

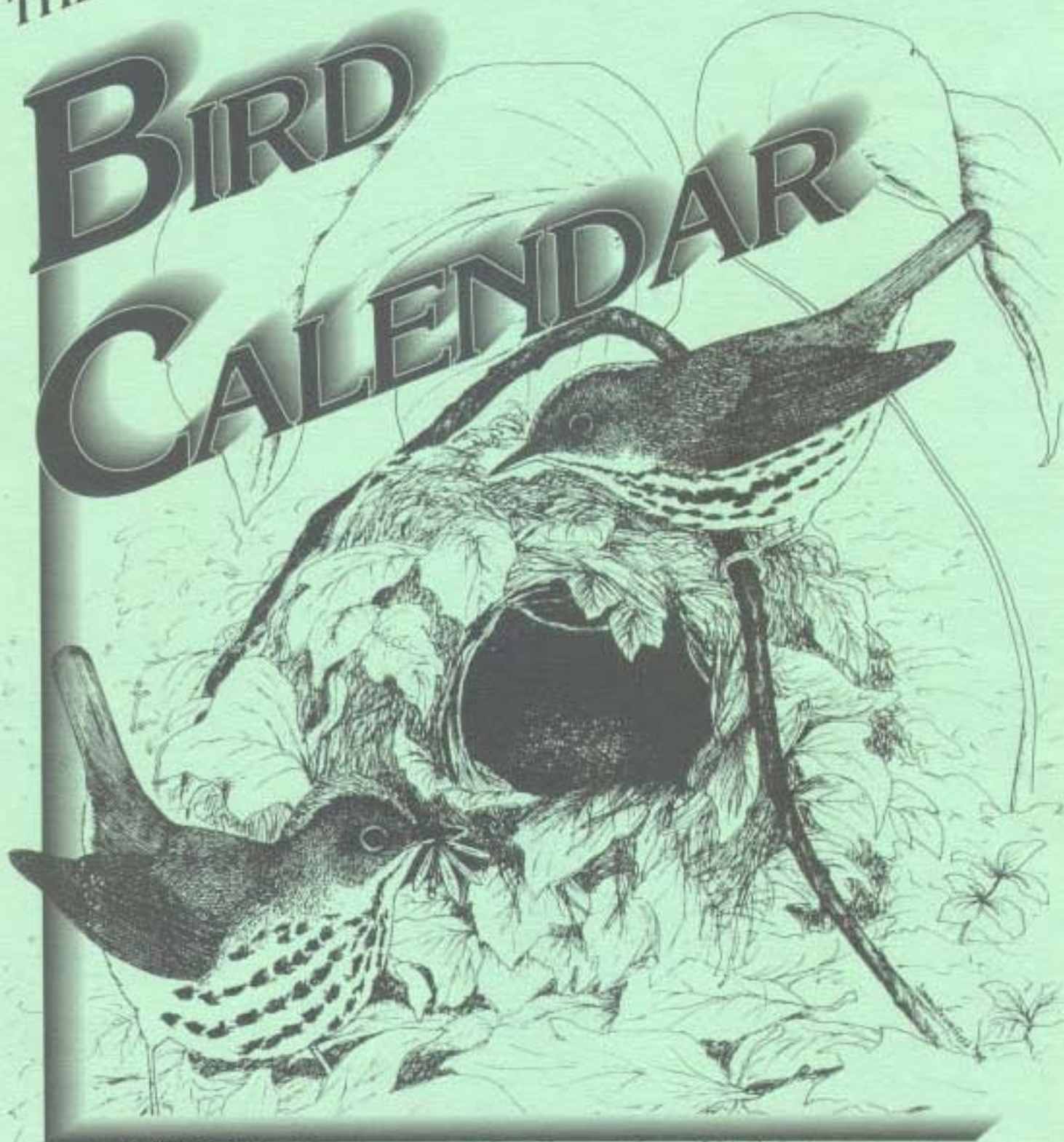
THE CLEVELAND

March, April, and May 1999

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Number 2

# BIRD CALENDAR



Published by The Kirtland Bird Club  
and The Cleveland Museum of Natural History

**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.**

**The Cleveland Bird Calendar is published quarterly by The Kirtland Bird Club and The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.**

**Suggested 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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**by Jennifer Brumfield, 1998.**

# The Cleveland Bird Calendar

## Editor:

Larry Rosche (LR)

## Consulting Editor:

Ray Hannikman (RH)

## Editorial Assistants:

Dwight W. Chasar - Weather Summary

## Technical Editors

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## Contributors:

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Emil Bacik (EB)  
Nick Barber (NB)  
Dan Best (DB)  
Dave and Jenny Brumfield (DJB)  
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# Remembering

Larry:

Fifty years ago I saw, and heard, and absolutely without equivocation, identified a Bachman's Sparrow near our farm in Hiram township. I encountered the bird on the dates of May 1, 3, 6, and 8, 1949. Each time the bird was located in the same spot: an old orchard near the Hiram side of the Cuyahoga River, about 1 mile upstream from the Route 82 bridge on that river. I asked the few birders I knew at that time to come and see this wonderful bird. Only Ralph Dexter of Kent came for a an unsuccessful look-see. I called the editor of the Cleveland Bird Calendar, A.B. Williams, and he

asked me to write him a letter with the relevant details. I am enclosing the letter I sent him. It describes, far better than my memory could, the logic that went into making that identification. Only the bird's first sighting, and the sound of its incredible song live fresh in my memory.

A.B. Williams sent me a letter in June describing the acceptance of this record.

Read more about Vernon's remarkable sighting in Field Notes.

