On the inside...

Autumn 2001 Overview
by Bill Whan ........................................... 1
Autumn 2001 Reports
by Bill Whan ........................................... 4
Further Afield
by Rob Harlan ........................................... 31
Albinism in Birds
by Jim McCormac ........................................ 36
A Leucistic Rough-legged Hawk in Ohio
by John Pogacnik ........................................ 40
The Surprise Nuthatch
by Linda Gilbert ........................................... 42
Pomarine Jaegers at Rocky River Park
by Ted Gilliland ........................................... 44
Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee
by Bill Whan ........................................... 47
North American Shorebird Population Estimates ........................................... 49
Reports of Yesteryear: Lucas County ........................................... 51
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Dec.-Feb. - March 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Mar.-May - June 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>June-July - August 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>Aug.-Nov. - December 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please send all reports to:

Bill Whan
223 E. Tulane Rd.
Columbus, OH 43202
danielel@iwaynet.net

Subscriptions

The subscription rate for one year (four issues) is $20.00. Please send all subscription requests to:

The Ohio Cardinal
c/o Edwin C. Pierce
2338 Harrington Rd.
Akron, OH 44319

Because it is sent as bulk mail, subscribers should remember that the Post Office will not forward this magazine to a new address. Please notify the Publisher promptly if you move.

The Ohio Cardinal

Bill Whan, Editor
Edwin C. Pierce, Publisher
Joseph W. Hammond, Design Manager
The Ohio Bird Records Committee: Jim McCormac, Secretary
ODNR Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
1889 Fountain Square Court
Columbus, OH 43224
ISSN 1534-1666


Autumn 2001 Overview

Bill Whan
223 East Tulane Road, Columbus, OH 43202
danielel@iwaynet.net

The scents of flowers mingle with that of burning leaves, and a few of summer's birds share the skies with waterfowl arriving from the Arctic. Butterflies and juncos, warblers and morning hoarfrost, chanting crickets and snowy owls, all the oddest couples of autumn, seemed particularly evident this year...in December. It is becoming tedious to recite such announcements, but here they are: October was the warmest on record worldwide, November was the second-warmest ever in the U.S., and 2001 seems likely to rate second only to 1998 as the warmest worldwide since records have been kept.

It is tempting to overestimate the effect of temperatures on bird abundance and distribution. Boreal birds, however, do not come to Ohio because it is too cold up north, any more than southern birds come our way for a break from the heat. But weather warm enough to sustain a food source can delay departure for certain southbound species. Open water in the north and unusually late flushes of insects may prolong migrations. We had a flycatcher—a vermillion one—right into December, a virtual absence of several hardy waterfowl species through November, and August arrivals of forerunner species like red-breasted nuthatches and pine siskins that raised hopes for a winter finch irruption.

We picked chilies out of the editorial garden until the first local hard frost on 12 December. The season's only measurable snow in Cleveland—an inch—fell on 26 October, where November was a hefty 6.2°F above normal—with only four days with temperatures below freezing—and the winds blew from the north on only seven days. Perhaps the most significant event of the season's weather involved high winds, which dominated the scene in the latter half of October. Nearly all the season's negligible snow fell at this time, and strong westerlies may have influenced the period's arrivals of western birds like Franklin's and Sabine's gulls, our only Eurasian wigeon, and big fallouts of migrant sparrows, of which fully 13 species were found at Headlands Beach State Park on the 21st. The weather grew much calmer and warmer after that. As a likely consequence, waterfowl were late and low in numbers this fall. Shorebirds lingered remarkably long in the few habitats allowed to exist; the Crane Creek estuary and Sheldon Marsh, two areas still open to natural fluctuations in the Lake Erie water levels, hosted most of them, and both areas are threatened—the former by government land managers, the latter by a private developer. Although there were some notably early arrivals, passerines from the north seemed to do their passing on a leisurely schedule.

An excellent nine Review Species were documented this fall, among them an astounding three potential first Ohio records. Two other Review Species were widely rumored, but could not be refound, and without documentation to back them up are not included in the Reports. One additional species that would be new to the state list remains in recirculation in the Records Committee. By and large we prefer to spend the money on additional content rather than on color photos, but excellent flycatcher images contributed by Sharon Cummings tempted us to include a vermillion crayon with each copy of The Ohio Cardinal so readers could kick it up a notch.

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001
As the ornithological journal of record for Ohio, we inaugurate here *For the Record*, a regular brief listing of significant bird records not covered in previous issues. Gleaned from tardy reports, omissions, publication elsewhere, etc., they are intended to more nearly complete the published record, and appear for the first time below. We trust the delayed publication of a few records will be more acceptable to readers than delayed publication of *The Ohio Cardinal* until all such records become available.

The 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; acceptable documentation is needed to add reports of such species to official state records. When supplied, county names appear italicized. Unless numbers are specified, sightings refer to single birds. Abbreviations, conventions, and symbols used should be readily understood, with the possible exception of the following: BCSP=Buck Creek SP in Clark; BIWA=Big Island WA in Marion; BSBO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CCE=Crane Creek estuary in Ottawa NWR; CPNWR=Cedar Point NWR in Lucas; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Cuyahoga and Summit; CVNPC=the 15 September census at CVNP, reported by D. Chasar; EFSP=East Fork SP in Clermont; EHSP=East Harbor SP in Ottawa; fide=“in trust of,” said of information conveyed on behalf of another person; HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in Lake; Killdeer=Killdeer Plains WA in Wyandot; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in Lucas and Ottawa; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in Lucas; MP=Metropark or Metro Park; m obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in Hamilton; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ONWRC=monthly census of Ottawa NWR, reported by E. Pierce; Ottawa=Ottawa NWR in Lucas and Ottawa; ph=photograph; Res=n.reservoir; Res=n=reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley Wildlife Area in Greene and Warren; WA=Wildlife Area; \( \approx \)=approximately.

Corrigenda

H. Slack’s report of double-crested cormorants in the previous issue should read “four in Lawrence on 26 July.” In “Early Works on Ohio Birds by J. P. Kirtland,” the scientific name of mourning dove should be *Zenaida macroura* (p. 201).

For the Record

**American White Pelican:** J. McConor saw one in Cuyahoga on 5 July 2001.

**Northern Harrier:** Last summer at Woodbury WA, J. Beechy observed one on 30 June 2001. R. Schlabach noted a juvenile in Tuscarawas on 26 July 2001.

**Piping Plover:** The US FWS (2 Oct 2001, J. Dingledine) reported that the Great Lakes population actually increased from 30 nesting pairs in 2000 to 32 in 2001. These pairs fledged 71 chicks in 2001.

**Willet:** One was observed 23 July 2001 at HBSP (R. Hannikman).

**Jaeger sp.** F. Downs saw a jaeger in Leesville Lk, Carroll, while fishing on 4 June 2001. Details diagnostic of species were not available.
Red-throated Loon: Seven birds were in the vanguard at Pymatuning Res on 1 Nov (E. Cornelius), then flybys were seen over Lk Erie, with two on 4 Nov and one on 10 Nov (J. Pogacnik), and another at Fairport Harbor on 30 Nov (B. Morrison). One was as far south as BCSP on 18 Nov (D. Overacker).

Common Loon: Over 600 birds reported, far fewer than last year. A basic-plumaged bird on Mosquito Lk 3-4 Aug had to be boycotting the breeding season (D. Hochadel). The earliest migrant was at HBSP on 30 Sept (K. Metcalfe), with another in Lake on 6 Oct (J. Pogacnik). The bulk of the migrants arrived on schedule, with 35 over Holmes on 27 Oct (E. Schlabach), where the season’s high count of 74 was made on 20 Nov by L. Yoder. Loons persisted well into the next period.

Pied-billed Grebe: Breeders were noted, with six at BIWA on 1 Aug (T. Nickerson), on which date one in Ross was intriguing (B&D Lane). Migrants appeared as early as 29 Aug in Holmes (E. Yoder), then peaked at 41 on the 7 Oct ONWR, with some remaining through the period. Numbers seemed down overall.

Horned Grebe: Like many waterfowl breeding to the north, their numbers were down this fall. First noted at Kelleys Isl on 29 Sept (K. Metcalfe), numbers in double figures did not appear until Nov, with 44 at Rocky River, Cuyahoga, on 2 Nov (P. Lozano) far outstripping other counts.

Red-necked Grebe: A few, all in Nov, and most inland. A first-winter bird in Lima on 3 Nov (B. Whan et al.) was joined by another the following day (D. Sanders). J. Pogacnik found one in the Ashtabula harbor on 18 Nov. One stayed at Hoover Res, Delaware, from 20-25 Nov (R. Thorn, m obs).

Eared Grebe: This, the most common grebe species worldwide, sparsely Ohio only a few individuals this season: basic-plumaged birds in Puttign 9-11 Sept (D&M Dunakin), at Shelden Marsh 4-10 Oct (J. Hammond, m obs), and two in Lk Erie in Lake on 18 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

American White Pelican: A bird in Medusa Marsh, Erie, from 4 (B. Morrison) to 17 Aug (P. Lozano) was intermittently seen. Another made a one-day show at the CCE on 12 Sept (G. Miller).

Double-crested Cormorant: Widespread inland, but in relatively low numbers. Instead of hundreds, H. Slack saw only six in Lawrence along the Ohio River in Oct and Nov, and J. Herman’s 425 at Clear Fork Res on 17 Oct was far and away the highest count away from Lk Erie. Four thousand-plus at CPNW on 21 Oct (E. Tramer) and 3923 on the 17 Nov Kelleys Isl census (T. Bardlet) were expected, but an estimated 25,000 on 25 Oct off S. Bass Isl (S. Wulkowiec) was not.
Turkey Vulture: J. Miller’s 150 in Holmes on 21 Aug was impressive for the date, as were 110+ at a Mahoning landfill on 7 Sept (B&D Lane) and 70+ at HBSP on 27 Sept (K. Metcalf). On 26 Oct, J. Glover had 55 at Rocky Fork SP, 120 at Paint Creek SP, and 400 at Madison Lk SP, while E. Letz counted 150 in Clermont. Migrants continued through the end of the period, with numbers like 110 at Cowan Lk SP on 19 Nov (E. Rough) and 230 at the Granville, Licking, roost by 28 Nov (R. Thorn).

Greater White-fronted Goose: Scarce, with Paudling providing nearly all the reports. The Dunakins had six there 28 Oct, then three on 4 Nov, one of which remained on 30 Nov. J. Pogacnik had one at Ottawa on 24 Nov.

Snow Goose: May be exploding in numbers, but not in Ohio: 181 were reported, with high counts of 70 in Lake on 10 Nov (J. Pogacnik) and 22 at the CCE two days earlier (V. Fazio). Migrants first appeared in late Sept, with one at Sandy Ridge MP on the 22nd (D. Sanders), one at Ottawa on the 29th (D. Overacker), and another at Mosquito Lk on the 30th (D. Hochadel). Reported blue goose outnumbered white ones 75 to 8.

Canada Goose: K. Metcalf reported the return of ~150 migrants from the Hudson and James Bay populations in Geauga on 16 Sept. V. Fazio reported 17 of the “Richardson’s” at form at Ottawa on 18 Sept.

Brant: One reported, a bird at Conneaut 20 Oct by D. English.

Mute Swan: High counts of fall gatherings were 43 at Ehisp and 26 at Medusa Marsh on 23 Oct (V. Fazio).

Tundra Swan: Nearly 1500 birds reported, all in flocks, the largest of 242 in Lake on 20 Nov (M. Huey). Earliest to arrive were birds at Ottawa, with 16 on 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik) and 135 on the 4 Nov ONWRC, in an area where they regularly overwinter, but fully half the reported numbers passed through on 20 Nov in nine large flocks, a peak over two weeks later in than recent years.

Trumpeter Swan: These introduced birds bear watching. D. Hochadel reported “a pair at Shenango WA had one young with them on 27 Aug. Were they responsible for the absence of pied-billed grebes and moorhens which had been annual breeders at this site until this year?”


Gadwall: First reported by the ONWRC, with 31 on 2 Sept, where 3400 were present on 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik) and 1898 on 4 Nov (ONWRC). Persisted through the period in robust numbers, with 24 Nov counts of 300 at Ottawa (Pogacnik) and 144 at Lk Rockwell, Portage (L. Rosche).

An adult white morph snow goose occupied a residential lawn near Clear Fork Reservoir in Richland County on 3 November 2001. This photo of the bird was digitized by Joe Hammond.

Eurasian Wigeon: One reported, 27 Oct at Ottawa (J. Pogacnik et al.).

American Wigeon: A 31 Aug bird in Paudling (M&D Dunakin) could have been an early migrant, or perhaps a rookie sitting out the breeding season. At the Lake, 58 were around for the 2 Sept ONWRC, with 444 on the 7 Oct count. Elsewhere, good numbers did not appear until late Oct. High counts were ~600 at the CCE on 1 Nov (V. Fazio) and 598 there three days later for the ONWRC.

American Black Duck: Their numbers were unimpressive. Fifteen were at Magee on 29 Sept (D. Overacker), but the largest numbers showed up only in Nov, with a high of 550 on the 4th (ONWRC). Fifty-two were at Lk Rockwell on 24 Nov (L. Rosche).

Mallard: Big numbers were at Ottawa, with 1950 on 2 Sept (ONWRC), ~8000 on 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and ~10,000 on 4 Nov (ONWRC).

Blue-winged Teal: Parents with young were at Ottawa on 2 Aug (W. Whan) and at SVWA on 12 Aug (K. Beal). Migrant numbers peaked in early Sept, with 904 on the 20th (ONWRC) and 1160 at Killdeer on the 11th (V. Fazio). Three lingered till 27 Oct at Ottawa (J. Pogacnik).

Northern Shoveler: In the vanguard were two at Medina Marsh on 17 Aug (G. Leidy), and the ONWRC found 31 on 2 Sept, but most appeared later, with decent counts of 70 at ONWRC on 29 Sept (D. Overacker) and 180 there on 28 Oct (J. Pogacnik).

Northern Pintail: First reported by K. Johnson, with eclipsed males at Medina and Sheldon marshes on 8 Sept. V. Fazio had 16 at BWA on 11 Sept. As with other dabblers, decent numbers waited till late Oct and early Nov, with 440 at the CCE on 28 Oct (J. Pogacnik), then 660+ there on 1 Nov (V. Fazio).

Green-winged Teal: The 2 Sept ONWRC produced 1115 birds, and two were at Berlin Res on 7 Sept (B&D Lane) for starters, but most substantial reports came from Oct and Nov at Ottawa: 700 on 7 Oct (ONWRC), 850 on 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik), 950+ on 1 Nov (V. Fazio), 1660 on 4 Nov (ONWRC), 400+ on 18 Nov (Fazio), and 220 on 24 Nov (Pogacnik).

