

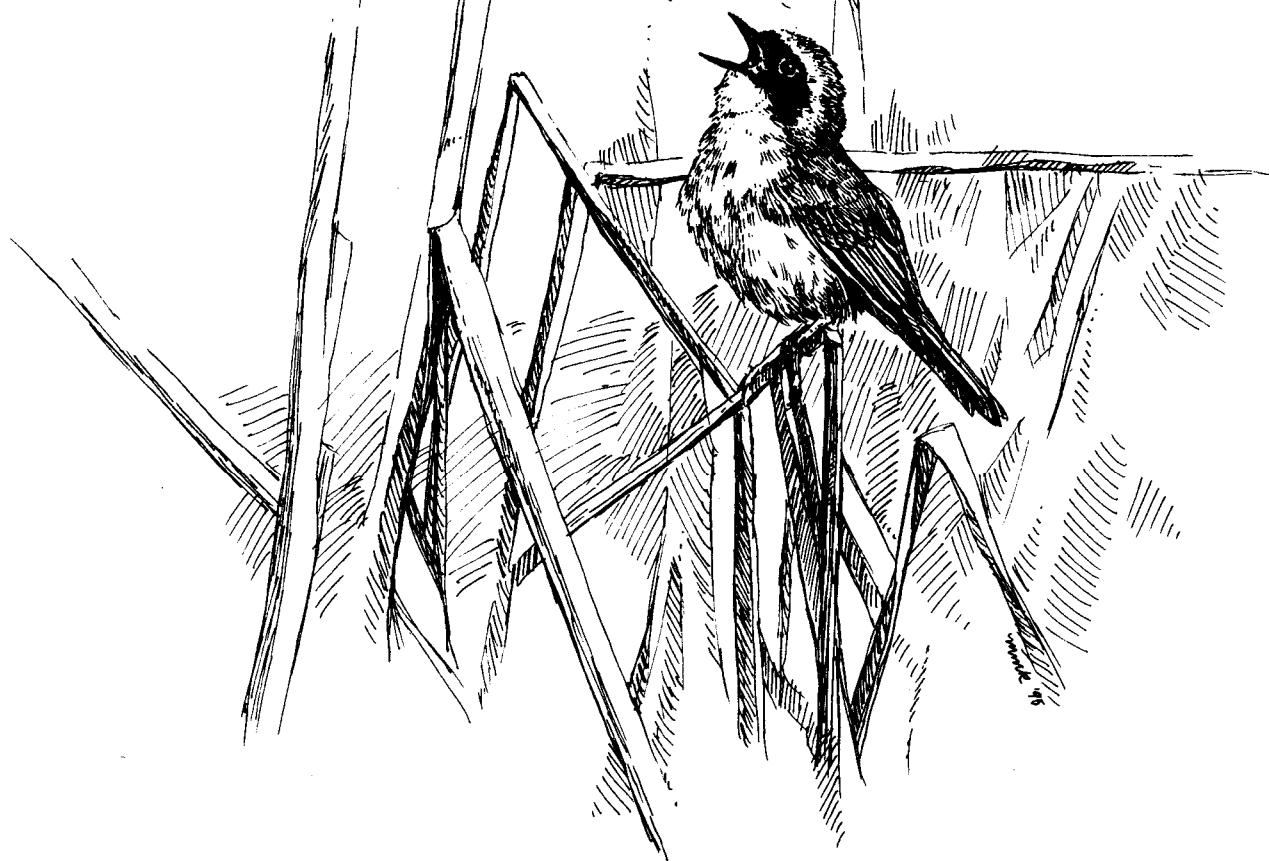
The Cleveland

Bird

Calendar

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December 1995,
January, February 1996
Volume 92 Number 1



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The Cleveland Bird Calendar was founded in 1905 by Francis H. Herrick of The Western Reserve University. The purposes of the publication are to provide information on the movements of birds through the Cleveland region, to monitor population densities of resident birds, and to help in the establishment of patterns of vagrancy for rarely encountered species of the region.

The Cleveland region includes Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit Counties.

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Due dates for seasonal field reports are as follows:

March 5 - Winter Season

June 5 - Spring Season

September 5 - Summer Season

December 5 - Autumn Season

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December 1995, January, February 1996

Volume 92

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The Cleveland Bird Calendar

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REFLECTIONS

THIRTY YEARS AGO: A **Double-crested Cormorant** was a noteworthy occurrence in Cleveland on Dec. 4, 1965 (Klamm). A **Common Black-headed Gull** was at White City on Dec. 13 (Surman). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was found in the hemlocks at Virginia Kendall Park on Jan. 1 (Szabo). A **Cape May Warbler** visited Waite Hill on Jan. 4, 6, and 11 (Flanigan). A **Chipping Sparrow** was discovered in eastern Lorain County on Jan. 16 (Klamm).

TWENTY YEARS AGO: A **Purple Sandpiper** was at Gordon Park on Dec. 7, 1975 (LePage). The only occurrence of **Ivory Gull** in the state was at E. 72nd St. from Dec. 17 to Dec. 19 (Hoffman). A **Red-throated Loon** was at the mouth of the Rocky River on Dec. 28 (Klamm). Bewick's Wrens were reported from Hudson on Jan. 13 (English) and Lake Lucerne on Feb. 6 (Sheldon). An adult **Little Gull** was at Gordon Park on Jan. 18 (Hoffman, Rickard). A male **Harlequin Duck** was at White City on Feb. 16 (Hannikman).

TEN YEARS AGO: Our latest Laughing Gull ever was at Lorain on Dec. 1, 1985 (M.ob.). A **Wood Thrush** lingered at Chester Commons through Dec. 3 (Hannikman). An immature **Northern Goshawk** was at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History on Dec. 17 (Henderson). Another immature was at Sims Park on Jan. 24 (Rosche). An immature **Merlin** was seen intermittently throughout the season at The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation area (Rosche).



Eastern Screech-owl (*Otus asio*) at Lakewood Park Cemetery
by Vincent Lucas

THE WEATHER

Winter 1995 - 1996

by William A. Klamm and
Dwight Chasar

DECEMBER: The month was wintry to the extent expected. Temperatures averaged 26.1°, 4.8° below normal. The high was 54° on the 1st and the low, 4° on the 10th. Lake Erie water stood at 44° on the 1st and slowly fell to 37° by the 31st. Sunshine prevailed only 20% of the time, while precipitation was dispersed over 18 days to total 1.45 in., 1.64 in. below normal. The greatest fall in any 24 hr. period was .42 in. on the 13-14th. Snowfall totaled 29.6 in. with the most in a 24 hr. period being 12 in. on the 19th. The greatest depth was 13 in. on the 26th.