# The Weather

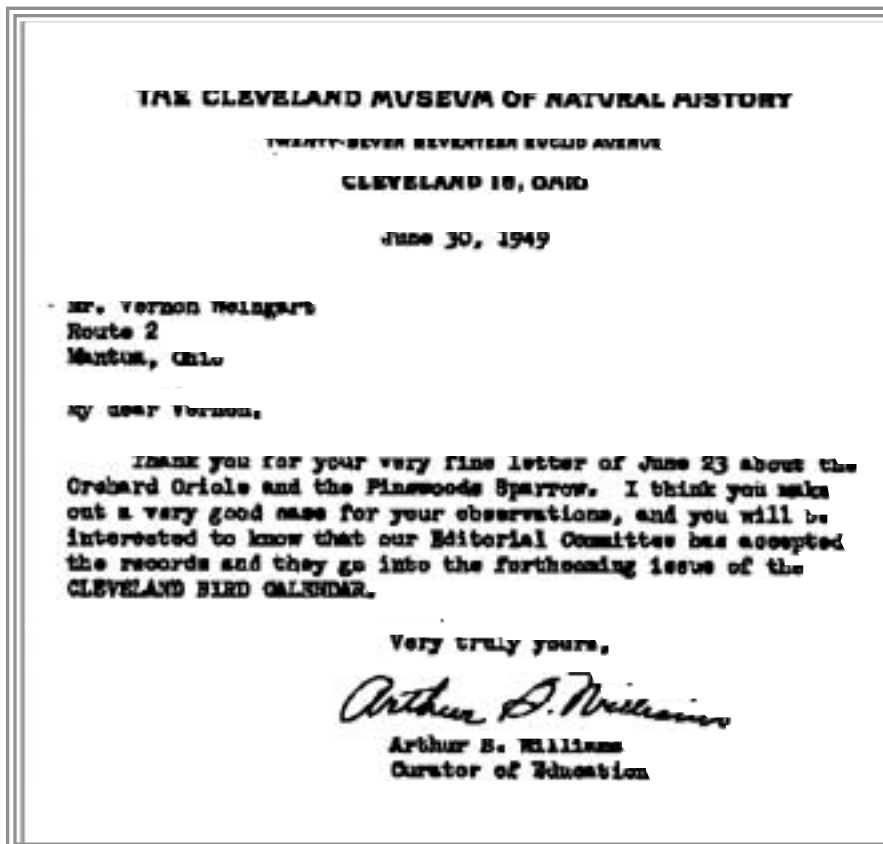
## SPRING 1999

by Dwight W. Chasar

**March:** The temperature averaged 34.3°, 3.0° below normal. The highest temperature was 73° on the 31st; and the lowest 1° on the 8th. Lake Erie waters rose only 1° to 37° during the month. Sunshine prevailed 63% of the time possible. Precipitation totaled 1.65 in., 1.26 in. below normal. The greatest fall for a 24-hour period was 0.60 in. on the 6th. Snowfall totaled 11.6 in. with the greatest amount being 6.0 in on the 6th. The greatest snow depth was 5 in. on the 7th.

**APRIL:** The temperature averaged 50.4°, 2.8° above normal. The highest temperature was 78° on the 3rd; and the lowest, 28° on the 25th. Sunshine occurred 59% of the time possible. Precipitation totaled 3.89 in., 0.75 in. above normal. The greatest fall for a 24-hour period was 1.06 in. on the 9th. No snow fell. By the end of the month, Lake Erie water temperature had moved up to 50°.

**MAY:** The temperature averaged 61.0°, 3.0° above normal. The highest temperature was 85° on the 30th; and the lowest, 40° on the 27th. The lake temperature rose to 57°. Rain was scarce, totaling only 1.54 in., 1.95 in. below normal. The greatest fall for a 24-hour period was a mere 0.42. in on the 23rd. The 17 year cicadas emerged from the earth on the eve of the 30th to join the ubiquitous gypsy moths.







by Larry Rosche

Spring 1999 will probably be remembered for the pleasant weather and easterly winds. Birds simply were not pushed into the region and, as a result, arrived at their leisure. I think this is the kind of migration that would normally occur if there are no abrupt changes in the weather. Still, field observers were hard at work. I received a lot of snail mail data, albeit much of it late. Because of this lateness, some sightings could not be squeezed in. Please note, I do not glean sightings from the internet. Data from a few of the Sunday Morning Bird Walks was greatly appreciated. Again, Dan Best did a remarkable job in summarizing the many reports he received from Geauga County observers. I cannot thank Paula Lozano enough for her summaries of KBC field trips and sightings in the Cleveland area. Too, I thank Ray Hannikman for his diligent reporting from Headlands Beach State Park and environs. For the first time in years I received a large-scale report from Firestone Metropark. Comparing arrival dates from the southern part of the region with the north is always educational. Lastly, Nick Barber's neatness, attention to detail, and timely reporting and gives me hope for the future of publications such this.

As far as migration goes, we did receive reports of 35 species of warblers, including both "Brewster's" and "Lawrence's". I did not hear of any one day when 20 species were found. The best I did was 19, on May 17, at the Ravenna Ammunition Depot.. Good birding.



**M**igrating loons and grebes moved through the region quickly and in small numbers. The high tally for **Common Loons** was an unimpressive 18 at HBSP on Apr. 10 (RH). **Pied-billed Grebes** remained at Frame Bog through the period (LR). The high count of **Horned Grebes** was made on Mar. 12 when 47 were seen of Edgewater Park (TLP). **Double-crested Cormorants** peaked at 2500 off the mouth of the Cuyahoga River on Apr. 12 (PL). Inland, the high was 100 at Lake Rockwell on Apr. 18 (GB). **Great Blue Herons** continue to

nest in large numbers throughout the region. **Great Egrets** were in expected totals. A bird was fairly regular at Pinery Narrows in Apr. (DAC). **Green Herons** arrived on Apr. 24 at HBSP (RH) and at Shaker Lakes (RR). As many as 31 **Black-crowned Night-Herons** could be found along the west bank of the Cuyahoga in Apr. (PL, m.ob.). **Turkey Vultures** passed in fair numbers along the lake in late March.

**W**aterfowl presented little to get excited about. Perhaps the best sighting for this group was on March 2, when a pair of **Snow Geese** flew over Hudson (NH). Another twosome was along Tare Creek in Geauga Co. on Mar.

22 (*fide* DB). **Mute Swan** numbers far exceeded expectations. I don't know if this is good or bad for our local native species. For the most part, **Tundra Swans** slipped through unnoticed. A flock of 60 was off HBSP on Mar. 14 (RH). **Wood Ducks** were numerous throughout the region. **Gadwalls** and **American Wigeons**, however, were in very low numbers. Ten **Northern Shovelers** in Streetsboro on Mar. 19 provided a nice surprise (CH). Another 6 at Frame Bog on Apr. 23 was equally unexpected (LR). A flock of 25 **Northern Pintails** at Wellington Reservoir on Mar. 11 was an outstanding number (TLP). The high tally for **Green-winged Teals** was 23 at Lake Rockwell on Mar. 23 (VW).

