

Winter Surprise: A January Baltimore Oriole in Ohio

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My husband called me to the breakfast room window, "Karen, you should see this huge goldfinch." OK, OK, we have lots of goldfinches at our thistle feeder and it was probably just fluffed up keeping warm, I thought. But this bird was on our big feeder, the one with sunflower and safflower mix, and it didn't look quite right. The bill gave it away, certainly not a goldfinch's bill. But what was an oriole doing at our feeder in Dayton, Ohio, in the dead of winter—23 January, to be exact, even though it had been rather mild? And what was an oriole doing at a feeder, anyway? Aren't they insect and fruit eaters?

We have been observing the comings and goings of birds in our yard for many years, racking up an impressive 62 species either in or flying over our 3-4-acre wooded suburban yard. Among our more interesting visitors have been summer tanager, fox sparrow, yellow-billed cuckoo, pileated woodpecker, wood thrush, and a nice variety of migrant warblers. This winter we were very pleased to have the red-breasted nuthatch and brown creeper to chase away the season's doldrums, but we never expected an oriole. Nor had we ever seen one here even in summer.

We eventually called the Audubon rare bird alert number here in Dayton, left a message about our bird, and got out all our bird books to figure out what kind of oriole we had. My new Sibley guide, a Christmas gift, came in handy: either a female or first-year male Baltimore oriole. Jim Arnold from the hotline came out and decided it was a first-year male because of the deep yellow color and the dark back. And then more birders came. It was present for over a week, and he came every day, flying between our house and our neighbors' across the street who serve up safflower seed and peanuts. I tried stringing orange sections in strategic locations to enhance our offerings, but he seemed to prefer the seed. I know insects are his number one favorite, especially caterpillars, and I'm wondering if he heard me declare this past year as our "Year of the Butterfly," and somehow got wind of the black swallowtail chrysalis hanging on our porch, and is just biding his time. Or maybe he was after any of the other 13 varieties of butterflies we observed here last summer. Hopefully our wooly worms were well hidden under the leaf litter. But then again, maybe he just preferred seeds. At any rate, there was no need for us to go south this winter; we had a little bit of summer right here in our own backyard.

See page 71 in this issue for one of the author's photographs of this remarkable bird. —Ed. 

The 2001-02 Christmas Bird Counts

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This year we present the results from 60 Christmas Counts conducted entirely or partially in Ohio, down from last year's 62. Most of the results were obtained directly from the Audubon web site at <<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/>>. Audubon cautions that the data have not been reviewed yet. Readers of this report should also be aware that there may be some errors. Three counts—Athens, Clark County, and Gypsum—did not report their results to Audubon, but are included here. Finally, we include the results from Hancock County, which counts the entire county, rather than the standard 15-mile circle.

An asterisk next to an entry in the charts indicates that we received documentation of the sighting. Other reports of unexpected species may also be accurate. I have omitted reports of exotics, and have corrected a few obvious data entry errors. At least I hope they were errors. If your count really did see multiple Tufted Ducks, and no Ring-necked Ducks, then I apologize for taking them away from you in this report.

Unusually warm weather lasted until well into the count period, allowing quite a few unexpected species to linger. We usually get a combined species list of somewhere in the high 140s; this year the tally was 152, plus 5 additional during count week. The most amazing statistic for this year's count is that we found six warbler species. Besides the obvious yellow-rumped warblers, we usually find a couple of common yellowthroats, and even a pine warbler isn't out of the question. But this year we also had Nashville warbler, yellow warbler, and American redstart.

