



CLEVELAND REGION

*Published by*  
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                    |
| Perkins Beach                | 43 Mentor Headlands          |
| 15 Terminal Tower            | 44 Mentor Marsh              |
| 16 Cleveland Public Square   | 45 Black Brook               |
| Cuyahoga River               | Headlands State Park         |
| 17 Brecksville Reservation   | 46 Fairport Harbor           |
| 18 Akron                     | 47 Painesville               |
| Cuyahoga Falls               | 48 Grand River               |
| 19 Akron Lakes               | 49 Little Mountain           |
| 20 Gordon. Park              | Holden Arboretum             |
| 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

Editor  
Annette B. Flanigan

Editorial Advisor  
Donald L. Newman

Weather Summary  
William A. Klamm

Special Features  
Donald A. Siebert

## Editorial Assistants

Vera Carrothers  
Adela Gaede  
Elizabeth Rose  
Muriel H. Sneller

## CONTRIBUTORS

Martha L. Anderson  
L. P. Barbour  
B. P. Bole, Jr.  
Kay F. Booth  
Vera Carrothers  
Genevieve Chambers  
Henrietta D. Crofts  
Mildred Daniels  
Leo A. Deininger  
Ralph W. Dexter  
Corrine F. Dolbear  
Marjorie S. English  
Nathan Finck  
Annette B. Flanigan  
Adela Gaede  
Wayne & Hilda Hammond  
Clinton Hobbs  
Charles W. Hocevar  
Mildred Hoprich  
Perry F. and Jan Johnson  
Faye B. King  
Glenn Kitson  
William & Nancy Klamm  
Mrs. Edward Klee  
Charles H. Knight  
Walter P. Kremm  
Sibyl Leach

Hilda A. Lebold  
Bernard S. Mandle  
Howard W. Martin  
Walter E. Mueller  
Zigmond & Helena Nagy  
Helen Nanovic  
Donald L. Newman  
Gretta Pallister  
J. P. Perkins  
Perry K. Peskin  
Jerry Piskac  
Mrs. Howard W. Proudfoot  
Marjorie Ramisch  
Bertram C. Raynes  
Genevieve Reutter  
Robert A. Scheibe, Jr.  
Margaret H. Sherwin  
Donald A. Siebert  
Merit B. Skaggs  
Gordon Spare  
Ethel Staley  
Michael Stasko  
Geraldine Sterle  
Bert L. Szabo  
Clinton E. Ward  
Barbara Webster

\* \* \*

All records, comments, and observations should be sent to  
Annette B. Flanigan  
Smith Road, Waite Hill, Willoughby, Ohio 44094

## THE WEATHER

December - The month was characteristically dreary and cold. Sunshine was scarce and totaled only 10% of the amount possible. Temperatures were more frequently below normal in the latter half of the month and averaged 3.3 degrees cooler than normal. Only four days passed without trace or measurable precipitation. Snow fell on 16 of the 19 days when measurable precipitation occurred, totaled 7 inches on the ground at the peak, and was continuous after the 14th. Total precipitation as water was 2.46 inches, and was in excess by 0.12 inches.

Inland and quiet waters were subject to transient freezing all during the month. Lake Erie remained open most of the month. Skim, pack, and shore ice initially developed on the 18th, varied in severity through the 27th, became extensive thereafter.

January - Except for one day, the 29th, the ground was continuously covered with measurable snow. It reached a peak of 7 inches but was never refreshed with new snowfall in excess of 1.3 inches at any one time. Measurable precipitation occurred on 22 days and sunshine increased to 28% of the possible amount. Precipitation measured 1.28 inches as water and was in deficit by 1.39 inches. Temperatures were generally well below normal until the last week of the month and averaged 9.5 degrees colder than normal.

Lake Erie remained extensively ice covered all during the month even though southerly winds prevailed on 18 days.

February - The month passed in a moderate, near normal manner. Sunshine increased to 51% of amount possible and temperatures averaged 1.3 degrees less than normal. Ground snow cover was measurable on 9 days and was substantially absent after the 17th. Total precipitation of 1.35 inches was in deficit by 0.98 inches. Wind shifts occurred at regular intervals with 10 days prevailing from northerly directions, 11 days from southerly, and 7 days from east or west directions.

Lake Erie remained extensively ice covered with some brief intervals of shifting ice fields and open fissures occurring in the latter part of the month.

## COMMENT ON THE SEASON

The winter season was not spectacular but it was extremely active. A tremendous aggregation of more than 100,000 gulls was present along the lakefront for the Christmas Count conducted on Cleveland's East Side. This number has never been even closely approached in the thirty year record of the East Side count. Ring-billed Gulls were the most abundant, numbering 64,250. In addition, there were 23,100 Bonaparte's and 14,600 Herring Gulls (Klamm),

The northern finches were present in some magnitude with the Common Redpoll overwhelmingly predominant. Their appearance encompassed the entire Cleveland region and they were reported with the recurring theme "this winter was the first time Redpolls ever came to the feeders". This widespread [widespread] invasion and other aspects of the season will be discussed below.

Waterfowl Lingers in Region. A Common Loon was found in Cuyahoga Falls on December 23 alive, but with a wing injured by shot. The bird did not live through the following day (Don Manson vide Szabo). A lone Whistling Swan was observed at LaDue Reservoir on December 2 (Scheibe).

