



CLEVELAND REGION

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The Cleveland Museum of Natural History
and
The Kirtland Bird Club

THE CLEVELAND REGION

The Circle Has A Radius of 30 Miles Based on Cleveland Public Square

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Beaver Creek | 30 Lake Rockwell |
| 2 North Amherst | 31 White City |
| 3 Lorain | 32 Euclid Creek Reservation |
| 4 Black River | 33 Chagrin River |
| 5 Elyria | 34 Willoughby |
| 6 LaGrange | Waite Hill |
| 7 Avon-on-the-Lake | 35 Sherwin Pond |
| 8 Clague Park | 36 Gildersleeve |
| 9 Clifton Park | 37 North Chagrin Reservation |
| 10 Rocky River | 38 Gates Mills |
| 11 Cleveland Hopkins Airport | 39 South Chagrin Reservation |
| 12 Medina | 40 Aurora Lake |
| 13 Hinckley Reservation | 41 Aurora Sanctuary |
| 14 Edgewater Park | 42 Mantua |
| 14 Perkins Beach | 43 Mentor Headlands |
| 15 Terminal Tower | 44 Mentor Marsh |
| 16 Cleveland Public Square | 45 Black Brook |
| 16 Cuyahoga River | Headlands State Park |
| 17 Brecksville Reservation | 46 Fairport Harbor |
| 18 Akron | 47 Painesville |
| 18 Cuyahoga Falls | 48 Grand River |
| 19 Akron Lakes | 49 Little Mountain |
| 20 Gordon. Park | Holden Arboretum |
| 20 Illuminating Co. plant | 50 Corning Lake |
| 21 Doan Brook | |
| 22 Natural Science Museum | |
| Wade Park | |
| 23 Baldwin Reservoir | 51 Stebbin's Gulch |
| 24 Shaker Lakes | 52 Chardon |
| 25 Lake View Cemetery | 53 Burton |
| 26 Forest Hill Park | 54 Punderson Lake |
| 27 Bedford Reservation | 55 Fern Lake |
| 28 Hudson | 56 LaDue Reservoir |
| 29 Kent | 57 Spencer Wildlife Area |



CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN
PARK SYSTEM



PORTAGE ESCARPMENT
(800-foot Contour Line)

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

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SUMMARY OF WEATHER CONDITIONS

From U. S. Weather Bureau Reports (Cleveland Hopkins Airport)

December - Quite cold and snowy the first 4 days, with a low for the month of 4° on the 2nd; moderately cold on the final 9 days. In the intervening 18 days the temperature averaged a mild 37.6°. Snow fell on 9 of the last 13 days, and 1 to 3 inches covered the ground after the 20th.

January - Mild. On just 4 days was the average temperature below 25° and on just 2 days below 20°. One inch of snow covered the ground from the 28th to 30th.

February - Excepting 2 mild days at mid month, quite cold throughout, with an average of 25.9°, or 2.6° below normal. From the 5th through 11th, 8.3 inches of snow fell, and 10.2 inches from the 21st through 28th.

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COMMENT ON THE SEASON

A negative rather than a positive element was the distinctive feature of the winter season, which was marked by a scarcity or complete absence of cyclical invaders from Canada, though there was a minor incursion of the Snowy Owl. As for the winter finches, the Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, and White-winged Crossbill were not reported at any time, while the Evening Grosbeak and Red Crossbill made only a token appearance. And of four records of the Pine Siskin, four birds on February 5 at Lower Shaker Lake was the largest number seen (Peskin).

Yet despite the lack of Canadian invaders, the winter was not without interest, as is shown by the number and variety of occurrences detailed in the Noteworthy Records section of this issue.

Gull Populations Set Records. Both at Lorain and Cleveland the peak numbers of gulls were record setting, though the pattern of occurrence at these two localities was distinctly different. For at Lorain the population reached its greatest numbers in late December and then decreased markedly in the next two months, whereas at Cleveland the population was quite large in December and fluctuated widely in January and February but at times was spectacularly abundant.

