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.

**Seasonal Report Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter (Dec.-Feb.)</td>
<td>March 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring (Mar.-May)</td>
<td>June 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer (June-July)</td>
<td>August 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn (Aug.-Nov.)</td>
<td>December 25</td>
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On the Cover: Juvenal Sabine’s gulls making their first trip south show up yearly in Ohio. This bird reliably haunted Huron Harbor 22-30 Nov. Brian Zwiebel’s photo may show a touch of first-winter plumage in the head and lesser coverts markings. See Rosche & Hannikman, *Birding* 21(5):241-246.

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**A personal statement from the editor**

It seems this issue will be my last as editor of *The Ohio Cardinal*. Ed Pierce, who as publisher for nearly thirty years has ably and selflessly ensured the Cardinal worked on behalf of Ohio’s birding community, can no longer do so, and has acted on plans to turn the journal over to the Ohio Ornithological Society. The current leadership of the OOS has not equally valued the Cardinal in the past, and now, having control of it, no longer wants my services. I thank our readers who for so many years have believed in the Cardinal and sent reports and notes and articles that served to enlarge our knowledge of Ohio’s birdlife. I hope that eventually circumstances will again permit a journal like this one to serve Ohio’s birders. In the meantime I look forward to continuing my work with birds and my friendships in our community, and will try to help readers in any other way I can. Because the future of this journal remains uncertain, I would appreciate it if regular contributors of records, etc., would continue sending copies to me as usual until matters are resolved. --Bill Whan

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**Fall 2007 Overview and Reports**

by Bill Whan

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No brief account of Ohio’s weather serves to describe the fall season of 2007. Record droughts in the southeastern US, and record rains in south-central areas, may have influenced the occurrences of birds here. Overall warmer temperatures delayed the migrations of some more northerly breeders. The Cincinnati area, for example, experienced 25 days of 90°+ and five days of 100°+ temperatures during a record-hot August, which was additionally the fourth driest locally, and the lower 48’s second warmest in recorded history (NOAA). Cleveland experienced its wettest recorded August, and Cleveland and Mansfield their third-warmest Octobers ever, Youngstown its second-warmest. Increasingly late average stays by regular Ohio species have followed recent warming trends. This season we set or tied a surprising five late Ohio record stays by migratory species.

Widespread failures of fruit/seed crops in Ontario compelled desperate boreal birds to arrive at our latitudes in unusual numbers. Red-breasted nuthatches appeared statewide quite early, and with time unusually widespread reports of siskins, common redpolls, and purple finches attracted attention. Later, species we haven’t seen or even expected here in years—eventing and pine grosbeaks and Bohemian waxwings—appeared in the northern tier of counties,
albeit in small numbers. Crop failures reduced populations of small rodents up north as well, leading to elevated numbers of northern saw-whet owls and perhaps northern shrikes, but nothing markedly unusual in apparent numbers of harriers, rough-legged hawks, short-eared owls, etc., as far as reports reveal.

Weather events produced notable migratory spikes among species that might otherwise have appeared in steadier progression. Note the remarkable numbers reported among sparrows, wrens, etc. in the day or two following a 12-degree drop in high temperatures on 10 October, for example, especially at Lakeshore migrant traps. The 16-degree drop on 15 November, too, brought winds that stirred many waterfowl to move south at last. Still, no measurable snow was recorded this fall in the central part of the state, where only on five late November days did the low temperatures even fall below freezing.

Paralleling our unusual irruption of “winter finches” was the delayed migration of other regular migrants from Canada, especially water birds. Lake Erie is the world’s most important wintering area for red-breasted mergansers, but this year they seemed late to arrive, and reduced in numbers; these assessments are of course based pretty much exclusively on shoreline observations. Many diving ducks failed to appear in expected numbers during the period. Loons, and grebes too, seemed to lag behind normal schedules, with few appearances before November, and swan movements mostly crowded near the hinge of their migratory window, as did those of Bonaparte’s gulls. A recent University of Wisconsin study found that lakes, rivers, and bays in the north now have 16 fewer days of ice cover than in 1975, a steady decline with fall freezes ten days later and spring thaws six days earlier.

Shorebirds found a few reservoirs with open mudflats on their upstream ends, like Hoover in Delaware and Mosquito in Trumbull counties. A few spots open to Lake Erie, such as Conneaut harbor, the Crane Creek estuary, and along the Cedar Point Chaussée, afforded shorebird habitat at least sporadically. The largely impounded western Lake Erie marshes afforded veteran shorebird census-takers Bolton & Szanto their worst numbers ever, especially after the Toledo area had 5+ inches more rain than normal in August. For example, only ten semipalmated plovers, 42 short-billed dowitchers, two solitary sandpipers, five red knots, 31 sanderlings, 60 semipalmated sandpipers, one western sandpiper, 186 least sandpipers, one white-rumped sandpiper, five Baird’s sandpipers, and 17 stilts sandpipers were total counts over the entire four-month season via day-long surveys each weekend in Lakeside marshes in Ohio and Michigan. Numbers like those from a single day at Conneaut harbor would not raise an eyebrow. Still, disturbed as it is by dogs, surfers, off-road vehicles, bonfires, etc., Conneaut’s records dwarfed all the shorebird numbers from huge areas in the care of State and Federal government wildlife agencies in NW Ohio.

Hunting reports of the following review species (though not always accompanied by documentation) were received: Ross’s goose (Anser serrirostris), American coot (Fulica americana), woodcock (Scolopax minor), belted kingfisher (Ceryle alcyon), chimney swift (Chaetura pelagica), bearded vireo (Vireo solitarius), eastern kingbird (Tyrannus tyrannus), yellow warbler (Dendroica petechia), bay-breasted warbler (Dendroica castanea), blackpoll warbler (Dendroica striate), northern parula (Dendroica collaris), ovenbird (Seiurus aurocapillus), blue-winged warbler (Dendroica caerulescens), yellow-rumped warbler (Dendroica coronata), hooded warbler (Dendroica citrina), American robin (Turdus migratorius), northern mockingbird (Mimus polyglottos), redwing blackbird (Agelaius phoeniceus), house sparrow (Passer domesticus), house finch (Carpodacus mexicanus), Carolina wren (Thryothorus ludovicianus), grey catbird (Dumetella carolinensis), American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos), snowy egret (Egretta thula), great egret (Egretta alba), black-crowned night heron (Nycticorax nycticorax), great blue heron (Ardea herodias), green heron (Butorides virescens), common gallinule (Porphyrio martinica), common moorhen (Gallinula chloropus), banded rail (Ornithorhynchus auritus), ruddy turnstone (Arenaria interpres), common scoter (Melanitta nigra), surf scoter (Melanitta perspicillata), white-winged scoter (Melanitta fusca), red phalarope (Phalaropus fulicarius), black phalarope (Phalaropus lobatus), snowy plover (Charadrius nivosus), western sandpiper (Calidris mauri), Semipalmated sandpiper (Calidris pusilla), willet (Catoptrophorus semipalmatus), sandwich tern (Sterna sandvicensis), black tern (Chlidonias niger), least tern (Sterna antillarum), handsome tern (Sterna elegans), spotted sandpiper (Actitis macularius), lesser yellowlegs (Tringa flavipes), greater yellowlegs (Tringa melanoleuca), American golden plover (Pluvialis dominica), red knot (Calidris canutus), black bellied plover (Pluvialis squatarola), white-fronted goose (Anser albifrons),豆雁 (Anser fabalis), greater white-fronted goose (Anser albifrons), lesser snow goose (Chen caerulescens), greater snow goose (Chen caerulescens), Canada goose (Branta canadensis), snow goose (Chen caerulescens), Canada goose (Branta canadensis), graylag goose (Anser anser), barnacle goose (Branta leucopsis), mallard (Anas platyrhynchos), wood duck (Aix sponsa), northern shoveler (Anas clypeata), black duck (Anas rubripes), mallard (Anas platyrhynchos), blue-winged teal (Anas discors), green-winged teal (Anas crecca), ring-necked duck (Aythya collaris), bufflehead (Bucephala albeola), Canvasback (Aythya valisineria), red-breasted merganser (Mergus serrator), northern pintail (Anas acuta), red-breasted merganser (Mergus serrator), American black duck (Anas rubripes), mallard (Anas platyrhynchos), blue-winged teal (Anas discors), green-winged teal (Anas crecca), ring-necked duck (Aythya collaris), bufflehead (Bucephala 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Greater white-fronted goose: The only fall reports made public were of three in Wyandot 2 Nov (R. Counts) and one at Springville Marsh SNP 25 Nov (T. Bartlett).

Snow goose: One seen 28-30 Aug at MBSP (D. Friedman) was apparently not that at ONWR observed to have an injured leg on 27 Aug (G. Crippen); the latter may have been one fed by local residents for at least two years. One was seen 27 Oct in Stark (K. Miller) and six at Deer Ck SP 29 Oct (B. Royse), but most reports, though totaling just 203 birds, came from Nov, in Lake, Erie, Paulding, Auglaize, Ottawa, Lucas, Preble, Holmes, and Hancock. The high count was 65 at HBSP 21 Nov (R. Hannimak).

Ross's goose: One frequented the Thomas Wetlands in Paulding 15-18 Nov (D&M Dunakin, S. Myers). Others were reported from Auglaize the following day, and another went undocumented from the CCE on the 24th.

Brant: A decent flight, with seven at Conneaut 12 (B. Lane) through 15 Oct (M. Vass), four at HBSP 28 Oct (E. Kistler), 29 passing LSR on 7 Nov (J. Pogacnik), one at Cleveland's Wildwood Pk 24 Nov (N. Anderson), and an imm that put in a rare inland showing at Evans Lk in Mahoning 28 Nov (C. Holt).

Cackling goose: Two were reported in Stark 27 Nov, another at CPNWR 11 Nov, one in Auglaize 12 Nov, four in Lake 13 Nov (J. Pogacnik), one at MBSP 18-24 Nov (J. Hammond), one in Wood 25 Nov (T. Kemp), and a flock of seven overhead in the Oak Openings 22 Nov. If you want to know why documentation is required for sightings of this species, see the photo of B. c. parvipes in this issue.

Tundra swan: First reported with seven 1 Nov in Lucas (E. Tramer), numbers rose in mid-Nov, with ~400 at Clear Flk Res (Richland, G. Cowell) and 326 in nine flocks over Holmes (E. Schlabach), both on 23 Nov, and 450 at ONWR on the 24th (P. Chao). Nearly 1500 were reported from their relatively narrow pathway across northern Ohio, with reports of good numbers as far south as ~50 in Harrison 23 Nov (D. Smith) and 32 at KPWA 30 Nov (C. Caldwell).

Lana Hays got this great comparison image of snow and Ross's geese at the wintering grounds in New Mexico's Bosque del Apache NWR on 21 Nov 2007.

Wood duck: B. Roach observed 73 in the CVNP 5 Nov, and the last report was of a female near Wooster on 28 Nov (S. Snyder).

Gadwall: First reported at Conneaut 21 Aug (J. Pogacnik), 200+ were present for the 7 Oct ONWR, and 756 for that of 4 Nov. The CPNWR census team counted 819 on 11 Nov.

American wigeon: Three basked in Conneaut waters 21 Aug (C. Holt), and the ONWR census counted 3000+ on 7 Oct and 350 on 4 Nov. Six arrived at Camp Dennison by 18 Oct (B. Foppe), and on 23 Nov 60 plied Caesar Ck Lake (F. Frick).

American black duck: Numbers from their Sandusky Bay offshore haunts were not made public, but 130 were at Ottawa NWR 24 Nov (P. Chao), and 150 at a Findlay Res 22 Nov (B. Hardesty).

Mallard: Less numerous than usual, with 3295 for the Cedar Pt NWR census of 14 Oct, and 1350 for that of ONWR on 4 Nov.


Northern shoveler: On 21 Aug, single birds were at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik) and Mosquito WA (C. Holt). Later, numbers peaked at 163 for the 11 Nov CPNWR census.

Northern pintail: Two early arrivals were at the Thomas Wetlands in Paulding 18 Aug (D&M Dunakin). Later, numbers reached ~300 for the 4 Nov ONWR census, and 120 at Mosquito WA 17 Nov (C. Babyak).

Green-winged teal: An Ohio breeder, two were in Hamilton 17 Aug (J. Stenger) and 30 in Hardin the 23rd (R. Counts). Migrant numbers peaked at ONWR, where the census had 2570+ on 7 Oct. The CPNWR census still had 477 on 11 Nov, and one lingered at BCSP 25 Nov (D. Overacker).

Canvasback: Two showed up for the ONWR census of 7 Oct, with another duo at Camp Dennison the 27th (B. Foppe). D. Overacker observed one in Hancock 24 Nov.

Redhead: Like the previous species, scarce, with high counts of two, in Hardin 12 Oct (R. Counts), at Camp Dennison 2 Nov (B. Foppe), and at Clear Fork Res 16 Nov (S. Snyder).

Ring-necked duck: Arrived as early as 6 Oct, with two at Winton Wds in Hamilton (J. Stenger), but larger numbers came only in Nov, as with 956 for the CPNWR census of the 11th, the high count for the period.
Greater scaup: Oddly, a hen spent at least 9 Aug through at least 19 Oct (B. Lane) in Conneaut Harbor; C. Holt noted it was in heavy wing molt on 4 Sept. Otherwise, numbers were as low as those of other diving ducks during a warm fall, with a high count of only 12 at HBSP 10 Nov (P. Chaon).

Lesser scaup: First reported from Paulding 11 Oct (M&D Dunakin). Fifty-plus were at Hoover Res 25 Oct (R. Thorn), and 35 at Clear Fork Res 16 Nov (S. Snyder) for a rather poor showing overall.

Surf scoter: At certain times and places, scoters were oddly enough the only waterfowl in the game this fall. Thirty-eight reported, with the first at LSR 13 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and three down in Lk Logan in Hocking 27 Nov (J. Fry). Offshore from the scoter mother lode at Rocky River poor viewing conditions led observers to report 70-75 “surf/black scoters” on 19 Nov and 60-70 on 27 Nov.

White-winged scoter: Always the scarcest scoter these days. P. Lozano had one as early as 4 Oct in Cuyahoga, and J. Edwards another there on 20 Nov. P. Chaon reported an impressive 17 at HBSP 10 Nov, J. Pogacnik five at LSR 17 Nov, and E. Kistler two at Geneva SP 25 Nov.

Black scoter: Two were off Rocky River 4 Nov (P. Lozano), and 26 off LSR the 7th (J. Pogacnik). P. Chaon had five off HBSP 10 Nov, J. Herman two 10 Nov, one on 16 Nov, and three on 22 Nov at Clear Fork Res, and T. Bartlett 12 off Kelleys Island 17 Nov. The proportion of this species in mixed scoter flocks was to dominate in the next period.

Long-tailed duck: The first to arrive were five females at Clear Fork Res (Richland) on 24 Oct, observer J. Herman’s second Oct record in 34 years of birthing there. One was seen 10 Nov at HBSP (P. Chaon), and another the next day at Huron (J. Pogacnik). The high count of seven was off Perry Park in Lake 18 Nov (J. Hammond). Pogacnik had another at LSR on 22 Nov.

Bufflehead: Quite early was one off HBSP 14 Sept (R. Hannikman). More on schedule was one at South Bass Isl 26 Oct (L. Brohl), and 461 had gathered by 17 Nov (T. Bartlett) at traditional haunts off Kelleys Isl. In the southern part of the state, B. Foppe had seven at Camp Dennison by 2 Nov.

Common goldeneye: All but absent, with a quite early report on 14 Oct from Sims Pk in Euclid (P. Lozano), two off Kelleys Isl 17 Nov (T. Bartlett) and one from Evans Lk in Mahoning 28 Nov (C. Holt).

Hooded merganser: Migrants mostly held off until Nov, with 100+ at Hoover Res on the 5th (B. Zimmerman), 65 at the Shaker Lks 18 Nov (L. Deining), and 120+ at Conneaut 29 Nov (B. Lane).

Common merganser: Many reports most likely represented local breeders from NE Ohio and NW Pennsylvania, with 30 on 9 Oct at Conneaut (C. Holt). One at HBSP on 25 Sept (R. Hannikman) was perhaps a quite early arrival. Three had arrived at Kelleys Isl by 17 Nov (T. Bartlett).
Red-necked grebe: Seen singly as usual, with one at Wellington Res 21 Oct (J. McCormac), one at BCSP 4 Nov (D. Overacker), and another in Conneaut 19-21 Nov (B. Lane, ph).

Eared grebe: Reported only on 8 Sept, with one at the Cedar Pt Chaussée (B. Sparks), and four at a former stronghold, BCSP (D. Overacker).

Northern gannet: A juvenile seen passing LSR on 17 Nov may or may not have been one doing likewise on 23 Nov.

American white pelican: Continues to garner more reports in Ohio, this season with five passing overhead at Magee WA (M. Warren et al.) 15 Sept, one in Butler 16-23 Sept (M. Busam), another at the CCE 5 Oct (M. Bolton), one or perhaps two at GLSM 3 and 27 Oct (J. Bowers), and three in Sandusky Bay 14 Oct (T. Fishburn).

Double-crested cormorant: Many passed along the lakefront the first half of August. E. Schlabach counted 540 flybys over Holmes on 12 Oct, D. Brinkman ~600 at MWW in Hamilton 23 Oct, and T. Bartlett an impressive 12,625 for the 17 Nov Kelleys Island census. B. Lane reported a radio transmitter on one at Conneaut 26-28 Nov, learning later that it came from the Abitibi region of western Quebec.

American bittern: Never reported in great numbers in fall, one was found at Camp Dennison 3 Sept (D. Smoyer), one in Hardin 11 Oct, and another at MCWS on 30 Oct (B. Jones).