A number of dabbling ducks delayed their usual departure time, a few remaining through the season. Pintail were reported in small numbers on many scattered dates during the winter. All observations were made on the Cleveland lakefront (Scheibe et al) and Lorain lakefront (Johnson), except one from Rocky River Reservation on January 12, where one Blue-winged Teal was present also (Siebert). A green-winged Teal was seen on the Black River, Lorain County, on December 20 (Klamm). American Widgeon wintered in small numbers along the Cleveland lakefront and at Baldwin Reservoir (Hocevar et al); on the pond in Wade Park in Cleveland (Gaede et al); but made only one appearance on the Lorain lakefront (Johnson). One Wood Duck was seen on Baldwin Reservoir during late December and early January (Hocevar et al), and one at Rocky River Reservation on January 1 (Stasko).

Several species of diving ducks were more numerous than in recent years -- notably the Oldsquaw which was reported in small numbers during the greater part of December and January. All reports came from the Cleveland lakefront (Klamm et al) with the exception of one from Baldwin Reservoir on December 28 (Scheibe).

All three species of Scoters were observed. White-winged appeared on December 1 on the Lorain lakefront (Dolbear) and sporadic sightings were made through the winter along the Cleveland lakefront on and after December 20 (Klamm et al). See the Noteworthy Records section for reports of the Surf and Common Scoter.

Gallinaceous Birds. A decline is noted in reports, caused presumably by increasing development and urbanization which continues to destroy their habitat. Of unusual interest, then, is a report from a most unlikely location. "On a cold January day a covey of 18 Bobwhite was observed foraging in West Park Cemetery, less than five miles from Public Square" (Stasko). A covey of 12 Bobwhite was observed in Garfield Park, Garfield Heights, on February 2 and 22 (Knight). A very poor season was reported from Seiberling Nature Center, Akron, "worst since the Center opened six years ago" (Szabo); "not one appeared in Waite Hill during the winter" (Flanigan).

On the positive side is a report from Hanging Rock Farm, Kirtland Hills, of a spectacular increase in Ruffed Grouse in the last three years with at least two birds wintering very near the house (Bole, Jr.). Three remained through the winter near Seiberling Nature Center, Akron (Szabo).

Common Crow. The Common Crow was reported almost daily in small flocks of ten or less -- except in Waite Hill where a flock of 30 was tallied on December 24, and 50 birds on January 22. Early in February their numbers increased and 100 were present on the 7th (Flanigan), and 175 on the 22nd .. (Sherwin).

Red-breasted Nuthatch in Abundance. Following an autumn of numerous records the Red-breasted Nuthatch was reported daily -- in contrast to the two reports received for winter 1968-69. This is in accordance with their irregular habit.

Changing Status of Mockingbird Continues. It appears this northward trend is typical as "the ever more northerly winterings of the Mockingbird" statement in Audubon Field Notes 23:3:560 supports. The presence of the Mockingbird in Willoughby Hills continued through the winter months, becoming irregular when the berries were depleted on the mountain ash which had been a favorite feeding spot. In late winter, it was seen for a few hours at a time every week or ten days (Reutter). One was seen in Waite Hill at frequent intervals where it was almost exclusively found either perching quietly or feeding in a mountain ash -- being viewed more than a dozen times. These two Mockingbirds being one and the same bird is a matter of conjecture since the distance -- as a bird flies -- is not too great (Flanigan and Sherwin). One made a brief visit to a yard adjoining North Chagrin Reservation on February 8 (Scheibe).

Evening Grosbeak Almost a Repeat. Following an active 1968-69 winter season which was considered one of the largest incursions ever experienced, Grosbeaks were again reported in numbers. Resident flocks were reported by seven contributors: (1) a flock that varied from 2 to 80 birds arrived in late November and visited daily at a feeding station in Brecksville

(Piskac) (see Field Notes section for account of Grosbeaks going to roost); (2) at Hanging Rock Farm, Kirtland Hills, small numbers were present from December 1 until the January thaw, returned on February 9 and became regular after the 15th (Bole, Jr.); (3) a group that numbered five or less was heard daily near Chardon, but came to the feeder only rarely (Spare); (4) five to 25 birds were daily visitors in Walton Bills (Staley); (5) a band varying from 18 to 24 birds, which arrived at a feeding station in Mentor in early December, diminished to 10 or 12 birds in early February believed due to a lesser amount of food being provided during an absence (Klee); (6) after several December visits in Kirtland Hills a band numbering as high as 20 birds became regular in January and remained to the end of the period (Daniels); (7) on December 13 a flock of 10 was present in Chagrin Falls, becoming daily visitors in February. A high count of 36 was reached on the 10th (English).

Evening Grosbeaks appeared in Lorain County in early December and resident flocks of 35, 50, and 60 birds were reported. In addition, many records were received of irregular visits (fide Johnson).

Observations were made of sporadic visits and/or lesser numbers from other locations: Holden Arboretum (Hammond); Strongsville (Hocevar); Seiberling Nature Center, Akron (Szabo); North Chagrin Reservation (Scheibe); Warrensville Farms (Knight); Kirtland Hills (fide Booth); Kirtland, Chardon, Gates Mills (fide Flanigan).