JANUARY: Temperatures averaged 25.9°, 1.1° above normal. The high was 64° on the 18th and the low, 0° on the 11th. Pre-

cipitation was distributed over 25 days to total 2.69 in., .65 in. above normal. The greatest fall in any 24 hr. period was .53 in. on the 23rd. Snow, sleet, and ice pellets for the month totaled 21.9 in. The greatest amount of snow in a 24 hr. period was 10.8 in. on the 23rd. The greatest depth on the ground was 14 in. on the 3rd. Sunshine broke out only 22% of the time. Lake Erie temperature fell only 1° to 36°.

FEBRUARY: Temperatures averaged 27.7°, .5° above normal. The high was 66° on the 27th; the low was -10° on the 4th. Lake Erie temperature fell to 33° on the 13th. After seven days it rose to 35° where it remained through the 29th. Precipitation was 1.63 in., .65 in. below normal. The greatest fall was .89 in. on the 17th. Snowfall totaled 10 in., with the greatest amount in a 24 hr. period at 2.0 in. on the 13-14th. The greatest depth on the ground was 4 in. on the 17th. Sunshine improved slightly to 23% of the time possible.

WINTER 1995-1996

Comment on the Season by Larry Rosche

I think we had a real winter this year. It was brutal at times along the lake. The combination of cold temperature and outstanding rarities in Western Ohio perhaps led to fewer birds being reported to me than usual. I could use some help in the Akron area. Also, does anyone bird the Cleveland Metroparks? I only hear from North Chagrin on a regular basis. Use my e-mail address if you don't have time to send in a written report. I can't take observations from the Rare Bird Alert nor can I write down things I hear on the telephone. For instance, just because a Snowy Owl is on the RBA, I cannot print it without some sort of paper trail. When I accept a noteworthy sighting it needs to be written. For example, Dan Best wrote that some of his co-workers described in detail a Northern Goshawk to him. This is acceptable because Dan is very conscientious and knows the significance of the report.

I cannot express enough gratitude to the Christmas Count compilers. The task of verifying sightings and tabulating numbers is generally a thankless one. I can remember Bert Szabo's relating how they "used to get phoebes on the Cuyahoga Falls Count in the old days." This year the Cuyahoga Falls CBC included phoebes, as did Elyria/Lorain, Cleveland, and Mentor. Table 1 contains data for most of the birds we expect to find on our local counts. Half-hearted species like Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Gray Catbirds, Hermit Thrushes, and Eastern Towhees were found in above expected totals. Winter finches were in fair numbers, except for Evening Grosbeaks.

Readers should be aware of the recent American Ornithologist Society's name changes. Of those most affecting us, Common Black-headed Gull becomes Black-headed Gull, Rufous-sided Towhee is now Eastern Towhee, Sharp-tailed Sparrow becomes Nelson's Sparrow, and Northern Oriole returns to Baltimore Oriole. If you find a Spotted Towhee or Bullock's Oriole, get the word out right away. These former races have achieved full species status.

I was saddened to hear of the recent passing of Harold Wallin. The Cleveland Bird Calendar lost a true supporter and friend. No person worked harder at getting spring migration data than Harold. His many years as a Sunday morning birdwalk leader and organizer did not go unnoticed. My memories of working with him will be cherished always. He was a special person and deserves to be remembered by us all.

As many as 10 **Pied-billed Grebes** could be found in the Akron Lakes (RHL, CH).

Horned Grebes were just starting to arrive at the end of February.

The 26 **Double-crested Cormorants** on the Dec. 16 Elyria/Lorain Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was the high for the period.

Great Blue Herons were fewer than expected. This probably was due to the cold weather. A few **Black-crowned Night-Herons** lingered at Merwyn St. into Jan.

(DJH). Two were seen on the Elyria/Lorain CBC. By Feb. 29 the Merwyn St. gang had grown to 18 (PL).

A flock of 14 **Tundra Swans** moved past HBSP on Jan. 14 (EB, RH, LR).

Mute Swans were as expected. Two **Snow Geese** were at Lake Medina on Dec. 9 (CW). A white morph bird was found on the Burton CBC. A "Dusky" **Canada Goose** was turned into the Lake Co. Rehab. Center on Dec. 2

(file AJF). It was released at Eastlake in February. Eventually, the goose made its way to HBSP, where it was seen by Bacik and Hannikman.

The 26 **Wood Ducks** found on the Cuyahoga Falls CBC were remarkable. A **Green-winged Teal** was in Northfield on Dec. 31 (DAC). **American Black Ducks** were down. **Mallards** continued to thrive regardless of weather. It seems that **Northern Pintails** show up at almost any available site in the winter. This year 1-2 frequented the spillway at Lake Rockwell (LR, VW). A drake was at Hinckley MP on Jan. 18 (RHL). No **Northern Shovelers** were reported. **Gadwalls** were seen only at the spillway at Mogadore Reservoir. **American Wigeons** were equally scarce.

Canvasbacks were fairly well represented. On Jan. 19, 40 were in Lorain (TMR). Edgewater SP hosted 70 on Feb. 14 (TLP). Holt noted 100 along the Lorain Co. lakefront on Feb. 11. **Red-heads** paralleled Canvasbacks in numbers and occurrence. Three **Ring-necked Ducks** wintered at the spillway at Lake Rockwell and at Lake Medina. **Greater Scaups** were relatively scarce. The largest gathering of **Lesser Scaups** was 500 at HBSP on Dec. 10 (RH). An **Oldsquaw** was at LaFarge Lake in Shalersville on Dec. 17 (VW). A **Black Scoter** was seen off HBSP on Dec. 2 (RH). Birds were seen off Lakeshore MP on Dec. 6 & Dec. 13 (JP). An immature male **Surf Scoter** was at LaDue on Dec. 2 (RR). Two were at Avon

Lake on Feb. 3 (TLP). One was at HBSP on Feb. 24 (EB, RH). Two were at Eastlake on Jan. 14 (CH). **White-winged Scoters** were seen at Eastlake on most days in January (M.ob.). Two were in Lorain on Jan. 30 (TLP). Good numbers of **Common Goldeneyes** and **Buffleheads** were seen along the lakefront. A female **Hooded Merganser** survived the winter at the spillway at Lake Rockwell. **Common Mergansers** were seen in large numbers along Lake Erie. High counts included 3500 in Cleveland on Dec. 30 (RHL), 2500 at Avon Lake on Feb. 4 (RH, LR), and 1500 at Eastlake on Feb. 4

before the lake froze. **Northern Harriers** were scarce, except for a few in Lorain Co. (NK). Accipiters were very much in evidence this winter. Of the two regular species, **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were decidedly in the minority. Augustine, the Hoffmans, and Wert felt that **Cooper's Hawks** were vastly more numerous than usual; in fact, Wert felt that **Cooper's Hawks** were downright abundant in Akron and the CVNRA. **Red-shouldered Hawks** continued to increase in numbers also. If CBCs are any indication, then **Red-tailed Hawk** numbers remained steady. **Rough-**

legged Hawks were in small numbers in rural Lorain Co. (NK). A dark morph bird was in Middlefield Township on Dec. 24 (CH). A light morph bird was seen at Swine Creek Reservation on Jan. 13

Gull Update

During a recent conversation with U.S. Department of Agriculture personnel, Paula Lozano heard that 4502 Ring-billed Gull nests were found last May on Dock 20. Another 3000 nests were found on warehouse roof tops in Cuyahoga County. To think, this species was not known to nest locally until 1994. Whew!

