything during

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Troy Emmons for his assistance in observation and characterization of the swimming behavior, Bill Whan for his helpful comments and suggestions throughout the preparation of this account, and Linda Birch of the Oxford University library for help in retrieving British publications.

Literature Cited

DISTEL


A Parting Shot . . .

One of the regal Cleveland peregrines endures an earful from a highly perturbed mockingbird. It was unclear which candidate each was supporting. Chad and Chris Saladin snapped a picture of the exchange on 3 August 2004.