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On the inside...

Winter 2000-01 Overview and Reports
by Bill Whan 57

Further Afield
by Rob Harlan 76

“The Possibilities are Bewildering”: The History and Mystery of the
Cincinnati Warbler
by Mike Busam 80

A History of the Crow Roost at Cincinnati
by Frank Renfrow 91

All Time High Ohio Christmas Bird Counts
by Tom Kemp 94

The 2000-01 Christmas Bird Counts
by Ned Keller 99

Short Note: Cedars and Waxwings 113

Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee 114

Retrospective: 20 Years Ago in the Cardinal 116

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

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

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

Seasonal Report Due Dates	Please send all reports to:
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Bill Whan, Editor

Edwin C. Pierce, Publisher

Joseph W. Hammond, Design Manager

The Ohio Bird Records Committee: Jim McCormac, Secretary

Ohio Division of Natural Areas and Preserves

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On the Cover: Townsend's Solitaire - Holden Arboretum, Lake Co., 25 January 2001.

Photo by Gary Meszaros.

Winter 2000-01 Overview

by Bill Whan

Looking back over the winter, we recalled the old story of the naval gunner who in a practice session first put a round a thousand yards left of the target, and on his next attempt another a thousand yards to the right, whereupon a statistician present cried out "Bull's-eye!" So it was, *on average*, a more or less normal winter, according to the seasonal statistics, but it was more complicated than that. Autumn ended cold, but the weather moderated during the first half of December before single-digit temperatures set in for the latter half, for an average of 8-10 degrees below normal for the month, and November-December temperatures the coldest on record on average. January, never truly warm of course, began cold but nevertheless ended up averaging warmer than normal, and February was 5 degrees warmer than usual overall.

Temperatures are important, but don't tell a winter's whole story. Two days in February featured 50-mph winds out of the southwest, and ushered in untimely arrivals of birds: on the 9th, apparent migrant killdeers and turkey vultures began to show up, and on the 25th a number of other more or less premature occurrences were noted. The season's third windiest day, 12 December, may have influenced the remarkable appearance of a summer tanager in Butler County, a palm warbler in Hamilton County, and even two varied thrushes in the northwestern quadrant of the state.

Amid such flux, some surprising stability endured. Two rare species stayed so long that even the most dilatory of birders got to see them. One of the aforementioned varied thrushes found a Findlay back yard inviting enough to stay there well into the spring season, and Ohio's fourth verified Townsend's solitaire—unlike its predecessors—hung around, putting on a five-week show in Lake County. Harlequin ducks and Harris's sparrows may not be so rare, but they are seldom as accommodating as the Grand Rapids duck that stayed long enough to proclaim his sex by molting into male alternate plumage, or the sparrow that haunted the same stretch of hedgerow for at least ten weeks in Wayne County. Nor are long-tailed ducks normally sedentary in Ohio, but a young female liked the spa-like setting of Castalia Pond enough to pass week after week there this season. We continued to find good numbers of snowy owls during the winter, but few stayed long in one place, complicating an estimate of exactly how many there were; only the (apparently) imperturbable habitué of Accommodation Road in Clinton County remained, satisfying humans' paradoxical twin lusts for novelty and predictability, until 7 February.

Numbers of the commoner waterfowl—mallards and Canada geese, for example—were huge, and the puddle ducks in general didn't do badly, considering frozen water in many places at times. Diving ducks were down considerably in numbers reported, some drastically. With a few interesting small-scale exceptions, raptor numbers and variety were unremarkable. Among gulls, no rarities were reported, but warm-water outlets along the frozen lakeshore during December and January concentrated good numbers of the less common species, and offered

excellent opportunities for studying all their plumages—as well as more than a few interesting aberrations. Few meaningful generalizations could be made among the passerines—save for the near-absence of winter finches—but there were some interesting occurrences among them, all treated in the Reports below. Seven birds on the list of review species were seen during the period, and all were written up for the Records Committee.

In the following reports, we from time to time cite Christmas Bird Count numbers from around the state, though we never mix CBC data with those submitted directly to the *Cardinal* or gathered from other sources. For a full review of the CBC data, we invite readers to consult Ned Keller's excellent compilation in these pages. Christmas Bird Counts bring out legions of birders with varying skills, and their reports of scarcer birds—absent details vetted by compilers—occasionally merit skepticism, but no one doubts their data are of considerable significance overall. The most numerous species during this CBC period were, from #1 to #10: European starling, Canada goose, American crow, ring-billed gull, mallard, house sparrow, common grackle, red-breasted merganser, American robin, and mourning dove. The presence of two exotic species in this list is familiar, but not reassuring. The ranks of at least the starling, goose, gull, and merganser are higher than they would have been a hundred years ago, and a hundred years before that the mallard and the crow and the house sparrow would not have ranked so high.

The following reports follow the taxonomic order of the 42nd Supplement (July 2000) to the 7th edition of the *AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998). Underlined names of species indicate those on the OBRC Review List; adequate documentation is needed to add reports of these to official state records, or to attributed records herein. County names are supplied for certain locations, and appear *italicized*. Unless other numbers are supplied in the text, sightings cited refer to single birds of the species in question. Abbreviations, conventions, and symbols in the text should be readily understood, with the possible exception of the following: BCSP=Buck Creek State Park in *Clark*; BIWA=Big Island WA in *Marion*; CBC=Christmas Bird Count; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley National Park in *Cuyahoga* and *Summit*; EFSP=East Fork SP in *Clermont*; EHSP=East Harbor SP in *Ottawa*; *fide*=“in trust of,” said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; GPI=Gordon Park Impoundment (Dike 14) in *Cleveland*; HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in *Lake*; Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh WA in *Wayne*; Killdeer=Killdeer Plains WA in *Wyandot*; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in *Ottawa*; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in *Lucas*; Metzger=Metzger Marsh WA in *Lucas*; MP=Metropark; m obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in *Hamilton*; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ONWRC=Ottawa NWR census, conducted monthly, and reported herein by E. Pierce; Ottawa=Ottawa NWR in *Lucas* and *Ottawa*; ph=photograph; Res=reservoir; Res'n=reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley WA in *Warren*; WA=Wildlife Area; ~≈approximately.

The Reports

Red-throated Loon: A latish migrant spent 3 Dec at Cowan Lake SP (**D. Overacker, L. Gara**).

Common Loon: Very few inland reports. Fewer than 30 were seen on Lake Erie, for that matter, with a high count of eight at GPI on 8 Dec (**S. Zadar**). A tough bird was observed at Avon Lake PP on 3 Jan (**J. Hammond**) and 29 Jan (**N. Barber**). Another appeared on newly-open water on Meander Res, *Mahoning*, on 13 Feb (**C. Babyak**).

Pied-billed Grebe: Migrants cleared out by the first week of Dec, with a high count of 18 at BCSP on the 2nd (**D. Overacker**). Mid-winter sightings included one lurking under an ice shelf at E. 72nd St in *Cleveland* 6 Jan (**B. Whan**), one at Hoover Res on 18 Jan (**B. Graves**), one in the CVNP on 27 Jan (**D&A Chasar**), one on the Scioto in *Columbus* on 11 Feb (**B. Royse**), and another the same day in *Hamilton* (**J. Lehman**). **S. Snyder** greeted the first returning migrant on 21 Feb in *Wayne*.

Horned Grebe: Most vacated Ohio during the first half of Dec, with a high count of 22 at Caesar Ck SP on 2 Dec. (**D. Graham**), where one remained on the 10th (**D. Whiteley**). Other than one seen at Eastlake PP on New Year's Day (**N. Barber**), the next observed were migrants, beginning on 24 Feb, with two at Mounds Rec'n Area (**Graham**) and two at GPI (**S. Zadar**).

Red-necked Grebe: **D. Whiteley** discovered one at Caesar Ck SP on 10 Dec, and **J. Pogacnik** another in *Lake* on 1 Jan.

Double-crested Cormorant: Migrants lingered until the first really cold weather, as at S. Bass Isl, where **S. Wulkowicz** noted the last two birds on 20 Dec. A few persisted later along Lk Erie, with several at Eastlake PP on 1 Jan (**N. Barber**), a healthy 25 off the Cedar Pt chaussee on 6 Jan (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**), one at Lorain on 7 Jan (**J. Larson**), another at Avon Lk PP on 26 Jan (**B. Royse**). Inland reports included one in *Columbus* on 31 Dec (**R. Cressman**) and another in *Washington* on 14 Jan (**B. Placier**).

Great Blue Heron: Wintered in small numbers in many spots with open water, but a host of 70 birds off the Cedar Pt chaussee, *Erie*, on 6 Jan was notable (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: A few wintered along Lk Erie as far east as Avon Lk. The high count was four at Bayshore, *Lucas*, on 1 Jan (**J. Rakestraw**), and one was at the Avon Lk PP on 26 Jan (**B. Royse**). Remarkable was a mid-winter imm bird in *Dayton* on 1 Jan (**D. Dister**). The Toledo CBC again led the state with 30 birds, on 17 Dec.

Black Vulture: The Lk Buckhorn roost was represented by a Millersburg CBC count of 28 on 16 Dec, and a 3 Feb count of 11 in *Holmes* (**E. Schlabach**). The Hocking Hills flock mustered 44 (with a single turkey vulture) on 18 Jan (**J. Fry**). *Adams* had a healthy 73 on 30 Dec (**P. Whan**), and 70 were over *Brown* on 14 Jan (**D. Styer**). Roosting black vultures are increasingly taking advantage of chimney heat at rustic lodges in state parks: at the lodge at Hocking Hills SP, **P. Gottschling** and **L. Aldrich** noticed 15 on 1 Jan, and **C. Dusthimer** ~20 there on 8 Jan, and at Hueston Wds SP's lodge **D. Dister** observed two on 24 Dec. The Paint Ck CBC reported 223 on 17 Dec from *Highland* and *Ross*.

Turkey Vulture: One of the two big *Athens* roosts persisted for the local 17 Dec CBC, with a count of 126. The *Holmes* roost was represented by counts of up to 45 during the period near Sugarcreek (**E. Schlabach**), and a Millersburg CBC tally of 86 on 16 Dec. The *Granville*, *Licking*, flock was down in numbers, with 80-100 overhead in Jan and Feb (**R. Thorn**). TVs forage widely, so these roosts could account for sightings such as 12 in *Muskingum* on 26 Jan (**J. Larson**), 30-40 there on 7 Feb (**L. Yoder**), or 20+ in *The Wilds* on 4 Mar (**B&A Toneff**). Single-digit sightings in the Cincinnati area spanned the period (m obs). A big storm pumped warm winds into the state on 9 Feb, bringing in early migrants—or at least blowing around residents—such as two in *Columbus* (**B. Royse**). Two were in *Ashtabula* on the 10th (**J. Pogacnik**), and one in *Summit* on the 13th (**A&D Chasar**). A second pulse came on 19 Feb with two over Toledo (**R. Nirschl**) and one in *Defiance* (**J. Yochum**), then on the 20th with 16 in *Lawrence* (**H. Slack**) and six in *Hancock* (**B. Hardesty**).

Greater White-fronted Goose: An unusual mid-winter inland flock of five was at Caesar Ck SP on 8 Feb (**L. Gara**). Seven were discovered at Funk WA on 11 Feb (**S. Snyder**), where 10 were seen the following day (**V. Fazio**), and four on the 24th (**Snyder**); two further west in *Wayne* on 27 Feb may have been from this flock (**D. Horn**). Elsewhere, one was in *Columbiana* on 22 Feb (**B&D Lane**), and one at Walborn Res on the 26th (**B. Morrison**).

Snow Goose: Wintered for the ninth year in a row in the western Lk Erie marshes, where the ONWRC had 75 on 3 Dec and 66 on 31 Dec, while **V. Fazio** found 33 there on 26 Feb. Inland, three were in *Holmes* on 25 Dec (**L. Yoder**), two in *Warren* on 28 Jan (**D. Dister**), and two to three at MWW during the first half of Feb (**F. Frick**, **J. Lehman**, m obs). By 18 Feb two migrants were at BCSP (**D. Overacker**), and another at Lk Rockwell on the 19th (**L. Rosche**).

Ross's Goose: One spent 18-20 Feb near BCSP in *Clark* for m obs, ph; details are with the OBRC, as are those for one reported at Hoover Res, *Delaware*, on 4 Feb.

Canada Goose: Numbers were even higher than usual this year, with all-time record highs on at least the Columbus and *W. Hamilton* CBCs. **B. Morrison** reported a bird of the Richardson's race at Walborn Res on 27 Feb. More than a dozen casual observations of over 500 birds were reported, other than from CBCs, with a high of ~6800 near Ottawa on 9 Feb (**V. Fazio**). The statewide CBC total was 71,494, our second most numerous species.

Mute Swan: Burgeoning. This exotic species promises to display here the same unpleasant habits it has shown to the east. Over 150 birds were reported, with a high count of 19 at Medusa Marsh on 28 Feb (**J. Hammond**). The CBCs found a total of 59.

Tundra Swan: During Dec more than 650 birds were reported, with a high count of 228 on the 3 Dec ONWRC, where some birds reportedly wintered for the ninth consecutive year. There were no Jan or early Feb reports. Earliest returning migrants were four at BCSP on 11 Feb (**D. Overacker**), and they continued in single-digit numbers throughout the state through the end of the period. A total of 100 came from the CBCs.

Wood Duck: Wintered at spots with habitat. Northward, **B. Hardesty** had one at *Hancock's* only open water, below a dam, on 6 Feb, and **J. Yochum** a pair in *Defiance* in similar circumstances on 20 Feb. **B. Glick** and **M. Gingerich** found six in *Holmes* on New Year's Day. **K. Metcalf** regarded two at N. Chagrin Res'n, *Cuyahoga*, on 10 Feb as early arrivals.

Gadwall: The high count of southbound migrants was 240 on 17 Dec at Magee (**H&S Hiris**). Some passed the winter at Castalia as usual, with a maximum of ~100 on 1 Jan (**J. Hammond**). Mid-winter numbers included 20 on 6 Jan at BCSP (**D. Overacker**), 12 at Farnsworth MP, *Lucas*, on 7 Jan (**E. Tramer**), and two at Killbuck on 24 Jan (**S. Snyder**); **J. Lehman** had 38 at Camp Dennison, *Hamilton*, on 11 Feb. Migrants were few in later Feb, with a high count of only 15 at BIWA on the 26th (**V. Fazio**).

American Wigeon: Good numbers wintered at Castalia, with 70 there on 7 Jan (**Z. Baker**); on the same day **B&A Toneff** found four in the Maumee River. **R. Thorn** reported 6-14 wintering below the dam at Hoover Res, *Franklin*. **S. Snyder** found two near Wooster on 1 Jan, and **D. Conover** one at Burnet Wds, *Hamilton*, on the 16th. Fifty-six birds were seen inland between 8 and 12 Feb, and may have been early migrants encouraged by strong SW winds, with a high count of 36 in *Hamilton* on the 11th (**J. Lehman**).

American Black Duck: Detected in decent numbers through the period. The high count was ~500 near Ottawa on 9 Feb (**V. Fazio**), but many good counts came from inland: ~400 at Castalia, of course, on 7 Jan (**Z. Baker**), ~150 at Caesar Ck SP on 3 Feb (**S. Patterson**), ~200 at Hoover Res on 5 Feb (**J. Hammond**), ~400 at BCSP on 10 Feb (**D. Overacker**), 250+ at Funk on 12 Feb (**Hammond**), and 520-560 during the period at Blendon Wds MP near Columbus (**R. Thorn**).

Mallard: Four-figure numbers observed included 1423 on the 3 Dec ONWRC, ~7000 at Killdeer on 13 Dec (**B. Shively**), ~1400 at Castalia on 7 Jan (**Z. Baker**), ~5000 near Ottawa on 9 Feb (**V. Fazio**), and ~2500 at BCSP on 16 Feb (**D. Overacker**). The CBC total was 36,561 statewide, good for fifth place among the most common birds.

Blue-winged Teal: A hen found on 6 Jan in the Gt Miami R in Dayton (**D. Dister**) was highly unusual for a species intolerant of cold weather. An early one was found on 19 Feb at Hueston Wds SP (**N. Compton**), and two migrants on 25 Feb were perhaps aided by SW winds of 50+ mph: one at BCSP (**D. Overacker**) and a drake at Oxbow Lk WA, *Defiance* (**J. Yochum**).

Northern Shoveler: Early Jan found ~40 at the traditional Castalia spot (**J. Hammond**) on the 1st, and two at Hoover Res on the 2nd (**J. Dennison**). Three to 10 wintered at BCSP (**D. Overacker**).

Northern Pintail: Very few reported in Dec, the last of them one in Euclid, *Cuyahoga*, on the 13th (**T. LePage**). The CBCs reported a total of 30. A few were scattered across the state in Jan, with 15 at Caesar Ck SP on the 17th (**S. Reeves**) and five at Killbuck on the 24th (**S. Snyder**). At BCSP ~50 were found on 3 Feb (**D. Overacker**). Like other puddle ducks, this species showed spikes after the big blow of 9 Feb, with 140 near Ottawa on that date (**V. Fazio**), ~70 at Funk on the 10th (**Snyder**), and eight in mostly-frozen *Paulding* on the 13th (**D&M Dunakin**). More on schedule were 400+ at Funk on 19 Feb (**J. McCormac**), 100+ at Killdeer on the 25th (**R. Sempier**), and 180 at BIWA on the following day (**Fazio**).

Green-winged Teal: Very small numbers passed through in Dec. Total for CBCs was 49. Mid-winter sightings included two in *Holmes* on 5 Jan (**B. Glick**) and five in *Fairfield* on 13 Jan (**C. Dusthimer**). Four were at Funk on 12 Feb (**S. Snyder**), and one at BCSP on 17 Feb (**D. Overacker**). Timelier migration began on 24 Feb, with one in *Summit* (**R. Harlan**, **S. Wagner**) and two the following day at BCSP (**Overacker**).

Canvasback: Lk Erie ice may have kept larger rafts out of sight, as the high counts were ~900 at Bay View (**R. Harlan**, **S. Wagner**) on 5 Feb and 830 in the area on 11 Feb (**V. Fazio**). **L. Rosche** found 55 on the Cuyahoga R in Cleveland on 27 Jan. Inland numbers topped out at 30 at Pleasant Hill Lk on 25 Feb (**B. Glick**).

Redhead: Scarce this winter. Six to seven spent most of the winter below the Hoover Res spillway near Columbus (**R. Thorn**). Three were at Castalia 1-3 Jan (**J. Hammond**), and one there on 6 Jan (**D. Linzell**); **L. Rosche** had 15 on the Cuyahoga R in Cleveland on 27 Jan. **D. Overacker** found four at BCSP on 4 Feb. On Lk Erie, 65 showed up on 9 Feb at MBSP (**V. Fazio**), but reported numbers of migrants thereafter failed to exceed that number.

Ring-necked Duck: Numbers tailed off steeply in Dec. Three Jan reports: **L. Rosche** had one on the 1st and eight on the 21st of Jan at Lk Rockwell, and **D&A Chasar** one in Northfield, *Summit*, on the 24th. Again, perhaps wild weather brought a spate of birds on 9 Feb (11 on the *Henry/Williams* county line by **J. Yochum**), 10 Feb (one at BCSP by **D. Overacker** and three in Funk by **S. Snyder**), and 11 Feb (163 in *Hamilton* by **J. Lehman**). No further Feb reports were made until more normal dates of 25 Feb, with 150 on Clark Lk, *Clark* (**Overacker**) and 150 at Killbuck on the 26th (**R. Harlan**, **S. Wagner**).

Greater Scaup: Where were they? Many veterans reported none. **J. Pogacnik's** frequent surveys from Lakeshore MP in *Lake* totaled 12 birds during the period. Neither the Magee nor the Ottawa censuses had any to report. The high count was a puny 20 birds, from the last day of the period, at Oberlin Beach (**D. Sanders** et al.). All the CBCs combined came up with 110 birds—with two on the Lake Erie Isl count of 30 Dec, 15 from Cleveland on 16 Dec, and a high count of 75 from the 23 Dec Mentor count. The ODOW aerial surveys, counting scaup spp, estimated 40,000+ on 1 Dec, 6000 on 15 Dec, and 8000 on 15 Jan. One knowledgeable observer remarked that huge numbers often gather in western Sandusky Bay areas where few birders have access... could be.

Lesser Scaup: More reported than of greater scaup, but still drastically down from normal—or at least out of sight somewhere. We had a total of 2212 from all the CBCs, and a high count otherwise of ~100 at Clark Lk in *Clark* on 25 Feb (**D. Overacker**).

Harlequin Duck: A first-year male was discovered in the Maumee R at Grand Rapids, *Wood/Lucas*, on 30 Dec (**C. Anderson**), and stayed, displaying a near-complete sequence of molt into alternate plumage, well into the next period for m obs.

Surf Scoter: A poor winter for scoters. All records of this, normally the most numerous scoter, follow: on 2 Dec, three were in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**) and one at S. Bass Isl (**S. Wulkowicz**); on 1 Jan one was in Cleveland (**J. Hammond**) and one at Eastlake PP (**N. Barber**). Two on CBCs.

White-winged Scoter: Both reports came from New Year's Day: one in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**), and two ad males at Eastlake PP (**N. Barber**). One on CBCs.

Black Scoter: All reports: a female was at Wellington Res, *Lorain*, on 9 Dec (**J. McCormac**), and one in Painesville on 10 Dec (**L. Rosche**). Eight birds flew by Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, on 21 Jan (**J. Pogacnik**), and another on 10 Feb. Another female was found in *Lake* on 4 Feb (**McCormac**). Two were off Kelleys Isl on 24 Feb (**T. Bartlett**). None on CBCs.

Scoter sp.: Three scoters of indeterminate species passed Vermilion on 2 Dec (**J. Hammond** et al.).

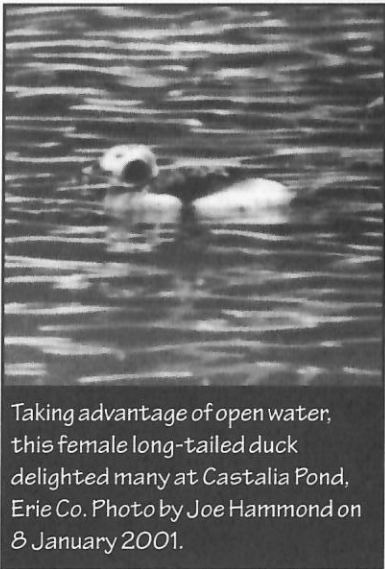
Long-tailed Duck: Fifteen were reported, with a high count of four off MBSP on 25 Feb (**G. Links**). All were in Lk Erie save for a bird **D. Overacker** found at BCSP on 16 Dec, and a female who spent 1 Jan (**G. Miller**) through the period among the throngs at Castalia Pond (m obs).

Bufflehead: As usual, the largest numbers congregated off the Lk Erie Isls, where **S. Wulkowicz** reported 600+ off S. Bass Isl on 1 Dec. A good count at Avon Lk PP was ~150 on 6 Jan (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**). Off Kelleys Isl, 87 remained on 24 Feb (**T. Bartlett**).

