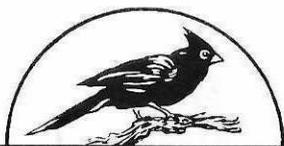


*The Ohio*



# CARDINAL™

Vol. 22, No. 4  
Summer 1999



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

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

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

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

## Subscriptions

The subscription rate for one year (four issues) is \$15.00. Please send all subscription requests to:

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

## The Ohio Cardinal

Bill Whan, Editor  
Edwin C. Pierce, Publisher  
Joseph W. Hammond, Design Manager  
The Ohio Bird Records Committee: Jim McCormac, Secretary  
Ohio Division of Natural Areas and Preserves  
1889 Fountain Square, Bldg. F-1  
Columbus, OH 43224

Cover: **Henslow's Sparrow** - Woodbury WA, Coshocton Co., 9 June 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

## Summer 1999 Overview by Bill Whan

The summer was memorably hot and dry, especially away from the northern counties. Few of us will have forgotten the discomforts of the season, but for the record here are the National Weather Service's numbers. In the columns of the following table, the first records deviations in degrees Fahrenheit from the average daily high temperatures for the month, the second deviation from the average monthly precipitation in inches, and the third the number of days in each month in which the high temperature exceeded 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

	Temperature (°F)	Precipitation (in.)	Nineties
<b>CLEVELAND</b>			
June	+2.5	-2.27	4
July	+4.3	+1.14	10
<b>COLUMBUS</b>			
June	+5.3	-3.39	12
July	+7.0	-1.29	20
<b>CINCINNATI</b>			
June	+2.0	-0.68	5
July	+3.9	-1.08	17

Human complaining aside, southern-style weather seems not to have discouraged northern birds. Red-breasted nuthatches, brown creepers, hermit thrushes, dark-eyed juncos, and golden-crowned kinglets, as well as warblers such as Blackburnian, magnolia, and Canada were, if not confirmed as nesters, at least repeatedly detected during the period. It is too easy for a pampered and chronically malcontent species such as our own to assume such a hot dry summer will greatly alter the lives of wildlife. We, for example, were all too ready to assume the drought had devastated insect prey for birds, but a talk with OSU entomologist and birder Dave Horn was customarily enlightening; he told us that in parched areas of southern Ohio, flying insects (parasitic wasps and flies, etc.) and crawling soil-surface arthropods (beetles, crickets, spiders, etc.) were down perhaps 5% for the former and about 10% for the latter. Such variations may or may not be due to drought, but in any case they are, he said, well within normal annual variation. If there were to be any major impact on birds, he predicted, it would be delayed; if plants were to dry up, caterpillars (and subsequent moths and parasites) would be depressed in population, consequently reducing forage for foliage-gleaning birds such as warblers, tanagers, etc., and that as streams dried up, there would be fewer midges, caddisflies, etc., with some impact on flycatchers. He didn't anticipate any reduction in bird populations, but some species might have to work harder next summer.

Lingering waterbirds were scarce, befitting their hasty departure in the spring, but as always a few individuals of species breeding to the north were discovered after mid-June. The widespread emergence of seventeen-year cicadas raised hopes for Missis-

sippi kites (hopes that may have been fulfilled, as documentation is now with the OBRC of a kite from Summit County), and good numbers of spring caterpillars brought excellent numbers of cuckoos. Two pairs of loggerhead shrikes nested, but eked out only a single verified nestling between them. Four singing Bell's vireos, a couple of clay-colored sparrows, and widespread sightings of sedge wrens, on the other hand, were encouraging. Overall, opinions among seasoned observers about the abundances of nesting species were so various as to tempt a compiler to conclude things were more or less normal. As for rarities, five individuals of four Review List species were reported, but not all were documented for the record, leaving some in the shadowlands of rumor. One, a least tern from the Cincinnati area, was written up, and has already been accepted by the Ohio Bird Records Committee.

This tern, the first officially recorded in two years, was emblematic. Birders from southern Ohio seem to be having the best of it in many ways, ever since their western grebe of last January through April. In particular, the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands, a Hamilton County park, emerged this summer as an outstanding birding venue, its habitats of marsh and prairie having developed sufficiently to support grassland specialists such as Henslow's sparrow and dickcissel, wetlands birds such as sedge and marsh wrens and the county's first breeding hooded mergansers, migrant shorebirds of many species, a Bell's vireo, and Review List rarities—purple gallinule last season and least tern in this. Probably no single area of its size anywhere in the state produced as many interesting sightings this year.

Shorebirds are usually the stars of the summer migration, and their occurrences were as spotty as usual, given the chronic shortage of dependable habitat. Many adults moved early, making it harder than ever to tell in June whether birds were coming or going. Lower Lake levels exposed shoreline mudflats and bars in many places difficult to access, but also produced two large and productive areas of mudflats in places often visited by birders, at Conneaut harbor and Sheldon Marsh State Nature Preserve.

Between these two areas 27 of the year's 32 species of shorebirds had been recorded by the end of the period. Dike construction at Medusa Marsh haphazardly introduced mudflats into the range of habitats there, inviting many shorebirds and a truly Evergladesian aggregation of egrets through the end of the period. Drought in the south briefly exposed unusually productive habitats in places like the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands and Winton Woods. Several shorebird hotspots of recent years have receded into obscurity: the Lorain impoundment, for example, has become another collection of invasive exotic plants such as *Phragmites* and purple loosestrife, where shorebirds seem out of the question, and earlier hopes that it might at least attract rarer *Ammodramus* species or gull roosts have evaporated for the time being. Metzger Marsh's anticipated emergence as shorebird habitat seems to have been delayed indefinitely by dramatically lower Lake levels—historically normal levels, it must be said—unforeseen in the planning for its regeneration.

We are deeply grateful to all the contributors to this magazine who braved stifling weather and the occasional dearth of birdsong and confusing fledgling plumages and hordes of insects to gather data for reports to the rest of us about the birds of the summer season. Confirming nesting is an especially important task, and observers with the skill and patience to perform it deserve extra thanks. Summer is seldom the year's most exciting season for listers or ID buffs, but let us not forget it is the season the birds live for.

The following report follows the taxonomic order of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of *The AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998). Underlined names of species indicate those on the OBRC Review List; sufficient documentation is necessary to add reports of these species to the official records. County names are supplied for certain locations, and appear *italicized*. Other abbreviations should be readily understood, with the possible exceptions of the following: CBC=Christmas Bird Count; CVNRA=Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area; *fide*="in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another; GAAS=Greater Akron Audubon Society (data from which herein derives from its 21<sup>st</sup> annual Summer Bird Count, held 11-21 June in the southern ¾ of Summit County), here reported by **C. Tveekrem**; Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh Wildlife Area; Killdeer=Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area; Magee=Magee Marsh Wildlife Area; Metzger=Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area, MP=Metropark; m obs=many observers; NF=National Forest; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ONWRC=Ottawa NWR Census (a monthly bird count on the Refuge conducted by volunteers) herein reported by **E. Pierce**; Ottawa=Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge; Res=Reservoir; Res'n=Reservation; RTLS=Ravenna Training and Logistics Site (formerly known as the Ravenna Arsenal), referring exclusively herein to a *Portage* site systematically surveyed by **L. Rosche** et al.; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; WA=Wildlife Area; ~≈approximately.



Field Sparrow (juv.) - Woodbury WA, Coshoc-ton Co., 16 June 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

## The Reports

**Common Loon:** As usual, some loons procrastinated through the first week of the period, and a few chose to lounge beside the gene pool by staying much longer. On the Findlay Res, six were present on 1 June, two on 6 July and one remained on 27 July (**B. Hardesty**). A bird was at Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, on 5 June (**J. Pogacnik**), and a basic-plumaged bird the same day at Buck Ck SP (**D. Overacker**). An adult in alternate plumage was at Killdeer through 6 June (**B. Barchus**), and one at Wolf Run SP, *Noble*, through 18 June (**J. Larson**). More oddly, one popped up beside **C. Ruttle**'s kayak on the Ohio River, *Hamilton*, on 15 July.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** The ONWRC produced 10 birds on 6 June and 21 on 4 July. 24 were counted at Magee on 18 July (**H&S Hiris**). One was at Shenango WA, *Trumbull*, on 18 June, and two different-aged broods accompanied by adults at Grand River WA on 23 July (**D&J Hochadel**). At the same locale **C. Babyak** noted grebes on 26 & 27 June, as well as 4+ immatures on 11 July. Eleven were at Medusa Marsh on 29 July (**C. Holt**). Less routine were four young produced by a pair at Highbanks MP, *Delaware*, during the period (**J. Hammond**).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** 123 were tallied by the ONWRC on 6 June, and as the period progressed birds were noted at customary spots in customary numbers along the Lakeside. Elsewhere, 20 were at Gilmore Ponds on 22 June (**D. Dister**), and two at Rocky Fork Lk SP on 27 June (**St. Wagner**), as well as at expected intervening bodies of water. **L. Rosche** reported the species plentiful at Lk Rockwell, *Portage*, all summer. In an uncharacteristic decline, 20-25 at Meander Res, *Mahoning*, were down from ~50 of recent years (**N. Brundage**). Concerns that this species may crowd out breeding herons and egrets might be easier to assess if more than a pitiful few nesting islands for any of these birds were protected from our species.

**American White Pelican:** This species often settles in for a long stay once comfy in an area, as did two birds who loitered in the Crane Creek estuary at Ottawa from at least 17 July through the end of the period (**T. Kemp**, m obs).

**American Bittern:** Few tidings. **J. Pogacnik** thought nesting possible at Grand River WA during the period, and **B. Hardesty** had most welcome confirmation of breeding in *Hancock* with a family group of four on 22 June. A pair may have nested at Crown City WA, *Gallia/Lawrence* (*vide J. McCormac*).

**Least Bittern:** Two were noted at Grand River WA the first week of the period, and nesting was later confirmed on 27 June (**J. Pogacnik**). One was heard from 1-9 June at the Black Swamp Nature Ctr (*Paulding*) by **M&D Dunakin**. Birds were noted in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 6 June (**N. Cade**) and 26 June (**T. Bartlett**). Two were at traditional breeding-grounds in the Spring Valley WA on 29 June (**J. Hays**), one in the Springville Marsh SNP on 15 July (**T. Bartlett**), and one at Metzger on 29 July (**B. Morrison**). Summered at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**). Breeding at Arcola Ck, *Lake*, during the period was reported as possible by **J. Pogacnik**.

**Great Blue Heron:** 162 were present on the Ottawa census on 6 June (ONWRC), and 82 on that for *Hancock* on 8 June (**B. Hardesty** et al.). On 11 June the Lordstown, *Trumbull*, colony boasted 394 nests on 88 trees (**C. Babyak**).

**Great Egret:** 74 were counted at Ottawa on 4 July (ONWRC), and a monster rally of 156 at Medusa Marsh on 30 July (**D. Sanders**). At less traditional sites, one was at Mosquito Lk WA on 25 June (**D&J Hochadel**), one on the CVNRA on 4 July (**R. Rickard**), five at the Grand River WA on 13 July (**J&D Hochadel**), and two on 25 July at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands (**N. Cade**), where as many as four were noted during the period (**N. Keller**).

**Snowy Egret:** High count was 15 at Medusa Marsh on 29 July (**C. Holt**). More farflung birds were singletons at Conneaut on 2 June (**J. Pogacnik**), at Grand River WA during the first week in June (**C. Babyak**), and way downstate at Greenlawn Dam in Columbus on 25 July (**M. Williams**).

**Little Blue Heron:** Two were reported at Magee on 18 July (**H&S Hiris**), and **N. Cade** saw one at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July.

**Cattle Egret:** One roamed as far as Grand River WA on 27 June (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Green Heron:** **T&M Romito** had 10 on the CVNRA on 19 July, and **D. Brinkman** 30 at Gilmore Ponds on the 31<sup>st</sup>. *Lake* MPs surveys show a steady increase with birds at seven locations in 1996, 11 in 1997, 12 in 1998, and 15 this year (**J. Pogacnik**), and **L. Rosche** regarded it as improved in *Portage*.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** 13 were at Ottawa on 6 June, then 25 by 4 July (ONWRC); the 20 June Magee census had 41 (**H&S Hiris**). **C. Holt** had 20 in *Erie* on 27 June. Five birds were noted on 17 July on S. Bass Isl (**S. Wulkowicz**). Interestingly, a bird was at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 5 June, then five on 23 July (**P. Wharton**).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** Many unanticipated sightings, although more predictability, however dull, might be more comforting: 4 June in *Athens* (**B. Placier**), an adult near Lk Hope SP, *Vinton* (**D. Horn**) on 22 July, one adult at Conneaut on 25 July (**J. Pogacnik**, **T. Uhlman**), an immature at the same spot by **B. Winger** on 28 July, and an immature at Metzger on the 30<sup>th</sup> by **B. Morrison**.

**Black Vulture:** Two were near New Richland, *Clermont*, on 2 June (**D. Brinkman**), and four over the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 23 July (**T. Uhlman**). More unusual was one—the first in *Clark* known to its veteran observer—on 20 June (**D. Overacker**), one in *Coshocton* on 25 June by **T. Hochstetler**, and another on 29 July near Spring Mtn in *Coshocton* (**L. Deininger**).

**Mute Swan:** Two were at Ottawa on ONWRC's count on 6 June, and seven birds were off S. Bass Isl on the 28<sup>th</sup> (**S. Wulkowicz**). Further afield, one spent the period at Paulding Res (**D&M Dunakin**), and another at Buck Cr SP (**D. Overacker**) through the period.

**Tundra Swan:** Strange enough was one at Sheldon Marsh SNP, on and off beginning on 18 July (**M. Zuilhof**, m obs); there are usually a few summering birds in the Great Lakes.

**Wood Duck:** 72 were at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC), 71 at Magee on 20 June (**H&S Hiris**), and 45 at Killbuck on 24 July (**B. Glick**).

**Gadwall:** Two were at Magee on 2 June (**E. Tramer**), one at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 27 June (**C. Holt**), one at Conneaut on 27 June and 20 July (**J. Pogacnik**), and 10 at Magee on 18 July (**H&S Hiris**).

**American Wigeon:** Three were seen at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC), and one at Killdeer on 18 June (**B&A Toneff**).

**American Black Duck:** The Ottawa census had two on 6 June (ONWRC), two were at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 27 June (**C. Holt**), and **N. Cade** had two at Spring Grove Cemetery, *Hamilton*, on 24 July.

**Mallard:** The 6 June Ottawa census produced 365, and on 4 July, 142 (ONWRC); the 20 June Magee census counted 90 (**H&S Hiris**).

**Blue-winged Teal:** The ONWRC had only one at Ottawa on 6 June. Teals nested on the Grand River WA during the period, and a pair was noted at Arcola Ck, *Lake*, in mid-June (**J. Pogacnik**). 14 were at Magee on 20 June (**H&S Hiris**). Two were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 28 June (**D. Russell**, **J. Jacquot**), and 12 at Killbuck on 30 June (**S. Snyder**). One persisted on the count at Ottawa on 4 July (ONWRC). A female and a large brood were reported from the Grand River WA on 11 July by **D&J Hochadel**; the young were counted at 12 the same day by **C. Babyak**. 70 were counted at Magee on 18 July (**H&S Hiris**), their numbers likely augmented by early migrants.

**Northern Shoveler:** The ONWRC had one at Ottawa on 6 June.

**Northern Pintail:** Two remained at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC), and **M. Zuilhof** reported one at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 9 July.

**Green-winged Teal:** Ottawa had its traditional summering birds, numbering six on 6 June and two on 4 July. One was at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 11 July (**C. Holt**), and another in the Grand River WA on 20 July (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Ring-necked Duck:** One tallied for **D&M Dunakin** at Paulding Res through 5 June.

**Lesser Scaup:** One was seen at a pond in *Hancock* on 1 June, 8 June, and 15 June by **B. Hardesty**.

**Hooded Merganser:** A female with six young and another female were found 13 June in the Grand River WA by **C. Holt**. A female and four young were on the CVNRA on 16 June (**D&A Chasar**). Five females were at Shenango WA, *Trumbull*, on 18 June, two of them minding 10 chicks (**D&J Hochadel**). Two adults accompanied three juveniles at Mosquito Lk WA on 25 June (**D&J Hochadel**), and three hens with broods were at Killdeer on the 26<sup>th</sup> (**C. Bombaci**). Three birds were seen at Pickerel Ck WA on 11 July by **C. Holt**. The female at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands continued with three young during the period, the male no doubt elsewhere bragging about their first-record *Hamilton* brood. **J. Pogacnik** found four nests in the *Lake* MPs during the period, and **L. Rosche** noted successful nesting on the RTLS and at Twin Lakes, *Portage*.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Mostly short-term lingerers. Three were at Findlay Res on 1 June (**B. Hardesty**), one at Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, on the 4<sup>th</sup> (**J. Pogacnik**), a female at Kelley's Isl on the 5<sup>th</sup> (**V. Fazio**), one at Paulding Res on the 7<sup>th</sup> (**M&D Dunakin**), and one on the 13<sup>th</sup> at the Grand River WA (**C. Holt**). Unusual was one discovered in the CVNRA on 19 July (**M. Zehnder**).