Great egret: Successful nests in Mahoning numbered three (L. Warren), and in Columbus two or perhaps three (M. Brehmer). No doubt the latter reinforced numbers of egrets in town, with 22 in a single flock on 10 Aug (R. Thorn) and 15 on 21 Oct (R. Cressman). Thirty were locally striking at Conneaut on 3 Oct (C. Holt). The 4 Nov ONWR census tallied 52. Later, E. Roush had one at Cowan Lk 23 Nov, and G. Crippen observed two passing Bradstreet Landing on the Lake Erie shore the following day.

Snowy egret: G. Crippen reported one at the Turning Pt Is. colony in Sandusky 26 Aug. B. Master found seven at ONWR 9 Sept, and C. Caldwell an impressive 17 at Pipe Ck WA in Sandusky 3 Sept.

Delores Cole got close to the little blue heron at Hoover Res on 25 Aug for this shot.

Little blue heron: Not many. M. Erickson found an imm at Hoover Res on 7 Aug, which may have been seen repeatedly seen there through 11 Sept (C. Bombaci). B. Glauser (fide L. Brohl) reported one on Middle Bass Isl 3 Sept. One the same day C. Caldwell found an imm at ONWR.

Cattle egret: At ONWR, one was around 26 Aug (G. Crippen), two on 3 Sept (C. Caldwell), and three on 29 Sept (D. Overacker). Four occupied Wood on 6 Nov (T. Kemp), and another four were near Sandusky 10 Nov (J. Pogacnik). P. Lozano reported a flyby at Rocky River PK on 11 Nov. A. Yoder followed one in Coshocton 17-23 Nov.

Black-crowned night-heron: At Lk Logan in Hocking, an adult was seen 7 Aug (B. Crow), and an adult and imm 10 Sept (J. Watts). J. Bowers reported this species nesting at Mercer WA this summer and last. Five were seen in Hamilton 10 Aug (D. Brinkman), with one remaining at the Spring Grove Cen colony 2 Nov (L. Brumbaugh). M. Packer reported an adult with a young bird 17 Aug at Pickerington Ponds in Franklin. Two adults and four juveniles were at Conneaut 17 Sept, and some present through 18 Oct (C. Holt). Five were at the Shaker Lks on 30 Aug (L. Deininger). P. Lozano’s visits to the flats roost in Cleveland produced 33 on 11 Nov, 55 on 18 Nov, and 63 on 24 Nov; a gas leak at this location is to lead to at least temporary destruction of the site, it seems.

Yellow-crowned night-heron: Scarce in fall. T. Uhlmam found an imm at Caesar Ck SP on 7 Sept.

White ibis: S. Snyder photographed an imm bird in Holmes on 2 Sept for the eighth state record.

Glossy ibis: One was photographed at Burr Oak SP in Morgan during a 1-8 Sept stay (L. Barmhart, N. Sudnick). Others were reported from SVWA on 14 Oct, and 20-21 Oct at Sandy Ridge MP in Lorain, but were undocumented.

Ibis sp: Two were reported by L. Brohl fide S. Young in Erie 30 Nov through the eop. E. Schlabach reported a flyby dark ibis at Funk Bottoms on 5 Oct.

Black vulture: One at Alum Ck SP 10 Oct (R. Thom) was unusual. Birds at winter roosts in Nov included the following: 13 in Ross the 7th (T. Bain), 100+ in Granville the 14th (J. Nisely fide B. Glick), 30+ near Cowan Lk the 18th (L. Gara), 36 at HWSF the 21st (J. Stenger), two in Holmes the 24th (J. Miller), and 50 in Coshocton the 20th (A. Yoder).

Turkey vulture: B. Lane reported 90 on the beach at Conneaut on 16 Aug, and C. Holt 40 there 8 Sept. R&S Harlan found 49 (including seven juv perhaps indicating local nesting) at the Cleveland Zoo’s African plains exhibit on 13 Sept. B. Glick counted 2603 migrating over Toledo on 24 Oct. Up to 1000 were roosting in Granville 14 Nov (J. Nisely fide B. Glick). E. Roush had 90 at the Cowan Lk roost 22 Nov and 200+ were in Athens 25 Nov (B. Whan).
Osprey: Most young in the state fledged in the first week of August, and R. Thorn noted four early migrants in the Columbus area 11 Aug. The ONWR census team noted seven on 4 Nov. F. Frick found the season's latest, on 23 Nov at Caesar Ck SP.

White-tailed kite: Documentation was not accepted by the OBRC for a sighting reporting this species on 13 Sept in Summit in the CVNP. The closest nests are in Florida, but the species is nomadic, with five accepted records in neighboring states (WV, IN, IL); there is also a report from Hamilton Co in May of 1973 that has not undergone formal review. See OBRC Actions in this issue.

Mississippi kite: J. Watts confirmed the continuing presence of two birds at the Hocking site 30 Aug. A. Boone photographed an adult feeding a young bird the next day to confirm breeding. Birds were photographed as late as 3 Sept (A. Osborn). B. Crow reported an adult and an immature two dozen miles away in Vinton, probably Hocking birds. Other Mississippi kites have nested in recent years further north than the latitude of Cleveland, such as in Iowa and Nebraska.

Northern harrier: Late August birds—such as five in Hardin on the 23rd (R. Counts) or one seen in the CPNWR the 26th (E. Tramer)—could be local nesters or early arrivals, though the locales suggest the former. Migrants arrived 3 Sept in Wayne (S. Snyder), 5 Sept in Columbian (B. Lane) and at MWV (J. Mundy, and 19 Sept in Vinton (B. Crow). A count of 11 over Toledo on 24 Oct (E. Schlabach) demonstrates the rather leisurely pace of their passage south.

Northern goshawk: An underestimated ID problem, and P. Lopez commendedly called “probable” the first report, one in Lorain 9 Oct. D. English reported an imm over Solon the following day. C. Mathena had another at Caesar Ck SP 18 Oct, refound by L. Garra the 20th. Migrants over Toledo were noted by M. Anderson on 17 Oct and E. Schlabach on 24 Oct. M&D Dunaikin had a flyover in Paulding during the period.

Red-shouldered hawk: Outnumbered red-tails 10-12 on the 22 Sept CVNP census.

Broad-winged hawk: Scarce in the Dayton area, one was around 31 Aug at Glen Helen in Yellow Springs (D. Distler). The peak of migration brought flights over the Oak Openings of 336 on 16 Sept (M. Anderson) and ~200 rising from roosts there early the following morning (R. Nirschel).

Red-tailed hawk: Less reliant on cold-blooded prey, red-tails moved later, with a count of 120 over Toledo on 24 Oct (E. Schlabach).

Rough-legged hawk: The first report came from Killdeer Plains on 14 Oct (R. Sempier). The Wilds hosted its first on 8 Nov (A. Parker), and R. Hannikman noticed one passing over HBSP 24 Nov. Overall numbers seemed fewer than usual.

Golden eagle: Quite early, a first-year bird was described over Columbus on 16 Sept (S. Gaunt). Two, ad and imm, passed over Irwin Prairie 30 Oct (R. Nirschel), and a juv was at BCSP the following day (B. Menker). B. Glick saw another over Toledo 1 Nov. The first report from The Wilds came as late as 30 Nov, with doubt remaining as to its wintering status (A. Parker).

Merlin: August merlins are exceedingly rare, and one well seen at Hoover Res on the 17th is an early Ohio record by a day (C. Bombaci, R. Williams). Might it signal breeding in the region? The species nests now in NW PA not far from the Ohio border. The high counts were three at Conneaut early enough on 8 Sept (G. Leidy) and four in Holmes on 12 Oct (E. Schlabach). Birds returning to established wintering spots included the first at Calvary in Garfield Hts on 7 Nov, and another on 25 Nov (both L. Gardella), and one at Green Lawn in Columbus 18 Nov (R. Cressman). Twenty-plus reports of migrants came during the period.

Prairie falcon: Well documented was a one-day wonder in Lucas near ONWR on 27 Nov (D. Sparks-Jackson, M. Yawney).

Yellow rail: Reportedly kicked up during sparrow walks were birds at Dixie 4 on 6 Oct and at Funk WA 14 Oct. One from Richland Oct 1 would be a first county record if viewable. An injured bird found in Columbus 12 Oct went to the Ohio Wildlife Ctr (ph L. Fusco).

Sora: A number of Sept reports were led by 57 tallied for the CPNWR census of the 23rd. The latest was one spotted at Conneaut on 22 Oct (B. Lane).

Common moorhen: Not well reported, with a high count of only nine, at Killbuck WA 15 Aug (S. Snyder).

American coot: First reported from SVWA on 5 Sept (J. Habig), and in the latter half of the period became conspicuous for local abundance, with 100+ on Sandusky Bay 6 Oct (N. Anderson), 800+ for the 7 Oct ONWR census, 1389 at Camp Dennison 27 Oct (R. Poppe), ~500 at Killdeer Plains 3 Nov (R. Sempier), 210 at Nimisila Res 9 Nov (R&S Harlan), 1500+ at Wellington Res on 10 Nov (B. Whan).

Sandhill crane: Earlier records included one heard at GRWA 6 Oct (J. Heffich), three in Wyandot 28 Aug (R. Counts), and two at Mosquito WA 3 Sept (M. Vass). The DOW reported 16 known nests in the state, with 22 colts produced. Numbers gathering at Funk WA in Oct, e.g., 49 on the 13th, well exceeded those of local nesters, reaching 86 by 28 Nov (S. Snyder). Seven were at the traditional La Due spots on 29 Oct (M. Egar). Migrants passed through in force following the 15 Nov front and sustained high winds from the west, with over 2200 reported, some migrants as far east as Licking in the center of the state.

American golden-plover: The first was early, and a first local record, at The Wilds on 1 Aug (J. Larson). Few in number, with a high of 18 on 23 Aug in Hardin (R. Counts). Beyond a few counts of seven or fewer at Conneaut, other reports of interest included an ad and a molting juv at Funk 29 Aug (R. Troutman), three at Hoover Res 4 Sept (B. Heck), and the latest, five at MCWS on 7 Oct (B. Jones).

Semipalmated plover: A disappointingly low number was 20+ at Conneaut, on 8 Sept (C. Holt). The Caesar Creek beach hosted but two, one on 4 Aug (L. Gara) and one on 13 Oct (B. Powell). BCSP’s beach had three during the season (D. Overacker). Bolton and Szanto found a grand total of ten during the fall in the NW marshes, a disappointing result.

Piping plover: One report, a bird found at Port Clinton on 4 Aug by L. Rosche fide S. Duris (ph).

Killdeer: Strong numbers, especially in Aug, with ~500 at Hoover Res the 3rd (J. Kuenzli), and ~1750 in one Hardin location the 23rd (R. Counts).

American avocet: First seen 4 Aug at Conneaut (C. Holt), and last reported from MCWS 29 Oct (B. Jones), the high count was 22 at Conneaut on 25 Aug (M. Vass fide B. Coulter). Overall 43 reported.

Spotted sandpiper: High counts included ~45 at Hoover Res 3 Aug (J. Kuenzli) and ~60 there on 14 Aug (C. Bombaci).

Solitary sandpiper: Three reported from the NW marshes, including surveys each weekend by Bolton and Szanto. High count came at Caesar Creek SP 18 on 5 Aug (L. Gara). Last reported from Brown 23 Sept (B. Stanley).

Greater yellowlegs: The first juvenile was reported 4 Aug from Conneaut (C. Holt). R. Counts had 110 at a single Hardin locality 24 Aug. Two persisted as late as 12 Nov at Deer Ck SP (B. Royse).

Willet: Eight different reports (26 individuals) came from Conneaut, including the first juvenile on 8 Sept (C. Holt) and the high count of 12 on 16 Aug (B. Lane). Quite late was one at Hoover Res 13 Oct (J. Kuenzli). None found by shorebird surveys in the NW marshes this season. See for the period were 37.

Lesser yellowlegs: The first juvenile showed up 8 Aug at Conneaut (C. Holt). The high count was 485 in one Hardin spot 24 Aug (R. Counts). In Holmes 95 flyovers were seen 11 Oct (E. Schlabach). The surveys of NW marshes found 1042 for the season, fewer than usual.

Upland sandpiper: Lamentably few, as has become expected. A. Yoder had one in Coshocton 1 Aug, and J. Taber (fide B. Hardesty) another in Hancock 27 Aug.

Whimbrel: August brought one to Mosquito WA the 26th (E. Kistler) and 27th (J. Lehman), as well as another on the latter date at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik). Conneaut had a flyover on 3 Sept (L. Hays). J. Straub (fide A. Boone) reported one at Deer Ck SP in “mid-Sept.” R. Hannikman saw one at HBSP on 28 Sept.

Hudsonian godwit: Eight grazed the Cedar Pt Chaussee 8 Sept (B. Sparks) and nine the following day (B. Warner), with two remaining 19 Sept (K. Miller). D. Overacker spotted one at the CCE on 30 Sept, where three were present 5 Oct (M. Bolton), and J. Pogacnik saw three on Port Clinton’s beach 10 Nov.

Marbled godwit: J. Haw found one at Pipe Ck WA 5 Aug (fide P. Lozano). At Mosquito WA, one on 6 Aug (J. Petruzzuri) grew to three on 14 Aug (E. Kistler), then fell to two 21 Aug (C. Holt), with a final individual present 1 Sept (C. Babjak). Another spent 20 (W. Shaffer) through 23 Aug (B. Lane) at Conneaut. EFSP hosted one on 9 Sept (D. Morse). Bolton and Szanto found one this fall in the NW marshes.

Ruddy turnstone: None were found in the NW marshes by Bolton & Szanto this season. First reported was one at Conneaut 5 Aug (P. Choian), where the first juvenile was present 1 Sept (C. Holt), and the high count of nine 21 Aug (B. Lane).

Red knot: Only about thirty-five reported, the first of fall an ad at Conneaut 16 Aug (B. Lane), then two at Winous Pt the 17th (T. Bartlett), a juv at Mosquito WA 18 Aug (B. Warner). High count only five, at Conneaut 4 Sept (B. Lane). A total of five were found in the NW marshes during the period (M. Bolton, J. Szanto). One was found at a Findlay res 3 Sept (R. Counts). An alternate-plumed adult was at Conneaut as late as 10 Sept (M. Vass).

Sanderling: Larger counts included 50+ at Conneaut 21 Aug (C. Holt) and 84 for the 14 Oct CPNWR census (E. Tramer). First juvenile reported at Conneaut 21 Aug (Holt), with a late adult 1 Sept. R. Troutman found two at Funk 29 Aug. Findlay reservoirs had four 28 Aug (B. Hardesty), 11 on 16 Sept (R. Counts), and six 24 Sept (B. Whan). Six strolled the Indiana Lk beach 20 Sept (T. Shively).

Semipalmated sandpiper: Often our most numerous migrant shorebird, counts of ~100 came from Hoover Res 14 Aug (A. Sewell), 27 & 29 Aug at Winous Pt (T. Bartlett), and Conneaut 10 Sept (M. Vass), with ~75 at the Cedar Point Chaussee 19 Sept (K. Miller). Astonishingly, Bolton and Szanto found only 60 in the NW marshes this fall. One was in Montgomery on 18 Nov (S. Egleston).

Western sandpiper: Reported in small numbers in many spots favored by peeps, with the last report of three from CPNWR on 11 Nov (E. Tramer).

Least sandpiper: Larger numbers came from Hoover Res (125+ on 14 Aug, C. Bombaci), Winous Pt (~100 on 27 & 29 Aug, T. Bartlett), and Conneaut (100+ on 10 Sept, M. Vass). Late reports on 18 Nov came from BCSP (two, D. Overacker) and Montgomery (four, S. Egleston fide R. Asamoto).
White-rumped sandpiper: Found as singletons at the usual Lakefront spots, except for two at Winous Pt 15 Aug (T. Bartlett), and two at the Cedar Pt Chaussee 19 Sept (K. Miller). Inland reports of single birds came from Paulding on 3 Aug (M&D Dunakin), Caesar Ck SP 6 Oct (R. Asamoto), and KPWA 14 Oct (R. Sempier). Only six found season-long in the NW marshes.

Baird’s sandpiper: With no reports from summer, the first came from Hoover on 3 Aug (J. Kuenzli). High counts were only four at Mosquito WA 13 Aug (M. Vass) and three in a Findlay res 16 Sept (R. Counts). One was in Hamilton 17 Aug (Jay Stenger), and the latest at GLSM 19 Oct (C. Mathena). Only six reported during the period in the NW marshes.

Pectoral sandpiper: Fairly puny counts involved 50 on 3 Aug at Hoover (J. Kuenzli), 180 in Hardin 24 Aug (R. Counts), and 50 in Erie 19 Sept (K. Miller). The Ottawa NWR census found 24 on 4 Nov.

Purple sandpiper: Remarkably enough, a bird feeding on the beach and in shallows in Conneaut Harbor on 29 Oct was earlyish, in uncharacteristic habitat, and the only fall individual reported.

Dunlin: One at Conneaut 16 Aug was a surprise (B. Lane), and had probably sat out the breeding season. The first to appear on a more normal schedule was in Erie on 19 Sept (K. Miller), and the ONWR was to count 475 on 7 Oct and ~1200 on 4 Nov. From the NW marshes, M. Bolton and J. Szanto reported two in Aug (the non-traditional non-breeders), none in September, 10,804 (over six occasions) in October, and 442 in Nov.

Stilt sandpiper: One was in basic plumage as early as 1 Aug at Hoover Res, perhaps a non-breeder (B. Master). The first juvenile was reported 10 Aug from Conneaut (C. Holt). High count was only 36 in Erie on 22 Sept (C. Holt). Only seventeen were found in the NW marshes (Bolton & Szanto).

Buff-breasted sandpiper: An excellent flight, with 97 reported. After a very early 28 July migrant, the first of fall appeared 22 Aug, at Mosquito WA (J. Petruzzi), with two late on 8 Oct near Findlay (B. Hardesty). Reports came from Trumbull, Hancock, Franklin, Wayne, Delaware, Ashtabula, Clark, Warren, and Logan. The high count at Hoover was difficult to determine, but at least 18 were present on 7 Sept (J. Brown).

