



CLEVELAND REGION

The Cleveland Bird Calendar

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)

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THE WEATHER

- December - The dreariness of the month was typical, with sunshine prevailing only 16 per cent of the time possible. Measurable precipitation was well distributed on 17 days and came as snow on 13 of these days. Total precipitation was 3.77 inches as water, an excess of 1.41 inches, and included 13.1 inches of snow. Temperatures started off in a cold spell but fluctuated widely in the month, reaching a high of 63 degrees on the 14th and plunging to a low of 8 degrees on the 19th. Temperatures over-all averaged out 1.7 degrees above normal. Shallow and inland waters were subject to transient icing.
- January - Lake Erie developed extensive ice cover by the 10th, and the condition persisted throughout the rest of the month. Sunshine remained low at 18 per cent of the time possible. Temperatures averaged out 5.3 degrees colder than normal, while snow occurred on 18 of the 21 days when measurable precipitation fell. The total precipitation amounted to 3.38 inches as water, an excess of 0.82 inches, with snowfall of 21.5 inches.
- February - The month was colder than normal during the first 10 days. It then steadily warmed to unseasonably warm weather having highs above 60 degrees during the last six days. Over-all temperatures averaged 9.1 degrees above normal, and sunshine increased to 40 per cent of the time possible. Of 13 days on which precipitation fell, only six included snow. Precipitation totaled 3.97 inches as water, including 6.8 inches of snow, to yield an excess of 1.79 inches. A 5.4-inch snowfall on the 5th and a 2.04-inch rainfall on the 16th stood out. Lake Erie experienced variable ice cover on the 1st which became extensive through the 7th and variable from the 8th to the 18th. The lake was generally open thereafter.

COMMENT ON THE SEASON

The 1975-76 winter birding season in the Cleveland Region was interesting, if not particularly exciting. Most common winter residents were present in satisfactory numbers throughout. Persistent snow and cold during the mid-part of the season helped bring birds in to feeding stations, where the usual residents were joined by species which are expected to range farther south in winter. On the other hand, those species whose winter residence is more northerly were, with a few exceptions, rather inconspicuous. Comparatively few casuals and accidentals were reported, although a new species--the Ivory Gull--was added to the Cleveland Region list and also to several individual life lists.

Grebes, Great Blue Herons Persist. Both Horned and Pied-billed Grebes persisted somewhat more than customary, the latter being sighted at various locations particularly during the latter half of the season.

Records of Great Blue Herons were well above the normal level. Evidently several specimens lingered well into the winter, with at least a few remaining. Late season reports came from as far apart as Kirtland Hills and Lorain.

No Evident Decline in Wintering Waterfowl. Overwintering flocks of Canada Geese were not significantly lower than in past years and may have actually increased. Comparisons are uncertain because of the habit of these birds of traveling extensively and irregularly to feeding grounds, creating difficulty in determining the total regional population.

The winter Mallard population was obviously healthy, but again comparisons with other years are unreliable. The January reports, though, would suggest a possible increase. Evidence was somewhat stronger that Black Ducks did winter in greater numbers than in the recent past. Other dabbling ducks, all rare here in winter, were not more persistent; casual records were, if anything, lower.

Redheads and Canvasbacks were seen more continuously than usual through the winter. Scaups were at least at the normal levels and perhaps were more plentiful. in January. Common Goldeneyes slumped in late February, perhaps because of the abrupt warming, but were otherwise normal. Buffleheads were more plentiful than usual in January and were apparently more widespread. Ruddy Ducks showed no deviation from recent years. Mergansers, present in moderate numbers in December, dropped to quite low later in the winter.

There was no significant incursion of the Arctic ducks which appear here as irregular winter visitors. Oldsquaws were recorded at various sites, the largest group being eight on Summit Lake, December 28 (Biscan). A few White-winged Scoters were seen, chiefly

single birds along the eastern Cleveland lakefront. Five Black Scoters and one White-winged were near Fairport Harbor, December 27 (Fais). A single Black Scoter was on the lake front near East 55th Street, December 20 (Hannikman) and December 21 (Stasko), and a female was in Lorain Harbor, December 26 (Ward). The only other Arctic visitors reported were two Harlequin Ducks (see Noteworthy Records).

Hawk Reports Up. Although there were no reports of the rare transients which sometimes stir excitement in winter, sightings of resident species of hawks were higher than usual. Cooper's Hawk reports, while showing only a modest increase, were from several areas, discounting the probability of just multiple sightings of one or two birds.