Canvasback: J. Herman reported the first at Clear Fork Res 27 Oct. Three were at Wellington Res 4 Nov (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), where the high count of seven followed 23 Nov (S. Snyder). One spent I-21 Nov at Wilmington Res (L. Gara), one was at Lk Rockwell 24 Nov (L. Rosche), and one was near Wooster 27 Nov (Snyder). Redhead: On schedule, but hardly plentiful, the first two arriving 8 Oct at Mentor (J. Pogacnik), and with high counts in Oct of 60 at Magee on the 21st (H&S Hiris) and 290+ at Findlay Res on the 27th (V. Fazio).

Ring-necked Duck: Arrived on schedule, but in singles, with one on the 7 Oct ONWRC, one at Mentor the following day (J. Pogacnik), and another the next day at Killbuck Marsh WA (S. Snyder). By 27 Oct, 280+ were at Wellington Res, Lorain (V. Fazio). On 11 Nov, 90 were at Clear Fork Res (J. Herman) and on the 24th the high count of 605 was made by L. Rosche at Lk Rockwell, Portage.

Greater Scaup: Very few reports, with Ohio’s waters perhaps too steamy for the species; the high count was two, inland at Oberlin Res on 9 Nov (G. Leidy).

Lesser Scaup: The bird summering near Wooster persisted, proving itself airworthy on 4 Sept (S. Snyder). The first report of migrants came from Conneaut on 14 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and numbers remained low, with the only reports of more than single digits being 45 at Wellington Res on 26 Oct (V. Fazio) and reports the following day of 55 at Clear Fork Res (J. Herman) and 230+ at Findlay (Fazio).

Surf Scoter: Fifty-seven birds reported, all in a span of 24 days. J. Pogacnik found the first on 20 Oct in Conneaut, with the last two by P. Lozano in Rocky River on 12 Nov. The highest count by far was 15 at HBSP on 27 Oct (K. Metcalf) among 29 birds at three locations along the Lake that day. Oddly, all but two at BCSP on 21 Oct (D. Overacker) were in or over Lk Erie.
Black Scoter: One hundred sixty-one reported, between 20 Oct (four birds in Paulding for the Dunkins) and 30 Nov (three birds off S. Bass Isl for S. Walkovich). The actual number of birds involved was probably smaller, as there were eight Nov reports of 1-7 birds at Fairport Harbor, and five Nov reports of 6-11 birds at Rocky River. All the same, beyond the Paulding foursome were four other inland reports of singles: 28 Oct at Lima (D. Distler), 4 Nov at Lima (D. Sanders), 4 Nov in Columbus (M. England), and 11 Nov at Maumee (M. Anderson, m obs).


Long-tailed Duck: Again a single bird, found at Findlay Res on 12 Nov and shot by a hunter two days later (B. Sams fide B. Hardey). Bufflehead: A female at Hoover Res 9 Sept (B. Sparks) was probably opting out of motherhood this year. The first migrant was at La Due Res 20 Oct (D. English), and the Lk Erie Islands again hosted the big numbers, with 900+ off S. Bass Isl 27 Nov (S. Walkovich).

Common Goldeneye: Anything but common this fall. Drakes appeared in Paulding (M&D Dunakin) and at HBSP (K. Metcalf) on 27 Oct, and the seasonal high count was only 30, off S. Bass Isl on 30 Nov (S. Walkovich).

Hooded Merganser: Few reports of breeding, with a family group of six at Medusa Marsh on 2 Aug (J. Hammond). The high count was 240 at Ottawa on 24 Nov (J. Pogacnik). Inland numbers were more modest, with ~100 in Geauga on 11 Nov (D. Ferris) and 70+ at Hoover Res on 20 Nov (G. Stauffer).
**WHAN**

**Merlin:** An imm spent some days in mid-Aug at Mentor Lagoons in Lake (fide L. Rosche). Almost as early were one at Conneaut 19 Aug (J. Pogacnik) and another 24 Aug at Kelleys Isl (P. Lozano et al.), where the high count of six was reported 30 Sept (T. Gilliland). A good total of 54 statewide.

**Peregrine Falcon:** A juv at Sandy Ridge MP 5 Sept (S. Wright), and a banded juv at the CCE 8 Sept (J. Hammond et al.) were probably of locally introduced stock. More timely migrants arrived 22 Sept, with one at HBSP (R. Metcalf) and another in Holmes (L. Yoder). Thirty-four birds were reported, the last of them two imm at Fairport Harbor 24 Nov (L. Rosche).

**Wild Turkey:** A good flock for the CVNP was ~100 on 30 Nov (D. Whitehead fide D. Chasar). The DOW estimated 260,000 turkeys in Ohio this year, versus none 50 years ago. J. McCormac noted their numbers have increased considerably in the hills of the southeast, where it is "now common to see large areas of forest floor denuded by the scratch-feeding of foraging flocks."

**Northern Bobwhite:** Two on Kelleys Isl on 17 Aug were a surprise (T. Bartlett). The high count of ~30 came from B. Stanley's property in Clermont.

**Virginia Rail:** Elusive as always in fall, two were detected on the 2 Sept ONWRC, and J. Pogacnik found one at Sandy Ridge MP 8 Nov.

**Sora:** One was in Clark on 5 Aug (D. Overacker), and seven at Magee on 17 Sept (H&S Hiris).

**Common Moorhen:** Eleven at BIWA on 1 Aug were local breeders (T. Nickerson). Seventeen were at Ottawa on 5 Aug (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). An adult with young was at Killbuck on 9 and 29 Sept, and one remained on 24 Oct (S. Snyder). Ten were counted on the 2 Sept ONWRC. The latest seen was in Columbus on 4 Nov (M. England).

**American Coot:** Twenty-five at Ottawa on 2 Aug probably summered locally (J. Hammond), and by 2 Sept the ONWRC found 161, which must have included migrants; their census of 7 Oct tallied 1200. By 21 Oct, 5404 were at Magee (H&S Hiris) and 1000+ at CP/ONWR (E. Tramer). On 1 Nov, 2300+ were at Ottawa (V. Fazio). Away from the western Lk Erie marshes, 450 were at Sandy Ridge on 4 Nov (T&M Romito), and 130 at Clear Fork Res on 9 Nov (J. Herman).

**AUTUMN 2001 REPORTS**

**Sandhill Crane:** An unbanded adult at Berlin Res 15 Aug (C. Holt) may have strayed from nearby breeding populations. Two tame birds at Sandy Ridge 25 Aug (M. Hendrick) and thereafter included one with band #355, which had been led by an Operation Migration ultralight to the Carolinas in the fall of 1998 and later failed to migrate back north; it and others were hauled up to New York by truck, where it stayed put, an unfortunate case of imprinting on humans and a photogenic but ineffective attempt at induced migration. Elsewhere, over 2000 wild migrants were counted, all in the western part of the state, with 100-125 as far east as Hoover Res on 20 Nov (G. Stauffer) and Ross on 10 Oct (J. McCormac). Their timing very close to that of tundra swans this season, the lion's share passed 20-23 Nov. High counts were on the 20th, with 370-570 at a roost in Montgomery (J. Wilson), 400+ over Spring Grove Cemetery in Hamilton (B. Jorg), and ~450 in Finneytown, Hamilton (J. Lippert). At Cowan Lk SP, Clifton, 20 were present on 20 Nov, 40 on the next day, and three persisted 23 Nov to 8 Dec (E. Rose). The Wayne breeders were seen 24 Aug (S. Snyder). Among the Geauga cranes, the "Troy Trio" remained throughout the fall, and the Claridon cranes numbered two at the outset of the period, but increased with a report of "four gray flamingos" to the local police on 15 Nov; they remained on 23 Nov (D. Best).

**Black-bellied Plover:** Over 800 were reported, most at the CCE's bounteous shorebird habitats. R. Hamikin had the first at HBSP on 4 Aug. On 9 Aug V. Fazio spotted 10 ad and two juv at the CCE, but relatively few reports emerged until October's juveniles arrived, with ~200 on the 4th at the CCE (J. Hammond), 125 on the ONWRC of the 7th, and 29 on the 28th at Conneaut (R. Royse). There were many Nov birds, with 104 on the 4th's ONWRC, 28 at the CCE on the 8th (Fazio), 39 there on the 18th (Fazio), six there the 24th (J. Pogacnik), and one at Findlay Res on the 26th (J. Taber fide B. Hardesty).

**American Golden-Plover:** Three were on the CCE on 10 Aug (B. Conlon). September's largest count was 20 in Paulding on the 11th (M&D Dunakin). October sightings were dominated by the CCE, with a good high count of 430 there on the 10th (V. Fazio); nine were at Berlin Res on the 5th (B. Morrison). One report came from Nov, a single bird at the CCE on the 3rd (J. Haw).

**Semipalmated Plover:** Returned during the previous period, and August numbers were decent, with 30 at the CCE on the 2nd (J. Hammond), and 96 there on the 30th (V. Fazio). Relatively skimpy numbers were found thereafter, and of only four Oct reports, the latest was of a single bird at Conneaut on the 23rd (G. Miller).
**WHAN**

**Killdeer:** On 2 Aug 100+ were at Toussaint WA, with ~400 at the nearby CCE (J. Hammond). A survey of shorebird spots in the western Lk Erie marshes yielded 3700+ on 5 Aug for V. Fazio. At Berlin Res, 559 were present 11 Aug (K. Miller) and 649 on 6 Sept (B. Morrison). Significant numbers in Nov were 52 in Van Wert on the 2nd (J. Perczalski) and 90 at Hoover Res on the 3rd (R. Thorn).

**American Avocet:** About 25 birds, half or so inland. One of the summer’s Medusa Marsh birds persisted through 9 Aug (T. Barlett fide V. Fazio). One was at Conneaut on 11 Aug (T&M Romio), with 1-3 at BCSF 12-14 Aug (D. Overacker). Five were at Conneaut on 10 Sept (B. Royse), and one in Paulling on 21 Sept (D&M Dunakin). High count was of eight at Caesar Ck SP on 20 Oct (L. Gara), and the latest report came from the CCE, with a bird on 24 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** Forty birds inland in Paulling on 16 Aug were unusual (D&M Dunakin), and would have been the season’s high count, save for 44 found on the 2 Sept ONWRC. Six reports came in Nov, with one of 26 birds at Port Clinton on the 18th (V. Fazio), and the last of a singleton on the CCE on the 24th (J. Pogacnik).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** The high count came early, with 380+ at the CCE on 9 Aug (V. Fazio). Paulling had another local record number with 135 on 16 Aug (M&D Dunakin). Numbers were relatively low once juveniles showed up, perhaps because Pt. Mouillee in Michigan was attracting lessers by the thousands. Remarkably, six sightings came from Nov, including 44 at Port Clinton on the 18th (Fazio) and three at the CCE on the 24th (J. Pogacnik).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** High counts were 31 at Beach City WA in Tucarrawas on 4 Aug and 24 the following day at Berlin Res (B. Morrison). Singles lingering into Oct were at BCSF on the 5th (D. Overacker) and at Caesar Ck SP on the 14th (L. Gara) and the 21st (N. Cade).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Not a good showing, with only 19 birds reported. The high count was four, at the CCE on 9 Aug (V. Fazio). The last two sightings were inland, with one at Findlay Res on 18 Sept (B. Hardesty) and another at Grand Lk St Marys on 30 Sept (J. Ruedisueli).

**AUTUMN 2001 REPORTS**

**Willet:** Thirteen reported, the first at Sheldon Marsh 16 Aug (G. Miller), with a high count of but two at Pipe Ck WA 26 Aug (A. Osborn). Remarkably, though nearly routine for some shorebird species this fall, there were an unusual number of late sightings, four in Oct: one the 2nd at SVWA (B. Royse), one the 4th at Crane Ck SP (B. Whan), one the 7th at the CCE (ONWRC), and one the 20th at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** Thirty-one at Berlin Res on 9 Aug was an excellent count (B. Morrison). R. Thorn had a couple on the Greenlawn Dam in Columbus on 7 Oct, and T&P Bihn reported 16 at Metzger Marsh on 20 Oct.

**Upland Sandpiper:** Mostly undetected, but five were in Paulling on 6 Aug (D&M Dunakin), and another at Berlin Res on 21 Aug (B. Morrison).

**Whimbrel:** Eleven birds reported, all near Lk Erie, the first the continuing individual at Medusa Marsh through 2 Aug (J. Hammond), the last not at all late on 22 Sept at Conneaut (D. Le Galle). High count was four at Conneaut on 19 Aug (J. Pogacnik).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** As many as 50 birds reported, with a high count of 18 at the CCE on 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik). Most were near Lk Erie, but an adult in near-basic plumage was at Caesar Ck SP on 23 Aug (E. Roush), three molting adults on 8 Sept at Hoover Res (G. Balson et al.), and six in Fulton 5 Oct (J. Yochum). R. Harlan and S. Wagner had a flyover during an Indian game in Cleveland on 30 Sept. The last seen was 8 Nov at the CCE (T. Gilliland et al.).

**Marbled Godwit:** At the CCE, three were found 8 Aug (V. Fazio) and were observed being flushed by humans on 10 Aug (B. Conlon); three were reported the following day at nearby Pt Mouillee, Michigan. Also at the CCE were one 21 Aug (J. Lehman), one 23 Aug (J. Hammond), one 30 Aug (T. Shively), then one 9 Sept (Hammond), 12 Sept (G. Miller), and one 27-28 Oct (J. Pogacnik). At Sheldon Marsh, one was found 16 Aug (Miller), 17 Aug (P. Lozano), 21 Aug (E. Yoder), 25 Aug (D. Sanders), 30 Aug (Fazio), 8 Sept (Hammond), and 12 Sept (Miller). Anyone’s guess as to how many individuals were involved in these, the only two locations where the species was found.

**Autumn sanderlings always provide a nice contrast. This one was present at Conneaut Harbor in Ashtabula County on 11 September 2001. Photo by Bob Royse.**

12

The Ohio Cardinal

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001

13
**Red Knot:** Around 50 birds reported, all at the CCE, Sheldon Marsh, or Conneaut Harbor. The first came from 15 Aug at the CCE (J. Brunfield), and the latest on 10 Oct there (V. Fazio). The high count of 11 also came from the CCE, on the 2 Sept ONWR.