Ruff: A juv touched down at Conneaut 1 Sept (C. Holt), and a molting adult was reported there on 8 Sept. Another was reported from the CCE 5 Oct.

Short-billed dowitcher: After some July movement, depressingly few were reported, except at Winous Pt, where T. Bartlett estimated 500 in 17 Aug and 300 on 27 Aug. The first of fall were 10 only on 6 Aug at Winous Pt (Bartlett). Other than Winous, the high count was just 25, at Conneaut on 27 Aug (J. Pogacnik), and this fall M. Bolton and J. Szanto found 42 in the NW marshes, in Aug and Sept.

Long-billed dowitcher: Four touched down at Winous Pt on 3 Aug (T. Bartlett), and a molting adult was at ONWR the next day (P. Gardner), where 35 were found 2 Sept (R&S Harlan). Single birds were reported Aug-Oct in Lucas, Ashtabula, Trumbull, Wyandot, Franklin, Pickaway, and Lorain. Evidence that the staging molting contingent persists at ONWR came from 200 reported on four occasions there during Oct (M. Bolton, J. Szanto).

Wilson’s snipe: Most reports came from Oct and Nov, with high counts of 41 at MCWS on 7 Oct (B. Jones) and 40 the same day for the ONWR census.

American woodcock: Most evident in Nov, with reports of small numbers from Ross, Franklin, Lucas, Montgomery, and Hancock.

Wilson’s phalarope: A molting juv was at Conneaut 5 Aug (P. Chaon), two at Sandy Ridge MP in Lorain 12 Aug (C. Pierce), one at Mosquito WA 13 Aug (M. Vass), another at Hoover Res 25 Aug (P. Gardner), one at Conneaut 26 Aug (G. Leidy), another at Mosquito 27 Aug (J. Lehman), and a family group of three at the Hardin breeding site on 23 Aug (R. Counts).

Red-necked phalarope: A decent showing, with one at Conneaut 18 Aug (E. Kistler), two at ONWR the same day (J. Roth), a juv at Hoover 19 Aug (J. Hammond) through 22 Aug (B. Warner), another juv at Conneaut 21 Aug (J. Pogacnik), two at Hoover 4 Sept (B. Heck), one at Funk 9 Sept (W. Brubaker fide S. Snyder), another at Hoover 10 Sept (C. Bombaci), two at the Cedar Pt Chaussee 16 Sept, growing to five on 19 Sept (K. Miller), with seven there on the 22nd (C. Holt). Twelve was the high count, on 21 Oct at Mosquito WA (J. Lucas fide C. Babyak). Eight were found in the NW marshes for the period (M. Bolton, J. Szanto).

Red phalarope: One report came from Hoover 1 Sept (B. Kinkead), another from Lawrence the following day (J. McCormac), then one at BCSP 29 Sept (L. Jeanblanc fide B. Menker) through 4 Oct (J. Lehman), one flying by LSR 28 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and another, or perhaps even the same bird, at HBSP the same day (R. Hannikainen).

Laughing gull: Reports came from Alum Res 2 Sept (R. Thorn), the CCE 15 Sept (J. Pogacnik), Conneaut 17 Sept (B. Lane), and Huron latish on 11 Nov (Pogacnik).

Franklin’s gull: One spent 2 Sept-5 Oct at Indian Lk in Logan (T. Shively).
One at BCSP on 3 Oct (F. Frick) led to a cohort of eight there 4-6 Oct (B. Menker). L. Gara had another at Caesar Ck SP 5 Oct, and A. Boone an adult the following day at Deer Ck SP. J. Herman reported a first-winter bird 15-24 Oct at Clear Fk Res in Richland, another there 16 Nov, and a Franklin’s 25 Oct-15 Nov (apparently a late fall record for the county). Still later, D. Horn came across two in a field in Mercer 25 Nov.

These red-necked phalaropes show the fine bill and strong back striping (buffy in life) of juveniles. Photo by Aaron Boone 4 Sept 2007 at Hoover Res.

Little gull: As many as 24 reported between Conneaut and Sandusky along the Lakefront. One was inland at Mosquito WA 19 (E. Kistler)-20 Aug (D. Hochadel). The high count was of five adults off HBSP 23 Nov (B. Wilkinson), and two ad and two imm were at Kelleys Isl 20 Aug (T. Bartlett). None reported in Oct, oddly enough.

Bonaparte’s gull: A season-long presence along the Lakeshore in the central basin this fall. Certain spots, like Eastlake, Avon Lk, and E. 72nd St, were often without many, but thousands throned Huron and Lorain and sometimes HBSP/Fairport Harbor. Conneaut, which doesn’t often host huge numbers, had 1500 on 7 Nov (C. Holt) and 5000+ on 27 Nov (B. Lane). B. Wilkinson estimated 5000 off HBSP on 23 Nov, and C. Caldwell 10,000 at Huron the following day, and this was well after movements toward the east coast had begun, witness ~300 at HWSP 21 Nov (Jay Stenger) and 50 flyovers in Holmes on 23 Nov (E. Schlabach).

Note the much shorter bill and fresh patchy gray feathers in the mantle of this red phalarope, indicative of a molting adult. Photo by Aaron Boone at Hoover Res on 4 Sept.

Ring-billed gull: At spots with lots of Bonaparte’s, this species, mostly adults by Nov, tended to segregate themselves: at Huron on 12/1, ~3000 Bonies occupied the harbor, while three groups of 2-3000 adult ring-billeds occupied the bar off the beach, the flats in the impoundment, and Nickel Plate Beach; fewer than fifty herring gulls were present.

Lesser black-backed gull: As often happens, appeared first at Conneaut, with a 2nd-year bird on 21 Aug (J. Pogacnik) and an adult on 23 Oct (B. Lane). All other reports came from Nov. Most interesting were inland reports from Clear Fork Res (J. Herman) of one adult, two second-winter birds, and one third-winter bird present 17 Nov through the end.

Glaucous gull: The weather was too warm to attract many, and it’s revealing that two of the following three reports are from inland locations. J. Pogacnik had a juv flyby at LSR on 17 Nov. J. Herman reported from Clear Fork Res in Richland a first-winter bird 22-28 Nov. T. Kemp reported a first-winter bird in Bowling Green 22 Nov.

Great black-backed gull: In the absence of truly frigid temperatures, few were seen during the period. C. Holt reported only single birds at Conneaut from 1 Sept on. T. Bartlett passed along only one sighting on Kelleys Island by mid-November. The fall high count was three birds, at Eastlake on 30 Nov (S. Isacco).

Sabine’s gull: Three for fall was a ho-hum number, but two that stayed for comparatively lengthy periods were remarkable. R. Hannikman had a flyby juv at HBSP 20 Sept. M. Misplon reported an unusual gull at GLSM on 25 Sept, and a number of observers were able to see a juv Sabine’s there through the 27th: it later turned out that a local birder, R. Kuhlman, had found this bird repeatedly at the site from 14 Sept on, but did not know whom to notify. Now he does. Later, M. Busam found another in Huron harbor 22 Nov, which was relatively easy to refine through the 30th for only.

Black-legged kittiwake: The last proliferation of Bonaparte’s gulls was bound to attract other small larids, and J. Pogacnik found the first of this species 20 Oct at LSR, R. Semper et al. another at Huron on 27 Nov, and R. Hannikman yet another at HBSP on 30 Nov. All were first-year birds, as expected.

Pomarine jaeger: R. Hannikman reported one off HBSP 20 Oct, and B. McCarty three adults off Lakewood on 15 Nov.

Jaeger, sp.: R. & S. Harlan reported a dark juv enal jaeger, probably a parasitic, off Huron on 15 Sept.

Least tern: One was seen well at HWSP on 19 Aug by an experienced observer; details are with the OBRC.

Caspian tern: Early appearances downstream included one at Cowan Lk 9 Aug (L. Gara) and 22 at Hoover the following day (R. Thorn).
Black tern: 181 reported, beginning with two at Sandy Ridge MP on 8 Aug (J. Edwards), with the latest three at HBSP 20 Sept (R. Hannikman), and 132 of the total on 24 and 25 Aug. The high count was 46 at Hoover Res on 25 Aug (R. Thorn).

Common tern: Some remarkable concentrations came at HBSP on 20 Sept with 1900+ (R. Hannikman), and ~2000 at the CCE on 30 Sept (D. Overacker). One started at EISP on 10 Nov (J. Pogačnik). Forster's tern: The high count was ~400 at the CCE on 30 Sept (D. Overacker). Six were found at EISP on 10 Nov (J. Pogačnik).

Sterna terns: On 23 Sept, the CPNWR census team estimated that there was a mass of 9970 terns, Forster's outnumbered common terns by a factor of approximately 8 to 1 (E. Tramer). Five thousand-plus common/Forster's terns were witnessed by the ONWR census team on 7 Oct.

Eurasian collared-dove: No further reports of the summer's arrivals were heard this fall, save for J. Habig's discovery of an apparent juvenile bird with an adult in West Manchester on 27 Sept, providing documentation of the first successful nesting by this species in Ohio.

White-winged dove: According to the Division of Wildlife, a hunter shot one in Ross 1 Sept. One was reported 15 Sept at ONWR, very close to where another was documented on 17 Sept 2005. Another was documented for a 22-29 Aug stay in Holmes, where it was sporadically seen by m.obs. Other mukier reports were not substantiated.


Black-billed cuckoo: The latest report came 1 Oct from Columbiana (J. Dolan). E. Tramer reported five sightings during the period in the Oak Openings as cuckoos fed on an oakworm (Anisota sp) outbreak.

Snowy owl: An emaciated individual found at E. 117th St in Cleveland was recovering in a rehabilitation facility on 24 Nov (B. Hinkle). Long-eared owl: One was found dead in downtown Youngstown 17 Nov (fide N. Brundage), K. Schieltz found two at KPWA on 21 Nov (fide R. Schieltz). At another familiar haunt, 2-3 were found at MBSP 23 Nov (P. Chad).

Short-eared owl: One was found dead in Columbiana 17 Nov (B. Lane). Numbers seem to have been held during the period, but it behooves us to await the arrival of winter before assessing their abundance.

Northern saw-whet owl: It quickly became clear a major movement of these owls was to take place based, one surmises, on crashes in rodent populations caused by diminished seed crops in Ontario. R. Hannikman watched one arriving on the Ohio shore of Lake Erie at HBSP on the winds of 11 Oct. D. Russell's banding crew captured four in three hours on 3 Nov at HWS. K. Williams-Sieg reported for the Ross Co. owl project captures of 122 owls during the period (versus 27 last year). T. Bartlett had banded 42 for the fall on Kelleys Isl by 16 Nov, all in six nights of work.

Common nighthawk: A reassuring number of major sightings were reported. G. Links reported close to 1000 during a 20-min flight on 21 Aug in the Toledo area. A. Yoder watched the skies in Coshocton on 4 Sept from 3:30 to 7:30 pm, coming up with a total of 1802 nighthawks overhead. In Cayahoga, 150 passed over on 8 Sept (L. Rainsong) and 252 the same day in Hamilton (P. Wharton), followed on the next day by 160+ in Licking (J. Estep) plus another 863 by Wharton, then ~500 over Vinton the 10th (B. Crow). October reports included 10 on the 4th (R. Thorson) in Franklin, eight on 8 Oct in Hamilton (B. Zimmerman), and a single bird on the 18th (B. Whan) in Columbus.

Whip-poor-will: Always elusive in fall, one was discerned at HBSP on 29 Sept (R. Hannikman).

Chimney swift: Migrant roosts kicked off early, with 2000+ at a Dublin site on 16 Aug (D. Sillick). R. Thorson reported several roosts of 1000+ in early Sept, then an amazing 4400-4500 in a single building in the Columbus suburb of Bexley on the 18th; he also reported the latest, on 10 Oct in Columbus.

Ruby-throated hummingbird: The previous late record for a stay in Ohio by this species had been 30 Nov, when birds in two different cities lasted this long in 2002. A bird in Toledo stayed into the winter season this year, with a last appearance 5 Dec (fide S. Duris).


Selaphorus hummingbird sp: Reported in Jefferson 26 Aug (G. Hostetler, ph), Licking 10/4-10/18 (M. Van Schoyck, H. Nagy, ph), and Logan 10/3-eop (J. Estep, ph).

Yellow-billed sapsucker: A good showing during migration in Sept. Birds lingering in Nov included one at Perry Pk the 3rd, one in Hocking the 4th (J. Watts), and an imm near Ashland on 25 Nov (S. Snyder).

Pileated woodpecker: Evidence continues to grow of their slow recovery in the Toledo region.

Olive-sided flycatcher: Arrived 27 Aug in Franklin (B. Master) and in Clermont (D. Graham). High counts of two came on 9 Sept, at ONWR (E. Tramer) and in Franklin (R. McNulty). Last reported from Holmes 16-17 Sept (E. Schlabach).

Eastern wood-pewee: Last reported was one in Clermont 5 Oct (B. Stanley).

Yellow-billed flycatcher: Banded was one in Clinton 31 Aug (B. Powell) and two at Shaker Lks 13 Sept (B. Fambrough). One in Richland 20 Oct (G. Cowell) far exceeded by two days the previous late record date.

Acadian flycatcher: Late stays included one calling in Franklin 20 Sept (R. Thorson) and another in Coshocton 22 Sept (E. Schlabach).
Whan

Willow flycatcher: Tardy migrants were at EFSP 16 (D. Morse) and in Mahoning 17 Sept (C. Holt).

Least flycatcher: High count was three, at HBSP 9 Aug (R. Hannikman), and last reported in Franklin 20 Sept (R. Thorn).

Great crested flycatcher: Departure was delayed for one in Hamilton through at least 8 Oct (S. Pelikan).

Eastern kingbird: Six remained at Killbuck WA 3 Sept (S. Snyder), with a last hurrah reported at EFSP 9 Sept (B. Stanley).

Northern shrike: First noted at HBSP 16 Oct (R. Hannikman), the next was a first banding recovery for BSBO at Navarre 23 Oct. Presaging a good winter presence, others were reported from Cuyahoga, Lake, Wyandot, Lucas (2), Darke, Wood, Geauga, Muskingum, and Ottawa (2).

White-eyed vireo: Three continued to sing 14 Sept at Alum Ck SP (R. Thorn). A fairly hardy vireo, the season's latest were not too remarkable on 13 Oct, at Shawnee Lookout (J. Stenger) and in Holmes (J. Yoder).

Yellow-throated vireo: Late was one in Licking 13 Oct (J. Estep), and near record-late another at MWW the 23rd (D. Brinkman).

Blue-headed vireo: A local continued to sing at the Oak Openings 10 Aug (E. Tramer). Two were the last to depart on 28 Oct, in Brown (B. Stanley).

Warbling vireo: High migrant count was five, at Alum Ck SP 2 Sept (R. Thorn).

Philadelphia vireo: First reported as a duo at Sheldon Marsh 3 Sept (P. Lozano), another migrant was still in song in Hocking 23 Sept (J. Watts). The ONWR census found one 7 Oct, and the last was in Adams 10 Oct (J. Habig).

Red-eyed vireo: Fifteen migrants were discovered in Coshocton 15 Sept (E. Schlabach), and quite late was another at Gilmore Ponds 21 Oct (M. Busam).

Blue jay: Some recovery in numbers may be signaled by 532 (vs. 328 and 380 the previous two years) for the fall census of the CVNP. Large movements along Great Lakes shorelines were reported mid-Sept.

Horned lark: Thirty on Whiskey Isl in Cleveland 29 Sept must have been southbound (R&S Harlan).

Purple martin: J. Brown found 1350 at Camp Dennison 5 Aug, and T. Bartlett 293 on Kelleys Isl 20 Aug. Last reported on 22 Sept, when seen at the Cedar Pt Chaussee (C. Holt) and in Coshocton (E. Schlabach).

Tree swallow: The latest gathering was of ~650 at Alum Ck SP (R. Thorn) on 14 Oct. A single bird was in Trumbull 18 Nov (L. Gardella).

The Ohio Cardinal

Fall 2007 Reports

Northern rough-winged swallow: R&S Harlan saw 75 at Huron on 15 Sept for the high count. J. Pogacnik found one at EHSP 10 Nov, and R. Thorn had one at Hoover Dam 7-26 Nov for the latest.

Bank swallow: C. Holt took note of five laggards at the Cedar Pt Chaussee on 22 Sept.

Cliff swallow: Sixty were still around in Tuscarawas on 18 Aug (E. Schlabach), and two in Hamilton on 9 Sept (J. Stenger). On 16 Sept ~2000 abandoned nests could be seen on the south side of the Rte 2 bridge over the Huron River (B. Whan).

Cave swallow: As before these birds appeared after other swallows had vacated the state. On 24 Nov, one was reported at the ONWR parking lot, and B. Morrison et al. saw another on the Huron pier. T. Bartlett documented one at a Fairport Harbor marina on a rainy 26 Nov.

Barn swallow: B. Lane reported 200+ at Conneaut 9 Aug. S. Williams saw the last reported straggler, at Delaware WA on 27 Oct.

Chickadee, spp: Band T. Bartlett reported the following during the period at Springville Marsh in Seneca: 35 Carolina chickadees, 68 black-capped chickadees, and 9 hybrids.

Red-breasted nuthatch: Reports of migrants began in mid-August with one at LSR the 11th (J. Pogacnik), Hamilton by 19 Aug (P. Wharton), mid-state by 1 Sep (three in Columbus, J. Grubermeier), and in the unglaciated Ohio River counties by the 3rd (two in Lawrence, T. Bain). By mid-Oct, hundreds had been reported from 20+ counties, including a phenomenal 58 at Gordon Pk in Cleveland 2 Oct (P. Chaon). High count for a single feeder was ten in Coshocton 25 Sept (L. Deininger).