Common Redpoll Present Everywhere. Redpolls appeared late in November in substantial numbers and continued to be almost universally abundant through the winter. Reports came in almost at once of their attendance at feeding stations, a rarely reported habit, and this became a regular pattern. They most commonly occur and feed in the wild but the records this season came more frequently from urban environments.

Redpolls arrived at a Mentor residence in early fall, feeding on seeds of the birch trees until they were depleted. In former years the birds disappeared when this took place but this year they remained and visited the feeders to partake of the bird seed mixture, becoming quite tame. On February 15 the band numbered 50 or more birds (Sterle).

Observations were made frequently during the winter of Redpolls in the birches surrounding Foster Pond at Holden Arboretum -- a band of 50 birds on January 11 was the largest flock observed here. On January 31, Redpolls were found feeding in the birches and foraging on the ground beneath the trees near a Mentor residence. When the food disappeared from the trees they found the feeders and became progressively tamer, eventually associating freely with the other feeding

station birds. This flock reached a peak number of 22 birds on February 21 (Hammond).

In early December Redpolls were reported from the Lorain area, feeding on seeds of the birch at times, but on January 7 a flock of 200 was observed feeding on weed seeds along the roadside. Beginning on February 5 they found seed that had been scattered on the ground near a Lorain residence and by the 26th the flock numbered 20 birds. At first the birds were quite timid but soon became unconcerned and were easily photographed (Dolbear).

A group of 20 birds was present at a Strongsville feeding station on December 20, and 42 birds were tallied on the 25th. They remained through early January, with a count of 40 birds on the 1st (Hocevar).

Redpolls were observed in Lakewood Park Cemetery in December and January -- a count of 35 birds on December 6 (Klamm) and 80 birds on the 29th (Stasko).

A single bird visited a feeding station in Cleveland Heights on February 10, the number increased to 14 birds within a few days and remained through the period (Anderson).

Flocks were reported from Shaker Lakes during the entire winter, in numbers as high as 29 birds (Gaede et al.).

Redpolls were observed along the Cleveland lakefront through the winter as follows: a few were encountered in Lakewood Park on December 6; 16 birds were seen feeding in the weed patches at White City and 14 were seen at Burke Lakefront Airport on the 21st; nine were present at Perkins Beach on February 7; 22 birds were tallied at White City on the 14th (Klamm).

A tally of 150 Redpolls on the Elyria Christmas Count is the largest number recorded in the past 12 years, and 138 were reported on the Cuyahoga Falls Count. Telephone calls were received by Glenn Kitson at the Natural Science Museum reporting single birds and small flocks appearing during February at home feeders in Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, Garfield Heights, South Euclid, and Willoughby. Resident flocks, as well as sporadic records, were reported from areas in and around Lorain (Johnson).

Limited appearances were reported from almost every corner of the Cleveland region, and are listed briefly as to locality. Mentor: a small flock of five or more birds were observed along Garfield Road on December 4 and 5, and February 3 (Flanigan); several birds were present for a week in mid-February (fide Booth). Willoughby Hills: a band of 20 birds fed in a large stand of birch trees in a nursery planting on



December 17 (Zophar Warner fide Flanigan). Waite Hill: nine Redpolls were seen on December 12 and 14, three on February 11 (Flanigan). Chagrin Falls: a small number appeared at a residence on February 19 and remained to the end of the period; a small number was observed from January 11 to 25 at nearby LaDue Reservoir (English). Cleveland Heights: a feeder was visited by several birds on irregular dates from January 21 to February 19 (Nanovic); eight were present in Forest Hill Park on February 22 (Newman). Warrensville Farms: from five to eleven Redpolls were present on several dates between February 8 and 28 (Knight). Willoughby: a feeding station was visited on February 8 and for the following ten days by one to seven birds (Proudfoot); a small number was seen from February 15 to the end of the period (Barbour); a count of 90 birds was made at two window-box feeders on February 28 (O.J. Melbourne fide Pallister). Kirtland Hills: a flock of 36 birds was present on February 14 (Webster); eight Redpolls visited a feeding tray on February 20 but only one bird returned the following day (Daniels). Lyndhurst: eight Redpolls were observed on February 15 (Kitson). Berea: a band of 30 birds appeared in mid-February but only a few remained for the following several days (Mrs. Goller fide Chambers). Baldwin Reservoir: on February 22 a flock of 40 was present (Leach). Brecksville: three birds appeared on February 22, becoming daily visitors thereafter (Piskac).

Other Finches. Pine Siskins were reported with uncommon frequency and in unusually large numbers. The first sizable flock which numbered 19 was observed in Rocky River on December 13 (Stasko), and 53 were sighted in North Chagrin Reservation on the 24th (Hammond). The Cuyahoga Falls Christmas Count recorded 12 Siskins and 20 were in the region on January 13 (fide Szabo). The largest flocks of the season were observed in the birches around Foster Pond at Holden Arboretum. A tally was made of 50 birds on several occasions, the number diminished and only two were seen on February 8 (Hammond). Other records were for one or two birds seen at infrequent intervals and came from at least eight localities.

American Goldfinch were present in exceptionally large numbers also. A wintering flock in Walton Hills contained more than 100 birds (Staley). A flock of 75 to 80 appeared regularly through the winter at a residence in Willoughby Hills (fide Skaggs). A group of 20 fed regularly at a feeder near a Chardon residence (Spare). A feeding station in Geauga County was visited by large flocks -- 35 on December 29, and 43 on January 25 (Kremm). Large numbers were observed through the winter at a Strongsville residence (Hocevar). The Elyria Christmas Count reported by far the greatest number of Goldfinch recorded in the past 12 years -- 309 birds. A total of 650 birds was reported on the Cuyahoga Falls count.