**Ruddy Duck:** Six males and four females were at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC). One was at the Girdled Rd Res'n, *Lake*, on 8 June (**J. Pogacnik**), and another was seen on 1 June and 8 June on the Findlay Res (**B. Hardesty**). One was in Sandusky Bay near Bayview 29 July (**D. Sanders**).

**Osprey:** In past years, sorting out summer sightings among late migrants, wandering non-breeders, and early migrants was no picnic; now, numerous juveniles introduced this year and adults from previous years must be factored into the mix. The good part is we're seeing more ospreys. Observers should take note of bands, if any, on birds seen, and report them. One was perched at Pickerel Creek WA, and also three days earlier, on 2 June (**D. Sanders**). One seen on 20 June at the Grand River WA (**J. Pogacnik**), one 25 June near Mt. Orab, *Brown* (**T. Bartlett**), one 10 July at Killbuck (**L. Deininger**), one 11 July at Lake La Su An WA (**J. Grabmeier**), and one on the CVNRA on 23 July (**M. Zehnder**) and the next day by **A&D Chasar**. Also on the 24<sup>th</sup> was one at Pleasant Hill Lk, *Richland/Ashland* (**A&A Burkholder**). **L. Rosche** had one at Streetsboro on the 27<sup>th</sup> and at Lk Rockwell on the 28<sup>th</sup>, both *Portage*.

**Bald Eagle:** Sightings in more unaccustomed areas included one immature on 24 June along the Little Miami River (**J. Hays**), one adult and one immature at Rocky Fork SP (**St. Wagner**), one over the Hebron Fish Hatchery, *Licking*, by **C. Dusthimer** on 27 July, and one adult on 19 July and 26 July at the Findlay Res by **B. Hardesty**.

**Northern Harrier:** At Tri-Valley WA, *Muskingum*, a male was seen on 3 June carrying food, and on 29 July a female was observed, suggesting nesting there (**J. Hammond**). One was seen in *Ashtabula* by **J. Pogacnik** on 27 June, and one on 20 July. **C. Babyak** noticed a male in *Ashtabula* on 11 July. A female was found in *Vinton* on 15 July (**D. Horn**). Another was sighted by **M&D Dunakin** in *Paulding* on 25 July. One bird was reported in *Summit* by the GAAS survey. A failed nesting took place at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Nests were noted in *Ashtabula* and *Trumbull*, and in the *Lake* MPs five sightings were made, with strong suspicions of nestings at two locations (**J. Pogacnik**). On 21 June, a bird was carrying food at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**).

**Cooper's Hawk:** **J. Pogacnik** noted nests in *Lake* and *Trumbull*. 12 were counted in *Summit* during the GAAS survey. **L. Rosche** had 10 birds at the RTLS, with nesting noted.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Traditional strongholds in the NE remain, as in Mill Ck Pk in *Mahoning*, where **N. Brundage** noted adults with two young on 10 June, and **L. Yoder** found four in the Mohican SF on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Nesting was noted at the RTLS and at Twin Lakes, *Portage*, by **L. Rosche**. At the opposite corner of the state, **N. Cade** had birds on 6 June in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands and on 24 July at Winton Wds, *Hamilton*. In the NW, **D. Sanders** and **D. Burton** had three on 11 July at Oak Openings.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** **L. Yoder** found two in the Mohican SF on 18 June and two were present at Oak Openings on 11 July (**D. Sanders, D. Burton**). **J. Pogacnik** noted nests in *Lake, Trumbull*, and *Ashtabula*, as well as 13 summer sightings in the *Lake* MPs.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** Seven were at Ottawa for the 6 June census (ONWRC). An albino individual was found in western *Pike* in mid-July (**D. Minney** et al.). Nesting was noted, and ~ 75 birds seen, at the RTLS by **L. Rosche**.

**Golden Eagle:** **H. Armstrong** reported this species on 11 July in East Fork SP, seen briefly but apparently clearly—unfortunately not relocated.

**Merlin:** Strikingly, three reports for the period: one 13 June at Conneaut (**J. Pogacnik**), one 16 July on Kelley's Isl (**T. Bartlett**), and another 26 July at Killdeer (**V. Fazio**).

**Peregrine Falcon:** One was at Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, on 4 June (**J. Pogacnik**). ODW reports that despite the species' Federal delisting, Ohio will retain it on its endangered list for the time being. This year, 13 chicks fledged in urban sites in Cleveland, Dayton, Lakewood, and Toledo.

**Wild Turkey:** ODW press releases stated that this spring's kill of 14,419 birds marked the 22<sup>nd</sup> consecutive record spring harvest. The observed reproductive rate this season was 60% above last year's, and the present population is estimated at 145,000 birds. Such success has encouraged the Division to relocate turkeys from areas where they are more plentiful to *Ottawa, Sandusky, Allen, Van Wert, Lucas, Wood, Mercer, Darke, Miami, and Clark*.

**Virginia Rail:** Most reports were from the NE strongholds, such as pairs at four sites in Mosquito Lk WA in early June (**J&D Hochadel**), one at the CVNRA on 13 June (**B&A Toneff**), and three territories found in the Grand River WA on 26 and 27 June (**C. Babyak**).

**Sora:** Three were at Magee on 20 June (**S&H Hiris**), and three nests were at the Grand River WA, with another singing at Arcola Ck, *Lake*, in June (**J. Pogacnik**). Nested at the RTLS, young observed (**L. Rosche**).

**Common Moorhen:** One was at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC), and another at Shenango WA, *Trumbull*, on the 18<sup>th</sup> (**D&J Hochadel**). Five were tallied at Magee on 20 June by **H&S Hiris**. A pair with four chicks and another adult with an immature were at Metzger on 11 July (**J. Keys**). Eight were at Magee on 18 July (**H&S Hiris**). A pair nested in Springville Marsh SNP (**T. Bartlett**), and three nests were found in the Grand River WA, as well as a pair with young in the *Lake* MPs (**J. Pogacnik**).

**American Coot:** 13 were at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC), six were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 11 June (**P. Wharton**), and three were at Magee on 20 June (**H&S Hiris**). Birds were seen on 27 June at the Grand River WA (**J. Pogacnik**) and throughout the period at Big Island WA (**V. Fazio**).

**Sandhill Crane:** Recent presences continued with a pair at Killbuck on 30 June (**S. Snyder**) and thereafter. A pair was noted at the *Lorain* airport on 23 June (**J.C. Dunn**), where at least one remained well into the next period (**P. Jones**); ODW determined the pair was not nesting.

**Black-bellied Plover:** Numbers were singularly unimpressive during the spring migration this year (for example, 257 forays by Black Swamp Bird Observatory shorebird surveyors found exactly nine), and early returnees were sparsely reported as well. Three were at Conneaut on 20 July (**J. Pogacnik**), one at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 24 July (**E. Pierce, B. Cullen**), and one at Conneaut on 25 July (**C. Holt**).

**American Golden-Plover:** One was at Conneaut on 20 July (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Piping Plover:** No reports of the species this season; ominous, but no longer surprising.

**Killdeer:** By contrast with the aforementioned species, lots of breeding habitat for this one. 60 were at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC), then 101 at Magee on the 20<sup>th</sup> (**H&S Hiris**). By 4 July, 307 were at Ottawa (ONWRC), and on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 220 were censused in *Hancock* (**B. Hardesty** et al.). 88 were at a

Pickaway golf course on 14 July (J. Hammond), and 285 at Magee on the 18<sup>th</sup> (H&S Hiris). 200 were at Berlin Lk, *Portage/Mahoning*, on 24 July (C. Holt). 75 were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 27 July (P. Wharton), and by the 31<sup>st</sup>, 300 had assembled at Englewood MP in Dayton (D. Dister).

**American Avocet:** J. Perchalski photographed a bird at Van Wert Res on 7 July. Four were at Conneaut on 25 July (J. Pogacnik, C. Holt).



American Avocet - Van Wert Reservoir, Van Wert Co., 7 July 1999. Photo by John Perchalski.

**Semipalmated Plover:** A late bird touched down at Conneaut on 13 June (J. Pogacnik). Three were in *Erie* on 27 June (C. Holt). Two were seen at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 12 July by J&D Brumfield, four at Conneaut on 20 July (J. Pogacnik), two at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on the 25<sup>th</sup> by N. Cade, and by the 30<sup>th</sup>, 20 were at Sheldon Marsh SNP (B. Conlon, B. Whan). Numbers seemed down, but fall reports will tell the tale.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** Another late 13 June bird was one of this species on the CVNRA (B&A Toneff). 19 were counted at Ottawa on 4 July (ONWRC), two on the 7<sup>th</sup> at Mosquito Lk WA (D&J Hochadel). Three were at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July (N. Cade), and 15 at Medusa on the 29<sup>th</sup> (C. Holt).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** Among the earlier migrants, this species was first reported at the Maumee River Rapids on 26 June by E. Tramer, then in *Erie* on the following day by C. Holt, and on the 29<sup>th</sup> at Girdled Rd Res'n by B. Finkelstein. By 15 July, 51 were at Sheldon Marsh SNP (V. Fazio), where on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 40 were present (R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner). 30 were down at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 27 July (P. Wharton), and on the 30<sup>th</sup> nearly 100 were at Medusa Marsh (B. Conlon, B. Whan).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** Surprisingly few early returns for this species. L. Rosche found the first southbound migrant on 9 July at the RTLS and S. Snyder had two in Killbuck on 10 July. By 12 July, however, S. Snyder had 21 at Killbuck with their number increasing to 41 on 15 July. On 22 July, C. Holt saw 45 at Berlin Lk, *Portage*, and B. Glick found 40 at Killbuck on the 24<sup>th</sup>. S. Smith had 20+ at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on the 25<sup>th</sup>, a number that had grown to 60 by the end of the period (J. Lehman, N. Cade).

**Willet:** Latish, but in normal numbers, and all singletons: 10 July at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik), 17 July Pickerel Ck WA (B. Conlon, B. Whan), 18 July at Mill Ck Pk, *Mahoning* (N. Brundage), 22 July at Conneaut (R. Rickard), 24 July at Conneaut (B. Cullen), and 30 July at Sheldon Marsh SNP (D. St. John).

**Upland Sandpiper:** Two were near Thompson, *Geauga*, on 1 June (J. Pogacnik), at least two in *Ashtabula*

on 6 June (J. Heflich), and one adjacent to Paulding Res on 29 July (D&M Dunakin). ~Eight spent the period at Big Island WA (V. Fazio, D. St. John), and at least three did likewise at the Springfield airport in *Clark* (D. Overacker). One was calling on 27 July near Sugarcreek, *Holmes* (R. Schla-bach).

**Whimbrel:** One was seen at Pickerel Ck WA on 24 July by A. Blank and B. Cullen.

**Marbled Godwit:** One was seen by D. Sanders and D. Burton at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 7 July, and what was probably the same bird was relocated there on the 10<sup>th</sup> by M. Zuilhof.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** It was beginning to seem this species was to be even harder to find on the way south as it had been on the northbound migration, or at the very least it was late in returning. Four lingered through 2 June at the Crane Creek SP beach (E. Tramer), and one was seen at Lakeshore MP on 5 June (J. Pogacnik).

**Red Knot:** Early returns presaged little improvement from spring's dismal numbers. The species should be much easier to find in fall. We had two reports: the first at Medusa Marsh on 30 July (B. Conlon, B. Whan), and the second a different bird at the same location (T. LePage) the following day.

**Sanderling:** A laggard was at Conneaut on 2 June (J. Pogacnik). An early bird presumably on the rebound was seen at Fostoria Res on 13 July (B. Hardesty), and two were at Conneaut by the 17<sup>th</sup> (C. Holt). Eight birds on the flats on Conneaut on 20 July (J. Pogacnik) round out the rather skimpy reports.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Overall numbers seemed depressed, despite some good showings inland. Late departures included 34 at Indian Ck WA, *Brown*, by O. Debre on 6 June, and 42 the same day at Big Island WA (V. Fazio). One was decidedly late on 13 June at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik), as were eight on the 17<sup>th</sup> at Mosquito Lk WA (J&D Hochadel). Two reappeared at Walnut Beach, *Ashtabula*, on 27 June, and by 20 July, 45 were at Conneaut, then 30 on the 25<sup>th</sup> (J. Pogacnik). 25 were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 27 July (P. Wharton); the high count was ~300 in *Erie* on 29 July (C. Holt).

**Western Sandpiper:** Unusual were two on 2 June at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik). Interesting inland records among birds on the return journey were singles found at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 11 July (*vide* N. Keller) and on 21 July (N. Cade). On the Lakeside, one was at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 12 July (B. Finkelstein, B. Winger) and two adults there on 27 July (V. Fazio).

**Least Sandpiper:** Earliest report of returning birds was on 21 June at Sheldon Marsh SNP (R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner); another was seen on 26 June at the Maumee River rapids (E. Tramer), and 14 were at Conneaut on the 27<sup>th</sup> (J. Pogacnik). By 5 July, 131 were at Sheldon Marsh SNP (V. Fazio), and 40+ at Hoover Res, *Delaware* (A. Goloda). 15 were seen down at Buck Ck SP on the 11<sup>th</sup> (D. Overacker), and ~200 the following day at Sheldon Marsh SNP (B. Winger, B. Finkelstein), a count which increased to 277 by the 15<sup>th</sup> there (V. Fazio). Downstate numbers remained strong through the period, with 52 at Big Island WA (V. Fazio) and 50 at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on the 27<sup>th</sup> (P. Wharton).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Late departures appeared at Conneaut on 2 and 3 June (J. Pogacnik) through 5 June (C. Holt), and eight at Big Island WA on the latter date (S. Zadar). By 10 July one returnee had arrived at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik), and one at Sheldon Marsh SNP by 20 July (B. Conlon), where two were noted on 29 July (B. Morrison).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** An early migrant appeared at Conneaut on 20 July (J. Pogacnik), then two at Sheldon Marsh SNP on the 27<sup>th</sup> (J&D Brumfield), one of which apparently remained on the 29<sup>th</sup> (B. Morrison, C. Holt).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** A very early bird was an excellent find on 26 June on the Maumee River rapids (E. Tramer). Numbers during the beginning of the peak period swelled to 80 at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July (N. Cade) and 75 at Medusa Marsh on the 30<sup>th</sup> (B. Conlon).

**Dunlin:** Late were five at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC) and one on the 13<sup>th</sup> at Conneaut (J. Pogacnik). A bird on 22 July (R. Rickard), 25 July (C. Holt), and 26 July (B. Finkelstein) at Conneaut (noted by the latter observer to be an "adult in partial breeding plumage") was apparently a lone-wolf celibate wanderer.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** On schedule, this species began appearing late in the period. One was at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 18 July (**B. Finkelstein, V. Lucas**), another at Conneaut on the 20th (**J. Pogacnik**), four at Sheldon on the 24<sup>th</sup> (**E. Pierce**), and six at Medusa Marsh on 29 July (**B. Morrison**), which swelled to 25 on the 30<sup>th</sup> (**B. Conlon**).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** This species breeds so far north that almost any direction it might take upon departure is due south, so its wide vagrancy is understandable; this year, however, it showed up early as well. Two Ohio birds coincided with large numbers appearing during the same week along the Central Flyway in Nebraska and Iowa: one adult—by no means the routine plumage in Ohio—at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 30 July (**B. Conlon, B. Whan**) was by a day the earliest record in the state, and the following day **N. Cade** et al. had another bird—a juvenile this time, making its early date all the more interesting—at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** Earlyish were two at Grand River WA on 27 June (**J. Pogacnik**). Six were on the Ottawa count on 4 July (ONWRC), and another six at Mosquito Lk WA on the 13<sup>th</sup> (**D&J Hochadel**). By the 18<sup>th</sup>, 279 were counted by **V. Fazio** at Sheldon Marsh SNP; only 75 remained there on the following day (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**), and 70 on the 24<sup>th</sup> (**E. Pierce**).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** Reported were an adult in alternate plumage at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 27 July (**V. Fazio**) and “several” at Stage’s Pond SNP, *Pickaway*, on 23 July (**J. McMahon**).

**Common Snipe:** Apparently nested at Grand River WA, *Trumbull* (**J. Pogacnik**). First return reported was on 20 July in southern *Mahoning* (**B. Jones**).

**Wilson’s Phalarope:** **J. Grabmeier** observed one at Seneca Lk, *Williams*, on 11 July. One was at Sheldon Marsh SNP on the 27<sup>th</sup> (**V. Fazio**) and two there on the 29<sup>th</sup> (**B. Morrison**).