Brown creeper: M&D Dunakin recorded the first arrival in Paulding on 28 Sept. The strong warm front of 11 Oct brought ~30 to HBSP (R. Hannikman), a remarkable event. Reported through the cnp.

House wren: Last reported from Hamilton on 12 Oct (K. Westendorf).

Winter wren: Oct 11's weather brought 150 to HBSP (R. Hannikman), a record second only to ~200 in Lucas on 14 April 1972. Elsewhere, the highest count was five, along the creek at Cantwell Cliffs SP on 4 Nov (J. Watts). Two still up in Holden Arboretum on 23 Nov were unusual (C. Parsons).

Sedge wren: New territories, and perhaps new birds, appeared in Aug as usual, reported this year in Ross, Lucas, Warren, Hamilton, Fairfield, and Darke. October migrants were reported from Lake, Montgomery, Richland, Tuscarawas, Lorain, Cuyahoga, Summit, and Hamilton, where the last was reported the 13th (W. Hull).
Marsh wren: Late passages came on 15 Oct at Conneaut (M. Vass), and 9 Nov in Ross (B. Lombardo).


Ruby-crowned kinglet: The first was one banded, not especially early, at the Shaker Lks on 25 Sept (B. Fambrough); one in Franklin 17 Nov was fairly late, though (R. Thorn).

Veer: Six on 9 Sept at CPNWR was a good count for this inconspicuous fall migrant (E. Tramer).


Swainson’s thrush: First detected 25 Aug in Cleveland (R&S Harlan), the latest was in Hamilton on 13 Oct (L. Brumbaugh).

Hermit thrush: Its high counts accompanied strong cold fronts passing, with 50+ at HBSP 11 Oct (R. Hannikman), and 11 on Kelleys Isl on 17 Nov (T. Bartlett).

Wood thrush: One was calling in Hocking 9 Oct (J. Watts), and another was in Wooster 12 Oct (S. Snyder).

American robin: A juvenile was late on 20 Sept in Norton, Summit (R&S Harlan). Overall its observed migratory numbers were greatly reduced from last fall’s.

Gray catbird: Nov birds were at HBSP the 3rd (J. Brumfield), in Summit the 9th (R&S Harlan), and on Kelleys Isl the 17th (T. Bartlett).

Northern mockingbird: Numbers were reported reduced in the northern tier of counties. R. Semper had six at KPWA on 10 Nov.

Brown thrasher: One in Franklin 2 Nov was of interest (R. Thorn).

American pipit: Five were the vanguard in Hardin 16 Sept (R. Counts); the high count was 80-100 in Holmes 13 Oct (J. Yoder), and birds were through the eop at points around the state.

Bohemian waxwing: One-two were said to have been in Elmwood Pk in Cuyahoga 18-19 Nov with cedar waxwings, for which documentation is sought.

Cedar waxwing: Especially numerous this fall. The 22 Sept CVNP fall census’s most numerous species was this one, with 792 found; at Ira Rd there later, T&M A Romito had 1200 on 5 Nov and 465 on 12 Nov. E. Tramer reported 117 on 27 Aug, 200+ 6 Sept, and 135 on 25 Oct in the Oak Openings; just east of the park, 1000+ were present 21 Nov on the day pine grosbeaks were discovered there.
Cape May warbler: T. Spahr reported the first southbound bird in Greene 27 Aug. E. Schlabach found six in Coshocton on 15 Sept, and one at HBSP on 2 Nov was late (P. Chaon) but not as late as one in Holmes 30 Nov (fide S. Snyder, ph).

Black-throated blue warbler: Columbus had the first and last reported fall migrants, on 31 Aug (A. Peterson) and 14 Oct (M. Packer) respectively.

Yellow-rumped warbler: M&D Dunakin witnessed the first returning bird, in Paulding on 19 Sept. By 11 Oct, waves impelled by the cold front produced 75 fresh arrival in Tuscarawas for E. Schlabach.

Black-throated green warbler: The high count was of 25 on 20 Sept in Hocking (A. Boone), and one at Shawnee Lookout in Cincinnati 21 Oct (N. Cade) was pretty late.

Blackburnian warbler: Early was one banded at the Shaker Lks 22 Aug (L. Gooch). Five were tallied in Coshocton 15 Sept (E. Schlabach). Late ones were seen on 13 Oct in Holmes (J. Yoder) and Franklin (N. Yee).

Yellow-throated warbler: A migrant passed through Holmes as early as 15 Aug (J. Yoder), and one wanderer was quite late at HBSP on 25 Nov (E. Back (fide R. Hannikman)).

Pine warbler: D&M Dunakin reported an arrival in Paulding 12 Sept. Later were others in Franklin 4 Nov (R. Thorn), and Rocky River 11 Nov (P. Lozano); some winter birds are to be expected.

Kirtland’s warbler: Rarely seen, though demonstrably more numerous than spring birds, documentation was written up for one in Wayne 3 Oct.

Prairie warbler: Lurkers on migration, one was found in Columbus 9 Sept (R. McNulty).

Palm warbler: No remarkable records except for a bird of the eastern race photographed at Delaware WA on 28 Oct (S. Williams).

Bay-breasted warbler: Not very numerous this fall, but one on 11 Aug at LSR was pretty early (J. Pogacnik), and one in Hamilton on 20 Oct just as late (E. Burkholder).

Blackpoll warbler: Some noteworthy movements occurred during Sept along the Lakeshore: 225+ at HBSP on the 8th (R. Hannikman), ~70 at ONWR the 9th (B. Master), and 79 for the CPNWR census of the 23rd (E. Tramer). One stragglers through BCSP on 20 Oct (D. Overacker).

Cerulean warbler: D. Plotts banded an AHY female on 11 Aug in Tiffin. One in Delaware 1 Sept still seemed to be defending territory (A. Peterson). E. Schlabach observed a migrant in Coshocton 15 Sept.

Black-and-white warbler: A juvenile was at HBSP 9 Aug (R. Hannikman). B. Stanley had eight individuals in Clermont 28 Sept.

American redstart: Unremarkable, with a first at Mentor 18 Aug (N. Anderson) and another in Wooster as late as 3 Oct (S. Snyder).

Prothonotary warbler: C. Bombaci summed up the breeding season at Hoover Res on 29 Aug with 176 territories. Migrants along the Lakeshore were few of course, but included birds at Magee 18 Aug (S. Snyder), 21 Aug (M. Warren), and 22 Aug (D. Friedman), and two on Kelleys Isl. 21 Sept (T. Bartlett).

Ovenbird: Four birds found in the second half of Oct were led by one that by 20 Oct apparently had spent over a month in a single Columbus location (R. Royse).

Northern waterthrush: T. Bartlett discovered a migrant on Kelleys Isl 20 Aug. One on 4 Nov at Magee was certainly bringing up the rear (J. Sawvel).

Louisiana waterthrush: Interesting was one still singing at Glen Helen Preserve in Greene 18 Sept (N. Boults).

Kentucky warbler: Unexpected was one at Magee 24 Sept (S. Skinner).

Connecticut warbler: Found 3 Sept in Cleveland (N. Anderson), at HBSP 14 Sept (P. Chaon), and on 13 Oct at Hoover Res (C. Bombaci), the latter date among the latest for the state.

Mourning warbler: Arrived 2 Sept in Cleveland (S. Wright, ph), and was last seen in Hamilton on 13 Oct (L. Brumbaugh).

Hooded warbler: A migrant was noted in Columbus 20 Aug (A. Peterson), and one was banded at the Shaker Lks 8 Oct (B. Fambrough).

Wilson’s warbler: Seen as early as 13 Aug, in Hancock (W. Seiler), the latest appeared in Clermont on 17 Oct (B. Stanley).

Canada warbler: Arrived on schedule 9 Aug at HBSP (R. Hannikman), but one 6 Oct in Licking (J. Estep) was running behind.

Yellow-breasted chat: Inconspicuous in fall, one was detected 23 Sept at Gilmore Ponds (L. Keene).

Summer tanager: M. Anderson observed a pair at the Oak Openings as late as 23 Sept. The latest report came from Cincinnati, with one on 8 Oct (S. Pelikan).

Scarlet tanager: A migrant showed up in Rocky River 26 Aug (P. Lozano), with one reported in Adams on 10 Oct (J. Habig). Tying the record late date for Ohio was one described by J. E. Yoder from Holmes on 6 Nov.
American tree sparrow: In no hurry, generally arrived across the northern counties during the first week of November, with the earliest at CPNWR on 14 Oct (E. Tramer).

Chipping sparrow: October throngs included 63 at Gordon Park in Cleveland 2 Oct (P. Chaon), and ~200 in each of two 25-acre plots in the Oak Openings on 9 and 22 Oct (E. Tramer). Late appearances included 28 in Franklin 13 Nov (A. Boone), and one at a feeder in Holmes 22 Nov (E. Schlabach).

Clay-colored sparrow: One amongst other sparrows at Gordon Pk on 2 Oct (P. Chaon) may have been one that persisted for m obs through the 14th (J. Habig). On the weather-day of 11 Oct one showed up at LSR for J. Pogacnik, and another at HBSP for R. Hannikman; these are late occurrences, but eclipsed by a new late record, one well described in eastern Holmes on 22 Nov (E. Schlabach).

Field sparrow: B. Stanley observed 25 at EFSP on 4 Nov.

Vesper sparrow: Late was one in Lake 21 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Lark sparrow: P. Chaon reported one, a first-year bird at Gordon Park on local Sparrow Day, 2 Oct.

Savannah sparrow: E. Schlabach found 30 in Tuscarawas 11 Oct as the front passed, and R. Counts 280 at one Hardin spot the day following. K. Westendorf reported one from Cincinnati 11 Nov.

Grasshopper sparrow: The sparrow storm had brought one to Mentor on 12 Oct (B. Fambrough), and one to Lorain the following day (J. Pogacnik). Lagging was one 30 Oct in Holmes (J.E. Yoder).

Henslow’s sparrow: Few reports, the latest from the VOA on 16 Sept (L. Gardella, ph).

Le Conte’s sparrow: More often reported, and widely observed, in Ohio than in any autumn in recent memory. First reported 30 Sept at MBSP (T. Kemp), where one was photographed as late as 14 Oct (B. Zwiebel). It is possible the powerful front that passed through on 10 Oct ground more birds than normally occur, but one must also factor in the persistence of observers acting on reports from others. Careful observation at HBSP & environs produced this species on 10/9, 10/11, 10/12 (2), 10/16, 10/19, 10/20, 10/21, 10/22, and 10/23 (R. Hannikman et al.). E. Schlabach reported a juv at Funk WA 5-6 Oct, which led to observations of 6-7 birds there on 13 Oct (B. Glick et al.), three on 14 Oct, one on 16 Oct, six on 21 Oct, three 22 Oct, and one on 28 Oct (R. Steiner). J. Habig came across one at SVWA on 23 Oct, and the latest reports came from Armleder Pk in Cincinnati 3-4 Nov (K. Westendorf et al.).

Nelson’s sharp-tailed sparrow: Like its congener above, first discovered on 30 Sept (with two in Rocky River, by P. Lozano) and in Richland (through 2 Oct, J. Herman), and with numbers in October. E. Schlabach found one on 4 Oct and two on 5-6 Oct at Funk, with subsequent sightings of single birds through 28 Oct (R. Steiner). The Lorain harbor impoundment produced 3-5 on 7 Oct (B. Whan), with three on the 13th (J. Pogacnik) and another the following day (J. Habig). E. Kistler reported one from Trumbull on 7 Oct. The HBSP observers reported single birds on 10/5, 10/6, 10/12, 10/16, 10/17, and the season’s latest on 10/29.

Fox sparrow: Reports of multiple birds included three in Franklin 13 Oct (N. Nye), eight near Jaitie in the CVNP 29 Oct (F. Losi), and 30 in Lake 11 Nov (G. Leidy). Continued into the winter period in places.

Song sparrow: Swiped in like other sparrows by the storm, on 11 Oct 300+ were at HBSP and nearby (R. Hannikman) and 90 down in Tuscarawas (E. Schlabach). D. Brinkman reported 84 at MWW 23 Oct.

Lincoln’s sparrow: First reported were three at HBSP on 14 Sept (P. Chaon). The movements of 11 Oct brought 25 to Tuscarawas (E. Schlabach) and on 12 Oct 13 to a Hardin site (R. Counts). Last noted on 28 Oct at MWW (N. Cade).  

Swamp sparrow: Oct 11 brought 75 to the HBSP area (R. Hannikman) and 58 to Tuscarawas (E. Schlabach), Oct 12 another 136 to Hardin (R. Counts), and 14 Oct 111 to CPNWR for the census (E. Tramer). Sixty were at MWW on 23 Oct (D. Brinkman), and 37 showed up for the 4 Nov ONWR.

White-throated sparrow: First reported from Holmes 14-15 Sept (J. E. Yoder) and 16 Sept from HBSP (E. Kistler). ~1000 were estimated at the latter location during the movement of 11 Oct (R. Hannikman).

White-crowned sparrow: Laggard a bit behind its congener as usual, with 18 among the sparrow arrivals of 2 Oct at Gordon Pk (P. Chaon), four in Summit 4 Oct (D. Chasar), and one in the 7th (M&D Dunakin), but no substantial numbers reported.

Dark-eyed junco: First arrived pretty much on time 15 Sept, at ONWR (J. Pogacnik).

Lapland longspur: First reported from Conneaut were two on 4 Oct (B. Lane, ph). On 13 Oct ~50 were at HBSP (R. Hannikman) five at Caesar Ck SP (B. Powell), and two flyovers at HWSP (D. Russel). M. Anderson had 25 in Maumee 31 Oct, and R. Counts 600-700 in Wyandot by 11 Nov.

Snow bunting: B. Lane found three at Conneaut 25 Oct, and 350+ by the 31st. Penetrated as far south as the Caesar Ck SP beach on 2 Nov (R. Asamoto).

Rose-breasted grosbeak: The high count of migrants was 12 at the Shaker Lks 22 Sept (L. Deininger), and the latest were two in Harrison 22 Oct (D. Smith).

Blue grosbeak: Many Aug reports were led by the high count of five at Camp Dennison the 5th (J. Brown). The latest report came from the Fernwald Plant near Cincinnati, with two on 3 Sept (Jay Stenger).
Indigo bunting: E. Schlabach reported a nest with young as late as 8 Sept in Holmes, and two birds in Tuscarawas 11 Oct. T. Bartlett reported one on Kelleys Isl as late as 22 Oct.

Bobolink: Reports of numbers included ~50 at Mosquito WA (G. Leidy) and 10-12 at Pickerington Ponds in Franklin 11 Sept (R. Thorn).

Eastern meadowlark: E. Schlabach had 22 on 10 Oct in Holmes. Elsewhere either absent or unreported.

Yellow-headed blackbird: One was seen at Conneaut 13 Aug (W. Shaffer, ph), and another spotted at ONWR 15 Sept (J. Pogacnik).


Common grackle: E. Schlabach reported a flock of ~20,000 in Holmes 23 Nov.

Orchard oriole: One persisted though 4 Aug in Tuscarawas (E. Schlabach).

Baltimore oriole: R. Thorn recorded 45 migrants on 10 Aug near Hoover Res. A. Boone found one as late as 6 Oct in Fairfield.

Pine grosbeak: M. Anderson discovered ed just east of Oak Openings Park in Lucas on 21 Nov; it and perhaps as many as two others (not reported simultaneously) were seen there by many through the eop.

Purple finch: First reported from Clermont (!) on 3 Sept (D. Morse), staged a strong movement through the state during the period, with records from at least 26 counties. High count was 50 on 20 Oct in Coshocton (A. E. Yoder).

Red crossbill: Both crossbills were predicted to play a minor role in the northern finch irruption this season. Nevertheless, C. Rieker found one at Dike 14 on 2 Oct (ph), G. Links one in Toledo 7 Oct, and D. Barta one in the Oak Openings 18 Nov (fide P. Gardner, m obs).
Further Afield

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For loyal readers of this column, the following tale should by now be a familiar one. I own a time machine. A real, nuts and bolts time machine. I will purchase it on eBay several decades from now. I keep it out in the garage.

Although many readers readily accept the factual existence of my time machine, especially those residing in the Columbia Woods Drive area of Norton, Ohio, I have been frustrated in my attempts to prove its authenticity to everyone. While I would like to offer every skeptic a personalized guided tour of my time machine quarterage, my wife assures me that the garage is far too cluttered at the moment, so that's out. For those ghoulish, ill-humored readers who still choose to deny its existence, instead preferring to believe that I compile these columns by gleaming the Ohio ornithological literature and other historical materials, I can only say, as I have said in the past, that the existence of my time machine is every bit as trustworthy as the annual spring arrival of the Hinckley buzzards on precisely March 15. A strong proof, indeed.

Whereas an unkempt garage prohibits me from allowing others to inspect my time machine in person, please instead allow me to take you on a vicarious trip through time. Imagine entering a stylish craft—sleek, dashing, bold—a virtual reflection of its proud owner. Imagine traveling through time to revisit the historical Ohio birding scene at ten-year intervals—an odd application for a time machine, I'll admit, but now its only function, given that (in a fit of technogeekish overconfidence) I jetisoned the owner's manual after programming its original settings. Imagine lurching backwards in time 150 years, from the Fall 2007 season to the Fall 1857 season, and then inching forward at ten-year intervals, all the way back to our day. Imagine what we might find in...

Fall 1857

The financial Panic of 1857 is touched off when the New York City branch of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company fails on August 24. The controversial Mountain Meadows Massacre is committed in Utah Territory September 11; some 120 settlers are killed. The next day, a hurricane engulfs the SS Central America in the deep ocean off South Carolina, carrying at least 45 tons of federal "California Gold Rush" gold to the bottoms of the Atlantic.