Common Goldeneye: Not a big season for goldeneyes, or for any diving duck. High count was of migrants off Kelleys Isl, of 1267 on 24 Feb (**T. Bartlett**). Fall migrants peaked at 300+ off S. Bass Isl on 13 Dec (**S. Wulkowicz**). For this species, as for others, there was a curious spike on 9 Feb and ensuing days: 80+ at MBSP on the 9th (**V. Fazio**), 155 off *Lake* on the 10th (**J. Pogacnik**), 26 at Hoover Res the same day (**R. Thorn**), then on the 11th 115 in Sandusky Bay (**Fazio**), 221 off *Lake* (**Pogacnik**), and 15 at BCSP (**D. Overacker**).



This first-winter male harlequin duck lingered on the Maumee River, *Wood and Lucas Cos.*, from late December 2000 well into the next season. Photo by Bill Whan on 6 January 2001.



Taking advantage of open water, this female long-tailed duck delighted many at Castalia Pond, *Erie Co.* Photo by Joe Hammond on 8 January 2001.

Hooded Merganser: A big late push of southbound migrants produced 235 at Hoover Res on 10 Dec (**R. Thorn**). Mid-winter reports included two at Avon Lk PP on 1 Jan (**J. Hammond**), one at Bayshore on 9 Jan (**A. Osborn**), five in the Cuyahoga R in Cleveland on 27 Jan (**L. Rosche**), a male at Avon Lake PP on 28 Jan (**D. Rickard**), three at Hoover Res on 5 Feb (**Hammond**), 14 at Camp Dennison, *Hamilton*, on 11 Feb (**J. Lehman**), and 10 at Ashtabula on 12 Feb (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**). On the return migration, 60+ were in *Columbiana* on 24 Feb for **B&D Lane**.

Common Merganser: Much less numerous than usual. Fall migrants peaked at 326 on the 17 Dec Magee census (**H&S Hiris**), then 800+ in Cleveland on the 24th (**S. Zadar**). No numbers so large were reported in Jan. Some peaks occurred in the now-familiar surge of birds on and just after 9 Feb, with ~1700 on the 9th at MBSP (**V. Fazio**), and at Lakeshore MP with 480 on the 10th and 566 on the 11th (**J. Pogacnik**). More timely migrants were seen in the last week of Feb, such as ~45 at Pleasant Hill Lk on the 28th (**S. Snyder**). A huge majority of birds reported as to sex were males.

Red-breasted Merganser: Very scarce during mid-winter, according to reports. The fall migration still produced 2000+ off S. Bass Isl on 1 Dec (**S. Wulkowicz**). The last inland reports during mid-winter came from the mouth of the Little Miami R, with nine birds on 6 Jan (**F. Renfrow**), and EFSP, with two birds on 11 Jan (**H. Armstrong**). By late Feb, migrants were again passing through, with 17 birds at Findlay Res on the 27th (**B. Hardesty**), and ~75 birds at Pleasant Hill Lk on the following day (**S. Snyder**).

Ruddy Duck: Passed south before the period, and north afterward for the most part. Mid-winter birds were few, with one on the 31 Dec ONWRC, four at Lk Rockwell on 16 Dec (**L. Rosche**), and a bird at Cowan Lk SP on 8 Feb (**L. Gara**).

Osprey: One was reliably described from the Hamilton-Fairfield CBC of 16 Dec for a very unusual winter record (**M. Busam** et al.). Oddly enough, this CBC holds the all-time record for ospreys—two birds in 1997; see Tom Kemp's article in this issue.

Bald Eagle: Over 120 reported, and from some unusual locales. Good luck came in thirteens, it seemed, as 13 eagles were seen at Mosquito Lk WA on 3 Dec (**J. Heflich** et al.), on 6 Dec in Athens (**S. Moody**), and on 7 Jan on the Maumee R in *Wood* (**J. Smithers**). By the end of the period, 66 nests had been discovered statewide, according to DOW, and the period's last survey found 204 eagles. The CBCs found 104.

Northern Harrier: About 140 reported, with a high count of 19 at Killdeer on 28 Jan (**R. Sempier**). Nine were at The Wilds on 15 Jan (**J. Bens**), and ~10 at Woodbury WA on 1 Feb (**B. Royse**). Six were in *w. Hamilton* on 20 Dec (**P. Wharton**).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Thirty-two reported, with 102 for the CBCs.

Cooper's Hawk: Eighty-eight reported, with 241 for the CBCs.

Northern Goshawk: The only report came from *Paulding* on 7 Feb, an imm bird (**D&M Dunakin**).

Red-shouldered Hawk: A hundred years ago and earlier this was Ohio's most numerous hawk, and **D. Best** pointed out that its numbers in the northeast have rebounded so well that they rival those of red-tails: on the Burton CBC 53 red-shoulders were counted, and 76 redtails. **R. Thorn** described a "slow recolonization of Columbus riparian areas." **E. Tramer** noted single birds in *Lucas* on 1, 15, 17, and 19 Jan, and 27 Feb. Overall 122 statewide in the CBCs.

Red-tailed Hawk: **D. Dister** reported a "western intermediate adult" in *Preble* on 6 Jan. The CBCs tallied a respectable 1670.

Rough-legged Hawk: Over 150 were reported other than on CBCs, with nearly all birds in the northern half of the state. High count was 14 birds at The Wilds on 10 Feb (J. Larson). D. Best reported an exceptional showing in *Geauga*, with 29 sightings during the period; D. Ferris found them at nine locations in the southern part of the county alone. At times, counts of rough-legged hawks at Funk and Killdeer WAS showed nearly half dark-plumaged birds, an unusually high proportion. Southward, one was in *Hamilton* on 25 Dec (N. Cade et al.), and another in *Warren* on 20 Jan (J. Habig et al.).

Golden Eagle: J. McCormac spotted a subadult, probably a second-year bird, at The Wilds on two occasions: on 30 Dec (w/ M. Lynd, H. Nagy, J. Switzer) and on 27 Jan (w/ B. Master, M. Woo-Lun, K. Archibald). The Chandlersville CBC of 30 Dec reported one.

Merlin: Only nine reports other than from CBCs, most far to the north, with one at the traditional Bath, *Summit*, location on 14 Jan (L. Rosche). High counts were two (an ad and a female/imm) in *Parma* on 8 Dec (G. Leidy) and two (ad male and ad female) seen wintering at Spring Grove Cem in *Cincinnati* from 24 Dec (L. Brumbaugh) through the period (J. Hays, m obs).

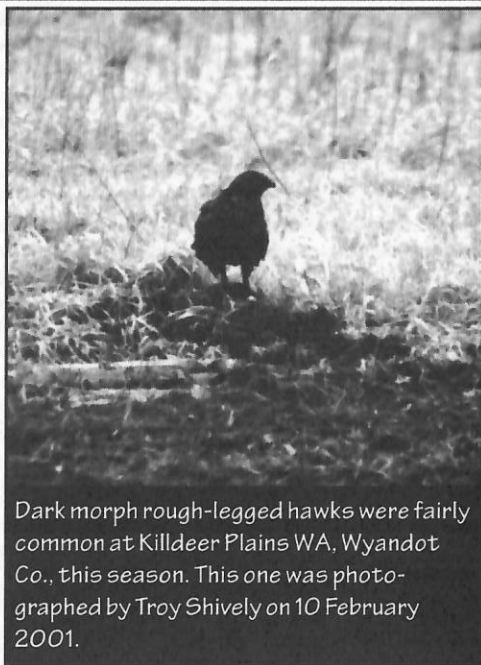
Peregrine Falcon: Few birds demonstrably outside the introduced population were reported. F. Renfrow saw one with prey in *Warren* on 21 Jan.

Wild Turkey: On 16 Dec, the Millersburg CBC found 430 in central *Holmes*. The Cleveland CBC had turkeys for the first time ever, 13 on 16 Dec.

Virginia Rail: Several interesting records. On 13 Dec J. Pogacnik found a personal first for *Lake*. The Millersburg CBC found two on 16 Dec, as in recent years, and the birds remained through at least 5 Jan (B. Glick). M. Tawse described two in *Richland* on 16 Dec for the Mansfield CBC. D. Dister had one at SVWA on 1 Jan, and N. Cade one at MWW on 4 Feb.

American Coot: D. Tensmeyer found a good flock of ~1000 at Camp Dennison in *Hamilton* on 2 Dec. Birds found in mid-winter included three in *Cleveland* and two at Avon Lk on 1 Jan, then three at *Castalia* on 3 Jan (all J. Hammond). B. Glick saw 15 on 15 Jan in *Zanesville*, and L. Rosche 21 on the *Cuyahoga R* in *Cleveland* on 27 Jan. Migrants included 112 on 24 Feb at *Killbuck* (S. Snyder).

Sandhill Crane: Thirty-eight reports, totaling nearly 700 birds, mostly between 1 and 27 Dec and after 19 Feb, and nearly all in the western half of the state. Later, one was near *Ottawa* on 14 Feb and another at *Killdeer* the following day (both J. Hammond), the latter remaining through the end of the period. 19 Feb brought birds in several places, one at *Hueston Wds SP* (N. Compton et al.), three in *Hamilton* (A. Fix), and 20 in *Clermont* (T. Stanley), then another 20 over *Paulding* on the 20th (M&D Dunakin), after which apparent migrants peaked at ~40 in *Lucas* (fide G. Links) on the last day of the period. The CBCs reported a total of 28.



Dark morph rough-legged hawks were fairly common at Killdeer Plains WA, Wyandot Co., this season. This one was photographed by Troy Shively on 10 February 2001.

Killdeer: The latest fall migrants reported came from 17 Dec, 16 birds at EFSP (D. Brinkman). The only mid-winter report was of a New Year's Day bird at The Wilds (D. Horn, B. Conlon). The big SW winds of 9 Feb brought the first returnees: one in *Holmes* (E. Schlabach), one in *Geauga* (K. Metcalf), and 13 at MBSP (V. Fazio).

Purple Sandpiper: Five to 10 birds were found and reported, most in Dec. One found during the fall at HBSP grew to two on 2 Dec (J. Hammond et al.), then three on 9 Dec (J. McCormac et al.), and one remained as late as the 25th (R. Hannikman fide B. Winger). C. Holt discovered one at *Walnut Beach, Ashtabula*, on 3 Dec, where J. Pogacnik found one on the 10th. A bird was at E. 72nd St in *Cleveland* on 23 Dec (Hannikman fide L. Rosche), and apparently remained on 6 Jan (C. Wolcott). Two were at Avon Lk PP on 28 Dec (J. Pogacnik), and the same observer had another in *Ashtabula* on 1 Jan.

Dunlin: Birds lingered into Dec, with eight at *Walnut Beach, Ashtabula*, on 3 Dec (C. Holt) and five at *Bayshore, Lucas*, for the CBC on 17 Dec and on the 18th for G. Links.

Common Snipe: Perhaps settled in were five on 2 Dec at BCSP (D. Overacker), but three at the *Cuyahoga County airport* on 16 Dec may have come to regret their choice (P. Lozano). Deep-winter birds were found in small numbers in the southern counties, such as on 30 Dec in *Hamilton* (N. Keller et al.), 18 Jan at SVWA (K. Beal), two in *Hamilton* on 28 Jan (M. Busam), and one at MWW on 28 Feb (Keller et al.). Two seen in *Washington* on 27 Feb may have been returning (B. Placier).

American Woodcock: A rash of reports came from the early date of 7 Feb: four calling in *Clermont* (C&S Clingman), one calling in *Adams* (L. Miller), and another at *Gilmore Ponds, Butler*, where 12 were present by the 22nd (M. Busam). By the 16th a bird had reached *Lake* (J. Pogacnik) and by the 19th *Geauga* (K. Metcalf).

Little Gull: All reports came from Dec, with two at HBSP (H. Petruschke) and two at GPI (S. Zadar) on the 17th, later three on the 30th in *Lakewood* (P. Lozano), then two ad and two 2nd-yr birds in *Lake* on the 31st (J. Pogacnik).

Bonaparte's Gull: Pretty much on schedule, with most departing in mid-Dec, as with ~150 seen at *Hoover Res* on 10 Dec (R. Thorn), though a count of 685 in *Lake* on 31 Dec was unusual. A few singletons were seen in early Jan, on the 1st at Avon Lk (D. Sanders), and on the 4th (B. Winger) and the 7th (G. Leidy) at E. 72nd St in *Cleveland*. On the rebound, two were seen on 28 Feb at GPI (S. Zadar).

Iceland, Thayer's, glaucous, and lesser black-backed gulls were all present in autumn, but none was reported during the first half of Dec. Between late Dec and mid-Jan, good numbers of birds of these species were conveniently observed at warm-water outlets in *Cleveland* (E. 55th – E. 72nd Sts to GPI) and at the Avon Lk power plant. Reports from places like HBSP, which in the following period were Meccas for gull-watchers, were pretty much non-existent during this period. Before and after this period of colder weather and iced-over shorelines elsewhere, a few were seen at spots to the west as far as the *Toledo* area and east to *Lake* and sparingly *Ashtabula*. Among the white-winged species, glaucous gulls were the most numerous, followed closely by Thayer's gulls, with Icelands least numerous. Still more lesser black-backed gulls were found, and while they too concentrated at the warm waters, they were distributed more widely across the lakefront in warmer weeks, and even inland on three occasions.

Estimating the true numbers of these gulls involved determining, by numbers of each age reported, a minimum number of each species at each location, then subtracting from the total number thus arrived at those seen during warm days on waters later or earlier frozen, and gulls likely to have been seen in transit from roosts to foraging areas.

All in all, it seems numbers of these species were not as large as they might have seemed, but that opportunities to observe a large portion of those present closely and repeatedly made for excellent gull-watching.

Ring-billed Gull: Probable migrants numbering ~1200 were a record for Winton Wds, *Hamilton*, on 7 Dec (J. Stenger). J. Pogacnik counted ~8500 at Lorain on 16 Dec. H. Slack noted a northbound movement in *Lawrence* on 11 Feb. On 7 Feb, E. Tramer drove 20+ mi from Maumee to Grand Rapids in *Lucas* along the river without seeing a single ring-billed, but over in *Lake J. Pogacnik* counted 14,880 passing Lakeshore MP on the 10th. Two thousand at BCSP on 25 Feb was a good count of migrants (D. Overacker), perhaps aided by strong SW winds.

Herring Gull: Large numbers included ~6500 at Lorain on 16 Dec (J. Pogacnik), then 5000+ at E. 72nd St in Cleveland on 31 Dec (B. Winger), and 10,000+ at Avon Lk the following day (J. Hammond).

Thayer's Gull: Twenty-five reports totaling 40 birds, with fifteen individuals probably involved. The greatest concentrations were at the power-plant outflows in Cleveland and Avon Lk, with a high count of three birds at Cleveland on 24 Feb (S. Zadar) and four at Avon Lk on 2 Jan (J. Pogacnik). The first and last of the period were reported from Cleveland, a 1st-winter bird on 24 Dec (H. Petruschke) and Zadar's adults of 24 Feb.

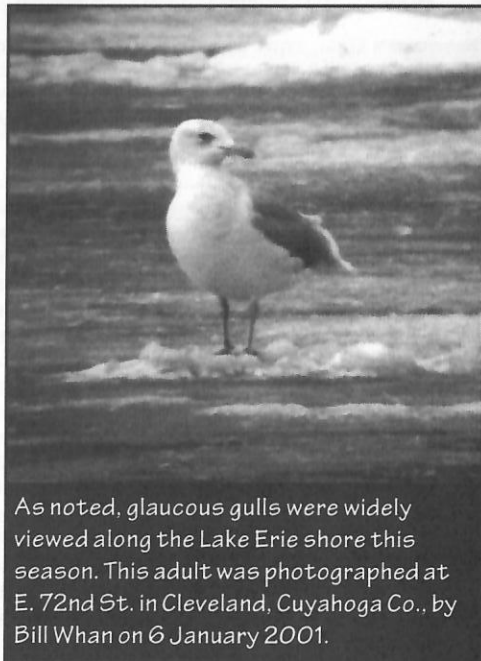
Iceland Gull: Twenty-four reports, of 32 birds. As many as seven or eight individuals were probably involved. By far the majority were found near E. 72nd St in Cleveland, where the high count was four on 2 Jan (S. Zadar), and the latest of the period were of a 1st-winter and a 2nd-winter bird there on 28 Feb (B. Whan et al.). A good find elsewhere was an imm bird in Toledo on 2 Jan (A. Osborn).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Forty-one reports totaled 92 birds. As many as 20 individuals were probably involved, almost completely at Cleveland and Avon Lk between late Dec and the end of Jan. Demonstrating the erratic wanderings of gulls—and the consequent ease of overestimating their numbers—was the discovery of an odd and distinctive pink-legged adult in three locations over two weeks: on 16 Dec at Lorain (J. Pogacnik), near E. 55th St in Cleveland on 29 Dec (D. Sanders), and at the Avon Lk PP on 30 Dec (B. Winger). High count at Avon Lk was five on 3 Jan (J. Hammond), and nine in Cleveland on 28 Jan (V. Fazio). In the west, E. Tramer found two on the Maumee River in *Lucas* on 28 Jan. Other unusual inland sightings came from Walborn Res on 1 Dec (B. Morrison) and Oberlin Res (two adults) on 9 Dec (J. McCormac et al.).

Glaucous Gull: Forty-nine reports totaled 89 birds. As many as 15 birds were probably involved, the lion's share frequenting Cleveland and Avon Lk between 21 Dec and mid-Jan; the high count was five at the former location, on 4 Jan (B. Winger), and seven at the latter, on 8 Jan (E. Schlabach). The species persisted through the period, with a 1st-winter bird at E. 72nd St on 28 Feb (D. Sanders et al.).

Great Black-backed Gull: The statewide CBC total was 503.

Black-legged Kittiwake: An adult bird was reported from Caesar Ck SP on 2 Dec; details were sent to the OBRC for this much less frequently-seen plumage. An imm bird was seen at Bayshore on 18 Dec (M. Anderson *vide* G. Links) after having been counted the previous day for the CBC.



As noted, glaucous gulls were widely viewed along the Lake Erie shore this season. This adult was photographed at E. 72nd St. in Cleveland, Cuyahoga Co., by Bill Whan on 6 January 2001.

Snowy Owl: Somewhat more numerous than in the fall, and no more faithful to most locations. One at Pt. Clinton on 3 Dec (H. DiCarlo) stayed only through the next day (A. Osborn). One was at HBSP on 3 Dec, and two there on the 10th (L. Rosche). A bird from the previous period continued at Conneaut through 4 Dec (H. Petruschke), and that at Kelleys Isl till 6 Dec (B. Coleman *vide* B. Phillips). J. Pogacnik saw one at Lorain on 16 Dec, G. Links one at Bayshore on the 18th, and F. Greenland another at Burke airport in Cleveland on the 21st. V. Fazio reported one at Resthaven WA, Erie, on the 27th, and one in *Wyandot* 28 Dec-11 Jan at least. Pogacnik found one in Ashtabula on 1 Jan. The owl near Wilmington ended an epic stay of 9+ weeks on 7 Feb (L. Gara). Latest reports were of one at HBSP on 9 Feb (K. Metcalf) and one the following day in Ashtabula (Pogacnik). How many observers are just guessing whether darker birds are females or immatures, and how many are looking carefully at tail markings?

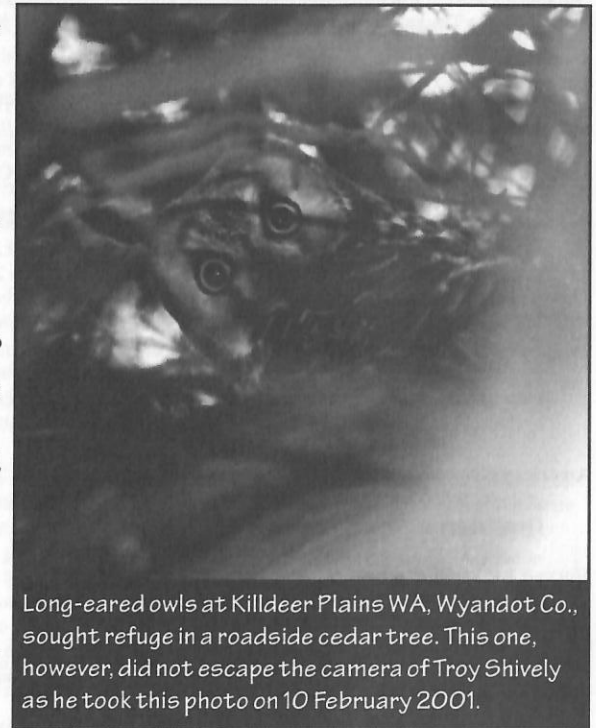
Barn Owl: Some wintered, as five were counted by the Millersburg CBC. E. Schlabach reported a pair wintering in a nest box near Sugarcreek in *Holmes*, as well. S. Snyder discovered one at Killbuck, *Wayne*, on 10 Jan, and J. Larson another in *The Wilds, Muskingum*, on 10 Feb.

Long-eared Owl: Three tried to avoid the crowds in the Killdeer pine grove by roosting in a cedar tree along the county road; the crowds followed (period, m obs). Otherwise no Dec owls were reported except for one that stayed 16 Dec through the period at GPI (S. Zadar). R. Thorn found one in *Franklin* on 1 Jan, L. Rosche one in Akron on 2 Jan and one in Cleveland on 14 Jan, and D. Overacker one in *Clark* on 7 Jan. Two were in *Stark* 4-11 Feb (B. Morrison), and another duo near the Ottawa parking lot on 25 Feb (G. Links).

Short-eared Owl: Over 85 reported, from the following counties: *Darke, Fairfield, Geauga, Wyandot, Lucas, Ross, Wayne, Portage, Defiance, Hamilton, Columbiana, Holmes, Coshocton, Madison, Licking, Butler, and Cuyahoga*. High counts were 13 at Killdeer on 26 Feb (B. Royse) and 12+ near Elkton in *Columbiana* through the period (B&D Lane).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Fewer than usual were found at Killdeer, where 1-4 were present through the end of the period. S. Zadar detected two at GPI on 14 Dec that persisted through 25 Feb; he inferred from pellets etc., that as many as 8-10 migrants frequented the area during the period. One was at the Cinci Nature Ctr on 11 Dec (E. Bonkamp), and another at Caesar Ck SP 17-20 Jan (S. Reeves, J. Habig).

Rufous Hummingbird: Persisting since early Nov at a feeder in Union Twp in *Clermont* was a hummer reported as this species (see photo in previous issue), and last seen on 12 Dec (M. Arn, M. McCarty *vide* N. Keller). Details are with the OBRC.



Long-eared owls at Killdeer Plains WA, Wyandot Co., sought refuge in a roadside cedar tree. This one, however, did not escape the camera of Troy Shively as he took this photo on 10 February 2001.

