

**Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District
1997 Bird Survey Results**

During the month of June, eight bird surveys were conducted in four of the Metro parks. The surveys took place in the early morning using a 10 minute point count method. For surveying the nature trails, transects were established using the trail as the transect and surveying using the 10 minute point method every 250 meters. At Clear Creek Metropark, Clear Creek Road was used as the transect with survey points every .5 miles. The total number of hours devoted to the surveys conducted was 17 hours.

Blendon Woods; Nature Trail transect (Franklin Co., Blendon Twp.)

The survey along the nature trail is newly established. The survey was conducted 6 June in 1 hr and 40 minutes and on 30 June in reverse order taking 2 hrs. Thirty-two species were recorded with 141 individuals counted. Notable species included Eastern Phoebe and Hooded Warbler. A pair of Red-shouldered Hawks were present all summer.

Battelle-Darby Creek Metropark; Darby Wildlife Area (Franklin Co., Pleasant Twp.)

In its 6th year, this 2 hour and 15 minute survey was done 20 June. The survey consists of 13 different fields that are surveyed as blocks for total of 15 species. No significant species were found.

Slate Run Metropark; Marcy Road Grassland and Nature Trail transect (Pickaway Co., Madison Twp.)

A grassland survey along Marcy Rd. on 9 June took 1 hour and 40 minutes, recording 25 species and 136 individuals. Highlights include 6 Bobolinks, 28 Grasshopper Sparrows, 5 Savannah Sparrows, and 1 Henslow's Sparrow. A second nature trail survey was conducted 10 June in 4 hours and 20 minutes. This survey recorded 44 species and 217 individuals. Significant species include 2 Eastern Phoebes, 3 Northern Parula, 1 Cerulean Warbler, and a Red-shouldered hawk.

Clear Creek; Starner Rd. hemlocks, Benua Lake hemlocks, and Clear Creek Rd. transect. (Hocking Co., good Hope Twp.)

Three surveys were made; Clear Creek Road, 17 June for 3 hours; Benua Lake, 10 June for 1 hour; Starner Rd., 8 June for ? hours. Notable along Clear Creek Road were several Northern Parula, several Cerulean Warbler, 3 Veerys, a Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawk. Of interest at Benua Lake was a Chestnut-sided Warbler, while at Starner Rd. species of note included Veery, Cerulean Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, and several Northern Parula. Combined, the three surveys had a total of 66 species and 435 individuals. Elsewhere in the park, the Canada Warbler, Black Vulture, and Hermit Thrush nested.

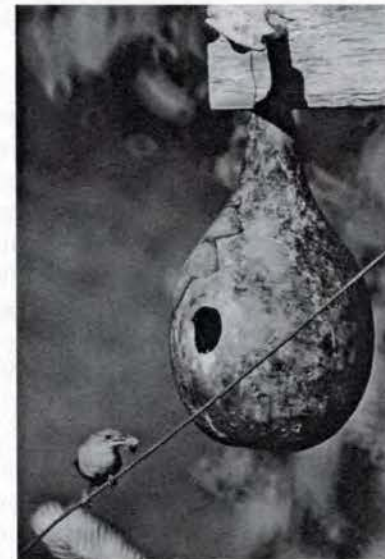
Other Notable Records

Battelle-Darby Creek - in Galbreath Field: 30-25 pairs of Bobolinks and Savannah Sparrows. This represents the largest known remaining population of Bobolinks in Franklin Co. A small colony of Sedge Wrens was discovered in late July with up to 9 territorial males. Birds carrying food were observed. Chestnut-sided Warbler successfully fledged young in early August for the first documented nesting record in Franklin Co.

Chestnut Ridge Metropark: A female Hooded Merganser with 14 young was observed on the small wetland next to the lake. They have been present two of the last three years and presumably used one of the Wood Duck boxes.

Highbanks Metropark: Pied-billed Grebes nested for the 5th consecutive year at the wetlands.