Red-tailed Hawks were reported with greater frequency than in at least six years. Red-shouldered Hawks, though far from common, were seen oftener than usual. The winter incursion of Rough-legged Hawks was not remarkable but did include at least 10 widely scattered observations. There were a like number of Marsh Hawk reports. Seemingly thriving on suburban living, American Kestrels appear to be increasing locally. Winter reports were well above those of any recent year.

What was described as "a nice migration" was observed at Elmwood Park, Rocky River, on February 29. The birds were moving eastward on a southeast wind with the temperature at 65 degrees. Tallied were 2 Sharp-shinned, 1 Cooper's, 16 Red-tailed, and 2 Marsh Hawks. Also in the flight were 8 Killdeers, 148 Common Crows, and small flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles (Stasko).

Coots, Killdeers Linger. Contributors' reports indicated that American Coots remained in the region in much greater numbers than usual. Among the more significant records were 125 on Sherwin Pond, December 20 (Stasko); {130 on Summit Lake, January 3 (Fricker) and 200 on Summit Lake, January 25 (Biscan)} Small numbers were at sheltered locations along Lake Erie continuously.

An unusually high tally of 35 Killdeers were sighted on the Kirtland Club (Cleveland East Side) Christmas Count, December 20 (Corbin); several observers reported three or four specimens. At least three birds remained all winter near Sherwin Pond. "When the pond was frozen, they frequented rivulets of running water through the snowy fields" (Sherwin). There were also scattered reports of individuals elsewhere in the region. As early as February 21 these hardy specimens were being joined by flocks of migrants that were arriving in force somewhat ahead of schedule.

American Woodcocks and Common Snipes were also reported in late February, markedly early for both species. A total of nine Common Snipes were also flushed from vegetation in Lake Isaac by a party of hip-booted waders in the Lakewood Christmas Count on December 28, a rather late date for fall birds (Hocevar). (See Noteworthy Records.)

Gulls Move Out During February. Gulls, including winter visitors such as Glaucous and Great Black-backed, were plentiful along the lakefront through January, but they virtually disappeared during February. The report from Lorain Harbor, which showed as many as 45,000 Herring Gulls on January 14 and 20,000 Ring-billed Gulls on December 26, listed a single Herring Gull on February 3: "I have reason to believe few or no gulls were present until March" (Ward). Similar reports came from the Gordon Park area, the other major concentration point for wintering gulls.

Over-all, sightings of Glaucous Gulls were higher than in any other recent year, with 26 records between December 6 and January 25. Although almost all records were from the lakefront, one specimen was found with other gulls three miles inland at the Willoughby city dump, December 20. (Pallister). Careful studies of coloration differences in the immatures seen from East 9th Street to Gordon Park indicated that several different specimens were involved. On January 10, three birds were at Lorain (Ward), an adult was at the Municipal Light Plant (Klamm), and an adult (possibly the same one) was at East 72nd (Hoffman). The following day an adult was at Muny Light and an immature at East 72nd (Klamm, Hoffman).

Great Black-backed Gulls were fairly numerous from the latter part of December until late January. Largest single count was of 74 adults--"no attempt was made to count immature birds"--at Lorain Harbor, January 4 (Hocevar). Other Arctic gulls which visited the lakefront during the winter were two or more Iceland Gulls, a Little Gull, and the first Ivory Gull ever recorded in the Cleveland Region (see Noteworthy Records).

Mourning Doves Numerous at Feeding Stations. Despite concern over the legalization of shooting, Mourning Doves were actually reported much more frequently than in recent years. The birds were most often seen at feeding stations, appearing regularly at some locations in flocks of up to 20. The apparent increase may represent a population change or may only be the result of overwintering birds being forced to seek food in this way because of persistent snow cover.

Short-eared Owls Stay. For the second successive winter Short-eared Owls were reported with enough regularity to indicate the presence of a substantial wintering population. The owls were most frequently, sighted at Burke Lakefront Airport and at Grafton Prison Farm. Seven were counted at Burke on December 21 (Hoffman). (See CBC, 71:1, Winter, 1974-75. for more on wintering Short-eared Owls.)

No significant change could be found in reports of the other resident owls. Great Horned and Barred Owls were seen or heard with about the usual consistency, chiefly in localities where they have been residing. The resident pair of Long-eared Owls in Kirtland

Hills were active during December but were not seen or heard after that (Bole); one was heard in Gates Mills on February 20 (Kremm). Only records of Snowy Owls were of two individuals in early December (see Noteworthy Records).

