

common. Never fear, though, as we did have a few interesting species, including red-headed woodpecker, northern mockingbird, and dickcissel. Oh, and on July 2, I should mention that we had two American crows. Exactly two.

What sticks in my mind most vividly about our experience is the frustrating and alarming lack of variety of habitat. The landscape is as flat as a steamrolled pancake. Fallow fields and early successional habitats seem practically nonexistent, replaced (this year, at least) almost entirely with fields of soybeans, corn, and wheat. In some portions of the county's northwestern corner, trees are lacking, and you have an unobstructed view all the way to the horizon. Farming is *intensive* here. Virtually every stream we encountered was meticulously channelized, and wetlands appear a long-forgotten novelty. Even most woodlots are too small to be productive, although I'm happy to report that we did find a gem of a woodlot, complete with big timber, in the county's southwestern corner. Also in this corner, the St. Marÿs River provides some productive riparian habitat before escaping into Indiana, although even this refuge is now being degraded by all-terrain vehicles. What we saw was grim indeed.

Now I'm sure we missed some interesting tidbits of habitat, and no doubt we overlooked several bird species as well. But what could not be overlooked was how very depressing, how zealously manipulated, and how clinically antiseptic the treatment of the natural world felt to us here. Nature has been dominated, with everything laid out just so, and all the dusty corners swept scrupulously clean, as in one of those "Twilight Zone" episodes where everything in the quaint little town seems so very nice, perhaps surreally nice. Maybe things aren't as they seem, but the results of this manipulation are here for all to see. And they should be seen. I recommend a visit, if only to help us each appreciate more how good we have it elsewhere. My hat is off to the stout-hearted handful of Van Wert County environmentalists. I hope they can continue to fight the good fight, because it looks like it'll be a long one. Oh, and by the way, if you stop at the local diner during your visit, be sure to order the soy burger on wheat, with a side of corn chips. It'll be fresh.

In sum, I encourage everyone to sample Ohio's summer birding fare as often as possible. After all, such unlikely species as purple gallinule, laughing gull, and western kingbird have nested here in the past, believe it or not. I don't know what new species to expect next, or where it will be found, but at least I have a hunch where it *won't* be found.

*The earth must've been knocked off its axis
To inspire yours truly to verse
Or maybe too much Van Wert County
Is to blame as these verses get worse.*

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Confirmed Nesting Record of a Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* at Clear Creek Metro Park, Hocking County, Ohio

by John Watts, Resource Manager
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Hermit thrushes are regular spring and fall migrants in Ohio, and occasional winter residents, particularly in the southern part of the state (Peterjohn 2001). During the Breeding Bird Atlas years of 1982-1987, hermit thrushes were recorded from five blocks, with nesting confirmed only at two sites in northeastern Ohio. Based on the numbers recorded during the Atlas years, the statewide breeding population was thought to total no more than eight to 12 pairs (Peterjohn and Rice 1991). Metro Parks initiated annual Breeding Birds Surveys at Clear Creek Metro Park in 1994. Since that time, hermit thrushes have been noted nearly annually with between one and eight singing birds present.

On 22 June 2001, while observing an eastern phoebe nest, the author observed an adult hermit thrush on a log carrying food. After approximately 5-10 minutes of observation the nest was located. The habitat was a hemlock ravine with small sandstone cliffs characteristic of Hocking County, Ohio. Closer observation revealed a squarish nest composed almost entirely of moss, placed in the center of a wood fern *Dryopteris carthusiana* with one edge located on a cliff edge approximately 15 feet above the ground. The nest contained two nestlings estimated to be 10 days or so old. Each possessed well-developed primaries and scattered spots on the back and upper shoulder region. The distinctive rusty-brown rump patch was already noticeable.

The nest was observed and photographed on 23 June 2001. During this time, both adults regularly fed the nestlings. Food consisted largely of various adult and larval moths, and at least one large adult crane fly. Several times during this period, the nestlings stood on the edge of the nest and stretched their wings. A recheck of the nest on 24 June 2001 revealed the nestlings had fledged; two unhatched eggs remained in the nest.