**Laughing Gull:** **D. Overacker** found an adult in molt at Buck Ck SP on 12 June, and another was at Conneaut on 20 July (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Bonaparte’s Gull:** Probable non-breeders included four at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 20 June (**M. Busam**) and one on the 27<sup>th</sup> at Conneaut (**J. Pogacnik**); by the latter date, the numbers at Sheldon had reached 55 (**C. Holt**). **S. Wulkowicz** noted the return of the species to S. Bass Isl on 17 July, and the first were seen at Mosquito Lk WA on the 27<sup>th</sup> (**J&D Hochadel**).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** An adult was reported on 27 June at Conneaut (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Great Black-backed Gull:** One was at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC). At Conneaut, numbers peaked at 35 on 27 June (**J. Pogacnik**), and had dwindled to “a few” by 23 July (**D&J Hochadel**). Reports were down from last summer, when three-figure numbers emanated from Lorain, where, admittedly, the surroundings often proved toxic to this species.

**Common Tern:** Nest sites are protected by USF&WS and ODW on the Lakeside. 46 were present at Ottawa by 6 June, and 60 by 4 July (ONWRC); 30 were at Pipe Creek WA on 27 June at the other protected site.

**Caspian Tern:** Three adults were inland on 25 June at Mosquito Lk WA (**D&J Hochadel**) at an early date, but surprisingly few reports were made of the species during July—a likelier time—as **C. Holt** saw seven on 25 July at Conneaut, and one at Sheldon Marsh SNP on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Forster’s Tern:** Three nonbreeders—or very successful ones—appeared on 27 June at Walnut Beach, *Ash-tabula* (**J. Pogacnik**). Inland, two were at Tappan Lk, *Harrison*, on 1 July (**L. Miller**). By the 7<sup>th</sup>, **D. Sanders** had 12 at Sheldon Marsh SNP.

**Least Tern:** A rare species at an unusual time, one was seen on 14 June at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands by **P. Wharton** and m obs. Record accepted by the OBRC.

**Black Tern:** One was seen at Magee on 20 June (**H&S Hiris**), one at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 9 July (**M.**

**Zuilhof**), another at Medusa Marsh on the 11<sup>th</sup> (**C. Holt**), three at Beaver Ck Res, *Seneca*, on 16 July (**T. Bartlett**), and one at Conneaut on 20 July (**J. Pogacnik**); such small numbers are not so bad in recent lean years for the species.

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** The GAAS found 16 in *Summit* in June. **L. Rosche** censused ~10 birds at the RTLS, with nesting noted. One was a nice find in *Paulding* on 14 June (**D&M Dunakin**).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Most reported excellent numbers, except for **J. Pogacnik**, who regarded it as down in the NE. 56 were in *Summit* in June (GAAS survey), ~52 in the RTLS, *Portage* (**L. Rosche**), four in Ottawa on 6 June and seven on 4 July (ONWRC), eight in the CVNRA on 13 June (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**), three singing in the Grand River WA on 11 July (**D&J Hochadel**), and 3+ pairs on S. Bass Isl during the period (**S. Wulkowicz**). A pair showed up in **L. Yoder**’s back yard in *Holmes* on 5 July.

**Barred Owl:** 12 were censused in *Summit* in June (GAAS).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** A juvenile was found in *Ashtabula* on 13 June (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Chuck-will’s-widow:** 20+ were calling in *Adams* on 19 June (**B. Whan**) along or near Ohio Brush Creek. See Spring 99 issue for other locales.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** **J. Pogacnik** regarded this species as “way down” in his NE area, but anecdotal reports from feeder-watchers further south were effusive about this summer’s numbers in Ohio and nearby states. **L. Rosche** estimated 125 birds on the RTLS, *Portage*, with nesting noted. On 25 July, **N. Cade** had seven presumably migratory birds at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands, *Hamilton*.

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Seven were in the CVNRA on 28 June (**T&M Romito**), and in the same month 94 were counted in *Summit* by the GAAS and ~69 in the RTLS (**L. Rosche**).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Several reporters said their numbers were down. The June GAAS census in *Summit* yielded three birds. Elsewhere in the NE, one was seen in the Holden Arboretum (**R. Rickard**) on 5 June, one was in Mosquito Lk WA on 21 June (**D&J Hochadel**), and one was in the Conneaut harbor on 22 July (**R. Rickard**). Nesting was confirmed in the Grand River WA, *Trumbull* (**J. Pogacnik**). **D&A Chasar, R. Harlan, and Sa. Wagner** agreed that CVNRA populations were expanding into new areas, but only one report was received of the birds at Killdeer, and the Sheldon Marsh SNP birds seemed harder to find. **B. Hardesty** et al. censused 14 in *Hancock* on 13 July.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Good numbers this year, mostly due to the efforts of **T. Leiden** to alert other birders to possible nesting sapsuckers, and then to study the nests as found. Many birders (**P. Lozano, B. Finkelstein, G. Meszaros, J. Pogacnik, et al.**) assisted in this effort. Results: two nests were located in *Ashtabula* on 5 June, one nest in *Lake* on 16 June, one in *Cuyahoga* on 19 June, another in *Ashtabula* on 20 June, adults with young in *Geauga* on 21 June, another bird in *Geauga* on 26 June, adult and young in *Trumbull* (probable first nesting record there) on 3 July, yet another bird in *Ashtabula* on 5 July, and finally a pair in another location in *Ashtabula* on 25 July. One was sighted on 12 July on the RTLS by **L. Rosche**.

**Downy Woodpecker:** The June *Summit* census found 169 birds (GAAS), and that in *Hancock* on 6 July totaled 26 (**B. Hardesty** et al.). The RTLS had ~58 on **L. Rosche**’s census.

**Hairy Woodpecker:** Four were counted in *Hancock* on 1 June (**B. Hardesty** et al.), and 40 on the GAAS’s *Summit* census in June. **L. Rosche** counted ~160 birds on the RTLS.

**Northern Flicker:** 108 were counted by the GAAS in *Summit* in June, and 27 in *Hancock* on 15 June (**B. Hardesty** et al.); on the RTLS, **L. Rosche** estimated 240.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** The GAAS counted 16 in *Summit* in June, and **L. Rosche** ~30 in the RTLS.

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** **E. Tramer** reported the species has “declined rapidly during the past few years,” noting “fewer than ever territorial males in the Oak Openings and along the Maumee River corridor this season.” 18 were censused in *Hancock* on 1 June (**B. Hardesty** et al.), and 81 in June in *Summit*

(GAAS); **L. Rosche** estimated 290 on the RTLS, *Portage*. A single bird was noted on S. Bass Isl on 17 July, where non-migrants are only occasional (**S. Wulkowicz**).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** A couple of late migrants were reported on 5 June in the Hocking Hills (**G. Stauffer**), and an early return migrant was at Lakeshore MP on 24 July (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** 44 were counted in *Summit* in June by the GAAS; **L. Rosche** estimated 198 birds at RTLS, with nesting noted. A returnee was seen at Lakeshore MP on 24 July by **J. Pogacnik**.

**Willow Flycatcher:** 26 were counted at Ottawa on 6 June, then only one on 4 July (ONWRC). 12 were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 6 June (**N. Cade**), then 10 on 14 July (**P. Wharton**). 87 were tallied by the GAAS in *Summit* in June, and 120 at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**).

**Alder Flycatcher:** A pair nested in the Grand River WA, *Trumbull* (**J. Pogacnik**), where **C. Babyak** noted territorial males on 26 June, 27 June, and 11 July. **R. Rickard** noted the species at the Streetsboro Bog, *Portage*, on 13 June. Two or three were present through the period at the Springville Marsh SNP, *Seneca* (**T. Bartlett**), and nesting was confined to three sites in the *Lake* MPs (**J. Pogacnik**). **L. Rosche** reported nesting at the RTLS, *Portage*, and estimated 60 birds.

**Least Flycatcher:** **L. Rosche** confirmed nesting at the RTLS, and estimated 36 birds there. Birds summered at two Mosquito Lk WA spots, where the species has been regular for several years (**D&J Hochadel**). Three were counted in June in *Summit* (GAAS). A singing bird was found 9 June on a Breeding Bird Survey route in *Muskingum* by **B. Peterjohn**. Migrants were noted on 19 July at Lakeshore MP (**J. Pogacnik**), on 24 July at West Fork Dam, *Hamilton* (**N. Cade**), and at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on the following day by the same observer.

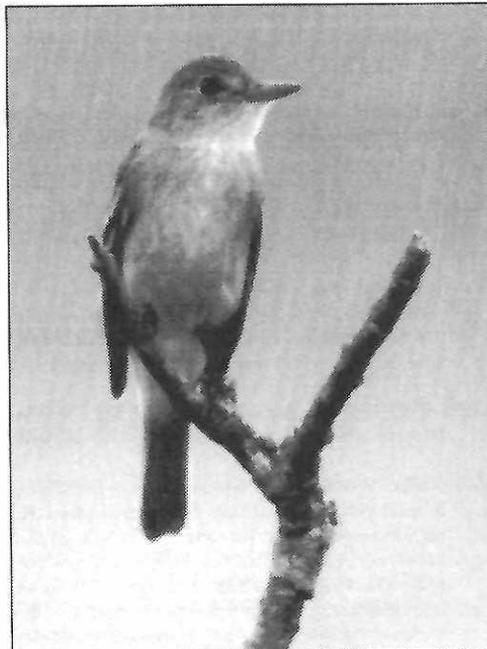
**Eastern Phoebe:** 66 were counted in *Summit* during two weeks of June by the GAAS; **L. Rosche** estimated 357 at the RTLS, with nesting noted.

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** The GAAS found 52 in *Summit* in June, and **L. Rosche** noted nesting and estimated 143 at the RTLS, *Portage*, during the period.

**Eastern Kingbird:** 6 June's Ottawa count had 21 (ONWRC), and 18 July's Magee count 34 (**H&S Hiris**). 49 were on the GAAS's mid-June count in *Summit*, and ~140 on the RTLS, *Portage* (**L. Rosche**). **R. Harlan** and **Sa. Wagner** saw 15 on Johnson's Isl, *Ottawa*, on 21 July, and **J. Pogacnik** 14 at Lakeshore MP on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Loggerhead Shrike:** No new reports, just leftovers from the previous season. The *Highland* birds, along with a begging fledged youngster, were last seen 19 June (**M. Skinner**). The eggs in the nest of the *Holmes* pair were found to have disappeared when last checked on 10 July (**B. Glick**).

**White-eyed Vireo:** **J. Pogacnik** regarded the species as scarce this year in the north, with only one pair



Willow Flycatcher - Crown City WA, Gallia Co., 21 July 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

found in the *Lake* MPs. **L. Rosche** reported ~95 birds at the RTLS, with nesting noted. Five were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July (**N. Cade**).

**Bell's Vireo:** Four reports. At the traditional area in Buck Ck SP, a bird which no one could rule out as a female was seen on 20 June (**M. Skinner**); no confirmed nesting was reported there, though a singing male was found nearby during the previous period. A singing bird was discovered at Big Island WA on 6 June (**M. Bolton**) and last reported on the 16<sup>th</sup>. At the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands, a singing male persisted from the previous period till at least 28 June (**J. Hammond**). Finally, **J. Fry** had a singing bird in his yard in *Hocking* on 29 July.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** 28 were counted in *Summit* during two weeks of June by the GAAS, and ~117 at the RTLS by **L. Rosche**. Two were singing at the same Mosquito Lk WA spot on 15 June and 15 July (**D&J Hochadel**).

**Blue-headed Vireo:** **F. Renfrow** reported as many as 14 individuals at spots in Hocking Hills SP between 2 June and 16 June, with one individual carrying food on the 15<sup>th</sup>. One was in the CVNRA on 13 June (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**), and two in Mohican SP on 18 June (**L. Yoder**). Three were located in Hinckley MP, *Medina*, on 19 June (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**), and **J. Hammond** had a singing male at Atwood Lk, *Tuscarawas*, on 3-5 July. **D. Dister** found a pair at a nest on 5 July in Mohican SP, *Ashland*. On 10 July, **E. Pierce** found two in Stebbins Gulch and three in Little Mtn in *Geauga*. **R. Rickard** had one in the CVNRA on 11 July, and **D. Overacker** another in *Hocking* on 16 July. Five were among the birds censused by the GAAS in *Summit* during June, and **L. Rosche** had nesting birds and ~6 individuals at the RTLS during the period; he also had summering birds in good numbers at the CVNRA, and at Lk Rockwell.

**Warbling Vireo:** The GAAS counted 53 in *Summit* during June, and **L. Rosche** ~55 birds at the RTLS, *Portage*, during the period. **R. Harlan** and **Sa. Wagner** had 12 on Johnson's Isl, *Ottawa*, on 21 June.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** The last reported northbound was on 1 June at Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, by **J. Pogacnik**.

**Red-eyed Vireo:** Undiminished in their ubiquity in the woods; the GAAS counted 166 in *Summit* during their two-week June census; **L. Rosche** estimated 612 at the RTLS. **B. Peterjohn** counted 60 on a single Breeding Bird Survey route in *Muskingum* on 9 June.

**Common Raven:** A 4 April 1999 record from *Trumbull* of two birds (**D. Hochadel**) was accepted by the OBRC.

**Horned Lark:** Undiminished in their own realm, 117 were counted in a *Hancock* census of 6 July (**B. Hardesty et al.**).

**Purple Martin:** **T. Bartlett** counted 800+ in *Adams* on 25 June, "the highest in years." 75 were at Johnson's Isl, *Ottawa*, on 21 July (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**). **J. Pogacnik** discovered eight nest sites in the *Lake* MPs, up from last year.

**Tree Swallow:** Nearly 500 were gathering at Big Island WA by the end of the period on 25 July (**V. Fazio**).

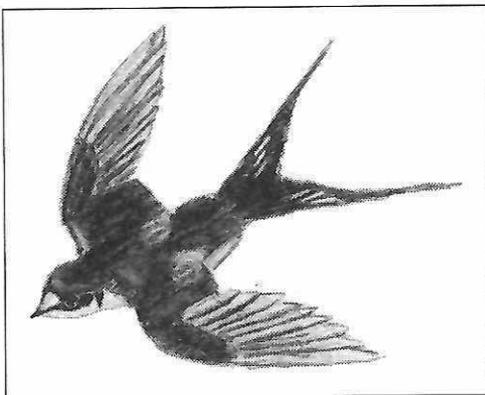
**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** **L. Rosche** estimated 57 birds, and nesting, at the RTLS.

**Bank Swallow:** On 15 June, 139 were counted in



Horned Lark - Woodbury WA, Coshocton Co., 15 June 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

**Hancock (B. Hardesty et al.).** 400 were at Conneaut on 17 July (C. Holt), ~300 there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> (D&J Hoffman), and at Killdeer, 450+ were present on 26 July (V. Fazio).



Barn Swallow  
by Ben Winger

**Cliff Swallow:** Nest sites: five+ pairs on abandoned bridge near Farnsworth Pk, Lucas, in late May through the period (E. Tramer); 30 nests on the Fishing Rd Bridge in Columbus (J. Hammond); first nesting at Buck Ck SP 5 June (D. Overacker); four nests at Grand Lk St Marys fish hatchery (first known attempt here) noted by D. Dister on 20 June; nests at least the second year on the Cummings Rd bridge in Adams (G&M Balson); probable nesters noted at Hidden Valley, Lake, by J. Pogacnik. Nesting noted at West Branch SP (L. Rosche). In swallow-friendly Holmes, E. Yoder had 47 nests, A. Troyer 432, and P. Yoder 575 (less than 1998's 614, but more young fledged).

**Barn Swallow:** An albino was seen 24 July south of Kidron in Wayne (B. Glick, m obs); another was a Shreve Lk on 19 July (fide B. Glick), and a third albino, probably either tree or rough-winged, appeared near Sugarcreek, Holmes (R. Schlabach).

**Black-capped Chickadee:** 417 were counted in Summit by the GAAS in June.

**Tufted Titmouse:** 27 counted in Hancock on 13 July (B. Hardesty et al.), and 247 by the GAAS in Summit in June.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Between 1 June and 20 June a pair nested in Hocking Hills SP (F. Renfrow); L. Gara observed the family on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> discovered they'd departed. Three were seen on 13 June and 30 June near Meander Res, Mahoning, (C. Babyak). A nesting pair was on S Bass Isl through the period (S. Wulkowicz). Probable nesters were found in Brecksville MP, Cuyahoga, on 22 and 23 June and 15 July (D&A Chasar). The first reported southbound migrant of what would later prove to be a tidal wave was observed by J. Kline on 13 July (!) in Holmes. J. Pogacnik had one at Lakeshore MP, Lake, from 18-20 July.

**White-breasted Nuthatch:** The GAAS counted 127 in Summit in June.

**Brown Creeper:** One was found on 12 June in the CVNRA (R. Rickard), and another on the following day at the Grand River Terraces, Ashtabula (J. Pogacnik), who reported four sightings in the Lake MPs this summer. On 15 June F. Renfrow observed a male singing and a female investigating a potential nest site at Hocking Hills SP. One remained, apparently mateless, at Highbanks MP, Delaware, from 30 June through the period (L. Smith, C. Beat). Five were counted in Summit during the GAAS's June survey, and the species was present, though nesting not confirmed, at the RTLs (L. Rosche). J. Grabmeier last observed the nesting pair at Lake La Su An WA on 11 July.