**C**anvasbacks and **Redheads** were in expected numbers at Oberlin and Wellington (TLP, CH, m.ob.). **Ring-necked Ducks** at Mogadore and Wingfoot totaled to 3500 on Mar. 18 (LR). **Greater Scaups** lingered in good numbers in to March. **Lesser Scaups** were in high numbers throughout the region (m.ob.). **Surf Scoters** were restricted to the lakefront and rural Lorain County. The 27 at Lorain on Mar. 16 was a very high Spring total (TLP). A group of 8 was at Wellington on Mar. 24 (BAT). As many as 8 **White-winged Scoters** were reported from Lorain in Mar. (TLP, m.ob.). Three were at HBSP on Mar. 10 (KM). Two **Black Scoters** were in Lorain on Mar. 16 & 19 (TLP, m.ob.). An **Oldsquaw** was in Cleveland on Mar. 20 (NB). Two were at Lake Rockwell and 6 were at Wingfoot Lake on Apr. 1 (BAT). The 50 **Buffleheads** at Avon Lake on Mar. 12 was a good lakefront tally (TLP). Inland, 70 were at Wellington on Apr. 11 (CH).



Eastern Screech-Owl--Elmwood Park  
by Bob Finkelstein

**Common Goldeneyes** were very disappointing. **Hooded Merganser** numbers were high along the lake. A total of 90 was at HBSP on Mar. 21 (RH, LR m.ob.). A family group was noted on May 28 in Twin Lakes (LR). **Red-breasted Mergansers** remained conspicuous along the lakeshore well into May. **Common Mergansers** left early. **Ruddy Ducks** peaked at 375 at Oberlin on Apr. 18 (CH).

**A**n **Osprey** was early at North Chagrin on Apr. 4 (KM). A bird visited Pinery Narrows on Apr. 10 (DAC). Lake Medina hosted one on Apr. 11 (CW). Several visited Shaker Lakes. The first was seen on Apr. 17 (LD). One nabbed a goldfish there on Apr. 24 (PP). Another was seen there on Apr. 29 (BW). An adult **Bald Eagle** was a unique find at Forest Hill Park on Apr. 29 (LD). Another adult drifted over I-90 near SR 306 on May 10 (CK). Two immatures were at LaDue on Mar. 7 (CH). One was in Twin Lakes on Mar. 17 (CH). A bird at HBSP on May 16 was late (RH). **Northern Harriers** were in expect-

ed numbers. One was moving northward over Firestone MP on Mar. 17 (EP, JR). A pair was trying their best to nest while dodging parachutes and incoming drops at the Ravenna Ammunition Plant (LR). Two were still being seen in Fairport at the end of the period (RH). A **Cooper's Hawk** produced an amazing rush of air through its feathers as it stooped and braked in a futile attempt to nail a Rock Dove in Parkman on Apr. 5 (JA). Gardella's hawk studies in the Cleveland Metroparks indicate a definite preference of White Oak by **Red-shouldered** and **Broad-winged Hawks**. No large movements of either of these species was reported. A Broad-winged was slightly early at Brecksville on Apr. 13 (RH, SW). Two **Rough-legged Hawks** were in Lorain Co. on Mar. 16 (TLP). **American Kestrel** were faring well in rural sectors.

A **Ruffed Grouse** was displaying on Newton Falls Road adjacent to the Ravenna Ammunition Depot on May 12 (LR, JH, LG). **Wild**

**Turkeys** appear to be flourishing throughout the region. **Northern Bobwhite** are at an all time low in this decade. **Virginia Rails** and **Soras** were seen in expected numbers and at usual sites. Two **Soras** were observed mating in Stumpy Basin on May 8 (DAC). **Common Moorhens** were seen at HBSP on May 8, 9, & 16 (RH), at Holden on May 12 (CK), at the Ravenna Ammunition Depot May 16 (LR) and in Madison Township on May 23 (JP).

**S**horebird reports were meager at best. The lack of suitable habitat and unfavorable weather conditions made for a very poor showing of this most sought after group. After reading LePage's detailed field tallies for many years, it was disappointing to read where he saw only 3 species of this favored group.

A **Black-bellied Plover** passed over HBSP on Apr. 11 (RH, LR). No **American Golden-Plover** was reported and only one **Semipalmated Plover** was seen in the entire region! **Greater Yellowlegs** moved through largely unnoticed. The high count of **Lesser Yellowlegs** was 18 on Apr. 17 in Lorain Co. (TLP). The high counts for **Solitary Sandpipers** were 6 in Hiram on Apr. 28 (EE) and 7 at Jaite on May 2 (DAC). **Spotted Sandpipers** were below average. Single **Ruddy Turnstones** were noted at HBSP on May 9 and May 24 (RH). On May 27, 15 **Sanderlings** were seen at HBSP (RH). No **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was reported locally. **Least Sandpipers** were scattered about in small numbers. **White-rumped Sandpipers** did not make any observer's field data sheet. A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was exceptionally early at Streetsboro Bog on Mar. 29 (CH). Lake Rockwell

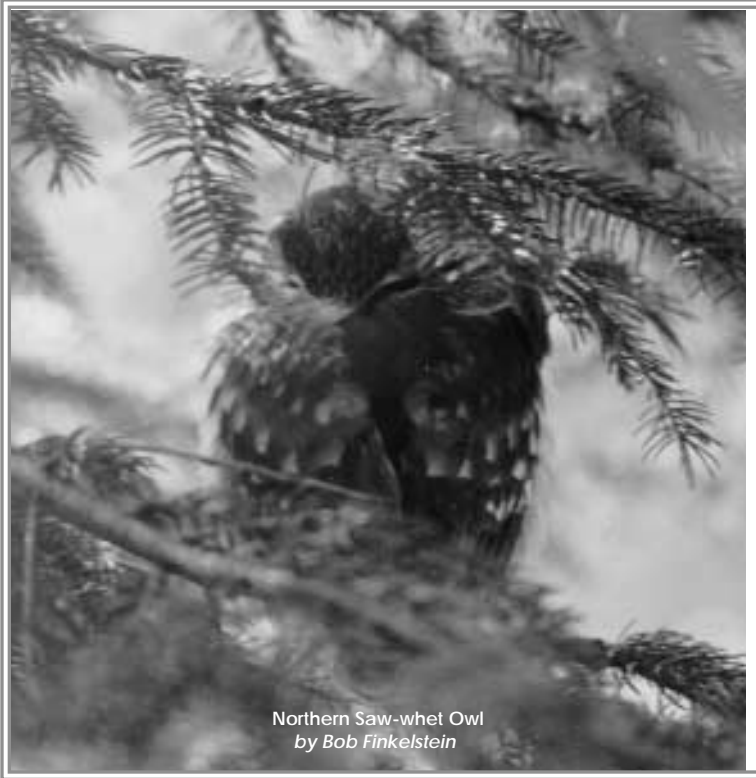


provided refuge for 22 on Apr. 14 (CH, VW). A **Dunlin** was early at Lake Rockwell on Apr. 9 (LR). As with many previous species, no **Stilt Sandpiper** or **Short-billed Dowitcher** was seen. A **Common Snipe** was at LaDue on Mar. 21 (RR). **American Woodcocks** were in large numbers at the Ravenna Ammunition Plant.