The Elyria Audubon Society Christmas Count conducted on December 26, tallied at the harbor in Lorain an estimated 79,000 Ring-billed Gulls, which exceeds by 3,000 the previous high recorded in 1964. In addition, there were an estimated 14,600 Herring and 3,700 Bonaparte's Gulls (fide Morse). The gull population fell off in January, with a maximum of 7,000 Herring, 10,000 Ring-billed, and 300 Bonaparte's, while in February the high count of the two principal species was 200 Herring and 3,000 Ring-billed on the 4th (fide Johnson).

Along the lakefront at Cleveland a pair of observers (Klamm) conducted a regular week-end survey of the waterfowl population. The following figures taken from their report show the highs and lows of the gull population (the figures in parentheses indicate the date):

	DECEMBER		JANUARY		FEBRUARY	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Herring	6925(26)	538(17)	2485(29)	335(22)	6600(18)	135(26)
Ring-billed	11425(24)	3900(10)	12000(29)	2025 (22)	34700(18)	905(26)
Bonaparte's	4900(26)	1600(17)	10550(29)	232(22)	55(4)	-0-(12)

Lake Erie was free of ice in the Cleveland region during December and until about January 22, when bay areas were largely frozen over, though on January 29 they were again open. It was in that seven-day period, as shown in the table above, that the population count went from minimum to maximum numbers, including an amazing 10,550 Bonaparte's Gulls. On the 29th off Gordon Park some 6,000 Bonaparte's were recorded, and "large flights were passing west in rather short, leap-frogging movements." Normally this gull disappears about January 15.

In the first half of February, as ice formed on the lake, the gull count declined to no more than about 500 Herring and 3,200 Ring-billed. No Bonaparte's were recorded after the 4th. But on February 18, with the lake extensively ice covered, the count skyrocketed. The 34,700 Ring-billed Gulls tallied that day seems to be a figure unequaled in the history of the region for that month.

Snowy Owl Narrowly Restricted. All reports of the Snow Owl were from the east side of Cleveland and, with one exception, were either directly on the lakefront or only about one mile inland. The single exception was a bird recorded on January 14 at Cuyahoga County Airport (Kitson), but even this site is no more than five miles inland. Thus it is clear that the incursion of this owl just reached but did not penetrate the Cleveland region. It is also apparent the incursion was a minor one since not more than four birds were reported.

No Snowy Owls were sighted in December (One was reported in north-east Cleveland on November 19, 1966). Then on January 1, one was discovered on a post at the intersection of Interstate 90 and the Lakeland Freeway (Surman, Jr.). Seemingly this same bird was seen by a number of observers from January 9 to February 18 either at White City or at points on the lakefront within a distance of about one and one-half miles to the west. A second bird was present on February 5 and 12 (Stasko). Also, one bird, probably a stray from the lakefront, was found on February 9 atop a building about one mile southeast of White City (fide Skaggs).

Flocks of Horned Larks and Snow Buntings in Early February. Large numbers of Horned Larks and of Snow Buntings appeared in the region, both east and west, from about February 3 to 13. An estimated 50 Horned Larks were seen at Waite Hill on the 7th (Flanigan), and on the 12th, 100 at Lorain (Nagy) and 75 or more in a corn field in Geauga County (Selby), as well as smaller flocks at other times in that period. At Lorain an estimated 150 Snow Buntings were observed on the 4th and 6th (Dolbear and Lebold), more than 75 at Waite Hill on the 9th and 13th (Flanigan), and smaller numbers elsewhere. The Snow Buntings apparently departed after mid-February, for there were just three records to the end of the month, the largest flock consisting of 25 birds at Lorain on the 28th (Szabo). Some evidence indicating that the buntings were transients rather than localized winter residents is found in a report of a band of ten "in transit to the west" along the Cleveland lakefront on February 12 (Klamm).

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Red-necked Grebe - A single individual was in the company of several hundred diving ducks, chiefly Scaup and Common Goldeneye, gathered in a stretch of open water along the breakwall near the Cuyahoga River mouth on February 26. The neck feathers of this bird showed signs of the beginning of change into breeding plumage (Klamm).