**Carolina Wren:** As many as six pairs nested on S Bass Isl during the period (S. Wulkowicz), and there was a nest in Trumbull (C. Babyak).

**House Wren:** 30 were at Ottawa on 6 June and 32 on 4 July (OWNRC). On 21 June R. Harlan and Sa. Wagner counted 27 on Johnson's Isl, Ottawa. 103 were tallied in Hancock on 27 June (B. Hardesty et al.), and 221 in the GAAS June survey of Summit; L. Rosche estimated 300 birds at the RTLs.

**Winter Wren:** Ten birds were found in five locations in the Lake MPs (J. Pogacnik). One was found in the GAAS survey of Summit in June. D. Dister had a singing male in the Mohican SF, Ashland, on 5 July. L. Rosche noted a nest site in the RTLs 9 July for the first Portage nesting known to this veteran observer.

**Sedge Wren:** A pretty good year for the species, or at least for birders looking for them. D. Sanders found one on 1 June at Twin Creeks, SW of Dayton. Two were found singing in a traditional Mosquito Lk WA site on 2 June (J&D Hochadel). A bird was noted in Buck Ck SP on 5-6 June (D. Overacker). One was singing in NE Williams in mid-June (T. Kemp). J. Mager found a bird at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands, Hamilton, on 23 June, and up to four were singing there by 14 July (P. Wharnton). Five+ birds were singing in Killdeer from 10 July through the period (V. Fazio, m obs); the same observer also found one singing a few miles south in Marion on the 10<sup>th</sup>. J. Pogacnik noted a nest in the Grand River WA on 20 July.

**Marsh Wren:** Present at three Trumbull sites through the period, including up to six birds at the Grand River WA (C. Holt, D&J Hochadel); seven nests were found there by J. Pogacnik. Three to five were present through the period at Springville Marsh SNP (T. Bartlett). 11 were tallied by the GAAS in Summit during June, and L. Rosche estimated 10 birds at the RTLs, with nesting noted. Ten were at Ottawa on 4 July (OWNRC), and seven at Killbuck on 6 July (S. Snyder).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Males were at two or more sites at Hinckley MP, Medina, on 19 June (R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner). D&J Hochadel discovered a pair attending three fledglings at a traditional site in Columbiana on 27 June. Possible nesting in Chapin Forest, Lake, was reported by J. Pogacnik.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** The GAAS counted 34 in Summit in June.

**Eastern Bluebird:** As a sample of a good assisted nesting program, 99 fledged at Highbanks MP, Delaware, during the period (J. Hammond), despite unusually heavy raccoon predation.

**Veery:** 51 were censused in June in Summit (GAAS). Individuals were noted in the Streetsboro Bog, Portage, on 13 June and 21 July (R. Rickard). Nesting was reported in the Grand River WA during the period (J. Pogacnik), as well as at the RTLs, where L. Rosche estimated 350 birds.

**Hermit Thrush:** A nest in the CVNRA's Kendall Ledges fledged four by 8 June (D&A Chasar). On 11 June, 11 were noted at four different sites in the Hocking Hills SP (F. Renfrow). A probable nester was at the Grand River Terraces, Ashtabula, and a pair in the Lake MPs on 13 June, as well as a bird at Lakeshore MP on 15 June (J. Pogacnik). L. Yoder had two singing males in one location, and two at another, in Mohican SF on 18 and 19 June. Two singing males were heard by D. Dister in the Mohican SF on 4 July. On 10 July E. Pierce heard two birds in song in the Little Mtn area, Geauga. Three were noted in Hocking on 16 July (D. Overacker). D. Minney reported none in Crane Hollow, despite a history in the area, in mid-July. J. Greene reported a nest in the CVNRA.

**Swainson's Thrush:** A straggler hurried through Lakeshore MP, Lake, on 15 June (J. Pogacnik).

**Gray Catbird:** High numbers: 10 were in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 6 June (N. Cade), 43 on the Hancock census on 22 June (B. Hardesty et al.), and 342 in the GAAS's survey of Summit in June; L. Rosche estimated 850 in his RTLs survey area. D. Kline's survey of a square-mile patch in Holmes produced 87 pairs.

**Northern Mockingbird:** M. Busam counted 15 in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 31 July. Birds in northern parts of the state included the following: three in Hancock on 22 June (B. Hardesty et al.), two in June in Summit by the GAAS, one NE of Paulding Res (M&D Dunakin) on 3 July; P. Lozano and J. Edwards had birds at three different locations in the Cleveland metro area on 10 July and 24 July.

**Brown Thrasher:** E. Tramer reports birds on five dates and four locations in the Toledo area; his previous high number for the period in the area was two birds. L. Rosche counted ~170 individuals in the RTLs during the period.

**Cedar Waxwing:** More than a few observers mentioned unusually large numbers of this species during the season. L. Rosche estimated 415 birds, and nesting, on the RTLs. S. Wulkowicz found four or more nests on S Bass Isl during the period.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** An apparent migrant was at Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, on 24 July (J. Pogacnik). The GAAS counted 68 in *Summit* during two weeks in June, and ~214 were estimated on the RTLS (L. Rosche).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** L. Rosche reported a possible territory on the Ravenna Arsenal property, *Portage*, during the period. A singing male was found in *Muskingum* on a Breeding Bird Survey route on 9 June (B. Peterjohn).

**Hybrids of the above two species:** A "Brewster's" was on territory in the Oak Openings on 27 June (A. Osborne); one was in *Lake* through the period, nesting with a blue-winged warbler (J. Pogacnik), and a female was found carrying food on the RTLS, *Portage*, on 22 June (T. Bartlett), and a territorial male 7-28 June (L. Rosche). The "Lawrence's" warbler reported during the spring period persisted in *Ashtabula* until at least 6 June (J. Heflich); this individual was singing a blue-winged warbler song. L. Rosche reported nesting probable in the RTLS during the summer by "Lawrence's."

**Nashville Warbler:** Two singing males, one clearly territorial, were located in the *Lake* MPs during June (J. Pogacnik).

**Northern Parula:** In the north, one was in the Oak Openings on 4 June (E. Tramer), and another in the Grand River WA on 13 June, and a singing male in late June at Lakeshore MP (J. Pogacnik). A bird spent the period at Collier River Scenic Area, *Seneca* (T. Bartlett), and one was found by the GAAS in their June survey of *Summit*.

**Yellow Warbler:** 85 were at Ottawa on 6 June (ONWRC). The GAAS counted 273 in *Summit* in June, and R. Harlan and Sa. Wagner had 39 on Johnson's Isl, *Ottawa*, on 21 June. A count of 55 at Grand River WA on 11 July may have been augmented by early migrants (J&D Hochadel). J. Pogacnik counted migrants through Lakeshore MP, *Lake*, as follows: 25 on 7 July, 45 on 18 July, 230+ on 24 July, and ~100 on 31 July.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** 11 were counted by the GAAS in *Summit* in June. One was in the CVNRA on 13 June, and another in the Hinckley MP, *Medina*, on 19 June (R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner). L. Yoder heard four singing males in the Mohican SF on 18 June, and A&D Chasar two in two areas of the CVNRA on 25 June. Four noted at Lakeshore MP on 18 July and four on 24 July seem to have been quite early migrants (J. Pogacnik).

**Magnolia Warbler:** One to two were noted in each of three locations in Hocking Hills SP by F. Renfrow between 2 and 15 June. Two were found in the Mohican SF by L. Yoder on 18 June. A pair was seen in *Lake* on 22 June (J. Pogacnik). On the following day, six were heard singing in Conkle's Hollow SP, *Hocking*, by L. Gara. On 26 and 27 June, D&A Chasar had a bird in the Kendall Ledges area of the CVNRA, where the species nested last year. A pair was on territory in *Columbiana* on 27 June (D&J Hochadel), and a pair nested in the Grand River Terraces, *Ashtabula*, during the period, as well (J. Pogacnik).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** One passed through Lakeshore MP on 1 June (J. Pogacnik).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** 22 were found in the Mohican SF on 18 June (L. Yoder), and three in Hinckley MP, *Medina*, the following day (R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner). The GAAS tallied six in *Summit* during June, and E. Pierce had three singing at Little Mtn and one at Stebbin's Gulch, both *Geauga*, on 10 July, as well as one on 7 July at Firestone MP, *Summit*. Nesting probably, found in the RTLS by C. Willis.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** A late migrant passed through Lakeshore MP on 4 June (J. Pogacnik). One to three singing males were at Mohican SF on 18 June (L. Yoder). One was at Ash Cave, *Hocking*, on 23 June (L. Gara). A singing male was at Girdled Rd Res'n, *Lake*, where a female was also seen, through the period (J. Pogacnik). A singing bird was at Stebbin's Gulch, *Geauga*, on 10 July (E. Pierce).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** To the north, one was in *Holmes* on 5 June (B. Glick). Six singing males were heard during the period in the *Lake* MPs (J. Pogacnik).

**Pine Warbler:** In the north, two were on territories in the Mohican SF on 18 June (L. Yoder); on 22-23 June adults were feeding two young in Brecksville MP, *Cuyahoga* (D&A Chasar); one was at Oak Openings on 11 July (D. Sanders, D. Burton); and D&A Chasar had a singing bird elsewhere in the Brecksville MP, *Cuyahoga*, on 15-16 July. Possible nesting was noted at Chapin Forest, *Lake*, during the period (J. Pogacnik). Nesting numbers at Lk Rockwell were regarded by L. Rosche as higher than usual.

**Prairie Warbler:** Northward, J. Hammond had a singing bird on the Tri-Valley WA, *Muskingum*, on 3 June. B. Glick had one on 5 June in *Coshocton*, and D&J Hochadel had a singing bird in *Columbiana* the following day.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** J. Pogacnik had seven during the season at the *Lake* MPs, and one on the Grand River Terraces, *Ashtabula*, on 13 June. L. Peyton had a singing bird in the Miami-Whitewater Forest from 19 June through the period.

**American Redstart:** Two were at Highbanks MP, *Delaware*, on 9 June (J. Hammond), and one remained on 12 June (D. Sanders). Six singing males were heard in the *Lake* MPs during the period (J. Pogacnik). J. Miller confirmed a nest in *Holmes* in June.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** In addition to nests reported for the previous season, more northern breeders included a territorial bird at Mosquito Lk WA on 6 June (C. Babyak), two calling on 13 and 20 June at Meander Res, *Mahoning* (C. Babyak), and two pairs nesting at the Grand River WA (J. Pogacnik).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** L. Yoder had three at a traditional outpost at Mohican SF on 15 June.

**Ovenbird:** Elsewhere in the east, alarms were sounded about this species in 1999. On balance, there seems to be no clear evidence of a decline in Ohio, witness 24 birds heard on 18 June in Mohican SF by L. Yoder, and 34 estimated by L. Rosche at the RTLS.

**Northern Waterthrush:** J. Pogacnik saw the species in three areas of the *Lake* MPs during the period.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** Away from its strongholds, six males were singing at Highbanks MP, *Delaware*, on 9 June, and two at Blendon Wds MP, *Franklin*, on 16 June (J. Hammond); five were heard at Mohican SF on 18 June (L. Yoder), and four were found by the GAAS in *Summit* in June; L. Rosche estimated 15 birds at the RTLS, with nesting.

**Kentucky Warbler:** Northward, six were singing near Millersburg, *Holmes*, on 18 June (B. Glick), and three were doing likewise in the Mohican SF on the same day (L. Yoder). Still further away from Kentucky, two were singing at Hinckley MP, *Medina*, on 19 June (R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner), and a male staked out a territory in the *Lake* MPs during the period (J. Pogacnik). L. Rosche regarded nesting as probable in the RTLS.

**Mourning Warbler:** One passed through the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 3 June (J. Mager), and one through Lakeshore MP on the 6<sup>th</sup> (J. Pogacnik). Two were reported to the GAAS between 11 and 21 June in *Summit*.

**Common Yellowthroat:** By 6 June, 27 were at Ottawa, and by 4 July, 38 (ONWRC). N. Cade counted 24 at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July.

**Hooded Warbler:** L. Yoder had 18 in the Mohican SF on 18 June, and the GAAS censused 72 in June in *Summit*.

**Wilson's Warbler:** The last report came from Lakeshore MP on 5 June (J. Pogacnik).



Hooded Warbler - Greenlawn Cemetery, Franklin Co., May 1997. Photo by Len Powell.

**Canada Warbler:** Defying its name, this species nests as far south as Georgia, at higher elevations to be sure. Generally quite uncommon at Ohio's elevations, decent numbers were noted this season. **D&A Chasar** found it on 5, 6, 8, 26, 27, and 30 June and 5 and 17 July at a site in the CVNRA; in another site in the CVNRA they observed a female on 27 June feeding two young, and a male singing nearby. Three were noted on territory in Crane Hollow, *Hocking*, during the period (**D. Minney**), and **F. Renfrow** noticed up to three birds in Hocking Hills SP between 4 June and 20 June. Four were in Mohican SF on 18 June (**L. Yoder**), and one was noted by the GAAS in *Summit* in June. **D. Dister** found one singing in the Mohican SF on 5 July, and **E. Pierce** saw a male with food on 10 July in Stebbin's Gulch, *Geauga*. Birds were seen at four locations at two *Lake* MPs during the period (**J. Pogacnik**). The last apparent northbound migrant (5 June), and the earliest southbound one (24 July) were reported at Lakeshore MP by **J. Pogacnik**.

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Among the more northerly sightings were six tallied by the GAAS in June in *Summit*, two at Mohican SF on 18 June by **L. Yoder**, a pair at Erie Shores MP, *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**), and three nests at the Grand River WA during the period (**J. Pogacnik**); **L. Rosche** estimated 50 birds at the RTLS, with nesting.

**Summer Tanager:** It may have been last year's lovelorn male who returned to Highbanks MP, *Delaware*, during the previous period, and had finally attracted a mate by late June (**J. Hammond**). The male remains as of this writing, on 28 Sept (**J. Hammond**). A nest was in *Holmes* during the period, success unknown (**B. Glick**).

**Scarlet Tanager:** Eight males were at Highbanks MP, *Delaware*, on 9 June (**J. Hammond**), and 12 on the CVNRA on the 13<sup>th</sup> (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**). 91 were counted by the GAAS in *Summit* in June, and 340 estimated at the RTLS by **L. Rosche**. Possible southbound migrants included 12 on 18 July and 10 on 21 July at Lakeshore MP (**J. Pogacnik**).



*Eastern Towhee* - Woodbury WA, Coshocton Co., 16 June 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

**Eastern Towhee:** The GAAS found 108 between 11 and 21 June in *Summit*, and 750 were estimated by **L. Rosche** at the RTLS, *Portage*.

**Chipping Sparrow:** The census of *Summit* in June by the GAAS yielded 182 birds, and that in *Hancock* on 1 June, 65 (**B. Hardesty et al.**).

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** One was reported by **S. Zadar** and **D. Kriska** in *Medina* on 1 June.

**Field Sparrow:** **N. Cade** had ~50 at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July. **L. Rosche** estimated ~1100 birds at the RTLS, *Portage*.

**Vesper Sparrow:** Very rare in *Trumbull*, a singing male was seen there on 20 June (**D&J Hochadel**); the same observers had two singing in *Columbiana* on 6 June. Numbers were down in *Portage*, according to **L. Rosche**.

**Lark Sparrow:** **T. Seidel** reported an adult feeding a juvenile on the driveway of The Nature Conservancy's office at the Oak Openings near the end of June, a new location. For elsewhere in the area, **E. Tramer** offered these remarks: "Adults of recently fledged young were observed in Oak Openings MP on 27 June. A University of Toledo doctoral research project conducted by Michelle Grigore has documented a substantial increase in the number of pairs of lark sparrows in the Oak Openings since 1993 (at least 20 pairs attempted nesting in 1998). It appears that recent burning and cutting of brush on parcels owned by the Toledo Area MPs and The Nature Conservancy have been effective in providing new nesting sites for this species. The persistence of this small isolated breeding population of lark sparrows since at least 1930 is remarkable."

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** The prairie area at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands had 10 birds on 24 July (**M. Busam**), and 77 were counted at Big Island WA's grasslands on the 25<sup>th</sup> by **V. Fazio**. **L. Rosche** reported one territory at the RTLS. One was at Ottawa on 4 July (ONWRC). Four males were on territory in a field west of the Toledo Express Airport on 7 June (**E. Tramer**); they disappeared in mid-July as a result of the critical need for a golf course at the site.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** One was found at Big Island WA on 26 June (**T. Bartlett**). 21 were at Woodbury WA, *Coshocton*, on 5 July (**J. Brumfield**), and ~50 were singing there on the 8<sup>th</sup> (**C. Dusthimer**). One was singing at a new *Trumbull* site on 11 July (**D&J Hochadel**), and four territorial birds at the RTLS (**C. Willis**). Through the period, three were in *Seneca* (**T. Bartlett**), two or three in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands (**P. Wharton**), 18+ in *Adams* (**T. Bartlett**), and well over 100 at Crown City WA, *Gallia/Lawrence* (fide **J. McCormac**). **B&A Toneff** counted 11 during a visit to The Wilds, *Muskingum*, on 20 July.