**B**onaparte's **Gulls** were in fair numbers into mid-Apr. High tallies include 1000 at HBSP on Mar. 2 (RH), 2500 at Docks 20 & 22 on Apr. 12 (PL), and 1500 in Lorain on Apr. 18 (CH). Approximately 250 **Ring-billed Gulls** were found nesting on the Royal Appliance property (JA). A **Thayer's Gull** lingered at HBSP on Apr. 11 (RH). An **Ice-land Gull** was late at Sims Park on Apr. 18 (TLP). One was at HBSP through at least Apr. 24 (RH, m.ob.). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was at Eastlake on Mar. 12 (KM). One was at Gordon Park on Mar. 25 (TLP). A **Glau-cous Gull** was on the Cuyahoga River on Mar. 22 (TLP). **Great Black-backed Gulls** seemed to be less conspicuous along the lake. A flock of 142 **Caspian Terns**

used Docks 20 and 22 on Apr. 21 (PL). Lorain hosted 75 on Apr. 11 (TLP). **Common** and **Forster's Terns** were hardly noticed. The high for Forster's was only 18 at HBSP on Apr. 26 (RH, LR). No inland reports of either species were received.

The earliest **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at the Ira Road marsh on May.10 (TMR). Another was in Parkman on May 14 (JA). One was at Shaker Lakes on May 17 (TK). A calling cuckoo was in Kirtland on May 14 & 17 (CK). Two were at Horseshoe Pond on May 23 (PL, m.ob.). Another was along the Wetmore Trail on the same day (DAC). Jaite provided sightings on May 25 & 26 (DAC). One was at Columbia Road on May 25 and another, at Bradley Woods on May 28 (TLP). **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were very numerous and benefiting from the explosion of Gypsy Moth caterpillars. An **Eastern Screech-Owl** delighted many in Elmwood Park from Mar. into May (TG, PL, BF). **Great Horned** and **Barred Owls** are doing well throughout the region.



Northern Saw-whet Owl  
by Bob Finkelstein

**Common Nighthawks** were in treacherously low numbers. The earliest **Chimney Swifts** were on Apr. 18 at Wellington (CH). **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were numerous at HBSP in mid-May (NB, RH). Elsewhere, they were in a hit or miss pattern.

**B**elted Kingfishers seemed to be average. Nesting was reported to be occurring widely in Portage Co. (LR). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were in expected lakefront locales. No major movement was detected at the well-monitored HBSP. In the CVNRA, birds were thought to be expanding north and south from the Pinery Narrows (DAC). **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were well reported throughout the region. The high count was at HBSP 36 on Apr. 22 (LR). One was late at Sims Park on May 17 (TLP). **Pileated Woodpeckers** were noteworthy at Nathan Hale Park on Apr. 27 (RH, SW) and at Shaker

Lakes on May 16 & 17 (LD, VF, PP).

**Olive-sided Flycatchers** put in a decent showing. Singles were at Pinery Narrows on May 16 (DAC), Shaker Lakes on May 26 (RR), at Firestone MP on May 26 (JR), North Chagrin on May 30 (RR), and at HBSP on May 31 (RH).

**Eastern Wood-Pewees** were as expected. A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was identified at Shaker Lakes on May 28 (RR). Birds were at HBSP on May 29 and 31 (RH). **Acadian Flycatchers** arrived en masse the second week of May. **Alder Flycatchers** were as expected at traditional Geauga and Portage Co. sites. None were noted at HBSP. A bird at Firestone MP on May 11 was early (EP, JR). **Willow Flycatchers** were numerous. **Least Flycatchers** moved well along the lake. The high count was 10 at HBSP on May 16 (RH). An **Eastern Phoebe** had its nest predated by a Brown-headed

Cowbird in Parkman. The cowbird apparently removed 2 of the 4 phoebe eggs. The reporter ousted the cowbird egg and the phoebe completed her clutch of 4 again. Alas, one by one all the young phoebes disappeared (JA). **Great Crested Flycatchers** seemed to be doing well. Perhaps it is just me, but I think **Eastern Kingbirds** are decreasing along the lakefront. Kingbirds were considered numerous at Station Road (GB).

**White-eyed Vireos** were in good numbers. A bird at Shaker Lakes on May 14 was the first Peskin had seen there in years. One was at Wildwood on May 23 (TK). **Yellow-throated** and **Blue-headed Vireos** made widespread appearances this Spring. The earliest **Warbling Vireo** was at Firestone MP on Apr. 22 (EP, JR). The 11 tallied on the Rocky River Nature Center Bird walk of May 16 was indicative of their local abundance (MS). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was early at Brecksville on May 9 (TMR). Another was at Shaker Lakes on May 16 (PP). Birds were at Firestone MP on May 6, 19, & 27 (EP, JR). The first **Red-eyed Vireo** was at Firestone MP on May 2 (EP, JR).

A **Purple Martin** was early at North Chagrin on Apr. 4 (KM). **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** returned to Lake Rockwell on Apr. 4 (CH). **Bank Swallows** were early at Lakeshore MP on Apr. 15 (JP). **Cliff Swallows** were seen at HBSP on several days in early May (m.ob.). Early **Barn Swallows** were at Lake Rockwell on Apr. 4 (CH) and at the Ira Road marsh on Apr. 5 (TMR).

**Red-breasted Nuthatches** put in token appearances throughout the region. Two along Major Road on May 15 may be local breeders



(DAC). **Brown Creepers** moved through nicely. Nests were found at Happy Days (DAC) and Hinckley (NK, SZ). **Carolina Wrens** were thought to be increasing in Lake Co. The Chasars felt they had decreased greatly in the CVNRA. **House Wrens** were conspicuous by mid-Apr. **Winter Wrens** were in good numbers. Three **Marsh Wrens** were noted at Streetsboro Bog on May 31 (RR). A **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was late at Major Road and, given the number of conifers there, may be an indication of a local nesting site (DAC). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were conspicuous from mid-April through mid-May. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were very well represented on the Sunday Morning Bird walk reports received by this desk.