(LR). The high count of wintering **Ruddy Ducks** at Summit Lake was 10 on Jan. 26 (CH, RHL). A flock of 200 lingered at Wellington Reservoir through Dec. 2 (NK).

A **Turkey Vulture** on the Mentor CBC was certainly that count's top sighting (HW). One passed over Cuyahoga Falls on the 25th (LR). Two were in Lorain Co. on the 26th (NK). **Bald Eagles** continued to be found in above-average totals. An immature was over North Chagrin on Jan. 24 (NB). On Feb. 4, 2 were at Eastlake, 2 at Avon Lake, and 1 at HBSP (RH, LR). This winter, up to 4 eagles could be found around Lake Rockwell. LaDue hosted singles on several days

(DJH). Concern for **American Kestrels** came from more than just this editor. Augustine felt that they were way down in his sector of Geauga Co. Weingart and Holt found them very irregularly in Portage Co. After driving many miles around Portage County, I could only locate 2 kestrels. Lorain and Medina Counties seemed to be the only ones where you could actually count on seeing a kestrel. The Neff and Station Road areas in Valley City provided the only regular areas for this beleaguered raptor.

Wild Turkeys continued to increase. Reports are starting to come from residential areas. (How wild are these birds?) The

Ring-necked Pheasant at Lake Rockwell on Dec. 2 was the first reported there in a decade (VW). Three were in Geauga Co. on Jan. 1. (AJF). Two were in Lorain Co. on Jan. 14 (TLP).

American Coots wintered in average numbers at the Akron Lakes. A twosome dallied at the spillway at Lake Rockwell all winter. Another was regularly seen at Eastlake. A **Killdeer** was at Notre Dame School in Munson Township on Feb. 27 (MS). As if to send us a message that spring was really going to arrive, an **American Woodcock** was seen in courtship flight in Parkman on Feb. 27 (JA). A **Common Snipe** was at the Cuyahoga County Airport on Dec. 16 (PL, BF). One was in a traditional site--a ditch--in Kent on Dec. 17 (LR).

Bonaparte's Gulls were scarce after early December. It was interesting to see that more **Ring-billed Gulls** were found on the Cuyahoga Falls CBC than the Cleveland CBC. **Herring Gulls** were in average numbers. A second-winter **Thayer's Gull** was at Eastlake on Dec. 16 (EB, RH, LR). The Mentor CBC had 1 on Dec. 23 (LR). Four sightings were reported from Lakeshore MP (JP). One was at Avon Lake on Feb. 17 (TLP). An **Iceland Gull** was in Fairport Harbor on Dec. 23 (RH, LR). An adult was in the "flats" along the Cuyahoga River on Dec. 24 (CH). A first-winter bird was a good find for the Lakewood CBC on Dec. 30 (LR, PL). An adult was at HBSP on Feb. 3 (EB, RH). Two were at Avon Lake on Feb. 16 (TLP). Three sightings were reported from Lakeshore MP (JP). **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were in expected numbers. One was in Lorain on Dec. 18 (NK). One was at Avon Lake Feb. 17-18 (JLD,

CH, TLP, SAT). Another adult frequented the Eastlake Power Plant through the period. Three sightings were reported from Lakeshore MP (JP). **Glaucous Gulls** were found at most lake-front sites at various times. Avon Lake was the most reliable spot. The 18 there on Feb. 16 was an excellent tally. (TLP). **Great Black-backed Gulls** were very numerous. Contrary to last year, there were no inland reports.

A red morph **Eastern Screech-Owl** delighted many at Lakewood Park Cemetery. It was last reported being seen with a gray morph on Feb. 22 (AJF). An incredible sighting was reported in the News Herald. A group of school children found a fledgling screech-owl on the way to school in Euclid. The bird, given to the Lake County Rehab. Center, was doing well as of this writing. This owlet was thought to have hatched during the first week of January. This hatching was way outside expected occurrence for this species. It just goes to show you that birds have yet to learn how to read what has been written about them. There was little mention of **Barred Owls**. The 20 **Belted Kingfishers** on the Cuyahoga Falls CBC was high.

Red-headed Woodpeckers lingered to be tallied in good numbers. Nowhere was this more evident than on the Lakewood Count, where at least 5 were seen. A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was in the CVNRA on Feb. 24 (DAC). **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** and **Hairy Woodpeckers** were in good totals. [See Table 1.] **Pileated Woodpeckers** were far more numerous than normal. A pair was very active throughout most of January and February along the

Zimmerman Trail at Mentor Marsh (EB, RH). A pair was a daily occurrence in Brecksville (BAT). The same went for one in Valley City (FG).

Horned Larks were fairly numerous in the farmlands of Lorain Co. (NK). A flock of 100 was in Geauga Co. on Dec. 30 (VW). By the last half of February many were moving along the lakefront. **American Crows** were migrating well at the end of February. The total of 950 flying eastward past HBSP on Feb. 25 was not unexpected. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were very well represented throughout the region. **Brown Creeper** numbers were solid on local CBCs. A creeper was at Lower Shaker Lake on Feb. 10 (PP). One was in Brecksville on Feb. 19 (BAT). In mid-January a pair was in Westlake (SS). **Carolina Wrens** apparently came through the winter in fair shape. **Winter Wrens** were found in small numbers. A bird was at North Chagrin on Dec. 28 (PL).