Building on Tom Kemp's article in last winter's issue ("All Time High Ohio Christmas Bird Counts", *The Ohio Cardinal* Vol. 24(2):94-98), this year's count added three new species to our list: brown-headed nuthatch (Burton, 1), yellow warbler (Cuyahoga Falls, 1) and American redstart (Columbus, 1). New high counts were set for mute swan (Gypsum, 43), bald eagle (Gypsum, 63), sandhill crane (Preble County, 200), least sandpiper (Clark County, 3), purple sandpiper (Lake Erie Islands, 11), hairy woodpecker (Millersburg, 148), and white-breasted nuthatch (Millersburg, 639). High counts were tied for red-throated loon (Mentor, 1), green heron (Millersburg, 1), northern shoveler (Ottawa NWR, 23), peregrine falcon (Cleveland, 2), black-headed gull (Elyria-Lorain, 1), and Nashville warbler (Cleveland, 1).

For those who enjoy the competitive aspect of Christmas Counts, Cincinnati and Toledo each found 88 species, followed by Millersburg with 84, Gypsum with 83, Cuyahoga Falls and Wilmot with 77, and Elyria-Lorain and Ragersville with 76. Cuyahoga Falls put 88 counters into the field, plus an additional 56 at feeders, Preble County had 89 in the field, and Toledo had only 31 field counters, but added 236 feeder watchers.

Red-throated Loon	—	—	—	Adams Co.	(82) December 15, 2001
Common Loon	—	—	—	Ashland	(30) December 15, 2001
Pied-billed Grebe	—	—	1	Ashville	(25) December 15, 2001
Horned Grebe	—	—	10	Athens	(78) December 16, 2001
Red-necked Grebe	—	—	—	Beaver Valley	(84) December 15, 2001
Northern Gannet	—	—	—	Buckeye Lake	(56) December 15, 2001
Double-crested Cormorant	—	—	—	Bucyrus	(14) December 15, 2001
Great Blue Heron	16	19	1	Burton	(27) January 1, 2002
Great Egret	—	—	—	Cadiz	(72) January 1, 2002
Black-crowned Night-Heron	—	—	—	Chandlerville	(74) December 29, 2001
Green Heron	—	—	—	Cincinnati	(65) December 30, 2001
Black Vulture	110	—	21	Clark Co.	—
Turkey Vulture	129	—	236	Clermont	(44) December 15, 2001
Snow Goose	—	—	—	Cleveland	(23) December 15, 2001
Canada Goose	277	166	1160	Colombus	(55) December 22, 2001
Mute Swan	—	—	—	—	—
Trumpeter Swan	—	—	—	—	—
Tundra Swan	—	—	2	—	—
swan sp.	—	—	—	—	—
Wood Duck	1	—	—	—	—
Gadwall	4	—	—	—	—
American Wigeon	—	—	CW	—	—
American Black Duck	14	35	—	—	—
Mallard	37	93	33	—	—
Mallard hybrid	—	—	—	—	—
Blue-winged Teal	—	—	—	—	—
Northern Shoveler	—	—	—	—	—
Northern Pintail	—	—	—	—	—
Green-winged Teal	—	—	—	—	—
Canvasback	9	—	—	—	—
Redhead	—	—	—	—	—
Ring-necked Duck	—	—	—	—	—
Greater Scaup	—	—	—	—	—
Lesser Scaup	8	—	2	—	—
scaup sp.	—	—	—	—	—
Surf Scoter	—	—	—	—	—
White-winged Scoter	—	—	—	—	—
Long-tailed Duck	—	—	—	—	—
Bufflehead	11	—	41	—	—
Common Goldeneye	—	—	8	—	—
Hooded Merganser	19	—	—	—	—
Common Merganser	2	—	13	—	—
Red-breasted Merganser	—	—	22	—	—
merganser sp.	—	—	—	4	—
Ruddy Duck	—	—	CW	—	—
duck sp.	—	—	—	—	—
Osprey	—	—	—	—	—
Bald Eagle	—	—	—	—	—
Northern Harrier	14	—	CW	1	—
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	1	1	1	4
Cooper's Hawk	7	3	5	4	2
Northern Goshawk	—	—	7	9	2
Accipiter sp.	—	—	—	9	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	3	1	8	4
Red-tailed Hawk	78	54	19	22	48
Rough-legged Hawk	1	5	1	—	3
Buteo sp.	—	—	—	1	1
Golden Eagle	—	—	—	5	2
American Kestrel	64	32	4	16	35
Merlin	—	—	—	20	14