**B**ucking the downward trend of most species, all regular occurring thrushes were well reported. Veeries, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes were widespread in distribution and in very good numbers. By late May it became evident Hermit Thrushes were doing their best to establish a solid place in our local breeding bird population. **Eastern Bluebirds** are doing well and the summer should prove to be a banner year for nesting. A **Veery** attending to a fledgling on May 28 at the Ravenna Ammunition Depot was truly hard to believe (LR). One was an urban visitor in Lakewood on May 4 (PL). **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were widespread. Two were at Sims Park on May 5 (TLP). Another was at Firestone MP the same day (JR). One was at the Ravenna Ammunition Plant on May 11 (LR). Singles were seen at HBSP on May 13 & 31 (RH). **Hermit Thrushes** were singing on territory in the CVNRA and Brecksville at the end of

May. A nest was discovered at Happy Days (DAC). **Wood Thrushes** were conspicuous. On May 7, the first one in many years appeared in a Brecksville neighborhood (BAT). The earliest **Gray Catbird** was at the Ira Road marsh on Apr. 5 (TMR, m.ob.). **Northern Mockingbirds** were reported widely. A bird was in Medina Co. on Mar. 11 (JW). One was at Sims Park on Apr. 11 (TK). Others were found at the regular Cleveland sites (PL, m.ob.). Two were at the Cleveland Metropark Zoo on Mar. 21 (TMR). One was in the CVNRA on Apr. 21 (DAC). **Brown Thrashers** were common at the Ravenna Ammunition Depot (LR). **American Pipits** moved through in timely fashion. The last birds were still flitting about and over HBSP in early May (KM, m.ob.). As is the case almost every Spring, **Cedar Waxwings** burst on the scene in droves the last third of May.

**W**arblers received outstanding coverage from HBSP and Firestone MP. Elsewhere, I received information from 4 of the Sunday Morning Bird walks. Most observers felt the number of warblers seemed lower than usual. The warm May produced heavy foliage and helped in making warbler finding difficult. As a result only 27 species were reported from HBSP. No single day total exceeded 18 species there or Firestone MP. The first **Blue-winged Warbler** arrived at Firestone MP on Apr. 22 (EP, JR). The next sightings were May 4 at HBSP and Ravenna Ammunition Plant. On May 8, 41 were censused at Horseshoe Pond (NK, SZ). **Tennessee Warblers** were unremarkable. The only **Orange-crowned Warbler** report was from Lakeshore MP on May 9 (JP). The

first **Nashville Warbler** was at Firestone MP on May 1 (EP, JR). A **Northern Parula** was at HBSP on May 5 (LR, VW). Two were at Firestone MP on May 7 (EP, JR). Birds were at Sims Park (TK) and HBSP (RH) on May 15. **Yellow Warblers** seemed in stable numbers. **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were widespread and in small numbers. At the Ravenna Ammunition Plant, numbers are mind-boggling to those who are not familiar with this facility. **Magnolia Warblers** seemed in lower than expected numbers along the lake. It seemed odd to me that a transoceanic migrant like **Cape May Warbler** would be so scarce after all of the easterly winds. Remarkably, only 3 reports were received: one at Firestone MP on May 4 (EP, JR), one at Horseshoe Pond on May 8 (NK, SZ), and one at HBSP on May 16 (RH). The earliest **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was on Apr. 29 at Firestone MP (EP, JR). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were in average numbers. A **Black-throated Green Warbler** was early at Shaker Lakes on Apr. 11 (BW, PP). **Blackburnian Warblers** were in small numbers. Two lingered at HBSP on May 31 (RH). No **Yellow-throated Warblers** were reported away from traditional nesting sites. **Pine Warblers** were widespread. A bird was early in Kent on Mar. 29 (CH). One was at Sims Park on Apr. 11 (TK). Four were in one tree at Shaker Lakes on Apr. 25 (PP). Four were seen at Station Road on Apr. 27 (GB). A singing male provided a first for the Ravenna Ammunition Plant on May 11 (LR). **Palm Warbler** numbers were far below average along the lakefront. The high was a mere 12 at HBSP on May 2 & May 12 (RH). **Bay-breasted Warblers** were found in fair numbers. **Blackpoll Warblers**

were exceptionally high for the season. Twenty-two were found at HBSP on May 23. **Cerulean Warblers** are always tough to find away from their nesting grounds. A bird at Firestone MP on May 10 provided local excitement (EP, JR). Three **Prothonotary Warblers** were at Pinery Narrows on May 5 (DAC). One visited the Ravenna Ammunition Plant on May 16 (LR). Along the Upper Cuyahoga, 7 nest sites were being monitored. House Wrens continue to plague these vibrant songsters (DB). **Ovenbirds** were doing well in the CVNRA. **Louisiana Waterthrushes** had returned to local nesting sites by early April. None were found along the lake. **Kentucky Warbler** reports came from Lakeshore MP on May 15 (JP) and HBSP on May 22 (KM). **Mourning Warblers** were good numbers. The earliest bird was May 11 at Firestone MP (EP, JR). A bird in Medina on May 16 was from a new locale (TK). A **Yellow-Breasted Chat** was a lucky find at HBSP on May 5 (RH). Birds were in the expected locales in the CVNRA and Ravenna Ammunition Plant.

**S**parrow numbers seemed lower than expected on the Sunday Morning Bird Walk information I received. It is hard to imagine no White-crowned Sparrow was seen at Shaker Lakes, Rocky River, Hinckley, or Elden Russell Park on these walks. The first **Chipping Sparrows** were at HBSP on Apr. 4 (RH). The number of **Field Sparrows** at the Ravenna Ammunition Plant are simply staggering. Migrant **Vesper Sparrows** were found in rela-

tively high numbers. Five were at HBSP on Apr. 11 (RH). The same day 8 were seen at Gilmore Academy (NB). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was a good find at HBSP on May 4 (KM). **Fox Sparrows** were in good supply. A bird at HBSP on May 23 was exceptionally tardy (RH, LR). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were widespread in good numbers. On May 8, 20 were tallied in the HBSP area (NB). Although numerous at most reporting stations, both **White-throated** and **White-crowned Sparrow** went unreported on the Hinckley Sunday Morning Bird Walks (EP).

**R**ose-breasted Grosbeaks were in high numbers away from Lake Erie. Forty **Rusty Blackbirds** were at Lake Rockwell on Apr. 4 (CH). **Orchard Orioles** continue to be found in increasing numbers along the lake. One was singing at Wildwood on May 23 (TK). An immature male was at Holden Arboretum on the same date (EP). **Baltimore Orioles** were a little late in arriving, but in good numbers when they got here. **Purple Finches** continue to be found in traditional nesting sites. A pair regularly visiting the Tonneff's feeder in Brecksville was good news.