Vocalizations among the adults were minimal, as only calls of one or two notes were made between the male and female. While other hermit thrushes were recorded singing in Clear Creek Valley this spring, several visits to the general nesting area of this pair had not revealed their presence until the adult with food was observed. During observations of the pair, another hermit thrush could be heard singing elsewhere in this same ravine.

A total of five hermit thrushes were located by Metro Parks staff within the Clear Creek Valley during the 2001 breeding season. On 12 July 2001, an immature hermit thrush was observed feeding along the Hemlock Trail. It would appear this represented another breeding pair, the male of which had been recorded singing during the spring. This site is in a ravine located approximately three miles from the documented nest site.

The occurrence of hermit thrushes as summer residents in the Hocking County region appears to be on the rise. In 1998, the author located a nearly-completed

hermit thrush nest on the east rim of Conkles Hollow State Nature Preserve on 24 April. During the 2000 breeding season, the author recorded the presence of seven singing birds between Little Rocky and Sheick Hollow State Nature Preserves. They are also noted annually in the Crane Hollow Preserve (Jeff Johnson, pers. comm.). During 1998, Frank Renfrow (pers. comm.) noted at least 30 singing males from the State Forest, State Parks, and State Nature Preserves in Hocking County. Only time will tell if this is a cyclic pattern or if the forests of this region have reached a stage of maturity better adapted for these and other northern species.

REFERENCES

- Peterjohn, B. G. 2001. *The Birds of Ohio*. Second edition. The Wooster Book Co., Wooster.
- Peterjohn, B. G., and D. L. Rice. 1991. *The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlases*. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Columbus.

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Hermit thrushes were confirmed nesters at Clear Creek Metro Park, Hocking Co., this year. Like many other species, hermit thrushes keep their nests tidy by removing fecal sacs. Photo by John Watts on 23 June 2001.

Early Works on Ohio Birds by J. P. Kirtland

Ed. Note: Because they are both rare and valuable, we present here Jared P. Kirtland's two most important works on the birds of Ohio: his 1838 list of the state's birds, plus annotations, and an ornithological report of 1840.

The first presentation consists of Kirtland's list, and annotations to many of the species therein, derived from pp 161-166 and pp 177-187 respectively of his "Report on the Zoology of Ohio"; to these are added marginal notes Kirtland inscribed in his personal copy of Nuttall's Manual of Ornithology (1832-1834) over the succeeding three decades. Published in 1936 by Christy, the marginalia supply new information from the author of the 1838 list, and add species (indicated here by three asterisks) as well. As informal personal notes, they were of course not intended for publication; nevertheless, they add considerably to our knowledge. Here Kirtland's marginalia are enclosed in [brackets], and we add for those species new to the 1838 list the Latin and English names as given and ordered by Nuttall in his Manual, as the names by which Kirtland knew them. We have supplied modern equivalents, when they differ, of both Latin and English names for each entry; except for these and editorial matter indicating errors in the printed text and adding modern nomenclature—each here enclosed in {braces}, plus a few explanatory footnotes—all the words are Kirtland's. Retained are inconsistent spellings and punctuations in the original publications.

The second work presented is his report of bird observations, mostly from the northeastern part of the state, published three years after the first. It, too, first appeared in a source now difficult to find, though Wheaton rescued it from obscurity by reprinting it in his Report (1882, pp 216-220). It is reproduced as it appeared there, again within {braces} modern equivalents of names for some of the species treated, as well as a few explanatory footnotes. We are indebted to Harold Mayfield, Ohio's eminent ornithologist and authority on Kirtland and the warbler that bears his name, for some introductory remarks.

Introducing Jared Potter Kirtland

by Harold F. Mayfield

Ornithology in Ohio is fortunate to have inherited a solid foundation left by Jared Potter Kirtland (1793-1877), who prepared the first checklist of the birds of the state in 1838. Dr. Kirtland was a man of many talents who illuminated everything he touched. He was a physician (medical consultant), teacher, and legislator. He is famous as the father of prison reform in Ohio.

He studied birds before prism binoculars were invented and most birds were identified down the barrel of a shotgun. In those days many ornithologists were physicians. Most of them visited patients in their homes, traveling many miles each day, often on country roads by horse and buggy. Many of them were alert to the wild creatures they saw in the woods and fields they passed. At home they had books and dissecting instruments for preparing specimens, and so they left evidence of their findings.