**Sanderling:** Nearly a thousand birds for the season, with a high count of 286 on 10 Oct at the CCE (V. Fazio), where nearly 700 of that season’s total were found.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Fall birds, nearly all juvenile, were not numerous. The high count was 250+ at Marblehead on 26 Aug (V. Fazio); 120 were at Sheldon Marsh on 2 Aug (J. Hammond), and 135 at the CCE on 5 Aug (Fazio). Fifty-two were at Berlin Res on 10 Sept (R. Morrison). Oct reports included two at CCE on the 6th (Hammond) and 10 at Mosquito Lk WA on the 11th (C. Babyak).

**Western Sandpiper:** Fewer than 30 reports, nearly all juveniles in the glaciated portion of the state. On 11 Aug two were at Berlin Res (K. Miller), one at MWW (N. Cade), and another at W. Branch SP (L. Rosche). The high count was three, in Paulling on 17 Aug (M&D Dunakin), at the CCE on 27 Oct (V. Fazio), and on 5 Nov at the CCE (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).

**Least Sandpiper:** Unusually skinny in numbers this fall. The high counts were early, with 180 at the CCE on 9 Aug (V. Fazio), and 141 at Berlin Res on 11 Aug (K. Miller), with other inland counts less than 50. A poor breeding season? Clement weather kept two at the CCE through 24 Nov (J. Pogacnik) and one at BCSP the following day (D. Overacker).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Only ~25 reported, with a high of six at the CCE on 26 Sept (G. Miller). Inland numbers included two at Berlin Res on 10 Sept (R. Morrison) and one at SVWA on 2 Oct (S. Reeves). Did not linger, with the latest on 27 Oct at HBSP (K. Metcalf).

**Baird’s Sandpiper:** Of ~125 reported the first was in Paulding on 12 Aug (D&M Dunakin). Twenty-five or more were inland, the furthest south one at SVWA on 22 Aug (S. Reeves). The high count was 15 at the CCE on 8 Sept (J. Hammond et al.), and the latest were two at the CCE on 3 Nov (J. Haw) and two at Port Clinton 18 Nov (V. Fazio).

**Fective Sandpiper:** Customarily numerous through the period, reported almost entirely from western Lk Erie; the high count of nearly 2000 in a 8 Aug survey of that area by V. Fazio, and the largest flock was 500+ at Sheldon Marsh on 16 Aug (G. Miller). On 18 Nov, two were at Port Clinton (Fazio) and one at BCSP (D. Overacker).

**Purple Sandpiper:** Only one, at Ashtabula on 18 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

**Dunlin:** More than 14,000 reported, the highest count a remarkable 6500+ at the CCE on 28 Oct (J. Pogacnik); the next highest was 2600+ there on 1 Nov (V. Fazio). Also notable were the following early arrivals: an albatross individual at the CCE 9 (Fazio) and 10 Aug (B. Conlon), an adult at Sheldon Marsh 21 Aug (J. Lehman) and 25 Aug (D. Sanders), one at the CCE 30 Aug (J. Brunfield, T. Shively), and a basic-plumaged bird at Hoover Res on 5 Sept (Sanders).

**Silt Sandpiper:** Nearly 200 reported. New to Kelley’s Isl records was one on 17 Aug (T. Bartlett). The high count of 25 at the CCE (J. Hammond) was no surprise, and 17 on 1 Oct at BWA (D. Sanders) was good, but of greater interest was its persistence: 24 Oct in Wayne (S. Snyder), 26 Oct at BCSP (D. Overacker), and 18 Nov, when 11 were at Pt Clinton (V. Fazio).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** About 50 birds reported, all or nearly all juveniles. In Minnesota this fall, by contrast, 480 adults were found the first week of Aug, with a high count of 164 in a single field (C. Mandel). Our first, a bird on 13 Aug at Berlin Lk (B. Morrison et al.) was indeterminate as to age because of viewing conditions. The high count was eight at Sheldon Marsh 30 Aug (T. Shively, J. Brunfield). Inland reports included one at Hoover Res 30 Aug (G. Baison), three there 3 Sept (D. Sanders), one there 18 Sept (J. Hammond), one there 22 Sept (Baison), three in Paulding 4 Sept (M&D Dunakin), one at BCSP 14-16 Sept (D. Overacker), one at MWW 26 (P. Wharton) and 27 Aug (S. Reeves), one at EFSP 9 (B. Stanley) and 10 Sept (B. Koppe), and one 21 Aug, six 11 Sept, and four 25 Sept at Findlay Res (B. Hardesty).

---

This white-rumped sandpiper was photographed on 1 October 2001 at Conneaut Harbor in Ashtabula County by Bob Royse.

This buff-breasted sandpiper was photographed at Conneaut Harbor in Ashtabula County by Bob Royse on 11 September 2001.
Short-billed Dowitcher: Migrants tapered off in Aug, with the seasonal high count only ~100 at Sheldon Marsh on the 16th (G. Miller). Only ~30 reported inland, with a high of five on 8 Aug at Mosquito Lk WA (D. Hochadel), and the furthest south one in Ross on 9 Aug (B&D Lane). The latest was in the CCE on 4 Oct (J. Ham mond et al.).

Long-billed Dowitcher: After one summer report, the first fall bird was on the CCE on 2 Aug (B. Whan), an adult already in molt; four were there the 9th (V. Fazio), and six the 10th (B. Conlon). The first basic-plumaged adult was seen at BIWA on 11 Sept (Fazio). On 4 Oct 110 were at the CCE (Whan), and 214 by the 10th (Fazio); 46 were counted 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and 60 on 5 Nov (ONWRC). Has the staging population displaced from Metzger Marsh WA resorted to temporarily low water levels at CCE? The last seen was at Huron on 16 Nov (B. Royse).

Common Snipe: Eleven were at Sheldon Marsh 4 Oct (B. Whan), 21 at the CPNWR on 21 Oct (E. Tramer), two in Van Wert on 2 Nov (J. Perchalski), five at the CCE on 8 Nov (V. Fazio), and 28 at BCSP on 10 Nov and 39 on 18 Nov (D. Overacker). On the latter date, Fazio observed a remarkable 310 at Metzger Marsh WA.

American Woodcock: Sightings were customarily sporadic, the first 7 Sept in Columbus (B. Royse), and the last of two in Lake 26 Nov (J. Pogacnik). R. Campbell had two in Belmont on 3 Nov, and N. Keller relayed a report of one in downtown Cincinnati on 17 Nov.

Wilson’s Phalarope: All reports: 2 Aug, an adult and a juv at CCE (B. Whan, J. Ham mond); 17 Aug one at Marblehead (V. Fazio); one at Pipe Ck WA 22 (G. Miller) and 23 Aug (Hammond); one at Conneaut 3 Sept (J. Pogacnik); one late at Port Clinton on 18 Nov (Fazio).

Red-necked Phalarope: Twenty to 25 birds reported, the high count seven at Sheldon Marsh on 8 Sept (B. Whan). The first, a juv, appeared at the CCE 12 Aug (P. Lozano), and an adult there 15 Aug (J. Brumfield). A juv in Paullding 18-24 Aug was unusual (M&D Dunakin). Two at Pipe Ck WA 18 Aug (B. Morrison) grew to five 30 Aug (T. Shively). Two were at Fairport Harbor 29 Oct for G. Meszaros.

Red Phalarope: Nine birds, all on or near Lk Erie: one at Ashtabula 14 Oct (J. Pogacnik); one at Sheldon Marsh 12 Oct (D. Sanders fide J. Hammond); one 23 Oct at Little Portage WA (V. Fazio); three 27 Oct at HBSP (K. Metcalfe); one at Rocky River, Cuyahoga, on 3 Nov (N. Walech); one 9 Nov at Huron Harbor (D. Sanders, m obs) through to the end of the period, and one at Conneaut 18 Nov (Pogacnik).

Phalarope sp.: One at Clear Fork Res on 19 Oct was too far out to identify (J. Herman).

Pomarine Jaeger: One passed a Lake lookout 22 Nov (J. Pogacnik), and another was at Fairport Harbor the 24th (L. Sachse); two were at Rocky River Pk 25 Nov (G. Leidy), where as many as five were subsequently seen (T. Gilliland: see article in this issue).

Long-tailed Jaeger: Quite late was one reported at HBSP 27 Oct. Details are with the OBRC.

Jaeger sp.: A dark jaeger was reported passing Lake on 10 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Laughing Gull: A juv was at Fairport Harbor on 16 Aug (J. Pogacnik), and a first-winter bird spent 20-Sept 4 Nov at Pleasant Hill Lk, Richland/Ashland (J. Herman).

Franklin’s Gull: Four were at Indian Lk in Logan on 4 Oct (M. Mispion), and one in Lake on 7 Oct (J. Pogacnik). Twelve at BCSP on 17 Oct (L. Joubert fide D. Overacker) dwindled to a single bird the next day for D. Sanders, and two were at Caesar Ck SP 19-24 Oct (L. Garl). An ad was at Clear Fork Res, Richland, on 17 Oct, and it or another there on 26 Oct (both J. Herman). Four were on the CCE on 28 Oct (Pogacnik). Five were at BCSP 3 Nov (J. Hammond et al.); the same observer also had one at Grand Lk St Marys the following day. On 5 Nov, B. Royse had two more at Indian Lk in Logan.

Little Gull: Not many: one at Conneaut on 14 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and another there on 3 Nov fide L. Yoder.

16

The Ohio Cardinal

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001

This red phalarope had staying power. Found on 9 November 2001, it lingered on-and-off into December at Huron Harbor in Erie County. Although this bird frustrated many with its periodic absences, Bob Royse was able to obtain this photo on 16 November 2001.
Bonaparte’s Gull: By 2 Aug 1480 had assembled at the CCE, and 1050 at Sheldon Marsh. 10 Oct brought 5000 to the CCE, and 23 Oct 5600 to EHSP. Eastbound Nov migrants at inland reservoirs numbered 280 at Mosquito Lk (C. Babjak) on the 11th, and 250 at Charles Mill Lk, Ashland. Richland on the 27th (J. Herman).

Ring-billed Gull: Notable were 1000 at Pleasant Hill Lk on 9 Oct (J. Herman) and as many as 8000 at the CCE on 23 Oct (V. Fazio).

Thayer’s Gull: A first-year bird was early in Eastlake on 4 Nov (J. Pogacnik, L. Rosche).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: First report from Conneaut on 14 Oct (J. Pogacnik); a first-year bird was at Eastlake on 4 Nov (L. Rosche). One at Huron on 8 Nov (Pogacnik) persisted through the period.

Great Black-backed Gull: The summer’s adult remained at Sheldon on 2 Aug (J. Hammond). One was on 7 Oct ONWR and P. Lozano counted 17 in Cleveland on 11 Oct. No counts of notable numbers were reported.

Sabine’s Gull: The first, a juv, was in Lake on 27 Sept (J. Pogacnik). One on 26 Oct at HBSP (J. Brumfield) may or may not have been the juv seen there by B. Winger on the 27th. G. Miller observed a juv inland at Indian Lk, Logan, on 3 Nov.

Caspian Tern: No large numbers, with a high count of 104+ at Hoover Res on 14 Aug (B. Royse). A pair at Conneaut was the last to depart, judging by reports, present from 20 (J. Pogacnik) to 28 Oct (B. Royse).

Common Tern: Dozens of local breeders were around earlier, but 1000 at the CCE on 17 Aug were staging migrants (P. Lozano). A month later on 18 Sept, 3000 were there (B. Whan). At EHSP on 27 Oct, 300 were present, but the only Nov report came from the 1st, with five birds at Pt. Clinton (both V. Fazio).

Forster’s Tern: The largest concentration was of 900+ at the CCE on 9 Aug (V. Fazio), and the same observer had 480 at Port Clinton on 23 Oct. The latest reported were four at EHSP on 21 Nov (B. Royse).

Least Tern: D. Overacker discovered an imm bird near Springfield, Clark, on 12 Aug., which remained on the 13th (B. Whan, B. Conlon).

Black Tern: Like last fall, nearly sixty birds reported, nearly all away from Lk Erie. Over 20 were at Winton Woods, Hamilton, on 6 Aug (B. Leaman) for the high count. The last were at Pipe Creek WA and Sheldon Marsh SP on 26 Aug (J. Brumfield).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: A bird shot on 1 Sept in Crawford was retrieved 3 Sept; it and accompanying details were sent to the OBRC. If accepted, it will be the long-awaited first state record of this species.

Black-billed Cuckoo: One was still calling in Athens on 20 Oct (C. Corbin). The CVNP census found two on 15 Sept for the high count, if you can call it that, and the last was detected 26 Sept at the CCE by G. Miller.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Persisted, with one seen by the ONWR on 7 Oct, and one banded at Shawnee Lookout, Hamilton, on 13 Oct (fide RSBO).

Barn Owl: A pair in Holmes produced a second brood of six, of which one remained in the nest on 11 Nov (E. Yoder) and a nest with four young near Sugar Creek in Holmes was active at the end of the period (E. Schlabach).

Snowy Owl: Much like last fall, with more than a dozen birds statewide. The first (imm male) appeared at Indian Lk, Logan, on 30 Oct (fide T. Shively), where the local paper breathlessly informed readers that adults of the species “grow to be 3-4 feet tall.” Most birds were at customary Lk Erie shore sites, but others penetrated as far south as BIWA on 15 Nov (V. Fazio) and Holmes on the following day (E. Schlabach).

Long-eared Owl: G. Leidy photographed one in Cuyahoga on 23 Nov.

Short-eared Owl: Migrants appeared near Lk Erie first in a mall in Rocky River on 26 Aug (P. Lozano), in Conneaut on 23 Oct (G. Miller) and 18 Nov (J. Pogacnik), at Gordon Pk in Cleveland 15 Oct-5 Nov (max of five on 2 Nov) (S. Zadar), and two at HBSP on 31 Oct (L. Rosche). In Columbus, numbers were noted from 20 Oct through the end of the period (B&D Lane), with a max of 11+ on 3 Nov. Five were in Faukland on 14 Nov (D&M Dunakin), and one in Holmes on 17 Nov (E. Schlabach).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: S. Zadar monitored their passage through Gordon Pk, finding 7+ from 27 Oct to 30 Nov, with a max of three on 14 Nov. A. Osborn found one on the Magee Bird Trail on 18 Nov.

This leucistic Caspian tern was photographed at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge in Lucas County on 23 August 2001. Digiscoped photo by Joe Hammond.
Common Nighthawk: Six three-figure counts came in for late August: the first migrants were 16 in Cuyahoga on the 22nd (P. Lozano) and the seasonal high count of 400+ in Washington, came on the 29th from B. Placier. Four large counts came from Sept, and one on 138 in 25 minutes over Columbus on the 2nd, B. Whan. In Nov, one was seen the 1st in Cuyahoga (G. Leidy), and on one the 2nd in Columbus (M. Skinner).