Cuyahoga Falls	(29) December 16, 2001
Dayton	(60) December 30, 2001
Dalaware Reservoir	(52) December 16, 2001
East Fork Lake S.P.	(9) December 15, 2001
Elyria-Lorain	(20) December 22, 2001
Firelands	CW
Fremont	(B) December 25, 2001
Grand Lake St. Marys	(41) December 22, 2001
Grand Rapids-Waterville	(2) December 29, 2001
Greenville	(43) December 16, 2001
Gypsum	(6) January 1, 2002
Hamilton-Fairfield	(62) December 15, 2001
Hancock Co.	(10) December 15, 2001
Hoover Reservoir	(53) December 15, 2001
Indian Lake	(42) December 15, 2001
Kildeer Plains	(50) December 30, 2001
Kingston	(58) December 30, 2001
Lake Erie Islands	(5) December 14, 2001

Peregrine Falcon		Adams Co.	(32) December 15, 2001
hawk sp.		Ashland	(30) December 15, 2001
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	Ashtrabula	(25) December 15, 2001
Ruffed Grouse		Athens	(78) December 16, 2001
Wild Turkey	61	Beebe Valley	(64) December 15, 2001
Northern Bobwhite	1	Buckeye Lake	(66) December 15, 2001
Virginia Rail		Bucyrus	(14) December 15, 2001
American Coot		Burton	(27) January 1, 2002
Sandhill Crane		Cadiz	(72) January 1, 2002
Killdeer	50	Chandlerville	(74) December 29, 2001
Least Sandpiper		Cincinnati	(65) December 30, 2001
Purple Sandpiper		Clark Co.	(44) December 15, 2001
Common Snipe		Cleveland	(23) December 15, 2001
American Woodcock		Columbus	(56) December 22, 2001
Pomarine Jaeger			
Franklin's Gull			
Little Gull			
Black-headed Gull			
Bonaparte's Gull	3	638	638
Ring-billed Gull	901	2998	2998
Herring Gull	—	460	—
Thayer's Gull	—	1	—
Iceland Gull	—	—	—
Lesser Black-backed Gull	—	—	—
Glaucous Gull	—	1	—
Great Black-backed Gull	—	18	—
gull sp.	—	—	—
Rock Dove	184	261	189
Mourning Dove	730	134	203
Barn Owl	—	497	553
Eastern Screech-Owl	6	53	3
Great Horned Owl	5	3	—
Snowy Owl	—	—	—
Barred Owl	3	1	—
Long-eared Owl	—	—	—
Short-eared Owl	—	—	CW
Northern Saw-whet Owl	—	—	—
Belted Kingfisher	10	8	2
Red-headed Woodpecker	14	4	3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	61	15	52
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	54	49
Dowdy Woodpecker	56	52	38
Hairy Woodpecker	23	10	22
Northern Flicker	37	11	38
Pileated Woodpecker	18	2	10
Eastern Phoebe	1	22	12
Northern Shrike	—	3	—
shrike sp.	—	—	CW
Blue Jay	274	106	314
American Crow	498	339	419
Horned Lark	—	303	612
Bank Swallow	—	434	136
Carolina Chickadee	122	2	92
Black-capped Chickadee	—	218	50
chickadee sp.	—	30	—
Tufted Titmouse	87	13	137
Red-breasted Nuthatch	6	11	13
White-breasted Nuthatch	46	21	21
Brown-headed Nuthatch	—	4	—
Brown Creeper	7	15	2