REPORTS

Red-headed Woodpecker: M. Hershberger on 1 Jan found 31 in *Holmes*, a remarkable 23 of them in a single 12-acre woodlot. In the north, K. Metcalf noted 3-4 wintering in N. Chagrin Res'n, and B&D Lane 6 ad and an imm at Berlin Res on 13 Feb.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 15 at Ira Rd in the CVNP (T&M Romito) on 1 Jan, then 9 on 26 Feb.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Beyond the more-expected reports from southern counties, birds in the central counties included 3-4 in Columbus between 17 Dec and 13 Jan (R. Thorn), and a female in Westerville, *Franklin*, on 19 Dec (J. Howard). In Lakewood, P. Lozano found one on 10 Dec, L. Deininger one in *Coshocton* on 11 Dec, and K. Metcalf an imm at N. Chagrin Res'n on 27 Dec. In the Toledo area, E. Tramer had a male and female daily 1-7 Jan, and C. Gajewicz a bird in the Oak Openings 28 Jan. Statewide CBC total was 60.

Downy Woodpecker: The 31 Dec ONWRC found 36. CBC total statewide was 3879.

Northern Flicker: Among others, wintering in northern counties through the period were birds in the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site, *Portage* (L. Rosche), S. Bass Isl (S. Wulkowicz), and Holden Arboretum, *Lake* (D. Rickard).

Eastern Phoebe: Southern birds included one on 25 Dec at Shawnee Lookout (N. Cade) and 23 Jan in Milford (W. Hull), both in *Hamilton*. B. Placier reported one overwintered in *Hocking*, commencing song on 3 Mar. The 16 Dec Millersburg CBC found one, and one was in Painesville on 8 Dec (J. Pogacnik), with another in *Trumbull* on 17 Dec (L. Warren, C. Babyak).

Northern Shrike: A shrike at Ottawa on 3 Dec (ONWRC) persisted through at least 11 Jan (M. Warren). One at Killdeer 13 Dec (B. Shively) through at least 24 Feb (L. Gara) was erratically seen. A bird reported by E. Durbin at Irwin Prairie, *Lucas*, on 28 Feb had apparently spent the period there (E. Tramer). J. Heflich saw one at Mosquito Lk on 3 Dec. Two birds were discovered in *Hancock* spots about ten miles distant, one on 6 Feb (B. Hardesty) and another on 23 Jan (W. Seiler *vide* Hardesty). There was a shrike around Fairport most of the period, reported 10 Dec (H. Petruschke), then 21 and 28 Jan and 11 Feb (L. Rosche). J. Pogacnik saw one in *Ashtabula* on 10 Dec, and another in *Lake* on 15 Dec. T. Shively found one in *Logan* on 21 Jan, and A. Fondrk one in *Geauga* on 28 Feb. Nine found on the CBCs.

American Crow: F. Renfrow (see note in this issue) estimated 70,000 in the Cincinnati roost. A roost of at least 20,000 defied municipal noisemakers to remain in Springfield through the period (D. Overacker).

Horned Lark: Widespread as usual. Large counts included 300+ in *Hamilton* 17 Dec (L. Peyton), ~100 in *Champaign* on 31 Dec (D. Overacker), 250+ in *Columbiana* on 19 Jan (B&D Lane), 250 in *Tuscarawas* on 27 Jan (E. Schlabach), and ~200 near Ottawa on 14 Feb (J. Hammond), but the clear winner was ~2000 reported by P. Wharton from western *Hamilton* on 20 Dec, where the CBC of 23 Dec reported 2676 birds. K. Metcalf reported 25+ migrants at HBSP on 9 Feb.

Black-capped Chickadee: One was out of range in *Hocking* on 2 Jan (D. Horn).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Smallish numbers wintered in the northeast, where high counts came from Lk Rockwell, with 12 on 3 Dec and 10 on 21 Jan (L. Rosche). F. Renfrow noted several in *Hamilton*, at Spring Grove Cem 17 Dec-22 Feb, and at Indian Hill 12 Dec-2 Feb. Birds frequented feeders in the glaciated counties through the period in *Hancock* (B. Hardesty) and *Lucas* (E. Tramer). Statewide, CBCs found 166.

Brown Creeper: Twenty-one were counted on S. Bass Isl on 2 Jan (S. Wulkowicz). Wintered elsewhere around the state in much smaller numbers. D&A Chasar noticed the first in song in the CVNP on 25 Feb. CBC total was 387.

REPORTS

Carolina Wren: Many reported in the north, where they have apparently recovered from mortalities in the late 70s. Eight relished balmy S. Bass Isl on 18 Dec (S. Wulkowicz), and four were found in Lakewood on 30 Dec by T. LePage and T. Leiden (*vide* P. Lozano)

Winter Wren: Few reports, mostly from the far south, with a high count of two at Gilmore Ponds, *Butler*, on 7 Jan (M. Busam). T&M Romito saw one in the CVNP on 8 Jan. P. Lozano had one in Lakewood on 10 Dec.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Some veterans regarded them as reduced in numbers this winter. High counts came from southern areas, and before the holiday freeze-up, as 17 at EFSP (D. Brinkman) on 17 Dec and 22 at Spring Grove Cem, *Hamilton* (N. Cade) on 23 Dec. The Millersburg CBC of the previous day tallied 54. Odd were two who fed on suet crumbs at a feeder in *Holmes* through the period (L. Yoder).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Eleven reports, all singles, throughout the period outside of CBCs was excellent: 3 Dec on the ONWRC, *Hamilton* 23 Dec (N. Cade), another there the 30th (J. Stenger), Salt Fork SP on 2 Jan (J. Larson), in *Washington* on 14 Jan (B. Placier), 21 Jan in *Hamilton* (B. Stanley et al.), 1 Feb on S. Bass Isl (S. Wulkowicz), 4 Feb at Crown City WA (P. Gottschling), and birds on 20 Feb at GPI (S. Zadar), EFSP (H. Armstrong), and Camp Berry, *Hancock* (B. Hardesty). CBCs claimed 21 birds.

Eastern Bluebird: Twenty-five in Antwerp, *Paulding*, on 10 Dec before the cold weather was a good number for the area (D&M Dunakin), and 20 at Woodbury WA, *Coshocton*, on 1 Feb a good one for afterwards (B. Roysse).

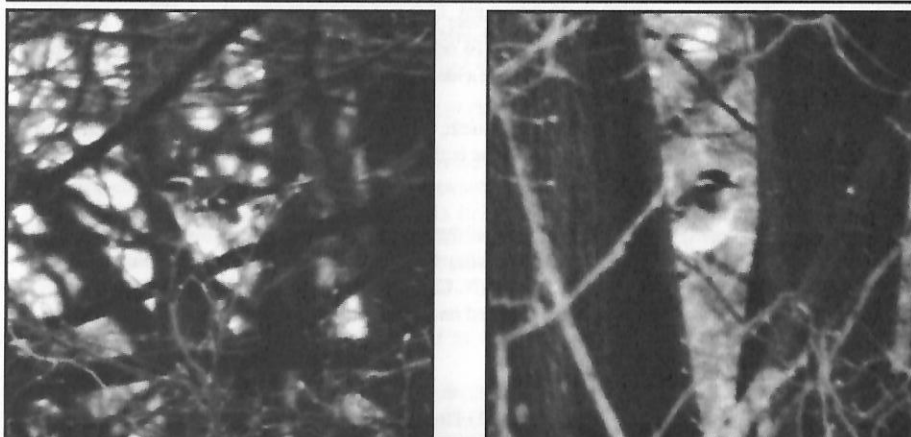
Townsend's Solitaire: Most birders in the state, and not a few from elsewhere, swelled the modest winter crowds at Holden Arboretum, *Lake*, to see a solitaire sharing the *Ilex* and winterberry plantings with a resident mockingbird. Discovered by L. Adams on 17 Jan, it ended a record stay on 21 Feb (J. Gause *vide* L. Rosche). It was Ohio's fourth confirmed record, or perhaps the fifth, as belated documentation has surfaced supporting an old report, not accepted by the OBRC, of a bird of this species at the "owl grove" at Killdeer in Nov of 1998; the OBRC is recirculating both.

Hermit Thrush: Found as usual in more southern locales, as well as in the Lk Erie Islands, where a healthy 37 were found on the 30 Dec CBC. Further north, and before the coldest weather, two were in the Oak Openings on 2 Dec (E. Tramer) and one in Bowling Green on 6 Dec (C. Gajewicz). One was in *Delaware* on 6 Jan (J. Hammond), and the hardest of all was observed 7-13 Jan in *Geauga* (A. Fondrk). The CBC statewide total was 121.

American Robin: Nearly universally described as more numerous than usual; E. Tramer called their numbers the highest he'd ever seen overwintering in the Toledo area, for example. There and elsewhere, reports of triple-figure flocks through the period were widespread. CBCs counted 19,434 statewide.

Varied Thrush: A. Wymer discovered a male coming to her feeder in Findlay on 12 Dec, a day with winds gusting to 50 mph+, and she and her family—and the bird—graciously put up with a host of observers through the end of the period. A second varied thrush was less outgoing, coming to a yard in *Lucas* only from 14-17 Dec (J&D Smith *vide* G. Links). For the first time, Ohio CBCs reported two. See photographs on the following page.

Northern Mockingbird: Continues to gain ground northward. One at Ottawa on 3 Dec was rather unusual. Forty were tallied on the Millersburg CBC of 16 Dec, and eight were seen for the Cleveland CBC on the same day.



This male varied thrush visited a Findlay, Hancock Co., yard from 12 December 2000 through the end of the winter season. It proved elusive at times, but Troy Shively was able to obtain these photos on 17 February 2001.

Brown Thrasher: One was found in Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati on 17 Dec (N. Cade), J. Fry had one in *Hocking* on 26 Dec, and T. Fitzpatrick another through the period at his *Clermont* farm. D. Styer had one in the Mt. Airy Forest in *Hamilton* on 11 Jan, and one was discovered at the Oak Openings, *Lucas*, on 24 Jan (A. Osborn). One at a feeder in Lakewood on 30 Dec was a nice find (N. Klamm *vide* P. Lozano).

European Starling: 132,922 counted on the CBCs took first place for most numerous species of the season. Hooray.

American Pipit: Most reports came from December; 12 on the 2nd in *Holmes* (E. Schlabach), one the 9th at BCSP (D. Overacker), two the 19th in *Holmes* (L. Yoder), and seven in Cincinnati on the 25th (N. Cade). D. Dister found a bird in Dayton on 31 Jan, and Overacker three at BCSP on 11 Feb. The CBCs reported 59.

Cedar Waxwing: Three- and four-figure reports came from Dec: 220 in *Lucas* on the 1st (E. Tramer), 300+ in *Hamilton* the 13th (P. Wharton), 294 in *Hancock* on the 16th (B. Hardesty), 1389 at EFSP on the 17th (D. Brinkman), 2346 on the Cincinnati CBC, and 2092 on the *Adams* CBC (see note in this issue). In Jan, the high count was 70 in *Wayne* (L. Yoder).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: The last report of the remarkable Rocky River male of last fall came from 10 Dec (P. Lozano).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: The high counts were 57 in *Clermont* on 9 Dec (*vide* V. Brannen) and 34 birds at EFSP on 17 Dec for a bumper crop of red cedar fruit (D. Brinkman), followed closely by 33 on 24 Feb in *Washington* feeding on equally-abundant poison ivy berries (B. Placier). S. Wulkowicz counted 26 on S. Bass Isl on 20 Dec at a traditional winter haunt. Other flocks were 14 on 2 Jan in *Delaware* (B. Shively) and 15 at Stage's Pond SNP in *Pickaway* on 24 Feb (B. Roysse).

Palm Warbler: Undaunted, two persisted into December. One apparently sheltered near a light bulb left lit to keep a pump from freezing at a water plant in *Delaware* through at least 5 Dec (B. Shively). Another stuck it out on B. Stanley's front porch in *Hamilton* through 12 Dec.

Summer Tanager: A female established an extraordinary record by occupying a cracked-peanut feeder at a home in Fairfield, *Butler*, from at least 13 Dec through 23 Dec (F&M Krisher *vide* D. Styer). The bird was closely observed and described by Styer and duly tallied for the Hamilton-Fairfield CBC.

Eastern Towhee: Widely seen in the south, with a high count of nine at EFSP on 17 Dec (D. Brinkman). Records to the north were sparser, but included a bird in *Mahoning* on 2 Dec (B&D Lane) and one in N. Chagrin Res'n on 31 Dec (K. Metcalf).

American Tree Sparrow: The Lk Erie Isl CBC of 30 Dec tallied 942, but Ottawa's 31 Dec CBC had the high count of 1434. Eighty-five were in *Holmes* on 27 Jan (E. Schlabach), and ~300 in Killbuck on 10 Jan (S. Snyder). The 31 Dec census counted 550 at Ottawa, and 125 were at Sparrow Central at GPI on 27 Dec (S. Zadar).

Chipping Sparrow: Three reports, all from Dec: one on 2 Dec in *Clermont* (D. Morse), one at GPI on 8 Dec (S. Zadar), and one at a feeder in Chillicothe, *Ross*, on 26 Dec (*vide* J. McMahan).

Field Sparrow: Dec birds included one on 1 Dec in the Oak Openings (E. Tramer), one at HBSP the following day (H. Petruschke), one at a *Hancock* feeder on the 5th (M. Dailey *vide* B. Hardesty), and four at BCSP on the 29th (D. Overacker). One was at a feeder in *Hancock* on 2 Jan (S. Ross *vide* B. Hardesty) for the only mid-winter record. Mid-Feb brought the high count of 10 at EFSP on the 20th (H. Armstrong).

Savannah Sparrow: Six reports came from *Hamilton* through the period, led by 15 at MWW on 17 Dec (N. Cade). The Millersburg CBC found two on 16 Dec, and L. Yoder two in *Holmes* three days later. On the Lk Erie shore, S. Zadar noted birds among the sparrow throngs at GPI on 17 and 27 Dec, and R. Harlan and S. Wagner discovered one near Ottawa on 7 Jan.

Fox Sparrow: On 10 Dec, M. Busam found one at Gilmore Ponds, and B. Shively one in *Delaware*. An unusual number of Jan reports ensued, including a bird in *Hamilton* on 2 Jan (D. Hedeon), birds in *Hocking* on the 7th and 23rd (B. Placier), one at Caesar Ck SP (L. Gara) and one at Killbuck (L. Yoder) on the 13th, and another at Gilmore Ponds (Busam) on the 28th.

Swamp Sparrow: Traditional winterers in the Lk Erie marshes, six were tallied on the census of 31 Dec at Ottawa, and two were found on the Kelleys Isl census of 21 Jan (T. Bartlett). Fifteen at Jaite in the CVNP were notable on 3 Dec (D&A Chasar), as was a bird at Lk Rockwell on 1 Jan (L. Rosche). High count was 30 in *Butler* on 30 Jan (J. Habig).

White-throated Sparrow: Notable flocks were 60 at BCSP on 16 Dec (D. Overacker) and 40 at Spring Grove Cem in Cincinnati on 22 Feb (F. Renfrow).

Harris's Sparrow: A 1st-winter bird found welcome forage near Apple Creek in *Wayne* from at least 1 Jan (A. Yoder), and the property owners also welcomed mobs from around the state through the end of the period.



Cavorting with other *Zonotrichia*, this Harris's sparrow (right) was enjoyed by many throughout the season near Apple Creek, Wayne Co. Photo by Troy Shively on 24 February 2001.

White-crowned Sparrow: A notable flock was one of 110 at Gilmore Ponds on 16 Dec (M. Busam).

Dark-eyed Junco: The Millersburg CBC of 16 Dec tallied 629. Three birds of the Oregon race were reported: HBSP on 26 Dec (L. Rosche), 1 Jan through the period at Hartsville (B. Morrison), and 26 Jan in Findlay hanging out with the varied thrush (V. Fazio). Rumors persist that this species may be resplit, so notes should be taken of sightings of other races of dark-eyed junco, although the Oregon race seems least likely to become a species in itself.

Lapland Longspur: The largest mid-winter flock was one of 200+ in Lucas from 24-26 Jan (E. Tramer). In Hamilton remarkable numbers were observed in the western part of the county, 130 on 20 Dec (P. Wharton) then 200 on 31 Dec (Wharton) and on 1 Jan (M. Busam et al.); careful scouting yielded a record 3034 for the 23 Dec Western Hamilton CBC. 140 were at Shawnee Lookout on 24 Dec for N. Cade, as well. Seldom numerous in Holmes in mid-winter, four were near Sugar creek on 14 Jan and five near Ragersville on the 27th (both E. Schlabach). Riding the big blow of 9 Feb over MBSP were what could only have been early migrants—voluntary or involuntary—, 400 of them (V. Fazio). On a more regular schedule were 100+ along Washburn Rd near Killdeer on 24 Feb (J. McCormac).

Snow Bunting: Triple-figure counts included: 262 on the 3 Dec ONWRC, 259 in Hancock on 16 Dec (B. Hardesty), 150+ on S. Bass Isl 20 Dec (S. Wulkowicz), 150+ in Columbiana on 6 Jan (B&D Lane), ~500 in Hancock on the same day (J. Kuenzli), 150 at Killdeer on 8 Jan (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), 150+ on 24 Jan in Defiance (J. Yochum), and ~800 in a manured field in Lucas 24-36 Jan (E. Tramer). The 50-mph+ SW winds of 9 Feb probably stirred up 300+ in Geauga (D. Ferris) and 140 overhead at MBSP (V. Fazio), as well as 120 in Ashtabula on the 10th (J. Pogacnik) and 83 at HBSP on the 11th (L. Rosche). 698 were on the Lk Erie Isl CBC of 30 Dec. One was far south in Ross on 2 Jan (J. Fry).

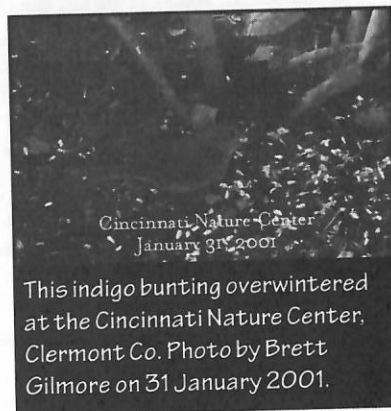
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: In a very rare winter appearance, one came to a feeder in Holmes, where L. Yoder saw it on 9 Dec.

Indigo Bunting: A male was noted at the Cincinnati Nature Center on 17 Jan (D. Tennant et al., ph) and remained, growing bluer and bluer, through the period. It was the second record of a well-documented overwintering indigo bunting, the other having occurred just last winter in Columbus.

Red-winged Blackbird: CBCs reported a modest total of 2529. No reports were received of large wintering flocks in the Lk Erie marshes; 700 overhead at MBSP on 9 Feb may have been local wintering birds or arrivals riding SW winds (V. Fazio). Most flocks characterized as freshly arrived dated from the second and third weeks of Feb: L. Rosche noted arriving flocks in Portage on the 12th, S. Zadar 84 at GPI on the 20th, and R. Royle arriving flocks numbering ~500 on 23 Feb in Columbus.

Eastern Meadowlark: Appreciable numbers appeared in Killdeer (30+ on 17 Jan, J. Hammond), Holmes (21 in the northeast on 1 Jan, L. Yoder; 25 near Walnut Ck on 4 Feb, J. Miller), and in Ross (15 on 3 Jan, J. Fry). Six were singing in the MWW on 11 Feb (M. Busam).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Earlyish were two birds found in Lucas by G. Links on 24 Feb.



Cincinnati Nature Center
January 31, 2001
This indigo bunting overwintered at the Cincinnati Nature Center, Clermont Co. Photo by Brett Gilmore on 31 January 2001.

Rusty Blackbird: The Wilmot team had by far the high CBC count, 347 of the state's total of 409, on 16 Dec. Otherwise reported in small numbers throughout the period, with a high count of 50 birds near Funk WA on 25 Feb, which may have been early migrants (S. Snyder).

Common Grackle: Can be the most numerous bird in Ohio during the season (see Tom Kemp's article in this issue), but with a statewide CBC total of only 28,586 this year. Unusual was a bird coming regularly to a feeder through the period in Paulding (D&M Dunakin).

Purple Finch: Very few reports from the southern counties, oddly, as they generally have the greater part of these birds in the winter. CBC total was 133, led by Grand Rapids-Waterville's count of 43 on 30 Dec. L. Rosche emphatically reported none this winter from his area, and the high counts were only of duos, two males in Mahoning on 18 Dec (B&D Lane), two males in Hocking on 3 Dec (B. Placier), and a pair seen on four dates in mid-Feb in Coshocton (L. Deininger).

Red Crossbill: A flock of 2-3 birds at Holden Arboretum, first seen on 23 Dec (H. Petruschke) stayed through the period for many obs. One of the birds, a female, was found injured and taken to Penitentiary Glen across the street on 14 Jan (N. Barber), where it later expired; it was supposedly prepared as a specimen but apparently has since been lost (T. Mullen). These birds were repeatedly seen eating seeds of ponderosa pine *Pinus ponderosa* in Arboretum plantings. This food preference, and opinions of some observers that these birds possessed markedly large bills, fueled speculation that they might be of an unusual subspecies of this eminently—perhaps imminently—splittable bird. Elsewhere, L. Rosche found 1-2 at Lk Rockwell on 2 Dec, N. Cade had a female in Cincinnati on 9 Dec, and J. Pogacnik found two in Lorain on 2 Jan, then later on 10 Jan a flock of at least seven in Lake—observed feeding on hemlock seeds, more customary fare for Ohio crossbills. High count from CBCs was eight for Mentor on 23 Dec.



Two to three red crossbills appeared at Holden Arboretum, Lake Co., on 23 December 2000. These birds remained throughout the remainder of the winter season feeding on ponderosa pine cones. The male (left) and female above were photographed in February 2001 by Troy Shively.

Common Redpoll: A wretched season for winter finches, and redpolls especially. H. Petruschke reported a single bird at Holden Arboretum on 23 Dec. Eight reports from the CBCs statewide.

Pine Siskin: Sparingly found. All reports other than CBCs: one was in Granville, Licking, on 13 Dec (R. Thorn), "several" in Hocking Hills SP on 1 Jan (P. Gottschling), 10 the same day at Mohican SF (B. Glick), six near Wooster on 10 Jan (J. Larson) and seven there on the 13th (S. Snyder, L. Yoder), three in Lake on 21 Jan (J. Pogacnik), and one the same day in Lucas, then on 18 and 26 Feb (E. Tramer). J. Fry's feeders were the hot spot: he had 46 on 14 Dec, 1-4 from 15-22 Dec, three on 20 Jan, nine on 21 Jan, one on 3 Feb, five on 17 Feb, and one on 18 Feb.

American Goldfinch: J. Fry had 90-100 in *Hocking* on 20 Jan.

Evening Grosbeak: Virtually absent. **D. Horn** had two flyovers in *Hocking* on 18 Dec. One was found on the Lk Erie Isl CBC of 30 Dec, and two on the Gypsum CBC.