**RED-THROATED LOON** - A winter plumaged bird flew by Headlands Beach SP on Apr. 17 (Hannikman, Bacik).

**AMERICAN BITTERN** - One was at North Chagrin on Apr. 28 (Metcalf).

**LEAST BITTERN** - One was in the Natural Area at Headlands Beach SP on May 22 (Hannikman, Metcalf). It or another was there on May 31 (Petruschke). One was early at River Road Park on May 6 (Pogacnik).

**HARLEQUIN DUCK** - A female was at Headlands Beach SP on Mar. 2 (Rosche, Hannikman, Weingart, Haley).

**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** - One was reported from Lakeshore Metropark on Mar. 31 (Pogacnik).

**NORTHERN GOSHAWK** - Rob Harlan and Sandy Wagner set a sighting benchmark that will in all likelihood never be broken for this magnificent species. They saw four individuals. The first was an immature at Nathan Hale Park on Apr. 27. Others were single adults at Nathan Hale Park on Apr. 30, Firestone Metropark on May 1, and in Wadsworth on May 4. Pogacnik reported an immature at Lakeshore Metropark on Apr. 6.

**MERLIN** - One was at North Chagrin on Apr. 12 (Metcalf). Merlins were seen at Headlands Beach SP on Apr. 3, 24, & 25 (Hannikman, Barber, m.ob.). The wintering Bath bird was last seen on Mar. 13 (Pierce, Reyda). One was in Silver Lake on Mar. 3 (Rosche). Birds were reported from Lakeshore Metropark on Mar. 29, Apr. 29, & May 1 (Pogacnik).

**PEREGRINE FALCON** - A bird drifted by a hawk watch at Edgewater SP on Mar. 17 (LePage). An adult was in Kirtland Apr. 8 (Petruschke). Birds were reported from Lakeshore Metropark on Mar. 19-20, & May 5 (Pogacnik).

**SANDHILL CRANE** - A pair was seen in Geauga Co. in late March through early April (fide Best). One flew over Russell Park on May 2 (Best).

**UPLAND SANDPIPER**- Ray Hannikman found one at Fairport Harbor on Apr. 20. He found 5 there on Apr. 24 and 3 in the same field on Apr. 25.

**WHIMBREL** - A flock of 16 was reported from Lakeshore Metropark on May 26. Another flock of 26 was reported from Chagrin River Park on the same day (Pogacnik).

**RED-NECKED PHALAROPE** - One was reported in Eastlake on May 19 (Pogacnik).

**LAUGHING GULL** - A single was reported from Lakeshore Metropark on Apr. 10 (Pogacnik).

**LITTLE GULL** - As many as 20 were reported near the mouth of the grand River on Mar. 2 (Hannikman, m.ob.).

**BLACK TERN** - Our only report was from Lakeshore Metropark on May 16 (Pogacnik).

**SHORT-EARED OWL** - One was in Grafton on Mar. 7 (Harlan, Wagner). Another was at Holden Arboretum near Corning Lake on Apr. 17 (Petruschke). One was mobbed by gulls at Headlands Beach SP on Apr. 24 (Barber, Hannikman).

**NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** Lantern Court hosted one for several weeks and was seen through Apr. 14 (Klaus).

**WHIP-POOR-WILL** - One was at Lakeshore Metropark on May 3-4 (Pogacnik).

**SEDGE WREN** - One was heard at Mentor Marsh on May 8 (Barber).

**NORTHERN SHRIKE** - The bird from winter was last seen in Fairport Harbor on Mar. 13 (Hannikman). One was at Jaite on Mar. 12, 14, & 17 (Chasar).

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** It was a pretty good season for this declining species. One was at Elmwood Park on May 5 (Gilliland, Lozano, Finkelstein). The CVNRA hosted another bird on May 8 (Chasar). Kotesovec and Zadar found one at Horseshoe Pond the same day. A bird was reported from Girdled Road Park on May 17 (Pogacnik). One was at the Ravenna Ammunition Plant on May 22 (Gilliland, m.ob.).

**BREWSTER'S WARBLER** - Metcalf found one at Hunting Valley on May 12.

**LAWRENCE'S WARBLER** - Kotesovec and Zadar found a female at Horseshoe Pond on May 8. A singing male was reported from Girdled Road Park on May 17 (Pogacnik).

**PRAIRIE WARBLER** - One was spied at Headlands Beach SP on May 18 by Tom Kellerman. One was at Jaite on May 26 (Chasar).

**WORM-EATING WARBLER** - A bird provided a startling surprise in Stow on May 6 (Tisdale). Lakeview [Lake View] Cemetery hosted one on May 9 (Kellerman). A bird was reported from Hidden Valley Park on May 4 (Pogacnik).

**CONNECTICUT WARBLER** - One was in Bradley Woods on May 28 (LePage). A singing male was found by Muggsie Krister at Headlands Beach SP on May 29 (Hannikman).

**SUMMER TANAGER** - A molting male was at Shaker Lakes on May 15 (Deinger, Peskin).

**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** - A bird was reported from Lakeshore Metropark on Apr. 22 (Pogacnik).

**HENSLOW'S SPARROWS** - Bird were reported from Girdled Road Park on May 17 and Penitentiary Glen on May 18 (Pogacnik).

**NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW** -. One was studied carefully at Holden Arboretum on May 11 (Klaus). This was our first Spring report since 1992.

**DICKCISSEL** - Lozano found a breeding plumaged male at Kirtland Park on May 3. Frank Greenland and Jim Heflich photographed it there later in the day. Harlan and Wagner found singles at Horseshoe Pond on May 10 and in Lorain Co. on May 23.

**BLUE GROSBEAK** - A male was observed by a single reporter at Headlands Beach SP on May 8 (Barber). Chapin Forest provided another single observer report on May 18 (Pogacnik).





## Spring Birding at Firestone Metropark by Ed Pierce

As I look over the tabulated results for May at Firestone Metropark this year, the warbler migration seems normal. We had a minimum of 13 warbler species and a maximum of 18 from May 5 through May 12 with the 18 on May 12. However, these figures are deceiving. I felt the total number of each warbler was greatly reduced (e.g., Chestnut-sided Warbler was at 1, 2, & 3 most days during this period; Magnolias and Redstarts were in the same low totals). Additionally, none of the rare species for the park were found, such as Golden-winged, Orange-crowned, Connecticut, Kentucky, Worm-eating, or Hooded.