Feeders Attract More Woodpeckers. Reports of all wintering species of woodpeckers showed an increase over immediate past years. Since most observations were at feeding stations and particularly on suet-holders, however, no positive determination could be made as to whether it was an actual increase in wintering birds or merely opportunism provoked by severe weather conditions.

Quite unusual were the 26 records (by 13 observers in five counties) of Common Flickers during January. Pairs were frequent among the Pileated Woodpeckers, which were reported rather uniformly through the season. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were less often reported as regular residents than as casual and irregular visitors at observation points. Hairy Woodpeckers, on the other hand, seemed to appear daily or fairly regularly at chosen sites. Tabulated increases were highest proportionately among the Hairies.

An immature Red-headed Woodpecker was in Westwood Cemetery, Oberlin, on January 12 (Lee Champney, fide Perry F. Johnson). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was at Lakeview Cemetery, December 20 (Hoffman). Another was in Painesville on January 16 (Booth). For about three weeks from January 19 one frequented a feeder in Gates Mills (Shirley Anderson, fide Richard). One was in Lorain on January 20 (Edwin A. Dowler, fide Perry F. Johnson).

Nuthatch Incursion Tapers Off. Although the fall reports forecast a major irruption year for Red-breasted Nuthatches, observations declined to much more modest levels during the winter. A few were seen regularly, but the total numbers would best be described as moderate. Winter records of Brown Creepers and Winter Wrens were not remarkable, either.

Indications so far are that the Carolina Wrens suffered no serious population decline because of the continuing cold weather. Most January and February observations were at feeding stations, giving rise to speculation of a greater degree of hardiness among the wrens than among the birders. Writing in WINGTIPS, Perry F. Johnson noted, "There were many reports from widespread Lorain County locations, particularly after they began to sing beginning about the 20th" (of February).

Wintering Blackbirds Erratic, Migrants Early. Winter records of Eastern Meadowlarks were irregular and scattered, though higher than usual. Notable were 20 to 25 near Lost Nation Road in Willoughby, December 20-25 (Pallister). Over-wintering Red-winged Blackbirds were also more numerous, but most January reports were of a flock of up to 45 that haunted feeders at one Mentor residence (Hammond). There were several winter sighting of Rusty Blackbirds including

flocks of 10 on January 21 and 17 on January 31 near Helmsdale Drive, Akron (Schirmer). Wintering Common Grackles were quite scarce, and Brown-headed Cowbirds were not above normal numbers but were more distributed than usual.

The influx of migrant blackbirds began quite early. In Strongsville large flocks of Common Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds were observed as early as February 17 (Hocevar). By the 19th the birds were appearing in many locations. On the 21st a half-flooded backyard in Mentor attracted 24 Rusties, more than 100 Grackles, 150 Cowbirds, and a few Redwings into an area about 40 feet square (Hammond).

Winter Finches Irregular. Winter visitations from northern finches were highly variable. Evening Grosbeaks were present in only moderate numbers, and they had a tendency to wander, appearing irregularly in small bands. Purple Finch reports were not unusual.

Common Redpolls enjoyed the best winter season since 1971-72 and with perhaps even wider distribution than in that notable winter. They were most in evidence in the latter half of the period. Pine Siskins, conversely, were seen on only a few occasions and mainly in small groups. The only report of Red Crossbills--three birds in Kirtland Hills on February 29 (Bole)--would have missed the season entirely except for the added day in the month. The other northern finches were absent from the contributors' reports.

Tree Sparrows Decline, White-throats Gain. Despite several reports of flocks staying around feeding stations, American Goldfinches generally were irregular and in only moderate numbers. Dark-eyed Juncos were back to normal after a slow season in 1974-75. Tree Sparrows, though, for the second successive winter showed a substantial reduction from the normal level. Reports were particularly low in February. At feeding stations occasional appearances by one or two birds were the rule. Fall reports had also been below the expected levels.

Conversely, records of White-throated Sparrows were double the frequency of any winter in the recent past, and the increase could not be explained by changes in the list of contributors or the areas of observation. Reports held fairly steady all through the season.

Song Sparrow tallies were about twice the average of the preceding five years and picked up in late February, suggesting probably early migration. There were sightings of Field, White-crowned, Fox, and Swamp Sparrows, but they were too few to establish any generalizations. Two flocks of Snow Buntings were seen in December.