Blue Goose - One was on the water with some Canada Geese at Lake Rockwell on December 12 (Szabo).

King Eider - At White City on December 26, a female was observed as it preened, paddled about in the lagoon, and then flew off to the east (Klamm).

White-winged Scoter - Exceptionally large numbers occurred in the last ten days of February: on the 18th at Edgewater Park a flock of eleven, including three adult males (Klamm); on the 19th a total of 21 along the Cleveland lakefront (Klamm) and a group of eleven at Avon (Nagy); on the 25th at Cleveland one band of nine and one of five (Klamm).

Surf Scoter - (1) At White City one bird was present regularly from December 5 to 23, then three on the 24th, four on January 7, 9, and 14, three on the 15th, and finally just one on the 31st (Surman, Jr. and Klamm). (2) One was seen at Summit Lake in Akron on December 26, January 1 and 10 (Hjelmquist and Szabo).

Common Scoter - Always the rarest of the scoters, this species was not recorded until February, when one was sighted in the harbor at Lorain on four dates from the 19th to 26th (Dolbear, Lebold, Klamm), and one was identified on the Cleveland lakefront on the 26th (Stasko).

Goshawk - At about mid-afternoon on December 4 on a wooded residential property in Cleveland Heights, whose owner keeps pens and roosts of domestic fowl, this bird was "first observed as it attacked a hybrid Trumpeter Pigeon which was flying in to the roost at a height of 30 feet. The hawk brought down its prey -- striking it on the nape and back -- and beat its outspread wings over the dying pigeon for about five minutes." When the observer approached to within 15 feet, the hawk flew into a nearby elm tree, releasing the dead pigeon. It was still in the area at sunset, though it had moved from tree to tree to escape from repeated harassment by Blue Jays and two Crows. The following day it was present at 7:00 a.m. but was not seen thereafter (Janosik). This is the first December record since 1955 and only the third winter record since that year.

Bald Eagle - The adult and immature recorded at Lake Rockwell on November 28 were still there on December 1, though they were not together as on the earlier date but were on opposite sides of the lake. The immature only was observed there on December 20 (Hjelmquist).

Ruffed Grouse - In Aurora Sanctuary on January 29, three birds were feeding together on partridgeberry exposed above the snow in scrub hawthorn growth at the edge of the beech-maple woods (Fulton and Henderson).

Common Snipe - Early on the morning of December 26 in Pepper Pike, a bird was discovered as it stood asleep on one foot in a narrow stream flowing under a leafless willow tree (Raynes).

Purple Sandpiper - On six dates from December 3 to January 2, a single individual, presumably the same bird, was recorded at White City, where it not only foraged over the rocky breakwall but also on the sandy beach, the mucky borders of the lagoon, and in patches of coarse grass (Surman, Jr. et al).

Northern Phalarope - At a farm pond in Kirtland Hills one bird remained from December 20 to 25 and was often seen "paddling around among a flock of Canada Geese" which fed there each day until they departed on the 25th (Bole, Jr.). This is the first winter record since 1953-54.

Glaucous Gull - Recorded only in February: (1) four birds on the 12th along the Cleveland lakefront between East 49th and East 72nd Streets (Klamm), and one there on the 19th (Hammond); (2) one, an immature, in the harbor at Lorain on the 18th (Surman, Jr.); (3) one on the 25th at Eastlake (Kitson).

Iceland Gull - An immature was discovered among several thousand Herring, Ring-billed, and Bonaparte's Gulls assembled at White City on December 3 (Surman, Jr. and Klamm).

Franklin's Gull - (1) One at White City on December 2 (Surman, Jr.). (2) At East 72nd Street on the Cleveland lakefront, where a bird in breeding plumage was recorded in February 1966, one bird "in perfect summer plumage" was observed on February 14 (Szabo) and on the 22nd (Carrothers).

Little Gull - (1) First recorded on December 11 at White City (Klamm and Szabo), an adult was seen there on four dates to January 7 (Surman, Jr.). (2) Conspicuous as they made short flights, two adults were among some 6,000 Bonaparte's Gulls riding the water off Gordon Park-East 72nd Street on January 29 (Klamm).