Red Crossbills were more in evidence than in any winter since 1963-64. (1) the first report came on January 25 from

Rocky River Reservation of a group of seven that fed silently in a stand of red pine. Although the trees had no cones the birds fed at the tips of the branches (Stasko). (2) Six birds were present in pine trees at Holden Arboretum on February 1 -- two males were observed exchanging food (Hammond and Raynes). (3) A flock of 13 fed daily from February 15 to the end of the period at a residence near Rocky River Reservation (Mary Chester fide Chambers). (4) Eight Crossbills fed on pine cone seeds that had fallen to the ground beneath a tree near a Cleveland residence on February 20 (Hoprich). (5) Two birds were observed at Warrensville Farms on February 14 and four on the 28th (Knight). (6) A feeding station at Brecksville was visited by 17 Crossbills at irregular times through the winter (Piskac).

White-winged Crossbills were reported in small numbers, -- with one exception: seven were sighted in late morning of December 7 as they fed in hemlocks at North Chagrin Reservation, and one bird on February 8 (Scheibe); six were observed at Holden Arboretum on January 18, and two on February 8 (Hammond); at Columbia Station, a male was viewed at close range and photographed on February 15 (Nagy) The only flock of any size, numbering up to 30 birds, fed at various times during the winter at Brecksville (Piskac).

Towhee. Although the Rufous-sided Towhee was a wintering bird it was only in Waite Hill that it occurred daily, where the "regular" Towhee was joined by a second bird on December 24, and remained also (Flanigan). One was observed in Rocky River Reservation on December 21 (Stasko); one appeared at a Waite Hill feeder on December 27, and on February 20, 21, and 27 (Sherwin); two birds were seen in Kirtland Hills on January 2 (Webster); one occurred at North Chagrin Reservation on January 2 (Carrothers) two were occasional feeding station visitors at Hanging Rock Farm, Kirtland Hills (Bole, Jr.)

Slate-colored Junco Declines in Numbers. Comment from contributors was in general agreement as to lesser numbers of the Slate-colored Junco and not one large flock was reported. A sampling follows: fewer at a Willoughby feeding station "often just one" (Pallister); "generally low" in Akron area (Szabo); "somewhat fewer" in North Chagrin Reservation (Finck); wintered sparingly in Waite Hill "often one or none at all" (Flanigan); "about half usual numbers" at a Geauga County residence (Kremm); "present in small numbers" near Chardon (Spare); "very scarce" in Walton Hills (Staley). Only one report, from Chagrin Falls, offered a differing opinion: "Juncos were as plentiful as the last two years" (English).

Stragglers. Despite the sustained frigid temperatures and continuous snow cover of 48 days duration during December and January, certain species were observed daily or with uncommon frequency, which are not normally present except as sporadic

visitors. (1) Mockingbird (discussed earlier in this section). (2) A Brown Thrasher which wintered at Seiberling Nature Center, Akron (Szabo); One that appeared in Willoughby on December 25, 27, and January 25 (Pallister); one tallied on the East Side Christmas Count (Klamm), (3) Field Sparrows were observed during the winter at Mentor Marsh, Rocky River Reservation, Holden Arboretum, and Waite Hill (Hammond, Stasko, Flanigan). (4) White-crowned Sparrows were present during the winter -- one flock numbering 30 birds- at Berea, Lorain, and Rocky River Reservation (Chambers, Dolbear, Stasko). (5) Swamp Sparrows were seen during December at Mentor Marsh, Holden Arboretum, and Waite Hill (Hammond and Flanigan).

Signs of Spring. Although no Meadowlark appeared in February and not until the 22nd did the first flock of Red-winged Blackbirds arrive, there were reports of early arrivals. On the 8th, five American Coot were seen at Eastlake (Kitson); a Green-winged Teal was observed on a pond in Lakeview [Lake View] Cemetery [Cemetery] on the 23rd (Carrothers and Gaede); a killdeer appeared in Chesterland on the 25th and two in Burton the following day (Mandle). The most surprising early arrival was a Phoebe which returned on the 22nd to an area between Chardon and Burton where they nest each year, and remained thereafter (Mandle). This marks a new early spring date.

#### NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Black-crowned Night Heron - An immature remained all day on December 20, perched in a tree at Lorain -- it was last observed at 2:00 AM on the 21st -- by flashlight (Harold Warner fide Ward); (2) an immature, possibly the same bird, was seen on the ice with the gulls at Harmon's Beach, Lorain, on the 25th (P. F. and Jan Johnson); (3) three immature birds were observed roosting near the Avon Light Plant on February 8 and remained for more than two weeks (Mrs. Hageman fide Ward).

Snow Goose - (1) An adult rested on the water with gulls on the lakefront near the mouth of the Cuyahoga River on January 18 (Klamm); (2) one came in with a flight of Canada Geese at Waite Hill on February 28 (Sherwin). These are the first winter records since 1960.

Blue Goose - (1) Ten were observed from a Lorain residence which overlooks the lake on December 1 (Dolbear). (2) An immature was seen on Shaker Lake on December 13 and at intervals through the winter. As time passed a change could be noted in the head coloring as it became more white (Leach and Peskin).