**Song Sparrow:** **N. Cade** counted 25 on 25 July in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands. 650 were estimated at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**). **D. Kline** had 91 pairs on a square-mile census in *Holmes*.

**Swamp Sparrow:** 14 were at the Streetsboro Bog, *Portage*, on 13 June, and 11 there on 25 July (**R. Rickard**). Six were at Magee on 20 June (**H&S Hiris**), as well as nine at Springville Marsh SNP the same day (**A&B Toneff**). 40 estimated at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**).

**White-throated Sparrow:** One was at the site of a 1997 nest in *Ashtabula* on 13 June (**J. Pogacnik**). **M. Busam** saw one at Sheldon Marsh SNP on 20 June, and a singing bird was noted at Spring Valley WA on 19 June (**E&L Roush**) and on 29 June (**J. Hays**).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** **J. Pogacnik** reckoned the species bred in 13 *Lake* MPs through the period, with four singing at other *Lake* sites on 22 June. One was at the Holden Arboretum on 27 June and 20 July (**R. Rickard**), and another at a feeder in *Mahoning* on 3-4 July (**L. Warren**). Seven were noted at Stebbin's Gulch and Little Mtn on 10 July (**E. Pierce**).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 101 were on the GAAS's survey of *Summit* in June, and 550 were estimated at the RTLS (**L. Rosche**). At or even beyond the normal southern limits of its range, two were at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 3 June (**M. Sandvig**), and on 7 June one was on territory at Fort Ancient, *Warren* (**L. Gara**). **C. Corbin** had one near Ash Cave, *Hocking*, on 24 June, and **J. Lehman**

had two singing males at Shawnee Lookout Pk, *Hamilton*, on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on the 27<sup>th</sup> (**M. Busam**), and several were present at Buck Ck SP through the period (**D. Overacker**).

**Blue Grosbeak:** A good year for reports of this species, and perhaps for its local population itself. When the editor asked his brother Pete the best places to find it in *Adams*, he was told, "on telephone wires." Many observers in that county found 10-15 birds, in the usual places. **L. Rosche** found a singing male on the RTLS 21 June. There was a successful nest in *Holmes* on 25 July (**B. Glick**), and on 20 July **J. McCormac** counted 11 males on territory, and estimated 20 pairs overall, at Crown City WA, *Gallia/Lawrence*. **E. Tramer** noted two brown-plumaged birds in a field west of the Toledo Express Airport on 2 July, as well as a singing bird to the east on 26 July. No birdlife was seen at the former location on the 26<sup>th</sup>—"the only reliable site for blue grosbeak in the northern 2/3 of the state"—the field having been cleared and graded for a planned golf course.

**Indigo Bunting:** 35 were in the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on 25 July (**N. Cade**), and 225 in *Summit* during the GAAS census in June; ~300 were on the RTLS (**L. Rosche**).

**Dickcissel:** Two were at the Toledo Express Airport on 3 June (**A. Osborne**), and four males appeared at the Miami-Whitewater Wetlands on the same date (**J. Mager**), their numbers swelling to at least seven by the 11<sup>th</sup> (**P. Wharton**). **B&A Toneff** had six at Killdeer on 18 June, then two on 13 July. **J&D Brumfield** had one at Woodbury WA on 5 July. **V. Fazio** censused 27 at Big Island WA on 25 July, and two days later the first *Hancock* bird in years was found (**B. Hardesty**). 12+ territorial males were in *Seneca* through the period (**T. Bartlett**), and an equal number at the Crown City WA, *Gallia/Lawrence* (fide **J. McCormac**).

**Bobolink:** Their nesting often interrupted by haying—even in Wildlife Areas—the birds did better in reclaimed strip-mines (see article in this issue).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** Several observers commented on an apparent decline in its numbers. The GAAS *Summit* survey found 54 last year, only 16 in 1999; **L. Rosche** estimated 54 at the RTLS. 13 were at Tri-Valley WA, *Muskingum*, on 10 June (**J. Hammond**).

**Western Meadowlark:** For the first time since 1988, no report reached us of this species for the summer season.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** After the spring's flush of this species, this season yielded a single report, an immature seen at Metzger on 30 July (**B. Morrison**), but coverage of this area by birders has been spotty recently, deservedly for the most part.

**Rusty Blackbird:** Very unusual was a male found by **J. Pogacnik** in *Lake* on 22 June.

**Orchard Oriole:** Northward, there were 13 on the GAAS June count in *Summit*, 10 on the RTLS (**L. Rosche**), five on a *Hancock* census (**B. Hardesty** et al.), and four on Johnson's Isl, *Ottawa*, on 21 June (**R. Harlan, Sa. Wagner**). Usually among the first to head south, six were especially impatient on 7 July at Lakeshore MP (**J. Pogacnik**).

**Baltimore Oriole:** Among systematic surveys, **L. Rosche** estimated 210 birds on the RTLS, and the GAAS 200 in *Summit* during the period. The species does not normally depart during the period.

**Purple Finch:** A female was at a feeder in Brecksville on 5 June (**B&A Toneff**). Two were singing on 6 June at sites in *Columbiana* (**D&J Hochadel**), and another at Oak Openings MP (**M. Anderson**) the same day. The species nested at the Grand River Terraces, *Ashtabula*, and in four *Lake* MPs (**J. Pogacnik**). **L. Rosche** found nests, and estimated 30 birds on the RTLS. Birds were noted in the CVNRA on 7 June, 12 July, and 19 July by **M. Zehnder**. Five were a quirky find in Spring Grove Cemetery, *Hamilton*, on 24 July (**N. Cade**).

**House Sparrow:** Heartening news from **L. Rosche**: "Remarkably, after over a hundred trips to the Ravenna Training and Logistics Site, found (2) inside the compound on only one occasion. No nest or nesting activity observed by anyone!"

**ADDENDA:** The following noteworthy sightings were submitted in timely fashion by **N. Kotesovec**, but erroneously omitted from the Spring 1999 seasonal reports:

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Two different individuals in Hinckley MP, *Medina*, on 17 Mar and 31 Mar; both reports predate the earliest one asserted in the previous issue.

**Brown Creeper:** A nest under construction in Hinckley MP ended in failure by 13 June.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** A new seasonal high count of 41 at Horseshoe Pond, *Cuyahoga*, was made on 8 May.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** One noted on 8 May at Horseshoe Pond.

"**Lawrence's Warbler**": A female was found 8 May at Horseshoe Pond.

**Magnolia Warbler:** Two singing males were noted on 4 May at Hinckley MP, where a female initiated a nest on 12 May.

**ERRATA:** Corrected here are errors in our previous issue. We apologize to Dorothy Kohl and Stan Wulkowicz for misspelling their names. Not two, but one northern goshawk was seen 30 April. The broad-winged hawk date of 3 April should be 13 April. In the sora report, Stumpy Basin is in *Summit*, not *Cuyahoga*. As a Review List species, piping plover should be underlined. ODW managed the common tern colony at Pipe Creek WA, while Ottawa NWR managed the Ottawa colony. The white-breasted nuthatch count should be 34, not 343. We regret the mistakes.

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Matt Anderson, Hank Armstrong, Carole Babyak, Zac Baker, Greg & Melanie Balson, Andy Barber, Nick Barber, Dorothea Barker, Brian Barchus, Tom Bartlett, Victoria Baumgardner, Cathy Beat, Inez Beck, Adam Blank, Mike Bolton, Charles Bombaci, Sue Bowman, David Brinkman, Jenny & Dave Brumfield, Nancy Brundage, Gina Buckey, Don Burton, Atlee and Adrian Burkholder, Mike Busam, Neill Cade, Robert Capanna, Granville Carey, Dwight & Ann Chasar, Clay Corbin, Ernie Cornelius, Fred Crates, Chris Crofts, Mike Crofts, Wayne Cromie, George & Sandy Cull, Brad Cullen, Mabel Dailey, Donna Daniel, Olivier Debre, Leo Deininger, Phyllis Devlin, Dave Dister, Susan & Alan Dooley, Doug & Micki Dunakin, Jon C. Dunn, Curt Dusthimer, Lois Eckart, John Edwards, Paul Ellsworth, Bob Evans, Ann Faruque, Vic Fazio III, Bob Finkelstein, Jim Fry, Larry Gara, Jerry Gillen, Ted Gilliland, Bruce Glick, Adam Goloda, Jeff Grabmeier, Jeff Greene, Michel Grigore, Joe Hammond, Rob Harlan, Becky Hatfield, Jeff Hays, Bill Heck, Jim Heflich, Judy Hendrick, Michele Hendrick, Hank & Sally Hiris, Dave and Judy Hochadel, Tim Hochstetler, Jean and Dick Hoffman, Craig Holt, James Hooper, Dave Horn, Nancy Ibsen, Joe Jacquot, Bill Jones, Dorothy Kohl, Ned Keller, Patty Kellner, Tom Kemp, Jan Keys, Dennis Kline, Jonathon Kline, Ron Kolde, Norm Kotesovec, Linda & Gene Kovach, Norm Krasovek, Dave Kriska, Jason Larson, Andrew Leeds, Dave LeGallee, Jay Lehman, Tom Leiden, Mickey Lewin, Kevin Longberry, Juan Lozano, Paula Lozano, Vince Lucas, Kathy MacDonald, Jay Mager, Bernard Master, Charlotte Mathena, Winnie McClanahan, Jim McCormac, Cal McCormick, Joe McMahon, Gary Meszaros, Jolan Miller, Leon Miller, Dave Minney, Marie Morgan, Ben Morrison, Donald Morse Jr., Eric Mulholland, Rich Nicholls, Hope Orr, Art Osborn, Bill Osborne, Steve Pelikan, Joyce & Wolfgang Pelz, John Perchalski, Bruce Peterjohn, Haans Petruschke, Lester Peyton, Brad Phillips, Ed Pierce, Bob Placier, John Pogacnik, John Rakestraw, Jay Ranahan, Mary Reinthal, Frank Renfrow, Jim Reyda, Richard Rickard, Tom & Mary Anne Romito, Dave Russell, Ronda Russell, Craig Ruttler, Dave St. John, Dan Sanders, Morris Sandvig, Robert Schlabach, Terry Seidel, Wilma Seiler, Ron Sempier, Julie Shieldcastle, Henri Seibert, Mark Skinner, Larry Smith, Steve Smith, Su Snyder, Terry & Barb Sponseller, Emily Sprague, Gene Stauffer, Jay Stenger, Mark Stephens, Erica Stux, Richard Sweet, Bert Szabo, Bill & Ann Toneff, Elliot Tramer, Andy Troyer, Carol & Jim Tveekrem, Tom Uhlman, Barb Von Stein, Sandy Wagner, Steve Wagner, Leslie Warren, Mary Warren, Bill Whan, Pete Whan, Paul Wharton, Mike Williams, Courtenay Willis, Ben Winger, Clyde Witt, Tom Wonnacott, Stan Wulkowicz, Emery Yoder, Leroy Yoder, Perry Yoder, Sean Zadar, Marian Zehnder, Bill Zelesnik, Mike Zuilhof. *The Ohio Cardinal* is also grateful for valuable assistance and information to the Division of Wildlife and the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the editors of *The Bobolink* and *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*, the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, the online services managed by Vic Fazio III, the Greater Akron Audubon Society, the Ohio Bird Records Committee, and the rare bird alerts of Dayton, Cincinnati, and Toledo.

After editing this journal for some six years, and having thousands of bird records pass across my desk, I can very confidently say that most records are, thankfully, straightforward. Although every editor has a preconceived filter about what is acceptable—and this varies from editor to editor—the fact remains that most records fit nicely into categories of “publish” or “don’t publish,” once compared to other records received for a given season. A flock of 24 white-rumped sandpipers probably would be published; a flock of 24 starlings probably wouldn’t. A yellow warbler at Hoover Reservoir on April 20 might be published (depending on how early other reporters found yellow warblers elsewhere), but the same yellow warbler at Hoover on June 20 would probably not find its name in print, being too routine given the date. Each record demands its own judgment, but most judgments are straightforward. To your friendly editor, “straightforward” is good.

But no one ever said that “straightforward” had to be interesting. I have assembled four bird reports here that are anything but straightforward. All have been published in various journals over the years, spanning the period from 1917 to 1962. Editors and authors have, over these years, dealt with these records several times, each time with eyebrows raised. It is not my intention here to question the decisions of others, or to question the veracity of the bird reports themselves. Instead, I simply pose to the reader the question: what would you have done with these?

The barnacle goose is an Old World species that appears in North America, albeit rarely, generally during the expected migration period from October through April. Most North American records come from eastern Canada and the northeastern US, as would be expected for a Greenland nester. Records from outside these areas, or from outside the migration period, are open to much conjecture, especially since the species is widely kept in captivity. It is no surprise that Ohio has no barnacle goose records currently accepted by the Ohio Bird Records Committee. But we do have at least one published record, perhaps with at least some merit. According to a brief 1932 notice published in *The Auk* (49(4):460), “On November 5, 1925, Mr. Chester K. Brooks... shot a fine-plumaged male...on the marshes of the Winous Point Shooting Club near Port Clinton, Ohio, at the head of Sandusky Bay. This bird was presented to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History by Mr. Brooks and is now preserved in the collection of that institution.” Dr. John W. Aldrich, the author of the piece and then Curator of Ornithology at the Museum, stated that “while it is possible that this bird may have escaped from confinement, the condition of the plumage gives no hint of this.” Aldrich also contacted “the directors of the leading zoological parks of the north central states but no records of escaped barnacle geese were forthcoming. Furthermore, the fact that the...specimen was accompanied by another of the same species at the time Mr. Brooks shot it makes the chances of its being an escaped bird much less.” In retrospect, I wonder how the number of private aviculturists in existence in 1925 compares with the number today. Also, captive individuals of migratory species may escape in one locality and attach themselves to a migrating flock of a similar species, ending up far from the escape site. In *Abundance and Distribution of the Birds of Ohio* (Peterjohn et al., 1987) this report is treated as that of an escaped bird. It does give one cause to ponder, however, given the early twentieth-century date, the presence of two

birds, and the November occurrence.

Reverse migration is a phenomenon in which migrating birds travel in the opposite direction of expected travel; it is well-documented elsewhere, but seldom observed in Ohio, particularly in the fall. Nevertheless, reverse migration may account for a peculiar series of observations made by Lawrence E. Hicks, then with Ohio State University, along Alum Creek in Delaware County on November 16, 1931 (*The Auk*, 49(2):222, 1932). While engaged in field work along the Alum Creek bottomlands, Hicks noted two birds he identified as great crested flycatchers flying overhead at about 150 feet elevation. After briefly stopping in a tree, the birds continued flying to the southwest. A minute later, two more great crested flew over, then another, and then two more. Hicks collected one of the latter two for verification. If that were not enough, two more flew by later, for a total of nine great crested flycatchers, all on November 16. The collected specimen, which was deposited at the Ohio State Museum of Biological Diversity in Columbus, “was found to be in excellent condition with a large amount of fat,” according to Hicks. Certainly, a single great crested flycatcher on November 16 would today arouse much interest over the possibility of a western stray, most likely ash-throated flycatcher, but the specimen speaks for itself in this case. It is hard to imagine what other phenomenon could have brought nine great crested into Ohio in mid-November if not reverse migration. Hicks cites “unusually warm summer temperatures which prevailed during much of October and November.” Perhaps after heading south during the expected migration period of August and September, these birds came back north during the extended warm spell, only to be discovered heading south again by Hicks in mid-November. It is curious, though, that Hicks listed no other bird species that were out of the ordinary that day. If this was a reverse migration, did only great crested flycatchers take part, and why was Hicks the only observer to find them?

The next report certainly pushes the limits of acceptability, and possibly good-faith reporting as well. Everyone knows that black-throated blue warblers are not to be expected in Ohio during the winter months; winter records are virtually non-existent. Except, perhaps, on the Killdeer Plains Christmas Bird Count of January 2, 1966. CBCs aren’t always the most scientifically rigorous undertakings, with rare birds all too often poorly documented or not documented at all. If only this were the case with this report, it would make things a bit more palatable. But instead, observers at Killdeer Plains that day totaled 23 black-throated blue warblers, and sent their report to “CBC Central” accompanied by a “sheet of details...accurately describing in detail both male and female plumages,” according to the CBC editor in *Audubon Field Notes* (20(2):226). Our troubled editor continues, “This observation sounds incredible. Ohio must double-check this report before accepting it. National Christmas Count record only 5.” To my knowledge, very few have accepted this report as valid since its initial publication. Many times, an “incredible” report (read as “not credible”) is merely the result of an observer’s mistake, listing a bird on the wrong line or column, or submitting a typo of some kind; all are errors easily rectified with a little detective work by the editor. But this report includes “a sheet of details,” with apparently accurate descriptions of both sexes! What possible explanation does that leave us? It seems to me we have either a report that seems to defy all logic, or else a prank of some sort. If anyone is still around who can shed more light on this report of 23 BTBs, we’d love to hear the details.

