

Birders Needed as Volunteers for Project

For the study he describes below, Mark Miller needs as volunteers Ohio birders who regularly bird favorite areas. You can help by describing the habitat in the area you choose, then collecting data (notes on time, weather, numbers of birds and species detected) during a few visits there during breeding season and mid-winter. This is a perfect opportunity to make a regular morning bird-walk, or frequent visits to a favorite birding area, into something more meaningful—for the scientific enterprise, and perhaps even for bird populations in your area. The record-keeping duties are easy, and the rewards could be considerable. Probably every reader of *The Ohio Cardinal* could contribute to this worthwhile effort without a lot of extra effort; please consider it. —Ed.

Profound changes have been documented in Ohio's avian community over the previous century. We know this by comparing current observations with records published in the early 1900s, by examining Christmas Bird Counts, and more recently from changes documented by the Breeding Bird Survey. While we have learned much from these sources, the data gathered in these projects are usually very large-scale. As a result, avian trends documented with these data usually cannot be correlated to changes in habitat. If habitat change in Ohio is driving change in Ohio's bird community, we need to document this relationship carefully to enable us to protect and manage our avifauna.

Last year I initiated a large-scale volunteer-oriented survey of Ohio's wintering and breeding bird communities. This survey uses modern sight-resight techniques, analogous to capture-mark-recapture statistical methodology, to estimate species richness on a relatively small scale. Habitat composition within each surveyed area is described annually. If enough volunteers participate in this project, more rigorous testing for correlations between avian community dynamics and habitat change will be possible than with existing large-scale surveys.

This new survey will be described in detail in the Summer 2000 issue of *Ohio Birds and Natural History*; I will also gladly send details upon request. It requires of participants 3-5 visits between late May and early July, but mostly in June, to record all species encountered in an area of your choosing. Another set of 3-5 visits to that same area between 15 December-15 February, but mostly in January, will enable comparison between winter and summer communities. Even if only a few individuals adopt this sampling approach, I believe the observations documented by those birders will be invaluable over time, and Ohio's avifauna will benefit. If you are interested in learning more about this survey, and how you can participate, please contact me.

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Another look at the Cleveland Hts., Cuyahoga Co., white-winged crossbill. Photo by Laura Gooch (13 March 2000).



Long-eared owls were conspicuous again this year at Killdeer Plains WA, Wyandot Co. This one was viewed and photographed by Len Powlick during the period.