Mockingbird - As is typical of the winter season, records were confined to the eastern portion of the region: (1) at Waite Hill the bird which appeared on October 28, 1966 was still present on February 28, though it was seen infrequently during the winter (Flanigan and Skaggs); (2) two of the four birds observed in Bath in the first week of October 1966 remained through the winter and continued to feed on rose hips (Hjelmquist); (3) on December 26, on the East Side Christmas Count, one was found in a nursery in South Euclid, where one was also recorded on the Christmas Count of January 2, 1966 (Joseph Bush fide Kitson); (4) one in Painesville on February 8 (Booth).

Catbird - Apparently finding food in a wild grapevine tangle and shelter in a nearby stand of evergreens, a single individual was reported from Gates Mills on December 26 and January 2 (Surman, Jr.).

Northern Shrike - (1) Four birds in all were recorded at widely-separated localities between December 18 and 26; (2) one on January 25 and 31 in Pepper Pike (Raynes); (3) one on February 27 in Kirtland Hills, where it killed a House Sparrow near a feeding station as the observer watched from a distance of ten feet (Bole, Jr.).

Myrtle Warbler - A solitary bird was observed briefly on December 19 when it stopped to feed at a suet bag in the back yard of a residence in Euclid (Fiening).

Baltimore Oriole - On December 30, with two inches of snow on the ground, a noticeably gray-flanked male appeared at a residence in Willoughby Hills,

where it fed on rotten apples still on the tree. It was there again on January 14, which is the latest date ever reported (Skaggs).

Evening Grosbeak - There were just two records for the region: a female in northern Summit County on December 19, 20, 26, and 27 (Jean Riester fide Dexter), and one bird reported at a feeding station in Gates Mills during the East Side Christmas Count on December 26 (fide Snider).

Dickcissel - Several times during the third week of December a "strange sparrow-like bird" was glimpsed at the feeding station on the Sherwin Farm in Waite Hill. Then observations were suspended for three weeks until January 15, when, presumably, the same bird was for the first time scrutinized at the feeder and identified as an immature male. It was seen daily thereafter and was still present at the close of the season, thus establishing the first wintering record in the history of the region (Sherwin).

Red Crossbill - A flock of eight to ten, both sexes, was viewed for about one minute in Aurora Sanctuary on January 29, when they perched in an evergreen tree and then quickly departed (Fulton and Henderson).

Oregon Junco - On four dates from January 8 (Selby) to February 19 (Hammond), a "vividly-marked mature specimen" was identified at Holden Arboretum as it, together with Slate-colored Juncos, frequented the feeding stations at the Thayer Visitor Center.

FIELD NOTES

Mutant Mallards. In the winter of 1966-67 three different types of mutant Mallards visited a small, spring-fed pond (about two-thirds of an acre) in Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Cuyahoga Falls. The first to arrive was a khaki hen, which later became the mate of a typical Mallard drake. She was a uniform, faded khaki color, the same as the color of a domestic Mallard-descended variety first developed in England, known as the "Khaki-Campbell". This mutant color has been determined to be sex linked.

The second mutant visitor, also a hen, had a light brown head and brown streaks running through the white ground color of the rest of the body. This bird, which stayed only one day, matched the description and photographs of a German domestic breed called the "Streicher-Ente". We have no information about the genetic properties of this mutation. The third mutant, a drake, was pure white, whiter than the usual yellowish white of Pekins. He was close to the wild Mallard in type and size and was a good flyer.

In two previous years, Mallard-type mutants -- coal black with a white bib -- visited the cemetery pond. There is a German breed of domestic duck of this same color and pattern. - CARL F. GRAEFE

Red Squirrel Encounters Screech Owl. On the morning of January 19 at our home in Waite Hill, I observed a red squirrel which was 'squirreling around' in the apple tree where a Screech Owl occupies a hollow in the trunk. I knew the owl was present, having seen it earlier in the morning, so I watched with great curiosity. The squirrel came to the opening

where the owl is in the habit of sitting, and paused, putting its head inside but not actually entering the cavity.

