

Site Guide

Lake County Shoreline

Larry Rosche

Birding the Lake County shoreline can be as exciting as any area along Lake Erie. If you have a decent map and a spirit of adventure, locating the following areas should prove to be fairly easy.

Starting near the Cuyahoga-Lake County line, the birder finds the town of Willowick. Willowick Lakefront Park lies on the north side of Lakeshore Boulevard (SR 283) across from the east end of Shore Gate Plaza. The park offers an excellent panoramic view of the lake. You can scan for scoters, ducks, and gulls from the benches or if the weather is inclement from the shelter building. The park has a wooded fencerow which produces migrant passerines and the raptors that accompany them.

Moving east a few miles on Lakeshore Boulevard (SR 283) you enter Eastlake. Turn north on Erie Street and follow it to the municipal parking area below the Eastlake power plant. This has long been an area for gull and waterfowl watching by Greater Clevelanders. Rarities include Eared and Red-necked grebes, Barrow's goldeneye, Scoters, Black-legged kittiwake, Lesser black-backed, California, Iceland and Little gulls, to name a few. Gulls gather from late October until early spring. Gulls usually are visible at very close range, but a scope is needed when they are resting on the breakwalls. This is the only area in Ohio where I have photographed multiple Black-legged kittiwakes.

Return south on SR 91 to SR 2, drive east to SR 44 and then north to Headlands Beach State Park. This is Lake County's answer to the Magee Marsh bird trail. On a weekend in May it is not uncommon to encounter up to ten other birders walking the natural area at the east end of the park. Several passes through the dunes and cottonwoods can produce a healthy day list during migration. After birding the natural area, try hiking the trail behind Shipman Pond. This area is reached from the near west end parking area. I am particularly fond of this area. I was among observers who watched a LeConte's sparrow sitting on a branch scratching its head only five feet from the trail. Imitating a Screech owl can bring many birds out of the dense habitat of rushes and reeds. The pond also has many dead snags which are used by a variety of species including Red-headed woodpeckers, Prothonotary warblers, and occasional Merlin. Overall, more than 260 species have been reliably recorded in the Headlands vicinity. These include Red-throated loon, Western kingbird, Bell's vireo, Yellow-throated warbler, Connecticut warbler and the aforementioned LeConte's sparrow. The number of birds is often mindboggling, especially in the fall. It is not unusual to see 20 plus winter wrens and many sparrows and warblers for several weekends in a row from September through early October. The mouth of the Grand River is attractive to gulls, terns, and waterfowl. Bonaparte's gulls often gather in excellent numbers and up to five Little gulls have been seen in a day. The breakwalls provide excellent habitat for the rare Purple sandpiper, which is reported almost yearly.

Winding one's way across the river into Fairport Harbor, you find more opportunities for excellent lake watching and migrant landbirds. The harbor is readily accessible. You can sit in your car with your scope mounted on the window and view the mouth of the Grand River. The park at the harbor has trees and brushy areas which can be excellent for passerines. The beach often has resting gulls and Sanderlings. All three phalaropes have been seen in the area. Drive to the east end of Second Street and park on the high bluff overlooking Lake Erie. You can scan behind the breakwalls from this vantage point to see the numbers of divers that use the area to rest and feed.

After lunch at one of the fine seafood restaurants in the area, head east on SR 2 until it becomes SR 20 in the town of Perry. Turn north on Perry Park Road and drive slowly through the brushy areas on the left and right before the railroad tracks. A Northern shrike spent the winter of 1985-86 and 1986-87 in this area. It is one of the few areas where White-crowned sparrows winter regularly in the Cleveland region outside of Lorain County. Continue to Perry Park, and you will find an excellent Lake Erie watching location. Harlequin duck, Bald eagle, and Parasitic jaeger are just a few of the fly-bys seen by observers here.

Although only five areas have been described here, you can see Lake County has much to offer. If you are in the Cleveland area, feel free to call me (1-216-678-9408). I would probably be able to show you any or all of the above areas if given ample notice.

