

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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A CALL FOR NESTING RECORDS

All subscribers to the BIRD CALENDAR are urged to send in their observations. This is especially true of records of nesting birds. A brief survey of the areas you frequent or of your neighborhood will reveal nesting activity. If you cannot conduct a comprehensive survey this spring, watch a nest or two and send us the data when nest building began, when completed; when the first egg was laid; when incubation was begun and completed; the number of young and how long in the nest, did both birds participate in nest building, incubation, rearing of young; and any other details of interest.

CHRISTMAS CENSUSES

There were two Christmas Bird Censuses reported to us from the Cleveland Region this year, one on December 24 by Owen Davies and six other observers from Lakewood, covering the lakefront from Edgewater Park to Rocky River Park, part of the Rocky River Reservation, a station in Fairview Park, and Clague Pond. Thirty species were reported, a good record for the size of the area and the number of observers. Black-backed gull, red-headed woodpecker and cowbird were three species not recorded in the other census, which was conducted on December 29 by the Kirtland Bird Club (25 observers) in an area 3.5 miles in diameter east of Cleveland. On this census 54 species were recorded, 58 being the greatest number seen since the Club started the census in 1940, For the first time no pileated woodpecker was reported, but both evening and pine grosbeaks were seen. The lists follow.

	December 24	December 29
Great Blue Heron		1
Mallard	12	51
Black Duck	12	158
Redhead		2
Greater Scaup		30
Lesser Scaup	150	25
Goldeneye	240	63
Bufflehead	10	8
White-winged Scoter		1
Ruddy Duck		1
American Merganser	86	355
Red-breasted Merganser	46	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk		1
Cooper's Hawk	1	7
Red-tailed Hawk		3
Red-shouldered Hawk		2
Rough-legged Hawk		2
Sparrow Hawk		2
Ruffed Grouse		1
Bobwhite		55
Ring-necked Pheasant	13	4
Great Black-backed Gull	3	
Herring Gull	800	390
Ring-billed Gull	650	118
Bonaparte's Gull		3
Mourning Dove		8
Belted Kingfisher		1
Flicker	1	3
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	
Red-bellied Woodpecker		3
Hairy Woodpecker		20
Downy Woodpecker	13	79
Blue Jay	25	138
Crow	12	3
Chickadee	28	270
Tufted Titmouse	10	76
White-breasted Nuthatch	9	127
Red-breasted Nuthatch		4
Brown Creeper	1	5
Winter Wren		1
Carolina Wren		1
Brown Thrasher		1
Robin		3
Bluebird		1
Golden-crowned Kinglet		14
Starling	40	381
English Sparrow	112	1350
Cowbird	1	
Cardinal	31	183
Evening Grosbeak		30
Purple Finch		1
Pine Grosbeak		21
Goldfinch	10	5
Towhee	1	2
Junco	10	99
Tree Sparrow	4	88
Song Sparrow	5	23

NOTES ON THE WEATHER

From the U.S. Weather Bureau, Cleveland Airport

December 1951 - The month had a mild beginning and ending with extremely cold weather during the middle of the month, when low temperature records were broken on the 16th and 17th with -9° and -4° respectively. The snowfall of 22.1 inches puts it 4th in greatest snowfalls since records began in 1891. 1951 accumulated 84.1 inches of snow which places it second only to 1910 with 90.0 inches.

January 1952 - The month was mild and wet and somewhat deficient in sunshine. Temperatures were normal or above to the 22nd. Snowfall of 9.3 inches was a little below normal for January. Heavy rains on the 17th and 26th caused localized floods.

February 1952 - The month was mild with extended periods of pleasant weather and deficient snowfall. Temperatures were well above normal in the first decade, seasonable thereafter, and the temperature range was slight. Precipitation was mostly in the form of rain, but some snow fell on more than half the days.

SPECIES OCCURRENCE

Species not specifically mentioned were
apparently present in usual numbers

A great blue heron unable to fly due to chunks of ice on its feet was found December 19 on the East Branch of Euclid Creek by Ted McIntee, who defrosted and liberated it.

A lingering American bittern was seen at North Chagrin December 2 by Donald Newman.

Rocky River Park Police reported a whistling swan found dead on the lake shore in early February. It was an adult bird and judging from the appearance of the breast, had starved to death.