Eastern Bluebirds wintered rather well, in spite of the severity of the season. Numbers on local CBCs were very good. **American Robins** could be found in most of their regular winter quarters. Their numbers seemed lower than in recent winters. **Northern Mockingbirds** were found at E. 72nd St. on Jan. 18, Lake View Cemetery on Feb. 16 (DJH), and in Akron on Jan. 7 (CH). **Cedar Waxwings** were in fair numbers. As usual, they flocked in some areas more commonly than others. Northfield and Sagamore Hills hosted 40-50 at various times (DAC). A group of 50 was at Lakewood Park Cemetery on Jan. 6 (TMR). **Northern Shrikes** were found regularly on CBCs. A

SELECTED SPECIES TOTALS FROM LOCAL 1995 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (CBCs)

	BURTON	CLEVELAND	CUY. FALLS	ELYRIA/LORAIN	LAKEWOOD	MENTOR	WELLINGTON
GREAT BLUE HERON	5	5	26	15	0	5	0
CANADA GOOSE	1180	1748	3950	1059	470	453	316
A. BLACK DUCK	11	37	14	17	25	44	0
MALLARD	438	490	1472	1029	417	144	50
SCAUP (SP)	0	10	2	43	8	10	0
C. GOLDENEYE	0	32	22	152	52	64	0
BUFFLEHEAD	0	20	4	53	27	45	0
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	2	2	8	2	1	2	2
COOPER'S HAWK	6	2	21	6	6	5	4
RED-TAILED HAWK	54	19	98	35	12	18	36
AMERICAN KESTREL	6	1	10	24	0	1	30
MOURNING DOVE	513	205	1204	489	144	214	554
E. SCREECH-OWL	2	1	8	0	1	3	0
GREAT HORNED OWL	1	1	12	0	2	4	1
BELTED KINGFISHER	2	11	20	6	3	3	0
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	50	55	162	28	40	17	14
DOWNY WOODPECKER	113	91	423	98	82	60	30
HAIRY WOODPECKER	32	36	89	11	16	10	3
NORTHERN FLICKER	7	6	48	27	1	1	2
BLUE JAY	264	261	1116	343	157	158	82
AMERICAN CROW	427	514	1039	166	177	314	199
Bc CHICKADEE	413	327	1312	274	141	341	81
TUFTED TITMOUSE	193	165	641	130	91	123	31
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	1	7	35	14	13	3	0
WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	129	98	365	82	35	44	37
BROWN CREEPER	6	4	19	5	1	4	1
CAROLINA WREN	1	1	43	9	8	1	0
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	7	2	37	7	3	2	2
EASTERN BLUEBIRD	36	12	56	32	16	39	13
AMERICAN ROBIN	10	56	66	21	124	9	0
CEDAR WAXWING	40	16	113	105	35	2	0
EUROPEAN STARLING	335	1109	4090	1715	704	3971	1544
YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER	0	0	10	0	0	0	1
NORTHERN CARDINAL	298	129	978	155	103	312	219
A. TREE SPARROW	284	77	1346	102	9	227	204
SONG SPARROW	53	31	295	41	23	27	31
SWAMP SPARROW	0	3	21	3	4	1	0
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	11	21	118	6	54	27	4
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	0	0	21	1	0	0	19
DARK-EYED JUNCO	157	186	805	226	130	241	98
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	2	8	5	0	0	74	0
COMMON GRACKLE	1	40	384	0	0	3	0
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	11	60	100	0	0	11	0
PURPLE FINCH	4	0	18	0	0	9	4
HOUSE FINCH	140	295	1730	304	205	275	89
COMMON REDPOLL	0	97	1	0	6	CW	4
PINE SISKIN	3	50	3	2	0	14	0
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	190	129	1503	127	66	114	120
EVENING GROSBEAK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HOUSE SPARROW	605	404	3066	781	191	523	603
NUMBER of FIELD OBSERVERS	16	47	151	36	unknown	23	13
TOTAL SPECIES	60	70	83	68	62	76	45

Table 1.

shrike was at Penitentiary Glen on Dec. 2 & 3 (AJF). Another was at Spencer Lake SWA on Dec. 8 & 17 (NK). One was at Spencer Lake SWA on Dec. 8 (NK). The 3 birds tallied on the Mentor CBC represented an excellent number (HW). Singles

were found on the Cuyahoga Falls, Elyria/Lorain, and Burton CBCs. One was in Peninsula on Dec. 26 (JW). An immature was seen at North Chagrin Jan. 21-29 (KM). As many as 6 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** wintered along the Towpath near Penin-

sula (MR). Other areas hosting this species included several areas of the CVNRA, Caley Wildlife Area, Findley SP, Seiberling Naturealm, Twin Lakes, West Branch SP, and Lake Rockwell. It seems that those who were hardy enough to hike in the win-

ter find "butter-butts" away from Lake Erie with a little effort.

Eastern Towhees were well represented on Christmas Bird Counts and at local feeders. Birds were found at HBSP, French Creek Nature Center, CVNRA, and Streetsboro. **American Tree Sparrows** were too numerous to count. A **Field Sparrow** was a frequent visitor to a feeder in Twin Lakes after the first heavy snows of the season. It was last seen Feb. 3 (LR). Four were in the CVNRA on Dec. 2 (DAC). The one at Lake Isaac on Jan. 1 was the northernmost sighting for our region (RHL). Inspection of wetland habitats produced few **Swamp Sparrows** after December. The only **Fox Sparrows** were on the Cuyahoga Falls CBC. Most observers found **White-throated Sparrows** to be fairly common throughout the region in winter. **White-crowned Sparrows** are uncommon to rare in winter. Reports were above normal this year. Up to 6 visited a feeder in Valley City throughout the winter (FG). **Dark-eyed Juncos** were in expected inland numbers. **Snow Buntings** were daily occurrences along the lake.

Red-winged Blackbirds were tough to find. **Brown-headed Cowbirds** and **Common Grackles** wintered in below normal totals. A **Rusty Blackbird** at Lake Rockwell on Jan. 21 was a good mid-winter find (VW). **Purple Finches** were virtually absent from all reporters' lists. Only Chasar mentioned them. He saw a solitary female on Feb. 24 in the CVNRA. **Common Redpolls** were scattered about in fair numbers. Lakewood Park Cemetery hosted a group of 9-14 most of the winter (DJH). A flock of 31 was in Akron on Feb.



Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) - December 13, 1995 - Eastlake, Ohio
by John Vanderpoel

8 (JW). On Feb. 10, 40 were at the Greenlands' feeder in Valley City. Nimisila Reservoir is always an area I like to hear from. Holt found 20 redpolls there on Feb. 25. As many as 60 were tallied at Lakeshore MP (JP). Another 30 visited a feeder in Akron most of the winter (Rose Donatell, JW). **Pine Siskins** were scattered about in small numbers. The only sizeable flock was 50 in Waite Hill on Dec. 16 (RHL). **Evening Grosbeaks** were in very small numbers. A feeder in Peninsula had 8 on Jan. 30 (RHL). Up to 3 visited the Weingarts' feeder in Streetsboro. Augustine reported a few intermittent birds at his feeder.