After a short time the squirrel climbed a little higher. Slowly the head of the owl appeared at the opening, then the body -- coming completely into view --, and the owl settled quietly at the entrance to the cavity. The squirrel then began to dart excitedly around the opening but always keeping about 18 inches away from the owl. After about five minutes of this frantic activity, the squirrel left the tree. The owl remained in view for another five minutes and then sank into the cavity. - ANNETTE B. FLANIGAN

Robins Become Drunk on Crabapples. A flock of about 150 Robins at Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Cuyahoga Falls on February 4 and 5, fed on crabapples which made them drunk. Often the birds would fly toward a limb only to miss it completely, falling to the ground with wings drooping. Some were sitting on branches with their wings hanging loosely. They were quite a sight, but even more amusing were the varied songs and calls they were uttering -- Robin-like, though not exactly typical.-MADELIN HJELMQUIST

Cedar Waxwings at Nighttime Roost. On February 25 at 5:00 p.m., a group of Cedar Waxwings was flying about in and out of the evergreens close to our house in Waite Hill. They were going mainly from the Colorado spruce, which is at the rear of the house, to the two Canada hemlocks which flank the front door. These trees are about seven feet tall and of about equal density.

At 6:00 p.m. (sunset was at 6:13) they appeared to have settled in one of the dense hemlocks less than three feet from the front entrance. Two of the birds were on the outer edges of the tree, and the others visible to me were in groups of three at several levels but no more than ten inches from the trunk. I observed them frequently thereafter and I felt almost certain they remained in a fixed posture, not even moving a feather. At about 6:40 I could clearly see only the two on the outer edge of the hemlock, and soon none were visible.

Sunrise was at 7:07 on February 26. On that morning I first looked into the hemlock at 6:15, but it was still too dark to observe the waxwings. At 6:45, however, I could see they were roosting in the exact positions of the previous night. The two on the outer edge maintained precisely the same posture as before, even to holding the bill and crest in the same position. The others, too, seemed to have held a rigidly fixed posture. By 6:45, Quail, Mourning Doves, and Cardinals were calling. And a great many birds --two Ring-necked Pheasants, American Goldfinches, Tree Sparrows, Slate-colored Juncos, Song Sparrows -- were at the several feeders located no more than 25 feet from the hemlock in which the waxwings were roosting. Yet despite this activity and despite the bright morning, the waxwings remained at rest. At 7:00 they were still roosting, and I could detect no movement whatever.

Then at 7:05 they roused, gently stretched their wings, and moved to positions on the outer branches of the tree so that in a single group they all faced west. They remained there, not moving about, until 7:16

when they all slowly raised their wings as though fluffing the feathers, then dropped them, and in an instant flew off to the west. I counted 18 birds.

Frequently during the winter I had observed the Cedar Waxwings at about 5:00 p.m. as they settled in prospective nighttime roosts. Often they flew out after a short time, though they generally roosted in the immediate vicinity of the house or in the dense growth behind the barn nearby. The doorway Canada hemlock tree may have been a favorite roost, for twice earlier in the winter I saw a small band leave the tree in the morning. On January 17 at 7:50 a.m. (sunrise was at 7:51), one bird appeared from the dense inner portion, paused on an outer branch where it was joined by seven or eight others, and all flew off together. Again at 7:50 a.m. on January 24 (sunrise was at 7:46), the same size group left the tree, though on both dates I can only assume that the birds roosted since I did not examine the tree the night before to see whether they were there. - ANNETTE B, FLANIGAN

Female Cardinal Fights Her Image. For 30 minutes on February 4 and for 20 minutes the next day, in Cuyahoga Falls, I watched a female Cardinal which was seemingly fighting her reflection in a window. She was sitting on a branch from which she would fly about two yards to peck at the window, sometimes falling to the ground or sometimes catching herself on the sill. Then, uttering subdued cries, she would return to the branch. This performance was repeated about every 30 seconds, and she was still at it each day when I left. A male Cardinal was nearby on both days. - MADELIN HJELMQUIST