Whip-poor-will: B. Lund heard the last calling bird in Adams on 8 Sept, and T. Gilliland saw the last reported migrant 25 Sept in Rocky River, Cuyahoga.

Chimney Swift: Will renovation of aging Ohio schools hurt swift populations? Large colonies seem restricted to chimneys of schools statewide, with more modern structures going swiftless. Big roosts appeared in Franklin with "close to a thousand" on 23 Aug (D.Sillick), then ~1500 on 30 Aug (G. Miller), and 2000+ on 23rd in Licking on 3 Sept (T. Nickerson). The largest reported migrant flock was of 2000+ at Gordon Pk in Cleveland on 5 Oct (S. Zadar). B. McCullough of Geauga watched the local high school chimney (built circa 1936, for coal-fired boilers) for swifts, with the following results: 9/28: 700 birds; 10/7: 113; 10/8: 1812; 10/19: 600; 10/20: 333; 10/24: 156; 10/26: 3; 10/28: 1; 10/29: 30; 0. He relates that "several years ago on a Friday night either late in August or early September Berkshire [HS] had a home football game. The county fair just six houses down the street from my house was in full swing, and I was out in the yard greeting people walking to the fair. All of a sudden the air over our house was filled with swifts. I counted 450 that went down my chimney. What had happened was that the band members for the game were tuning up at the base of the chimney, and that was too much for the swifts. The next night there were about 250 at my house, and then the numbers dropped off until in a few days they were all back at the school chimney."

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: The high count was eight, all feeding on natural sources, in Holmes on 19 Aug (E. Yoder). Last sightings spanned the second half of Sept, with immature birds inMahoning on the 17th (C. Babyak), in Paulding on the 24th (M&D Dunakin), and in Adams on the 27th (B. Lund). Their rapidly-decreasing numbers in late Aug are illustrated by amounts of nectar used at Lund's feeder: on the 18th two quarts, on the 20th one quart, on the 25th one pint, and on the 28th one-half cup.

Rufous Hummingbird: A reported subsabudal male was photographed in Adams on 6 Nov, and documentation is with the OBRC. The homeowners reported two adults had been at the feeder in early Oct, and reported photos of these birds are being sought. Not unprecedented, as three birds were banded this fall in adjacent yards in Georgia (fide K. Theodoro) and two in Virginia from the same neighborhood (fide L. Lynch); nor are these tough birds doomed: this year one was captured in Michigan on 1 Nov that had been banded in North Carolina on 2 Dec 2000 (fide Allen Chartier); a banded in Missouri captured another in the first week of Dec that had been banded two years earlier in Louisiana (fide N. Newfield).

Selasphorus Hummingbird: An immature bird present 14-16 Nov in Wood was photographed, and details are with the OBRC. S. Peterson tallied fall and Dec 2001 reports of birds from this genus in 172 counties in 26 of the 37 states east of Colorado; last year it was 204 counties in 28 states.

Hummingbird sp.: One was at HBSP on 30 Sept (K. Metcalfe), and one in Hancock on 2 Oct (D. Kohl fide B. Hardesty). From Franklin (fide I. Poteet) came a belated report from 24 Nov of a bird "much smaller than a ruby-throated, with green back, dark front, no visible gorget." Ouch.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: The high count of migrants was four, at HBSP on 18 Oct (L. Rosche), and a late bird was at Black Hand Gorge, Licking, on 9 Nov (H. Nagy). One seen 22 Nov in Clinton (E. Roush) may be among southern-wintering birds.

Northern Flicker: The largest numbers passed through in Sept, with 25 on the ONWRC of the 2nd, 106 on the CVNP census of 15 Sept, and 60+ the same day at Gordon Pk (S. Zadar).

Pileated Woodpecker: The 15 Sept CVNP census tallied 28, oustripping hairy woodpecker numbers for the first time locally.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Twenty-two birds reported was a good result. A very early report came on 5 Aug at the Shaker Lks (R. Rickard), with the next two on 9 Aug (T. Bartlett) in Seneca and 19 Aug at HBSP (L. Rosche). The latest came from the CVNP on 24 Sept (T&M Ronito).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: A high count of seven in Medina on 28 Aug perhaps included migrants (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). On the late side were one in Holmes on 15 Oct (E. Yoder) and one in Columbus on 18 Oct (K. Kaufman fide J. Switzer).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Returns dated from Aug 18 (N. Barber) and 24 Aug (R. Hannikman) at HBSP. One was banded at Navarre Marsh on 9 Oct (BSBO).

Acadian Flycatcher: R. Harlan and S. Wagner had an adult and a juv in Medina on 18 and 19 Sept, and E. Yoder a singing bird on the 22nd in Holmes. S. Zadar et al. encountered one in Gordon Pk, Cleveland, as late as 7 Oct.

Willow Flycatcher: One was at MWV on 1 Sept (P. Wharton), two at Magee on 8 Sept (J. Hammond), and one on the CVNP census of 15 Sept.

Least Flycatcher: E. Yoder's bird of 15 Aug in Holmes was likely a migrant, and by 25 Aug, B. Winger had five at HBSP. The last was banded at Navarre Marsh on 27 Sept. (BSBO).

Empidonax Flycatcher: One was at Sandy Ridge MP, Lorain, on the intriguing date of 8 Nov (J. Pogacnic) could neither be conclusively identified nor refound.

Eastern Phoebe: Six were on the CPNWR on 26 Aug (E. Tramier). One was at Mosquito Lk on 11 Oct (C. Babyak), and one in a likely wintering clime at Cowan Lk SP on 21 Nov (E. Roush).

Vermilion Flycatcher: What promises to be the state's third verified record, a young male, was found by S. Cummings and B. Zwibel at Ottawa on 4 Nov. It remained through the period for those able to see it, as Ottawa managers permitted birders to venture ~200 yds into an off-limits area, with supervision, during three days of the first week of its stay. Documentation of this tricky ID is with the OBRC.

Great Crested Flycatcher: One was still in song in Pickaway on 7 Aug (R. Thorn), and another remained on 22 Sept in Highland (D. Overacker).

Eastern Kingbird: Migrant concentrations of 28 occurred at Kelleys Isl 17 Aug (T. Bartlett), and 26 Aug, with 35 at Kildeer (D. Sanders) and 31 at Ottawa (E. Tramier).
WHAN

Northern Shrike: Appeared on 7 Nov at Killdeer with two birds (B. Morrison), Ottawa on 8 Nov (J. Pogacnik), Bayshore PP on 12 Nov (G. Klug & G. Linko), MBSP on 23 Nov (R. Johnson), and a less commonly-seen adult at Fairport Harbor (L. Rosche) on 24 Nov; H. Hendrickson found another shrike the same day in Geauga.

White-eyed Vireo: One was still in song in Adena on 23 Sept (L. Lund). October birds were at Gilmore Ponds (M. Bussem) and Shawnee Lookout (G. Linko) on the 6th. Cowan Lk SP on the 9th (E. Reusel), and an irrim at Gordon Pk in Cleveland on the 18th (S. Zadar).

Bell's Vireo: Five birds from the breeding site at MWW were last noted 11 Aug (N. Cade).

Yellow-throated Vireo: Seen in Franklin (J. Hammond) and in Holmes (E. Schlabach) on 27 Sept, and last on 6 Oct at BCSP (D. Overacker).

Blue-headed Vireo: First two migrants reported at Shaker Lks 14 Sept (B. Farnbrough). Eight were at Kelleys Isl 30 Sept (P. Lozano) for the high count. Late birds were found 2 Nov at Ottawa (J. Yoder) and the next day at Magee (J. Hw.).

Warbling Vireo: Fifteen were at Magee 2 Sept (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). One was banded at Navarre Marsh 8 Oct (BSBO). Strange was one at Bay Village, Cuyahoga, 9 Nov (P. Lozano et al.), it was impossible to tell if this silent bird was of the western race.

Philadelphia Vireo: Ten late Aug reports, beginning the 24th at HBSP (R. Hannikman), and four during the first week of Sept, all near the lake save for one in Holmes on 3 Sept (E. Yoder). No Oct reports, oddly. Last bird was one banded at Navarre Marsh on 29 Oct (BSBO).

Red-eyed Vireo: Last reported 23 Oct at Cuyahoga’s N. Chagrin Res’n (K. Metcalf).

Blue Jay: Fifty were at Gilmore Ponds, Butler, on 22 Sept (M. Bussem). A good fall count was 300 migrants in Lake on 8 Oct (J. Pogacnik).

American Crow: D. Brinkman estimated the Cincinnati roost at 50,000 on 26 Nov. In Cleveland, 2500 were contrastingly notable on Nov (G. Leedy).

Purple Martin: The last report came from the site of Ohio’s one-time record roost, S. Bass Isl, on 11 Sept (S. Wulkowicz).

Tree Swallow: Seen in spectacular numbers, with 1370 at CPNWR on 26 Aug the month’s reported high, but scarce thereafter, with an Oct high count of only 12 on the 26th at Clear Fork Res (J. Herman). Last report came from 8 Nov at Sandy Ridge MP (J. Pogacnik).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One hundred were at Castalia, Erie, on 5 Aug (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), another 100 in Pickaway on 29 Aug (J. Hammond), and ~80 at MWW on 6 Oct (D. Brinkman), not bad for a standoff species. One at Fairport Harbor on 18 Oct was latish (L. Rosche), but two at Buckeye Lk, Licking, on 15 Nov were lagging way behind.

Bank Swallow: No reports were later than that for 7 Sept in Pickaway (D. Overacker).

Cliff Swallow: A hundred or more in Delaware 29 Aug (J. Hammond et al.) easily qualified as the high count, and the last were 10 in Pickaway on 8 Sept (D. Overacker).

Barn Swallow: No huge flights reported, though 300 inland in Holmes on 21 Aug was a good one (E. Schlabach). Late was a bird in Ottawa on 23 Oct (V. Fusco), and later still one at MBSP on 24 Nov (J. Pogacnik).

Black-capped Chickadee: High count was 24 on 18 Oct at Gordon Pk (S. Zadar), and regional reports signaled a possible southward push. At least in Holmes, two were around on 23 Oct (E. Schlabach), one on 24 Oct through the end of the period (E. Yoder), and seven on 27 Oct (Schlabach).

The Ohio Cardinal AUTUMN 2001 REPORTS

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Early sightings can prease invasions by northern birds, as in 1995, when early Sept nuthatches were followed by higher than usual numbers of redpolls, siskins, and evening grosbeaks; appearances of nuthatches as early as 15 Aug in 1993 were followed by flushes of the same species. This year Aug sightings began on 13 Aug in Cuyahoga (S. Wright), two in Lake on 23 Aug (J. Pogacnik), and five in Cincinnati on the 29th (D. Brinkman). Later, the CVNP census counted 36 on 15 Sept, and B. Zwiebel had ~20 at Magee on 7 Oct.

Brown-headed Nuthatch: What should prove to be a first Ohio record was found 21 Nov by L. Gilbert on private property in Geauga, with obs ph and through the period. Details are with the OBRC, whose job on this bird seems almost as onerous as that on the vermilion flycatcher. The Gilberts were so hospitable and generous as to put other hosts of rare birds—even the public servants at Ottawa NWR—to shame.

Brown Creeper: An early migrant was in Medina on 1 Sept (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), and four remained at BCSP on 25 Nov (D. Overacker).

Carolina Wren: We’ll see what this winter brings, but northern populations looked good, with 15 on the CVNP census of 15 Sept, and 22 on the Kelleys Isl census of 17 Nov (T. Bartlett).


Winter Wren: The high count was 10, on the Kelleys Isl census of 16 Sept (T. Bartlett), and the latest report in the north was 12 Nov on the CVNP (T&M Romito).

Sedge Wren: August birds included eight on the 5th at the Voice of America grounds in Butler (M. Bussem), four at Ottawa on the 5th (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), at least five at MWW on the 5th (R. Wharton)—with two still there on 6 Oct (D. Brinkman) and five in Franklin (nest, ph) on the 16th (J. Watt). S. Zadar had five between 15 Sept and 20 Oct at Gordon Pk, Cuyahoga, where D. Finkelstein saw one, for the last report, on 22 Oct. L. Rosche had one at HBSP on 18 Oct.

Marsh Wren: Migrants continued through Oct, with birds at HBSP the 6th (J. Lehman et al.), two at Gordon Pk in Cleveland on the 10th (S. Zadar), and one on the 20th at HBSP (K. Metcalf).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Three in Lake 12 Sept (J. Pogacnik) and seven in Hinckley Med in Medina on 22 Sept (R. Harlan, S. Wagner) were likely local nesters, but the BSBO was to band 107 at Navarre on a single day, 29 Sept. D. Overacker found two at BSCP on 25 Nov.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: E. Renfrow found one very early on 23 Aug in Hamilton, but the first real wave began with one at HBSP on 14 Sept (R. Kierdick), and on the following day ruby-crowns were seen in Clark (D. Overacker), Delaware (J. Hammond), Cuyahoga (D. Chasar), and Holmes (E. Yoder). The high count was ~350 on 18 Oct at Gordon Pk (S. Zadar), and the final northern report came from Kelleys Isl on 17 Nov (T. Bartlett).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Perhaps it was balmy weather that allowed one to bask in Springfield Marsh SNF, Seneca, and late as 3 Nov (T. Bartlett).

Eastern Bluebird: E. Tramer called the species’ numbers at Oak Openings MP “a success story,” with 43 on 2 Sept, and ~100 migrants on 13 Oct. Other good numbers of migrants were 62 in loose groups in Mahoning on 7 Oct (C. Babyak) and 54 between Kent and Ashtabula 13 Oct (L. Rosche).

Veery: Five was the high count, on S. Bass Isl on 31 Aug (S. Wulkowicz). A few Oct sightings ended with an extremely late one on the 20th in CVNP (T&M Romito).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Arrived as early as 24 Aug at HBSP (R. Hannikman), and the last was banded at Navarre Marsh on 20 Oct (BSBO).

Bicknell’s Thrush: At Navarre Marsh on 28 Oct, alert BSBO banders captured and measured with care an individual they determined to be of this species (M. Shields). Details are with the OBRC.
Whi

Swainson’s Thrush: First noted in Lake on 23 Aug (J. Pogacnik), the last was banded at Navarre Marsh on 28 Oct (BSBO). The unrivalled high count was 25 at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 6 Oct (J. Lehman et al.).

Hermit Thrush: The earliest report came from Lake on 28 Sept (J. Pogacnik). BSBO banders captured the high day count of 27 at Navarre Marsh on 4 Oct. The latest was in downtown Cleveland on 20 Nov (T. Colburn).