Another remarkable record revolves around Ohio's only accepted record of Harris's hawk, a native of the southwestern US and points south. Although the species is largely resident, dispersals have occurred on rare occasions in the winter months, whereupon birds appear outside their normal range. It is a gregarious bird, and one that adapts well to captivity; it is a species popular with falconers. This said, our story (*Wilson Bulletin* 30(1):15-16, 1918) begins with Thomas M. Earl, a well-known Columbus area taxidermist, receiving a parcel post package from J.H. McKinley of Harrisburg, Ohio, on December 29, 1917. Although it was customary for Earl to receive specimens from McKinley for mounting, unlike normal shipments this one arrived without written comments. Earl recognized it as a Harris's hawk, and stated "I could not bring myself to think that it had not been shipped in from the Texan border by some soldier friend perhaps" of McKinley. Several weeks passed before Earl finally spoke with McKinley. The latter maintained that "The hawk in question was shot by a farmer, living some four miles southeast of Harrisburg, on or about December 24, 1917. On the morning of that day a pair of these hawks were molesting this man's poultry and had killed one or two of them when they were frightened away. In the afternoon they returned, when the farmer, armed with a shotgun, killed this one, the mate then disappearing. After lying around for several days, the hawk was then brought to town and given to me." Thus the hawk came into McKinley's possession, and finally into Earl's. The specimen still exists, and resides at the Ohio State Museum in Columbus. It bears no signs of captivity, and is in good condition. In concluding his article, Earl sums up: "It is a remarkable coincidence in name that a *Harris* hawk should have been first taken near *Harrisburg*, Ohio." (italics in the original).

It should be noted that the following is purely conjecture, and a wild one at that. It is a fact, however, that an institution known as the "Liar's Club" was commonplace in turn-of-the-century small-town America. A group of like-minded folks would gather together regularly with the express purpose of telling "tall tales," the taller the better, and all with a straight face. There was no malicious intent, but if someone from outside the club were to believe one of their tales, well...all the better. But to make sure that no one in the club would be fooled by a tale that had circulated in the outside world, club members would include an aside, or a sort of "wink-wink" acknowledgment, in each tale meant to be recognized only by club members, thus saving them from the gullibility of outsiders. An example of such a "wink-wink" acknowledgment might be something along the lines of "Isn't it curious Mr. Bass caught his record trout on Bass Lake?" or even "Isn't it peculiar that a Harris's hawk would be found in Harrisburg, Ohio?"

Not to belabor my precarious point, or risk ridicule for your old retired editor, but I find it a curious coincidence that this story ties in with bird banding. Bird banders have a widely-accepted form of abbreviating the names of bird species, used to save time when hustling to band, record, and release many birds during a busy period. For bird species with two-word names, such as yellow warbler, banders traditionally abbreviate using the first two letters of the first word and the first two letters of the second, giving us YEWA in this example. Likewise, for American woodcock the abbreviation would be AMWO, for wood thrush it would be WOTH, and for Harris's hawk it would be.....

## Ohio Grassland Breeding Bird Survey

by Jim McCormac

Neotropical migrants—such as warblers, tanagers, flycatchers, etc.—have garnered their fair share of attention lately due a perception that many of these species are on the decrease. While this is probably true, neotropicals face a threat that we North Americans are largely powerless to affect—the destruction of Central and South American wintering habitat. There is at the same time another group of birds that is likely even more at risk, a risk that prevails here in the midwestern United States.

Grassland birds are familiar to most birders: meadowlarks, bobolinks, short-eared owls, and various sparrows, such as grasshopper and Henslow's. Prior to settlement and large-scale alterations of North American ecosystems by Europeans, grassland species were confined to the vast prairies of the central U.S., which extended as far east as central Ohio. In Ohio, there were several large prairie regions: the Sandusky Plains, which covered parts of Crawford, Marion, and Wyandot counties, and of which Killdeer Plains is the only substantial remnant; the Pickaway Plains, a huge prairie that occupied central Pickaway and Ross counties south of Circleville; and the Darby Plains in Madison and Union counties, including the location of the proposed Darby Plains National Wildlife Refuge. There were numerous other prairies, too—some substantial, most small, but today sharing one trait—almost all have been destroyed by agriculture or other development.

Of the nearly 1200 square miles of original Ohio prairie, less than 1% remains, giving this habitat the dubious distinction of being our rarest natural feature. Given



Large expanse of open grassland at Crown City WA showing the invasion of Asian bush-clover, *Lespedeza cuneata* (the lighter shaded areas). This introduced weed overruns enormous areas, and is largely worthless for avifauna. However, northern bobwhite and Henslow's sparrow do frequently utilize this habitat. Photo by Jim McCormac.

this, it's remarkable that any grassland bird species remain part of our avifauna. Sadly, one species was eliminated—the greater prairie chicken, which inhabited prairies in central and northwest Ohio. Not as resilient as other grassland species, these magnificent creatures disappeared from the state by the mid-1930s. Surprisingly however, the prairie chicken is one of only a few Ohio birds extirpated as breeders, others including merlin, Bachman's sparrow, and piping plover.

Fortunately, most of our grassland species are adaptable enough to exploit artificial habitats created by farming practices, and shifted to these new habitats as the native prairies were plowed under. During the early to mid-1900's, small farms were the rule, and there was always plenty of suitable "grassland" habitat in the form of pastures, fallow fields, and hay meadows. In recent decades, many small farming operations have been consolidated into mega-farms, whose practices tend to favor higher productivity and "cleaner" agriculture; consequently they provide little in the way of suitable habitat for grassland birds.

A seemingly unrelated development in the early 1970's proved of great benefit to Ohio's grassland bird life. Reacting to public outcry resulting from tremendous environmental damage caused by vast unreclaimed strip-mines in southeastern Ohio, the Ohio legislature enacted mining reclamation laws in 1974. As a result, thousands of acres of open rolling grasslands were created throughout unglaciated southeastern Ohio, sited on abandoned mines that prior to reclamation had resembled lunar landscapes devoid of life. Although this newly created habitat resembles the African savannas more than any feature occurring naturally in Ohio, grassland birds found the reclamation sites suitable as breeding grounds. Currently, the greatest concentrations



Open grassland at Crown City WA. This habitat supports grasshopper, Henslow's, and savannah sparrows, occasionally northern harrier and short-eared owl, and numerous other species. The white tubes in the foreground protect tree seedlings, an attempt at habitat alteration which might not be advisable in these areas, given the high usage of grassland species. Photo by Jim McCormac.

of grassland species in Ohio are now found in these areas.

Over the past several years, the Division of Wildlife of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources has acquired four wildlife areas—Crown City, Egypt Valley, Tri-Valley, and Woodbury—now located on reclaimed strip-mine, and collectively totaling over 61,000 acres. Recognizing that these sites support grassland birds, Division of Wildlife provided me with a two-year grant to document the avifauna of these wildlife areas. The resulting information can be used to assist in making management decisions, and to insure that significant populations of unusual breeding birds are protected.

Our 1999 field season was comprised of two survey periods: 25 May to 15 June, and 15 July to 5 August. A network of approximately 45 volunteers was enlisted to conduct survey routes on the wildlife areas. Each route consisted of a half-mile of road bisecting suitable grassland habitat; surveyors walked this route and recorded numbers and species of all birds seen or heard on either side of the road. Using this method, we were able to obtain an excellent representative sampling of grassland bird life on approximately 12,000 to 15,000 acres of open reclaimed land in the counties of Belmont, Coshocton, Gallia, Lawrence, and Muskingum.

Even though the majority of habitat along the survey routes was grassland, a surprising number of species unanticipated in grassland areas were recorded. While this is due in part to many unexpected species utilizing what would appear to be sub-optimal habitats of black locust thickets and autumn olive tangles, another reason is that vocalizations can be heard for long distances in these open habitats, and songs from distant woodlots could often be detected. A total of 105 species was recorded,



Typical early successional shrubland interspersed among open grassland. Blue grosbeaks are invariably present in this habitat at Crown City WA, as are orchard oriole, yellow-breasted chat, prairie warbler, and others. Photo by Jim McCormac.

collectively, from the four wildlife areas. In the summaries for each wildlife area that follow, readers are asked to bear in mind that these were not comprehensive surveys, and reflect only species found during the study. Most species noted probably breed in or near the wildlife area for which they are mentioned. Listed status indicates the likelihood of observing the species during a breeding-season visit to the area: common=almost certain to be seen; occasional=should be seen, but in low numbers; and rare=only one to a few individuals present. Detailed maps are extremely helpful in finding one's way in these areas. To obtain them, contact the Ohio Division of Wildlife at (614) 265-6300, or write the same at 1840 Belcher Drive, Building G-1, Columbus, OH 43224-1329.

### **Crown City Wildlife Area**

*Location:* Straddles the Gallia/Lawrence County line, about two miles north of the Ohio River. State Routes 218 and 790 border the area on the east and north, respectively.

*Site Description:* Crown City WA has 11,171 acres, and much of the area is open grassland. There are numerous copses of black locust, which are good habitat for species like orchard oriole and blue grosbeak. Scattered small wetlands—some formed by beaver—can be good birding areas. Presently one of the least explored of Ohio's wildlife areas, Crown City is very rewarding not only for grassland species, but also for southern specialties like blue grosbeak.

*Species:* A total of 84 bird species were detected during the survey period. Those of particular interest included: American bittern (rare, possibly breeding in a large beaver wetland), northern bobwhite (common), yellow-billed cuckoo (common), willow flycatcher (common), white-eyed vireo (common), blue-winged warbler (common), prairie warbler (common), yellow-breasted chat (common), vesper sparrow (rare), grasshopper sparrow (common), Henslow's sparrow (common; any open grassland had this species, and singing males numbered well over 100 in 1999), blue grosbeak (common; probably the greatest concentration of this species in Ohio, with at least 15 territorial males present in 1999, easily found in suitable habitat), dickcissel (occasional; about 12 territorial males in 1999), eastern meadowlark (common), and orchard oriole (common).

### **Egypt Valley Wildlife Area**

*Location:* In Belmont County, just east of the Guernsey County line. Interstate 70 borders the southern boundary, and State Route 800 traverses the western border. The wildlife area surrounds Piedmont Lake.

*Site Description:* Egypt Valley contains 14,300 acres of somewhat fragmented, discontinuous land scattered around the west, east, and south sides of Piedmont Lake. This was one of the earliest strip-mines reclaimed; consequently much of the area is in a more advanced state of succession than the other sites. Nevertheless, there are still extensive areas of grassland that harbor many interesting species. This would seem to be one of the likelier sites for Common Raven to be found breeding in Ohio. Piedmont Lake is always worth checking for water birds, too.

*Species:* A total of 84 bird species were detected during the survey period. Those of

particular interest included: osprey (rare), yellow-billed cuckoo (common), willow flycatcher (common), white-eyed vireo (occasional), blue-winged warbler (occasional), prairie warbler (occasional), cerulean warbler (occasional), yellow-breasted chat (occasional), summer tanager (rare), savannah sparrow (occasional), grasshopper sparrow (common), Henslow's sparrow (common), blue grosbeak (rare), dickcissel (rare), bobolink (occasional), eastern meadowlark (common), and orchard oriole (occasional).

### **Tri-Valley Wildlife Area**

*Location:* Located in Muskingum County, just east of Dresden. State Route 208 bisects the northern half of the area, and State Route 93 borders the southeastern section.

*Site Description:* 16,200 acres are included in the sprawling Tri-Valley complex, which is the "youngest" of the four sites in terms of reclamation. Indeed, there is still an active strip-mine adjacent to the wildlife area. Consequently, most of this area is open grassland, although some sizeable woodlands are interspersed throughout. Even though Tri-Valley is less than an hour's drive from Columbus, it is relatively unknown to birders, in spite of the interesting avifauna. Like the other areas in this report, Tri-Valley is a good place to observe winter raptors such as rough-legged hawk and short-eared owl. I observed a peregrine falcon here in February 1999.

*Species:* A total of 90 bird species were detected here during the survey period. Those of particular interest included: bald eagle (rare), northern harrier (rare; one pair probably bred in 1999), broad-winged hawk (rare), yellow-billed cuckoo (common), willow flycatcher (common), white-eyed vireo (common), chestnut-sided warbler (rare; a territorial male was present into early June), prairie warbler (occasional), cerulean warbler (rare), black-and-white warbler (occasional), ovenbird (rare), Louisiana waterthrush (rare), Kentucky warbler (rare), yellow-breasted chat (common), vesper sparrow (rare), savannah sparrow (occasional), grasshopper sparrow (common), Henslow's sparrow (common), rose-breasted grosbeak (rare), bobolink (common), eastern meadowlark (common), and orchard oriole (occasional).

### **Woodbury Wildlife Area**

*Location:* Located in Coshocton County, about five miles west of the city of Coshocton. State Route 541 runs through the center of the area, and provides good access to the property.

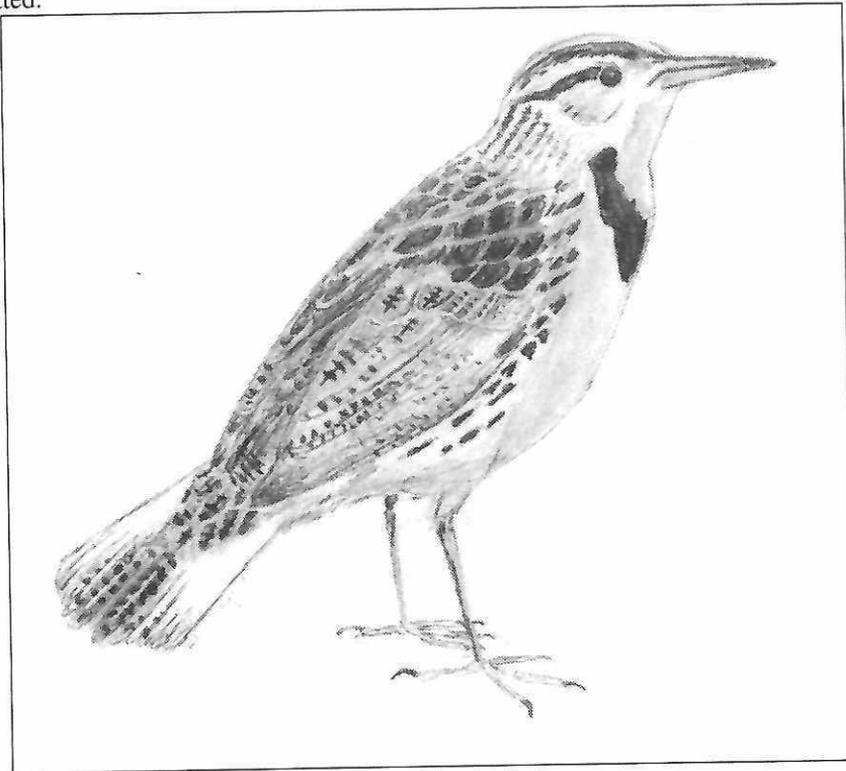
*Site Description:* Woodbury, at just over 19,000 acres, is the largest of the reclaimed strip-mine wildlife areas. A good diversity of habitat is found here, including grassland, shrub land, woodlands in various states of succession, and small wetlands and ponds. In addition to the interesting summer avifauna, Woodbury is known to support significant wintering raptor populations, at least in some years.

*Species:* A total of 82 bird species were detected during the survey period. Those of particular interest included: northern harrier (rare), northern bobwhite (occasional), black-billed cuckoo (rare), yellow-billed cuckoo (common), short-

eared owl (rare), willow flycatcher (common), least flycatcher (rare), white-eyed vireo (common), blue-winged warbler (occasional), prairie warbler (occasional), black-and-white warbler (rare), yellow-breasted chat (common), vesper sparrow (rare), savannah sparrow (occasional), grasshopper sparrow (common), Henslow's sparrow (common), rose-breasted grosbeak (rare), dickcissel (occasional), bobolink (common), eastern meadowlark (common), and orchard oriole (common).