Calmly return to your seats as we make our final approach back to the Fall 1857 season. Our search function is set to locate and transport us to interesting Ohio bird sightings as they occur. Our first stop takes us to Rockport (now Lakewood), just west of Cleveland, where legendary naturalist Jared Potter Kirtland reports that a young parasitic jaeger has been shot October 25, accused of harassing local hens. Fowl play is suspected. Moving on....
Harlan

Fall 1867

Following the close of the American Civil War, President Andrew Johnson extends amnesty to most Confederate leaders September 7. On October 18, the U.S. formally takes possession of Alaska, having purchased it from Russia for $7.2 million. Many Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa Apache, Southern Cheyenne, and Southern Arapaho leaders sign a peace treaty with the U.S. government at Medicine Lodge, Kansas, October 21-28.

We land, only to find no bird sightings during this disquieted season. The recent hostilities may simply be too fresh. Onward... 

Fall 1877

Native Americans continue to make headlines. On September 5 or 6, Sioux warrior and leader Crazy Horse is fatally bayoneted at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Peacemaker Chief Joseph and 418 Nez Perce surrender in Montana Territory October 5, after their 1700-mile journey to reach the Canadian border falls just 40 miles short. Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer is reinterred from the Little Bighorn battle site in Montana Territory to West Point Cemetery, New York, October 10. Thomas Edison demonstrates a hand-cranked "phonograph or speaking machine" November 29.

On September 15, Cincinnati entomologist Charles Dury adds a cerulean warbler to his esteemed bird collection. Later this season, but well to the north in Ottawa County, a trumpeter swan is a prized addition to the Winous Point Shooting Club collection. Or might it instead, we ask today, be an "overstuffed" tundra swan? Milton Trautman found several such overstuffed tundras in collections, lurking as trumpeters, in efforts to locate early Ohio trumpeter swan specimens. I wonder if that Fall 1877 swan might still reside in the renamed Winous Point Marsh Conservancy collection. It seems worth a look...

Fall 1887

A low-key season, it seems. On September 9, "Alf" Landon is born; he would go on to carry exactly two states as the Republican nomnee in the landslide 1936 presidential election. Billiards world-champion Willie Hoppe is born on cue October 11; William Henry Pratt, later to become Boris Karloff, materializes November 23.

World events seem rather subdued, and so is the birding. At least Charles Dury, representing the Cincinnati Society of Natural History, is out and about, collecting a Louisiana waterthrush September 8 and a merlin September 24. L.M. Hibby bags a greater white-fronted goose at Winous Point Shooting Club November 18.

Further Afield

Fall 1897

If you enjoyed the somnambulant Fall 1887 season, then Fall 1897 seems equally snoozeworthy. Robert Ringling, operatic baritone and master of circuses, makes his grand entrance August 16. The world's first car dealership opens its doors in London October 22; on the same day in Italy, Ettore Boiardi (Chef Boy-ar-dee) pops fresh from the oven. J.L. Love patents a pencil sharpener November 23.

I had hoped that the birding would be more newsworthy than snoozeworthy, but no such luck. Oberlin's indefatigable Lynds Jones at least tries to shake the doldrums, turning up a northern shrike November 6 and a very late green heron at the Oberlin Water Works November 13. Can you feel the excitement?

Fall 1907

The excitement can only build. Actress Irene Tedrow (kindly "Mrs. Elkins" on TV's Dennis the Menace) is born August 3. "The Amazing Criswell," fabulous psychic prognosticator and star of the cult film Plan 9 from Outer Space, is manifested on the earth's plane August 18. Actress Fay Wray (love interest of King Kong) is born September 15. The lake freighter Cyprus, built in Lorain, Ohio, is launched August 17. The lake freighter Cyprus, built in Lorain, Ohio, sinks October 11. Oklahoma becomes the 46th state November 16. In quasi-birding news, actor Burgess Meredith ("The Penguin" on TV's Batman) is stationed in Cleveland November 16.

Now we're rolling. Arthur Secor collects a willlet at the Cedar Point in Lucas County October 10. An American avocet is observed in Oberlin on the late date of November 4. The same day, Lynds Jones spots a flock of 42 greater white-fronted geese at the Cedar Point in Erie County. Not to be outdone, the first sighting of "The Penguin" is recorded in Cleveland November 16.

Fall 1917

Several unpretentious and peaceful periods, once considered somnambulant and snoozeworthy, now seem so bad after all. The World is at war. German troops take Riga, Latvia, September 3. On September 26, Australian forces capture the Polygon Forest in France. Mata Hari, accused of spying for the Germans, is executed by firing squad October 15. U.S. Army troops see front-line action in France. Stalled assaults in Flanders ultimately cost hundreds of thousands of British and German casualties. Vladimir Lenin and the Bolsheviks setze power in Russia October 25.

Hostile tendencies infiltrate the birding world as well. On August 12 at Headlands Beach, a willet is purposely flushed "in order to see the attractive wing pattern," and then is rudely and impudently flushed "suddenly again to hear his call." At New Bremen (Auglaize Co.), a rapacious northern goshawk is gunned down November 8. In Ashtabula County, Sam Wharram reports on
a different sort of European invader—the European starling. First seen there on November 17, it will start to nest in 1918. It remains firmly entrenched and shows no sign of retreat.

## Fall 1927

On September 7, Philo T. Farnsworth transmits an image electronically using an "image dissector" tube (camera tube) and an "image oscillate" (picture tube). New York Yankees’ outfielder Babe Ruth hits his record 60th home run of the season September 30, propelling the powerhouse Yankees to their second World Series championship. The Jazz Singer, starring Al Jolson, opens October 6, ushering in the era of talking pictures. Leon Trotsky is expelled from the Communist Party November 12, leaving Josef Stalin as the undisputed leader of the Soviet Union.

By this season, it’s apparent that the popularity of birding, and of bird reporting, is growing rapidly. Observations deemed worthy of reporting this season include a migration of mourning doves October 2, a migration of ring-billed gulls October 17, and a “small flock” of Canada geese on Sandusky Bay November 12. Skillfully identified are seven red knots in Dayton August 17 (viewed for a half-hour with 8x glasses at 50-60 feet), and a red phalarope, collected on the Scioto River in Delaware County September 29. A regional compiler remarks that the many intriguing Toledo-area records supplied by a young Lou Campbell “certainly indicate that all isn’t yet 'cut and dried' in Ohio ornithology.” Not by a long shot, I’d say.

## Fall 1937

Throughout August, Japanese forces continue their invasion of China. The Appalachian Trail is completed as a continuous footpath August 14. German Chancellor Adolf Hitler meets with Italian Premier Benito Mussolini September 25. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicates Timberline Lodge, a WPA project, in Mt. Hood National Forest September 28.

Birding and natural pursuits thrive between World Wars. Three lark buntings are discovered in Henry County August 9. A flock of 45 upland sandpipers rests near Toledo the same day. Most unfortunately, a black rail is killed during the mowing of a Paulding County oat field September 23. For those interested in such things, the Ohio Conservation Bulletin reports that the fall gray partridge hunting outlook is good for Allen, Clark, Darke, Mercer, and Van Wert counties. The Bulletin also reports “a few” greater prairie-chickens in Marion County, the remnant of recent reintroduction efforts. Get ‘em while you can.

## Fall 1947

The Sporting News names Brooklyn Dodgers' first baseman Jackie Robinson Rookie of the Year September 19. The New York Yankees win the World Series, their eleventh; Ohio Major League teams have combined for

*The Ohio Cardinal*

Further Afield

three such championships since the Series began in 1903. On October 5, President Harry Truman presents the first televised White House address, asking the American public to help relieve European food shortages in the wake of World War II. On October 14, Chuck Yeager’s rocket plane breaks the sound barrier. On November 2, Howard Hughes pilots his huge wooden H-4 Hercules seaplane, otherwise known as the Spruce Goose, on its first, and only, flight.

Birding takes a back seat as lives are rebuilt after World War II. Eight ruffed grouse in the Cleveland area September 13 would be judged an outlandish number in our day, but are considered far less impressive than four Forster’s terns in Cleveland September 27-October 5, which attract “much attention locally.” On October 30, a great gray owl is found on Lake Erie’s tiny Starve Island (Ottawa Co.); it is being harassed by a welcoming committee of herring gulls, but flies away unscathed.

## Fall 1957

With the Cold War in full swing, on August 1 the U.S. and Canada agree to create NORAD (North American Air Defense Command) to provide early warning of ballistic missile attacks. American Bandstand debuts nationally August 5. Other television series premiering this season are Wagon Train, Perry Mason, and Leave It to Beaver. On September 9, President Dwight Eisenhower signs the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first federal civil rights legislation enacted since Civil War Reconstruction. On October 4, the Soviet Union launches Sputnik, the first man-made space satellite to reach orbit. For a change of pace, the New York Yankees lose the World Series, although they won 17 previously. Perhaps not coincidentally, the Broadway play Damn Yankees closes at New York City’s Adelphi Theatre October 19 after 1019 performances.

Birding and leisure activities abound. An adult laughing gull on Bay Point in Ottawa County August 14 provides one of Ohio’s first records. Old friend Neil Henderson, professional chemist, bagpipe player, and author of The loon’s yodel: A key to bird sounds in northern Ohio (1988), finds an American white pelican at Magee Marsh September 2, and it remains for a month. A flamingo of unknown species appears at Clendenning Dam September 8, and enjoys a three-week-long holiday in sunny Harrison County. Two pine grosbeaks decorate Waite Hill (Lake Co.) November 25. A fine season.

## Fall 1967

The U.S. is fully engaged in Viet Nam. The Beatles’ All You Need is Love tops Billboard’s Hot 100 Chart August 19, but is replaced one week later by Bobby Gentry’s Ode to Billy Joe. In September, three nations formally sign the "Agreement of the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Government of the Republic of Zambia on the Construction of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway," thus establishing an agreement whose title is as long as its function. Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court justice, is sworn in October
Birds and birders are everywhere. An influx of Franklin's gulls is noted in Cleveland by mid-August; birds remain through mid-November, peaking at 15 individuals October 12. A piping plover with its "underparts soaked with oil" does little to help Cleveland's environmental reputation: September 19. On September 29, a magnificent frigatebird is found dead near Cincinnati; the next day another is found, soaring and perching in dead trees, at Clear Fork Reservoir. It becomes a museum specimen the day after that. Oddly, no hurricanes seem to account for these records. A single double-crested cormorant (an immature) at Lorain October 28 is also worthy of note. An unconfirmed report of a California gull in Cleveland November 21 earns little respect; in fact, a national correspondent remarks "with the great amount of pollution in that locality, the need for verification by collection remains great." He must have heard about that oily piping plover... 

Fall 1977

Tandy introduces the Radio Shack TRS-80 microcomputer August 3. On August 12, the space shuttle Enterprise successfully touches down after its first flight; it had gone aloft piggybacking a Boeing 747. Elvis Presley, a famous musical performer, is found dead at his Graceland mansion August 16. The Star Wars Theme reaches the top of the Billboard Hot 100 Chart October 1. The New York Yankees win their 21st World Series championship October 18. On October 19, Robert N. Harlan, a fan of the lowly two-time champion Cleveland Indians, decides that he doesn't much like the Yankees. On November 19, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat becomes the first Arab leader to visit Israel.

August is often on the slow side, but not this year. Bill and Nancy Klam find an amazingly early second-year glaucous gull at Cleveland's White City Beach August 7. The next day, an extraordinary four Le Conte's sparrows are uncovered by three observers at Ottawa NWR. From August 27, 1000 black and common terns are estimated along Cleveland's Lake Erie shore. Twelve white-winged crossbills reach Genoa (Ottawa Co.) by September 5. House finches, which were first noted in the Barnesville (Belmont Co.) area in 1976, are now regular there in batches of 10-16. For all of Ohio, three reports of double-crested cormorants and zero reports of merlins are submitted to national compilers. This is not due to any lack of skilled observers—not with Tom Bartlett, Jim Fry, Ray Hannikman, John Herman, Dick and Jean Hoffman, Dennis Kline, Tom LePage, Bert Szabo, and Elliot Tramer all actively reporting—birders still active in our day, some 30 years later. Hats off to them all.

Fall 1987

The Iran-Contra hearings end August 3. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop appears September 9 before a presidential special commission on AIDS. On October 6, Microsoft announces Excel, the first application for its Windows operating system. "Alf" Landau, the former Kansas Governor who carried
The Future??

Now's when I wish I had a time machine that could foresee the future. After I had finished writing this column, I learned that The Ohio Cardinal will, after almost 30 years, be changing hands from publisher Ed Pierce to The Ohio Ornithological Society. Ed has been an incredible force, mostly behind the scenes, in Ohio birding for several decades now, and I want to personally thank him for all he's done (often at his own expense) to see that this journal might exist, and continue to publish information on Ohio's birds. Ed's a good friend, and a generous man.

It's been over 20 years now since my first article was published in the Cardinal, and not too many years after that, Ed and then-current editor Tom Kemp encouraged me to try my hand as the new editor. This was a task I did proudly, if not always gracefully, back in the days of ultra-tight shoestring budgets, 40 MG hard drives, 286 MHz processors, and nine-pin dot-matrix printers, all now the stuff of computer museums or thrift store bargain bins.

I'm glad that we've been able to graduate to the product you now hold in your hands.

And for the past nine years, with the blessings of editor Bill Whan and publisher Ed Pierce, it has been my privilege to write this indulgent little column for a sophisticated audience of Ohio birders. I know it has been a treat for me; I hope it has been of value to you.

The Ohio Cardinal represents "citizen science" at its purest. Long-term collections of data are beyond calculable value for tomorrow's birders and researchers, and for tomorrow's birds as well. I don't know what the future holds for the Cardinal, but I earnestly hope that it will continue to function as it has for three decades now—to bring birders together in a forum where they can share information on Ohio bird observations in a long-term hard-copy format, accessible to all.

I'll risk sounding preachy here, but as forward-thinking birders, we should expect—better yet, we should demand—as complete and accurate a record of Ohio bird observations as possible. We need an ever-growing number of active and skilled field birders who report their observations from around the state. We need dedicated and knowledgeable editors, who are given enough room to properly address these observations in the permanent historical record. We need a strong, fair, and accessible peer-review panel (the Ohio Bird Records Committee neatly fills the bill) to help adjudicate exceptional records, to provide a balanced approach, and to help avoid the dangers that can occur when an individual attempts to act as the ultimate authority. We must not give our combined expertise short shrift; this would be a terrible disservice to the future, especially in our rapidly changing world.

Thanks, and hoping to see you in the field...

Birdin' the Pits

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It is generally agreed that diminishing habitats are the major threat to bird populations. The gradual but steady losses of wetlands, grasslands, and mature forest garner the most attention, and rightfully so. Many species that depend on these imperiled habitats are in steep decline. Urbanization has taken its toll, and the constant expansion of urban areas into the rural countryside claims thousands of acres annually.

Fortunately, many species have apparently been able to adapt to these changes to the natural environment and can be found in all sorts of altered habitats. Urban birders learn to recognize these habitats and the birds potentially attracted to them. Airports, garbage dumps, golf courses, residential back yards, urban parks, cemeteries, dams and impoundments, sewage lagoons, cropland, railroad right of ways, and power transmission line cuts are just a few examples of manmade or altered habitats that attract birds, and of course the birders looking for them.

Maybe the most interesting of these types of man-made habitats are gravel pits. Similar sites include quarries, borrow pits, and to some degree, retention basins and settling ponds. With the exception of a few well-known sites, the vast majority of these pits generally go unrecognized, overlooked, and under-birded. Some of these sites may be better than others, but they all attract birds on some level and certain sites can be downright outstanding in terms of the sheer numbers and diversity of species they attract. Some are productive enough that they have become local hot spots and attract more observers than more pristine natural areas nearby. Here in southwestern Ohio (Hamilton, Butler, Warren, Clermont, Brown, Clinton, Greene, Preble and Montgomery counties), the Camp Dennison and Newtowm gravel pits in Hamilton County and the Roxanna-New Burlington gravel pit just north of Spring Valley WA are well known and regularly birded. In the Greater Cincinnati area the Oxbow, a wetland located along the Indiana/Ohio state line, offers a couple of examples of productive borrow pits. Without suggesting that these manmade pits are preferable to the natural landscapes they replaced, they provide surprisingly productive staging areas and habitats for a number of resident and migratory species. In these days of rapid habitat loss, gravel pits and similar sites deserve recognition. And while one seldom hears the words "natural beauty" and "gravel pits" used in the same sentence, a solid case could be made that many of these sites are greatly beneficial to birds and a host of other wildlife.

Gravel pits, quarries, and borrow pits can be found scattered throughout Ohio and the entire Midwest. In southwestern Ohio, however, literally hundreds of gravel pits, both active and abandoned, are concentrated along the banks of the Ohio, Little Miami, Great Miami, and Whitewater Rivers and their larger feeder streams. Few are birded with any regularity. Many are privately owned and trespassing is forbidden. Some are concealed and off the beaten track, and even birders are unaware of their presence. Apparently owners' fears of liability and lawsuits effectively make many abandoned gravel pits and quarries
Birdin' the Pits

Veritable wildlife refuges. Still, many can be wholly or partially scanned from roadsides or other vantage points. Aerial maps available on the Internet provide an excellent resource for locating these sites.

As an interesting innovation, the Hamilton County Park District has recently acquired several abandoned gravel pits in western Hamilton County along the Whitewater River, which are now open to the public for fishing and nature viewing. During the two years these particular sites have been open a number of great finds have already been recorded and include blue grosbeaks (breeding), Bell's vireo (probably breeding) and grasshopper sparrows (breeding), species rare or uncommon in Hamilton County.

The concept of reclamining open pit mines into wildlife and recreation areas is not a new one, and has been practiced in Europe for decades. On a similar but larger scale is the reclamining of coal-producing strip mines in many places in Indiana, Kentucky, and eastern Ohio over the past twenty years. The American Electric Power Company, in conjunction with ODNR, has turned large areas of reclamined strip mines into State wildlife areas. The AEP recreation lands near The Wilds and the Crown City State Wildlife area are two prominent examples. While it may seem strange to garner support to "preserve" a gravel pit, the concept may become a reality someday if habitat loss elsewhere continues at its current pace.