House Sparrow: Lamentably, the high CBC count of this exotic species came from Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, with 3442 birds.

CONTRIBUTORS: We are indebted to the help of the following birders who shared reports of their observations around the state and other data this winter: Ian Adams, Pam Adams, Lynne Aldrich, Chad Amos, Chuck Anderson, Matt Anderson, Keith Archibald, Hank Armstrong, Marilyn Arn, Carole Babyak, Zac Baker, Nick Barber, Dorothea Barker, Tom Bartlett, Erich Baumgardner, Sue Baxter, Kathy Beal, Andy Bens, Joe Bens, Andy Bess, Dan Best, Adam Blank, Elmer Bonkamp, Bill Bosstic, Veronica Brannen, Liz Brennan, David Brinkman, Lori Brumbaugh, Jen Brumfield, Donald Burton, Mike Busam, Jason Cade, Neill Cade, Ann Chasar, Dwight Chasar, Chris Clingman, Suzanne Clingman, Delores Cole, Bill Coleman, Annie Collins, Nathan Compton, Bob Conlon, Denis Conover, Rich Cressman, Mable Dailey, Andrea Daily, Sarah Dalton, Donna Daniel, Jeff Davis, Tim Davis, Leo Deininger, Jen Dennison, Harry DiCarlo, David Dister, Doug Dunakin, Micki Dunakin, Eric Durbin, Curt Dusthimer, Elinor Elder, Marcus England, Bob Faber, Joe Faulkner, Vic Fazio, Duane Ferris, Doug Fisher, Tim Fitzpatrick, Andrew Fix, Andy Fondrk, Frank Frick, Jim Fry, Chris Gajewicz, John Games, Larry Gara, Lee Garling, Judie Gause, Ted Gilliland, Tami Gingrich, Bruce Glick, Peter Gottschling, Jeff Grabmeier, Darlena Graham, Bret Graves, Frank Greenland, John Habig, Don Hadley, Joe Hammond, Betty Hardesty, Rob Harlan, Paul Haskins, Jeff Hays, Dave Hedeen, Jim Heflich, Helen Hendrickson, Michael Hershberger, Hank Hiris, Sally Hiris, Dick Hoffman, Jean Hoffman, Chuck Holliday, Craig Holt, Gabe Hostetler, Dave Horn, Judy Howard, William Hull, Ned Keller, Kelley Kelley, Tom Kemp, Doug Kinslow, Nancy Klamm, Dorothy Kohl, Ron Kolde, Fred Krisher, Mary Ellen Krisher, John Kuenzli, Bob Lane, Denise Lane, Jason Larson, Amy Lavy, Jay Lehman, Tom Leiden, Gabe Leidy, Tom LePage, Ernie Limes, Greg Links, Doreene Linzell, Jerry Lippert, Jean Long, Paula Lozano, Mitch Lynd, James Marshall, Bernard Master, Winnie McClanahan, Jim McCormac, Kathy McDonald, Brian McGuire, Joe McMahon, Gary Meszaros, Kevin Metcalf, Greg Miller, Jeffrey Miller, Lucy Miller, Steve Miller, Mary Mispion, Scott Moody, Ben Morrison, Donald Morse, Tammy Mullen, Heather Nagy, Patti Niehoff, Rick Nirschl, Art Osborn, Ken Ostermiller, Doug Overacker, Maryellen Parlier, Shane Patterson, Steve Pelikan, Haans Petruschke, Lester Peyton, Brad Phillips, Ed Pierce, Brad Phillips, Bob Placier, John Pogacnik, Len Powlick, John Rakestraw, Barb Redmer, Scott Reeves, Grant Rettig, Steve Richards, Frank Renfrow, Jim Reyda, Steve Richards, Richard Rickard, Bill Rinehart, Roxanne Rinehart, Craig Reiker, Randel Rogers, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Larry Rosche, Sue Ross, Bob Royse, David Russell, Dave St. John, Dan Sanders, Winnie Sarno, Charlie Saunders, Gary Saxton, Regina Schieltz, Ed Schlabach, Wilma Seiler, Ron Sempier, Rod Sharpnack, John Shrader, Bill Shively, Troy Shively, Carol Skinner, Mark Skinner, Darlene Sillick, Harry Slack, Dave Smith, Jane Smith, Steve Smith, Su Snyder, Bill Stanley, Tammy Stanley, Gene Stauffer, Jay Stenger, Dave Styer, John Switzer, Merrill Tawse, David Tennant, Dave Tensmeyer, Tom Thomson, Rob Thorn, Elliot Tramer, Jack Volker, Janet Volker, Sandy Wagner, Leslie Warren, Mary Warren, Bob Welch, Ben Winger, Bill Whan, Pete Whan, Paul Wharton, David Whiteley, Ben Winger, Connie Wolcott, Marlene Woo-Lun, Scott Wright, Stan Wulkowicz, Arlene Wymer, John Yochum, Abe Yoder, Leroy Yoder, Norman Yoder, Sheryl Young, Sean Zadar, Kim Ziegel. We also received valuable assistance and information from the editors of *The Bobolink* and internet resources managed by V. Fazio, N. Keller, and C. Anderson.



An adult Ross's goose, discovered on 18 February 2001 at Old Reid Park, Clark Co., lounged around for several to enjoy over the next two days. Its small size, when directly compared to a Canada goose, is very apparent in the photograph. Photo by Joe Hammond on 18 February 2001.

Further Afield by Robert Harlan

I like to look at things differently. This is not to say that I'm automatically disagreeable in the unpleasant sense; in fact, I can be downright civil if the need should arise. I prefer to examine any given subject from a variety of different angles. If one of those angles serves to gently goose the standard line of thinking, then so be it. At the very least this should make things more interesting. You'll recall the old story about the group of blind-folded folks and the elephant—everyone attempted to describe what could be sensed by touch from different perspectives. One described the trunk, one described an ear, one a leg, one a flank, and another described the tail. Although I can conjure up only a few images more unfortunate than being the person assigned the task of describing the area around the elephant's tail, the exercise turned out for the greater good. Separately, their various descriptions only added to the confusion, but when combined, a clearer image of the whole began to form. It is this clearer image that I seek. After all, how does one recognize something as "good" unless it can be compared to something worse? And it is that "something worse" to which we dedicate this column. My nominations for various Ohio "worsts" lie directly ahead. Please watch your step.

Just recently, many of us were asked by Audubon Ohio to participate in a project designed to compile a list of Ohio's most important birding areas. Participants were invited to nominate birding sites they deemed particularly valuable to birds and birders. These areas might harbor rare or endangered species. They might contain rare habitats, or significant numbers of nesting, wintering, or migrating birds. Or they might boast a long history of research undertaken locally. Through a rigorous process, 71 sites have so far been designated as Important Bird Areas. Many more valuable sites await nomination—I suggest that if your favorite spot has yet to be nominated, that you do so promptly, as once accepted as an IBA, these sites achieve a priority status for management and protection. Potentially, this project could prove very worthwhile, assuming funding, manpower, and cooperation all come together as needed. But this column isn't about Ohio's most important or best birding areas. That would be too simple. I fear that as usual, I must look at this topic from a different angle. To have good birding areas, one must logically have lousy birding areas. Have you ever stopped to consider what might be Ohio's *worst* birding area? Well, I have.

Now, first off, before any brickbats are thrown, of course I realize that it's not fair to label any area as the worst Ohio has to offer. After all, how does one define the "worst" area? Worst by having the lowest number of species present? Worst by virtue of lowest overall number of individual birds? Worst in a given season? Or perhaps "worst" could even refer to the area that is least birded and therefore most poorly known. With all these potential pitfalls in our path, we need a concrete definition for "worst." For our purposes here, the worst area is henceforth defined as: the Ohio county which, according to the *Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas* (1991), contained the lowest number of confirmed or probable nesting avian species during the Atlas period. There. That is what "worst" means.

FURTHER AFIELD

So, after painstakingly wasting several hours poring through the *Atlas* and compiling the number of confirmed or probable nesting species for each of Ohio's 88 counties, it was finally determined that Ohio's worst birding area straddles the Lake Plains and Till Plains regions along the Indiana border, lying immediately below Paulding County and immediately above Mercer County. However, so as not to offend either birder living in said county, we will not name that county directly. We will politely say only that the name of this particular county begins with "Van" and ends with "Wert." No more.

Just how bad is our mystery county, which interestingly enough was named after Revolutionary War hero Isaac Van Wart? Bad enough, I suppose, that a clerical error has caused the county's name to be misspelled for over 200 years. But that is beside the point. In truth, it's probably not so bad there after all, assuming you like soybean fields and dislike trees. According to the cold hard facts, however, only 76 species were tallied there as confirmed or probable breeders in the county's Priority Blocks during the six *Breeding Bird Atlas* years. Compare this to the statewide average of 103 species per county, and the top-scoring county, Lucas, which weighed in with a whopping 154 confirmed or probable nesting species.

Now, it must be stressed that comparatively little intensive birding has been undertaken in our unnamed lowest-scoring county. In fact, it is one of our most poorly-known sectors of the state birdwise. It must also be said that the likelihood is great that some tasty local birding spots simply didn't fall within the boundaries of the county's six *Atlas* Priority Blocks, and therefore a goodly number of localized species might have gone undetected. Actually, the St. Marys River corridor, a site in southern Van Wert County (oops, I didn't mean to mention it by name), has already been accepted by Audubon Ohio as one of our state's Important Bird Areas. Other nooks and crannies look enticing on the various topographical maps covering the county; enticing enough, in fact, to inspire me to attempt at least one special birding weekend to Van Wert County this summer, with an eye toward searching for nesting species. Actually, it might prove interesting and educational if other concerned birders were to do likewise this year. I'm guessing that with some intensive effort, as a group our species list might approach the upper 80s or even hit the lower 90s, thereby removing from this area the stigma of being the worst Ohio birding county. Then, that ignoble distinction would fall to...oh, never mind. Some knowledge is best kept to oneself.

Now let's choose a smaller target, shall we? While still on the delicate subject of the worst birding Ohio has to offer, it should be pointed out that the lowest-scoring of the 764 Priority Blocks for the *Breeding Bird Atlas* was not in Van Wert County. No, that honor belongs to the Dayton North Block in Montgomery County. State-wide, Priority Blocks averaged 78 confirmed, probable, and possible nesting species. The Dayton North Block, however, stumbled in at 48 species and, quite frankly, observers canvassing this block should consider it a job well done to discover even that many, heavily urbanized as the area was, with basically only one small riverside city park to provide any reasonable variety in habitat. And yes, I can vouch for this first-hand, as I was one of those valiant observers.

In retrospect, perhaps the list could have been higher if more time had been spent birding the riverside park. However, the first time I attempted to bird the area, my car was trapped in a small parking lot behind a locked gate, and I was forced to call the police to let me out. It seems the lot was not meant for public use, and had been opened only briefly for a city maintenance truck to gain access to the park. Apparently, the maintenance employee locked up the gate after leaving, and hadn't noticed my car sitting there. The only other vehicle in the lot. The car with the "State of Ohio" license plates. The *bright white* state car. The bright white state car that I had parked *right next* to the maintenance truck. Considering how the maintenance crew overlooked my car, I suppose that it might be possible I had overlooked some species in the park as well. I didn't go back.

And now, continuing our theme of things different, my nomination for Ohio's most maddening and baffling published "rarity" article. This is not intended to imply that the birds in question were misidentified. Actually it's hard to say whether they were correctly identified or not, as there are simply not enough data to go on. Just enough tantalizing hints are included in the article, however, to indicate that perhaps at least some were correctly identified. Beats me, though. The article in question appeared in West Virginia's journal *The Redstart* 28(4), but concerns Ohio's spring migration of 1961. The article, entitled "Black-throated Gray Warblers Invade Muskingum County," contains the following data: in early May 1961, Muskingum County "was hit hard by several violent windstorms which originated in the Southwest." Shortly after these events, the author and his wife (both of whom who shall here remain nameless) heard an unfamiliar warbler song that reminded them of a song of the black-throated green warbler, a "zee zee zee zee zeet." When seen through binoculars, the singer "had a black throat, white on the cheek, white wing-bars and black streaks on the sides." The author identified the bird as a male black-throated gray warbler, which would of course be an extremely rare, but nonetheless plausible sighting, although the supporting details do not point conclusively to black-throated gray or, for that matter, black-and-white or blackpoll warblers.

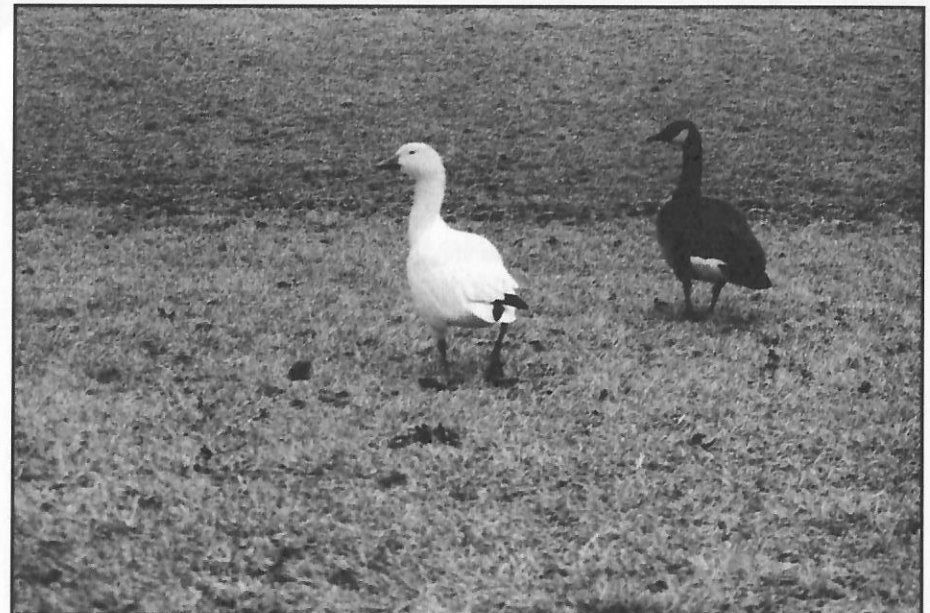
But here's where things get even more interesting. The author continues: "Our first Black-throated Gray Warbler was seen on May 8. Later that day we heard and saw another one. The next day we saw another individual of this species. On May 13 we saw eight of them. By this time the bird had become rather common and was seen and heard in various habitats in almost all parts of the county. We continued to see and hear Black-throated Gray Warblers until May 25, when the last one was seen." Egads.

The author acknowledges that to his understanding this species was not reported by other birders in the area. He also maintains that "[m]any good, close observations" were made "from every angle." Approximately half of those seen were males and about the same number were females. The female differs from the male in that it has little or no black in the throat." Furthermore, "[m]ost of the time the birds were seen in the tops of rather large deciduous trees. They were quite active...I would say there were more pugnacious than most wood warblers, as I observed them scrapping with other warblers on several occasions." This feisty, tree-top activity mentioned

here is strikingly similar to that of the widely-seen male black-throated gray warbler that inhabited the Baldwin Lake area near Cleveland in late April and early May 1992, and is certainly not an expected behavior of the limb-creeping black-and-white warbler. Blackpoll warblers are more likely tree-top denizens, but their song hardly resembles any song of a black-throated green warbler. I simply cannot force myself to accept the possibility that so many black-throated grays were present, but enough tantalizing evidence is presented to lead one to believe that the species could very well have been present. I remain maddened and baffled, but that's not so unusual for me.

And, finally, I submit my nomination for the most inane and vacuous article published in Ohio. It appeared in *The Ohio Cardinal* 24(2), and you have just finished reading it. My apologies to all.

7072 Parma Park Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44130



This snow goose was keeping good company at the Carlisle Reservation duck ponds in Lorain Co. Photo by Paula Lozano on 24 February 2001.

"The Possibilities are Bewildering": The History and Mystery of the Cincinnati Warbler

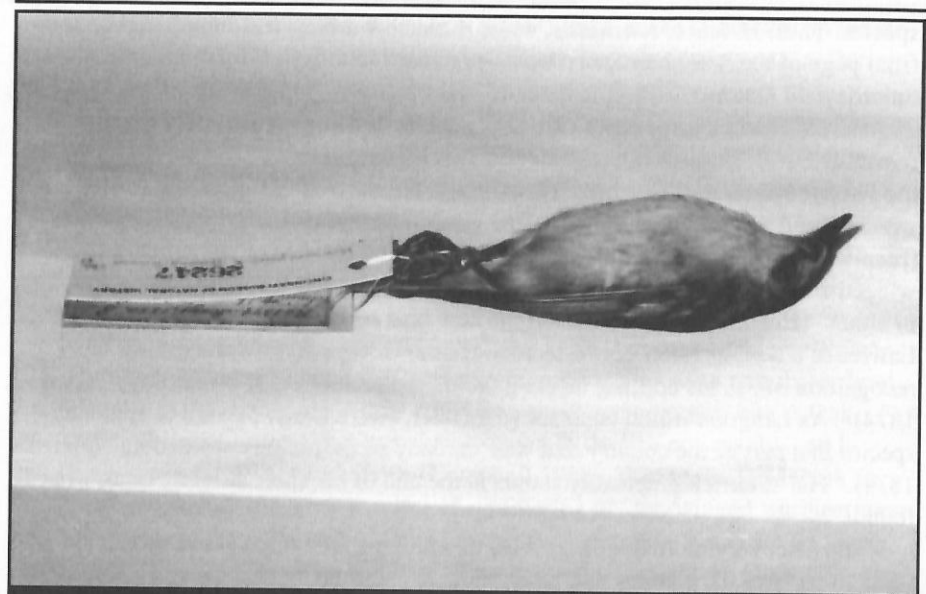
by Mike Busam

Dr. Frank Langdon carefully set the olive-green and yellow warbler on his desk. The skin was finally dry, and after waiting impatiently for three very long days, he was eager to examine and handle his find again. He had collected the bird while it was hunting for insects in a maple tree on 1 May 1880, in Madisonville, a small village in Hamilton County, next door to Cincinnati. After placing a fresh sheet of paper on his desk, he picked up the bird and stared at it intently. As he studied the bird, he scarcely noticed that the air coming through the open window in his study had turned cold, that day had surrendered to night; he stared at the bird held gently in the palm of his left hand, his thumb on the bird's nape, his index finger tucked under the throat. He turned his wrist over and back again, looking at the bird's upperside, then its underside. Finally, he began writing:

Adult male; spring plumage. Entire upper parts, excepting forehead, clear, bright, olive green, with a tinge of yellowish in certain lights; quills and rectrices dark plumbeous brown, their outer webs fringed with olive green like that of the back. Below, including crissum, bright cadmium yellow, of nearly the same shade throughout. Forehead, bright yellow, this color bounded anteriorly by a very narrow black line from the lores, and behind gradually merging into the clear olive green of the crown; feathers of vertex with a median concealed area of black. Lores velvety black; auriculars black, tipped with yellow-ish green, giving them a mottled appearance. A yellow area beneath the eye separates the black of lores from that of auriculars. (Langdon 1880)

When he was finished, Langdon was simultaneously elated and, he realized, due to the late hour, rather tired. He knew almost as much about ornithology and North American birds as the leading scientists in the east, people with names like Coues and Ridgway. He knew all that was known about the birds of the Cincinnati area, including southeastern Indiana, northern Kentucky, and southwestern Ohio. He knew enough to know that what he had in his hand wasn't anything that anyone before him had ever seen or described. He had the satisfied sense that comes from knowing one has realized—well before anyone else—that lightning had struck not just twice, but three times since 1874 in the genus *Helminthophaga*. Dr. Frank Langdon, eminent physician and natural scientist, had before him, lying on the desk in his study, a brand new species of warbler. Underneath his notes, at the bottom of the page, in his finest flourish, he wrote out the name he had chosen for his discovery in large script that would have earned the approbation of John Hancock: "*Helminthophaga cincinnatiensis*, the Cincinnati Warbler."

After sending his specimen to Elliott Coues, who showed it to Robert Ridgway and other ornithologists—all of whom, with the notable exception of Ridgway, seem to have initially agreed the bird was a new species—Langdon published his descrip-



The type specimen of the "Cincinnati" warbler collected in Hamilton Co. on 1 May 1880 by Dr. Frank Langdon. This study skin is housed at the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History (CMNH #26247). Photo by Mike Busam.

tion of the Cincinnati warbler in the *Journal of The Cincinnati Society of Natural History* in 1880. Toward the end of his article, Langdon noted "it is a little remarkable that this should be the third new species of this genus announced from the eastern United States during the past six years" (Langdon 1880).

The other two species of *Helminthophaga*, the genus known today as *Vermivora*, are of course Brewster's warbler, which had been named white throated warbler when first described in 1874 by its discoverer William Brewster, and Lawrence's warbler, which was described and named by Herold Herrick, also in 1874 (Brewster 1874, Herrick 1874).

The type specimens of the "new" species of *Helminthophaga*, Brewster's and Lawrence's, were collected in Massachusetts and New Jersey, respectively. William Brewster collected a bird he suspected to be an immature male golden-winged warbler on 18 May 1870 in Newtonville, Massachusetts. The bird had a "bright yellow" crown, and a "restricted line of black through the eye" similar to that of blue-winged warbler, but the "cheeks, throat and entire under parts" were "white, with a slight tinge of pale yellow on the breast" (Brewster 1874). He noted that the wing and tail feathers were worn and faded, like that of an older bird, rather than a hatch year bird. He remained uncertain of the age and identity of his find until four years later, when in July 1874 Brewster collected specimens of immature male and female golden-winged warblers. After comparing the immature golden-winged warblers with the bird collected in 1870, he concluded that he had found a new

species. Thus, *H. leucobronchialis*, white throated warbler, was introduced on the front page of the *American Sportsman*—precursor to today's *Field and Stream*—on Saturday, 17 October 1874 (Brewster 1874).

Herold Herrick came across his new warbler in a slightly different manner. A friend, D.B. Dickinson, collected an odd-looking bird in May 1874 on the banks of the Passaic River, near Chatham, New Jersey. He showed the specimen to Herrick, who realized it was something new: "Its general appearance is at first like *pinus* [blue-winged warbler] with the black eye and throat patches of *chrysoptera* [golden-winged warbler], but a closer examination shows little peculiarities that do not exist in either" (Herrick 1874). He named the new bird *Helminthophaga lawrencii*, Lawrence's warbler, after his "esteemed friend, George N. Lawrence, Esq., in recognition of . . . his untiring labors towards the promotion of ornithology" (Herrick 1874).¹ As Langdon would echo six years later, Herrick was pleased to find a new species in a part of the country that was "already so thoroughly worked up" (Herrick 1874). "Ha!" Herrick practically shouts at the end of his short article. "Look what I found!"

The discovery of three new species of warbler in the same genus within six years in parts of the country that were home to a number of serious and active field ornithologists was remarkable, indeed. Even more remarkable, however, was the discovery in the early 1880s that the Cincinnati warbler, Brewster's warbler, and Lawrence's warbler were not new species at all, but hybrids.