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A project of this scope isn't possible without the efforts of many, and I was fortunate to have numerous excellent birders helping out. These include, in no particular order: Laura Gooch (whose excellent photos contributed greatly to the project), Nick Barber, Larry Rosche, Linda Burianek, Bruce & Craig Glick, Bernie Daniel, Scott & Janice Emrick, John Rakestraw, Robb & Pam Morrison, Tim Fitzpatrick, CeCe Johnston, Carl & Jaunita Slater, Mike Williams, Guy Denny, Marlene Woo-Lun, Mike Flynn, Joe Hammond, Bill Whan, Dan Sanders, Kathy & Ara Beal, Dave Demmon, Kitty Butterworth, Shaune Skinner, Scott Hull, Melanie & Kelly Koontz, John Watts, Bob Royse, Brad & Dee Bond, Bill Thompson, Julie Zickefoose, Jay Stenger, Jane Huff, Brad Bolton, Jason Larson, Donna Kowalczyk, Carroll DeVore, Jessica Mulford, Brian Gara, and especially Claudia Steele. My apologies to anyone I've inadvertently omitted.



Eastern Meadowlark  
by Ben-Winger

## Red-breasted Nuthatches Nesting at Hocking Hills: The First Records for Southeastern Ohio

by Frank Renfrow

On 12 June 1998 I found a pair of red-breasted nuthatches (*Sitta canadensis*) excavating a hole in a dead red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) at the campground at Hocking Hills State Park, Hocking County, Ohio.

During several subsequent trips I found the pair's attention had shifted to another hole in another dead red pine nearby. Nesting activity was confirmed on 4 July, with the pair going in and out of this hole and making feeding motions, but evidence of young was never definitely established. I did locate several other red-breasted nuthatches in two additional locations near Old Man's Cave during this summer period.

I returned to the campground the next year, on 14 April 1999. I found a male red-breasted nuthatch, and followed it as it busily inspected numerous holes in many dead red pines in the area, including last year's nest hole. I also observed him collecting sap from a small wound that he had apparently made in the base of a white pine (*Pinus strobus*).

I returned to the campground on 31 May, but was unable to find any red-breasted nuthatches. The next day I checked the Old Man's Cave picnic area and the cabin area near the lodge, these being the two other areas where I had found this species the previous year. Just as I was about to give up, I found a male perched on a live red pine in front of one of the cabins. There he was joined by a female, and both were soon busily foraging in the needle clusters in the upper branches of the pines.

I foolishly proceeded to search every dead red pine in the area, only to find the female flying into a hole in the living red pine where I had first seen the male. I then noticed that there were many holes in this tree, some rather large and oblong in shape, indicating the work of a pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*). The nuthatch hole was about eighteen feet up and almost square, possibly also started by a pileated. This



Red-breasted Nuthatches at nest site in Hocking Hills SP, Hocking Co.,  
3 June 1999. Photo by Frank Renfrow.

hole was thickly coated with pine resin, as were many of the other holes in this tree. I observed the male spreading more resin on the nest hole rim on this date and the next as the female flew in and out of the nest hole.

The pair's duties were made much more difficult by a pair of tufted titmice (*Baeolophus bicolor*) nesting in a crevice in the trunk about six feet below in the same tree. The titmice seemed determined to keep the nuthatches from reaching the hole. On several occasions the male nuthatch appeared to act as a distraction. While the male was being chased by the titmice, the female nuthatch was able to fly into the hole.

On 10 June I found the pair busily engaged in carrying food to the hole and removing fecal sacs about every ten minutes. Instead of dropping the fecal sacs on the ground, they would carefully place them on the branches of nearby red pines.

On 16 June the in-and-out pace had risen to once every 3 or 4 minutes. A pair of white-breasted nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*) landed on the nest tree, only to be dive-bombed by the irate male red-breasted. They quickly moved on to quieter foraging nearby.

On this same date I observed the male carry a periodical cicada (*Cicada septendecim*) out(!) of the nest hole. This being about the peak of the 17-year outbreak, the insects were everywhere. I later saw the female chasing a cicada through the pines. Most of the food items carried to the nest were smaller fare, consisting mainly of small caterpillars and flying insects.

On 20 June I could hear the begging young in the nest hole, as the parents came about every two minutes. By this time I had devoted the better part of 14 days during four separate trips to observing this nest. I would have liked to witness the fledging, but obligations to home and family (my own nest) won out.

Larry and Lenna Mae Gara took up the torch on 21 June. When they arrived at the site the nuthatches were very loud and vocal, possibly engaged in coaxing the young to come out. The next day the birds could not be found, and the young had probably fledged.

Red-breasted nuthatches have previously been found in the summer at Hocking Hills (Peterjohn, 1989). The planted red and white pines at Hocking provide excellent habitat for this species. Red pine does not naturally occur in Ohio. White pine is not known to be native to Hocking County, although it is indigenous to two nearby Southeastern Ohio counties, Jackson and Washington (Braun, 1961).

The red-breasted nuthatch breeds in scattered locations across northern Ohio, the closest to Hocking Hills being about 90 miles to the north in southern Ashland County (Peterjohn and Rice, 1991). The Hocking Hills area is distinct from these northern Ohio sites in being a northern outlier of the Cliff Section of the Allegheny Plateau, with a forest of mixed (i.e., southern and northern) character (Braun, 1961).

I have found these birds nesting even farther south in the Cliff Section at the Rock Bridge area of the Red River Gorge, in Wolfe County, Kentucky. These birds nest in a deep gorge area of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and white pine (Renfrow, 1996).

The only other southern Ohio nesting record of the red-breasted nuthatch is of a nest that I chanced upon at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati (Hamilton County) in June 1982 (Renfrow, 1982). This was located in the dead limb of a white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) among ornamental plantings of a wide variety of conifer species.

## REFERENCES

- Braun, E. L. 1950. *Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America* (2nd edition). Hafner Press, New York.
- Braun, E. L. 1961. *The Woody Plants of Ohio*. Ohio State University Press, Columbus, Ohio.
- Peterjohn, B. G. 1989. *The Birds of Ohio*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Peterjohn, B. G., and D. L. Rice. 1991. *The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas*. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Columbus, Ohio.
- Renfrow, F. 1982. Red-breasted Nuthatches Nesting in Cincinnati. *The Ohio Cardinal* 5:40.
- Renfrow, F. 1996. Red-breasted Nuthatches Nesting at the Red River Gorge: A First State Record for Kentucky. *The Kentucky Warbler* 72:62-64.



Dickcissel - Woodbury WA, Coshocton Co., 16 June 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

## Summary of the 1999 Waterfowl Population

by Joseph W. Hammond

Every year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) publishes a report detailing the status of North American waterfowl populations in order to aid the establishment of hunting regulations. *Waterfowl Population Status, 1999* contains information on habitat quality and availability as well as waterfowl breeding population and production derived from surveys conducted by the USFWS, the Canadian Wildlife Service, State and Provincial agencies, and private organizations. Here are summarized the results published in this report, forming an overall picture of the continental waterfowl population in 1999. All in all, it was a very successful year for these species in North America.

### The Duck Population

Two areas were surveyed to determine the populations of ducks in North America: the Traditional Survey Area (TSA), which encompasses Alaska, central and western Canada, and the north-central U.S., and the Eastern Survey Area (ESA), located in Ontario, Quebec, and Maine. Other outlying regions were also sampled, but these data are not included in this summary.

Due to unusually high spring precipitation, the condition of breeding habitat in the TSA was rated as good to excellent, better than in 1998. The number of ponds during May in Prairie Canada and the north-central U.S. was estimated at 6.70 million, 46% higher than 1998's total of 4.59 million ponds and 37% higher than the long-term average (LTA) from 1974-1998 of 4.88 million ponds. Conditions in the ESA were less favorable after unusually dry spring weather, which resulted in fewer ponds and low water levels in permanent wetlands, and production was expected to be limited in this area. Because summer weather also influences duck populations, a July pond survey was conducted in the TSA. Excellent conditions continued in Prairie Canada and the north-central U.S., with 5.21 million ponds available in July. This estimate was the largest on record, 24% higher than 1998 (4.20 million ponds) and 94% higher than the LTA (1974-1998) of 2.68 million ponds.

Overall, the estimated breeding population for all ducks (excluding scoters, eiders, oldsquaws, mergansers, and wood ducks) in the TSA was 43.4 million birds. This, the largest on record, was 11% higher than 1998's estimate of 39.1 million and 32% higher than the LTA (1955-1998) of 32.8 million. The estimated breeding population for all ducks (excluding scoters, eiders, oldsquaws, mergansers, and wood ducks) in the ESA was 1.25 million birds. Although not a statistically significant change, this estimate was 23% higher than 1998's estimate of 1.01 million and 26% higher than the LTA (1995-1998) of 0.99 million.

Of 10 principal duck species in the TSA, five (mallard, green-winged teal, northern shoveler, northern pintail, and scaup—greater and lesser combined) showed significant increases over 1998, while one—gadwall—showed a slightly significant decrease (Table 1). The mallard estimate of 10.8 million was the second highest on record, after 11.2 million in 1958. Although gadwall decreased from 1998, the 1999 estimate of 3.24 million was the third highest on record: only 1997 (3.90 million) and 1998 (3.74 million) were higher. The green-winged teal estimate of 2.63 million was

the second highest on record, the highest having been 1959's 2.65 million. Blue-winged teal set a new record with 7.15 million in 1999. The northern shoveler estimate (3.89 million) in 1999 was the second highest, after 1997's estimate of 4.12 million. The redhead estimate of 0.97 million was also the second highest, next to 1.01 million in 1998. Finally, the canvasback estimate of 0.72 million in 1999 was the fourth highest on record.

Looking at the LTAs for the 10 principal species in the TSA we find that seven species were significantly above the LTA (1955-1998) (Table 1). Such increases included: mallards 47%, gadwall 110%, green-winged teal 50%, blue-winged teal 65%, northern shovelers 95%, redheads 60%, and canvasbacks 29% (Table 1). Two species were significantly lower than their LTAs, northern pintail by 30% and scaup (greater and lesser combined) by 18% (Table 1).

In the ESA, data were presented for the 10 most abundant duck species. Most species' population estimates were statistically similar to those of 1998 (Table 2). The goldeneye (common and Barrow's combined) estimate of 308,000 in 1999, though 196% higher than in 1998, was only marginally statistically significant (Table 2). Scaup (greater and lesser combined) showed a 93% decrease from 1998, but again this was only marginally significant (Table 2). Only three species in the ESA showed significant changes from their LTAs (1995-1998) in 1999 (Table 2). Blue-winged teal were down by 95%, scaup (greater and lesser combined) down by 90%, and goldeneye (common and Barrow's combined) up by 287% (Table 2).

American black ducks are monitored each year through mid-winter surveys in the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways and through spring surveys in the ESA (see above). In these flyways, the 1999 winter count was 318,000 birds, 31% higher than in 1998 (243,000) and 11% above the most recent 10-year average (287,500). Over 80% of these birds were found in the Atlantic flyway. It should be noted that even though the Mississippi flyway count (46,700) was 14% higher than in 1998, it was still 34% lower than the most recent 10-year average of 70,500.

Wood ducks are monitored through the North American Breeding Bird Survey yearly during May and June. Unfortunately, wood ducks are not encountered very often on these roadside counts and therefore the amount of usable data is limited. Some trends have been noted however, and it seems the number of wood ducks in the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways has increased by 5-6% over the long term (1966-1998) and the short term (1980-1998) as well.

Evidently, ducks had a very good year in 1999 (especially in the TSA) and were noted in record or near-record numbers. An indication of what will be witnessed in the autumn of 1999 is the fall flight index. This number is based on surveys in the TSA and six other states (California, Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) and estimates the total number of ducks (again excluding scoters, eiders, oldsquaws, mergansers, and wood ducks) set to migrate through North America. Hold onto your seats, because the 1999 total duck fall flight index is predicted to be 105 million birds! This is a new record. Of these 105 million birds, fully 13.6 million are expected to be mallards.

(Continued on Page 136)

Table 1. Duck breeding population estimates (in thousands) for the Traditional Survey Area. Reproduced from *Waterfowl Population Status, 1999* by the USFWS.

Species	1998	1999	Change from 1998		LTA <sup>a</sup>	Change from LTA	
			%	P		%	P
Mallard	9640	10806	+12	0.011	7374	+47	<0.001
Gadwall	3742	3235	-14	0.054	1538	+110	<0.001
American Wigeon	2858	2920	+2	0.791	2641	+11	0.127
Green-winged Teal	2087	2631	+26	0.015	1756	+50	<0.001
Blue-winged Teal	6399	7149	+12	0.128	4337	+65	<0.001
Northern Shoveler	3183	3890	+22	0.006	1999	+95	<0.001
Northern Pintail	2521	3058	+21	0.045	4348	-30	<0.001
Redhead	1005	973	-3	0.822	610	+60	<0.001
Canvasback	686	716	+4	0.767	556	+29	0.046
Scaup <sup>b</sup>	3472	4412	+27	0.002	5405	-18	<0.001
Total <sup>c</sup>	39082	43436	+11	<0.001	32797	+32	<0.001

<sup>a</sup> Long-term average (1955-1998).

<sup>b</sup> Greater and lesser combined.

<sup>c</sup> Includes American black duck, ring-necked duck, goldeneye, bufflehead, and ruddy duck; excludes scoter, eider, oldsquaw, merganser, and wood duck.

Table 2. Duck breeding population estimates (in thousands, for the 10 most abundant species) for the Eastern Survey Area. Reproduced from *Waterfowl Population Status, 1999* by the USFWS.

Species	1998	1999	Change from 1998		LTA <sup>a</sup>	Change from LTA	
			%	P		%	P
Mallard	309	245	-21	0.410	275	-11	0.518
American Black Duck	176	126	-28	0.223	167	-25	0.232
Gadwall	4	14	+241	0.328	11	+25	0.821
American Wigeon	21	77	+268	0.201	22	+258	0.199
Green-winged Teal	142	185	+30	0.627	123	+50	0.267
Blue-winged Teal	15	2	-89	0.151	29	-95	<0.001
Scaup <sup>b</sup>	21	1	-93	0.073	15	-90	0.018
Ring-necked Duck	177	213	+20	0.662	228	-7	0.842
Goldeneye <sup>c</sup>	104	308	+196	0.053	80	+287	0.028
Bufflehead	40	64	+58	0.305	34	+88	0.159
Total <sup>d</sup>	1013	1247	+23	0.219	993	+26	0.114

<sup>a</sup> Long-term average (1995-1998).

<sup>b</sup> Greater and lesser combined.

<sup>c</sup> Common and Barrow's combined.

<sup>d</sup> Includes northern shoveler, northern pintail, redhead, canvasback, and ruddy duck; excludes scoter, eider, oldsquaw, merganser, and wood duck.

## The Goose and Swan Populations

Unlike those of ducks, goose and swan population estimates are derived from independent surveys conducted by federal, state, and provincial biologists, as well as universities and government agencies, instead of coordinated annual surveys. As a result, some estimates are of wintering birds while others are of breeders. Despite this, a clear picture is formed regarding the status of geese and swans in North America.

Spring weather conditions in the Arctic and Subarctic had an effect on breeding success that varied according to region. The onset of spring was average or earlier than average in the south-central and southeastern Arctic, but later than average in the western and high Arctic and Alaska. Spring weather conditions in southern Canada and the U.S. were very favorable for staging and nesting geese.

### Canada Geese

*Atlantic Population*—In 1999, a spring survey on the Ungava Peninsula in northern Quebec revealed 77,451 breeding pairs. This was an increase of 84% over 1998, but the rate of change since 1989 has not differed significantly from a stable population's. A June 1999 estimate of total population size was 428,166 birds, similar to the 1998 estimate.

*North Atlantic Canada Geese*—Nest densities in Labrador were significantly higher in 1999.

*Atlantic Flyway Resident Population*—A spring 1999 survey in the northeastern U.S. revealed a population estimate of 999,496 birds. This estimate was close to 1998's, but overall this population has been increasing by an average of 14% per year since 1989.

*Southern James Bay Population*—A spring survey estimated a population of 136,623 birds, similar to 1998. Over the last 10 years, there has been a significant increase in size of this population.

*Mississippi Valley Population*—969,499 geese were counted in a spring 1999 survey. This was a 118% increase over 1998, but there has been no steady trend in the population over the last 10 years.

*Mississippi Flyway Giant Population*—The spring 1999 population estimate was 1,390,200 birds, similar to 1998. These are Ohio's resident geese.

*Eastern Prairie Population*—The breeding population was estimated at 270,540 birds in spring 1999, 68% more than in 1998. Still, there has been no overall trend in the population over the last 10 years.

*Western Prairie Population/Great Plains Population*—467,162 geese were counted in a January 1999 survey, a number similar to 1998's. These populations have been increasing at a rate of 4% per year over the last 10 years.

*Tall Grass Prairie Population*—In the Central flyway, 548,206 geese were counted in January 1999. This number was 63% higher than the December 1997 estimate. There has been a trend toward growth in the population over the last 10 years.

*Short Grass Prairie Population*—In January 1999, surveys revealed 403,197 geese. This number is similar to the previous year's count; there has been no steady trend in the population over the last 10 years.

*Hi-Line Population*—A January 1999 survey estimated 119,500 geese, 37% less than 1998's estimate. Over the last 10 years, however, this population has increased at

an average rate of 7% per year.