April was slow for all migrant species. Eight warbler and 2 vireo species were seen before May 1. Baltimore Orioles were not seen until May 3, and Common Yellowthroat, not until May 5. The weather was probably too good. From about April 22 to May 5, the prevailing winds were northeast. Beautiful, clear, chilly, sunny days, but no migrants. When the wind shifted southerly on May 5, migration for the park began; but by May 12, it was essentially over, as the days became consistently sunny and warmer.

My guess is the bulk of the migrants went over or around us, leaving us to ferret out among the much advanced vegetation the

remnant. Clearly, the bird of the season at Firestone MP was the Northern Goshawk seen by 17 members of the Kirtland Bird Club near the end of their May 1 field trip. It was about 10:30 AM and we had just passed the ponds on the way back to Tuscarawas Meadow when someone noticed a hawk soaring over the marsh. It turned out to be a Broad-winged. As it moved off, a second bird appeared, soaring low over the marsh. Rob Harlan identified it as an adult Northern Goshawk. (This would be the third time in four days he had seen the species in the Akron-Cleveland area for the Spring!)

The bird was relatively low when first seen, soaring in circles and climbing with each circle. We saw a dark and light multi-banded tail with white undertail fluffs billowing out and over the top of the bird's tail, giving a white rump appearance. As the bird soared on spread wings, it had a Red-tailed buteo appearance, but with a tail narrower and longer than a Red-tail. However the tail was not as long appearing in relation to the body of the bird as a Cooper's Hawk.

We were lucky to have among our number that day--Tom LePage, Elinor Elder, Paula Lozano, Dave Ford, Bob Finkelstein, Karin Tanquist, Ted Gilliland, Ben Winger, Dave LeGallee, Sandy Wagner, and, of course, Rob, among others. A great view by all!

## Starving Tree Swallow at The Wilds by Ben Winger

On March 25, my parents agreed to take me birding in The Wilds, near the town of Cambridge. It

was my spring break, and we were not vacationing anywhere (such as Florida). The day was chilly and very gray, making the old strip mine appear eerie. The bird life was not spectacular; the only songs were coming from a few scattered Eastern Meadowlarks among the hills. I did not mind however, because February reports indicated that I could expect to reach at least the mid-30's in Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Harrier tallies. When at two o'clock, I had only counted three rough-leggeds and one harrier, my attitude changed a little.

Around 3:30, we were getting very hungry, so we set out to find a place to eat in the small town of Cumberland. Despite disappointing birding that afternoon, I was still on the lookout, when a white and green flash on the side of the road caught my eye. "Tree Swallow," I yelled; and since that species had been a life bird for me when I spotted it earlier that day, I got out of the car to take a closer look. The bird was sitting next to the curb in the road, so I realized that it must not be able to move. I went to retrieve it from the dangers of the street. When I bent over to pick the swallow up, it managed to move itself farther into the road by skittering along the ground like a coot across water. I chased it onto the grass, where I picked it up. Once the swallow and I were safely back in the car (to the surprise of my mom and dad), I was able to examine it more closely. Its incredibly gorgeous plumage was completely unmarked; the blinding white underside contrasted the amazing blue green iridescence of the back along a clear cut line. At close range, I could see that its beady black eye was surrounded by a faint dark mask, it

stretching from the top of the small, flat beak to where it faded at the back of the eye.

As Harvey Webster of the Cleveland Museum on Natural History had taught me to do when I rescued a Ring-billed Gull in January, I examined the swallow's keel. The swallow, just like the gull, had a sharp keel and was very skinny, so I concluded that it had been starving for sometime and had begun to digest its muscle tissue. We put the bird in a cardboard box from the general store in Cumberland, and decided the plan for the rest of the day. Realizing that it was unrealistic to go all the way back to The Wilds with the swallow to see the Short Eared Owls come out, we proceeded home. The swallow stayed at my house until the next morning, when I brought it to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History's Wildlife Resources animal room, where I regularly volunteer. There, Harvey Webster confirmed my assessment about the starving swallow. He told the animal room staff and me to put it on a meal worm and cricket diet, which was the closest available food source to a swallow's regular diet of flying insects. The Tree Swallow, which I named Jim, was rehabilitated in the animal room until April 11, when I released it at Horseshoe Lake in Shaker Heights.

There were several major things that I noticed about Jim the Tree Swallow's behavior. The most striking is the fact that from the first time I picked it up off the road until just a few days before I released it, the bird would sit calmly on my index finger while I fed it, with hardly any apparent attempt to get away! Was the swallow just so weak and over-

whelmed that it temporarily became tame? Probably, because as it gained strength each day, it became less and less tolerant of me. As for eating, it did quite well. At first, we had to force feed it, which was a multiple person job. One person would hold the bird (or let it sit on his finger) and another person would use a dropper to dribble water on its mouth. When it opened its mouth to swallow the water, someone with a long fingernail would have to pry apart the delicate upper and lower mandibles to stuff in a meal worm. After the first five or so meal worms and dismembered crickets, Jim figured out that they were, in fact, food, and began eating on his own. I had to fill his small food tray several times a day to keep up with his large appetite. Occasionally, the Tree Swallow had trouble getting a whole cricket in its tiny mouth, which is smaller than my pinky nail, and it would hop away. However, by April 11, Jim had eaten his way to strength and had begun to try to fly out of his cage. He would no longer sit on my finger, so we decided to release him before he worked himself up too much.

As stated, on Sunday the 11th, I took the bird over to Horseshoe Lake on my way home from the museum. There were 20 or so other Tree Swallows and four or five Northern Rough-winged Swallows flying over the lake. I threw Jim into the air, and he headed straight for the water. I thought, "Oh no, he's gonna fall into the water and drown!" But just like a swallow, he pulled up in the nick of time and resumed his routine acrobatics as if nothing had happened.

## Peregrine Updates by Scott Wright

**March 21, 1999**

Clearpath has found a new mate and is now at Case Western Reserve University on the Bio Medical Research building. Her mate is unknown.

New pair in downtown Cleveland. Not on the Terminal Tower. This pair is taking up territory from Cleveland State University to East 13 St. Is this the pair being seen on the Hanna Building? Could be.

The male and female of the new pair were seen atop the apartment building on the corner of East 13 and Chester. He was doing aerial displays and bringing her food. The male is very dark blue/gray. (Bullet is a light gray). The female is very buff and missing different primary feathers than Zenith. Who are they? All I can say is that they are not the Terminal Tower pair and not the LTV pair.