Harlequin Duck - An immature occurred on the lakefront at Lakewood on December 21, and one, possibly the same bird, was observed diving at Perkins Beach on the 25th (Klamm).

Surf Scoter - A female with an injured wing remained on Sunset

Pond, North Chagrin Reservation, from December 3 through 9. The bird was very inactive during the first three days and then appeared to gain strength (Scheibe et al).

Common Scoter - A female was observed at the Municipal Light Plant on January 10, 11, 18 and 24 (Klamm).

Peregrine Falcon - In view of the drastically declining population of this Falcon, especially in the past decade, any appearance is of extreme interest. According to a study recently published Peregrine Falcon Populations Their Biology and Decline edited by Joseph J. Hickey "In the western United States the population has been seriously reduced and the species has been extirpated from the eastern United States." At 4:30 PM on December 22 one perched on a snag within 80 feet of an intersection near Twinsburg. After five minutes it flew to the TV aerial of a nearby house, where it remained until a car entered the driveway (Szabo).

Purple Sandpiper - This rarely reported migrant was seen on five dates during the autumn season but believed to represent only three individuals. With the following reports its most numerous appearance in our entire history is shown. (1) One, obviously crippled in the right leg, was observed feeding in debris at the waterline at Headlands State Park on December 7. When one was seen on the ice at Gordon Park on January 4 which was similarly crippled it was presumed to be the same bird (Hammond and Carrothers). (2) On December 7 one was present on the breakwater in Rocky River, and on January 4 one was observed probing on the leaf-littered shore near the Rocky River Disposal Plant (Stasko). [It is not clear the number of individuals involved in the winter reports, but presumed to be at least two birds. - Ed.]

Dunlin - Two were reported on December 6 and 21, single individuals on the 14th and 25th -- all reports coming from White City (Klamm and Hocevar). The December 25 date marks a new latest fall date.

Glaucous Gull - (1) One was observed at Harmon's Beach, Lorain on December 12 (Johnson); (2) an adult and an immature were present at Municipal Pier, Lorain on December 20 (Klamm); (3) an adult was identified on the ice at Gordon Park on January 3 (Hocevar and Klamm); (4) an adult was seen at Lorain harbor on January 10 and 18 (Siebert and Nagy).

Franklin's Gull - On December 27 an immature was fishing in the channel with other gulls at Eastlake (Klamm).

Little Gull - This rare visitor was observed under circumstances not commonly reported: "despite gale winds and problems of handling the ship as we entered the Cleveland harbor on the afternoon of December 7, I was able to note the presence of a Little Gull among the hundreds of gulls of other kinds" (Perkins).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - (1) One appeared in North Chagrin Reservation on December 24 and 27 (Hammond, Kitson, Scheibe); (2) one was seen in Kirtland Hills on February 22 (Webster).

Catbird - (1) One in Rocky River Reservation on December 21 (Stasko); (2) one in Willoughby Hills on the 27th (Scheibe). These birds were tallied on two separate Christmas Counts.

Hermit Thrush - (1) One stayed near open rivulets in a ravine bottom near Seiberling Nature Center, Akron, being observed on several dates -- the last December 21 (Szabo), (2) On February 26 one was observed through the day at the Natural Science Museum (Webster and Kitson). Not since 1960 has there been a February report.

Northern Shrike (1) About 1:00 PM on December 13 in Walton Hills an immature flew straight down from a tree top, taking a small bird of unknown species. The Shrike returned briefly to the tree top before flying off (Staley). (2) One was observed in late afternoon on January 26 in Pepper Pike (Raynes). (3) One appeared in a yard which borders North Chagrin Reservation in mid-afternoon on February 15. It perched long enough for quick identification before pursuing a group of Chickadees and hovering over the thick shrubbery in which they took refuge (Scheibe).

Myrtle Warbler - In North Chagrin Reservation three were seen on December 24 (Hammond); 12 on the 27th, and one on January 25 and 31 (Kitson and Scheibe).

Baltimore Oriole - Two birds wintered: (1) a male that fed daily on suet, from early December to January 15, at a residence near Chardon (Mary Aumick fide Spare); (2) a female that frequented a feeding station at May field Heights in late December, and was still present January [January] 17 (Chester Butler fide Mueller).

House Finch - A male visited a feeding station at a Mentor residence on January 11 (Hammond).

Lincoln's Sparrow - One at Mentor Marsh on December 14, an uncommonly late date (Hammond).

#### FIELD NOTES

Red-bellied Woodpecker Seizes Starling. On December 20 a Red-bellied Woodpecker feeding at a suet bag near a Waite Hill residence suddenly paused and assumed a threatening attitude as a Starling landed on the opposite side of the suet and began to feed. When the Starling persisted the Woodpecker reached out with his bill, grasped the Starling by the leg and tugged, holding firmly until the Starling pulled free and retreated to a perch about ten feet away. After a few minutes the Starling returned to the suet and again failed to be

frightened off by the threatening pose of the Woodpecker. A second time the Woodpecker grasped the Starling by the leg and pulled until the Starling flew off, this time remaining perched at a short distance until the Red-bellied had completed his feeding and departed. This was the first observation of any direct physical contact by a Red-bellied Woodpecker as heretofore a threatening thrust of the head had been sufficient to drive away an unwanted intruder. - ANNETTE B. FLANIGAN