NOTEWORTHY RECORDS

Red-throated Loon - A lone bird was studied for about 20 minutes shortly before noon on December 28, as it swam and dived, moving easterly near Rocky River Pier (Klamm).

Black-crowned Night Heron - At the Gordon Park-CEI pier area, December 20, an adult was half-sleeping and fishing at times as it stood at the water-edge of the new stone fill forming the seawall; first observed about 8:00 a.m., it moved little during the next hour (Klamm, et al.).

Whistling Swan - Two at Lorain Harbor on February 22 were evidently migrants and mark a new earliest date of spring migration in the region (Baum). Two days later three landed on Crystal Lake near Stow in early morning and then promptly departed (Steve Ross, fide Biscan, Fricker). On February 26 a flock of 21 were reported near Grafton (fide Perry F. Johnson). Early in the winter four had lingered at Bass Lake as late as December 18 (Ramisch).

Snow Goose - A white-phase adult which joined with Canada Geese at Sherwin Pond during the fall remained throughout the winter. Several sightings at Holden Arboretum of a Snow Goose flying with Canadas were probably of this specimen. Late in the season a blue-phase adult joined the company, and after that the two Snow Geese were sometimes seen together and at other times separately (Sherwin, et al.).

Blue-winged Teal - An exceptionally early arrival was seen at North Chagrin Reservation on February 29 (Kitson).

Harlequin Duck - At least two birds frequented the lakefront area during the winter. A female was seen by many observers at White City from December 7 to December 22. An adult male appeared near Gordon Park on January 19 and was observed there repeatedly until February 8. On February 16 a male was with Buffleheads at White City (Hannikman).

Turkey Vulture - A very early specimen was observed flying over Route 8 north of Akron on February 24 (Doug Caesar, fide Biscan, Fricker).

Common Snipe - One was seen in Hudson Township, January 12, and must be presumed to have been a wintering specimen (Sheldon). Three were found at Cuyahoga County Airport on Richmond Road on February 28 (Peskin). The first extensive documenting of wintering by this species in the region was in 1974-75 at Cuyahoga County Airport. (See CBC, 71:1, Winter, 1974-75).

Purple Sandpiper - A single bird was at the East 55th Street marina on December 7 (LePage). One, presumably the same specimen, was again there, December 18 (Hoffman, LePage).

Iceland Gull - Two immature specimens of this rare northern visitor were with Herring and Ring-billed Gulls and an immature Glaucous Gull near Gordon Park, January 11 (Hoffman, et al.). One immature was also there on January 24 (Klamm).

Little Gull - At Gordon Park on January 18 an adult was flying about with Bonaparte's Gulls, the usual companions of this species here (Hoffman, Rickard). An immature was in the same locality on February 1 (Klamm).

Ivory Gull - First identified about 2:00 p.m. on December 17, the presumably adult bird was seen by several observers during its three-day sojourn near the Illuminating Company plant at East 72nd Street. It was described as "an all-white gull, much larger than Bonaparte's Gull but smaller than Ring-billed Gull (both species present for comparison), feet black, eyes black, bill medium-gray tipped with yellow, bill thick but short, body heavy, tail rounded, wings narrow, all feathers white" (Hoffman). While diving suddenly and repeatedly from about 100-foot heights almost to the water level and darting about, it was at times less than 15 feet from observers. The last reported sighting was about 9:45 a.m., December 19 (Carrothers).

The Ivory Gull is not known to have occurred previously in the Cleveland Region. Trautman's Annotated List of the Birds of Ohio (1968) lists no occurrence in the state. A Field List of Birds of the Detroit-Windsor Region (Cranbrook, Institute of Science, 1960) does, though, report one near Grosse Ile, Wayne County, Michigan, on January 12, 1949.

Snowy Owl - Only reports received were from Burke Lakefront Airport, single birds being seen on December 1 (Hoffman) and December 13 (Klamm).

Bewick's Wren - Specimens were recorded at least twice at feeding stations during the season, first in Hudson on January 13 (David English, fide Sheldon) and later near Lake Lucerne on February 6 and possibly at least one other date (Sheldon).

Brown Thrasher - One was sighted near the Cleveland lakefront on January 4 (Stasko). On January 10 one visited a feeder in Akron (Jessie Belitsky, fide Biscan). On January 24 one was at a feeder in the Headlands area of Mentor (Fais). Winter reports, chiefly from feeding stations, have become more frequent for this species in recent years.