Hybridization among passerines was not well understood in the early 1880s, and Gregor Mendel's seminal work on genetic inheritance was still more than 20 years from reaching the scientific community at large. Ornithologists of the day didn't expect to find passerines such as blue-winged and golden-winged warblers hybridizing; and when they did discover the birds were doing so, they still had trouble explaining the strange mix of features represented in the hybrid offspring. Take Brewster's warbler, for instance. Brewster named the bird white throated warbler for an obvious reason, but even after ornithologists agreed that the bird was a hybrid, they still couldn't explain how two parent species, neither of which had a white throat, could produce offspring with white throats!

Additionally, in the 1880s the blue-winged warbler's northward spread and "takeover" of its closely related congener, the golden-winged warbler, was a new development, the significance of which was not yet recognized. Today we have a good idea how blue-winged warblers have come to replace golden-winged warblers throughout areas in eastern North America. But that wasn't common ornithological currency in the days of Langdon, Brewster, and Herrick.

The northward push of blue-winged warblers was more pronounced in the eastern U.S. than in the Ohio Valley and southwestern Ohio, where golden-winged

¹ Regarding the species name "*lawrencii*": after Herrick, many subsequent authors, including Langdon (1880), Brewster (1881), Ridgway (1885), and even many contemporary authors, spell the species name "*lawrencei*." Others, Dunn (1997), for instance, use the spelling from Herrick's 1874 article in which the species was first named. I've chosen to follow Herrick's spelling, as well (whether or not it's grammatically correct), though I have not changed "*lawrencei*" when directly quoting a primary source.

warblers were only rare migrants in the first place (Langdon 1877), but wherever blue-winged warblers encounter golden-winged warblers, the same events ensue. During the initial period of contact between the two birds, records of Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers increased. Gradually, through a combination of competition and interbreeding (though many lean towards interbreeding as the leading cause), blue-winged warblers replaced golden-winged warblers—often to the point where the golden-winged warblers disappeared altogether as breeders. The entire process, from initial meeting of populations of blue-winged and golden-winged warblers, to the disappearance of the golden-wings as breeders, takes about 50 years (Gill 1980, Morse 1989).

In Ohio, golden-winged warblers have never been abundant breeders. Writing in 1935, Lawrence E. Hicks stated that golden-winged warblers were rare throughout the state, and that the only place they could be considered common was at Oak Openings in Lucas County. This population began to decline noticeably—and quickly—during the 1930s and 1940s (Campbell 1968). During the field work for the *Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas* a handful of summering golden-winged warblers were found, but never more than two or three in any given summer. Peterjohn and Rice (1991) surmised that "the Ohio summering population . . . currently totals no more than 3-5 males annually." In the 2000 summer breeding season there were no reports of golden-winged warbler (*The Ohio Cardinal* 23:4). Ohio seems to have followed the model for replacement of breeding golden-winged warbler populations by blue-winged warblers within 50 years or so of first contact.

Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers in Ohio are noted most often during migration, though during the *Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas* project both hybrids were found to be "very rare summer residents," with one Brewster's warbler nest reported from northern Tuscarawas County, and an adult Lawrence's warbler seen carrying food in Monroe County (Peterjohn and Rice 1991). In spring 2000, two Brewster's warblers were found in Ohio, with a bird in Ravenna remaining into June. Meanwhile, there were three records of Lawrence's warbler reported, all from June (*The Ohio Cardinal* 23:4). Peterjohn and Rice (1991) write that summering Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers could continue to be reported from time to time in Ohio well after our population of golden-winged warblers disappears, an outcome that appears inevitable, if indeed it hasn't already occurred. The likely source for summering hybrids would be "individuals produced in surrounding states and provinces."

The first of the new *Helminthophaga* triumvirate to "disappear" as a valid species, though, was, alas for us Queen City Birders, the Cincinnati warbler. In the very same issue of the *Bulletin of The Nuttall Ornithological Club* in which Langdon's article on the Cincinnati warbler was reprinted, Robert Ridgway contributed a brief piece in the "General Notes" section in which he questioned the validity of *cincinnatiensis* as a species. "At first sight," writes Ridgway, "the bird impresses one with its unique coloration, which on further examination is found to be a perfect combination of the plumage of *Helminthophaga pinus* [blue-winged warbler] and *Oporornis formosa* [Kentucky warbler]" (Ridgway 1880). Ridgway added that "the

forehead is yellow, as in *H. pinus*, but behind and along the postero-lateral edge of this yellow is seen a portion of the black cap which characterizes *O. formosa*" (Ridgway 1880). He went on to note that the Cincinnati warbler's measurements were intermediate between those of blue-winged warbler and Kentucky warbler, that the bill was closer to an *Oporornis* warbler in size and shape, and that feet were more like those of a *Helminthophaga* warbler.² Neither could Ridgway overlook the fact that throughout the Mississippi Valley and especially in the region around Cincinnati, both Kentucky and blue-winged warblers "breed very abundantly in the same localities, both nesting on the ground, and often having nests situated only a few feet apart" (Ridgway 1880).

Ridgway's doubts proved to be correct. Later studies supported his claim that the Cincinnati warbler is the progeny of a blue-winged warbler and Kentucky warbler. That's not to say that similarities between the Cincinnati warbler and the two birds we now know produced it were overlooked when it was discovered. In his description of the Cincinnati warbler, Langdon writes that according to Coues "its relations are mainly with [blue-winged warbler], although in the concealed black of vertex and auriculars it slightly resembles certain plumages of Kentucky warbler" (Langdon 1880). Similarities in facial features aside, Coues and Langdon ruled out an unusual-looking Kentucky warbler because of the Cincinnati warbler's "smaller size, dissimilar proportions, short tarsi, yellow forehead, and white margin to [the] outer tail feathers" (Langdon 1880). They also felt the bird wasn't an oddball blue-winged warbler because of its large size, lack of wing bars, and the presence of black auriculars. The potential that this was a blue-winged x Kentucky hybrid crossed their minds, but, according to Langdon, given what they knew at the time, the "suspicion of hybridism" was considered "inadmissible" (Langdon 1880).

To appreciate the theoretical leap that Robert Ridgway took when he suggested the Cincinnati warbler was a hybrid, one needs only to read an important 1881 article William Brewster wrote for the *Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club*. In this article, Brewster describes in detail all 12 of the known specimens of white throated (Brewster's) and Lawrence's warbler, noting that all the specimens were collected in areas where both blue-winged and golden-winged warblers breed, and observing that when laid side-by-side there was a tremendous amount of variation in the different birds: "Taken as a whole," writes Brewster of the 12 specimens, "the series perfectly connects *leucobronchialis* with *pinus*, as well as showing an extension of the former toward *chrysoptera*" (Brewster 1881).

Brewster singled out two birds in particular to put the exclamation point on his argument that white throated warbler and Lawrence's warbler were not valid species. The first bird was a female Lawrence's warbler he had collected and labeled No. 4,667; the second bird was No. 4,668, which Brewster believed to be one of 4,667's offspring. When collected, No. 4,668 was molting from its juvenal plumage into its first basic (first fall) plumage. Brewster explains that across the breast and along the sides of the bird patches of "bright yellow feathers" were replacing the

² At some time between 1881 and 1988 the tip of the bill of the Cincinnati warbler type specimen was broken off and lost.

gray feathers of the juvenal plumage. More importantly, writes Brewster, "the sprouting second plumage of the throat is *pure white*; the lores are black, but the few second feathers which appear on the auriculars are, like those of the throat, *white*" (Brewster 1881; emphasis in original). Since the offspring of No. 4,667 looked more like a white throated warbler than a Lawrence's, he hypothesized that the bird likely mated with a blue-winged warbler.

In summation of his argument Brewster made three points to support his claim that both *H. leucobronchialis* and *H. lawrencii* were hybrids. First, neither bird had any original characteristics that weren't borrowed from either blue-winged or golden-winged warblers (with the exception of the white throat that tends to show up on *leucobronchialis*, a point that Ridgway used four years later to argue *in favor* of the validity of white throated warbler as a species); second, "the characters of *leucobronchialis* are inconstant, and that this supposed species intergrades with [blue-winged warbler];" and third, the characteristics of Lawrence's warbler "are also inconstant" and that it "interbreeds with some unknown ally—presumably [blue-winged warbler], producing offspring that resemble aberrant specimens of *leucobronchialis*" (Brewster 1881).

Without an understanding of the ways in which dominant and recessive traits are mixed and matched through crosses and backcrosses to create different physical characteristics, Brewster suggested that perhaps white throated warbler resulted from a paring of a male blue-winged warbler with a female golden-winged warbler, while Lawrence's warbler might result from a male golden-winged warbler mating with a female blue-winged warbler. Whatever the case, "the possibilities opened by this field are bewildering" marveled Brewster. He continued, writing that

[u]ntil very recently there was not a single established example of hybridity among North American Passeres, and many of our leading ornithologists were incredulous as to its occurrence in a state of nature save among the Grouse and some of the Swimming Birds. (Brewster 1881)

In presenting arguments that favored hybridization as the origin of the Cincinnati, white throated, and Lawrence's warblers, Brewster and Ridgway were on the verge of untying an ornithological Gordian knot that was both exciting and intriguing. Exciting because heretofore hybridization was unknown among North American passerines; intriguing because it was hard to sort out where all the different characteristics of these hybrids came from.

Ridgway could understand how Cincinnati and Lawrence's warblers were hybrids—the birds were clearly in debt to their respective parent species for all of their physical characteristics. But he differed with Brewster's claim that white throated warbler was a hybrid. Focusing on the unique white throat of Brewster's warbler, Ridgway agreed that the variation in a number of *leucobronchialis* specimens was the result of hybridization with either blue-winged or golden-winged warbler (Ridgway 1885). However, the variation that made Brewster doubt the validity of white throated warbler actually strengthened the case for the bird keeping

its status as a species in Ridgway's mind. Because neither blue-winged or golden-winged warblers have white throats, he reasoned, then they cannot produce Brewster's warbler; however, a Brewster's warbler hybridizing with a blue-winged or golden-winged warbler *could* produce the variation noted by Brewster when he reviewed the known specimens (Ridgway 1885). If only Ridgway had known that the gene for the white underparts of golden-winged warbler is dominant, and that when this dominant gene meets the recessive gene for the yellow underparts and throat of blue-winged warbler, the dominant gene for white underparts will also make the throat white. The result is a bird with a white throat, paradoxically produced by parents that lack this feature (Curson 1994). But that was a discovery that in 1885 was still some years away. Given what they knew at the time, Brewster and Ridgway's work on the hybridization of blue-winged and golden-winged warblers, as well as the latter's work on the Cincinnati warbler, is fairly on the mark—and in a word, groundbreaking.

Sightings and studies of Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers continue to the present day. But for decades after its discovery in 1880 there was but one Cincinnati warbler. It was an interesting specimen in that, unlike blue-winged and golden-winged hybridization, the Cincinnati warbler is the result of an intergeneric pairing, but for all practical purposes the Cincinnati warbler was merely an enigma, a yellow and olive green bolt out of the blue that fell to earth from the limb of a maple tree near Cincinnati one fine May morning.³

However, the story of the Cincinnati warbler wasn't finished after Ridgway's article raised questions about the validity of its species status in 1880. Sixty-eight years after Langdon discovered the first Cincinnati Warbler, Frank McCamey collected a *second* Cincinnati warbler in Cass County, Michigan, 18 miles north of the Indiana state line.

On 19 May 1948, while birding in a mature oak woods called Russ Forest, McCamey heard a "puzzling song—a loud 'kuh-chee, kuh-chee, kuh-chee', which rang through the woods like the song of an Ovenbird. The syllables were repeated with even rhythm and unvarying pitch" (McCamey 1950).⁴

When McCamey located the warbler he immediately realized it was not an ovenbird, but a bird that resembled a blue-winged warbler, minus the white wing-bars. McCamey observed the bird for nine consecutive days. Unlike Langdon's account of the Cincinnati warbler type specimen, McCamey's paper included

³ For information on other intergeneric as well as intrageneric warbler hybrids such as Sutton's warbler, Audubon's warbler x myrtle warbler, Townsend's warbler x hermit warbler, and other hybrids, see Curson 1994, Dunn 1997, Morse 1989, Peterson 1980, Sibley 1994, and Sibley 2000. Peterson's 1980 guide is the only major field guide with an illustration of Sutton's warbler, though this hybrid hasn't been recorded since the early 1970s. For more information on hybridization in North American wood warblers see the April 1998 (vol. 115, no. 2) issue of *The Auk*. As of March 2001, the abstracts for the articles in this issue, as well as an interesting introductory essay by Frank B. Gill, were available on the internet at <http://www.aou.org/aou/ABS1152.HTML>

⁴ Sutton and McCamey allude only briefly to this in their article, but McCamey's description of the song of his mysterious warbler fits a Kentucky better than a mourning warbler—though some mourning warblers have a song that "may suggest" Kentucky warbler (Dunn 1997).

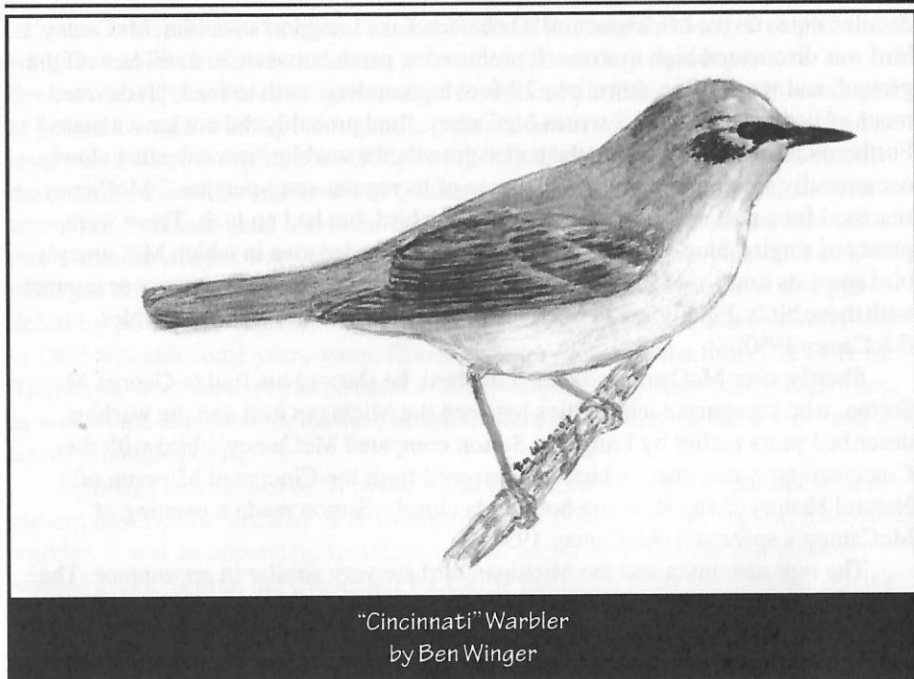
detailed notes on the Michigan bird's behavior. Like Langdon's warbler, McCamey's bird was discovered high in a tree. It preferred to perch between 20 to 60 feet off the ground, and would drop down into 20-foot high undergrowth to feed. "It devoted much of its time to singing," writes McCamey, "and probably did not have a mate." Furthermore, when foraging in the under-growth, the warbler "moved rather slowly, occasionally singing without flying to one of its regular song-perches." McCamey searched for a nest and a possible mate for the bird, but had no luck. There were plenty of singing blue-winged warblers near the wooded area in which McCamey's bird spent its time, but McCamey never saw the warbler attempt to attract or interact with those birds. Finally, on 28 May, McCamey collected his mystery warbler (McCamey 1950).

Shortly after McCamey collected the bird, he showed his find to George M. Sutton, who recognized similarities between the Michigan bird and the warbler described years earlier by Langdon. Sutton compared McCamey's bird with the Cincinnati type specimen, which he borrowed from the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. After studying both birds closely, Sutton made a painting of McCamey's specimen (McCamey 1950).⁵

The type specimen and the Michigan bird are very similar in appearance. The Cincinnati bird is a little larger; other than that, the main difference between the two birds is that the Michigan bird lacks a distinct, black auricular patch, while retaining a black loreal streak that runs through the eye, similar in appearance to the loreal streaking on a blue-winged warbler. McCamey and Sutton were fairly certain that the bird's parentage was at least one-half blue-winged warbler, and that the other likely candidate was either a Kentucky or a mourning warbler (McCamey 1950). Kentucky warbler was all but ruled out, in large part because in 1948 there were only three records of that warbler from Michigan, while mourning warbler was known to breed just north of the location where McCamey collected his mystery warbler. Additionally, the size of the wings and tail of the Cincinnati specimen are closer to that of a Kentucky warbler (though overall it is intermediate in size between blue-winged and Kentucky warblers) than are the more blue-winged warbler-sized wings and tail of the smaller Michigan bird. McCamey and Sutton concluded that "at least provisionally" the Michigan bird was a cross between a blue-winged warbler and a mourning warbler (McCamey 1950). So lightning didn't strike in *exactly* the same place twice (though it came very close!), and the Cincinnati warbler discovered by Frank Langdon in 1880 remained the only one of its kind.

Given the oddity of these two very similar hybrids, as well as the fact that parentage of both birds is at least one half blue-winged warbler, one had to know

⁵ David Sibley made illustrations of both Langdon's Cincinnati warbler and McCamey's warbler for an article titled "A Guide to Finding and Identifying Hybrid Birds" that appeared in the June 1994 (vol. 26, no. 3) issue of *Birding*, pages 172 and 173 respectively. As of March 2001, these drawings were also available on the internet at http://www.sibleyart.com/hybrid_warblers.htm. The Cincinnati warbler type specimen is in the upper left corner and the Cincinnati warbler collected in Michigan is in the lower right corner. A reproduction of the rather stylized illustration that accompanied Langdon's article describing the Cincinnati warbler in 1880 can be viewed on Ned Keller's *Birding in Cincinnati* website at <http://w3.one.net/~keller/cincybirds/index.htm>.



"Cincinnati" Warbler
by Ben Winger

that the issue of their genetic origins wasn't going to be left dormant for too long. Eventually, someone was going to pull both specimens out of their metal storage drawers and take a long close look. Finally, in 1988, Gary R. Graves of the Smithsonian Institute compared size and plumage characteristics of the Cincinnati and Michigan specimens, which he borrowed from their respective keepers; in addition he ran measurements on numerous specimens of pure blue-winged, Kentucky, and mourning warblers, and charted where the Cincinnati and Michigan birds fell in comparison to the two species of *Oporornis* (Graves 1988).

Graves' findings affirm that the Cincinnati bird is a little larger than the Michigan bird, though it is intermediate in size between blue-winged and Kentucky warbler (Graves 1988). The Cincinnati bird also shares plumage characteristics with both blue-winged and Kentucky warbler—that is, facial features that reflect both the eye line of blue-winged warbler and the auricular patch of Kentucky warbler, underparts like those of Kentucky warbler, and upperparts similar to those of blue-winged warbler. As Ridgway, Langdon, and Coues all noted at one time or another, the Cincinnati bird truly bears striking resemblances to both blue-winged and Kentucky warblers.

Graves put the Michigan bird under a microscope and discovered that it had "black barbs on the edges of a few auricular feathers"—a "Kentucky-like" characteristic. The Michigan bird is, as McCamey noted, closer in size to a blue-winged warbler, but the other half of its parentage isn't necessarily a mourning warbler, particularly given the presence of auricular coloring, albeit all but invisible to the naked eye. Furthermore, Graves observed that both birds have "small black dots

above each nostril" and "scattered black feathers, tipped with grayish olive, at the sides and rear of the hindcrown... Because crown feathers of [mourning warbler] are uniformly gray, black spots above the nostrils and black crown feathers could only have been inherited from [Kentucky warbler]." Additionally, neither the Cincinnati nor the Michigan bird has any trace of the gray or black bib of mourning warbler (Graves 1988).

At the conclusion of the article Graves writes that the "correlation between intermediacy in plumage and morphology" of the Cincinnati bird suggests it is a first generation hybrid, while the lack of an obvious auricular patch and the Michigan bird's smaller size are due to the fact that the Michigan bird could very well "represent the progeny of [a first generation Cincinnati warbler] hybrid back crossed with a pure [blue-winged warbler]" (Graves 1988). It's quite possible, then, that there hasn't been just one Cincinnati warbler, but at least as many as two or three.

CONCLUSION

Though not nearly as well-known as its *Vermivora* hybrid siblings, nor the much more famous intergeneric hybrid Sutton's warbler (northern parula x yellow-throated warbler), the Cincinnati warbler nonetheless played an important role in the process by which 19th century ornithologists worked to discover the origins of Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers, the most studied of North American hybrid passerines. Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers are still sighted in Ohio today during migration and occasionally into the breeding season, though they are very rare. Might another Cincinnati warbler ever be encountered? Who's to say it couldn't happen again? And if it does, maybe some lucky Ohio birder will get to discover yet another *Vermivora cincinnatiensis* (Langdon): the Cincinnati warbler.

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(Continued on the following page)

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7577 Whitehall Circle West
West Chester, OH 45069
mjb@schafter.cc

A History of the Crow Roost at Cincinnati

by Frank Renfrow

Evening has returned. The heavens have already opened their twinkling eyes, although the orb of day has yet scarcely withdrawn itself from our view...Crows are flying towards their roosts...

—John James Audubon, from his account of fishing in the Ohio

The winter roosting behavior of the American crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* has been well documented in various sections of the United States, with numbers of over five million having been reported at a great roost in Kansas (Angell 1978). *Corvus* species from other temperate regions of the world are also known to form large roosts (Wilmore 1977).

Alexander Wilson's vivid description of crows flying to their roost, penned some 200 years ago, aptly describes what can still be witnessed in the Cincinnati area today:

About an hour before sunset, they are first observed flying, somewhat in Indian file, in one direction, at a short height above the tops of the trees, silent and steady, keeping the general curvature of the ground, continuing to pass sometimes till after sunset, so that the whole line of march would extend for many miles...Burns in a single line, has finely sketched it: The blackening trains of Crows to their repose.

In 1848 Joseph Longworth built a country home at Walnut Hills, at the time a suburb, but now an inner-city neighborhood of Cincinnati. He named the estate "Rookwood," due to the large number of crows that (in his word) "inhabited" the area. In 1880 his daughter, Maria Longworth Nichols, founded the Rookwood Pottery. Many years later she explained that "the Crows in an old dead elm tree had begun the Rookwood Pottery." Although the Pottery was originally located on Eastern Avenue near the Ohio River, it was later moved to the top of the hill at Mt. Adams (Peck 1968).