The usual wintering ducks were present in about normal numbers, and there were winter records for baldpate, pintail and canvasback. An early record for the green-winged teal is February 24 when one was seen on Sherwin Pond at Waite Hill. The American and surf scoters remained at White City through December 8, while the white-winged was seen on the Christmas Census December 29.

Seven turkey vultures were seen December 26 at Avon by James Akers, a late date for this species.

Only 2 rough-legged hawks were reported in this region in 1951, and only 1 in January, February 1952.

Another late date is December 8 for the killdeer seen in Lakewood by Owen Davies.

A few black-backed gulls were reported from the lakefront during this period, 3 December 24 on the Lakewood Christmas Census, and one to three at Avon, Fairport and White City December 20, 26, January 3, 9 (Akers).

There were fewer than usual Bonaparte's Gulls reported after December.

A great horned owl was occupying an old red-tail nest on the River Road north of Chardon Road on February 24, but on February 26 the bird was seen hanging across the nest dead (Carrothers).

A screech owl perched in a pine tree outside the living room window of a house in Lakewood February 11 was apparently unaware of its exposed position to the rear and afforded much amusement to the occupants of the house throughout the day.

Red-breasted nuthatches were not as numerous this winter as early reports indicated they might be, while brown creepers were more common than usual.

Only one winter wren was recorded this season, and golden-crowned kinglets did not winter in as large numbers as usual.

The few robins reported this winter contrasted sharply with the many flocks that wintered here in 1950-1951.

There were several cedar waxwing flocks reported, one especially of up to 100 birds on Coventry Road near Shaker Lake feeding on ornamental crabs through January and February.

Winter records were reported for the mourning dove, kingfisher, flicker, red-headed woodpecker, towhee, meadowlark, brown thrasher, bluebird and cowbird.

On February 24 migrating robins, redwings and cowbirds were noted. February 24 is a new early spring date for the cowbird.

Pine grosbeak flocks continued to be seen throughout the period, diminishing in numbers after the middle of January. The birds were still feeding on ornamental crabs, and Gordon Spare also noticed them feeding in large tamaracks near his home near Chardon. The largest flock was one of 45 seen at Highland Park Cemetery January 6 (Knight). Of these, 8 or 10 were rose-red males. The number of red males in other flocks reported were 3 out of 22, 2 out of 17, 4 out of 13, and 1 out of 40. Flocks were seen at Willoughby, Cuyahoga Falls, Huntington Park, Elyria and the Holden Arboretum. The birds were noisy and easily approached, and several males were heard singing.

Evening grosbeaks were almost "abundant" throughout the winter. Generally speaking, the flocks seemed to move about considerably, staying in one location from a few days to several weeks, and then moving on. Several flocks, however, remained in the neighborhood of well-stocked feeders for long periods of time. Dr. R. C. McKay of Wiese Road, Brecksville, started feeding sunflower seeds to 2 females on November 13, and in early January had a maximum of 70 birds at his feeder, usually coming to feed shortly after dawn and staying until 11 A.M. Dr. Ralph W. Dexter of Kent State University banded 15 of these birds, 6 males and 9 females, which he says approximates the sex ratio of the flock. Mrs. Phelps Meaker, Concordia Drive, South Euclid, had a flock at her feeder starting with one bird December 16, and building up to a maximum of 15, until January 24, when one female was the last bird seen. This flock also came in the morning, but sometimes birds were at the feeder until mid-afternoon. The sex ratio was about 4 males in a flock of 12. At Mrs. Francis Sherwin's feeder at Waite Hill a flock of 30 maximum was present from December 21 on. Mrs. Sherwin writes: "They crowded into the window feeding box like English sparrows and acted very much like them, fighting, pushing and noisy." A flock of 14 at Bay Village February 5-11 extends the range of this species in this region west of the valley of Rocky River (See CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR 47(4):5). All the flocks were reported to eat sunflower seeds,

and at Mrs. Sherwin's mixed grain also. Mrs. Meaker fed a pound of sunflower seeds a day, while Dr. McKay used 100 pounds of sunflower seeds every 3 weeks. It will be interesting to see when the last birds leave the region this spring. The latest previous date recorded is May 20 in 1950.

Purple finches were reported several times in February, as well as on the Christmas Census December 29.

A flock of 14 redpolls was at Shaker Lake during January and February, and 2 pine siskins near the lake December 7-9 and 1 January 5-7 were reported to be feeding on birch seeds (Watson).