While there are differences between gravel pits, quarries, and borrow pits, the habitats they provide share many similarities. All are generally fairly sizable tracts, ranging between ten to several hundred acres. Sometimes several large pits are adjacent to or in close proximity to another. Most pits hold at least some permanent water, although some are virtually dry. Many are completely filled with water, featuring large lakes. Some such lakes are fairly shallow, but others can be quite deep, remaining open throughout the year. The Camp Dennison gravel pits, sometimes sand bars and peninsulas, remnants from previous mining operations, jut out into the ponds. Pits by their very nature are wide-open habitats, often with only a few scattered trees such as cottonwoods, locusts, and willows around the perimeters, although wooded riparian corridors or woodlands may persist nearby. These areas generally have well-drained, loose, sandy or rocky soils, and slopes on perimeters of the pits are often sparsely vegetated with a wide variety of grasses, forbs, and other scrubby and brushy vegetation in various stages of succession. Active pits usually have considerably less herbaceous growth than do abandoned pits due to the continuous mining operations and ongoing alterations to the pit. One might think the disturbances associated with active mining in these pits would result in fewer birds being present. In some cases this might be true, but it's not necessarily the rule. For example, the Camp Dennison gravel pits have been well known for concentrations and diversity of waterfowl and other species even during the peak of their active days.

There are a few subtle differences between gravel pits, borrow pits, and quarries, and a few new definitions are probably in order. A gravel pit is a piece of land, most often lying along a river or stream, excavated for extracting gravel, sand, or crushed stone. These products, collectively referred to as aggregates, are used in construction. These mining operations are big business, and hard to miss by anyone exploring the rivers of southwestern Ohio. A quarry, on the other hand, denotes a site dedicated to the extraction of larger rock, such as blocks or slabs of granite, limestone, or slate. These open pits are generally steeper-sided than gravel pits and, if I understand correctly, often shallower. Such sites are more common in central northern and eastern Ohio, where local geology favors such materials. A borrow pit is an area where soil or other material has been excavated, or "borrowed," for use at another site. These types of pits are commonly seen along expressways throughout Ohio, where borrowed soil was used in the construction of the highway or to create nearby embankments for exit ramps. Retention basins are usually found in commercial or residential areas and often resemble gravel pits, but are intended to control runoff and flooding in nearby areas. Settling ponds also have some physical similarities to gravel pits and retention basins. These impoundments are created to dispose of dredged materials taken from nearby bodies of water. Silt and water are pumped into these impoundments and allowed to settle, at times creating a permanent pond unless it is eventually filled.

Almost all these varieties of pits attract a diverse array of species throughout the year. Most of my personal experience comes from southwestern Ohio, where gravel pits are predominant, but if the prospect of making new discoveries excites readers to explore, any of these sites near where you bird should be checked, often year-long. Waterfowl, loons, grebes, and coots can be common during migration and throughout the winter if the water stays open. Other waterbirds such as gulls, terns, and cormorants are regular visitors to gravel pits during appropriate seasons, as are eagles and ospreys. American white pelicans, while rare, are more likely, but you may recall that among the few Ohio records of brown pelican, one spent a week during early May 2004 at the Roxanna-New Burlington gravel pits, and others appeared at borrow pits in Hancock County in 1991 and Franklin County in 1996.

Steep-sided gravel pits and quarries usually do not offer much of the shallow-water habitat preferred by long-legged waders and shorebirds. But every pit is different. Some gravel pits have excellent shallow-water habitats and quite a few actually have mudflats, exposed sandbars and even emergent vegetation such as cattail beds. During late summer and early fall droughts, lower water tables may expose considerable shoreline. When and where these conditions occur, expect migrant shorebirds, herons and egrets, bitterns, rails, and moorhens.

Another declining habitat that sometimes seems to get overlooked in discussions concerning land preservation is successional habitat. Here I refer to those transitional habitats that occur over a long period of time when an open habitat such as grassland, pasture, old-field or other open area slowly reverts back to a woodland habitat. When these open areas are left uncult or untended shrubs, red cedars (in southern Ohio), and other woody growth slowly invades. Eventually young trees will begin to take a foothold, and as they mature over many years a canopy eventually forms and shades out many of the pioneering plants. This natural process is referred to as succession. These successional habitats are commonly found in dry gravel pits and around the periphery of water-filled ones.

Early succession (when an open area is still mostly grass and forbs with only a few scattered shrubs and cedars) and advanced succession (when cedars, brush, and dense tangles become dominant) habitats host an interesting array of avian species. Successional habitats were once more common in Ohio, especially in rural areas. They have become distinctly uncommon as many such areas, like abandoned farms, have reverted back to woodland or been eliminated due to modern farming practices, urban sprawl, and commercial development. Most gravel pits, particularly abandoned ones, are excellent places to find...
such habitats and the birds associated with them. I have no evidence, only my perception, but it seems to me the successional process occurs at a slower rate, and is more delayed, in gravel pits. This could possibly be due to the sandy, loose, or more rocky and less fertile soils found in gravel pits.

Typical breeding species and/or year round residents that either nest or forage in and around the gravel pits in southwestern Ohio include a noteworthy group of species, many of which are on Ohio’s and the Audubon Society’s list of threatened species or of species of special concern lists. This list includes Canada goose, wood duck, mallard, northern bobwhite, great blue heron, green heron, Cooper’s hawk, red-shouldered hawk, red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, killdeer, spotted sandpiper, American woodcock, mourning dove, black-billed cuckoo, yellow-billed cuckoo, great horned owl, ruby-throated hummingbird, belted kingfisher, northern flicker, willow flycatcher, eastern phoebe, eastern kingbird, white-eyed vireo, yellow-throated vireo, warbling vireo, horned lark, purple martin, tree swallow, northern rough-winged swallow, bank swallow, cliff swallow, barn swallow, house wren, eastern bluebird, American robin, gray catbird, northern mockingbird, brown thrasher, cedar waxwing, blue-winged warbler, northern parula, yellow warbler, yellow-throated warbler, prairie warbler, prothonotary warbler, common yellowthroat, yellow-breasted chat, summer tanager, eastern towhee, field sparrow, savannah sparrow (UC), grasshopper sparrow (UC), song sparrow, northern cardinal, blue grosbeak, indigo bunting, red-winged blackbird, eastern meadowlark, brown-headed cowbird, orchard oriole, Baltimore oriole, house finch, and American goldfinch.

During the winter and migrations all of Ohio’s sparrows may be found, as can American pipits, horned larks, and rusty blackbirds. Occasionally Lapland longspurs and snow buntings are also seen. Most of Ohio’s migrant warblers pass through the denser vegetation in and around gravel pits, and palm and yellow-rumped warblers can be abundant. As gravel pits are almost always located along rivers and streams, any species associated with wooded riparian corridors is always a probability when birding in and around these places.

The possibilities of what potentially breeds in gravel pits are exciting to say the least. We just don’t know. But the odd tells us that we are missing quite a bit. As mentioned before, there are hundreds of gravel pits in southwestern Ohio alone, and only a few are 100% totally accessible to birders. As for the chance of getting permission to access active gravel pits, one probably has a better chance to win the lottery. Most, if not all abandoned pits are posted. To acquire permission to enter one, one would first have to know whom to ask. Of course you could always take your chances and take a fairly quick peek, but who needs that type of stressful birdering? Someone with a good set of ears and the skills to recognize bird songs could probably make some interesting finds, but most birders don’t make the effort. Of these hundreds of pits, I know of fewer than 10 that are regularly birded. I’m fairly certain there are more than a hundred gravel pits in southwestern Ohio alone that are never birded at all. Many gravel pits that do get looked at are usually situated near a highway, but many of those pits get only the occasional quick scope scan during migration or on a Christmas Bird Count, but they probably never see a birder during the breeding season. So, you may be asked, what’s the big deal? One answer to that question is that of the few gravel pits birders do bother to check during the breeding season, all seem to have at least one pair of blue grosbeaks present. I am certain that a thorough survey of this region’s gravel pits during the summer months would discover additional considerable populations of blue grosbeaks.

Blue grosbeaks are not city birds, and they have a decided preference for rural areas. Typical blue grosbeak habitat in the eastern U.S. consists of brushy successional areas, hedgerows, and thickets along fencerows and roadides, grassland with scattered shrubs, old fields, forest edge, transmission-line corridors, open slashings left after logging, groves, stream edges, and in the deep south multi-age pine forests. And apparently gravel pits can be added to that list. I suppose that shouldn’t be too much of a surprise, as gravel pits share a lot of similarities with these other habitats. But it doesn’t explain the decided preference for gravel pits that blue grosbeaks exhibit in southwestern Ohio. Here they can now be almost expected in a gravel pit, but are generally absent over wide areas of their supposedly more traditional habitats as described above.

Blue grosbeaks are predominantly a bird of the southern United States and while widespread throughout their breeding range are generally scarce or uncommon over much of it. It was apparent during the 1960s that blue grosbeak populations were undergoing a gradual northward range expansion. They are relatively newcomers to Ohio. Ohio’s first confirmed breeding record was from June 1940 in Adams County, and the Cincinnati area’s first breeding record was in July 1974. During the ensuing years Ohio’s blue grosbeak populations were for the most part restricted to southern and southeastern Ohio. Adams County seemed to be their stronghold, though the 1990s other sites in southeastern Ohio, such as Crow City WA (interestingly a reclaimed strip mine) in Gallia County, were hosting considerable populations of blue grosbeaks. During this period grosbeaks remained rare but regular summer residents in southwestern Ohio, but were considerably more common in some not too distant locations in northern Kentucky and southeastern Indiana. During the 1990s and through 2005 most Greater Cincinnati area blue grosbeak records came from northern Kentucky and southeastern Indiana. Southwestern Ohio records were decidedly scarce.

During the 30-year period from 1975 through 2005, a considerable portion of our records came from gravel pits. During that time five different local gravel pits have produced 32 summering blue grosbeak records in the Greater Cincinnati area. Many other area records came from sites that mimicked gravel pits to a considerable extent, such as major highway construction projects and the alternately grass and riprap-covered slopes along the dams at East Fork State Park and Brookville Reservoir. All of these sites exhibited certain characteristics in common with gravel pits: wide-open habitats, with rocky and disturbed earth adjacent to grassy and weedy areas.

Anyone even casually reviewing local southwestern Ohio blue grosbeak records will notice the tremendous increase in their local populations over the past few years. The Cincinnati Birding Database shows blue grosbeaks breeding, or presumed breeding, at 15 separate locations in southwestern Ohio over the past two years. Many of these sites had multiple pairs. By comparison, in 2000 there was only one breeding pair reported over the same area. Of these 15 summering blue grosbeak sites, 11 were from either gravel pits (7) or borrow pits and retention ponds (4). Of the four other sites, three featured habitat similar to gravel pits. One of those was from the Fernald plant site that had been recently disassembled, leaving much scrubby vegetation and broken surface roads in its wake, and another was along a major highway construction site, an extension to Blue Rock Rd. Two pairs of lark sparrows also nested here in 2007. The third was along the dam and spillway at East Fork State Park. Only one site exhibited classic blue grosbeak habitat of weedy fields bordered by brush and hedgerows, and that was at Valley View Preserve along the East Fork of the Little Miami in Milford, Ohio. Remember, there are hundreds of
Birdin' the Pits

these types of pits in southwestern Ohio alone, and less than 5% get any birding coverage. If we are finding blue grosbeaks in most of the pits that do get birding coverage, then how many are there in the hundreds of pits that don’t?

Two other rare Ohio species have shown an affiliation to gravel pits in southwestern Ohio. Lark sparrows, an accidental species in Ohio away from Oak Openings, have been reported breeding or presumed breeding at three southwestern Ohio locations since 1980. On two occasions they were discovered in gravel pits. In 1987 a pair nested in the Mt. Nebo gravel pit near Shawnee Lookout Park in Hamilton County. A pair was seen there again in 1990 but was not confirmed breeding. In late May and early June of 2004 a lark sparrow was present at the Roxanna-New Burlington gravel pit and seen by many birders who came to see the brown pelican. The third site, as mentioned before, was along a newly constructed section of Blue Rock Rd. in Hamilton County, a site that exhibited many of the characteristics of gravel pits. In central Ohio in 2007, a lark sparrow was confirmed breeding in an abandoned quarry near Columbus. The habitat the Oak Opening colony of lark sparrows uses consists of sandy soils and open weedy fields with scattered trees. Some gravel pits make a pretty good imitation of that type of habitat.

As I noted before, a territorial male Bell’s vireo was found in an accessible Hamilton County gravel pit in 2006 and may have bred there. A probable breeding Bell’s vireo was found in 1995 in a gravel pit along the Great Miami River at West Carrollton. Granted that is only two sites, but consider there are only six locations that have summing Bell’s vireo records in southwestern Ohio. That’s a 33% average for gravel pits. Without a doubt the typical habitats found in and around gravel pit are perfectly suited for this species.

Apparent blue grosbeaks have a special affinity with gravel pits and the like, and more thorough surveys of these areas during the summer months would most definitely discover additional, and maybe even considerable, populations. And don’t be too surprised if a few lark sparrows and Bell’s vireos show up as well. Gravel pits have great birding potential, and with three more years to go on the OBBA II we should have ample opportunity to get many of these great sites covered. But whatever the season, gravel pits assuredly will produce great birding.

Eurasian Collared-doves in Ohio: The Background

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The Eurasian collared-dove Streptopelia decaocto has made history in lands far beyond its likely origins in India, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar. Its present range in North America is already as extensive as that for the rock pigeon Columba livia, and it has occupied its adopted territory far more quickly. This species entered Florida by way of the Bahamas in the 1980s and had conquered North America by the summer of 2007, when single birds and possibly pairs were documented in several locations in Alaska. Coincidentally, Ohio experienced its first substantial influx of these doves in 2007, with reports of multiple birds in Williams, Darke, Preble, Butler, and Mercer counties. Prior to that we had only two accepted records, one of two birds sighted by a hunter in Crawford County 1 September 2001 (specimen), and one visiting a Licking County feeder 15 April-28 May 2006 (photos). Other individuals previously reported had not been seen or described well enough to distinguish them from look-alikes. During this spring’s invasion, these doves were observed copulating on several occasions, and on 27 September were observed in northern Preble County with a juvenile, suggestive of successful local nesting. Such is the Eurasian collared-dove’s story in Ohio to date. It is likely only the beginning of a familiar tale.

History and taxonomy of the Streptopelia doves

As a group, the doves and pigeons (family Columbidae) present unique problems for observers. Few wild birds have been as adaptable to the human presence, as amenable to domestication, or as unlikely—even in large numbers— to threaten populations of other species. But their very adaptability and tendency to associate with humans has led to hybridization in the wild, intentional crossbreeding in captivity, and consequently rapid range expansions across the globe. The result has often been confusion: about the identities of certain populations, the local status of others, and any stable notion of their distribution overall.

Some columbids, it is true, have not adapted to us. The range of the passenger pigeon Ectopistes migratorius in North America shrank as rapidly as ours expanded, and the extinction of this, at one time perhaps the most populous bird species in existence, followed after little more than two centuries of extensive contact with European settlers. Most of the ~300 species of doves and pigeons remain relatively modest in numbers and restricted in range. Others, however, have associated with dense human populations—as pets, as game, and as familiar neighbors—to a degree unknown in other bird families, and their history as captives among us dates back over two thousand years. Their dependence on humans has led to a number of odd versions of typical evolutionary progressions in the wild, as these birds seemingly dispersed far
more quickly than any other species, and various genetic characteristics, some ancestral and some not, have entered these populations via human interference in far-flung locales.

In North America, no single bird species has emerged to take over much of the huge ecological niche once occupied by the passenger pigeon, presumably because its vast undisturbed tracts of eastern hardwood forests are no more. Certainly our other native columbids are adapted to quite different ranges and habitats. Rock pigeons *Columba livia* were apparently the first to arrive here via introduction, just over four hundred years ago. They prospered, and have assumed many roles: treasured pet, subject of many genetic and psychological experiments, message-carrier and racer, food source, and urban pest. No other introduced columbid has established itself in North America until the arrival of the Eurasian collared-dove (hereafter ECD).

Among other factors, a long tradition of aviculture involving the dove family makes it difficult to trace the history of their status and distribution. Humans traded and transported them widely. Gentle, unobtrusive, and taking easily to human habitats, certain columbids have been welcomed, fostered, and crossbred for thousands of years, and the origins and destinies of strains are consequently often obscure. One good example is the taxon for which the ECD is most easily mistaken in the field.

The ring-neck, or ringed turtle-dove, once known as *Streptopelia risoria*, has been the most commonly kept dove in the world. A domesticated form, it apparently breeds reliably only in captivity or if fed by humans, and its taxonomic status has always been in doubt. In fact, two eggs of this taxon were collected in Columbus on 12 Apr 1898 (OSU Museum collection). Its likely ancestor, *S. roseogrisea*, the wild African collared-dove, has been imported to breed with this form. In North America, *S. risoria* was first recognized by the American Ornithologists' Union in the *Check-list*’s fourth edition of 1931, and remained in the 7th edition (AOU 1998) as an introduced species; it was re-named *S. roseogrisea* after its wild ancestor in the 47th Supplement to the Checklist in 2006. Thus, *S. risoria* no longer has official status here. The Eurasian collared-dove *S. decaocto* was included in the North American avifauna in the 7th AOU Check-list (p. 222). The Checklist Committee of the American Birding Association replaced *risoria* with *decaocto* in its list in 1992 (DeBenedictis 1994). While in 2006 the AOU committee continued to accept *roseogrisea* based

Note the undertail and tail coverts pattern on this Eurasian collared-dove. Photo from West Manchester, OH, on 2/2/08 by Troy Shively.