Pickerington Ponds Wetland Wildlife Refuge: Approximately 40 nests were active at the Great Blue Heron Rookery.



House Wren :
Tiffin, Seneca Co., June 1997
Photo : Vic Fazio

Notes on Cerulean Warbler Nesting
by Dwight Chasar

The nesting chronology of the Cerulean Warbler *Dendroica cerulea* in Ohio is not well documented (Peterjohn and Rice 1991). Their feeding and nesting in the upper canopy of tall trees (20-100 ft) in unbroken expanses of forest does nothing to ease nest discovery or observation of nesting behavior. This note documents a nesting in the Pinery Narrows of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreational Area on the Summit Co. side of the Cuyahoga River.

While Ann Chasar, Wilbur McQueen, and I were observing newly fledged Cerulean Warblers being fed by adults on the evening of 9 July 1997, we observed a small bird flying by us carrying nesting material. We followed a female Cerulean Warbler to a nearly completed nest on a Sycamore limb about 35 ft. high and 15 ft. out from the trunk. The limb extended directly over the towpath allowing for extended observation. Ann thought this nest looked like that of a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, while I thought it was similar to that of an Eastern Wood-Pewee. Harrison (1975) suggests that it may look like either. The female flew several times to grapevines just above our heads, gathered more material and returned to the nest. Females are reported to be the nest builders although there is an element of doubt [Ehrlich et al. 1988, Harrison 1984, Mengel 1965]. As some nests had fledged, the timing of this nest likely indicates a second nesting attempt (pers. comm. Sara Barker, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology). First nestings have been reported throughout June and early July (Peterjohn and Rice 1991, Williams 1950).

The nest appeared completed by the 10th as we did not observe further gathering of material by the female. By the 13th, the female was remaining on the nest for longer periods of time suggesting that incubation had begun. Allowing a rate of one egg per day, three eggs had been laid. A number of visits to the nest through the 23rd was uneventful. On the 24th the female was sitting higher in the nest, it appeared the eggs had hatched. Short subsequent visits after this time did not reveal the adults feeding young until the 27th. On the 29th, we could see some fuzzy heads in the nest and on 1 August confirmed three nestlings were present. On 3 August, between 7 and 10 am, three fledglings left the nest (pers. comm. McQueen). At 5 pm that day one was located about 10 ft higher than the nest, while the next morning one was located in an adjacent tree with a parent in attendance.

Incubation was estimated at 12 days agreeing with several sources (Harrison 1975, Ehrlich et al. 1988) which give 12-13 days. Fledgling data is especially sparse (Baicich and Harrison 1997). Our estimate of 10 days is corroborated by Cornell Laboratory for Ornithology. Retrieval of the nest, allowed for closer examination. Outside diameter = $2 \frac{3}{4}$ inches, inside diameter = $2 \frac{1}{8}$ inches, inside depth = $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and outside depth = $1 \frac{1}{4}$ inches. Compared with dimensions in Harrison (1975), this nest was of the same outside diameter but

flatter. The nest was woven with bark strips and grasses, bound on the outside with spider silk, and lined on the inside with fine stiff brown grasses. Cotton from the cottonwood tree was also present. The nest is in the possession of the Brecksville Nature Center, Cleveland Metroparks.

Literature Cited

- Baicich, P.J. and Harrison, C. 1997. 2nd Ed. A Guide to the Eggs, and Nestlings of North America. Academic Press.
- Ehrlich, P.R., Dobkin, D.S., and Wheye, D. 1988. The Birder's Handbook. Simon & Schuster Inc.
- Harrison, H.H. 1975. A Field Guide to Bird Nests. Houghton Mifflin Co.
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- Peterjohn, B.G. and Rice, D.L. 1991. The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas. Ohio Department of Natural Resources.
- Williams, A.B. 1950. Birds of the Cleveland Region. Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



Cerulean Warbler :
Original 1999 Artwork by
Jenny Brumfield