Starlings in Savage Struggle. A struggle between two Starlings was in progress when first observed in Hunting Valley. It was witnessed for five minutes on the morning of February 23 -- a morning with a hint of spring -- and was a savage battle with mayhem intended. The birds each had one foot locked with one foot of their opponent and used the free foot to punch the other bird, but unquestionably the main weapon was the beak. The eye was obviously the target for each fighter and the loser was quite bloody about the eye, About eight Starlings made up an audience and followed the battle closely. A nesting hole appeared to be the prize and it was to this the victor repaired. The loser survived -- so far as is known. - BERTRAM C. RAYNES

Evening Grosbeaks at Nighttime Roost. [The following is an account of a rarely reported occurrence which was observed near a residence in Brecksville in January. - Ed.]

As I brushed against a red cedar tree on leaving the house about 4:30 PM, a number of Evening Grosbeaks flew out. Re-entering the house at once I watched as they soon returned to the tree. Arising early the next morning I was able to observe the Grosbeaks as they departed from the roost, flying directly to an oak nearby. The following evening I flushed the Grosbeaks from the same cedar in order to make a count, and tallied nine birds as they returned to the roost. On the third evening I discovered many were present in a Norway spruce located quite near the cedar. I was able to count at least 16 birds -- this was in addition to the group present in the cedar. On this last occasion the Grosbeaks did not remain -- with the exception of one bird that perched near the house -- but flew to the west and settled on an adjoining property.

Although the Grosbeaks roosted about thirty-five yards from the feeders, at no time were they seen to feed after 2:00 PM, until March 8 when one did so at 5:00 PM. This Grosbeak, a male, fed for about five minutes and then hopped upwards in a Norway spruce adjacent to the feeder until a satisfactory roosting place was found. I observed the bird at roost as long as daylight permitted. - JERRY PISKAC

White-crowned Sparrows Attain First Nuptial Plumage and Other Notes. A small group of White-crowned sparrows daily frequented the feeding stations at my home in Waite Hill during the 1968-69 winter and 1969 spring season. This first instance

of overwintering here offered an opportunity to study the daily development that takes place in the crown molt of the immature birds. One adult and four immature birds were observed, three immatures being banded which allowed a more detailed record. (It was not until April 5 that the presence of the third banded immature bird was established, instead of two as heretofore believed. At this time the emergence of individually distinctive head patterns made it possible,)

The first indication of crown molt was apparent on March 7 - on the unbanded immature -- characterized by a scattering of white feathers in the center stripe and a lightening of the side stripes. On March 9 a banded immature showed noticeable lightening on the crown. Due to the location of the white feathers in the crown stripes, coupled with the fact that one bird was banded and the other unbanded, it was possible to follow the progress of the individual birds. The first showing of black in the head pattern was seen on March 12 and appeared in the eye line. A change in the chin coloring and evidence of change in the breast feathers was also apparent on the 12th. The center crown stripe of one individual appeared boldly white on March 24 although not yet completely changed for the entire length of the stripe. The wide brown crown stripes were the last to show change, and change was not noticeable in them until April 6 -- then only slightly.

By April 17 one of the immature birds appeared to be in fully adult plumage until viewed through binoculars, which disclosed that the black crown stripes still contained some brown feathers. At this time the plumage of all the birds changed dramatically, in that the color change was greatly increased and the contrast was conspicuous compared to the preceding day. They had the look of adults on April 22, except for one banded bird whose black crown stripes contained two minute spots of brown. These spots of brown had disappeared by the 25th and all five birds were in adult plumage. The migrating White-crowned Sparrows appeared on May 4, reaching a peak on the 7th with a count of 25 at the feeders.

Singing was first heard on a cold, windy, February 4 with the temperature at 30 degrees. It followed an aggressive encounter with a Tree Sparrow on one of the feeders in which the immature White-crowned emerged the victor. There was just a snatch of the regular song at first, but within five minutes the complete song was sung three times. A full song by an immature was heard at 7:20 AM on February 6, a sunny day with the temperature at 11 degrees. By February 25 all the White-crowned Sparrows were singing and continued thereafter.

On March 18, a sunny day with the temperature rising from 30 degrees in early morning to 62 degrees at 4:45 PM, four White-crowned Sparrows were seen to engage in aerial feeding. They ran after, and caught, small insects that emerged and flew about close to the grass tops. A Song Sparrow and a

Starling also took part in this aerial feeding, often jumping ten inches into the air to capture an insect.

On October 5, 1968, between 6:50 and 7:05 PM, approximately 30 White-crowned Sparrows were observed going to roost in a large blackberry and sumac thicket. The group, composed of adult and immature birds, was singing as they moved in and entered the thicket and continued to sing after they had disappeared from sight. They were seen again, going to roost in the same thicket, at dusk on the 11th. - ANNETTE B. FLANIGAN

### TO CATCH A SPARROW

In the year 1850, eight pairs of House or English Sparrows were released in Brooklyn, New York, to help control cankerworms. The birds failed to establish themselves, but later imports succeeded only too well. Their rapid spread across the nation was due to the birds' hardiness, adaptability to various environmental conditions, ability to multiply rapidly, and almost complete immunity from natural enemies.