In 1891, Raymond W. Smith, the editor of Lebanon, Ohio's newspaper, *The Western Star*, wrote an account of the birds of Warren County. There he describes the daily movements of the crows:

In speaking of the crow as a resident, it should be stated that the crows to be seen in all parts of the county any winter day, return every evening to the great crow roost at Clifton, a suburb of Cincinnati. Every morning from November to March, they arrive in the vicinity of Lebanon about an hour after sun-rise. The day is spent searching for food along the numerous water-courses of the county, and about three o'clock in the afternoon they may be seen returning, in small flocks, to the Clifton roost. So, while during the day-time, in Winter, crows are more abundant than at any other time of the year, by five o'clock in the afternoon there is probably not a crow left in the county.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the crow roost seems to have split into two locations, possibly due to human disturbance and persecution. The noted Ohio naturalist and photographer Karl Maslowski remembers one roost near the mouth of the Great Miami, in Indiana just north of the Oxbow, in a grove of large

cottonwoods and soft maples. The other roost was at the mouth of the Little Miami (Kemsies and Randle 1953). These crows sometimes crossed the Ohio to roost in the wooded hills of Fort Thomas, Kentucky (Karl Maslowski, pers. comm.).

Sometime in the latter half of the twentieth century, the crow roost returned to urban Cincinnati. I lived in Clifton during the 1980s, and remember watching endless lines of crows passing from north to south. On occasion I would follow them to the roost, at the time at Liberty Hill, just west of Mt. Adams. Other years I have seen the roost shift to Walnut Hills, Clifton Heights, and even to the rooftop of the Cincinnati Library. In very cold weather they can be seen huddled en masse (possibly to conserve heat—see Bent 1946) on the asphalt parking lot just north of the Greyhound bus station. In recent years the roost has convened most often at Mt. Adams and Eden Park.

Now I watch the crows from the Kentucky side of the river. Many times I have counted up to 30,000, only to see countless more stream in from the north during the final minutes before sundown. At mid-winter 70,000 would probably be a reasonable estimate for the average size of the roost.

Before reaching the final roost, the crows form large staging parties at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, Evergreen Cemetery in Southgate, Kentucky and elsewhere, about an hour or so before sunset. By sunset at their roosting location, the crows have massed by the tens of thousands. A deafening roar arises from their assembly calls (Goodwin 1976), their combined effect being not unlike the “assembly calls” of their human neighbors amassed at a Cincinnati sports stadium.



In mid-February the Crow roosts are augmented by thousands of blackbirds returning from the south. For reasons unknown to me, the blackbirds roost apart from the crows in the fall, in recent years forming a large roost at Northern Kentucky University, some five miles south of Cincinnati. The NKU blackbird roost transforms into a considerable assemblage of starlings and robins during the winter. By mid-March the crow roost dwindles in size and gradually dissipates with the commencement of nesting activities.

Various theories have been proposed as to why crows form such massive roosts. The most likely theory concerns safety in numbers from predation by owls during

the night, when the crows are most vulnerable. Anyone who has observed the torment that a few dozen crows can wreak while mobbing an owl, can easily understand why an owl would not want to be anywhere near a vast assembly of crows. In addition, during cold winters when all other bodies of water are frozen over, the Ohio River can be the only source of open water, and a roost close by is advantageous. On occasion I have watched them congregate at the river at sunset, flying down to the banks to drink and bathe.

It was a strange coincidence that during this past winter, the crow roost seemed to center on the grounds of the old Rookwood Pottery. At the approach of nightfall one could witness crows swirling around the black rook statuettes on the old stone gateposts at the pottery entrance. The birds would then cluster in the bare tree beside the gate. In the gathering darkness one could scarcely distinguish between the rooks of cast metal and the crows of flesh and blood. I imagine that Maria Longworth Nichols would be pleased.



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611S. O'Fallon Ave.
Bellevue, KY 41073
renfrowpiano@aol.com

Both photographs appearing in this article were taken by the author at the Rookwood Pottery crow roost.—Ed.

All Time High Ohio Christmas Bird Count Records

by Tom Kemp

I have reviewed past issues of *American Birds*, *Audubon Field Notes*, *Bird Lore*, and Cornell's birdsources.org website to compile what I believe to be the all-time high Christmas Bird Count records for Ohio. Since 1900, when the first count was conducted in Ohio, a remarkable 242 species have occurred on Ohio CBCs. This number includes 13 warblers, 20 shorebirds, and 17 gulls! Twenty-six species have been detected just once. Cincinnati, with its veritable army of observers, leads the way with at least 26 high counts, followed by Toledo with 20. Elyria-Lorain, which garnered most of the gull records, has 14 high counts, as do Cleveland and Ottawa NWR. Some Christmas Bird Count records have been published that lack documentation and are not presently included on Ohio's official list of birds. They are discussed below. Other records that were obviously published erroneously (e.g., Steller's jay) or likely the result of misidentifications (e.g., multiple black-throated blue warblers) are omitted from the list. Other species were recorded in numbers that are, to say the least, a bit hard to believe. Are *all* of the additional records listed below (the ones not commented on) accurate? Probably not. Christmas Bird Counts attract a wide range of birders, some with limited ability and good imaginations. It would be impossible to ascertain the veracity of each record. So I present this list as much for the fun of it as for its accuracy.

Ohio Christmas Bird Counts - A Brief History

The first Christmas Bird Count in Ohio was conducted at Oberlin in 1900. Here is their list: red-shouldered hawk, 1; downy woodpecker, 6; hairy woodpecker, 1; blue jay, 6; crow, 4; chickadee, 8; tufted titmouse, cw (seen during the count week but not on the count day); white-breasted nuthatch, 14; bluebird, cw; song sparrow, 2; junco, 3; bronzed grackle, cw; purple finch, 14; cardinal, 1; flicker, 2; sparrow hawk, 1; tree sparrow, 40. From this modest beginning, the number of counts has burgeoned to over sixty statewide. Along the way, there have been dozens of others, many going by the wayside after lasting only a year or two. That makes the record of the Cadiz count all the more remarkable. Without question the champion for longevity, the Cadiz CBC has been held every year with no lapses since 1901! Congratulations to the compilers and counters of this Harrison County count. Wauseon's count lasted just one year (1924), but still garnered the all-time high record for gray partridge in the state, a record that will surely stand the test of time. Finally, Cincinnati's first count in 1911 found 14 cardinals; do you suppose they said, "Boy, there sure are a lot of cardinals around here!"?

Published Records, Obviously Wrong

Imagine the surprise of the Goll Woods compiler when he discovered that his group had seen Steller's jays and plain titmice on their 1986 count! Equally surprised must have been the Mentor compiler (ruddy ground dove in 1995) and the Trumbull County counters (ringed kingfisher 1996). These were obviously published erroneously. A report of 23 black-throated blue warblers on the 1965 Killdeer

Plains count was published, *with comments!* What were these birds? My best guess is dark-eyed juncos. What do you do with the red-cockaded woodpecker reported on the 1965 Oxford count? Seventeen California gulls were listed on the 1968 Lake-wood count. Remarkable.

Published Records Not on the State List, or Extremely Suspect

There are still no accepted records, or in one case an accepted winter record, for the following species for Ohio. The great cormorant (Ashland 1986) may have been the least likely to occur here; one would have to think the documentation did not eliminate the far more likely double-crested cormorant, or the bird was entered in the wrong line of the form. You can bet that ferruginous hawk will eventually be convincingly documented in Ohio; the Grand Lake St. Marys (1980) bird was certainly possible, as was the Greenville bird in 1997. I understand that documentation does exist for the golden-crowned sparrow reported on the 1988 Wooster count. Although I have not been privy to that write-up, my guess is this bird was an immature white-crowned sparrow showing a bright buffy central crown stripe. I try to turn the white-crowns at my feeder into golden-crowns all the time. Three-toed woodpecker was listed on the 1981 Beavercreek count; it sure would be a good one for the state list. Swainson's hawk was reported from the New Lexington count in 1977. Hard to say what this one was. Skuas have been reported on two counts (Ashtabula 1946, Gypsum 1979); it is possible.

High Counts: How Many Birds Were Really There?

Were there really that many ducks at Killdeer Plains in the late 1960s (wood duck, 2407; northern pintail, 1000; American wigeon, 1500)? And again in 1985 when 100 blue-winged teal were reported? Remarkably, 46 chipping sparrows were listed on two counts, when *one* on an Ohio CBC should be a noteworthy event. The count of 2500 white-winged scoters listed on the 1985 Firelands count is astonishing to say the least; this number would far exceed any high number ever reported for the state. These birds were probably red-breasted mergansers. Oxford listed 200 Brewer's blackbirds in 1995, an incredible total.

Counts I Would Like to Have Been On

Wouldn't you have loved to have been on the Kingston count in 1975 to witness the tremendous concentration of birds of prey, including 87 rough-legged hawks and 80 northern harriers? The 1956 Buckeye Lake count recorded the most species ever on an Ohio CBC, 97. It would have been nice to walk around with Milton Trautman and be part of CBC history. Can you imagine all those evening grosbeaks on the 1975 Logan count? Swarming everywhere! The 1962 Utica count featured gray partridge, a bird I wouldn't mind having on my Ohio list. The 1961 season was excellent for pine grosbeaks and Burton was the place to be, with a high count of 47.

The Rarest of the Rare

How do you choose the rarest bird ever found on an Ohio CBC? The vote has to go to those species that have occurred no other time in the state. So mountain

bluebird and Heermann's gull are the winners. Second place is a toss-up. I would go with Townsend's solitaire, common eider, western tanager, rufous hummingbird, boreal chickadee, mew gull, varied thrush, green-tailed towhee, and black-billed magpie. One might also argue for some of the neotropical migrants that failed to migrate. There are plenty of those to choose from.

All-time High Counts by Species

Many thanks to all those compilers who provided comments and corrected high totals. The author welcomes any further corrections in the list of high counts. For each species, I have listed the number seen, the name of the count, and the year of the count. For example: Black vulture, 112 (Paint Creek 1998). This notation indicates the 1998-1999 CBC season. If you detect any errors, please drop me a note at the address found at the end of this article.

Red-throated Loon, 1 on five counts
 Common Loon, 46 (Cleveland 1983)
 Pied-billed Grebe, 56 (Paint Creek 1984)
 Horned Grebe, 84 (Cleveland 1974)
 Red-necked Grebe, 2 (Cleveland 1931)
 Eared Grebe, 2 (Cleveland 1987, Paint Creek 2000)
 Western Grebe, 1 (Mansfield 1999)
 Northern Gannet, 2 (Cleveland 1949)
 Double-crested Cormorant, 94 (L. Erie Is. 1998)
 American Bittern, 4 (Hamilton-Fairfield 1927)
 Least Bittern, 1 (Toledo 1970)
 Great Blue Heron, 327 (ONWR 1976)
 Great Egret, 3 (ONWR 1981)
 Green Heron, 1 on 12+ counts
 Black-crowned Night-Heron, 103 (Toledo 1972)
 Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, 1 on five counts
 Black Vulture, 112 (Paint Creek 1998)
 Turkey Vulture, 357 (Athens 2000)
 Greater White-fronted Goose, 5 (Cleveland 1966)
 Snow Goose, 200 (Fremont 1975)
 Canada Goose, 19,671 (ONWR 1996)
 Brant, 19 (Firelands 1976)
 Mute Swan, 30 (Quail Hollow 1997)
 Trumpeter Swan, 15 (ONWR 1999)
 Tundra Swan, 496 (Toledo 1982)
 Wood Duck, 2407 (Killdeer Plains 1969)
 Gadwall, 601 (ONWR 1994)
 Eurasian Wigeon, 1 (Ashtabula 1941)
 American Wigeon, 1500 (Killdeer Plains 1969)
 American Black Duck, 16,715 (Gypsum 1959)
 Mallard, 27,356 (ONWR 1999)
 Blue-winged Teal, 100 (Killdeer Plains 1985)
 Northern Shoveler, 286 (Toledo 1998)
 Northern Pintail, 1000 (Killdeer Plains 1969)
 Green-winged Teal, 200 (Killdeer Plains 1966)
 Canvasback, 10,206 (Toledo 1976)
 Redhead, 500 (Fremont 1986)
 Ring-necked Duck, 503 (Cincinnati 1998)

Greater Scaup, 3000 (Lakewood 1963)
 Lesser Scaup, 6778 (Lakewood 1954)
 King Eider, 3 (Elyria-Lorain 1973)
 Common Eider, 1 (Lakewood 1963)
 Harlequin Duck, 2 (L. Erie Is. 1986 & 1993, ONWR 1996)
 Surf Scoter, 5 (Cleveland 1964)
 White-winged Scoter, 2500 (Firelands 1985)
 Black Scoter, 42 (Ashtabula 1935)
 Long-tailed Duck, 85 (Ashtabula 1941)
 Bufflehead, 1681 (L. Erie Is. 1994)
 Common Goldeneye, 6564 (ONWR 1996)
 Hooded Merganser, 492 (Trumbull Co. 1987)
 Common Merganser, 10,757 (Toledo 1991)
 Red-breasted Merganser, 91,526 (L. Erie Is. 1991)
 Ruddy Duck, 1511 (Gypsum 1987)
 Osprey, 2 (Paint Creek 1986, Hamilton-Fairfield 1997)
 Bald Eagle, 36 (Fremont 1999)
 Northern Harrier, 80 (Kingston 1975)
 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 18 (Wilmot 1991)
 Cooper's Hawk, 34 (Columbus 1997)
 Northern Goshawk, 2 on seven counts
 Red-shouldered Hawk, 53 (Burton 2000)
 Broad-winged Hawk, 3 (Lakewood 1957)
 Red-tailed Hawk, 252 (Wilmot 1992)
 Rough-legged Hawk, 87 (Kingston 1975)
 Golden Eagle, 1 (Ashtabula 1945, Firelands 1986, Millersburg 1994, Chandlerville 2000)
 American Kestrel, 151 (Cincinnati 1975)
 Merlin, 5 (Cuyahoga Falls 1993, Cleveland 1999)
 Peregrine Falcon, 2 (Dayton 1947 & 1996, Ashland 1976, Toledo 1988 & 1995)
 Gray Partridge, 35 (Wauseon 1924)
 Ring-necked Pheasant, 436 (Toledo 1935)
 Ruffed Grouse, 19 (Ragersville 1994)
 Wild Turkey, 430 (Millersburg 2000)
 Northern Bobwhite, 551 (Cincinnati 1969)
 King Rail, 2 (Plymouth 1958)

Virginia Rail, 5 (Gypsum 1979)
 Sora, 1 on five counts
 Common Moorhen, 4 (Youngstown 1996)
 American Coot, 907 (ONWR 1994)
 Sandhill Crane, 51 (Preble Co. 1998)
 Black-bellied Plover, 4 (Salem 1984)
 Killdeer, 208 (Ohio River 1994)
 American Avocet, 1 (Toledo 1998)
 Greater Yellowlegs, 3 (Buckeye Lk. 1964)
 Lesser Yellowlegs, 3 (ONWR 1994)
 Solitary Sandpiper, 1 (Mansfield 1987)
 Willet, 1 (L. Erie Is. 1997)
 Spotted Sandpiper, 1 (Fremont 1987)
 Ruddy Turnstone, 1 (Elyria-Lorain 1981 & 1988, Ashtabula 1984, Mentor 1993)
 Sanderling, 4 (L. Erie Is. 1998)
 Least Sandpiper, 1 (Cadiz 1957, Ashtabula 1982)
 Baird's Sandpiper, 1 (Hoover Res. 1982)
 Pectoral Sandpiper, 2 (Wooster 1981)
 Purple Sandpiper, 3 (Mentor 1991 & 1994, Elyria-Lorain 1994)
 Dunlin, 225 (Ashtabula 1952)
 Long-billed Dowitcher, 5 (Grand Lake St. Mary's 1981)
 Common Snipe, 25 (Wooster 1987)
 American Woodcock, 7 (Warren 1950)
 Red-necked Phalarope, 1 (Cleveland 1953)
 Red Phalarope, 2 (Cleveland 1980)
 Pomarine Jaeger, 3 (Cleveland 1988, Mentor 1988)
 Laughing Gull, 1 (Gypsum 1988, E. Fork Lk. 1990, Delaware Res. 1991, O'Shaughnessy Res. 1991)
 Franklin's Gull, 6 (Ashtabula 1949)
 Little Gull, 4 (Lakewood 1978, 1979)
 Black-headed Gull, 1 (Elyria-Lorain 1980 & 1988, ONWR 1984, Lakewood 1986)
 Bonaparte's Gull, 56,136 (Firelands 1996)
 Heermann's Gull, 1 (Elyria-Lorain 1980)
 Mew Gull, 1 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1994)
 Ring-billed Gull, 168,710 (Firelands 1996)
 California Gull, 1 (Elyria-Lorain 1993)
 Herring Gull, 64,005 (Elyria-Lorain 1989)
 Thayer's Gull, 7 (Elyria-Lorain 1989)
 Iceland Gull, 3 (Elyria-Lorain 1988 & 1989)
 Lesser Black-backed Gull, 8 (Elyria-Lorain 1988, Toledo 1999)
 Glaucous Gull, 16 (Elyria-Lorain 1989)
 Great Black-backed Gull, 1020 (Gypsum 1986)
 Sabine's Gull, 1 (Ashtabula 1952, Toledo 1974)
 Black-legged Kittiwake, 2 (Gypsum 1975)
 Caspian Tern, 1 (Elyria-Lorain 1975, Grand Lake St Marys 1993)
 Common Tern, 2 (Lakewood 1970, ONWR 1990)

Rock Dove, 4384 (Washington Co.-Parkersburg 1987)
 Mourning Dove, 4500 (Hamilton-Fairfield 1970)
 Barn Owl, 12 (Toledo 1953)
 Eastern Screech-Owl, 112 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1981)
 Great Horned Owl, 37 (ONWR 1994)
 Snowy Owl, 3 (Ashtabula 1941, Toledo 1967)
 Barred Owl, 19 (Oxford 1976)
 Long-eared Owl, 12 (Killdeer Plains 1990)
 Short-eared Owl, 38 (Toledo 1983)
 Northern Saw-whet Owl, 6 (Killdeer Plains 1990)
 Rufous Hummingbird, 1 (Mohican SF 1996)
 Belted Kingfisher, 49 (Cincinnati 1988)
 Red-headed Woodpecker, 268 (Buckeye Lk. 1956)
 Red-bellied Woodpecker, 521 (Millersburg 1999)
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 50 (Cincinnati 1958)
 Downy Woodpecker, 652 (Cincinnati 1980)
 Hairy Woodpecker, 147 (Millersburg 1999)
 Northern Flicker, 280 (Cincinnati 1987)
 Northern ("red-shafted") Flicker, 1 (Kingston 1972)
 Pileated Woodpecker, 103 (Millersburg 1999)
 Wood-Pewee sp., 1 (Lakewood 1963)
 Eastern Phoebe, 8 (Portsmouth 1992)
 Loggerhead Shrike, 3 (Buckeye Lk. 1958)
 Northern Shrike, 7 (Ashtabula 1956)
 White-eyed Vireo, 1 (Elyria-Lorain 1982, Tiffin 1984, Great Bend 1992, L. Erie Is. 1993)
 Blue-headed Vireo, 1 (Youngstown 1977, L. Erie Is. 1991 & 1997, Mentor 1992)
 Blue Jay, 1116 (Cuyahoga Falls 1995)
 Black-billed Magpie, 1 (O'Shaughnessy Res. 1956)
 American Crow, 100,381 (Youngstown 1957)
 Horned Lark, 2676 (W. Hamilton Co. 2000)
 Tree Swallow, 5 (Dayton 1977)
 Barn Swallow, 1 (Toledo 1984, Oxford 1997)
 Carolina Chickadee, 2636 (Cincinnati 1980)
 Black-capped Chickadee, 1748 (Cuyahoga Falls 1981)
 Boreal Chickadee, 1 (Cleveland 1972)
 Tufted Titmouse, 1108 (Cincinnati 1969)
 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 154 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1997)
 White-breasted Nuthatch, 592 (Millersburg 1999)
 Brown Creeper, 141 (Dayton 1982)
 Carolina Wren, 1089 (Cincinnati 1974)
 Bewick's Wren, 4 (Parkersburg 1921)
 House Wren, 5 (Adams Co. 1974)
 Winter Wren, 36 (Sugar Grove 1947)
 Sedge Wren, 2 (Buckeye Lk. 1956)
 Marsh Wren, 8 (Buckeye Lk. 1941)
 Golden-crowned Kinglet, 223 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1990)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 35 (Cincinnati 1975)
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1 (Firelands 1980, Toledo 1987, W. Hamilton Co. 1987)
 Eastern Bluebird, 904 (Millersburg 1999)
 Mountain Bluebird, 1 (Ragersville 1989)
 Townsend's Solitaire, 1 (Toledo 1938)
 Gray-cheeked Thrush, 1 (Cincinnati 1947, Lakewood 1976)
 Swainson's Thrush, 2 (Adams Co. 1995)
 Hermit Thrush, 63 (L. Erie Is. 1990)
 Wood Thrush, 1 on seven counts
 American Robin, 15,120 (Cincinnati 1964)
 Varied Thrush, 1 (Mentor 1977, Columbus 1983, Lakewood 1988, Steubenville 1988, Hancock Co. 2000, Toledo 2000)
 Gray Catbird, 4 (Paint Creek 1986, Ragersville 1998)
 Northern Mockingbird, 416 (Cincinnati 1971)
 Brown Thrasher, 3 (Buckeye Lk. 1986)
 European Starling, 612,701 (Dayton 1952)
 American Pipit, 259 (Ragersville 1998)
 Bohemian Waxwing, 10 (Mentor 1926)
 Cedar Waxwing, 2746 (Cincinnati 1989)
 Orange-crowned Warbler, 1 (Columbus 1926, Youngstown 1953)
 Nashville Warbler, 1 (Hamilton-Fairfield 1969)
 Cape May Warbler, 1 on eight counts
 Yellow-rumped Warbler, 538 (Adams Co. 1998)
 Yellow-rumped ("Audubon's") Warbler, 1 (L. Erie Is. 1997)
 Yellow-throated Warbler, 1 (Youngstown 1971, Mansfield 1981)
 Pine Warbler, 2 (Logan 1983)
 Palm Warbler, 5 (Great Bend 1991)
 Black-and-white Warbler, 1 (Cuyahoga Falls 1979, Indian Lake 1998)
 Ovenbird, 1 on six counts
 Northern Waterthrush, 1 on seven counts
 Louisiana Waterthrush, 1 (Portsmouth 1956)
 Common Yellowthroat, 6 (Toledo 1969 & 1975)
 Yellow-breasted Chat, 1 (Buckeye Lk. 1956)
 Summer Tanager, 1 (Hamilton-Fairfield 2000)
 Western Tanager, 1 (Mentor 1971)
 Green-tailed Towhee, 1 (O'Shaughnessy Res. 1963)
 Eastern Towhee, 214 (Cincinnati 1980)
 American Tree Sparrow, 2531 (Millersburg 1998)
 Chipping Sparrow, 46 (Portsmouth 1953, Zanesville 1983)
 Field Sparrow, 193 (Cincinnati 1971)
 Vesper Sparrow, 16 (Dayton 1964)

Lark Sparrow, 2 (Salem 1978)
 Savannah Sparrow, 50 (Cincinnati 1961)
 Grasshopper Sparrow, 1 (Cincinnati 1947, Oxford 1947, Ashland 1959, Hamilton-Fairfield 1981)
 Henslow's Sparrow, 1 (Steubenville 1949, Elyria-Lorain 1970, E. Fork Lk. 1985)
 Fox Sparrow, 23 (Alliance 1946)
 Song Sparrow, 2353 (Cincinnati 1968)
 Lincoln's Sparrow, 8 (Lakewood 1970)
 Swamp Sparrow, 163 (ONWR 1987, Fremont 1990)
 White-throated Sparrow, 2030 (Cincinnati 1984)
 Harris's Sparrow, 4 (Dayton 1947)
 White-crowned Sparrow, 1071 (Millersburg 1998)
 Dark-eyed Junco, 2609 (Cincinnati 1968)
 Dark-eyed ("Oregon") Junco, 6 (Lakewood 1966)
 Dark-eyed ("White-winged") Junco, 1 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1985)
 Lapland Longspur, 3034 (W. Hamilton Co. 2000)
 Smith's Longspur, 1 (Tiffin 1956, New Lexington 1977)
 Snow Bunting, 9000 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1967)
 Northern Cardinal, 3775 (Cincinnati 1970)
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1 (Youngstown 1975, Gypsum 1981, Trumbull Co. 1996)
 Indigo Bunting, 1 (Grand Lake St Marys 1995)
 Dickcissel, 3 (New Lexington 1977)
 Bobolink, 1 (Ashland 1957, Cincinnati 1968)
 Red-winged Blackbird, 15,750 (Toledo 1990)
 Eastern Meadowlark, 387 (Buckeye Lk. 1956)
 Western Meadowlark, 1 (ONWR 1982)
 Yellow-headed Blackbird, 3 (Toledo 1979)
 Rusty Blackbird, 5008 (Buckeye Lk. 1978)
 Brewer's Blackbird, 200 (Oxford 1995)
 Common Grackle, 1,600,592 (Logan 1978)
 Brown-headed Cowbird, 80,098 (Dayton 1980)
 Baltimore Oriole, 3 (Wilmot 1986)
 Pine Grosbeak, 47 (Burton 1961)
 Purple Finch, 300 (Cincinnati 1982)
 House Finch, 2192 (Cuyahoga Falls 1987)
 Red Crossbill, 35 (Grand Rapids-Waterville 1979)
 White-winged Crossbill, 60 (Cleveland 1966)
 Common Redpoll, 253 (Youngstown 1969)
 Hoary Redpoll, 1 (Cleveland 1995)
 Pine Siskin, 500 (Youngstown 1919)
 American Goldfinch, 1859 (Cincinnati 1968)
 Evening Grosbeak, 765 (Logan 1975)
 House Sparrow, 21,356 (Dayton 1953)

The 2000-01 Christmas Bird Counts

by Ned Keller

This year's summary contains reports from the same 62 count circles as last year. Once again, most of the information is now reported via the internet, with only a few circles reporting directly to us. Although we asked to have copies of rare bird documentation forms sent to *The Ohio Cardinal*, we received only a few, which are marked with asterisks in the report. Hopefully, many more documentations were sent to Audubon. As always, we have published all sightings reported to us (except for some exotics), regardless of how well, if at all, they were documented. We have, however, lumped all sightings of a species into one number. For example, some circles reported northern flickers as yellow-shafted, while others did not; all are reported here simply as northern flickers.