Hermit Thrush - A late-lingering specimen was near Terrace Road, East Cleveland, on December 24 (Leach).

Gray-cheeked Thrush - On January 8 one landed in a shrub just outside an office window at the top of Cedar Hill, then flew to the ground where it was studied at a distance of three feet (Delos E. Johnson). This is the first winter record in the Cleveland Region of this species, which is regarded as "accidental" in Ohio in winter.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet - A male bird flashed its red crown as it fed on suet at a residence in Solon on a cold January 9 (Surman).

Northern Shrike - In Waite Hill one lit in a tree near a feeding station remaining for a few minutes before moving on, January 23 (Sherwin). (See also Field Notes.)

Common Yellowthroat - A hatching-year female with a legband was found in Waite Hill on December 5, a new latest fall date for the species (Flanigan).

House Finch - From January 5 to the end of the winter period a pair visited a feeding station in Cleveland Heights daily. Frequently they appeared several times in a single day, remaining for extended periods. The pair were always observed together, never separately. The only feed offered was sunflower seeds. Identification was confirmed by persons who were familiar with the species and further verified by an examination of skins in the Cleveland Museum of Natural History of all similar species (Rossbach).

FIELD NOTES

WHITE-THROATS WINTER DOWNTOWN. At the St. John's Cathedral complex, which occupies an entire city block in downtown Cleveland, at least two White-throated Sparrows were present in December and January. At least one was still there on February 27.

Despite the heavy snowfall in January, the birds evidently were able to find food in the leaf litter beneath the several fairly dense stands of hawthorns and low shrubbery on the cathedral grounds, as well as among the planting of evergreens in the minipark across the street from the cathedral. On the afternoon of February 18 one White-throat sang briefly and in a restrained fashion. - DONALD L. NEWMAN

FEEDERS BECOME HUNTING RANGE FOR HAWK. From one to two feet of snow covered the ground around our home in Leroy Township during most of January. During that period we realized from the behavior of the birds on or near our feeders that some predator was using the feeding area as its personal hunting ground. The 40 to 50 patrons--Dark-eyed Juncos, Cardinals, White-breasted Nuthatches, Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, Carolina Wrens, Blue Jays, and assorted woodpeckers--would suddenly take cover and not return for long stretches of time or would remain "frozen" on suet bags or feeders. (Incidentally, the Carolina Wrens were the last to seek protection and the first to return when it was safe.)

We did spot a hawk at times flying low over the creek in back of the feeding area and at other times sitting on a low branch just over the feeders. Perched thus, it was identifiable as a Sharp-shinned Hawk.

On January 16 the hawk surprised the birds by suddenly and at high speed flying very low into their midst. There was an explosion of birds scattering in all directions, as the hawk seemed to stop in mid-air, do an about-face, and pursue and catch a male Cardinal. In their panic three birds hit the window where I was watching and suffered broken necks--a male and female Cardinal and a Junco.

We saw male Cardinals caught by the hawk on other days (dates not recorded) and also found the remains of some it had eaten. Cardinals were probably the victims because of their availability; we generally had 25 to 30 Cardinals at peak periods daily. - DOROTHY MILLER

SHRIKE SELECTS GOLDFINCHES. {ED. NOTE: The following study of predation by Northern Shrikes was originally prepared when the writer, a long-time and distinguished contributor, to the CALENDAR, was living in Willoughby Hills. It was not submitted for publication at that time and was only recently sent to the editor by way of a former CBC editor. Although the specific incidents occurred some years back, the behavioral descriptions are obviously still applicable.}

In northern Ohio the Northern Shrike must be considered to be a rare or infrequent visitor in the winter season. Prior to 1971 we had not seen this bird on our property in 21 years, but this winter we have had two visit us.

The first one came on January 25, 1971, and quickly killed an American Goldfinch that was in one of our bird-banding traps. The story in some detail is appearing in one or two publications of interest to naturalists.

On February 21, 1971, my wife Marion glanced out the window toward the area when we feed the winter birds and exclaimed, "Come and look at this bird! Oh, it's a shrike!"

Not more than 20 feet away a Northern Shrike was on the ground, facing us. We then saw that it was in the process of killing a goldfinch by standing on it and delivering savage pecks at the throat. After several such blows, the shrike grasped the goldfinch in its bill and flew to the back of our lot and out of sight.