The House Sparrow is a member of the Weaver Finch family of the Old World. Unlike our native sparrows which build cup-shaped nests, the House Sparrow nests are large dome-shaped structures built from everything imaginable -- bits of cloth, pieces of string, feathers, and even balls of lint which are emitted from clothes-dryer vents. When the nest is built in an open situation the bird enters through a hole on the side and the nest usually contains four to seven whitish eggs finely speckled with black. The birds are always gregarious and their presence discourages beneficial native songbirds from entering our gardens. They usurp nesting boxes built for Bluebirds, Martins, and other species, and they rapidly denude feeding tables set for more desirable species.

To attempt to maintain a bird feeder in the city was a very exhausting and trying experience. These aggressive birds were attracted to the yard by the score. They adopted the feeder for their own and with a diet of almost 200 pounds of seed a winter they prospered and multiplied. After many winters, I vowed to reduce their ranks, hopeful that some of the more timid birds would be attracted to the feeder if the sparrows were not so prevalent. After weighing the possibilities of capture, the answer became obvious -- a live trap. For \$10.95 I purchased a piece of equipment guaranteed to catch at least two birds at a time. The idea was to trap as many as possible, put them in a box and release them in an area far from my home, assuming that they had no homing instincts. The trap was set and baited with seed and I began my wait. For days not a single bird ventured near, finally, early one Sunday morning I noticed the trap had been sprung and the unit was shaking violently. I rushed out, picturing the trap brimming with sparrows, only to find an irate Blue Jay.



Weeks later the sparrows were still as numerous as ever. They were perching on top of the trap waiting their turn at the feeder, but not one would risk entry. Reluctantly, I accepted the fact that the Weaver Finch, despite its curiosity and aggressive nature, was too skeptical to fall for a man-made trap.

This winter I vowed anew to tackle the sparrow problem. I decided a much larger trap was the answer; one that would not cause them to be so cautious. I constructed a three-foot square wooden frame with a badminton net crisscrossed over the top. The frame was suspended by a pole about 14 inches from the ground and held in place by a pin attached to a long cord. The cord was then strung through a window into the house. A pull on the cord would cause the pin to release and the frame would crash to the ground, entangling the sparrows below.

Seed was then scattered at the base of the pole, but not one sparrow would go near the trap, even refusing to come into the area where the netted frame stood. After a week of waiting my vigil was rewarded - in the dim light of dawn on January 12, my eye caught sight of two huddled forms feeding under the netting. Before I pulled the cord, I viewed the forms through my binoculars. To my amazement they were Tree Sparrows -- the first we had ever seen in our area. The next day five Slate-colored Juncos and a White-throated Sparrow were feeding, and on January 15, a Song Sparrow made an appearance. Never before had there been a Song Sparrow evident in the neighborhood prior to mid-March. These welcome guests were followed by Chickadees, Goldfinch, Mourning Doves, Cardinals, and Blue Jays. By now the trap had turned into a very remarkable ground bird-feeder for these desirable birds.

I had long before stopped filling the regular feeder, and the sparrows were no longer coming. The few that did venture into the yard would not go near the other birds feeding beneath the shelter. By their very nature, the House Sparrows had outwitted themselves. - DONALD A SIEBERT

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE FOOD OF COMMON BIRDS -- XVI

Since the last report in this series (Cleveland BIRD CALENDAR 64 (1) :12-15. 1968), 67 bird stomachs were examined. Nine of these were empty (Cooper's Hawk (2), Mourning Dove, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Swainson's Thrush, Starling (2), Common Grackle). The contents from 58 stomachs are given here and an appendix is given for data on seven previously reported birds. Many people contributed specimens to this study, but special thanks should be given to Olive Hobbs, Blanche Swartz, Bernice Haas, Victoria Read, Annette Flanigan, Eleanor Humiston, Madelin Hjelmquist, and Mrs Burt Frank who contributed most of the specimens. Unless otherwise stated, all of the birds were collected in northeastern Ohio during the past two years.

Lesser Scaup: 1 water snail (Amnicola Limosa)

Ruffed Grouse: in crop--26 grasshopper nymphs, 1 preying mantis, 2 caterpillars, numerous achenes of climbing false Buckwheat (Polygonum scandens) numerous stones of Dogwood (Cornus sp.) 2 seeds of Bitter Nightshade (Solanum dulcamara), and several unidentified seeds; in gizzard--1 grasshopper nymph and numerous seeds of Bitter Nightshade.

Bobwhite: 1 seed of Ragweed (Ambrosia artemisiifolia) and 1 seed of Dogwood.

Ring-necked Pheasant: (1) 25 stones of Dogwood, 12 grains of wheat, 8 pits of Wild Black Cherry, 2 kernels of corn, 5 apple seeds, 6 seeds of Smartweed (Polygonum pennsylvanicum) and 1 small rodent (Microtus sp.?); (2) many seeds of climbing false Buckwheat, Pennsylvania Smartweed, and Dogwood.

Common Gallinule: several insect fragments and 5 achenes of Ladysthumb Smartweed (Polygonum persicaria) with 3 unidentified seeds.

American Woodcock: several insect fragments with seeds of Sheep Sorrel (Rumex acetosella) strawberry (Fragaria sp.), and blackberry (Rubus sp.)

Mourning Doves: seeds of Proso Millet (Panicum miliaceum) and several unidentified seeds; two other Mourning Doves contained macerated, fresh plant tissue.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 20 caterpillars.