**April 6, 1999**

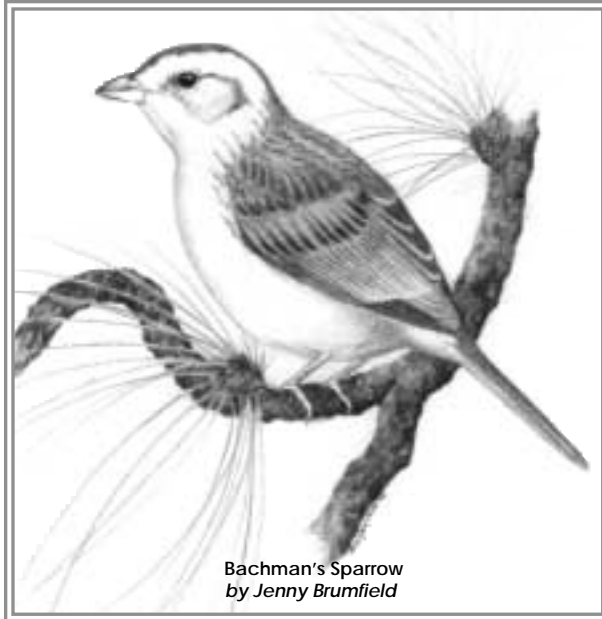
Terminal Tower Cleveland  
First egg laid today.

Akron nest has 4 eggs.

LTV Cleveland eggs laid (3?)

Case Western Reserve University Status unknown, birds are still using the gutter of the BRB (Bio Medical Research building) This site has yet to produce. Are eggs getting washed literally down the drain? (ODW placed nest box last year and moved it to Lerner Tower this year, Birds are showing no interest in box and like the gutter).





Bachman's Sparrow  
by Jenny Brumfield

Update on Sunrise--the female that Zenith fought with a few years back. She has taken a new mate, one of her offspring from a previous year. (Detroit area)

As for the second nesting pair in downtown Cleveland, I cannot mention the building that a nest box was installed upon last week. (the building's owner does not wish the location public knowledge) But the birds may have other plans and have shifted to Fenn Tower on the campus of Cleveland State University where they are being seen at CSU on a regular basis. Will they lay eggs at CSU or in the Nest box that ODW placed last week? Only time will tell.

#### **April 13, 1999**

Terminal Tower, Cleveland. 4 eggs laid as of 4/13/99 with incubation under way.

New nest site in downtown Cleveland. 3 eggs laid. The Male at this site is "Wizard" from Indiana. Female is still unknown. LTV Cleveland. 4 Eggs laid.

Hilliard Road Bridge. Unknown at this time. Birds have probably laid and are incubating. (Only one bird is being seen at a time). Nest location still unknown.

Case Western Reserve University. Nest box moved to Learner Tower. Birds have shown no interest in the box and "Clearpath" is hanging in the gutter.

## **A Bachman's Sparrow Sighing Revisited**

*by Vernon Weingart*

I wonder whether, today, 50 years later, you would be willing to accept this record, coming from a total stranger, based on only the following evidence.

" Referring to the Pinewoods Sparrow, I realize there is little likelihood of having the observation of as bird so difficult to identify accepted, especially when made by a person unfamiliar with the bird in question. However, in my own defense, here follows a summary of the reasoning which led to the identification of this bird.

I question whether a person unfamiliar with the Pinewoods Sparrow could conclusively identify it be sight alone. If possible, it could be done only by close observation, in good light, using the comparison and elimination method.

1. Upon finding the bird, I immediately compared it with both the

Grasshopper and Field Sparrows which were present, and found this bird to differ with them quite sharply in appearance. A. The Grasshopper Sparrow was smaller and had a much shorter tail. In addition, the bird in question sang exclusively in low trees on perches 5 to 20 feet high. B. This bird lacked the pink bill, ruddy cap, white wing bars, and blank face of the Field Sparrow.

2. This bird lacked the striking facial and head markings of Chipping, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows.

3. This bird resembled the Swamp Sparrow more closely than any of the fore-mentioned, though they could hardly be confused. It lacked the Swamp Sparrows ruddy cap and contrasting light throat. The Swamp Sparrow is a darker bird, and would hardly be found in a high dry habitat.

This bird's song was its most distinguishing feature, and was the outstanding factor leading to its identification. The song was very musical, carried well, and was repeated 4 to 5 times per minute. I compared this song with the Albert R. Brand Bird Song Foundation recording, and found the two songs to be absolutely identical. The bird in question repeated all but the first of the song variations found on the recording.

Though I make no claim to being infallible, I sincerely believe my observation of this bird to have been made with sufficient care and to be backed with sufficient experience and knowledge so as to remove any reasonable doubt (short of a mutational variation) concerning its identity as as Pinewoods Sparrow."



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

**RARE BIRD HOTLINE:** (216) 526-2473 (BIRD) 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 Shannon Spyker at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, (216) 231-4600 ext. 309

**FIELD REPORTS, ARTWORK, PAPERS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS** should be sent to Larry Rosche, 7473 Sylvan Drive, Kent, Ohio 44240.  
e-mail: lorofs@aol.com

# CLEVELAND REGION BIRDING SITES



1. Lorain Harbor
  2. Findley State Park & Wellington Reservoir
  3. Portage Lakes
  4. Mogadore Reservoir
  5. West Branch State Park
  6. Lake Rockwell\*
  7. LaDue Reservoir\*
  8. Cuyahoga Valley National Park
  9. Bedford Reservation
  10. Brecksville Reservation
  11. West Creek Preserve
  12. Rocky River Reservation
  13. Avon Lake Power Plant
  14. Edgewater Park & Perkins Beach (Cleveland Lakefront State Park)
  15. Burke Airport
  16. East 72nd St. Marina & Gordon Park (Cleveland Lakefront State Park)
  17. Villa Angela & Wildwood Yacht Basin (Cleveland Lakefront State Park)
  18. Sims Park
  19. Eastlake Power Plant
  20. Mentor Marsh and Lagoons
  21. Headlands Beach State Park
  22. Lakeshore Metropark
  23. Headwaters Park
  24. Lake Medina
  25. North Chagrin Reservation
  26. Tinkers Creek State Nature Preserve
  27. Hinckley Reservation
  28. Mill Stream Run Reservation
  29. Shaker Lakes
  30. Lakeview Cemetery
  31. Berlin Reservoir
  32. Happy Days (CVNP)
  33. Big Creek Metropark
  34. Spencer Lake State Wildlife Area
  35. Oberlin Reservoir
  36. Rocky River Park
  37. Seiberling Naturealm
  38. Sandy Ridge Reservation
  39. Wolf Creek Environmental Center
  40. Holden Arboretum\*
- \*Restricted/limited access