NOTEWORTHY REPORTS

RED-NECKED GREBE - The bird found in November off Perkins Beach was seen again by the

Hoffmans and Schlabach on Dec. 2. LePage saw it at Edgewater SP on Dec. 4.

G. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - Two were reported from Medina Co. on Feb. 19 (Pogacnik).

NORTHERN GOSHAWK - Helen and D. J. Hendrickson described in detail this species to Dan Best. The bird was at the Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve on Jan. 13.

MERLIN - Up to 2 remained through the period in Bath (Rosche). One was reported on the Dec. 23 Mentor CBC ([fide Webster](#)). The Romitos found one at West Park Cemetery on Dec. 30. One was at Lake View Cemetery on Jan. 1 and Feb. 14 (Hoffman).

PEREGRINE FALCON - A pair of birds was seen regularly near Winton Place in Lakewood (Lozano, M.ob). Downtown birds were seen by many observers in Cleveland and Akron. A bird

stooped the waterfowl at Springfield Lake on Dec. 10 (Holt). One was seen in Lorain on Feb. 17 (Pogacnik).

GYRFALCON - On Feb. 10 Headlands Beach SP briefly hosted one of the truly rare birds of the "Lower 48." A gray morph bird flew in from the north, banked, then paused on an ice crag for stunned observers to watch at their leisure. (Bacik, Hannikman, Missig). All observers turned in detailed notes on this extraordinary sighting.

SANDHILL CRANE - A bird flew over Lorain County on Feb. 25 (Kraps).

PURPLE SANDPIPER - Hannikman found this species at Headlands Beach SP through Dec. 10.

CALIFORNIA GULL - An adult was viewed at the foot of Merwyn St. in the flats most of Dec. 29 (Hoffman, M.ob.).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - An adult cruised by Headlands Beach on Feb. 3 (Bacik, Hannikman). One was reported from Lakeshore MP on Feb. 24 (Pogacnik).

LONG-EARED OWL - A bird spent most of December at Donald Gray Gardens. Al Jakubowski found it dead there on Dec. 28 (Lozano, M.ob.).

SHORT-EARED OWL - Continuing their fine fall showing, birds were found at Headlands Beach SP on Dec. 3 & Dec. 17 (Hannikman). One was in Lorain on Dec. 16 (Pogacnik). Paul and Larry Kittle found one in Geauga Co. on Dec. 22. Bill and Norma Kraps had 4 south of Wellington on Dec. 23 and one there on



Eastern Screech-owls (*Otus asio*) at Lakewood Park Cemetery
by Pat Coley

Jan. 4. Two were at Burke Airport on Feb. 25 (Lozano, Finkelstein).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL - A bird was found in the top of a bush by a postman in Lakewood on Dec. 12. Mike Stasko reported it to Paula Lozano, who reported it to this desk.

EASTERN PHOEBE - Incredibly, birds were found on the Cleveland, Lorain/Elyria, Cuyahoga Falls, and Mentor Christmas Bird Counts. Except for the phoebe found on the Cleveland Count on Dec. 16 by the Hoffmans, observer names were not reported to this desk. One was documented thoroughly by Kevin Metcalf at North Chagrin on Dec. 15.

MARSH WREN - Marking the second year in a row for the same location, a male was observed at length in a cattail marsh in Kent on Dec. 17 (Rosche).

HERMIT THRUSH - A bird was an

expected rarity on the Mentor CBC in Perry on Dec. 23 (Rosche). A bird feeding on sumac along the Zimmerman Trail on Feb. 4 - 28 was an indication that a few of these thrushes actually survive the winter (Hannikman, Rosche).

GRAY CATBIRD - One was at North Chagrin on Dec. 28 (Anna Kozlenko, Lozano). One was reported on the Elyria/Lorain CBC (Pogacnik).

VARIED THRUSH - A female at Nathan Hale Park in Parma Heights provided many with the opportunity to add another species to their state lists. The bird was found on Jan. 23 and stayed through Feb. 25 (Harlan).

HOARY REDPOLL - Rickard documented this species at a feeder in Gates Mills on Dec. 16. This made an extraordinary addition to the Cleveland Christmas Bird Count. It was seen again on Dec. 17 (Lozano, Finkelstein).





Comments on a Varied Thrush

by Jon L. Dunn

Varied Thrush-(*Ixoreus naevius*) - January 28, 1996 - Nathan Hale Park, Parma Heights, Cuyahoga County. Rob Harlan found this bird. I wrote this entry in my field notebook later in the day, some of which was taken from rough field notes. We looked for the thrush yesterday, the 27th, with no luck; but then the conditions were totally revolting with blowing snow and a gale all day. On the 28th we arrived at 3:30 p.m. to find out that it had been seen in the morning several times. At about 4:10 p.m. Dick and Jean Hoffman spotted it along the ditch behind the school; and fortunately, it remained for all to see. I watched it for some thirty minutes and saw it on the ground, in bushes over the fence, and perched quite high in the trees with an American Robin. This is the first time I have seen this species in Ohio, or for that matter, in eastern North America. This bird was about the size of an American Robin, but was noticeably shorter tailed. Overall, it appeared chunky. Distinctive was the very long bill--rather slender and with the culmen curving over the lower mandible, creating a slight hook. The very tip of the culmen was yellowish, as was the base of the lower mandible. The legs and feet were pale pinkish. The auriculars, crown, and the entire

upperparts were a uniform brownish color, except for the wing. The median and greater secondary coverts were tipped broadly with pale orange-buff that formed two distinct wing-bars. The primary coverts were dark, but the base of the primaries showed a patch of orange-buff. I noted other patches of orange-buff, one farther out on the folded primaries and another, a circular one on the folded secondaries. In flight, this all appeared as a broad orange-buff bar across the spread wing. I noted thin orange-buff tips to the tertials. Striking was the long and sharply contrasting, pale orange-buff supercilium that appeared to broaden or flatten slightly at its terminal portion.

The underparts were mostly pale orange, but there was an obvious, almost "V" shaped brownish chest band (matched back color), that was quite broad and complete. The orange continued down the sides, where it became scalloped with some brownish. By the lower flank the color became solidly dark gray-brown. The undertail coverts were white (faintly stippled in the center), and this whitish color extended into the lower belly.

Eventually the bird did call several times--it was a penetrating long monosyllabic whistle, a bit like a note from its song. This species is polytypic, and the females are the ones that can be most easily assigned to subspecies. If there are decent photos, they could be compared eventually to a series of skins of each subspecies and perhaps a designation could be made.