Mrs. A. E. Luedy of Bedford reports an unusual occurrence of the Lincoln's sparrow. There were 2 of these birds near her home from October 2-25, then one left and the remaining bird stayed on until December 15. While the weather was nice, this bird sang every day, particularly in late afternoon. The song Mrs. Luedy describes as a soft, long-continued warbling. On December 15 while out shoveling the deep snow to the feeder, Mrs. Luedy heard the bird give two or three little warbles from a corner shrub. It visited the feeder daily when snow was on the ground, eating suet or peanut butter occasionally, but spending most of its time eating scratch feed in a swinging feeder. It fed late into the afternoon, usually right up to dusk. The distinguishing buffy color and the little eyering were plainly seen at the feeder.

RECORDS FROM NEIGHBORING LOCALITIES

Sandusky Region	12/20	1/15	2/2	2/6	2/10	2/14	2/23	2/24
Whistling swan						110		4
Canada goose	12	121	1061		100	425		
Lesser snow goose	5							
Mallard	18	400	48	37			14	30
Black duck	18	300	300	81			6	12
Gadwall				100			80	25
Baldpate				200			100	500
Pintail		800		75			50	40
Green-winged Teal				6			1	
Shoveler				50			14	30
Redhead				1			10	25
Canvasback	30			300				
Lesser scaup				2			1	
Goldeneye	8		6	45			50	8
Bufflehead	4			10				
American merganser			200	685				
Broad-winged hawk	1							
Rough-legged hawk	1							
Bald eagle	2	1	2	1				
Black-backed gull							1	
Short-eared owl	1							
Meadowlark	1							
Lapland longspur	6							
Snow bunting	20		12					

OBSERVERS: J.W Akers 2/6; Vera Carrothers, H.C. Dobbins 2/23; Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Clisby 2/24; H.W. Stockdale 2/10; Karl E. Bednarik 12/20, 1/15, 2/2, 2/14.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE FOOD OF COMMON BIRDS - III.

by
Ralph W Dexter,
Kent State University

Since two earlier reports were issued (CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR 46(1):10; 47(1):12-13). on the food habits of some local species of birds additional information has come to hand. During the past year 30 bird stomachs from 19 species have been analyzed. Four were found empty and six contained either very little or nothing not already reported. To the remaining 20 has been added one analysis overlooked earlier.

American bittern - Found dead on highway at Streetsboro May 21, 1951. Contents: 7 White Crappies 1 beetle.

Bobwhite - Found dead on highway south of Tallmadge May 16, 1951. Contents: 1 dermestid beetle; 1 fruit stone, portions of corn kernels, and miscellaneous plant debris.

American woodcock Accidentally killed on farm on Kent-Tallmadge Road April 20, 1949. Contents: large mass of fresh green vegetable matter (new spring growth).

Rock Dove - Found dead on campus of Kent State University October 29, 1951. Contents: 1 grain of wheat, several corn kernels, abundant green vegetable matter.

Barred Owl - Found dead on highway near Killbuck (Holmes Ct.) April 5, 1951. Contents: 1 Field Mouse (Microtus pennsylvanicus) 1 Short-tailed Shrew (Blarina brevicauda), 3 Burrowing crayfish (Cambarus diogenes)

Golden-crowned kinglet - Found dead at Lake Rockwell April 25, 1951. Contents: mass of insect fragments including those of beetles and dipterans.

English sparrow - Killed by car south of Akron August 27, 1951, Contents: 2 insect fragments, 1 kernel of corn, and fragments of herbaceous stems.

Olive-backed thrush - Found dead in Kent May 16, 1951. Contents: 2 millipedes, 1 centipede, 1 sow bug (isopod crustacean), 1 ant, 1 weevil, several insect fragments including beetle parts, and several skins of fruit (?).

Wood thrush - Found dead in Akron May 7, 1951. Contents: beetle and millipede fragments.

Bluebird (immature) - Killed by car near West Lafayette (Coshocton Ct.) August 6, 1951, Contents: 2 ants, 1 spider, fragments of a weevil and a stag beetle.

Cedar waxwing - Found dead at Massillon January 15, 1951- Contents: fruit of rose bush (?), and 1 fruit pit. Three found dead on campus of Kent State University November 2, 1951- Contents: (1) seeds, pulp, and skins of 2 small fruits, 2 seeds of crabapple; (2) 1 crabapple; (3) pulp

and seeds of a small fruit. Found dead on campus of Kent State University November 5, 1951. Contents: 2 black haw fruits. Found dead on Kent State University campus January 15, 1952. Contents: 1 crabapple.