LOCATION CROSS REFERENCE

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>
Barberton	Summit	Lake Rockwell	Portage
Bayshore	Lucas	Little Portage WA	Ottawa
Beavercreek Res.	Seneca	Magee Marsh WA	Ottawa/Lucas
Bresler Res.	Allen	Maumee Bay SP	Lucas
Buck Creek SP	Clark	Medusa Marsh	Erie
CJ Brown Res.	Clark	Mentor Headlands SBP	Lake
Cedar Point	Erie	Metzger Marsh	Lucas
Cedar Point NWR	Lucas	Mosquito Creek Res.	Trumbull
Clark Lake	Clark	Navarre Marsh	Ottawa
Crane Creek SP	Lucas	Oak Openings	Lucas
Cuyahoga Valley NRA	Cuyahoga/ Summit	Oberlin Res.	Lorain
Deer Creek SP	Pickaway	Ottawa Nat. Wild. Ref.	Ottawa/Lucas
Eastlake	Lake	Oregon	Lucas
East Fork SP	Clermont	Oxbow area	Hamilton
Englewood Reserve	Montgomery	Painesville	Lake
Ferguson Res.	Allen	Parma	Cuyahoga
Findley SP	Lorain	Perrysburg	Wood
Firestone Metropark	Summit	Resthaven WA	Erie
Germantown Reserve	Montgomery	Salem	Mahoning
Gordon Park	Cuyahoga	Sheldon's Marsh	Erie
Grand Lake St. Mary's	Mercer	South Bass Is.	Erie
Hinckley Lake	Medina	Spring Valley WA	Greene
Hoover Res.	Delaware	Springville Marsh	Seneca
Hueston Woods SP	Preble	Sugarcreek Res.	Greene
Huron	Erie	Vermilion	Erie
Kent	Portage	Waterville	Lucas
Killdeer Plains	Wyandot	Winous Point	Ottawa

OBSERVERS

Kirk Alexander (KA)	Kent Glauser (KG)	Harry McMaken (HM)
Matt Anderson (MA)	Bruce Glick (BG)	Lee McNeely (LM)
Bill Arnold (BA)	Nan Groves (NG)	Morris Mercer (MM)
Carole Babyak (CB)	Ray Hannikman (RHa)	Lyla Messick (LMe)
Lynn Barnhart (LB)	Betty Hardesty (BH)	Jeff Miller (JM)
Tom Bartlett (TB)	Robert Harlan (RH)	Kathy Mock (KM)
Sue Baxter (SB)	Jim Hickman (JH)	Carol Molleran (CM)
Joe Bens (JB)	Jim Hill (JHi)	Jack Molleran (JM)
Charles/Betty Berry (CBB)	Tom Hissong (TH)	Pete Montion (PM)
Chet Bowsher (CBo)	Clayton Hofstetter (CH)	Ann/Bill Moring ABM
Nancy Brundage (NB)	Judy Howard (JHo)	Dane Mutter (DM)
Joe/Cathy Caminiti (JCC)	Betty Hultgren (BHg)	Maynard Neal (MN)
Cliff Cathers (CC)	Sam Johnson (SJ)	Dave Nolan (DN)
Laurie Cathers (LC)	Tom Kemp (TK)	Doug Overacker (DO)
Dwight/Ann Chasar (DAC)	Carol Kennedy (CK)	Ed/Cheryl Pierce ECP
Harry Connor (HC)	Mike Knauer (MK)	John Pogacnik (JP)
Nancy Cook (NC)	Kathy Knoblet (KK)	Ken Powers (KP)
Rick Counts RC)	Joe Komorowski (JK)	Worth Randle (WR)
Robert Cutter (RCu)	Steve Lee (SL)	Larry Rosche (LR)
Eric Durbin (ED)	Tom LePage (TL)	John Shrader (JS)
Jeff Eller (JE)	Jean Hughes (JHu)	Jim Simpson (JSI)
Duncan Evered (DE)	Tim Little (TLi)	Jim Smallwood (JSm)
Nancy Ferris (NF)	Charlotte Mathena (CM)	Maggie Stack (MSt)
Ken Fulmer (KF)	Jeff Maugans (JM)	Jay Stenger (JSt)
Larry Gara (LG)	S. McIntire (SM)	Dave Styer (DS)
		Mark Shieldcastle MS
		Erdine Thompson ETH
		Elliot Tramer (ET)
		Paul Wharton (PW)
		Art Wiseman (AW)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Thanks to everyone involved in reviving THE OHIO CARDINAL. I read Mark Shieldcastle's letter to the editor in the summer 1987 issue with more than casual interest. I also wondered why the article that I sent in about the Kirtland's Warbler was changed from reading "Magee Marsh Bird Trail," as I had written it, to "Crane Creek Bird Trail," by your editors. Mark's concern is understandable.

Nonetheless, your early efforts to publish news about Ohio birding are commendable and greatly appreciated by me.

Kent Glauser
Toledo, Ohio

Sir,

By your survival and persistence you have earned my renewal and I will include a couple of comments. The articles on bird distribution and factors changing distribution in Ohio are of greatest interest to me, especially if clearly written and well annotated. It appears to me that the species report list could be set on a compressed format without loss of content or accessibility.

Although it is proper to print letters such as Mark Shieldcastle's, I would not take his remarks too seriously because the important thing is that corrections are made when inaccuracies found, not that a field is provided for academic jousting.

Randy Jones
Poland, Ohio