We did not see exactly how the shrike captured the goldfinch. But since several had been feeding on the lawn, the Shrike probably flew downward from a perch and pinned the, little bird to the ground.

About a quarter-hour later, the shrike was seen about four feet from the top of a 30-foot-tall tree located about 150 feet from our house. Strangely, it paid no attention to several Black-capped Chickadees and a Tree Sparrow that seemingly flirted with death by hopping about on branches of the same tree and scarcely 10 to 15 feet away.

After a while, Marion decided to go out and frighten the shrike away. She approached to within about 60 feet of the bird and was amazed to hear and see the shrike singing a subdued song not unlike that of an American Robin. This continued for several minutes, and the bird even mimicked some whistled calls that Marion made. In another five minutes or so it flew away.

The shrike that came in January was a fully adult bird in very light plumage, but the February bird was much darker with some brownish feathers. According to Bent's Life Histories of North American Wagtails, Shrikes, Vireos, and Their Allies (1950), the species undergoes a partial pre-nuptial molt in March or April, during which the young of the previous year lose their brownish areas that distinguish them from adults in the fall.

With credit to Bent's Life Histories for some of the following data, it may be mentioned that shrikes are sometimes called "butcher-birds" because of their habit of impaling mice or small birds on thorns, much as a butcher hangs meat on a hook. {In the rural South the Loggerhead Shrikes favor barbed wire fences for this purpose.}

Some investigators appear to be biased in stating that mice, grasshoppers, and House Sparrows compose most of the shrike's food. We cannot verify this assertion, as both of the shrikes that appeared in our yard killed goldfinches, even though there were plenty of the sparrows available.

The list of birds that the Northern Shrike has been known to kill is quite lengthy and includes some large birds such as the Hairy Woodpecker, Cardinal, American Robin, and Starling. Many smaller birds more commonly preyed upon are the Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warbler, both of the kinglets, Field Sparrow, Pine Siskin, Horned Lark, Eastern Phoebe, Common Redpoll, American Goldfinch, Tufted Titmouse, and White-throated and Fox Sparrows.

Bird-banders and others who feed birds in the wintertime are sometimes annoyed by shrikes being bold enough to kill a number of birds at such stations and often very close to a house. In one case, one was so persistent that a woman used a broom to drive the intruder away!

When shrikes enter a bird-bander's trap, they kill all the birds in the trap before starting to eat one or even to find a way to escape. They are very bold and have been seen to seize a newly-banded bird as it flew from the bander's hand.

The Northern Shrike nests in the far north, from Labrador to Alaska. Therefore, it usually leaves our area by April, when the Loggerhead Shrike arrives from the south. The latter species nests only sparingly in the Cleveland Region and seemingly is becoming even less frequent.

Persons who feed birds in winter are advised to watch their feeding stations closely. They may see a bold, uninvited stranger preying on their guests. - MERIT B. SKAGGS

EARLY SINGING. On January 24 at 7:15 a.m., when it was still quite dark, our neighborhood male Cardinal whistled a number of times, though in a somewhat subdued manner. This was a rather early response to the lengthening daylight hours and the consequent stimulus to assert territorial rights.

At 4:45 p.m. on February 6--cold, the ground snow-covered, heavy clouds overhead but sunny in the west--a neighborhood Song Sparrow sang at least four times, the song broken and incomplete: another early sign of the changing season and of the beginning of territoriality. - DONALD L. NEWMAN

SNOWBLOWER AIDS WINTER FEEDING. January brought 63 inches of snow to Hanging Rock Farm in Kirtland Hills. Ponds froze during the night of January 4, and we failed to feed the wintering Canada Geese, as 23 inches of snow greeted us the following morning. With 80 chicken yards to be cleared, it was all Ed Shan, Dave Byrne, and I could handle that first day.

But on January 6, Ed plowed out two strips along the pond edge with the snowblower. Thereafter, we fed on the strips regardless of weather. It was wonderful as you put out your grain in a full blizzard and watch a hundred geese drop out of the blinding snow, all around you, into the strips.

The feeding was not limited exclusively to geese, either. One day in January we had two Common Crows, a Pileated Woodpecker, and a Ruffed Grouse all within ten feet of each other. - B. P. BOLE JR.

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AN INVITATION: The Kirtland Bird Club meets at 7:45 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month except July and August in The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle. Visitors are always welcome.

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Inquiries and correspondence regarding subscriptions to THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR should be addressed to The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, Ohio 44106.