Wood Thrush: Few reports, the last of them from 28 Sept in Lake (J. Pogacnik).

American Robin: An extraordinary 9000+ were estimated at Woodbury WA on 24 Oct by G. Miller. More than a thousand were still around on 27 in nearby Coshocton on 27 Nov for L. Deininger.

Gray Catbird: E. Tramer counted 27 in Wildwood Preserve in Toledo 5 Sept. Late birds to the north were on Kelleys Isl on 17 Nov (T. Bartlett) and on 26 Nov in Lake (J. Pogacnik).

Northern Mockingbird: The CVNP census had its first ever on 15 Sept, and another was in the Park on 7 Nov (D. Chasar). K. Metcalfe found one at Chagrin MP on 23 Oct, and G. Links one at Woodlawn Cem in Toledo on 27 Nov. A bird was still in song in Cincinnati on 20 Nov (D. Brinkman).

Brown Thrasher: Seven were at HBSP on 25 Aug (B. Winger); one was at the CCE on 27 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and a late bird touched down in Holmes on 17 Nov (L. Yoder).

American Pipit: Single birds appeared in Ashtabula (J. Pogacnik) and Paulding (M&D Dunakin) on 8 Sept, and ~15 were at Conneaut as early as the 11th (B. Royse). Near Findlay, 310+ were counted on 23 Oct (B. Hardesty), and 56 were in Holmes on 1 Nov (J. Miller).

Cedar Waxwing: Not many noted this fall, so a count of ~200 in Perry on 26 Oct was a good one (J. Faulkner).

Hybrids of the above: A “Brewster’s” warbler was at the Shaker Lks 27 Aug (G. Leidy et al.).

Tennessee Warbler: In normal numbers. The first was at HBSP on 13 Aug (B. Winger), the last two at EFSP on 28 Oct (B. Stanley). Good finds included 24 in Cincinnati on 9 Sept (N. Cade) and 15 in Adams 2 Oct (B. Lund).

Orange-crowned Warbler: The first arrival was banded at Navarre Marsh 15 Sept (BSBO). The high count was seven at Gordon Pk on 20 Oct (T. Gilliland et al.), and the last report was of three birds in Parma 29 Oct (G. Leidy).

Nashville Warbler: A trickle, but on schedule. The first was at Navarre Marsh on 24 Aug (BSBO), the last in Holmes on 3 Nov (E. Schlachbach); in between, the high count was 20, on S. Bass Isl on 6 Sept (S. Wulkowicz).

Northern Parula: Two at the Shaker Lks 27 Aug (B. Winger) were the first report and high count. J. Lehman photographed the last to pass through, at Sheldon Marsh 6 Oct.

Yellow Warbler: The greatest numbers were 26 at Kelleys Isl on 17 Aug (T. Bartlett), and the last straggler reported was in Holmes on 6 Oct (L. Yoder).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: The first arrived on 17 Aug, with 10 at Kelleys Isl (T. Bartlett) and one at Magee (P. Lonzo). Twenty were on S. Bass Isl on 26 Aug (S. Wulkowicz), and the last hurrah came from SVWA on 9 Oct (S. Reeves).

Magnolia Warbler: One was at HBSP by 13 Aug (B. Winger), and a noteworthy straggler was an imm female in Medina on 30 Oct (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). The high count was 50 at S. Bass Isl in 26 Aug’s waves of migrants (S. Wulkowicz).

Cape May Warbler: An excellent flight. The commonest warbler at times. Counts in the twenties were frequent, the most interesting 26 at Paulding on 15 Sept (D&M Dunakin). M. Busam had seven in one tree at Sheldon Marsh on 2 Sept, and BSBO netted 121 on 20 Sept at Navarre Marsh, where the last was reported on 1 Nov.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Arrived 23 Aug in Lake (J. Pogacnik), and last seen on 6 Oct, with one at Magee (J. Hammond) and two at HBSP (L. Rosche). The high count was a noteworthy nine in Rocky River on 14 Sept (T. Gilliland).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Neither especially early or late, but numerous in between. No Aug reports, and only a few for Nov in the north. Nearly 1300 were reported near the Lake in the NE 29 Sept-4 Oct, with a high of ~400 in Cleveland on the latter date (P. Lonzo).

Black-throated Green Warbler: No fall reports till 17 Aug, at Kelleys Isl (T. Bartlett). E. Yoder had seven on 22 Sept in Holmes. Latest was one at BSBO on 28 Oct (D. Overacker).

Blackburnian Warbler: Arrived with many others at Kelleys Isl on 17 Aug (T. Bartlett), and a straggler lasted till 6 Oct in Columbus (R. Thorn). Six were among the throngs at S. Bass Isl on 26 Aug for the high count (S. Wulkowicz).

Yellow-throated Warbler: Latest reports in Sept: on the 10th at Cowan Lk SP (E. Roush), on the 22nd in CVNP (Chasar), and on the 24th in Cincinnati (B. Stanley).
Pine Warbler: A family of seven at Lk Rockwell was a nice find on 8 Aug (L. Rosche), and three remained there on the 16th (Rosche). Singing birds were at Oak Openings MP on 15 Aug (E. Tramer), and one was rattling as late as 4 Oct at North Chagrin Res’n in Cuyahoga (K. Metcalf), with no later reports, singing or not.

Prairie Warbler: Few reports as usual, but interesting was one in Paulding on 15 Sept (M&D Dunakin), and one as late as 14 Oct at North Chagrin Res’n (K. Metcalf).

Palm Warbler: Earliest was one at Bacon Wds, Lorain, on 1 Sept (S. Wright), and numbers were healthy in Oct, the highest ~25 in Cleveland on 11 Oct (P. Lezano). One was seen 22 Oct in Franklin (R. Thorn).


Blackpoll Warbler: First noted on 12 Aug at HBSP (B. Wingier), they came in good numbers later—55+ there (K. Metcalf) and 21 in Holmes (L. Yoder) on 22 Sept, and 100+ the following day in the CPNW (G. Links). The latest report came from Franklin on 16 Oct (R. Thorn).

Cerulean Warbler: Hard to find in fall, one—apparently a local nester still feeling his oats—was singing in Holmes on 25 Aug (E. Schlabach).

Black-and-white Warbler: Two were in Holmes on 11 Aug (L. Yoder). Eleven were on Kelleys Isl on 17 Aug (T. Bartlett), and a late bird was in Cuyahoga on 23 Oct (K. Metcalf).

American Redstart: Three joining the crowd at Kelleys Isl on 17 Aug (T. Bartlett) also made up the high count. An unmistakable male was in the front yard of R. Rogers in Columbus on the very late date of 20 Nov, joining a few Nov records of the species in the state, including another from this fall on 3 Nov at Hoover Res (R. Thorn).

Prothonotary Warbler: The BSBO captured the first, on 11 Aug at Navarre Marsh. Two were at Magee, on 16 (P. Lezano) and 17 Aug (E. Tramer). The last seen was on 1 Sept in Cincinnati (A. Bess).

Worm-eating Warbler: Two were found rather late in Cincinnati on 18 Sept (J. Cade).

Ovenbird: Seen as early as 25 Aug, at HBSP (B. Wingier), and as late as 7 Oct in Cuyahoga (G. Leidy).

Northern Waterthrush: Seen in singles, the first at Sandy Ridge MP on 8 Aug (B. Wingier), the latest on 28 Sept when one was captured at Shaker Lks (fide BSBO).

Louisiana Waterthrush: A good find was one in Rocky River on 27 Aug (S. Zadar).

Kentucky Warbler: Here today, gone tomorrow: a migrant was in Holmes on 12 Aug (E. Schlabach), and the last were seen 1 Sept in Wayne (S. Snyder) and Hamilton (A. Bess). In the interim, a male at Magee on 16 Aug was of interest (E. Tramer).

Connecticut Warbler: More than a dozen reported, and during the expected period. The latest was banded at Navarre Marsh on 4 Oct (BSBO).

Mourning Warbler: First found at HBSP on 24 Aug (R. Hannikman fide B. Wingier), where the high count of two was made on 31 Aug (K. Metcalf), they trickled through till the last was banded at Navarre Marsh on 10 Oct (BSBO).

Common Yellowthroat: The news was late birds, with three in Nov: one on the CCE on the 8th (J. Brumfield fide V. Fazio), a male in Holmes on the 11th (E. Yoder), and another on the CCE on the 24th (J. Pogacnik).

Hooded Warbler: Approximately 10 in Washington on 31 Aug was a good find (H. Nagy). One was singing in Columbus on 21 Sept (R. Thorn), and two were found in Holmes the following day (L. Yoder). The last was in Lake on 28 Sept (J. Pogacnik).

Wilson’s Warbler: Appeared on 21 Aug in Paulding (D&M Dunakin) and in Cuyahoga (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). At HBSP 10 were found by R. Hannikman on 24 Aug. Last noted on 6 Oct, at Sheldon Marsh (J. Hammond).

Canada Warbler: E. Schlabach found a migrant on 12 Aug in Holmes. The high count was four, on 17 Aug at Kelleys Isl (T. Bartlett), and the last passed through on 18 Sept in Holmes (L. Yoder).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Surprisingly few detected. The BSBO reported the latest, netted in Hamilton on 15 Oct.

Summer Tanager: Eight reports clumped from 20-24 Sept, all in the breeding range. The last report of a migrant came from 27 Sept in Adams (R. Land).

Scarlet Tanager: The high count was seven on the 15 Sept census of the CVNP, probably local nesters. A juv was at Hoover Res on 23 Oct (R. Thorn).

American Tree Sparrow: One on 5 Oct was earlier than expected, but showed up at one of Ohio’s premier sparrow spots, Gordon Pk (S. Zadar). By 1 Nov, 60+ were at the CCE (V. Fazio), and 80 gathered at MWW on 23 Nov (N. Cade).

Chipping Sparrow: E. Yoder reported 35 in Holmes on 24 Sept, and by mid-Oct other large counts were almost routine, with 35-40 at HBSP on the 18th (L. Rosche), at Gordon Pk on the 19th (S. Zadar), and 60+ at N. Chagrin Res’n on the 23rd (K. Metcalf). The latest report was of two at Hoover Res on 3 Nov (R. Thorn).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Two reported of this scarce species, one on 11 Oct in Cuyahoga (G. Leidy), and one 24 Oct in Lake (J. Pogacnik).

Field Sparrow: Mary joined the sparrow throng in the NE in Oct, with 17 at Gordon Pk on the 19th (S. Zadar) and 45 the 21st at HBSP (L. Rosche), but on the 13th 60 were already at MWW (N. Cade), where some may winter. On 11 Nov, three remained in Holmes (E. Schlabach).

Vesper Sparrow: J. Watts photographed fledglings in a Madison nest 16 Aug. The high count of migrants was three, at HBSP 22 Oct (L. Rosche) during the big sparrow movement. Latest were two at MWW 23 Nov (N. Cade). Continues its decline, it seems.

Savannah Sparrow: Migrants were widely noted in Oct, with high counts of 32 at MWW on the 6th (D. Brinkman) and 20 at HBSP on the 22nd (L. Rosche). One was in Holmes as late as 22 Nov (E. Schlabach) and 10 remained at MWW the 23rd (N. Cade).

Grasshopper Sparrow: N. Cade found one at MWW on 13 Oct.

Henslow’s Sparrow: In migration Henslow’s becomes as hard to find as other Ammodramus spp. On 14 Aug, >30 could still be found at Crown City WA, Galilea/Lawrence (V. Fazio), but only two reports emerged from October: one in Paulding on the 2nd (D&M Dunakin), and one at HBSP on the 22nd (L. Rosche).

Le Conte’s Sparrow: At Gordon Pk, S. Zadar found a juv on 18 Oct, and a first-winter bird on 24 Oct. M. Busam had another at Gilmore Ponds on 20 Oct. Details for all are with the OBRC.

Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow: J. Pogacnik found one in Lake on 30 Sept, then two more on 8 Oct. S. Zadar had one at Gordon Pk on 17 Oct, and L. Rosche one at HBSP on 18 Oct.

Fox Sparrow: The first was rather late, netted at Navarre Marsh on 6 Oct (BSBO), but fair numbers were around in Nov, with 25 on the 7th and 15 on the 10th at CVNP (D. Chasar), six or seven at Stage’s Pond, Pickaway, on the 12th (R. Thorn), four at MWW on the 23rd (N. Cade), and one in Hancock on the 27th (R. Hardesty).
Song Sparrow: N. Cade estimated 350 at MWW on 13 Oct, and 120 there on 23 Oct. K. Metcalf had 90+ at N. Chagrin Res’n the following day, when 203 appeared at Gordon Pk (S. Zadar).

Lincoln’s Sparrow: Three were found by CVNP census-takers on 15 Sept, where the high count of 10 was later made on 3 Oct (D. Chasar). B. Winger had one at HBSP on 25 Oct. Latest was 4 Nov in Fairfield (R. Thornd).

Swamp Sparrow: The first migrant was reported at the Shaker Lks on 14 Sept (B. Fambrough). As with other sparrows this fall, peaked in mid Oct, with 80 at MWW on the 13th and 85 on the 23rd (N. Cade), 30 each at Gilmore Ponds, Butler (M. Busam) and at HBSP (L. Rosche) on the 21st; and 45 at N. Chagrin Res’n on the 23rd (K. Metcalf). Five were in the CVNP on 26 Nov (M&T Romito).

White-throated Sparrow: The first was netted at Navarre Marsh on 12 Sept (BSBO), and by 7 Oct 436 were on the ONWRC nearby. S. Zadar had the high count, ~1000 on 18 Oct at Gordon Pk, and 316 were still passing through Kellys Isl on 17 Nov (T. Bartlett).

White-crowned Sparrow: The first were reported 29 Sept, with three at Gilmore Ponds (M. Busam) and one banded at Navarre Marsh (BSBO). The high count of ~550 came from Gordon Pk on 18 Oct (S. Zadar), and L. Deininger counted 1000+ at the Shaker Lks 22-24 Oct.

Dark-eyed Junco: A bird was well seen in Bowling Green on the extraordinary date of 31 July (B. Cullen et al.). Another nine were found at Holden Arboretum on 26 Aug (H. Petruschke). Even J. Fry’s first in Hocking on 3 Oct observed early in the 80°F heat. The high count was 446 on 19 Oct at Gordon Pk (S. Zadar).

Lapland Longspur: Also early, two were in Lake on 30 Sept (J. Pogacnik), and 10-15 at Conneaut on 2 Oct (B. Roys). The high count was ~400 in Marion near Killdeer on 17 Nov (J. Lesser). On the following day, 75 were in Vev Wett for R. Harlan and S. Wagner.