We found a total of 148 full species this year, up one from last year. Surprisingly, no other species were added during count weeks. The total number of individual birds declined from 1,087,541 to 705,376. Millersburg and Cincinnati tied for the most species with 82, well below last year's 87 at Millersburg. Other high counts were 78 at Ragersville, and 77 at Dayton and Cleveland.

After unusually warm winters the past few years, winter arrived in December this year. Waterfowl numbers in general were down, probably because more water was frozen. Lapland longspurs and snow buntings made it all the way to the southern counties, with numbers of longspurs in particular way up over last year. But winter finches were nearly absent; and red-breasted nuthatch numbers were also down.

Changes from one year to the next are fun to look at, but seldom mean much in terms of population trends. If you want to learn more about those trends, data from all 101 Christmas Counts are available at <http://birdsource.cornell.edu/>. You can view population trend reports, and can also extract the raw data (with a little effort) to test your own hypotheses about winter bird populations.

7899 Bridgetown Rd.
 Cleves, OH 45002
 keller@one.net

10346 Obee Road
 Whitehouse, Ohio 43571
 andigena@aol.com

KELLER

	Adams Co. (82) 12/16/2000	Ashland (30) 12/16/2000	Ashtabula (25) 12/16/2000	Athens (78) 12/17/2000	Beaver Creek (36) 12/30/2000	Beaver Valley (84) 12/16/2000	Buckeye Lake (56) 12/16/2000	Bucyrus (14) 12/30/2000	Burton (27) 11/2001	Cadiz (72) 11/2001	Chandlersville (74) 12/30/2000	Cincinnati (65) 12/30/2000	Clark Co. (44) 12/16/2000	Cleveland (23) 12/16/2000
Ruffed Grouse	1		1	1	5					3	1			
Wild Turkey	15	152	116	53	80	CW			65	77	41	82	36	13
Northern Bobwhite	1					10								
Virginia Rail														
American Coot	5		12		4							73	40	10
Sandhill Crane														
Killdeer	6	2				1		1				10		
Dunlin														CW
Common Snipe		1										1		3
American Woodcock								CW						
Bonaparte's Gull			26									CW		360
Ring-billed Gull	46	1	4750	3	260		972		15		54	576	540	1231
California Gull														
Herring Gull			863		CW		1						17	468
Thayer's Gull														
Lesser Black-backed Gull														
Glaucous Gull														
Great Black-backed Gull			17											2
Black-legged Kittiwake gull sp.														
Rock Dove	103	58	83	198	350	262	42	51	139	186	97	225	10	678
Mourning Dove	478	270	136	133	295	731	73	88	419	82	88	343	189	175
Barn Owl								1						
Eastern Screech-Owl	2				2	2		CW				1	1	
Great Horned Owl								CW	1			8	3	2
Snowy Owl														
Barred Owl				1	1	CW						3		
Long-eared Owl														1
Short-eared Owl					6						2			1
Northern Saw-whet Owl														1
owl sp.		1												
Belted Kingfisher	7	1	1	4	2	3		CW	1	1		19	4	5
Red-headed Woodpecker	5			1				1	1					1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	12	27	6	24	49	21	5	16	53	12	17	242	7	62
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3			2				1				12		
Downy Woodpecker	18	30	18	36	74	32	6	23	112	24	23	249	23	84
Hairy Woodpecker	13	9	3	4	8	4		5	29	1	5	38	7	15
Northern Flicker	35	12		11	11	14	1	2	12		6	73	4	5
Pileated Woodpecker	9	1	2	10	12	12		1	14	5	2	26		6
woodpecker sp.														
Eastern Phoebe						2						2		
Northern Shrike		1												
Blue Jay	110	101	55	95	173	172	24	60	362	38	28	296	4	360
American Crow	243	321	158	603	496	639	128	118	487	131	289	6708	20000	560
Horned Lark	1				CW			78		32	75	1	27	
Carolina Chickadee	24	2		123	38	118	6	2			28	48	1002	22
Black-capped Chickadee		3	69		18			5	421	1				242
chickadee sp.		41			101				14					
Tufted Titmouse	34	43	25	71	98	45	7	29	146	10	23	471	9	139
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1			1	2		6	5			4		
White-breasted Nuthatch	8	29	9	34	53	25		25	90	9	5	112	5	61
Brown Creeper		1			3	3		1			1	16	3	1
Carolina Wren	31	7	1	19	32	30	3		8		4	216	7	16
House Wren														
Winter Wren				1	1				1	1	1	8		1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	19	4		49	37	36	2	2	6	2	8	88	3	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			1									1		
Eastern Bluebird	145	42	18	56	64	83	2	7	93	21	25	86	15	56
Veery														
Hermit Thrush	2				3							15		

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

	Columbus (55) 12/19/2000	Cuyahoga Falls (29) 12/17/2000	Dayton (60) 12/31/2000	Delaware Reservoir (52) 12/17/2000	East Fork Lake S.P. (67) 12/17/2000	Elyria-Lorain (20) 12/16/2000	Firelands (9) 12/16/2000	Fremont (8) 12/23/2000	Grand Lake St. Marys (41) 12/17/2000	Grand Rapids-Waterville (2) 12/30/2000	Greenville (43) 12/31/2000	Gypsum (6) 12/30/2000	Hamilton-Fairfield (62) 12/16/2000	Hancock Co. (10) 12/16/2000	Hoover Reservoir (53) 12/16/2000	Indian Lake (42) 12/16/2000	Killdeer Plains (50) 12/31/2000	Kingston (58) 12/31/2000		
		37		2	57	11									5				14	
		16																		
		46	30		56	87	9			1			51		70					
					3															
		1	3		16								1							
				CW								1							2	
	985	1836	220	27	2532	13390	8776	6		CW		127	63	694	29	204	9			
	3	21	16			6502	202					26	879		12					
						6														
						1														
						318	22			CW		7								
	521	945	97	54	46	462	223	72	3	98	153	40	78	158	92	12	359	605		
	421	489	193	339	379	205	157	42	44	577	353	230	528	278	49	188	173	1670		
		4		2			15				12	1	3					10	4	
	3	6	5	1	2	1	1	2		9	2	3	4	6	1		6	1		
						1														
	1	1	4							1			1		1	1	2	1		
				1														18	8	
	5	6	16	5		4	1	1	1	1	11	1	6		4				5	
			CW		6	2	2		2	2						10	20	2		
	68	96	73	36	45	42	24	3	1	54	10	8	14	15	12	24	31	57		
	4	1	4				CW			1						1			1	
	89	216	144	63	37	45	38	13	10	100	32	61	14	85	26	33	48	93		
	14	52	12	6	9	5	6		1	29	3	8	2	11	2	4	5	8		
	41	22	23	18	24	11	23	7		32	7	17	6	15	19	13	7	22		
	4	8	11	4	1	2	CW				11		2		2			17		
										1										
				1															6	
					1															
	197	601	59	78	43	184	127	14	27	295	47	57	21	127	81	80	123	198		
	542	1012	303	104	168	161	58	31	13	1549	81	8	354	139	139	58	78	203		
		8	190	1681	770	187	36		36	88	644	152	8	268		87	737	756		
	314		421	2	123				16		46		66		95	30		143		
		873				109	50	5		180		44		58		1				
					105											3	18			
	105	305	151	27	36	94	30	7	6	85	24	17	12	48	56	47	42	113		
	8	1	2				2	1		9		5		1			3	7		
	48	184	79	38	12	50	17	14	3	88	18	9	4	36	23	32	42	65		
	10	7	41	8	4	1		2		35	1	5	1	8		2	1	6		
	23	32	33	8	29	17	13	3		18	2	4	21	9	2	2		37		
		2	3									2	1						1	
	35	57	37	9	17	6	5			83			5	3	9		2	68		
	1		2			1					1						1			
	21	78	46	94	75	27	36	7	CW	54	20		7	2	13	34	23	70		
		2	9		2		1			3				1			1		13	

KELLER

	Adams Co. (62) 12/16/2000	Ashland (30) 12/16/2000	Ashabula (25) 12/16/2000	Athens (78) 12/17/2000	Beaver Creek (36) 12/30/2000	Beaver Valley (64) 12/16/2000	Buckeye Lake (66) 12/16/2000	Bucyrus (14) 12/30/2000	Burton (27) 1/1/2001	Cadiz (72) 1/1/2001	Chandlersville (74) 12/30/2000	Cincinnati (65) 12/30/2000	Clark Co. (44) 12/16/2000	Cleveland (23) 12/16/2000
American Robin	2336	CW	1	178	18	275	32	1	3	6	16	9763	92	119
Varied Thrush	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gray Catbird	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Northern Mockingbird	31	--	--	13	1	24	1	--	--	1	3	60	5	8
Brown Thrasher	CW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	1
European Starling	3731	1224	332	1162	677	6223	4930	287	287	436	330	12370	1089	556
American Pipit	--	--	--	--	--	--	33	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cedar Waxwing	2092	85	22	52	--	76	--	--	272	--	67	2346	132	108
Yellow-rumped Warbler warbler sp.	154	--	--	4	11	42	--	6	--	--	--	81	--	8
Summer Tanager	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Eastern Towhee	3	CW	--	16	--	14	--	--	--	3	5	64	3	2
American Tree Sparrow	--	47	19	14	235	61	4	62	200	48	69	661	18	131
Chipping Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Field Sparrow	27	--	--	--	--	6	--	2	--	--	2	21	--	--
Savannah Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	3	--	--
Fox Sparrow	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	8	--	--
Song Sparrow	73	34	2	63	68	129	14	18	16	20	23	650	23	34
Lincoln's Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Swamp Sparrow	--	--	--	1	--	12	--	--	--	--	--	26	2	1
White-throated Sparrow	43	18	3	33	21	105	4	3	13	4	18	743	92	35
Harris's Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
White-crowned Sparrow sparrow sp.	67	12	2	18	9	33	5	CW	--	--	42	25	--	4
Dark-eyed Junco	203	253	151	166	438	219	30	121	231	105	120	522	92	311
Lapland Longspur	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Snow Bunting	--	--	6	--	--	--	--	--	--	53	12	--	--	18
Northern Cardinal	97	137	54	151	262	111	49	80	485	49	88	1189	72	119
Red-winged Blackbird	90	--	2	--	3	8	--	--	--	1	--	52	--	1
Eastern Meadowlark	64	20	--	1	1	21	--	--	--	--	42	--	--	--
Rusty Blackbird	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--
Brewer's Blackbird	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
blackbird sp.	--	--	--	--	--	10000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Common Grackle	14	2	--	3	--	15076	--	1	--	--	--	72	1	--
Brown-headed Cowbird	--	3	--	--	CW	6	20	--	1	--	--	--	1	--
Purple Finch	5	4	--	--	4	--	--	19	--	1	--	1	--	--
House Finch	57	106	79	43	16	39	24	34	349	5	--	173	60	73
Red Crossbill	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Common Redpoll	--	4	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pine Siskin	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
American Goldfinch	155	127	34	88	155	226	18	66	185	3	9	392	53	160
Evening Grosbeak	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
House Sparrow	127	700	149	85	374	102	232	123	675	47	109	521	355	254
total species	68	50	63	53	56	61	36	44	47	42	50	82	62	77
total individuals	11227	4301	15073	4337	5788	35285	8019	1473	7324	1614	2712	46675	27598	11410
observers	18	16	8	23	15	20	9	2	24	6	15	67	5	42
+ at feeders	0	2	2	3	3	0	4	14	3	2	0	4	0	0
party hours	53	47	29	55	56	47	16	13	70	30	23	155	25	86

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

	Columbus (55) 12/19/2000	Cuyahoga Falls (29) 12/17/2000	Dayton (60) 12/31/2000	Delaware Reservoir (52) 12/17/2000	East Fork Lake S.P. (67) 12/17/2000	Elyria-Lorain (20) 12/16/2000	Firelands (9) 12/16/2000	Fremont (8) 12/23/2000	Grand Lake St. Marys (41) 12/17/2000	Grand Rapids-Waterville (2) 12/30/2000	Greenville (43) 12/31/2000	Gypsum (6) 12/30/2000	Hamilton-Fairfield (62) 12/16/2000	Hancock Co. (10) 12/16/2000	Hoover Reservoir (53) 12/16/2000	Indian Lake (42) 12/16/2000	Killdeer Plains (50) 12/31/2000	Kingston (58) 12/31/2000
American Robin	416	53	828	64	126	68	21	4	--	52	13	19	954	3	18	--	--	134
Varied Thrush	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gray Catbird	--	CW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--
Northern Mockingbird	18	1	11	5	7	--	--	--	--	2	2	--	10	--	9	1	5	30
Brown Thrasher	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5	2
European Starling	2466	2007	2025	5886	1095	9636	1550	89	164	640	615	1427	754	858	1080	2591	689	4012
American Pipit	--	--	1	--	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cedar Waxwing	13	813	30	68	1389	64	372	24	2	564	60	--	1	294	42	23	36	76
Yellow-rumped Warbler warbler sp.	6	3	3	14	34	--	3	--	--	25	3	4	1	1	2	--	7	37
Summer Tanager	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	--	--
Eastern Towhee	7	--	5	1	9	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	21
American Tree Sparrow	97	555	101	338	66	203	376	81	162	174	100	344	197	237	9	160	1015	330
Chipping Sparrow	--	1	--	--	3	1	--	--	--	9	12	--	1	--	--	12	9	--
Field Sparrow	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Savannah Sparrow	--	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	CW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fox Sparrow	85	82	101	55	69	43	74	14	40	35	96	17	176	27	10	28	60	216
Song Sparrow	73	34	2	63	68	129	14	18	16	20	23	650	23	34	--	--	--	--
Lincoln's Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--
Swamp Sparrow	--	--	--	1	--	12	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	--	2	1	2	7
White-throated Sparrow	222	140	352	49	120	33	63	1	--	16	17	96	195	17	20	CW	8	99
Harris's Sparrow	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
White-crowned Sparrow sparrow sp.	25	5	--	16	3	1	29	42	--	--	1	7	117	1	12	14	27	91
Dark-eyed Junco	445	618	237	464	231	194	313	48	132	416	185	158	45	309	128	89	286	299
Lapland Longspur	--	--	--	36	111	--	2	--	--	CW	--	10	--	1	--	--	3	--
Snow Bunting	--	--	9	65	1	21	39	--	5	49	9	41	--	259	--	104	1	--
Northern Cardinal	655	746	451	318	277	124	123	39	31	192	80	208	99	190	133	88	90	320
Red-winged Blackbird	--	--	--	2	--	53	30	--	--	--	--	5	31	--	--	--	--	25
Eastern Meadowlark	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	1	2	--	--	--	--	--	CW	25
Rusty Blackbird	--	7	--	--	24	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	15
Brewer's Blackbird	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
blackbird sp.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Common Grackle	5	18	2	--	--	19	148	--	--	1	--	1	5	--	--	1	--	--
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	3	--	1	2	6	30	--	--	--	162	40	--	--	--	1	--	67
Purple Finch	1	2	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	43	--	--	--	1	--	--	1	--
House Finch	404	606	60	239	57	97	87	87	73	234	96	244	17	109	83	76	83	95
Red Crossbill	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Common Redpoll	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pine Siskin	208	752	133	149	88	99	148	90	11	99	31	63	108	94	57	72	51	156
American Goldfinch	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Evening Grosbeak	1108	1485	859	924	51	424	141	270	173	474	350	552	142	991	262	464	496	1200
House Sparrow	62	74	77	54	63	73	68	41	31	70	47	64	70	49	53	49	49	64
total species	12601	18637	12881	12729	8691	36727	28956	2804	2300	7871	4421	12447	7238	6247	4156	6210	5351	13325
observers	30	87	56	26	11	28	22	7	4	34	19	9	17	21	14	14	18	28
+ at feeders	1	48	3	3	0	0	2	0	0	5	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
party hours	116	188	99	67	32	66	37	13	17	66	23	31	36	??	40	30	43	68

	Lake Erie Islands (5) 12/20/2000	Lakewood (21) 12/30/2000	Lancaster (57) 12/30/2000	Mansfield (13) 12/16/2000	Mentor (24) 12/23/2000	Millersburg (83) 12/16/2000	Mohican State Forest (35) 12/30/2000	Mt. Gilead (51) 12/16/2000	New Lexington (75) 12/17/2000	Ohio River (IN-OH-KY) (64) 12/16/2000	O'Shaughnessy Res. (54) 12/16/2000	Ottawa N.W.R. (4) 12/31/2000	Oxbow Lake (7) 12/30/2000	Oxford (61) 12/16/2000
Common Loon	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	7	9	---	---	---
Pied-billed Grebe	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---
Horned Grebe	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Eared Grebe	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Double-crested Cormorant	10	---	---	---	22	---	---	---	---	---	3	---	---	---
Great Blue Heron	---	3	3	11	1	19	24	---	---	61	1	3	8	6
Black-crowned Night-Heron	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Black Vulture	---	---	CW	---	---	28	---	---	---	32	---	---	---	2
Turkey Vulture	---	CW	1	---	---	86	CW	---	---	1	---	---	---	50
Greater White-fronted Goose	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Snow Goose	---	---	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	4	---	66	---	---
Canada Goose	246	537	912	2773	179	1024	511	98	41	1574	750	4148	766	348
Mute Swan	---	---	1	4	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	---	---
Trumpeter Swan	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4	---	---
Tundra Swan	13	---	---	---	---	9	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	1
swan sp.	---	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Wood Duck	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	2	---	1	---	---
Gadwall	---	---	---	---	---	4	---	---	---	31	---	1	---	9
American Wigeon	---	9	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	12
American Black Duck	126	93	---	47	25	28	15	---	---	35	5	7	20	9
Mallard	398	3017	438	595	67	588	117	49	10	144	261	61	53	687
Mallard x Am. Black Duck	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Northern Shoveler	---	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Northern Pintail	---	---	---	2	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Green-winged Teal	---	2	---	---	---	3	---	---	---	8	---	---	---	---
dabbling duck sp.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Canvasback	26	98	---	---	250	---	---	---	---	6	---	66	CW	---
Redhead	2	7	---	---	75	---	---	---	---	3	---	25	---	---
Ring-necked Duck	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Greater Scaup	2	6	---	---	75	---	---	---	---	---	---	6	---	---
Lesser Scaup	9	13	---	---	75	1	---	---	---	3	---	25	---	---
scaup sp.	55	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Harlequin Duck	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Surf Scoter	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
White-winged Scoter	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Long-tailed Duck	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Bufflehead	353	2	---	---	10	---	1	---	---	25	2	---	---	---
Common Goldeneye	593	319	---	---	30	---	---	---	---	---	---	236	1	---
Hooded Merganser	2	---	---	---	2	1	---	---	---	7	1	---	---	---
Common Merganser	663	216	---	---	127	---	---	---	---	10	42	39	13	---
Red-breasted Merganser	581	4	---	---	1315	1	---	---	---	---	3	---	---	---
Ruddy Duck	---	---	---	1	---	1	---	---	---	6	---	3	---	---
duck sp.	---	---	33	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---
Osprey	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Bald Eagle	7	---	---	---	1	CW	3	---	---	---	---	11	1	---
Northern Harrier	25	---	1	3	---	1	1	1	1	---	---	13	2	7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	10	1	3	---	---	4	1	---	1	1	---	2	---	1
Cooper's Hawk	4	1	2	9	2	5	3	1	3	2	1	5	2	1
Northern Goshawk	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Accipiter sp.	---	---	1	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Red-shouldered Hawk	---	2	2	3	3	---	4	---	---	---	1	---	---	---
Red-tailed Hawk	9	4	19	33	22	76	41	4	---	24	10	37	23	7
Rough-legged Hawk	2	---	---	2	---	13	9	---	---	---	---	4	---	---
Buteo sp.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Golden Eagle	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
American Kestrel	---	1	5	9	2	28	10	4	3	14	18	14	11	11
Merlin	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---
Peregrine Falcon	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	1	---	---
hawk sp.	---	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Ring-necked Pheasant	43	---	---	5	---	4	---	1	---	---	---	---	2	1