Ovenbird - Found dead south of Kent May 11, 1951 Contents: 2 millipedes, 2 weevils, 1 gnat, 1 spider, and many arthropod fragments. Found dead in Kent May 15, 1951. Contents: 5 ants, 4 weevils, 1 dipteran, 1 spider, fragments of arthropods, and 1 land snail (Hawaiiia minuscula)

Meadowlark - Juvenile killed by car near North Canton August 16, 1951. Contents: mass of insect fragments including ground beetles.

White-throated sparrow - Found dead at Stow May 7, 1951. Contents: 1 dipteran, several. arthropod fragments, and a mass of macerated leaves and fruits.

White-crowned sparrow - Found dead at Twin Lakes May 15, 1951, Contents: 2 ants, 8 seeds (Bouncing Bet?).

WINTER BIRDS AT MAGEE MARSH

by

Karl E. Bednarik

Daily movements of waterfowl, as well as passerine and raptorian forms of bird life, were recorded on the 2000 acre Magee Marsh Wildlife Management Area, Ottawa County, Ohio. The marsh, approximately two hours drive from Cleveland, lies on the principal migratory travel lanes of waterfowl over Ohio.

The rapid and continual December freeze of all marsh areas of the southwestern Lake Erie region, as well as deep snow cover on surrounding corn fields, induced almost complete withdrawal of waterfowl to regions to the south.

Mixed winter flocks of ring-necked pheasants were in evidence throughout December and January. In the optimum pheasant range of northwestern Ohio, these birds segregate during the winter by sexes into large flocks. No such flocks were witnessed on the Magee area; instead the sexes moved together in flocks of 150 to 250 birds. Feeding data indicated that the 12 to 16 inch snow mantle of December limited the type or amount of food available; Burdock and Staghorn Sumac comprised a large portion of the winter feed throughout December and January. Dispersal of winter flocks was noted in early February.

Marsh hawks were the most common raptores [raptors] in the region throughout the winter; 2 rough-legged hawks were recorded in January.

Bald eagles were observed almost daily on the marsh; 5 eagles were seen in one tree in the middle of February. A pair of eagles was seen in courtship flight in early February on the Magee area; these birds have since established territory over a nest on the marsh.

Great horned owls were observed incubating eggs on the area as early as February 10.

Canada geese made their appearance on January 3; a violent southwest wind on January 1 brought a marked movement of geese traveling over the

marsh in considerable numbers. A large flock of 1061 geese was observed feeding on the marsh on February 2.

Mallards and black ducks are the most common species throughout the year, as well as principal breeders during the nesting season. Few birds of these species were evident during December. A large movement was recorded on January 15. Moderate temperatures of February have resulted in a large influx of these two species in the region.

Pintails were also recorded early. Flocks appeared in the large bird movement of January 15; however, the subsequent cold weather resulted in a regression which persisted until the last week of February. Flying pairs of pintails are now (March) very much in evidence throughout the marsh.

Canvasback and American goldeneyes were not listed until mid-January. Diving ducks seldom occur on the marshes in large numbers; however, a large flock of these birds was observed in the open pools of Magee in late January. The first bluebills (scaup) were reported on February 24.

American mergansers appeared in large concentrations on February 2; they are easily the most abundant of all waterfowl in the entire region at the present time with males outnumbering the females.

Three whistling swans made their appearance on January 28; a flock of 110 birds was seen at Crane Creek, immediately to the west of Magee, on February 14. There are reports that this flock wintered some miles to the east of Toledo.

A pair of white-winged scoters was observed floating among the ice floes off Marblehead Lighthouse on January 8.

An influx of prairie horned larks was noted in early February. A strong northern movement out over the Lake was recorded on February 2. There are similar reports of large numbers of larks passing over the island archipelago in early February.

The most outstanding feature of bird movement in this region to date has been the migration of crows. No crows were reported in the county until January 15; an influx appeared on February 24 until 300 to 600 birds are to be seen daily moving from the southwest over the barrier beach between the lake and the marsh.

Red-winged blackbirds arrived during the last week of February; clouds of these birds are to be seen wheeling over the marsh.