Notes on a Northern Shrike

by Kevin Metcalf

On January 29, 1996, I had some exceptional views of a Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) I spotted on January 21. I watched through a scope at close range and noted these additional field marks. At close range the bill was paler than previously noted. The upper mandible was pale to medium brown-gray, with a straw-colored tint to it at the base. The bill was darkest at the tip (hook), being almost black there. The lower mandible was slightly paler than the upper. The crown and back had a slight brownish cast at some angles that I had not noticed before. The lores were definitely pale gray. The uppertail coverts had no barring. The undertail was white. It was interesting to note that the bird's bill appeared darker at a distance and the brown tint to the upperparts was not obvious. In some light, the back appeared like an adult Northern Shrike. This bird was not nearly as brown as the bird depicted in the National Geographic Guide, but it was not an adult either.



A Look at the Uncommon Gulls in the Region

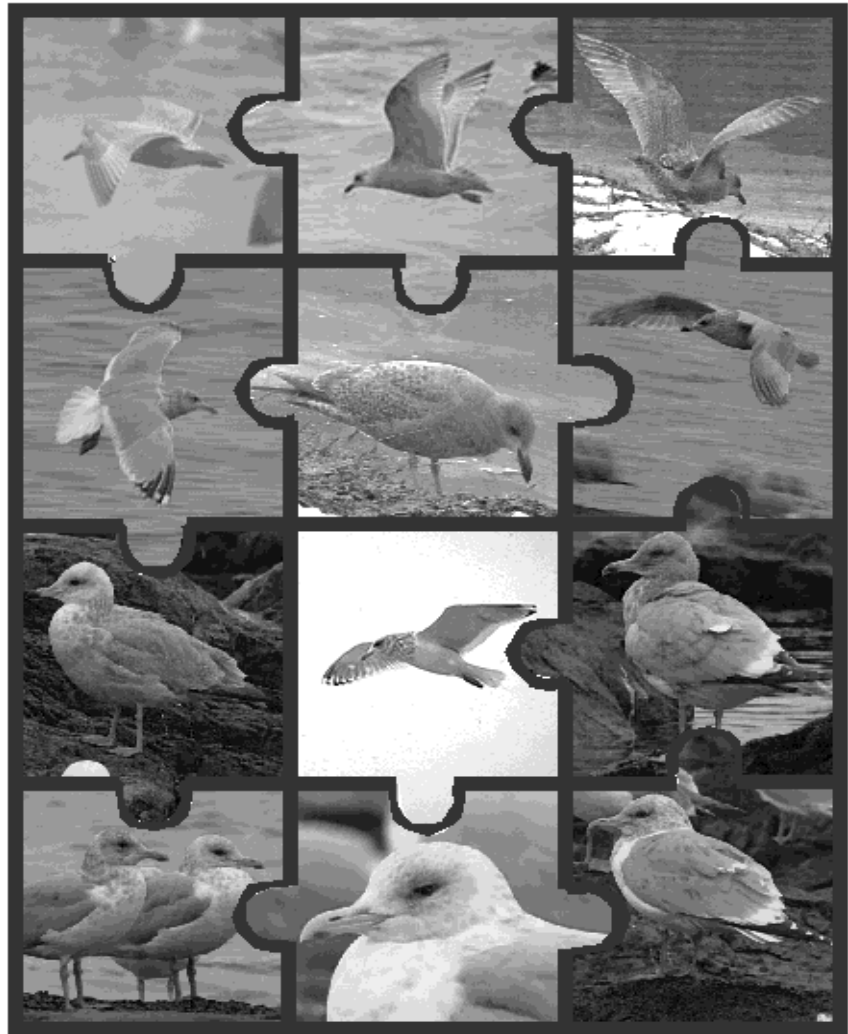
by Larry Rosche

Gulls are fascinating creatures. Research shows much has been written about gulls in this quarter over the years. The first major article was in Vol. 67, No. 2. Hannikman updated this article in Vol. 82, No. 1. Gull watching is a much more difficult art

now than it was in the past. Formerly, we could all go to Lorain and study gulls at our leisure from our vehicles at the "hot waters." Who can forget the incredible gull gatherings at E. 72nd St. in the late 70s? Because the parking lot at Eastlake was always treacherous in winter, most gull watching there was done under the severest of conditions. In recent winters, the power companies have turned to alternative measures of supplying electricity locally. E. 72nd St. and the "hot waters" are sites of the past. Even the parking area at Eastlake is closed.

Most of us who bird the lakefront consider 4 gull species to be uncommon from late fall to spring. They are Lesser Black-backed, Thayer's, Iceland, and Glaucous Gulls. By uncommon, I mean the gull is expected, but not found on every trip to a particular gull-gathering site. Iceland (Kumlien's) and Glaucous Gulls have long and storied histories in the region. The Lesser Black-backed Gull, however, is relatively new to the region. The first sighting was of a possible 3rd-year bird at Gordon Park on Jan. 20, 1977, by Jim Hoffman. By February 1977 others were found in Lorain and Eastlake. The wretched winter of 1978 even produced an Akron record (Tveekrem, M.ob.). Thayer's Gulls have an even more recent history.

The saga of the Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) began locally on January 15, 1978, when Jean and Dick Hoffman identified an adult in Lorain. A year later the Hoffmans and Ray Hannikman found a first-winter plumaged bird at E. 72nd St. Thus, is the background of a species that has remained to this day one of



The Puzzle of Thayer's Gull Identification - Photos by Larry Rosche and John Vanderpoel

the most controversial and difficult birds to identify in the Cleveland region. By 1983 the species was regarded as uncommon to rare by the lakefront gull watchers. As editor of The Cleveland Bird Calendar, I would never consider this species a "Noteworthy Record," except in summer or away from Lake Erie. Summer reports would be looked upon very skeptically. Thayer's Gull is a bird of the high Arctic and the Herring Gull, with a history of bizarre plumages in summer, can be easily mistaken for a Thayer's Gull.

Over the past decade, Lesser Black-backed is the most likely

of these to be found, although the most I have ever seen at one site is 4. It seems to be more widespread for a longer period than the others. Glaucous Gulls will be more numerous than others in very cold weather. Counts of over 30 in Lorain have been made on a given day. Iceland Gulls have the narrowest window of occurrence of the 4 and are the least likely of the group to be encountered. Counts of 5± can be had on a particularly great gull day in the dead of winter. Thayer's Gulls are usually found in about the same numbers as Iceland Gulls, but parallel the occurrence pattern of the Lesser Black-backed Gulls.