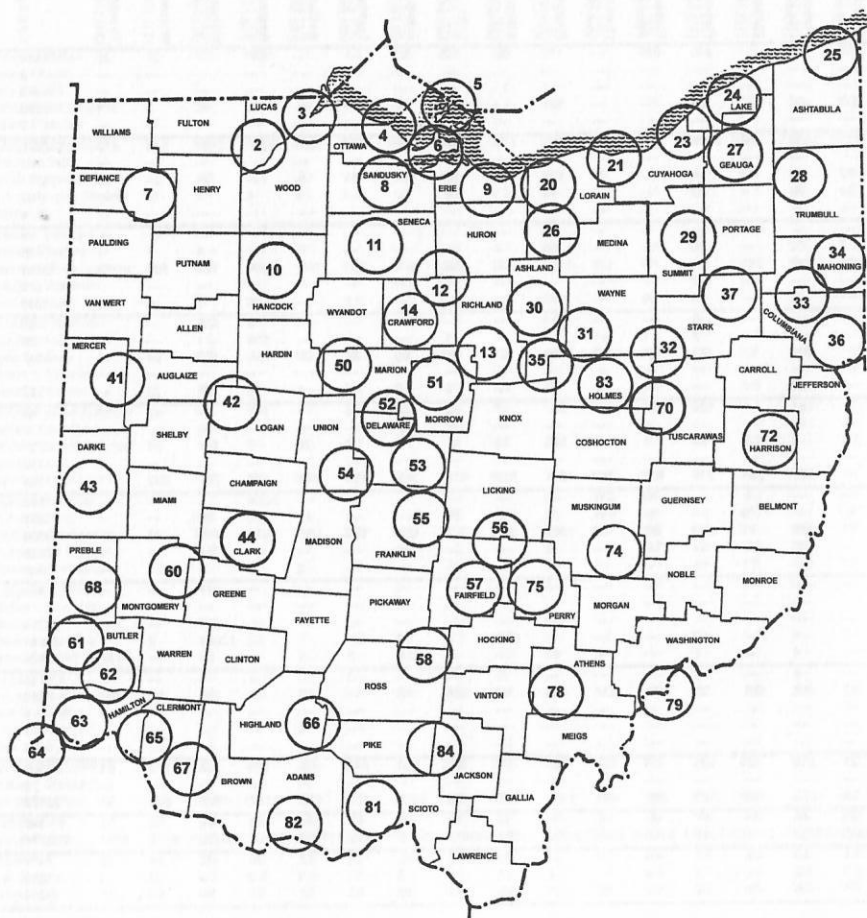
	Paint Creek Area (66) 12/17/2000	Parkersburg (79) 12/30/2000	Plymouth (12) 12/30/2000	Portsmouth (81) 12/16/2000	Preble Co. (66) 12/21/2000	Quail Hollow-Harville (37) 12/19/2000	Ragsville (70) 12/27/2000	Salem (33) 12/30/2000	Tiffin (11) 12/16/2000	Toledo (3) 12/17/2000	Trumbull Co. (28) 12/17/2000	Wellington (26) 12/30/2000	Western Hamilton Co. (63) 12/23/2000	Wilmet (32) 12/16/2000	Wooster (31) 12/23/2000	Youngstown (34) 12/16/2000	Total Individuals	Number of Counts
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	2
38	CW	---	5	---	---	---	---	---	---	8	---	---	3	---	---	1	104	19
2	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	8	4
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	5	---	---	---	---	---	---	90	12
10	15	2	44	4	6	6	3	6	51	1	---	17	4	8	2	871	57	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	30	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	32	4
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
223	---	---	---	---	---	6	---	---	---	---	---	---	9	---	---	---	317	11
58	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4	---	---	---	359	15
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	2	---	84	10
CW	1078	395	31	492	714	126	821	650	1838	4966	185	1783	1275	2600	1748	71494	62	
CW	CW	---	---	---	8	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	59	16
---	---	---	---	---	13	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	5	---	37	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	---	7	100	12
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	7	2
---	CW	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	9	2	---	---	32	12
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	12	---	272	18
---	CW	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	1	---	---	120	15
5	105	6	4	---	---	2	10	2	95	173	---	30	17	30	121	2902	45	
7	655	9	164	38	47	170	446	339	723	3907	30	1079	719	612	529	36561	62	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	12	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	98	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	30	11
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	49	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	1
---	5	---	CW	---	---	3	---	---	164	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	655	19
---	---	---	CW	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	293	17
---	CW	---	CW	---	1	---	---	24	---	---	---	15	---	---	50	494	14	14
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	110	8
4	1	---	CW	---	---	---	---	---	2006	---	---	---	---	---	30	2212	21	21
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	603	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	658	2
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	3
4	3	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	521	23
---	CW	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	99	23	---	---	---	---	---	---	1847	22
32	CW	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	2	---	---	---	---	---	14	253	23
3	CW	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	333	---	---	---	---	---	---	2994	20
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	7	---	---	---	---	---	20741	17
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	16	3	---	---	---	---	10	85	18
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	700	---	---	---	---	---	---	835	4
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
CW	3	---	2	---	---	1	---	8	---	---	12	---	---	---	1	5	104	26
3	2	3	1	2	1	16	---	16	4	7	10	8	1	7	2	295	51	
---	5	2	---	1	2	4	1	1	2	---	4	4	2	1	---	---	102	47
1	4	1	2	1	4	16	6	7	1	2	7	3	7	3	2	241	61	
---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	14	10
---	3	---	1	---	2	1	1	1	---	6	---	5	1	2	2	---	122	34
8	12	12	29	14	6	157	37	59	19	23	25	28	71	51	21	1670	61	
---	1	1	---	---	---	27	1	2	---									

KELLER

	Lake Erie Islands (5) 12/20/2000	Lakewood (21) 12/30/2000	Lancaster (57) 12/30/2000	Mansfield (13) 12/16/2000	Mentor (24) 12/23/2000	Millsburg (83) 12/16/2000	Mohican State Forest (35) 12/30/2000	Mt. Gilead (51) 12/16/2000	New Lexington (75) 12/17/2000	Ohio River (IN-OH-KY) (64) 12/16/2000	O'Shaughnessy Res. (54) 12/16/2000	Ottawa N.W.R. (4) 12/31/2000	Oxbow Lake (7) 12/30/2000	Oxford (61) 12/16/2000
American Robin	35	166	21	14	34	236	36	---	5	307	18	3	---	493
Varied Thrush	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Gray Catbird	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	1
Northern Mockingbird	---	2	9	---	1	40	3	2	2	16	7	CW	---	12
Brown Thrasher	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---
European Starling	706	266	877	455	494	663	397	209	216	898	2319	1844	2178	1910
American Pipit	---	---	---	---	---	14	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Cedar Waxwing	50	1	31	31	---	111	349	50	2	67	---	135	137	129
Yellow-rumped Warbler warbler sp.	31	---	12	2	---	20	2	---	5	11	1	3	32	2
Summer Tanager	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Eastern Towhee	---	---	16	1	---	62	12	---	5	14	---	---	---	2
American Tree Sparrow	942	34	49	117	70	548	447	7	12	154	3	1434	44	49
Chipping Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	---	---
Field Sparrow	---	---	1	9	---	9	3	---	---	21	---	---	---	---
Savannah Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Fox Sparrow	2	---	2	---	---	2	---	---	---	1	---	3	---	1
Song Sparrow	151	13	65	82	17	543	62	12	19	230	29	157	2	9
Lincoln's Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Swamp Sparrow	31	---	---	2	---	20	2	---	---	35	---	26	---	---
White-throated Sparrow	158	18	48	7	5	137	44	---	11	142	2	3	---	40
Harris's Sparrow	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
White-crowned Sparrow sparrow sp.	1	---	3	18	2	190	45	12	---	33	---	15	---	5
Dark-eyed Junco	447	165	385	495	125	629	592	29	166	125	87	220	64	96
Lapland Longspur	1	---	---	---	---	4	---	---	---	254	---	20	---	CW
Snow Bunting	698	---	---	---	---	35	---	---	---	---	3	230	---	CW
Northern Cardinal	281	88	197	227	101	823	282	24	117	346	88	231	58	97
Red-winged Blackbird	2	---	---	---	9	2	---	---	---	17	20	75	1	---
Eastern Meadowlark	---	---	---	7	---	26	3	---	---	---	---	1	---	---
Rusty Blackbird	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4	---	---
Brewer's Blackbird blackbird sp.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Common Grackle	3	---	---	12	2	3	1	---	1	---	---	1	---	---
Brown-headed Cowbird	15	---	---	4	---	52	---	---	---	---	---	22	---	---
Purple Finch	---	---	---	---	---	27	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---
House Finch	70	199	74	211	48	155	140	38	19	23	67	55	36	52
Red Crossbill	---	---	---	---	8	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Common Redpoll	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Pine Siskin	6	---	1	---	1	---	12	---	---	---	---	1	---	---
American Goldfinch	60	182	51	232	33	232	260	17	95	118	76	242	12	82
Evening Grosbeak	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
House Sparrow	564	491	180	540	268	828	223	16	99	59	225	3442	270	609
total species	66	60	55	63	64	82	67	33	40	71	48	72	43	56
total individuals	9533	15937	4780	16340	4691	11370	6521	597	1268	8519	4754	15718	4707	5913
observers	10	26	30	15	??	64	15	3	7	10	7	25	9	16
+ at feeders	0	2	9	28	??	0	6	3	1	0	0	0	2	6
party hours	41	37	45	61	30	159	59	9	19	35	27	40	28	112

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

	Paint Creek Area (66) 12/17/2000	Parkersburg (79) 12/30/2000	Plymouth (12) 12/30/2000	Portsmouth (81) 12/16/2000	Preble Co. (68) 12/21/2000	Quail Hollow-Hartsville (37) 12/19/2000	Rogersville (70) 12/27/2000	Salem (33) 12/30/2000	Tiffin (11) 12/16/2000	Toledo (3) 12/17/2000	Trumbull Co. (28) 12/17/2000	Wellington (26) 12/30/2000	Western Hamilton Co. (63) 12/23/2000	Wilmet (32) 12/16/2000	Wooster (31) 12/23/2000	Youngstown (34) 12/16/2000	Total Individuals	Number of Counts	
13	76	---	---	318	106	---	179	20	2	22	---	---	1639	7	51	20	19434	53	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1*	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2	2
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	4
CW	58	---	---	38	---	---	124	4	1	---	---	---	45	40	3	1	656	43	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	7	6
811	3489	86	3328	274	508	3107	859	2554	5636	257	1884	22360	2161	545	413	132922	62		
1	---	---	---	---	---	5	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	59	6
72	---	3	56	15	37	128	---	37	162	70	---	124	34	24	33	11011	52		
29	20	4	32	---	1	35	5	16	4	4	4	4	7	16	---	---	752	46	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
3	52	---	16	---	85	4	---	---	---	1	11	4	1	---	---	---	445	32	
64	12	251	4	84	133	1158	393	532	441	230	632	469	198	526	50	15201	61		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1*	---	---	---	---	---	---	5	3
---	13	---	5	20	---	35	---	---	---	---	---	16	2	---	---	---	241	25	
---	---	---	5	---	---	13	---	---	---	---	---	5	CW	---	---	---	31	8	
---	8	---	2	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	38	19
21	261	11	135	21	33	1055	67	63	60	27	28	350	128	94	14	6154	62		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
---	24	1	---	1	---	21	---	5	2	1	1	75	21	13	---	---	392	33	
41	181	---	133	15	4	267	17	43	38	5	1	347	14	43	21	4368	58		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
3	6	8	59	1	8	373	33	22	4	2	26	7	194	24	5	1707	52		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	112	4
---	521	204	225	156	222	1314	327	934	262	235	648	404	265	292	71	17264	61		
---	---	---	---	15	CW	48	---	---	---	---	3034	---	---	---	---	---	---	3540	17
---	---	8	---	13	CW	25	105	20	---	4	47	12	66	---	---	---	1958	31	
83	589	27	230	91	163	1455	325	333	256	195	219	672	485	272	88	15550	62		
---	22	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	59	---	---	---	2012	4	1	2529	26		
11	3	11	19	---	1	40	---	---	---	---	2	9	5	28	---	---	345	25	
---	---	---	---	---	---	8	---	---	1	---	---	---	347	---	---	---	409	9	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
2	1	---	60	---	30	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	227	---	---	---	10259	4	
---	4	---	2	---	83	---	---	---	266	3	5	---	26	---	---	---	28586	35	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	826	27
---	8	---	4	---	---	---	---	---	---	6	---	3	---	---	---	---	---	133	18
13	398	104	99	41	217	426	67	306	156	111	66	38	184	69	108	7395	61		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	8	1
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	9	4
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	12	---	34	7
21	326	58	158	14	183	663	97	178	150	247	296	174	308	172	63	8880	62		
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3	2
13	322	156	200	262	494	1720	687	1154	1379	167	677	1177	1696	503	98	32738	62		
56	66	44	67	44	50	78	48	59	72	61	49	69	66	66	51	148	---	---	
3269	10781	2106	7848	2450	5549	21229	7321	10974	23469	12412	7363	53191	26728	8119	5344	705376	---	---	
4	33	6	17	44	18	51	13	30	18	9	17	22	52	14	13	1313	---	---	
0	32	0	1	0	1	0	1	6	3	10	0	0	0	2	2	219	---	---	
15	56	15	52	21	37	191	60	45	48	46	51	63	98	48	37	3254	---	---	



The 2000-01 Christmas Bird Count areas. Numbers within circles correspond to count numbers in the preceding article.

Short Note: Cedars and Waxwings

On a clear, calm day in April 2000, we received four calls from Adams County residents living around our Edge of Appalachia Preserve. This 13,000-acre preserve has been owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy and the Cincinnati Museum Center for the past 40 years, and consists in large part of heavily-forested rugged terrain and associated habitats. Our callers were concerned that some one was apparently setting fires along the hillsides in our Wilderness Preserve. They seemed genuinely alarmed, and the conditions were such that we decided to respond quickly. Chris Bedel of the Cincinnati Museum Center and I donned our Nomex (fire-resistant clothing) and helmets, and loaded tools in the truck to go out to see what we could do, and whether it would be better to call the Fire Department.

As we approached the area we could clearly see smoke rising from the hillsides and drifting upslope. As we came closer we noticed the smoke was rising from the red cedars *Juniperus virginiana* for the most part, and upon closer inspection we found that these cedars were not in fact in flames, but pollinating at an astounding rate! Between us we had 18 years of experience in this habitat, and we had never seen anything like this. Throughout the year these familiar trees of the limestone soils of the local Bluegrass region went on to produce a truly amazing fruit crop. Later, they were literally covered in the small blue berries (actually cones) typical of the species, so much so that the trees appeared more blue than green.

It should not perhaps have surprised us that when this year's Christmas Bird Count took place on 16 December, we had the highest count of cedar waxwings ever recorded in our 26-year history of counting—an astounding 2092 birds! Our previous high had been 542 waxwings in 1998. I should also note that our count also encountered some of the worst weather on record, with heavy rain throughout, conditions which kept our out-of-car hours way down, so who knows how many waxwings we might have counted on a clear day? Not only that, but don't we have to ask how the waxwings knew we had such a crop?

Pete Whan
The Nature Conservancy
3223 Waggoner Riffle Rd
West Union, OH 45693

The all-time Ohio high for a CBC count of this species is 2746 birds, tallied in Cincinnati in 1989, perhaps under similar conditions (see Tom Kemp's article in this issue). This winter, D. Brinkman found 1389 in nearby East Fork State Park on the following day (17 December) with far better weather, as did the Cincinnati CBC with better weather on 30 December with 2346 waxwings.—Ed.

Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee

The Ohio Bird Records Committee exists to increase knowledge of Ohio's birdlife. To do so it validates records, maintains public archives of records of occurrences of rare birds in the state, and establishes the official list of Ohio's bird species. The Committee relies on the help of field observers who supply details of their sightings of birds rare enough to appear on the OBRC's Review List (this list appears in each Spring issue of the *Cardinal*). Occurrences of these species require acceptable documentation—complete written description, specimen, photos, and/or sound recordings—to enter the official record. *The Ohio Cardinal*, as the journal of record for Ohio birds, will not treat reports of these species as established until accepted by the OBRC, nor will it usually publish such reports at all unless they are supported by details sent to the Committee.

The OBRC does not of course review sightings, only documentations submitted from those who were present at sightings of rare birds. If a rare bird is found, but not well enough documented for acceptance by the Committee, it is likely to remain in the realm of rumor and will soon be lost to history. All Committee records—documentations received, supplementary opinions, records of Committee actions, and comments and votes by members, are available to the public upon request to the Secretary; the only data unavailable are the names of voters writing individual opinions.

RECORDS IN CIRCULATION: No final decisions on bird records have been rendered by the OBRC since the last issue, but a packet of new documentations has been sent out for votes, including the following species: glossy ibis, two Ross's geese, "Harlan's" red-tailed hawk, gyrfalcon, black-legged kittiwake, northern hawk owl, Townsend's solitaire, varied thrush, two Le Conte's sparrows, and Harris's sparrow. In addition, documentations for the following additional species, having received between six and eight votes to accept, are being recirculated: glossy ibis, long-tailed jaeger, dovekie, Townsend's solitaire, western tanager, and hoary redpoll. The solitaire report comes from November 1998 in the pine grove at Killdeer Plains WA; initially not accepted, it is being recirculated because supporting details from another observer have emerged; readers who might have information to add are urged to contact the Secretary. Black-legged kittiwake is not a Review Species, but details were requested because it was in adult plumage, much rarer in Ohio than juvenal, though perhaps not so rare as Peterjohn's *The Birds of Ohio* might lead one to suppose.

ANNUAL MEETING: At the OBRC's annual meeting on 24 March, Secretary Jim McCormac reported that during the previous year 61 records had been reviewed, with 39 accepted, 18 not accepted, and four pending. He thanked retiring members Tom Kemp, Jay Stenger, Bill Whan, and Kevin Metcalf for their service. After discussions about Ross's goose, pomarine jaeger, and Le Conte's sparrow, it was decided that no changes would be made to the Review List at this time. Subsequent to the annual meeting, the withdrawal of a candidate having avoided the necessity

OHIO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

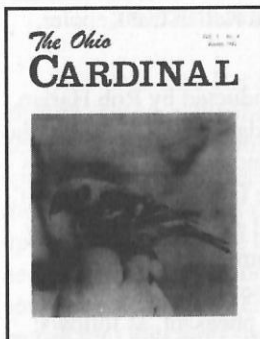
for an election, the four new members of the Committee are Ned Keller, Cal Keppler, Jay Lehman, and Greg Links. They will serve three-year terms.

SPECIES ADDED TO STATE LIST: Based on research conducted by Rob Harlan, the Committee at the annual meeting voted to add gray partridge *Perdix perdix* to the official state list, bringing the current total to 408 species. Conclusive evidence was presented (readers of "Further Afield" in the last issue will be familiar with some of it) that gray partridge, while an introduced exotic species, had established a healthy breeding population in the state independent of subsequent introductions, and its extirpation came as a result of hunting and habitat change. Insert in first position under Gallinaceous Birds in the checklist, above ring-necked pheasant, as follows: "*Gray Partridge* {E}*+1" (italics indicate non-native species, E=extirpated, *=breeding confirmed, +=intentionally introduced, 1= voucher specimen exists).

Bill Whan



Members present at the Annual Meeting of the Ohio Bird Records Committee, 24 March 2001. Left to right, back row: Rob Harlan, Dave Dister, Kevin Metcalf, Bob Conlon, Tom Kemp, and Bernard Master; front row: Jim McCormac and Bill Whan. Absent: Craig Holt, Larry Rosche, and Jay Stenger. Photo by Joe Hammond.



Retrospective: 20 Years Ago in the Cardinal

The issue for the winter of 1980-81 was a meaty one, with many articles, the magazine's first summary of statewide CBC results, and some very interesting reports. The cover photo of a white-winged crossbill was taken by John Pogacnik in his yard in Lorain, where two birds spent January through early June.

Articles included one on common names of birds by Lou Campbell, a recapitulation of red-cockaded woodpecker records in Ohio by Edward S. Thomas, a look at the vexing Thayer's/Iceland gull problem by Tom Kemp, a review of Ohio records of yellow-headed blackbirds by John Herman, and a treatment of Bell's vireo and cinnamon teal records in Cincinnati by Worth Randle.

Especially interesting upon looking back into Ohio's birding past was an unsigned report on the "Crane Creek" (more accurately, the Magee Marsh) Bird Trail, consisting largely of letters from officials concerned about habitat destruction at the site. The story of the preservation of this unique area had yet to play out, but by 1980 it was clear that birders and others were by overuse threatening the habitat that made the area attractive to birds. Various solutions—signage, fences of various kinds, closure of the area to all but guided tours, etc.—were proposed. Not long before publication of the piece, Crane Creek Wildlife Experiment Station Supervisor Karl Bednarik, John Pogacnik, and Mark Shieldcastle had laboriously hauled in gravel in wheelbarrows and buckets to line the trail, put up signs, and install log benches, all in an effort to control the behavior of visitors to the site. In his opening remarks, Bednarik was attempting to reach Ohio birders through the *Cardinal*, in order to let them know the more or less drastic measures being considered. This is but one chapter in a long story that deserves to be told in full.

As for the season's birding, wintry weather started early, and continued quite cold and dry before ending ahead of schedule. Fifty-eight birders totaled 164 species in their reports, including some very good ones. A northern gannet and a gyrfalcon were seen, and Virginia rails were found in December and January. A 22 Dec sanderling was recorded, as were no fewer than six red phalaropes. Both pomarine and parasitic jaegers were observed in December. A glaucous gull was found in Akron, and two black-headed and two Franklin's gulls were reported. Four kittiwakes appeared, one of them in Dayton. The larid star was a Heermann's gull, which showed up—apparently for the second winter in a row—from 20 Dec to 23 Feb.

Snowy owls were numerous, 20 or more of them staying on from autumn arrivals. Two varied thrushes were discovered, marking Ohio's fourth and fifth records. A vesper sparrow wintered in Richland County, and a Harris's sparrow made the list. A pine grosbeak and a hoary redpoll were reported. No fewer than 192 evening grosbeaks were tallied for the season.

All in all, 120 subscribers were paying \$6.50 for a year's subscription back in 1980. Apropos of that, the interesting contents of the issue described above prompt us to remind readers that back issues—in this particular case in photocopy form—are available at reasonable prices from the Publisher upon request. It is an occasion for some pride to be able to recommend material from twenty years ago that remains of considerable interest and usefulness. *Bill Whan*



Originally discovered on 17 January 2001, Ohio's fourth Townsend's solitaire lingered at Holden Arboretum, Lake Co., until 21 February, delighting hundreds of onlookers. Photo by Gabe Leidy on 28 January 2001.