Black-billed Cuckoo: 10 caterpillars and their webbing with fragments of spiders and insects, 1 stone of Dogwood.

Screech Owl: 6 caterpillars, 3 moths, 1 grasshopper, and insect fragments. (Insects found in the stomachs of Owls and similar predators are sometimes interpreted as remnants from the Owl's prey. In this case, however, it is clear the Owl was feeding directly on insects.)

Barred Owl: remains of a flying squirrel (Glaucomys volans)

Saw-whet Owl: 3 moths.

Yellow-shafted Flicker: (1) mass of ants and insect fragments, seeds of Toothed Arrowwood (Viburnum recognitum) and prostrate Knotweed (Polygonum aviculare) (2) large mass of ants and 2 fruits of Wild Black Cherry (Prunus serotina)

Red-headed Woodpecker: insect fragments including weevils, ground beetles, and rove beetles.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 1 Ladybird beetle, 1 spider, insect fragments including small beetles and many insect eggs.

Cliff Swallow: insect fragments including beetles.  
(Usually birds feeding on the wing do not contain grit in the stomachs. This Swallow, however, contained 2 pieces of gravel, 3x4mm and 4x8mm in size.)

Purple Martin: 1 small beetle.

Black-capped Chickadee: 2 Weevils.

White-breasted Nuthatch: 1. seed of Proso Millet.

Brown Thrasher: several kernels of corn, millipede fragments, 1 Carabid beetle, and other insect fragments.

Robin: (1) 3 insect larvae, 2 weevils, 1 small beetle, and 1 Harvest Spider (daddy-longlegs); (2) 7 beetle larvae, 3 small caterpillars, and insect fragments including beetles; (3) 1 stone of sweet cherry and fragments of a beetle; (4) 2 others contained fruits and seeds of Wild Cherry.

Wood Thrush: (1) 2 with 1 millipede (Parajulus sp.); (2) 1 millipede, 1 spider, and 1 wasp.

Swainson's Thrush: (1) 3 ants, with fragments of insects and macerated fruit; (2) 2 caterpillars with insect fragments including beetles.

Veery: 4 beetles, 2 ants, and insect fragments.

Cedar Waxwing: a rose hip with seeds of Wild Rose (Rosa carolina)

Starling:(1) fruits and seeds of Sweet Cherry (Prunus avium) (2) 11 fruits of Silky Dogwood (Cornus amomun) 22 fruits and seeds of Staghorn Sumac (Rhus typhina) 4 seeds of Pokeberry (Phytolacca americana) and 1 grape seed (Vitis sp.) (3) 6 weevils, 1 caterpillar, and fragments of a millipede.

Myrtle Warbler: fragments of insects including Diptera and Hemiptera.

Bay-breasted:Warbler fragments of tiny insects.

Ovenbird: (1) robber fly, 1 small caterpillar, and small insect fragments including beetles; (2) 1 caterpillar and insect fragments including beetles; (3) 2 fruits of White Avens (Geum canadense) and a few insect fragments.

Meadowlark:1 grasshopper, 2 caterpillars, and 1 beetle larva.

Red-winged Blackbird: (1) grains of wheat, macerated fruits and seeds, and insect fragments including beetles; (2) kernels of corn and insect fragments.

Brown-headed Cowbird: (1) macerated plant tissue; (2) seeds of Common Sorghum (Sorghum vulgare) small Crabgrass (Digitaria ischaemum) large crabgrass (D. sanguinalis) and Millet, with insect fragments including weevils.

Cardinal: (1) 6 seeds of Wood Sorrel (Oxalis sp. ), and a few insect fragments; (2) seeds of Sunflower. -

Indigo Bunting: 1 small caterpillar and 9 seeds of Spring Beauty (Claytonia virginica)

American Goldfinch: 7 small caterpillars and several fragments of seeds.

Slate-colored Junco: (1) 5 seeds of small Crabgrass, 9 seeds of large Crabgrass, 2 seeds of Sheep Sorrel, and 1 seed of Ladys-thumb; (2) seeds of small Crabgrass, Bluegrass (Poa sp.), and Ryegrass (Lolium sp.).

Tree Sparrow: seeds of Sheep Sorrel and some unidentified seeds.

White-throated Sparrow: (1) few insect fragments; (2) fragments of weevils and some unidentified seeds.

Song Sparrow (nestling): 2 caterpillars, 2 leafhoppers and fragments of insects.

ADDENDA: (Identification of seeds previously reported as unidentified.)

Ring-necked Pheasant: (1) Rice Cutgrass (Leersia oryzoides) (2) Flowering Dogwood (Cornus florida)

Mourning Dove: small Crabgrass.

House Sparrow: (1) Goosegrass (Eleusine indica) (2) Common Sorghum.

Cardinal: Common Ragweed.

Slate-colored Junco: Nimblewill (Muhlenbergia schreberi)

Snow Bunting Witchgrass (Panicum capillare)

RALPH W. DEXTER and CLINTON H. HOBBS Department of Biological Sciences Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Addendum (Autumn 1969):

Piping Plover - One, in winter plumage, was viewed at some length on the beach at Lakeview Park, Lorain, on November 23 and 24 (Ward, Lebold, Johnson). This marks a new latest fall date. [Verification was received too late to include this record in the proper section.]