Typical bill and wing pattern of first-winter Thayer's Gull photo by Larry Rosche



Typical bill and wing pattern of first-winter Iceland Gull photo by John Vanderpoel



Typical bill and wing pattern of first-winter Herring Gull photo by Larry Rosche

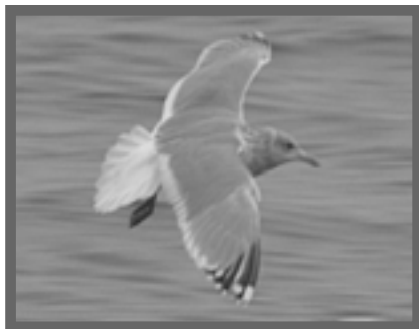
The problem with Thayer's Gulls is the difficulty in making the proper identification. For example, recently a veteran observer told me that he didn't have a Thayer's this year. He then continued to tell me that he was at Avon Lake when two very respected observers disagreed on a Thayer's Gull so he couldn't count it. "Wow! I thought. If anyone has experience with Thayer's Gull, it is this guy." If it is still that difficult for experienced birders to identify, then it must be really tough on those birders who are trying to improve their gull-watching skills.

of birds seen at various lakefront sites. I hope that the well-described field characters in the field guides can be seen in them. For an excellent treatise on Thayer's Gull, see Kevin Zimmer's chapter in Advanced Birding (1990).

All the talk of reducing the species to a race of Iceland Gull will certainly not bode well for its future status as a well-documented winter visitor. I have watched hours of video of both Thayer's and Iceland Gulls. Physically, there are quite a few differences. I am probably one of

jection beyond the tail is very obvious in Iceland Gull but not so in Thayer's. With practice and the ability to withstand the winter's cold, one can learn to separate these two species.

The first winter plumage birds show the various degrees of dark edges on the wings. If you observe the wing tips carefully, you can see the typical gradation of pale brown in Iceland Gull, to gray brown in Thayer's Gull, to the large amount of blackish brown in Herring Gull. The adults show the typical patterns associated with each



Typical dark in wing tip of Thayer's Gull photo by John Vanderpoel



Typical wing tip of Iceland (Kumlien's) Gull photo by John Vanderpoel



Typical dark in wing tip of Herring Gull photo by John Vanderpoel

The fact that gull-watching locations have become fewer doesn't mean that the species is any less abundant. This is particularly true for Thayer's Gull. I feel that they will continue to be seen in expected numbers from late October through early March along the Cleveland area lakefront. I have included several photos, depicting ages

the people who will hold on to my Thayer's Gull for as long as I can. I have watched many Iceland Gulls in winter plumage. I have yet to see a first-winter Iceland Gull with the dark trailing edge to the wing that a first-winter Thayer's Gull has. The bill of the Iceland at any age is always smaller. The wings are very pointed and the wing pro-

species. The very pale wing of the Iceland's shows the slightly darker gray wing-tips. The Thayer's shows the greatly reduced dark gray areas. The Herring Gull is rather typical. The extension of black on the primaries is more noticeable than on Thayer's, and the white primary mirrors are very evident at the wing tip. Good luck.



Headlands Beach State Park - Fairport Harbor Area Bird List as of 1995

x Red-thr. Loon	x L. Scaup	x Bbellied Plover	x Laughing Gull	x Yb Sapsucker	x Bg Gnatcatch	Blackburn. W.	x Henslow's Sp.
_ Pacific Loon•	_ King Eider•	x A. Gold-Plover	x Franklin's Gull	x Downy Wp	x E. Bluebird	x Ythroated W.	_ LeConte's Sp. •
x C. Loon	x Harlequin D.	x Semipalm Pl	x Little Gull	x Hairy Wp	x Veery	x Pine Warbler	x Sharp-f. Sp. •
x Pb Grebe	x Oldsquaw	_ Snowy Plover•	_ Bhead Gull•	x N. Flicker	x Gc Thrush	x Prairie Warbler	x Fox Sparrow
x Horned Grebe	x Black Scoter	_ Piping Plover•	x Bonap. Gull	x Pileated Wp	x Swain Thrush	x Palm Warbler	x Song Sparrow
x Rneck. Grebe	x Surf Scoter	x Killdeer	x Rb Gull	x Olive-sided F.	x Hermit Thrush	x Bay-b Warbler	x Lincoln's Sp.
_ Eared Grebe	x Ww Scoter	_ A. Avocet	_ Cal. Gull•	x E. Wood-Pew	x Wood Thrush	x Blackpoll War.	x Swamp Sp.
_ N. Gannet•	x C. Goldeneye	x G. Yellowlegs	x Herring Gull	x Yb Flycatcher	x A. Robin	x Cerulean War.	x Wt Sparrow
_ A. W. Pelican•	x Bufflehead	x L. Yellowlegs	x Thayer's Gull	x Acadian Fly	_ Varied Thrush•	x B&w Warbler	x Wc Sparrow
x Dc Cormorant	x Hooded Merg.	x Solitary Sp	x Iceland Gull	x Alder Fly	x Gray Catbird	x A. Redstart	x De Junco
x A. Bittern	x Com. Merg.	_ Willet	_ L.Bb Gull	x Willow Fly	x N. Mockingb.	_ Prothon. War.	x Lap. Longspur
x Least Bittern	x Rb Merganser	x Spotted Sp	x Glaucous Gull	x Least Fly	x B. Thrasher	_ Worm-eat. W.	x Snow Bunting
x G. Blue Heron	x Ruddy Duck	x Upland Sp	x G. Bb Gull	x E. Phoebe	x A. Pipit	x Ovenbird	x Bobolink
x Great Egret	_ Black Vulture•	x Whimbrel	x Bleg Kittiwake	x Gc Flycatcher	x C. Waxwing	x N. Waterthrush	x Rw Blackbird
_ Snowy Egret•	x Turkey Vulture	_ Lb Curlew•	x Sabine's Gull•	_ W. Kingbird•	_ Boh. Waxwing•	_ L. Waterthrush	_ E. Meadowlk
_ L. Blue Heron•	x Osprey	_ Hud. Godwit•	x Caspian Tern	x E. Kingbird	x N. Shrike	x Kentucky War.	x Y-headed Bb
_ Tric. Heron•	x Bald Eagle	_ M. Godwit•	x Common Tern	x Horned Lark	_ L. Shrike	x Connect. War.	x Rusty Bb
x Green Heron	x N. Harrier	x R. Turnstone	x Forster's Tern	x Purple Martin	x E. Starling	x Mourning War.	x C. Grackle
x Bc Night-Her.	x Shp-sh. Hawk	_ Red Knot	x Black Tern	x Tree Swallow	x White-eye. Vir.	x C. Yellowthrt	x Bb Cowbird
_ Ibis (species)•	x Coop. Hawk	x Sanderling	_ Thick-bill. M•	x N. Rw Swallow	_ Bell's Vireo•	x Hood Warbler	x Orch. Oriole
x Tundra Swan	_ N. Goshawk	x Semipalm Sp	x Rock Dove	x Bank Swallow	x Solitary Vireo	x Wilson's War.	x B. Oriole
x Mute Swan	x Red-sh. Hawk	_ Western Sp	x Mourn. Dove	x Cliff Swallow	x Yf Vireo	_ Canada War.	x Purple Finch
x G. Wfr Goose	_ Bw Hawk	x Least Sp	x Bb Cuckoo	x Barn Swallow	x Warbling Vireo	_ Yb Chat	_ House Finch
x Snow Goose	x Red-tail.Hawk	x White-r Sp	x Yb Cuckoo	x Blue Jay	x Phil. Vireo	x Sum. Tanager•	_ Red Crossbill
_ Brant	_ R-leg Hawk	x Baird's Sp	_ Barn Owl•	x A. Crow	x Red-ey. Vireo	x Scar. Tanager	x Ww Crossbill
x Can.Goose	_ Gold. Eagle•	x Pectoral Sp	x E. Scrch-Owl	x Bc Chickadee	x Bw Warbler	x N. Cardinal	x C. Redpoll
x Wood Duck	x A. Kestrel	x Purple Sp	x G.Horned Owl	_ C.Chickadee•	_ Gw Warbler	_ Rb Grosbeak	x Pine Siskin
x Gw Teal	x Merlin	x Dunlin	x Snowy Owl	x Tuff Titmouse	x Tennessee	x Blue Grosb. •	x A. Goldfinch
x A. Black Duck	x Peregrine F.	x Stilt Sp•	x Barred Owl	x Rb Nuthatch	x War.	_ Indigo Bunting	x Evening Grosb.
x Mallard	_ Rn Pheasant	_ Buff-breast Sp	_ Long-ear. Owl	x Wb Nuthatch	x Oc Warbler	x Dickcissel	House Spar.
x N. Pintail	_ Ruffed Grouse	x Short-bill Dow	x Short-ear. Owl	x B. Creeper	x Nashville War.	x E. Towhee	• -Indicates his-
x Bw Teal	x N. Bobwhite•	x C. Snipe	x N. Saw-whet	x Carolina Wren	x N. Parula	x A. Tree Spar.	torical or
x N. Shoveler	_ Black Rail•	x A. Woodcock	x C. Nighthawk	_ Bewick's Wr. •	x Yellow Warbler	x Chip. Sparrow	accidental
x Gadwall	_ King Rail•	_ Wilson's Phal.	x Whip-poor-will	x House Wren	x Chest. Warbler	x Clay-col. Spar.	record.
x A. Wigeon	_ Virginia Rail	_ Red-neck Phal. x	x Chimney Swift	x Winter Wren	x Mag. Warbler	x Field Sparrow	Species is not
x Canvasback	x Sora	x Red Phal.	x Rt. Hummingb.	x Sedge Wren	x Cape May W.	_ Vesper Spar.	expected.
x Redhead	_ Purple Gall. •	_ Pom. Jaeger	x B. Kingfisher	x Marsh Wren	x Bf Blue Warbler	x Lark Sparrow•	x - Denotes
x Ring-n. Duck	x C. Moorhen	_ Par. Jaeger	x Rh Woodpr	x Gc Kinglet	x Yell.-rump War.	x Savannah Sp.	species seen in
x G. Scaup	x A. Coot	x Ltail Jaeger•	x Rb Woodpr	x Rc Kinglet	x Bf Green War.	_ Grasshop. Sp.	1995