...the most interesting results of this year's research emanated from the mountain ranges of the Rhodope and Staniinas, that lies 4-6 hours south of Philopol. Among the class of birds, the travelers were delighted to find some of the rarer species. These were the little bastard Otis tetrix, which sometimes shows up in the plains of Hungary; here it was found on the nest, incubating three eggs, pugnus coronatus Phalorocorax pugnax. Calandra lark Melanocphalala calandra, and a peculiar dove species. This dove is very similar to the laughing dove native to China, so much so it is probably its subspecies; it feeds predominantly on the rice paddies fields, especially during harvesting, but also flies around in the woods. However, it always breeds in the towns, under the eaves in baskets hung on the ends of the rafters for this special purpose. Although it lives in company with the jackdaws, they are eternal enemies and fight all the time. Coocing starts early in spring, often in February, when it sings 'gur-gur-gur' sounds, intermingling 'deca octo deca octo' sounds. For this reason the people of this land are especially fond of this bird, almost with a religious devotion, and they are reluctant to harm them. This is based on an old folk tale that relates a poor maiden who served a miserly mistress had hardly any bread to eat, and her yearly income was only 18 para. In her desperation, she prayed from the bottom of her heart to let the world know her misery. {Frivaldszky 1838, trans. Domoki}

The story goes on to relate the gods heard her plea and changed her into a dove whose calls sounded like the Greek for “eighteen,” *decaocto*. There are later and more elaborate Christianized versions of the story. The vernacular name of this species in Greek is Διακαχοτορά, which one might translate into English as “eighteener,” and it is reasonable to regard it as a echo of the bird’s vocalization, and the folk etymology as a subsequent elaboration. Clearly this dove soon endeared itself to the local human population, and as quickly took advantage of its welcome.

Whan

The Ohio Cardinal
Eurasian Collared-doves in Ohio

With time, two subspecies were generally recognized, the nominate and _S. d. xanthophyctis_ (Newman, 1906). The latter is known from Burma and southern China, differing from _decaeco_ in its darker overall coloration and yellow bare skin around the eye; conceivably it could show up in North America as a release. Some authorities recognize two Far Eastern subspecies, _S. d. intercedens_ and _S. d. stolzicae_ (see Vaurie 1961); if valid, it seems their identification in the field would be problematic.

The Great Invasions: Europe

First recorded in the eastern Mediterranean in the 16th century, _S. decaeco_ extended its range slowly at first. It moved east as far as Korea and Japan during the 18th and 19th centuries, but not in a massive way; most records can be attributed to releases of captive birds. By 1900, its European range was restricted to the Balkans. It was not to be recorded in Frivaldsy’s native Hungary until the 1930s, when the doves began a rapid northwestern sweep of Europe that was to be halted only in 1964 in Iceland by the vastness of the North Atlantic. In Hungary, for example, its numbers increased an average 30% yearly from 1932-1943, and the doves moved over 1500 miles further across the continent during the next 30 years (Hudson 1965). Inhabitants of warm arid and lowland settings in their homelands, they demonstrated unexpected abilities to adapt to cold climates, and now nest near the Arctic Circle in Scandinavia.

Reported arrival dates in Europe (Hudson 1965, Hudson 1972) follow:

Naturally, questions arise as to why the once leisurely range expansion of this dove accelerated so explosively. Fisher (1953) called it “one of the most remarkable range-changes to have been recorded, ever since man began to record the ranges and changes of birds.” Mayr (1950) suggested that a genetic mutation may have enabled this change in behavior, and others have wondered if perhaps land-use changes in Europe may have encouraged it. It typically became a resident breeder within 1-2 years of its arrival. Hudson (1972) cites an ECD seen on a vessel at sea in the Eastern Atlantic, and wondered if perhaps they might undertake a ship-assisted passage to the New World. It was eventually concluded that the explosion of ECDs had ebbed in Europe, and that while it was regarded as a local nuisance it has apparently wrought no important damage to plants of gardens or fields, or interfered with native bird populations in a significant way. The British Trust for Ornithology Web site estimated its population in Britain at 298,000 pairs in 2007: http://btobx.bto.org/birdfacts/results/bob6840.html#. Surveys reveal an estimated 50% growth in its numbers in continental Europe between 1980 and 2005 (“The State of Europe’s Common

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1The direction of the ECD’s advances has been pronounced in the New and Old Worlds. At the eastern edge of its natural range comparatively little change was noted. In April of 2004 the Hong Kong Bird Committee declared in a memorandum (“Statement Number 1”) that “[d]espite the westward spread in Europe, there is no evidence of the natural range of this species expanding in China.”

The Ohio Cardinal

Vol. 31 No.1

Birds 2007” from the RSPB, European Bird Census Council, and BirdLife International).

The Great Invasions: North America

As it happened, the ECD’s appearance in North America was apparently the result of a deliberate, if mistaken, introduction in the Bahamas, a story well researched by Smith (1987). Having interviewed many of the persons involved, he relates that a pet dealer in Nassau got a shipment of ten pairs of doves in the early 1970s; ironically, he had ordered “ring-necks” _S. risoria_, but was shipped “Indian ring-necks” _S. decaeco_ by his European contacts, who may not have known the difference. In 1974 thieves broke into his place of business, in the process releasing some of these birds. The shop-owner later released the remainder. They soon flourished as nesting populations in the Bahamas, at least some of them assisted by humans who released birds—sometimes as unwanted pets and sometimes in order to take hunting pressure off native doves—and by the 1980s local numbers were in the tens of thousands.

Smith reasonably concludes this species likely jumped the 80 kilometers from the Bahamas to Florida on its own, rather than being assisted in this crossing or having flown from Europe on its own. Though some were reported in the ‘70s, the first published record of the species in the US came from the Florida Keys in 1980, and during the subsequent decade they were recognized and reported in many locations in southern Florida. Smith estimated their numbers in the state as certainly in the thousands, perhaps already in five figures, by 1987. Pointing out that like other dove species it can raise as many as six broods (two eggs apiece) a year, Smith predicted:

...eventually it could span the North American continent, as has the European Starling (Sturnus vulgaris) and the Cattle Egret (Bubulcus ibis). Because dispersal is primarily westward, it may take a few more years before the species breaks out of the Florida peninsula. However, expansion then might occur rapidly across the southeastern states because of the region's many small towns and extensive farming economy.


Breeding in North America has been reported fairly widely from Feb-Oct, with reported nests in Florida in every month but January. In Nov of 2007, birds were reportedly still incubating eggs as far north as Missouri and Kansas. There are three to six clutches per year, and in some cases another is started before the previous hatchlings fledge. As in Europe, many first-year birds
have dispersed via jumps, even as far as hundreds of kilometers, the distance decreasing with saturation. The ECD has a reputation of not being as docile as *roseogrisea*, but nonetheless it is fostered as a captive, and known to have been released from captivity singly and in numbers up to ~300 in California, Colorado, Missouri, Tennessee, Texas, and possibly Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland and New Jersey (Ramogosa 2002), blurring the picture of its distribution as a wild bird. The 2001 and 2006 records in Ohio, having occurred rather farther eastward in the state than those in the mass incursion of 2007, could easily represent released birds.

Because the aforementioned incursion occurred in every instance quite close to Ohio's western border, it is worth examining its records in Indiana in some detail. In June 1999, ECDs were first acceptably reported within hours of one another in small towns in central and northwestern Indiana. One was later to represent the first state record at the site; two were soon found there, then one killed, then two still around, and nesting attempted, with one adult and two juveniles discovered in mid-September. A bit later, one, then two, then six the next day, were reported from a third county, with copulation observed by 1 Oct, anecdotal reports claimed they had been nesting at the site for at least three years (Gorney 2001). Subsequently, ECDs were reported in dozens of other counties in the state, since which time Indiana reports of the species no longer require documentation, and ECD is now regarded as locally uncommon in small towns and rural areas throughout the state (Gorney, pers. comm.).

Elsewhere in the US, as in the Old World, its dispersal farther to the east was far less dramatic. ECDs were reported in Cuba in 1990, but many populations in the West Indies, particularly farther down in the Greater Antilles, appear to have originated with releases (Romogosa 1999). Smith observed that even in the Bahamas, where in the late 80s the species numbered in five figures on New Providence alone, he could find no evidence of its having colonized the more southerly islands. This parallels the more questionable wild origins of movements east in the Old World, where populations in Korea and Japan (Fisher 1953) seem to have been releases as well, and underlines the distinct tendency of the species to disperse in a northwesterly direction.

In North America the ECD is as yet less than common in many areas. Its occurrence is still sparse and spotty in inland western states and provinces. In the eastern part of the continent, sightings thus far have been few enough as to require records committee verification in at least Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ontario, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. Sightings do not require documentation for acceptance in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, or Minnesota. The dove's distribution here continues to reflect a strong tendency to spread westward via juveniles from a resident breeding population, with a weaker but still obvious northward tendency. One may speculate further that this species, more comfortable with villages in the low agricultural country and open suburban habitats, has found the forested and mountainous areas of the Appalachians and even the adjacent piedmont a barrier to advances from Florida.

Ohio and West Virginia would seem to be well placed behind such a barrier, and indeed until this year both states had but one accepted record of this species. The spate of Ohio records in 2007 may well represent a sort of backflow from Indiana, where ECDs have been nesting since 1999, rather than radiation directly from the Florida population or from locales to our east. Certainly they all occurred in the central and western parts of the westernmost Ohio counties.

As for the preferred habitats of the ECD, observers of the Old World invasion (Fisher 1953, Hudson 1965 & 1972) documented its devotion to human habitations, especially parks and gardens, rather than to open farmland or densely urban settings. They remain quite tame if not persecuted. They tend to avoid high elevations. They favor large (15-30') conifers like cypress and pines for nesting, although they will make use of buildings or rooks' nests. They often reuse nest sites. For their typical ground feeding, agricultural lands are not preferred, except during late summer when stubble fields are foraged. Doves associate with game farms, bird feeders, mills, or docks where grains are shipped. They prefer poles and wires for roosting and territorial defense. They may associate with other dove species.

The experience in North America is quite similar. Here, the spread of this dove was rapid, and also took place in a northwestward direction. As in Europe, it seemingly undertook not a steady advance, but rather a jump-skip progression, apparently with younger birds shooting ahead 300 or more kilometers at a time to establish beach-heads along the advance. Such first waves often arrived April-June, in small numbers rather than singly, with nesting beginning with little delay. Here, as in Europe, later advances seem to take place as infilling between these beach-heads, “often by spreading into less favoured rural habitats” (Hudson 1972). Their habitat preferences here closely resembled those in the Old World: small villages and rural settlements, suburbs with parklands and open spaces, grain elevators with conifers nearby, etc. Once such habitats are saturated, as in Florida, the infilling populations seem to adjust to large urban parks, denser suburbs, etc. They are harder than doves of southern climes, with documented overwintering in southern Saskatchewan. As for more southerly sites, the only land bird species regularly nesting on the Dry Tortugas has been the mourning dove; it has now been joined by the ECD as a breeder in this rather demanding habitat.

Status of ECD in Ohio

The Ohio incursion of 2007 matched quite well the pattern established in other states west of the Appalachians. On 11 March, two experienced Michigan observers saw and heard a pair flying in and out of tall spruces in Stryker, a small town (population 1400) in Ohio’s Williams County. Photographs were obtained, but others were unable to relocate the birds later. On 19 June, observers in the village of Fort Jefferson in western Darke County saw and heard two that had been frequenting a single tree in a yard; a nest site was suspected but not confirmed by subsequent observations. Eight days later, at least three birds were found in West Manchester, a village of about 400 about eight miles to the south, in Preble County. Here, courtship and copulation were witnessed. Not far away, on 10 June and subsequently, a dove had been seen at a new location less than three miles west of the border in Union County, Indiana. Many observers reported another just north of Oxford in Butler County over a three-week period in June, where it frequented grain elevators. On 11 July, a pair of doves was found in central Celina (pop. ~10,000) in Mercer County; they...
Eurasian Collared-doves in Ohio

and perhaps others were rediscovered there, calling, on 17 and 22 July. On 27 September, an apparent juvenile ECDO was observed in West Manchester, along with an adult.

Probably because its advance in our direction was blocked or at least slowed by relatively inhospitable dense forests and mountains, this species had furnished few records in Ohio until 2007, lagging well behind its arrival elsewhere at our latitude. Its appearance here in appreciable numbers was, in fact, contemporaneous with a similar arrival 4000-plus km. northwest in Alaska, where geography will soon dictate the limit of its North American dispersion. It has been promoted as a game bird and successfully hunted in southeastern states. As of this writing, this species has not been directly addressed in Ohio hunting regulations, but presumably as a non-native dove it may be taken. Streptopelia doves are frequently kept in captivity in Ohio, and have been released at weddings, corporate roll-outs, grand openings, and at other such public events. Releases will continue to confuse our perception of its natural distribution, but it seems likely they will become less significant as wild birds arrive.

Identification Problems

Issues, some of them difficult, in distinguishing S. decaocto from lookalikes in the field have been discussed here earlier (Hammond 2000) and in many other publications. The only serious ID contender is the domesticated S. roseogrisea, once S. risoria, now known as the African collared-dove, once as the ‘ringed turtle-dove.’ This species, allopatric in the wild for all that means, is a subject of aviculture and appears in many color morphs, some confusable with ECDs. Domesticated ACDs are smaller, and many—though not all—show folded primaries with a noticeably paler look than ECD, but these distinctions are most useful in the field when both species are present. Vocalizations are distinctive: ECDs utter a distinctive three-note hollow hooting ‘koo KOO kook,’ so persistently that some find it the species’ most annoying behavior. Beneath, decaocto shows gray undertail-coverts (markedly darker the rest of the underparts), and blackish on the bases of the tail feathers extending farther distally, especially on the outer webs of the two outermost primaries, where diagnostic narrow ‘spikes’ appear. The underparts of roseogrisea show coverts as pale as the breast, and lack the spikes. Fortunately, the settings in which both species appear lead them to perch on utility wires, making these characteristics of the underparts easily discerned. Hybridization between decaocto and roseogrisea is known to occur (Romagosa & McEneaney 1999, Fisher 1953, Smith 1987).

Eurasian collared-doves have spread so quickly that observers have not always been prepared to document observations adequately. This may have resulted in over-reporting of this species, as in the beginning reporters felt satisfied in distinguishing them only from mourning doves, for example, rather than the more confusable domesticated forms. Additionally, these birds quickly become so familiar in occupied areas that observers less often remark on them after their appearance. Over the last twenty years, S. decaocto has become more common than its congener in North America, but reliable records

1 The two atypical records in Ohio for 2001 and 2006 could easily represent escaped or released captive birds.

The Ohio Cardinal

Whan

of its local status and distribution continue to depend on accurate identification by observers. Their occupation of North America over such a short period is certainly worthy of careful documentation.

Acknowledgments

The author is indebted to Ferene Domoki of Wake Forest University for his generous help with translation and Central European birds; to Jozsef Buki and the Hungarian Academy of Science for efforts to locate obscure publications; and to John Arnfield, Martin George of the Shropshire Ornithological Society, British Birds, and Birdguides for providing British publications. Don Gorney supplied helpful information on Indiana records, and Joe Hammond excellent photos and commentary on a perplexing ACD that appeared in Ohio in 2002. Paul Gardner made helpful comments on a draft of this paper.

Literature Consulted


Migrant Birds Swarm at Little Cedar Point
by E. S. Thomas & Louis W. Campbell

The Toledo Naturalists' Association's Yearbook for 1975 republished part of a weekly column in the Columbus Dispatch of 6/4/1939 by E. S. Thomas, then curator of the Ohio State Museum, appending remarks from Louis W. Campbell. It appears again here with permission from the TNA.

It was in many respects the biggest bird day in my career—and that covers 31 years’ study of migrating birds. It was a dazzling exciting slightly bewildering day. Just imagine birds by the hundreds, birds everywhere, a dozen pairs of twinkling wings in every tree and shrub, sprightly song bursting our every few moments, hundreds and hundreds of birds!

I had often heard of the great swarms of migrating birds which occasionally mass themselves at places on the shore of Lake Erie in May, preparatory to their flight across the lake. But in a dozen or more May trips up to the lake, I had failed to find any more migrants than would occur in central Ohio on favorable days.

And, although the evidence was from unimpeachable authority, I had come almost to believe that the stories were myths. But, finally, I have seen it with my own eyes. You may believe me: bird migrants do occur on occasion swarm along the lake shore in absolutely unbelievable numbers, in numbers that are never seen in inland districts.

Upon the invitation of Louis W. Campbell, authority on the birds of northwestern Ohio, and Mrs. Campbell, we drove to Toledo one Saturday and started immediately for Little Cedar Point, a sand spit extending out into the lake, some 10 miles east of Toledo.

The sand spit is surrounded on all sides by extensive marshes, while the lake shore and the lane which leads to the point are bordered with trees and shrubbery. There, thus are presented opportunities for seeing marsh birds, birds of the sand beaches and birds which frequent trees and shrubbery.

There was an abundance of birds at the point that afternoon, but not to be compared with numbers which we were to find on the following day. The feature of the afternoon was the number of Lincoln's sparrows and gray-cheeked thrushes.

Both species are ordinarily considered rare, and you can imagine our pleasure at finding them actually common on this afternoon. Both birds are normally very shy and difficult to approach, but here they were crowded into such close quarters that we were able to get incomparable views of them time and again.

Out on the sand spit, there were sanderlings and turnstones and some charming, little suede-gray piping plovers—one of the very rarest of our Ohio nesting birds, and the first which I had seen in Ohio for five years or more.

At the very tip of the point there was a large flock of herring and ring-billed gulls, with some hundred pairs of common terns, which had established a nesting colony. Several dozen tern's nests had already been scooped out in the sand, and a few even had complete clutches of three eggs.

