

ted to the Ohio Bird Records Committee for review with the following points in mind: 1) A picture is worth a thousand words. Photographs showing the bird's upperparts and wingtips while perched, the outstretched wing showing the color patterns, and the underparts showing the undertail coverts and rectrices would provide necessary details for species identification; 2) A recording of the bird's call/song or call note is worth a whole lot more than the picture; 3) Both pictures and recordings at the same time would be priceless. (With the increasing affordability of video cameras, rare bird documentation can be taken to new levels. A video camera allows a better zoom, especially held up to the eyepiece of a spotting scope, provides evidence of behavior, and can capture any sound the bird might make. All the operator has to do is push the record button.) Many readers are probably uttering foul words at this point. Do not fret. If a birder has a collared dove in view and no camera or tape recorder available, detailed notes and sketches will suffice. The key factors involved in separating Eurasian collared-doves from ringed turtle-doves are size, shape, overall color, primary color, wing pattern, undertail covert color, undertail pattern, and call. Noting these will go a long way toward identifying the bird and adding a new species to the Ohio list.

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## The Breeding Birds of Sandy Ridge Reservation

by Sean T. Zadar and Ted Gilliland

Sandy Ridge Reservation (SRR) is a mitigated wetland located in the northeast corner of Lorain County, and part of the Lorain County Metro Parks. Opened to the public in Fall 1999, the approximately 310-acre wildlife preserve offers habitat for a variety of forest and wetland avifauna. To the north, a gravel path guides visitors southward through a seasonally flooded oak/maple forest that attracts several breeding species from the neotropics, including Acadian flycatcher, great crested flycatcher, yellow-throated vireo, wood thrush, scarlet tanager, ovenbird, and rose-breasted grosbeak (see Table for complete list). Further south, the forest gives way to a diked wetland of over 100 acres. Here a trail atop the dikes grants access to the wetland, and a centrally located observation mound provides a panoramic view of the surroundings.



At Sandy Ridge, the wetland is the center of avian activity. Throughout migration an assortment of waterfowl frequents the area, on occasion arriving on the scene in good numbers. Eight northern shovelers, for example, were reported here for spring of 2000 (*The Cleveland Bird Calendar* 96:2). Other waterfowl using SRR as a stopover site include wood duck, American black duck, mallard, blue-winged teal, green-winged teal, American wigeon, ring-necked duck, hooded merganser, ruddy duck, and American coot. Shorebird movements in the area, on the other hand, have been rather unremarkable, with only a smattering of sightings, mostly of greater and lesser yellowlegs, killdeer, and spotted sandpipers.

During a breeding bird survey between 7 June and 19 July 2000, 64 avian species were recorded in the forest and wetland regions. The survey was conducted along the main trails and restricted-access trail with permission (Table). Standard point counts were conducted during seven scheduled weekly visits involving 22.8 hours and 14 foot miles. As a supplement, spot mapping was implemented to plot out the approximate territories of selected species such as least bittern, American bittern, Virginia rail, sora, and marsh wren. The census discovered two summering ruddy duck males and two nesting pairs. Peterjohn in *The Birds of Ohio* (1989) calls this species a rare but regular summer resident along west-



Table. Results of the 2000 breeding bird census at Sandy Ridge Reservation, Lorain County, Ohio. Data were collected on a weekly basis between 7 June and 19 July. Numbers indicate singing males or mated pairs.

Pied-billed Grebe	6	Great Crested Flycatcher	3
Least Bittern	2	Yellow-throated Vireo	2
American Bittern	1	Red-eyed Vireo	5
Green Heron	2	Warbling Vireo	4
Canada Goose	7	Blue Jay	4
Wood Duck	2	Tree Swallow	3
Mallard	8	N. Rough-winged Swallow	1
Blue-winged Teal	1	Barn Swallow	2
Hooded Merganser	1	Tufted Titmouse	3
Ruddy Duck	2	Black-capped Chickadee	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	2
Red-tailed Hawk	1	House Wren	2
Virginia Rail	2	Marsh Wren	6
Sora	5	Eastern Bluebird	2
Common Moorhen	2	Wood Thrush	3
American Coot	6	American Robin	4
Killdeer	2	Gray Catbird	3
Spotted Sandpiper	1	Brown Thrasher	1
Mourning Dove	1	European Starling	1
Great Horned Owl <sup>a</sup>	1	Blue-winged Warbler	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Yellow Warbler	3
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	Ovenbird	1
Belted Kingfisher	1	Common Yellowthroat	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	Scarlet Tanager	2
Northern Flicker	1	Eastern Towhee	1
Downy Woodpecker	3	Song Sparrow	10
Hairy Woodpecker	1	Swamp Sparrow	2
Eastern Wood-Pewee	3	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5
Acadian Flycatcher	2	Northern Cardinal	3
Willow Flycatcher	2	Indigo Bunting	1
Eastern Phoebe	1	Red-winged Blackbird	10
Eastern Kingbird	2	Baltimore Oriole	4

<sup>a</sup>Active nest observed prior to breeding bird census during April.

ern Lake Erie, and an accidental to casual summer visitor within other glaciated counties. In early July, park personnel observed immature ruddy ducks on the property. Another wetland specialty, pied-billed grebes were consistently observed, for Sandy Ridge offers suitable habitat in the form of scattered open water and rich emergent vegetation, predominantly cattails and sedges. Six pairs of pied-billed grebes produced at least 35 young, and during July their presence was ubiquitous.

Least bitterns and American bitterns were a major attraction for birdwatchers at Sandy Ridge during the period. Two pairs of least bitterns were seen in June and July, with a pair occupying a cattail fragment west of the observation mound, and another pair along the eastern perimeter within emergent vegetation. During late May, five American bitterns had been observed, but in June excessive rain inundated a section of principal habitat, which may account for the numerical reduction in this species through June and July, in which only one pair remained.

In early June, park personnel noted the presence of Cerulean warblers and American redstarts near a river that snakes through a secluded western section of the forest. This area did not fall within the range of the census and it is unclear if these species were summer residents or late migrants. A brief search to ascertain their status in early July was unsuccessful. Another possible breeder, a male prothonotary warbler, sang vigorously in late May and early June, prior to the commencement of the census. Subsequent scheduled visits yielded no prothonotary, and it is assumed the male was unable to attract a mate and consequently moved out of the area.

Sandy Ridge Reservation is located in the city of North Ridgeville, in Lorain County. From I-90, exit to SR 83 (exit 153) and head south. Turn west onto SR 254, then south onto Case Rd. Turn east onto Otten Rd, and the entrance to SRR will be found on the left side of the road. From northbound SR 83, turn west onto US 20; turn north onto Case Rd, then east on Otten Rd.

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All photographs appearing in this article were taken at Sandy Ridge Reservation, Lorain Co., by Sean T. Zadar.