Snow Bunting: First noticed were five in Lake on 20 Oct (J. Pogacnik), and by 28 Oct birds were observed in Allen (D. Dister), in Hamilton (S. Corbo), and in Clark (D. Overacker). Well represented by mid-Nov, with 360+ at Ottawa (D. L. Gallee et al.).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: The high count of migrants was seven at Shaker Lks on 13 Sept (B. Fambrough). Its hardiness belies its tropical plumage, as one was singing in Stark on 22 Oct (P. Soehnlen), and birds were found on 4 Nov in Preble (C. Tucker) and in Lake (R. Rickard).

Blue Grosbeak: V. Fazio reported four of the Crown City WA breeders on 14 Aug. A male was found on the Harrison/Beaumont line on 21 Aug (R. Campbell).

Indigo Bunting: The high count was 10 at Gilmore Ponds on 8 Sept (M. Busam). One pair gambled on the weather and won at the CVNP. D. Chasar observed an ad feeding young on 18 Sept, and birds remained through at least 15 Oct. K. Metcalf had one in N. Chagrin Res’n as late as 17 Oct.

Dickcissel: Not a big year for nesters in Ohio. Apparent migrants were at Ottawa on 5 Aug (R. Harlan, S. Wagner) and nearby on 17 Aug (P. Lozano). One late on 22 Oct was at HBSP, a first for L. Rosche in 38 years of observations at the site. An irror female was still later in Holmer on 17 Nov (E. Schlabach).

Bobolink: Fifty in Butler at the VOA site on 8 Aug (M. Busam) may have been local breeders, but by 26 Aug 53 were passing over CPNW (E. Tamer), while 50 were at MWW (P. Wharton). On 1 Sept Wharten estimated 500 at MWW; on 6 Oct D. Brinkman was able to find 27 there, and at 17 Oct N. Cade found six. One passed through HBSP on 22 Oct (L. Rosche).

Eastern Meadowlark: Its population at the VOA site in Butler was 37 on 27 Oct and 25 on 21 Nov (M. Busam), suggesting this may be a wintering as well as a breeding site. Twenty were on D. Hochadel’s property in Trumbull on 8 Oct.
Further Afield

Rob Harlan
7072 Parma Park Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44130

I saw the vermillion flycatcher at Ottawa this fall. It was rare. It looked nice. I liked it.

An oversimplified view, perhaps, but the vermillion flycatcher seen by many at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge this November and December was indeed a "no-brainer." Now here was a bird that grabbed you by the binocular strap, looked you straight in the eye and said, "I am rare in your state. I represent only your third state record, and I am the very first of my kind to be widely seen here. Not only that, but my vivid shade of red blends quite fashionably with my understated browns and whites. My ongoing personality speaks for itself, and I have been faithful to a relatively small piece of property, providing you with reasonable odds to make my acquaintance. Furthermore, I have chosen to inhabit a normally off-limits area of what you know as Ottawa Refuge, which lends, I think, a certain indefinable exclusive quality to my presence. Thank you for visiting. You may count me now."

And indeed, many of us did count it, or at least made its acquaintance. All with good reason. There could be no doubt about its identification or its rarity in the context of Ohio's birding timeline. This bird is rare in 2001, it would have been rare in 1901, and, although I assume none of us will be around to verify the fact, it may be just as rare in 2101. But not all bird records are quite so straightforward. What is considered rare or noteworthy now wouldn't necessarily have been noteworthy a hundred, fifty, or even ten years ago. Likewise, a record considered significant fifty years ago might be considered commonplace today. Rarity is relative.

I have always found it enlightening to step back in time, so to speak, whenever possible, to let the voices of the past help us better understand our time and, we hope, the future. Fortunately, birders have a form of time machine that would have made H. G. Wells proud. We have the published record. Although these aging books and journals may now rest unassumingly on muted library shelves, each contains a wealth of valuable information for those who care to look. They may not all boast of mega-rarities like a vermillion flycatcher, but they are all filled with useful data that were at least deemed noteworthy at the time of publication. These works will never grab you by the binocular strap, but nonetheless they deserve your attention. Their small voices have a large story to tell.

We will set our time machine at ten-year intervals. We will use as our guides historical books as well as many national journals, including The Auk, The Wilson Bulletin, Bird-Lore, Audubon Field Notes, and American Birds, and also one particularly august local journal, The Cleveland Bird Calendar, which has been issued, I believe, in an uninterrupted series since 1905. Since this issue of The Ohio Cardinal covers the autumn season of 2001, we will also review the autumn seasons of the past, beginning, shall we, in 1861. Yes, we shall.

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001
1861: Although the Confederate States of America had just been formed on 8 February, this did not deter J. M. Wheaton from having the presence of mind to report a large flock of American white pelicans on the Scioto River near Columbus during the fall of 1861. In his own words, Dr. Wheaton was “greatly astonished.” I don’t blame him.

1871: After a brief perusal, our time machine has found no published records from the autumn of 1871. Perhaps all Ohio birders were paying rapt attention to the 1871 event *The World Almanac* refers to as the “quasi-Socialist Paris Commune uprising,” which, in case you were wondering, was “violently suppressed.” Or perhaps they were still stunned by the Great Chicago Fire of 8-11 October. I suppose their distraction could have been based on, or neither. I don’t know. I wasn’t there.

1881: Mr. A. Hall shot a black-necked stil in Berea on 24 October. Members of the Winous Point Shooting Club shot a snowy owl sometime during the season. It was deposited in the clubhouse bird collection, and I wouldn’t be surprised to learn it resides there to this day.

1891: In August, Charles Dury collected one of the very first specimens of Henslow’s sparrow for Ohio in Hamilton County. Mr. O. B. Franks of the Wooster area shot an immature golden eagle on 10 November. Meanwhile, Mr. Harry Warden of Lorain collected a red knot in September, and presented it to Oberlin College. A lack of proper optics and the prevailing hunting mentality of the day helps to explain all these “collections”; I have no explanation, however, for some of the then-current synonyms for red knot, including “horse-foot snipe” and “blue plover.” “Beach robin” yes, “white robin snipe” maybe, “blue plover” no.

1901: On 1 August, Rev. W. F. Henninger procured the first Ohio specimen of a certain species along the Scioto River, likely in Pike County. He observed two birds, and, “after an exciting chase of about three hours” succeeded in collecting a young male, “being pure white in color, but having the tips of the first seven quills of each wing a slate blue color.” He shot another in Pike Co. on 3 August, and others took two more near there later that month. Four more were seen but not collected. According to Henninger, the presence of eight individuals, the immaturity of the birds, and the time of year “would make it highly probable that they have been bred in the State.” Although this certainly would have been the obvious conclusion at the time, today in retrospect we can more accurately assign the appearance of these little blue herons to an early record of post-breeding dispersal, an irregular and still poorly understood phenomenon. This dispersal would become particularly evident during the 1920s and 1930s. Almost thirty years after Henninger noted these eight herons, the species’ largest post-breeding event would take place during the late summer and early fall of 1930, when L. E. Hicks tallied records from 40 Ohio counties, totaling 1185 little blue herons across the state. No, that is not a typo.

1911: The primary chronicler of Ohio birding during the early decades of the twentieth century, Lynds Jones, announced that E. Barnes and E. Tannehill had collected Ohio’s first two surf scoter specimens on 20 October, at a seemingly unlikely spot—along the Muskingum River below McConnellville (Morgan County). It might be interesting to find out if there have been any Morgan County

records since. Rev. Henninger makes another appearance, noting that on 17 November an Auglaize County farmer brought him “a fine live female” *Buteo borealis calurus*, or what we now know as the dark-morph western red-tailed hawk. For those scoring at home, this specimen represents No. 1018 in Henninger’s personal collection.

1921: Autumn 1921 seemed rather low-key. Lynds Jones did note that “a considerable company” of chimney swifts was present around Oberlin, and that “about the first of October they left the chimneys that they had been using for roosting places and repaired to the cemetery, where they seemed to be roosting at night in some Scotch pine trees.” Also, white-winged crossbills and a single pine grosbeak remained for several days in early November. Jones concludes by stating that by 20 November, migration had “settled down to winter conditions, and there has been nothing out of the normal to report since.” Very low-key, indeed.

1931: Things had picked up by 1931. A young Lou Campbell was very active in the Toledo area, observing 101 species on 7 September alone. A month earlier, Campbell witnessed what I consider to be one of the greatest avian spectacles ever described for Ohio—a group of bank swallows at what is now Cedar Point National Wildlife Refuge measuring about one mile long by a thousand feet wide. He estimated that conservatively 250,000+ birds were present, with “nearly a million” possible. Elsewhere, R. L. Baird passes along “Good news about the Pileated Woodpeckers!” accounting for two pairs near Zanesville, and another pair in the Municipal Park in Poland (the Mahoning County Poland), but also had to relate some bad news: near Kinsman, “some —— hunter shot one of these rare birds.” On 25 October, a very late ruby-throated hummingbird was reported in the Cleveland area; today a hummer this late would certainly be carefully scrutinized in hopes of a western stray. Nor let us forget L. E. Hicks’s astonishing flight of nine great crested flycatchers in Delaware County on 16 November (one of which was collected), as described in a previous column. Suffice it to say, this sighting is still rather unusual.

1941: Twelve Canada geese at Cleveland’s Gordon Park on 6 August provided “an unusually early date.” About a week later on 15 August, a black-necked stilt was found near Shaker Lakes; unfortunately it was a “dead bird on pavement, apparently hit by automobile.” At Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island, C. F. Walker reported 300-400 warblers of 13 species on 27 August, “all crowded into an acre or so of brushy woodland.” I certainly would have enjoyed birding my way through that flock. At nearby Bay Point (Ottawa County) on 24 September, W. Earl Godfrey, who later would pen the monumental *The Birds of Canada*, spotted two Forster’s terns, with identification “made certain by rowing out in a boat to inspect birds at close quarters.”

1951: It seems Milton B. Trautman had an interesting autumn in 1951. Working out of Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island, he could “follow the land-bird migration with something of the accuracy with which the inland observer follows waterfowl migration on a lake.” On 8 September, he counted a thousand warblers leaving the southern tip of the island for the mainland, all in 42 minutes. He also collected Ohio’s first harlequin duck specimen on 2 November, and had a close fly-bys gyrfalcon on 26 November. Elsewhere, 23 pine grosbeaks, mostly immature males and females, were found in the Cleveland area from 20-30 November.
1961: The legends of the Cleveland lakefront, Bill and Nancy Klamm, counted 28 upland sandpipers at Cleveland Hopkins Airport on 26 August. Their careful surveys also focused on terns, with the peak black tern count (1300 birds) coming on 3 September, the peak common tern count (1500 birds) the next day, and the peak Forster's tern count (2 birds) also coming on 4 September. A western kingbird made its way to East Liverpool on 17 September. Regarding waterfowl migration in central Ohio, Milton Trautman summarized: "on Buckeye Lake and the Scioto River...I frequently recorded over 1000 ducks a day in November before 1930; after the decrease in the early 1930s the number was several hundreds; and this year "in the dozens." Back in the far northeast, Ohio’s first black-throated sparrow was found at the Conneaut feeders of Mrs. Mary Stump 5 November-9 December. We’ve had only once since then.

1971: An adult little gull was on Cleveland’s east side at White City Beach on 26 September, while an immature great black-backed gull was on the west side at Rocky River Park on 7 November. The day before, the Klamms were treated to “a lone immature” double-crested cormorant which passed “within 100 feet at tree top level along the bluff at Perkins Beach.” Tom Thomson was busy, reporting a western kingbird at Hoover Reservoir 10 October and an American white pelican in Greene County on 14 October. Seneca Lake hosted some interesting shorebirds including a red-necked phalarope in September and a late American golden-plover from 11-18 November.

1981: Armed with modern identification techniques combined with a widening range of correspondents, reports flourished. Shorebirds seen in Ohio this season included piping plover, whimbrel, willet, purple sandpiper, western sandpiper, buff-breasted sandpiper, both godwits, ruff, and red-necked and red phalaropes. Gulls, meanwhile, were represented by Ohio’s first mew gull at Lorain 29 November, plus laughing, little, lesser black-backed and Thayer’s gulls, and black-legged kittiwake. Cormorants reached an “exemplary peak” of 175 birds at East Harbor State Park on 24 October, and three flocks of sandhill cranes, containing 8-20 birds each, passed over southwest Ohio 6-8 November. A groove-billed ani graced the Arlene Brown farm in Clermont County from 9 October-19 November. All four Ohio groove-billed records occurred between 1963 and 1981. Another would be nice, right about...now.

1991: An eclipsed male harlequin duck surprised the Klamms on the very early date of 6 August. It remained along the Cleveland lakefront for most of the season. A long-tailed jaeger appeared at Headlands Beach State Park on 20 September—the third straight September for this species at this location. The next day, a yellow rail was captured by hand, photographed, and released in Tuscarawas County. Continuing progress in Plegadis ibis identification allowed for the designation of a white-faced ibis at Spencer Lake WA 10-17 October. Two Harris’s sparrows in October and November, along with another earlier in the spring, ushered in a new period of “abundance” for this very rare bird. Since these three sightings, the species has almost come to be expected somewhere in the state each year.

2001: Crowds gathered at select vermillion flycatcher and brown-headed nuthatch sightings. Other bird species were also apparently present in the state at various times during the season; details presumably appear elsewhere in this issue.

FURTHER AFIELD

2011: Listers continued to crisscross the state attempting to track down varieties of the recently split former “red crossbill.” The great-tailed grackle roost in Lucas County reached double digits. The Eurasian collared-dove population proliferated to alarming levels; old-school traditionalists fearing for the well-being of Ohio rock doves initiated reintroduction programs. The highly-localized brown-headed nuthatch nesting colony in Geauga County continued to flourish; this fall up to eight pairs brought their young to the Gilberts’ remarkable feeding station in South Russell. The Gilberts’ construction of enclosed bleacher seating on their property in early 2002 once again paid dividends—after hosting Ohio’s first sage thrasher in 2003 and first lazuli bunting in 2005, this year Jon Dunn’s Great Geauga County Birding Extravaganza tour found Ohio’s first golden-crowned sparrow there 23 November. The Gilberts, always the gracious hosts, invited the entire tour group to stay for Thanksgiving dinner.