Cuyahoga Falls	(29) December 16, 2001
Dayton	(60) December 30, 2001
Delaware Reservoir	(52) December 16, 2001
East Fork Lake S.P.	(67) December 29, 2001
Elyria-Lorain	(20) December 12, 2001
Fairmont	(8) December 25, 2001
Findlands	(9) December 15, 2001
Grand Lake St. Marys	(41) December 22, 2001
Grand Rapids-Waterville	(2) December 29, 2001
Greenville	(43) December 16, 2001
Gypsum	(6) January 1, 2002
Hamilton-Fairfield	(62) December 15, 2001
Hancock Co.	(10) December 15, 2001
Hoover Reservoir	(53) December 15, 2001
Indian Lake	(42) December 30, 2001
Killdeer Plains	(50) December 30, 2001
Kingston	(58) December 30, 2001
Lake Erie Islands	(5) December 14, 2001

Red-throated Loon	—	Lakewood	(21)	December 29, 2001
Common Loon	1	—	—	2
Pied-billed Grebe	4	—	1	—
Horned Grebe	1	—	CW	2
Red-necked Grebe	—	—	—	—
Northern Gannet	—	—	—	CW
Double-crested Cormorant	—	—	—	—
Great Blue Heron	6	2	9	3
Great Egret	—	—	—	—
Black-crowned Night-Heron	—	—	—	—
Green Heron	—	—	—	1*
Black Vulture	—	1	—	65
Turkey Vulture	—	6	2	220
Snow Goose	1	—	—	1
Canada Goose	404	1411	1093	891
Mute Swan	—	2	3	3
Trumpeter Swan	—	—	—	—
Tundra Swan	58	—	CW	1
swan sp.	—	—	—	—
Wood Duck	1	—	—	8
Gadwall	17	—	—	1
American Wigeon	10	—	—	11
American Black Duck	200	12	14	18
Mallard	925	111	109	300
Mallard hybrid	—	—	—	—
Blue-winged Teal	—	—	—	—
Northern Shoveler	1	—	—	—
Northern Pintail	—	—	—	1
Green-winged Teal	—	—	CW	—
Canvasback	17	—	—	—
Redhead	59	—	1	—
Ring-necked Duck	—	—	45	—
Greater Scaup	23	—	—	—
Lesser Scaup	9	—	48	—
scaup sp.	30	—	—	—
Surf Scoter	—	—	CW	—
White-winged Scoter	—	—	—	—
Long-tailed Duck	—	—	—	—
Bufflehead	10	—	1	9
Common Goldeneye	51	—	—	11
Hooded Merganser	18	5	5	10
Common Merganser	—	—	—	8
Red-breasted Merganser	707	—	1	250
merganser sp.	—	—	—	3
Ruddy Duck	22	—	8	—
duck sp.	—	—	—	—
Osprey	—	—	—	—
Bald Eagle	—	—	1	3
Northern Harrier	1	1	—	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	—	2	—	4
Cooper's Hawk	5	3	9	3
Northern Goshawk	—	—	—	—
Accipiter sp.	—	—	1	—
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	2	6	2
Red-tailed Hawk	11	24	57	13
Rough-legged Hawk	—	—	1	18
Buteo sp.	—	1	—	8
Golden Eagle	—	—	CW	—
American Kestrel	2	13	14	7
Merlin	1	—	—	1

Plymouth	(12)	December 30, 2001
Portsmouth	3	(81)
Preble Co.	1	(88)
Quail Hollow-Hartville	CW	(37)
Ragerville	—	(70)
Salem	—	(33)
Tiffin	—	(11)
Toledo	6	(3)
Trombull Co.	—	(28)
Wellington	—	(26)
Western Hamilton Co.	—	(63)
Wilmot	—	(52)
Wooster	—	(31)
Youngstown	—	(34)