The 1995 Headlands Beach State Park Area List

by Larry Rosche

Each year Ray Hannikman, Emil Bacik, and I try to see how many species we can get collectively at Headlands Beach State Park and nearby Fairport Harbor. Headlands has long been a favorite spot for us. Except for a few people, we hardly see any birders from other parts of the state. Over the years approximately 300 species have been documented from the immediate Headlands area. In 1995 the Headlands area really produced a variety of birds. The 3 of us tallied 240 species. We topped all other years by 10! This (to paraphrase Bill Klamm) translates into just about 80% of the total possible. I liken it to getting 320 in the state during a given year. To quote our friend Bernie Master, "That's incredible."

Why we do this each year is not quite clear. I guess it's to keep us relatively sharp. We know the best birding areas in Ohio are in the Western Basin, but we really don't seem to enjoy the 2.5 hour drive to

get there as we used to. Anyway, we find our share of good birds here. It seems extraordinary that between all of my two compadres' discussions of Crescent-faced Antpittas and El Oro Parakeets (Ray and Emil have really gotten into birding South America) that we found so many less glorious creatures. Since we basically only get to Headlands on the weekends, we wish that Kevin Metcalf was in our group, as he seems to see all the ones we don't. If you check our list, you can see that we missed some fairly easy ones like Broad-winged Hawks, Virginia Rail, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Although we expect it, we have never seen a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow there.

It's as Bill Klamm always used to tell me, "The lake changes every hour." We certainly have found this to be true at Headlands. Ray has found many "goodies" in the afternoon after Emil and I have gone home. Keep up the good work, guys.



Acknowledgement: Special thanks are given to Mr. and Mrs. E. William Haley, Anthony Hess, Richard and Jean Hoffman, William and Nancy Klamm, and William and Ann Toneff for their generosity towards the publication of Volume 92.

Notice: All reports to The Cleveland Bird Calendar are archived in the The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Rare Bird Hotline: (216) 381-8325 (TEAL) The hotline is sponsored by the Kirtland Bird Club. In cases of extreme rarities (i.e. Western Grebe, Mew Gull, Varied Thrush, Harris Sparrow, etc.) please contact the editors as soon as possible.

Invitation: The Kirtland Bird Club meets the first Wednesday of the month except July and August at 7:45 P.M. in The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Field Study: On the first Sunday of each month a census is conducted at Headlands Beach State Park. The purpose is to study the long term occurrence patterns of migrant and resident birds of the Grand River and Fairport Harbor section of the region. For more information call Larry Rosche at 330 - 678- 9408 or Ray Hannikman at 216 - 261- 9552.

Inquiries regarding subscription to The Cleveland Bird Calendar should be addressed to Joan M. Palmer, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, 1 Wade Oval, University Circle, Cleveland, Ohio 44106. The annual subscription rate is \$7.50.

Changes of Address: Contact Jean Loes, at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, (216) 231 – 4600

Field reports, artwork, papers, and photographs should be directed to Larry Rosche, 7473 Sylvan Drive, Kent, Ohio 44240. e-mail lorofs@aol.com