A group of birders in the Gilberts’ side yard in Geauga County anxiously awaits the arrival of the famous brown-headed nuthatch. It failed to make an appearance on the day this picture was taken (24 November 2001). Photo by Joe Hammond.
Albinism in Birds

Jim McCormac
ODNR Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
1889 Fountain Square Court, Columbus, OH 43224
Jim.McCormac@dnr.state.oh.us

With the exception of gulls (most of which are various shades of gray above), we see very few species of predominantly white birds in Ohio. White birds tend to cause immediate excitement—after all, they may turn out to be goodies like Ross’s goose, snowy owl, or white ibis. Only about 13 species of Ohio birds—out of 410—are mostly white at least in some plumage, and many are rare to uncommon visitors. Every now and then, however, a white bird shows up that later proves to be an albinistic individual of a common species. These can be real puzzlers. Without the familiar colorations on which we are used to basing our identifications, the identity of even common birds can generate lots of debate. Witness the recent discussion of photos (16-20 December 2001) posted to the ID-Frontiers internet list of a sparrow-like bird in Texas. At a glance, it looked very redpoll-like, but ultimately the consensus among experts was that it was an albinistic chipping sparrow.

What is Albinism?

Essentially, albinism is a genetic disorder that inhibits the formation of tyrosinase, an enzyme that causes the synthesis of melanin, a dark pigment. There are four degrees of albinism, as defined by geneticists Hutt and Mueller in 1941: 1) total albinism, the rarest form, in which the individual is all white with pink eyes; 2) incomplete albinism, in which melanin (in birds) is completely absent from eyes, skin, or feathers, but not all three; 3) imperfect albinism, where melanin is only partially inhibited, creating a pale organism (a well-known example are the “white” tigers used by the entertainers Sigfried and Roy); 4) partial albinism, the most common form, where localized body parts are white or whitish. The majority of unnaturally white birds are in this fourth category.

Albinism is a recessive genetic characteristic, and generally quite rare in any animal population. In humans, it manifests itself in about one person out of every 20,000. Perhaps the best-known people with this condition are the rock musicians Johnny and Edgar Winter. According to the Hardy-Weinberg Equilibrium (a formula for determining population genetics), about one human sperm or egg in 141 carries the recessive gene for albinism. This translates to a likelihood of 1.4% that an individual will become a carrier for albinism. Albinism is probably about equally rare in birds. It’s been estimated that only 0.5% to 1.0% of all birds display any sign of albinism—partial or complete.

Albinism vs. Leucism

The difference between albinism and leucism is quite technical and, practically speaking, probably not that important to bird observers. Either condition causes a whitening of the plumage. But, for technophiles, here’s the basic difference:

Disadvantages of Albinism/Leucism

I consider 13 species of birds that regularly visit Ohio as primarily white in their natural state. There a few others, such as wood stork, ivory gull, and white ibis, but these are accidental in occurrence and not included here. They are American white pelican, great egret, snowy egret, cattle egret, snow goose, Ross’s goose, mute swan, tundra swan, trumpeter swan (introduced), glaucous gull, Iceland gull, snowy owl, and snow bunting.

When looking at this group of only about 3% of our avifauna, two trends become apparent. First, most of these species are relatively predator-free, large enough or close enough to the top of the food chain that predation is generally not a problem. The others tend to flock, finding safety in numbers rather than protective coloration. Thus, the disadvantages of being white and sticking out like a sore thumb are offset by behavioral or morphological characteristics.

Generally speaking, there are probably no benefits for a bird in being albinistic or leucistic, and it’s likely this genetic anomaly isn’t selected for perpetuation. Most strongly albinistic birds have a short shelf life as compared to other normally plumed individuals of the same species. They stand out to predators, and many albinistic passerines, for example, are likely picked off by accipiters in short order. As with humans, albinistic birds tend to have weak eyesight, and while people with this condition often have brittle bones, birds have weaker feather guils. In addition, there are numerous accounts of albinistic individuals being shunned by others of their kind, which is nature’s indifferent way of reducing the likelihood that they will breed and perpetuate this trait.

Examples of Albinism in Birds

The incidence of albinism is just an odds game—the bigger the population, the more likely this condition will be observed. Unsurprisingly then, the number one species displaying albinism in North American birds is the American robin, followed by the house sparrow. In theory, however, any species may display albinism or leucism, and this can lead to some real puzzlers in identification. Oftentimes one does not have long to observe these birds, because of the aforementioned predation factor, but when a larger, relatively predator-free albinistic bird appears, it may be seen for years. This is the case with the turkey vulture that has frequented the area of Egypt Valley in Belmont County, Ohio for at least four years. While not a complete
albino, the bird displays extensive white in the body and wings, and is a very striking sight.

Sometimes, though, it is very difficult to determine the species of an unnaturally white bird. Imagine the surprise—then frustration—experienced by the owners of a South Carolina feeder when an essentially all-white hummingbird made an appearance. This bird, seen in 1999, was established as a ruby-throated hummingbird only when captured and closely studied. As would be expected, it was initially reported as an albino, but actually proved to be leucistic, as its feet, bill, and legs were normally pigmented.

In September 2001, a finch-like bird appeared in rural Licking County, Ohio, that was strikingly patterned in white and dark brown. Understandably, it was at first called a snow bunting. It was quickly realized that it was something else, though, as its behavior, size and shape, and coloration were not right for that species. Figuring out its true identity was very difficult, as is often the case with aberrant birds, and ultimately it could only be guessed at. While I have seen only pictures—and not great ones—I believe a good hypothesis can be made as to its identity.

Identifying Albinos

When working with an albinistic/leucistic bird, whose natural markings are mostly obliterated by white, there is a suite of factors to consider in drawing conclusions about its identity. One, closely examine the plumage. Often times in a leucistic bird, the typical markings will bleed through the whitish overlay, although they may not be evident until the bird can be seen well. White feathering may not mask some markings. Two, examine its habits: is it feeding on the ground or in trees, hopping or walking, have an undulating or straight flight, etc.? Three, pay attention to structure, such as overall size, shape, length of tail, legs, and wings, type of bill, etc. Albinism/leucism will not affect these characteristics. Four, what are its associates? Sometimes, in flocking birds, the company “whitey” keeps will be a dead giveaway. And last, listen for vocalizations. They could clinch the identification.

With careful study, many albinistic birds are not too tough to figure out. The Licking County sparrow was, however. As can be seen from the photos, this bird is mostly white, with what appear to be blackish primaries and markings on the back. Any normally pigmented feathering will appear darker when set off against white. In this case, the plumage is so altered from the typical that coloration is no real help in making the identification. I was given some details of its habits from observers that assisted in the process of elimination. The bird hopped—rather than walked—and spent most of its time foraging on the ground. When startled, it would fly into bushes or trees. Unfortunately, no vocalizations were heard.

Because the bird was reported to hop rather than walk, snow bunting can be ruled out. It also displayed a skulking behavior, sticking close to cover and seeming to flatten to the ground periodically. This is very characteristic of sparrows in the genus Spizella, which tend to be shy and retiring. While somewhat more subjective, the relatively slender body, longish tail, and largish bill are also indicative of Spizella. Although hard to definitively ascertain from the photos, the bill also appears to be pinkish.

All in all, the overall shape, bill, and habits are consistent with one of our native sparrows, in particular the field sparrow Spizella pusilla, and that is my guess. If that is correct, this bird definitely falls into the realm of oddities, as I can find only one reference for an albinistic field sparrow; a bird documented in South Dakota in the early 1980s.

Albinistic or leucistic birds, in addition to providing an unusual spectacle, offer an excellent chance to hone one’s observational skills and powers of deduction. They also serve as a good reminder that first impressions aren’t always correct, and aberrant individuals must always be considered as a possibility—not just rarities.
A Leucistic Rough-legged Hawk in Ohio

John Pogacnik
4765 Lockwood Road, Perry, OH 44081
jpogacnik@ncweb.com

On 15 March 2000 a set of images (see below) was posted on the Ohio Birder Resources website. They were photos of a raptor found in Portsmouth (Scioto County) in early February and subsequently seen and photographed by a number of people. The bird had originally been identified as a gyrfalcon. When I studied the pictures, a couple of things bothered me about the identification. The bird was cream-colored, and had the overall shape of a buteo. Although no expert in gyrfalcon identification, I have seen a few through the years. Gyrfalcons should not be unmarked white, and they should show a typical falcon’s shape.

The bird in the photos was creamy white overall, lacking any dark markings on the wings or back. When I see an all-white bird I suspect something other than a normal plumage, and first try to determine whether it might be leucistic or albinistic. Truly albinistic birds are extremely rare. Such a bird would be pure white, with pink eyes and pink legs and bill. In my 25 years of birding I can remember seeing only one albino bird. Leucistic birds, on the other hand, are a little more common. These birds are typically cream-colored and have soft parts of normal color. This bird’s bill, legs, and eyes showed no abnormal pinkish tones. I felt without a doubt I was looking at photos of a leucistic hawk. Which species, though?

My initial impression had been that this bird was a buteo. The heavy build, with smallish head and bill, were right for a buteo. The wingtips extending to the tail clearly ruled out all the accipiters, as well as gyrfalcon. The eyes also appeared pale, but this feature was difficult to see on the website picture. To get a better view I decided to save the pictures as JPEGs and play with them in Paint Shop Pro 7.0. Once in the program I was able to sharpen the image slightly using the “unsharp mask” function. I also increased the size of the image, and was able to see clearly a pale iris on the bird. All the Ohio falcons have a large dark eye. This bird’s eye was pale and relatively small. I was now positive this bird was a buteo. But which buteo was it?

Species of buteos regularly occurring in Ohio include red-tailed, red-shouldered, broad-winged, and rough-legged hawks. The shape of the bird—fairly bulky, with wingtips appearing to reach the tip of the tail—was more like one of the larger species. Red-shouldered and broad-winged are smaller, trimmer buteos. Nor do the wingtips in either species come close to reaching the tip of the tail. The time of year—February—should also eliminate broad-winged hawk. This left me with a choice between red-tailed or rough-legged hawk.

When perched, red-tailed and rough-legged hawks’ wingtips extend nearly as long as the tail. Rough-legged hawk’s wings are a little bit longer, extending to the tip of the tail, better matching the pictured bird. Another feature that stood out to me was the bird’s noticeably small beak and head. Again, this is consistent with rough-legged hawk. With some effort, I was able to lighten up one of the pictures enough to see the legs and feet of the bird. The feet appeared proportionately small, and the small size of the branch the bird perched on seemed to confirm this. The tarst appeared to be fully feathered. The bird’s feathered legs, small feet, beak and head size, and long wings, along with its choice of small-diameter branches for perching, confirmed to me that this was a rough-legged hawk.

When invited to write this article I was given some additional photos. Included was one of the bird in flight on a cloudy day. In this picture a slightly darker narrow tail band is clearly evident. Leucistic birds will sometimes show the normal plumage bleeding through in shadowy patterns beneath the white, a feature readily apparent in this image. It leaves no doubt as to the bird’s identity. It should be noted that a check through the literature and inquiries of experienced hawk watchers turned up no prior records of leucistic or albinistic rough-legged hawks. While a rough-legged hawk may not seem as exciting a find as a gyrfalcon, seeing what may be the first documented leucistic one is a one of a kind experience.
The Surprise Nuthatch

Linda Gilbert
1604 Bell Street, South Russell, OH 44022
lkg38@worldnet.att.net

South Russell is a small village in Geauga County where I have lived all my life. As a kid growing up in a rural setting, it seemed inevitable that I would become interested in nature, particularly birds. With a variety of habitats on our 38 acres of land, there was always an interesting assortment of songbirds and waterfowl to view throughout the year. I became quite good at identifying them. I wish I could attribute the sighting of a particular bird on 21 November 2001 to keen observational skills, but actually it had more to do with dumb luck and being in the right place at the right time when a small bird with a brown cap landed on the feeder just outside the kitchen window.

The first day the brown-headed nuthatch appeared at the feeder, the most obvious field mark was its brown cap and the pale splotch on the back of its neck. Its underparts were pale or whitish, its back and wings were blue-gray. It had the typical nuthatch body shape, and appeared only a tad smaller than nearby red-breasted nuthatches. It behaved like a nuthatch as well. We watched it climb headfirst down the side of the feeder. Then, it jumped to the suet basket and was eating suet upside-down. It inspected the peanut feeder and the sunflower seed mixture. It placed a seed in one of the crevices on the feeder and pounded on it. The bird came frequently to the feeder all day the first day, preferring to eat the suet, then the peanuts, and lastly, the sunflower seeds. In the ensuing weeks, however, its taste changed from the suet to the sunflower seed. It would make short trips to the feeder and pick through the seeds, tossing them aside until it found a black oil sunflower seed to its liking. Then it would fly off into one of the three white oak trees in the back yard. Placing the seed under a piece of bark, it would hammer on it and eat it up there. Occasionally, it would forage up and down an oak’s trunk or along the limbs.

Between its trips back and forth to the feeder, it sometimes sang or gave a call note. Its song is very un-nuthatch-like; sort of squeaky phrases, some of them like the “dee-dee-dee” parts of a Chickadee song but higher. The call note was distinctive, too, a sharp “kip,” but with different harmonics. It is hard to describe. Learning its voice, though, was a useful way to locate the bird when it wasn’t at the feeder or in the oak trees. The nuthatch was certainly not intimidated by the presence of people. It would come to the feeder even if I was working around my little pond only 15 feet away, nor did the number of visiting birders gawking at it through binoculars, scopes, and cameras seem to bother it.

I am certainly not a bird expert, but I am a very careful birder. I like to have a really good look at a bird before it gets a check mark on my list. The bird feeder is only a couple feet from the kitchen window, allowing great, close-range observations. The bird appeared to be a perfect match to the picture in the Peterson field guide. The only thing that didn’t match was the bird’s range, but sometimes, I knew, birds get misplaced. After studying the new bird for some time, I was certain it was a brown-headed nuthatch so it was with pure innocence that I reported it to the rare bird hotline. I was totally ignorant of the fact that the brown-headed nuthatch had not been seen in Ohio since the 1800s*, until I received a phone call from the man who posts the bird sightings on the phone line. When he told me about its rare status, I was worried that no one would believe that I’d seen it. Luckily, my brother had taken some digital pictures of the bird while it was on the feeder. We didn’t think the pictures were very good, but apparently they were intriguing enough that an expert wanted to come out and have a look. Fortunately, Larry Rosche was sitting at our kitchen table on 23 November when the brown-headed nuthatch landed on the feeder right in front of him. He was able to confirm my sighting.

That is when everything started “hitting the fan,” and the significance of what I had seen began to sink in. Later the same afternoon, some people on the Ohio Bird Records Committee were sitting in the kitchen waiting for the bird to show up. It did not. In the following days, various people from Columbus (including the editor of this journal) and other parts of Ohio, as well as people from Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky came to our house hoping to see this tiny bird. The nuthatch did not make an appearance for an entire week, even though the birders did. When it appeared again, it seemed to follow a routine of making morning visits to the bird feeder and oak trees. Finally, the visiting birders began to get some good looks at it. My parents and I have been very amused by the fanatical interest this bird has generated. Some of the people on the records committee finally got to see it on their fourth or fifth trip to our house—a three-hour drive each way! Someone else tallied fifteen hours of waiting before seeing it! We have met some really great folks, though, and it has been very satisfying to share the brown-headed nuthatch with bird watchers from near and far.