*Rocky Mountain Population*—114,416 birds were counted in the January 1999 survey. Although this number was slightly higher than the 1998 count, no trend has been noted over the last 10 years. This population has increased in size over the longer term, however.

*Pacific Population*—The number of nesting pairs and overall production in California in 1999 were low relative to the 10-year average. Other Pacific regions reported numbers similar to or less than 1998's.

*Dusky Canada Geese*—The January 1999 population estimate was 13,447 geese, 36% lower than the previous winter's.

*Cackling Canada Geese*—The fall 1998 count was 195,516 geese, slightly larger than the fall 1997 count. Overall, this population has been increasing at an average of 12% per year for the last 10 years.

*Lesser Canada Geese*—Because these geese mix with other Canada geese in winter, no reliable population estimates are available.

#### Greater Snow Geese

The spring 1999 photographic survey revealed 800,387 geese, a new record high count, and 15% higher than in 1998. This population has grown by 14% per year on average since 1989, increasing eight-fold since 1970. The report did indicate poor breeding success this year, resulting in a fall flight expected to be lower than in 1998.

#### Lesser Snow Geese

*Mid-Continent Population*—The January 1999 survey revealed 2,575,700 'light' geese (mostly lesser snow geese, with some Ross's geese). This number was slightly lower than 1998's count, but this population has been increasing at an average rate of 5% per year over the last 10 years. Overall, it has tripled since 1970.

*Western Central Flyway Population*—The January 1999 survey counted 236,400 'light' geese. This was a 100+% increase over 1998, and this population has increased at an average rate of 9% per year over the last 10 years. Since 1980, it has increased almost six-fold.

*Western Arctic/Wrangell Island Population*—The winter 1999 estimate was 354,300 'light' geese, 15% lower than the 1998 estimate. This is the only population of 'light' geese in decline (approximately 6% per year over the last 10 years).

#### Ross's Geese

Because Ross's geese are included in snow goose counts, no estimate of winter population size is available. Breeding surveys in Canada suggest a steady increase since the mid-1960s, and preliminary estimates from Canadian biologists suggest that there are approximately 1,000,000 Ross's geese in North America.

#### Greater White-fronted Geese

*Pacific Population*—Fall 1998's population estimate was 413,000 geese, 29% higher than fall 1997's. The population has increased at an average rate of 7% per year

over the last 10 years.

*Mid-Continent Population*—The fall 1998 estimate of 1,058,300 geese was 70% higher than the fall 1997 estimate. There has been no larger trend in the population over the last seven years.

#### Brant

*Atlantic Brant*—The January 1999 estimate was 171,628 birds, 24% higher than in 1998. There has been no trend in the overall population over the last 10 years, but the 1999 estimate was 25% higher than the 10-year average.

*Pacific Brant*—129,208 were counted in January 1999. This number was 7% lower than the 1998 count, but there has been no trend in the population over the last 10 years.

#### Emperor Geese

The spring 1999 count revealed 54,600 birds, 38% more than in 1998. There has been no large-scale trend in the population over the last 10 years, but the population has declined overall since the late 1970s and early 1980s.

#### Tundra Swans

*Western Population*—The January 1999 estimate of 119,800 birds was 70% higher than 1998's. This population has increased at an average rate of 7% per year since 1989.

*Eastern Population*—The January 1999 population estimate was 109,000 birds, 13% more than 1998's. There has been no trend in this population over the last 10 years.

#### Conclusions

Many populations of ducks, geese, and swans increased in 1999. Record high counts and estimates above long-term averages are encouraging, meaning that we—as a growing population—are realizing more keenly that the continent's wildlife is intrinsically valuable and should be preserved. Granted, many people do not appreciate our large population of Mississippi Flyway Giant Canada geese, but the next time they complain, remind them that these geese were not here just a few years ago and that they are a valued part of our reintroduced wildlife, just like trumpeter swans. Furthermore, you are armed with data; there are demonstrably no more of these geese now than a year ago. On the serious side, the continuing overall decline of northern pintail, scaup, and American black ducks is disheartening, but as with other species, good management practices and habitat preservation promise to bring these populations back up to historical levels. Enjoy the fall migration as 105 million ducks and seemingly countless numbers of geese and swans traverse the continent to their wintering areas.

## Spring Shorebird Survey Results

We are grateful to the Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) for a compilation of their shorebird survey results for the spring of 1999, results that BSBO customarily publishes, along with surveys of songbirds and raptors, in its annual report each April.

We offer a word on the methodology of this survey. These surveys are designed to study the timing of shorebird migrations and the birds' use of available habitat, as well as to get a sense of their overall abundance regionally. At each survey visit to an area, all shorebirds present are surveyed as to species and numbers, as are certain variables of the habitat present. No attempt is made—because without capturing and marking each bird no reliable attempt could be made—to avoid counting the same bird (or birds) on more than one occasion. Thus, while the method used produces results comparable from year to year within the aims of the study, it is inevitable that nearly all its counts accumulated over time—by species, location, or season—will be higher than the actual number of birds involved. In this system, if a thousand birds stayed put during three visits to an area, or moved within surveyed areas during this period, the survey would show a count of three thousand of that species, or even more.

In all, 257 visits were made, with a total of more than 256 hours of observation, to promising shorebird areas near the western basin of Lake Erie between Old Woman Creek in Ohio's Erie County to Point Mouillee in Monroe County in Michigan. Visits were made between 11 March and 20 June, with those between 1 April and 31 May accumulating over 99% of the birds found. This spring the survey areas most productive of shorebirds were flooded fields near Park Colony Road in Lucas County, Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, and the Winous Point Shooting Club on western Sandusky Bay.

Readers may wish to test their memories of the past spring season, and their knowledge of Ohio birds, by guessing, before looking at the figures below, which were this spring's three most numerous shorebird species in the western Lake Erie marshes.

Black-bellied Plover—9	Sanderling—0
American Golden-Plover—4952 (all 21 Apr-10 May)	Semipalmated Sandpiper—364 (321 from 21-31 May)
Snowy Plover—0	Western Sandpiper—0
Semipalmated Plover—253 (all in May)	Least Sandpiper—176 (all 21 Apr-31 May)
Piping Plover—0	White-rumped Sandpiper—6
Killdeer—795	Baird's Sandpiper—0
Black-necked Stilt—0	Pectoral Sandpiper—2092 (nearly 70% 1-10 Apr)
American Avocet—0	Dunlin—9732 (nearly all 21 Apr-31 May)
Greater Yellowlegs—382	Curlew Sandpiper—0
Lesser Yellowlegs—462	Stilt Sandpiper—1
Solitary Sandpiper—26 (all 1-20 May)	Buff-breasted Sandpiper—0
Willet—3	Ruff—0
Spotted Sandpiper—119	Short-billed Dowitcher—71
Upland Sandpiper—0	Long-billed Dowitcher—0
Whimbrel—0	Dowitcher sp.—3
Long-billed Curlew—0	Common Snipe—430 (nearly all in Apr)
Hudsonian Godwit—0	American Woodcock—0
Marbled Godwit—1	Wilson's Phalarope—1
Ruddy Turnstone—208	Red-necked Phalarope—1
Red Knot—83 (75 from 21-30 Apr)	Red Phalarope—0

(Details on this and other BSBO surveys are available from Black Swamp Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 228, Oak Harbor, OH 43449).

16,776 birds, or 83% of the total, involved only three species. One of them, dunlin, was at the lowest count of the six springs surveyed; in previous years, dunnings averaged over 75% of the total shorebird count, and as many as 23,953 birds in 1995. American golden-plover numbers, on the other hand, had never risen above 100 birds until 1998, when 221 birds were counted. The number of pectoral sandpipers this past spring was close to 90% of its six-year average. To some extent a dry spring this year may have favored the more facultative migrants, which are just as happy with fields as mudflats. Water levels in the many impoundments in the study area are less subject to vagaries of the weather than to management decisions, it is true, but this spring even fewer than usual seemed managed in ways beneficial to migrant shorebirds than in 1998.

Black-bellied plovers had their lowest count yet—there were 226 in 1998—as did lesser yellowlegs, whose count was 1498 last year. Spring knots are always scarce—in four of six years, none appeared in BSBO surveys—and the species is in decline regionally, so this spring's numbers are likely anomalous. More meaningful figures for all our shorebird species will emerge over time in this ongoing study, and explanations for them will become more meaningful even more slowly, but even now those who control so many of the habitats available to migrant shorebirds in the region are aware of these surveys and their results. Those who care about these birds can contribute their time and expertise by volunteering their help to these surveys. *Bill Whan*



*Ruddy Turnstone - Crane Creek SP, Lucas Co., May 1998. Photo by Bob Roysse.*

The Ohio Bird Records Committee (OBRC) exists to increase knowledge of Ohio's birdlife by validating bird records, maintaining for the public archives of bird occurrences, and establishing the official state list of bird species. Like this magazine, it relies vitally upon the voluntary participation of the birding public in submitting records of sightings. As a publication of record, *The Ohio Cardinal* does not publish reports of Review List species (see previous issue for complete list of these species rare in Ohio) until documentation of such species has been accepted by the OBRC. We are indebted to the OBRC's Secretary, Jim McCormac, for this update of actions taken by the Committee since our last report in the previous issue.

**ACCEPTED RECORDS:** Documentation received for the following species on the indicated occasions was judged sufficient to verify the record by at least nine members of the committee.

Purple Gallinule—Hamilton County, 22-30 May 1999, observer N. Keller  
 Least Tern—Hamilton County, 14 Jun 1999, observer N. Keller  
 Common Raven—Trumbull County, 4 Apr 1999, observer D. Hochadel  
 Spotted Towhee—Franklin County, 31 Mar 1999, observer B. Master  
 Le Conte's Sparrow—Marion County, 15 Oct 1998, observer V. Fazio III

**RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:** Documentation received for the following species received fewer than six votes to accept; such votes, it is important to note, do not reflect upon the sighting itself, but on the adequacy of the documentation to validate it for the permanent record.

Ruff—Lucas County, Mar 1999  
 Violet-green Swallow—Lake County, May 1999

**RECORDS IN RECIRCULATION:** These records are currently being recirculated among members of the committee, the documentation for which having received between six and eight votes to accept.

Green-winged Teal, subspecies *crecca*—Holmes County, Feb 1999  
 Long-billed Curlew—Lucas County, May 1999  
 Ruff—Lake County, May 1999  
 Glaucous-winged Gull—Cuyahoga County, Jan 1989  
 MacGillivray's Warbler—Stark County, Jan 1999

In addition, documentations are undergoing initial review for the following species: Mississippi kite, yellow rail, ruff, white-winged dove, and a report of a western kingbird during August in *Muskingum*, all from the spring, summer, and fall seasons of the current year. *Bill Whan*

As Jim McCormac points out in his article in this issue, the grassland habitats imposed by strip-mine reclamation on areas of Ohio previously dominated by deciduous forest are inviting new birdlife. Here we—less constrained than McCormac by the sober requirements of science—indulge in a bit of more reckless speculation and exhortation. We are only beginning to learn about these habitats. Next year's continuation of this survey, which reportedly will include a study of the plant associations—most of them exotic—of the birdlife in the study areas, will teach us much more. It seems reasonable to assume that with time the areas' species compositions and numbers among bird populations will change. How likely are these habitats to persist? Are the soils so low in nutrients, or so polluted, that plant successions will be affected? To what extent will management efforts—controlled burns, plantings of native species, etc.—affect these changes?

There are already signs that these areas may attract some breeders rare to Ohio. Western kingbirds seem poised to expand their range further east, with reports just this year of first successful nestings in Louisiana and Tennessee, and what may have been a family group was reported this August in an Ohio reclaimed grassland area. Common ravens are known to breed in very similar habitats just to our east, and a brief sighting of what may have been this species was made in a reclaimed grassland in eastern Ohio this summer. And what about upland sandpipers? These areas look great for this species; will they show up eventually, or is something subtly wrong with the habitat? If the Ohio Division of Wildlife were to reintroduce another extirpated breeding species in Ohio, greater prairie-chickens might thrive in these exotic grasslands.

We are only beginning to learn how many birds are attracted to these areas in non-breeding seasons, as well. Last winter, for example, reclaimed strip-mine grasslands featured high counts on single occasions of 83 short-eared owls, 31 northern harriers, and 51 rough-legged hawks. We know even less than far about migrants in these areas. It seems clear that birders need to explore these areas more often, and let the rest of us know what they find. More of us should volunteer to help with the grassland bird surveys, and more of us should head out there on our own at other seasons. *The Ohio Cardinal* welcomes news—from interesting bird sightings to entire bird-finding articles on these wildlife areas—from explorers in this new frontier. An article on Egypt Valley WA—written by West Virginia birders—has already appeared in *The Ohio Cardinal* (19(1), Autumn 1995), and we hope to cover the rest of these areas and their avian riches in issues to come. *Bill Whan*

## The CARDINAL



VOL. 2 NO. 2

### Retrospective: 20 Years Ago in the Cardinal

Twenty years ago, Robert Crundwell illustrated the cover of Vol. 2, No. 2 of *The Ohio Cardinal* with his rendition of a white-breasted nuthatch, and founder John Herman continued as editor. This Summer 1979 issue was brief, consisting of the seasonal report and an article by Jean Hoffman entitled "Guide to the Cleveland Lakefront." Her guide described sites near downtown Cleveland: Wildwood Park, Gordon Park, the East 55<sup>th</sup> Street Marina, Edgewater Park, and others. Some of these sites remain as birding hotspots, while others have lost some of their importance with the passage of time.

The seasonal report was impressive, tallying 210 species. Of these, 28 species were shorebirds and 32 warblers. Ten species which required documentation were reported during the season. A tricolored (then Louisiana) heron was found on 22 July at Ottawa NWR and two snowy egrets were reported—one at Port Clinton on 9 July and another at East Harbor on 13 July. Two whimbrels were reported, representing fall migrants—one in Cleveland on 20 July and one in Erie Co. on 22-23 July. Another fall migrant shorebird, an American avocet, was found on 24 July in Cleveland. Very unusual was a sub-adult glaucous gull at Conneaut Harbor on 18 July. Another gull species, Franklin's gull, made a decent showing with three reports—one second-year bird at Little Cedar Point on 3 June, one adult at Neilson's Marsh (now known as Medusa Marsh) on 16 June-6 July, and one adult at Neilson's Marsh on 30 July. An alder flycatcher was at Magee Marsh on 1 June. A pair of blue-headed (then solitary) vireos were observed feeding three young on 28 July at Hinckley Ledges (Medina Co.) and a single individual was noted on 27 June at Mohican SP. Two male yellow-headed blackbirds were found at Little Cedar Point on 3 June and a clay-colored sparrow was at Magee Marsh WA on 1 June.

Among species not on the Review List, several put on good showings during the summer of 1979, while others were notably scarce. Common loons summered in Ohio and were represented by six birds. Late horned grebes were noted at Little Cedar Point and Wellington Reservoir in June. Yellow-crowned night-herons nested in Franklin Co. and raised at least five young. Only four least bitterns and three American bitterns were reported, reflecting these species' secretive behavior and perhaps lack of suitable nesting habitat.

Lingering waterfowl provided summer listers with some quarry in June with American black ducks, northern pintails, blue-winged teal, and northern shovelers nesting in the state. Bald eagles began showing their resilience in 1979 when three nests produced young, a number unmatched since 1968 in Ohio. Notable shorebird species (aside from those mentioned above) were black-bellied plover, ruddy turnstone, willet, red knot, white-rumped sandpiper, stilt sandpiper, western sandpiper, marbled godwit, sanderling, and Wilson's and red-necked phalaropes. Black terns were much more common than now, with 79 individuals reported in the summer of 1979. A brown creeper summered at Shaker Lakes. There was only one report of Carolina wren. Purple finches nested in Lorain and Richland Counties, and house finches continued their proliferation with reports from six counties and confirmed nesting. Finally, a pine siskin was in Kent on 1-4 June. *Joseph W. Hammond*



Grasshopper Sparrow - Woodbury WA, Coshocton Co., 16 June 1999. Photo by Laura Gooch, Kingston Photography, Copyright © 1999.

***A friendly reminder...***

It's time to renew your subscription if this box is checked.

***On the inside...***

Summer 1999 Overview and Reports by Bill Whan.....	101
Further Afield by Rob Harlan.....	122
Ohio Grassland Breeding Bird Survey by Jim McCormac.....	125
Red-breasted Nuthatches Nesting at Hocking Hills: The First Records for Southeastern Ohio by Frank Renfrow .....	131
Summary of the 1999 Waterfowl Population by Joseph W. Hammond .....	134
Spring Shorebird Survey Results .....	140
Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee .....	142
Grassland Birds.....	143
Retrospective: 20 Years Ago in the Cardinal .....	144

THE OHIO CARDINAL  
2338 HARRINGTON RD.  
AKRON, OH 44319

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 487  
AKRON, OHIO