Total individuals
Number of Counts

Peregrine Falcon	Lakewood	(21)	December 29, 2001
hawk sp.	Lancaster	2	—
Ring-necked Pheasant	(57)	December 29, 2001	—
Ruffed Grouse	1	—	—
Wild Turkey	126	2	(24) December 22, 2001
Northern Bobwhite	—	—	—
Virginia Rail	—	—	2
American Coot	7	12	79
Sandhill Crane	—	—	1
Killdeer	1	—	47
Least Sandpiper	—	—	—
Purple Sandpiper	—	—	—
Common Snipe	—	—	20
American Woodcock	—	—	4
Pomarine Jaeger	—	—	CW
Franklin's Gull	—	—	—
Little Gull	—	—	—
Black-headed Gull	—	—	—
Bonaparte's Gull	1381	295	460
Ring-billed Gull	9983	770	9589
Herring Gull	58	8	144
Thayer's Gull	—	—	2
Iceland Gull	—	—	CW
Lesser Black-backed Gull	—	—	—
Glaucous Gull	—	—	—
Great Black-backed Gull	10	—	5
gull sp.	—	88	—
Rock Dove	158	72	340
Mourning Dove	206	176	683
Barn Owl	—	—	—
Eastern Screech-Owl	2	3	30
Great Horned Owl	—	3	3
Snowy Owl	—	1	16
Barned Owl	—	—	CW
Long-eared Owl	—	4	1
Short-eared Owl	—	—	—
Northern Saw-whet Owl	—	—	—
Bellied Kingfisher	3	4	13
Red-headed Woodpecker	2	—	3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	41	38	89
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	—	5	—
Downy Woodpecker	40	44	115
Hairy Woodpecker	10	10	21
Northern Flicker	1	9	11
Pileated Woodpecker	3	18	12
Eastern Phoebe	—	—	—
Northern Shrike	—	—	2
shrike sp.	—	—	—
Blue Jay	133	114	314
American Crow	788	276	10000
Horned Lark	—	53	—
Bank Swallow	—	—	252
Carolina Chickadee	—	128	8
Black-capped Chickadee	142	—	4
chickadee sp.	—	—	252
Tufted Titmouse	86	105	209
Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	2	14
White-breasted Nuthatch	55	48	125
Brown-headed Nuthatch	—	—	—
Brown Creeper	1	4	3

Plymouth	(12)	December 30, 2001	—
Portsmouth	(81)	December 22, 2001	—
Prie Co.	(68)	December 21, 2001	—
Quail Hollow-Hartville	(37)	December 16, 2001	—
Ragenville	(70)	December 26, 2001	—
Salem	(33)	January 5, 2002	—
Tiffin	(11)	December 15, 2001	—
Toledo	(3)	December 16, 2001	—
Trumbull Co.	(28)	December 16, 2001	—
Wellington	(26)	January 5, 2002	—
Western Hamilton Co.	(63)	December 23, 2001	—
Wilmett	(32)	December 15, 2001	—
Worster	(31)	December 22, 2001	—
Youngstown	(34)	December 15, 2001	—
Total Individuals	6	5	—
Number of Counts	15	3	—

Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee

Bill Whan

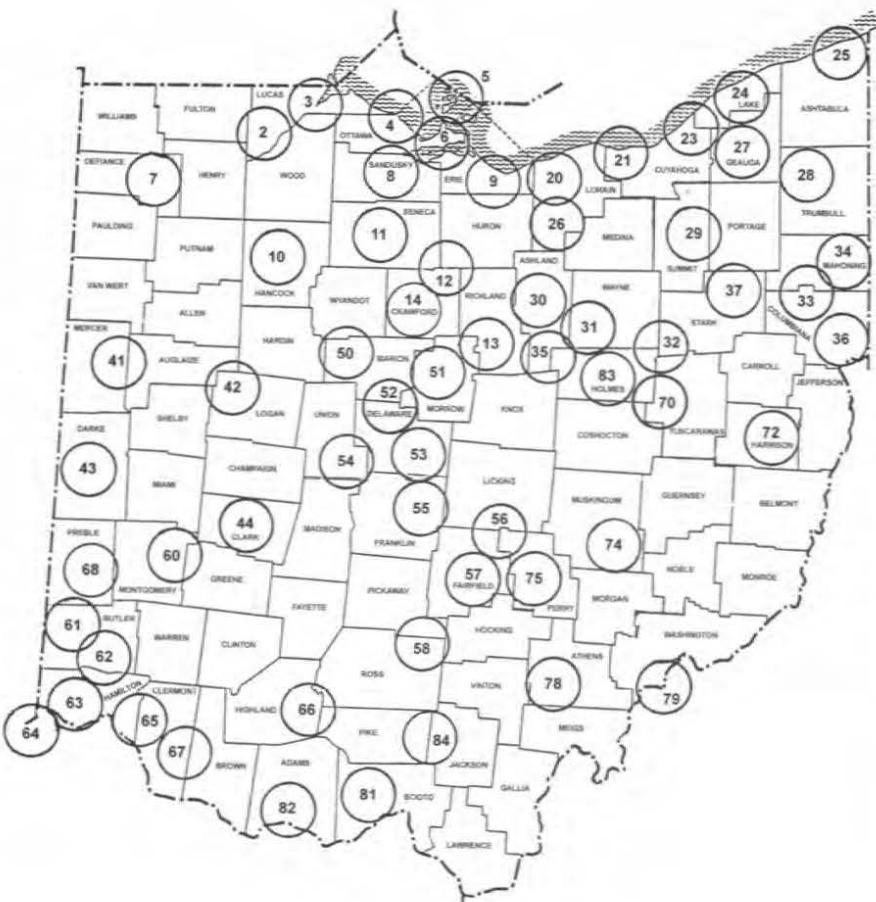
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The Ohio Bird Records Committee exists to increase knowledge of Ohio's birdlife by validating records, maintaining public records of occurrences of rare birds in the state, and establishing the official state list of species. Observers are asked to send in documentation of sightings of birds on the OBRC Review List, published here each spring, and indicated on OBRC checklists and on its website at <<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/dnap/OhioBirding/ohiobirding2.htm>>; reports of these species are not published in *The Ohio Cardinal* in the absence of such documentation. In its reviews, the OBRC does not judge sightings, but documentations of sightings; the issue at stake is not whether the bird in question was actually present, but whether the record as documented serves to verify the species. The current membership of the Committee, with counties of residence, follows: Dave Dister (Montgomery), Micki Dunakin (Paulding), Ned Keller (Hamilton), Cal Keppler (Mahoning), Jay Lehman (Hamilton), Greg Links (Monroe, MI), Bernard Master (Franklin), Secretary Jim McCormac (Franklin), Kevin Metcalf (Geauga), Larry Rosche (Portage), and Sean Zadar (Cuyahoga). Members serve three-year terms. Each year replacement members are nominated by the Editor and Publisher of *The Ohio Cardinal*. In addition, any other person may be nominated, having given his or her permission, by any subscriber of *The Ohio Cardinal* by submitting a timely nomination in writing to the Editor; in such a case an election is held among the subscribers. We are indebted to OBRC Secretary Jim McCormac for extensive material used in the following report.

Accepted Records

Plegadis ibis sp.—Van Wert County, 28 October 2001, observer J. Perchalski. This record of the glossy/white-faced type was of course in non-breeding plumage, and separation of these two species in this plumage is one of the most vexing problems the Committee—and birders in general—consistently face. Ultimately, both the observers and the OBRC felt that this bird was best left identified only to genus, although several members did suspect it may have actually been the rarer—for Ohio—white-faced ibis *P. chihi*, based in part on the apparent lack of pale lines around the base of the bill.

Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudis*—Lake County, 27 October 2001, observer K. Metcalf. There are Ohio records of this species from the third week of October, but this is the first from the fourth week. While the bird was a juvenile, and great care must be taken in separating this species from subadult parasitic jaeger *S. parasiticus*, it was well seen and impeccably documented, including supporting field sketches.



The 2001-02 Christmas Bird Count areas. Numbers within circles correspond to count numbers in the preceding article. 