*Ed. note: The author refers here to a specimen J. P. Kirtland reported collecting in Ohio sometime prior to 1838. Accepted by older authorities, the OBRC does not recognize it. For Kirtland’s report see our previous issue, The Ohio Cardinal 24(4):199.

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001
Pomarine Jaegers at Rocky River Park

Ted Gilliland
19955 Roslyn Drive, Rocky River, OH 44116
gillilandted@hotmail.com

Any occasion to see jaegers in Ohio is rare, but rarer still is a chance to study them at length. Fly-by jaegers often provoke little more than an increased heart rate and the opportunity to use the bold-face type on your sightings report, but lengthier observations can provide quite a bit more. Taking notes on behaviors such as hunting, roosting, and the birds’ other interactions with their environments can heighten your enjoyment and might even add to our knowledge of these enigmatic birds.

A group of pomarine jaegers offshore from Rocky River Park (Cuyahoga County) provided me with one of these scarce opportunities. The first two birds were found by Gabe Leidy on 25 November 2001, and at least one was present through 7 December. During this period five individual jaegers were identified. They seemed to have accompanied an influx of gulls that appeared around Thanksgiving weekend. This concentration was unusually large for the area, totaling roughly 15,000 birds, approximately two-thirds of them Bonaparte’s and one-third ring-billed gulls. The weather during the period mostly featured southwest winds, with only occasional shifts to the south or west. Temperatures were uncommonly mild for the time of year. After nearly two weeks the gull concentrations dwindled, and sightings of the jaegers seemed to do likewise.

Since comparatively little is known about the habits of these birds away from their breeding grounds, it is important for observers to take advantage of a prolonged stay by migrating jaegers. At such times, their interactions with gulls and waterfowl fill such a unique niche that they are a continual source of interest, and a joy to study in the field. The Rocky River birds stayed far offshore for the most part, but occasionally approached closer, usually in search of gulls. This group of pomarines was observed harassing only ring-billed gulls, ignoring Bonaparte’s and avoiding herring gulls. On more than one occasion herring gulls actually pursued the jaegers, as if to chase them off. Rarely, two birds would be seen cooperatively harassing a gull: one jaeger would “dog-fight” with the gull, the other chasing close at hand. When looking for a victim to pursue, the jaegers adopted a distinctive posture, in which the head was pointed straight down and the legs dropped into the “down” position. The legs dangled there until the bird finally swooped after a gull. When the jaegers prepared to land they invariably performed the same distinctive gestures. When approaching the water they would begin to run their legs and flap their wings very daintily, in a manner reminiscent of a storm-petrel. When in the water the pomarines often associated with red-breasted mergansers, sitting either inside the flock or just on its periphery, perhaps to conceal themselves from nearby gulls. As night approached, the jaegers could occasionally be seen flying far offshore into open water before finally landing to roost for the night.

A later chance encounter with another pomarine jaeger at the Avon Lake Power Plant (Lorain County) on 8 December provided one more opportunity to study some of the behaviors of the species. This individual was much closer to shore than the group in Rocky River, allowing chances to examine it in more detail. Along with the usual harassment of gulls, this bird showed an interest in other food sources such as carrion. As a dead fish floated past, the jaeger showed a keen interest, approached it, and began to feed. This food source perhaps enabled the bird to save energy, reducing the time spent in the air hunting. Hunting time consumed no more than two minutes of the hour and a half during which it was observed. When flying the jaeger exhibited one obvious characteristic not observed on the Rocky River birds: on long glides very near the water’s surface, the wings were held in a deep arc, which I estimated to be roughly 90 degrees of a circle. The Avon Lake bird was aged as an immature dark morph.

Plumage sequences in jaegers seem not completely understood. Some immature plumages are not yet well mapped out, making them important to note in jaeger observations. As far as identification goes, the Rocky River birds showed the usual deep steady wing beats, big head, short body, and large size typical of pomarines. Good opportunities for size comparison arose while one was harassing a ring-billed gull, when the jaeger showed a slightly longer wingspan. Before I realized there were several jaegers present, I was in a bit of a quandary. I kept finding birds with contrasting field marks. Once a gathering of birds proved that five individuals were present, I realized the source of my confusion, and set about trying to distinguish among them. There was one adult light morph, but the rest were immature. Their distance from shore, and their customary solitary appearances, posed a real challenge for distinguishing among the latter individuals. All the immatures showed a contrast between the lighter uppertail coverts and the dark tail; less often seen was the contrast between the dark tail and the barred undertail coverts and vent. The mantles and bellies of these birds were dark, and in most individuals there was contrast between the belly and the still darker head. When they were cooperative, it was

Two of the Rocky River, Cuyahoga County, pomarine jaegers harassing a ring-billed gull. Drawing by the author.

The Avon Lake Power Plant, Lorain County, immature dark morph pomarine jaeger as drawn by the author.

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001
possible to see the two pale crescents on the underwing—one on the base of the primaries, another on the wing linings. Some showed more white on the dorsal side of the wings than others, but this was visible only when the birds were closer to shore. The only easily distinguishable immature bird was noticeable because of its tan-colored head and nape, possibly an indication that it was an intermediate morph.

It was truly a treat to be able to spend so much time with these birds, and I will not soon forget it. In some instances these birds approached close enough for great scope views, revealing the real personality of a jaeger—close enough to see the bill, feet, and even the eye. A chance to see an adult—the rarest plumage for jaegers in Ohio—at this range added to the excitement of the sighting. Just watching the jaegers in pursuit I could not help but marvel at their flight capabilities. The way they twist and turn in flight is certainly something to admire. I was blessed to have these birds for a whole two weeks, and even more so to have them just down the street! 😊

The Ohio Cardinal

Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee

Bill Whan
223 East Tulane Road, Columbus, OH 43202
danrnel@lwaynet.net

One of the missions of the OBRC is the validation of records of rare birds reported in the state. Thanks to observers who submitted documentation, the following decisions have been made since the last published summary of Review List species reported in Ohio.

Accepted Records

Documentations received from observers for the following records were judged sufficient to verify them for the record by at least nine of the eleven members of the Committee.

Glossy Ibis—Wyandot County, 13 April 2001, observer R. Rogers
Glossy Ibis—Erie County, 5 May 2001, observer G. Bernhardt
Mew Gull—Lake County, 12 March 2001, observer L. Gardella
Least Tern—Clark County, 13 August 2001, observer D. Overacker

Records Not Accepted

Documentation received for the following reports received fewer than six votes to accept. Such votes do not reflect on the sighting itself, but on the adequacy of the documentation to validate it for the permanent record.

"Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk—Holmes County, 18 November 2000
Long-tailed Jaeger—Lake County, 15 September 2000
Black-legged Kitiwake—Warren County, 2 December 2000
Chestnut-collared Longspur—Marion County, 10 April 2001

Records in Recirculation

These records are being recirculated, the documentation for which having received between six and eight votes to accept.

Eurasian Collared-Dove—Crawford County, 1 September 2001
Bewick's Wren—Hocking County, 16 June 2001
Shiny Cowbird—Lucas County, 5 May 2001

Two species potentially new to Ohio are in recirculation, and as many as three others are among those to be circulated for the first time in December. The next packet of documentation for the committee will include:

Oporornis warbler—Lucas County, 21 May 2001
Le Conte's Sparrow—Butler County, 21 October 2001
Plegadis falcinellus—Van Wert County, 28 October 2001
Long-tailed Jaeger—Lake County, 27 October 2001
Le Conte's Sparrow—Cuyahoga County, 18 October 2001
Le Conte's Sparrow—Cuyahoga County, 24 October 2001
Vermilion Flycatcher—Lucas & Ottawa Counties, 4 November 2001
Bicknell's Thrush—Lucas County, 28 October 2001
Brown-headed Nuthatch—Geauga County, 21 November 2001
Rufus Hummingbird—Adams County, 8 November 2001

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001
The Committee's other activities include the development of a pocket-sized checklist of Ohio birds with bar-graphs indicating their seasonal abundances, planned for publication this spring. The Committee asks observers of Review List species to send documentation for such sightings to Committee Secretary Jim McCormac at ODNR/DNAP, 1889 Fountain Square Ct., Columbus, OH 43224, or to Jim.McCormac@dnr.state.oh.us. Information on documentation, and a form useful for the purpose, can be found at the Ohio Division of Natural Preserves' Ohio Birding site at <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/dnap/OhioBirding/ohiobirding2.htm>.

---

**North American Shorebird Population Estimates**

The following list is adapted from Appendix I of the second edition of the United States Shorebird Conservation Plan 2000, published by the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences. The complete text of the Plan, a product of years of work by many agencies, institutions, organizations and concerned individuals, as well as updates on these numbers, is available from Manomet (Manomet, MA 02345) and on the internet at <http://manomet.org/USSCP/index.htm>. A confidence level of “poor” means the estimate is an educated guess, “low” that it is in the correct order of magnitude, “moderate” that it is thought to be within 50% of the true number, “good” that it is an effort on which confidence limits can be placed, and “high” that it results from dedicated census effort and thought to be accurate and precise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Population Estimate</th>
<th>Confidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black-bellied Plover</td>
<td>Pluvialis squatarola cyanosurae</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P. s. squatarola</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Golden-Plover</td>
<td>Pluvialis dominica</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Golden-Plover</td>
<td>Pluvialis fulva</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowy Plover</td>
<td>Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus (interior)</td>
<td>13,200</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. a. nivosus (Pacific)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. a. temminckii (Gulf &amp; Caribbean)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson's Plover</td>
<td>Charadrius wilsonia</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semipalmated Plover</td>
<td>Charadrius semipalmatus</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piping Plover</td>
<td>Charadrius melodus circumcinctus (Great Plains)</td>
<td>3300</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. m. melodus (Atlantic)</td>
<td>2600</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. m. circumcinctus (Great Lakes)</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killdeer</td>
<td>Charadrius vociferus</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Plover</td>
<td>Charadrius montanus</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Oystercatcher</td>
<td>Haematopus palliatus</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Oystercatcher</td>
<td>Haematopus bachmani</td>
<td>8900</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-necked Stilt</td>
<td>Himantopus mexicanus mexicanus</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H. m. knudseni</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Avocet</td>
<td>Recurvirostra americana</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Yellowlegs</td>
<td>Tringa melanoleuca</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Yellowlegs</td>
<td>Tringa flaviga</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitary Sandpiper</td>
<td>Tringa solitaria cinnamomea</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T. s. solitaria</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willet</td>
<td>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus (western)</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. s. semipalmatus (eastern)</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandering Tattler</td>
<td>Heteroscelus incanus</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Sandpiper</td>
<td>Actitis macularia</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland Sandpiper</td>
<td>Bartramia longicauda</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eskimo Curlew</td>
<td>Numenius borealis</td>
<td>&lt;50</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reports of Yesteryear: Lucas County

The abundances and distributions of our birdlife are subject not only to slow evolutions and glaciations, but to the unnatural selection imposed by humans. Even as recently as 1940, Lou Campbell, former dean of Toledo-area birders, reported observations that provoke thoughts about how quickly birds’ numbers and ranges can change, and why. These reports come from his Birds of Lucas County of that year.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Campbell remarked that their largest colony was on West Sister Island (now part of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge), estimated to contain five to ten thousand nests in June of 1934.

American Bittern: Though he notes they are far more often heard than seen, Campbell’s high count was nevertheless 35 American bitterns seen in the Jerusalem marshes on an August day in 1929.

Tundra Swan: Campbell cites reports of flocks of 25-30,000 birds seen during spring migrations in the county, though his personal high count was only about 5000, in March of 1930. He remarks that “[c]omparatively few Whistling Swans are seen during autumn in this district,” with a record flock of only 275 in November of 1936, and notes “there is but one winter record.”

Canada Goose: He comments that this species “is much less common in Lucas County than the Whistling Swan. Found regularly each spring and fall, it is never very abundant.” He calls its status in Ohio that of an uncommon migrant.

American Black Duck: Campbell asserts the two forms of this species (Anas rubripes rubripes, the transient “red-legged black duck,” and A. r. tristis, the locally nesting “common black duck”) together “outnumber Mallards, with which they so often associate, more than two to one.”

Red-breasted Merganser: Stating that these birds “are never numerous,” and “far less regular...than either the Hooded or American Mergansers,” Campbell goes on to say the “greatest number seen in one day in the county is thirty, January 14, 1932.”

Northern Bobwhite: In decline though locally common in Lucas County at the time, reports Campbell, even though the species had been protected from hunting since 1912.

Sandhill Crane: A colony of 12-15 pairs nested in the Oak Openings around 1875, but in “the spring of 1913, Professor W.P. Holt saw a migrant Sandhill Crane which had been shot in the Oak Openings. This occurrence appears to be the last local record.”

Black Tern: “Commonly found in the marshes” of the county, this species nested at the time only in Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky, Erie, Lorain, and Ashtabula Counties.

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Autumn 2001
Great Horned Owl: A "rare permanent resident," of which there was "a total of eighteen records from all sources for this area from 1929 to the present time."

Barred Owl: With only two definite nesting records for the county, "this permanent resident has been so reduced in numbers by hunters that it must now be classed as rare," and "within the next few years its weird hooting may become only a memory."

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Campbell saw only one of this species in Lucas County, and says it was "not known to breed in most of the northwestern quarter" of Ohio. In his 1968 Birds of the Toledo Area, he says that after only 12 records in the region between 1926 and 1960, the ravages of Dutch elm disease in the Toledo area attracted these birds in numbers.

Golden-winged Warbler: A rare migrant and summer resident known to breed in fifteen counties, the "greatest number of these birds seen in one day was fifteen, June 14, 1933, in Spencer Township." Loss of habitat loomed as a serious problem.

Le Conte's Sparrow: From 30 August to 1 November 1936, a "great wave" of Le Conte's sparrows passed through Ohio, with highest concentrations in Lucas County, where in Jerusalem Township meadows on 25 October "fifty-three birds were actually seen and four hundred and ninety-five were estimated by means of a cross section of a field." Searchers found eight birds the following year locally, and none in 1938 or 1939.

Henslow's Sparrow: "Common summer residents in the fields and wet prairies of the Oak Openings," in the mid-30s the species colonized grassy borders in the Cedar Point and Erie marshes, where "at least fifty were found at the former location, August 1, 1936."