There was a gorgeous scarlet tanager which we saw, shimmering in the sunlight, at 30 feet, along the road. There were gaudy Baltimore orioles, canary and black goldfinches and a flock of the rare brown-streaked pine siskins.
Migrant Birds Swarm at Little Cedar Point

clustered close at hand around a little mud puddle in the road. But we could not have dreamed of the host of birds which we were to find swarming in the vegetation at the point. Our first intimation of it came when we began seeing large numbers of olive-backed [Swinson's] thrushes in the willows along the lane. The gray-checks which were so plentiful the afternoon before had disappeared, and here were scores and scores of olive-backs.

There were also in the horde of birds which flitted ahead of the car a number of stately beautiful white-crowned sparrows, Wilson's warblers, and a few Lincoln's sparrows, though only a fraction of those we had seen the day before. It was obvious that there had been a tremendous turnover during the night.

And then, as we approached the wooded border of the lake, we were suddenly plunged into a mass of seething, flitting, signing, feeding birds. Every bush had its quota.

I would hesitate to estimate the numbers of salmon and black redstarts, magnolia warblers, Wilson's warblers. We carefully estimated that there may have been as many as 500 olive-backed thrushes in this restricted area! I counted 46 fleeing ahead of the car at a distance of about 200 yards.

One of our warbler warblers is the mourning warbler, a lovely creature with vivid olive-green back, clear slate-blue throat, ornamented with a garret of black with bright yellow underparts. We usually feel fortunate indeed, to find half a dozen of them in a spring's migration.

On this day alone, we saw no less than 10 of them. Since they are shy little creatures, which skulk in the dense herbage of the forest floor, it is not unreasonable to suppose that there were 50 of them in the few acres of woodland at the base of the point.

We estimate that we saw about 10 of the even rarer Connecticut warblers, though we did not definitively identify all of them.

There were chestnut-sided warblers, bay-breasted warblers, blackpoll warblers, ovenbirds, Canada and black-throated blue warblers in fair numbers. We saw several of the rare Philadelphia vireos. There were purple finches and rose-breasted grosbeaks.

And everywhere we were seeing redstarts, golden Wilson's warblers, with their jaunty black caps; gold, black and white magnolia warblers; and especially olive-backed thrushes.

As we started out on to the sand spit, which extends a half a mile out into the lake, we could see that there was a storm brewing out over the water, ostensibly headed in our direction. There was a strong, 25-mile gale blowing off the lake, and flashes of lightning zig-zagged down from the black thunderheads.

A flock of 18 migrant blue jays hovered timidly around the bordering woods, unable to make up their minds (figuratively) to cross the lake. A similar flock of crows, Campbell said, had loitered around the point for a week.

Five kingbirds, perched in the branches of a single fallen willow tree, made a sight that was both unusual and impressive.

For several minutes, 1 watched a nighthawk vainly trying to migrate out to the tip of the point against the gale. Foot by foot, it would fight against the wind, only to be buffeted up into the air and backwards, losing all ground which it had gained.

And then came a flight of hummingbirds. One, another, three in a group, two more—a total of seven, one after another, sped past like tiny winged bullets. Straight out over the sand they flashed and out into the teeth of the gale; out over the water into the menacing storm, until their bodies were lost in the distance.

Thomas & Campbell

Where the nighthawk had failed, they braved the wind with ease and not one of them hesitated for a fraction of a second in its lunge over the breakers toward an unseen destination. One felt it like cheering or doing something equally foolish.

We had to leave in the middle of the afternoon and how we hated to go! Our list for the portion of the day totaled 123 species of birds, by far the largest one-day list I have ever assembled. If we had been out at the crack of dawn and had worked until dark, we could easily have topped 150 species; 160 would have been by no means impossible.

* * * * * * *

Lou Campbell's comments (1975): The Cedar Point Marsh is shaped like a triangle, with its point marking the dividing line between Lake Erie and Maumee Bay. At the time the above article was written the marsh was fringed with trees on the lake and bay sides. A mile-long forest one-half mile wide stretched across the base, and the road leading to the clubhouse was lined with willows and cottonwoods. Between the Cedar Point Hunting Club headquarters and Little Cedar Point was about one-half mile of woods. The time was only a few years after Lake Erie had reached an all-time low water level. Shore lines were stabilized, and the sand bar was over 1000 feet long.

One of the area bird-migration lanes in spring follows the Lake Erie shore to Maumee Bay and crosses into Michigan. Little Cedar Point was a jumping-off place and birds following wooded shore lines and the marsh border accumulated at the tip of the triangle of marsh. Because the wooded edges of the marsh were natural bird highways, concentrations also occurred in autumn. Insect migrants such as dragonflies, bumblebees, and monarch butterflies were often prominent in spring.

Today Little Cedar Point attracts only a small fraction of the migrants formerly found there. In 1961 clearings of the swamp forest across the inner border of the marsh was begun, and it is now virtually all farmland. The lake and bay reaches are badly eroded by recent all-time high Lake Erie levels. A long stretch near the Toledo and Oregon pumping stations is completely washed away. The fringe of trees on the Maumee Bay side is interrupted and about one-third as wide as it was formerly. The greatest change has taken place at the point itself. It is only a few hundred feet long and at least one-half mile south of where it was in the 1930s, with a corresponding reduction in the wooded areas formerly lying between the clubhouse and the sand bar.

If the U.S. Department of the Interior had not spent a million dollars (obtained from hunters, by the way) to protect the outer dikes, the Cedar Point Marshes would now be a large bay and a part of Lake Erie. Ultimately a low water cycle will return, and birds will again follow shorelines and gather at Little Cedar Point. But never in the numbers that they once did.
Rails in Pickaway County

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In 1889, Oliver Davie wrote in *Nests and Eggs of North American Birds* this of the yellow rail *Gottornicops noveboracensis*: “The small Yellow Crane appears to be quite rare everywhere in Eastern North America...Dr. Howard Jones has frequently taken it in the vicinity of Circleville, Ohio, and considers it nearly as common as other species, and believes it breeds there, which is probably the case throughout the State.”

Jones (1853-1945), patriarch of the talented clan that produced *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of the Birds of Ohio*, was a Circleville physician with a passion for birds. He published half a dozen ornithological works, and was known as an authority on local history and archaeology. His papers are now in the Ohio Historical Society’s archives. Jones’s colleague Blenn Rife Bales (1876-1946) also worked as a physician in Circleville. Bales became known also for his archaeological collections, as well as his interest in natural history, which included local butterflies and moths, but especially birds. He published articles on local nesting birds in the *Auk* and the *Wilson Bulletin*, and upon his demise his collection of over 10 thousand egg specimens, including those of about 650 North American species and nearly all the known Ohio nesters, was donated to Ohio State University’s Museum, along with related papers.

Jones recalled his boyhood rambles in the county by observing “one could walk half a day through the woods without coming to a clearing of any size,” but by the turn of the century much clearing for agriculture had taken place, even though tracts of forest and wetlands remained. It was often after making professional visits around the countryside that he and Bales collected nests and eggs. Bales’s taste was more acquisitive, and he managed a large professional collection of eggs, purchasing some (an ivory-billed woodpecker egg went for about a hundred dollars in the early twentieth century; he apparently did not own one) and trading with other enthusiasts.

The Bales egg collection, along with other large ones from Harold Price and Carl Tuttle, form the heart of OSU’s collection, which ranks in numbers among the top two dozen in North America. The eggs themselves are accompanied by accession slips, catalogues, and journals from the collector, forming a unique source of information on Ohio birds. The personal journals preserved in the Museum collection chronicle among other things his discoveries of nesting birds in Pickaway County in the early years of the twentieth century. They show the author to have been a frequent and scrupulous observer of the natural world.

The first journal, a green school composition book with stapled page numbers, covers the years 1906 and 1907 in a clear hand and brown ink. Four old photographs, loose, are tucked inside. It reveals a county that has changed much since his time. At Calamus Pond (a few miles west of Circleville, now a Columbus Audubon property called Calamus Swamp) during 1907 for example, Bales records four June forays for least bittern nests, during which he collected 17 nests and 57 eggs, without apparent concern that he might have diminished their overall numbers there, nor did they in reports of years to come. From other wetlands in the county come numerous records of other bitterns, king rails, Virginia rails, and soras. All the common nightshawk eggs he mentions were collected on bare ground in cornfields, not on roofs. Of special interest was this entry on pp. 90-91, for 10 June 1907:

*Nest of Black Rail. Nest sunk in a bunch of cattails 4 in above water and composed of cattail leaves and muddy trash, lined with pieces of smart weed stalks, a few pieces of morning glory vine, some timothy straw evidently taken from a pile of drift nearby and some short bits of cattail leaves. The nest was built near the end of a slough overgrown with cattails and water grasses and was situated near a clump of willows. Eggs 3 fresh, creamy buff, speckled and spotted with reddish brown and lavender gray. Markings more numerous at large ends of eggs.*

These specimens were located in the OSU collection, in a box labeled “Gottornicops n. noveboracensis.” This is of course the scientific name of the yellow rail. Inside, the three eggs, marked with AOU number 216 (black rail) and set number 4/3, are swathed in cotton, along with a catalog card that reads “#4068. Circleville, Ohio. 10 June 1907. 3 spec. B. R. Bales. Lateraltus jaenensis coturniculus. Bales 1, p. 186.” The latter is the scientific name of the black rail.

The last citation is to an 8x12 ledger of 300 pages, with the handwritten title “Record of Bird Eggs Taken by B. R. and M. E. Bales 1907,” one of a series of volumes forming a catalog of eggs in the Bales collection. The entry is headed by “AOU 216. Black Rail. Porzana jaenensis.” The words “Black Rail,” in ink, have been crossed out, and in pencil the words “Yellow Rail” inserted; the handwriting in both entries seems to be identical. The rest of the details follow the wording of the journal entry, except that measurements are added: “99x.70/97x.70/87x.64,” and the nest’s location is given in more detail, as “In a slough near a bunch of willow trees on Col. Anderson’s farm 7 mi W [presumably of Circleville].”

The Anderson farm, according to local historians, was located along Lick Run, just north of where it crossed today’s US Rte. 22. The 1913 USGS map of the

In the center is Bales’s notebook containing notes on the record. On the left are the yellow rail eggs he found in Pickaway County, later verified at the Smithsonian. On the right is a set of black rail eggs from New Jersey for comparison.
Rails in Pickaway County

Era quadrangle shows a homestead 1/10 of a mile north of the highway, just 3/10 of a mile west of where the highway crosses the creek. A sign for “Seven Oaks Farm” marks the spot today. Just half a mile north of the homestead a smaller creek merges with Lick Run, and this wet area might well be the site of the collection of these eggs.

Evidently Bales, after measuring the eggs and consulting references and feeling unsure of his initial identification, sought expert advice, and eventually corrected the name in his catalog. The error, however, was perpetuated in the catalog card placed in the specimen box. The three eggs in question, when compared with black rail eggs in the collection, differed in being smaller, with a decidedly buff ground color rather than off-white. They represent the only known existing specimen evidence for Ohio nesting of the yellow rail.

This evidence is published here for the first time. Peterjohn (2001) writes that the “only nest was collected in Pickaway County in 1909 (Hicks 1935a).” The reference is to Distribution of the Breeding Birds of Ohio, where Hicks mentions a set of eggs collected near Circleville, Pickaway by B. R. Bales in 1909, citing Wilson Bulletin 26:196, 1914. Actually this article, by W.F. Henninger, provides correction to the existing bird list for Ohio by saying a set of eggs collected by Bales had been “identified in 1909 at the Smithsonian Institution. (Apologies due Dr. Bales).” It seems likely these specimens—collected in 1907 and later sent to USNM for identification—have at last been located, and serve to verify Dr. Jones’ view of the status of the yellow rail in Pickaway County. They also correct the date of collection.

[A searchable electronic database of the OSU Museum’s bird egg collection is currently being developed, and may well provide new specimen evidence of the Ohio breeding status of other species. It and the Museum’s collection of bird skins—data from both of which will be available via databases soon to be available on the Web—may be consulted by members of the public conducting research by making an appointment with the curator, John Condit, at condit!@osu.edu or (614) 292-0543 weekday mornings.]

Acknowledgments

John Condit, curator of higher vertebrates at the Ohio State University Museum of Biological Diversity, provided access to its holdings and library resources for the preparation of this paper. Marcia Brehmer provided original research into Pickaway County locations involved in the record.

Bibliography


Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee

by Tom Kemp, Secretary
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The Ohio Bird Records Committee reviewed a total of 49 records in September and December 2007. Of these, 37 were accepted by the committee, 10 were not accepted, and two remain in circulation. Most of the records come from 2007, but some are from prior years. Remember, bird records can be submitted to the committee from previous seasons and even previous years. A complete and accurate record of Ohio’s birdlife is what all in the state’s birding community should strive for. To those of you who submitted records after mid-December 2007, they will be voted on in the next round, likely in late January or February. Finally, the OBRC welcomes Jay Stenger from Cincinnati as its newest member. Jay replaces Kevin Metcalf who resigned his position when he moved out of state.

Accepted Records

Ross’s goose Chen rossii; 10-12 Nov 2007; Paulding Co.; S. Myers, M. & D. Dunakin

Cackling goose Branta hutchinsii; 18 March 2007; Auglaize Co.; R. Asamoto
7 April 2007; Montgomery Co.; S. Egleston & R. Asamoto
13 Nov 2007; Lake Co.; J. Pogacnik
24 Nov 2007; Lucas Co.; J. Hammond
25 Nov 2007; Wood Co.; T. Kemp

Tricolored heron Egretta tricolor; 21 April 2007; Preble Co.; F. Frick
8 July 2007; Erie Co.; C. Caldwell

White ibis Eudocimus albus; 2 Sep 2007; Holmes Co.; S. Snyder

Glossy ibis Plegadis falcinellus; 10 May 2007; Wayne Co.; S. Weaver
18 May 2007; Greene Co.; F. Frick, L. Gara
4 Sep 2007; Morgan Co.; N. Sudnick

White-faced ibis Plegadis chihi; 10 May 2007; Wayne Co.; S. Weaver

Swallow-tailed kite Elanoides forficatus; 6 July 2006; Mahoning Co.; B. Jones

Mississippi kite Ictinia mississippiensis; 21 June 2007; Hocking Co.; B. Whin, m.obs. 19 Sep 2007; Vinton Co.; B. Crow

Swainson’s hawk Buteo swainsoni; 23 April 2007; Ashtabula Co.; E. Schlabach, S. Weaver 23 April 2007; Ashtabula Co.; E. & R. Schlabach, S. Weaver, L. Hochstetter

Prairie falcon Falco mexicanus; 27 Nov 2007; Lucas Co.; D. Sparks-Jackson, M. Yawney

Piping plover Charadrius melodus; 28 April 2007; Lucas Co.; S. Duris, m.obs.


Vol. 31 No.1

60
Ivory gull *Pagophila eburnea*; “probably” Feb 2006; Lucas Co. Details provided did not eliminate other more likely gull species. In addition, the observer was unsure of the date of the sighting.

Eurasian collared-dove *Streptopelia decaocto*; 11 March 2007; Williams Co. Photographs and written documentation provided were not diagnostic for this species. Although found within a stone’s throw of U.S. 127, the corridor providing a spate of collared-dove records in 2007, the documentation submitted did not unequivocally eliminate African collared-dove (ringed turtle-dove).

Kirtland’s warbler *Dendroica kirtlandii*; 22 May 2007; Wayne Co. Although detailed, the documentation provided did not positively rule out magnolia warbler.

Possible hybrid tanager *Piranga* sp; 15 May 2007; Lucas Co. This bird was extensively photographed, but the committee found no reason to invoke hybrid in this case. It was deemed a slightly aberrant scarlet tanager.

Black-headed grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*; 27 Aug 2007; Trumbull Co. The details submitted to the committee were insufficient to distinguish this species from the far more likely immature rose-breasted grosbeak.

**Records Not Accepted**

Common pochard *Aythya ferina*; 6 March 2007; Erie Co. Details submitted on this sighting did not exclude the far more likely possibilities of canvasback and redhead.

White-tailed kite *Elanus leucurus*; 13 Sep 2007; Summit Co. The observers submitted a detailed account of this sighting. However, no optics were used in the observation and the observers lacked any experience with this species. The committee felt a more complete description and photographs would be desirable to add this species to the state list.

Swainson’s hawk *Buteo swainsoni*; 27 April 2007; Ottawa Co. A majority of committee members felt that this bird lacked sufficient detail to be accepted. In particular, there was no mention of flight style, an important field mark for this species. Nor was the tail mentioned. The overall pattern suggests this species, but distance to the bird and lack of the above characters in the description did not positively eliminate other *Buteo* species.

Whooping crane *Grus americana*; 12 May 2007; Lorain Co. This bird was surely a whooping crane, but likely coming from an introduced population in the upper Great Lakes. Therefore, it was not added to the state list.

Black-tailed gull *Larus crassirostris*; 8 June 2003; Ottawa Co. The description provided for this bird did not eliminate any number of other far more likely species.

Pen and ink by Bill Shively
Interesting are the comparisons between closely-related species of geese. There are many parallels in morphology. Above are in #1 a greater white-fronted goose Anser albinos, and a lesser white-fronted goose Anser erythropus. The latter species is globally endangered, but the specimen is nonetheless from Ohio. In #2 are a Ross's goose Chen rossii and a snow goose Chen caerulescens. In #3 are on the left a typical Branta canadensis maxima, the large local nonmigratory giant Canada goose; in the middle Branta canadensis parvipes, the lesser Canada goose; and on the right, Branta hutchinsii hutchinsii, the subspecies of cackling goose that occurs in Ohio.

Bob Lane contributed three photos documenting the perils to birds at Conneaut harbor. Top: a young ring-billed gull; Middle: auto antics, this one organized, on 6 Sept; Bottom: discarded tires at low water on 25 Oct