

The Ohio Cardinal is a quarterly publication devoted to the study and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife.

The Ohio Cardinal exists to provide a permanent and timely record of the abundance and distribution of birds in Ohio; to help document the occurrence of rare species in the state; to provide information on identification of birds; and to provide information on birding areas within Ohio.

The Ohio Cardinal invites readers to submit articles on unusual occurrences of birds, bird distribution within the state, birding areas in Ohio, identification tips, and other aspects of ornithology. Bird reports and photographs are welcome from any area of the state. Report forms are not a necessity but will be supplied upon request. Unusual species should be documented, and forms to do so are available upon request from the Editor, Publisher, and Records Committee Secretary.

Seasonal Report Due Dates Winter (Dec.-Feb.)—March 25 Spring (Mar.-May)—June 25 Summer (June-July)—August 25 Autumn (Aug.-Nov.)—December 25	Please send all reports to: Bill Whan 223 E. Tulane Road Columbus, OH 43202 danielel@iwaynet.net
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Subscriptions

The subscription rate for one year (four issues) is \$25 including membership in the Ohio Ornithological Society. Please send all subscription requests to:

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The Ohio Cardinal

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On the Cover: Having just eaten a bird, possibly a meadowlark, this prairie falcon struck a familiar pose in a hayfield on reclaimed stripmine land in Meigs Twp, Muskingum Co. on 25 February 2004. *Photo* © Alan Ryff,

Winter 2003-04 Overview

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We enjoyed more or less normal winter weather this time, at least on average. The latter half of January was the harshest, averaging ten degrees F below normal with widespread icing, inevitably displacing water birds. These displacements concentrated waterfowl and gulls in open water statewide, making some assessments of their numbers and variety a little easier. All the same, aviators reported that the surface of Lake Erie did not freeze solid, and large numbers of these aquatic species were escaping our notice in slivers of open water far offshore. Something, perhaps the relative brevity of the cold snap, encouraged a variety of species to hang around in unaccustomed numbers. Certainly the waterfowl refugium at Camp Dennison in Hamilton County generated some impressive records. February had above-freezing temperatures on 24 of its 29 days in Columbus, and invited early northbound waterfowl.

Surprisingly, 156 species were reported in Ohio during our cold and snowy January, with five warbler species and five of shorebirds, apparently a record total and perhaps unexpected in view of the weather. What we learn about the numbers and distribution of birds in January is boosted by enthusiastic listers who increasingly go out of their way to seek out as many species as possible in the first month of the year. Their exertions are welcome in figuring out how many species are really around, and we wish they'd scour every corner of the state as thoroughly in every month of the year.

The season as a whole produced rather high reported numbers of a number of species: certain gulls (of 13 species), sapsuckers, owls, hummingbirds once again, pipits, and several half-hardy songbirds, along with some odd warbler and sparrow records. Sandhill cranes and tundra swans were also among species found in remarkable numbers throughout the season. A spotty but noticeable winter finch incursion was forecast—based on food sources to our north—and the best predictions were confirmed, as we had numbers of redpolls, siskins, nuthatches, and purple finches far better than last winter's. Predictions for minimal numbers of crossbills, grosbeaks, and Bohemian waxwings were also to prove well founded.

Last winter we recorded eight review species for the state—species sufficiently rare that documentation is required to add them to the official records. Our total of five was more modest this winter: Ross's goose (2), prairie falcon, California gull (2), rufous hummingbird 10 (eight rufous and two rufous/Allen's), and loggerhead shrike. Certainly the bird of the season was the prairie falcon that haunted areas of SE Muskingum County for three weeks, evading detection by hundreds of observers and staying far enough away to deprive the rest of views that would have confirmed its sex and age or produced a sharp photographic image; that on our cover, generously contributed by Alan Ryff, was the best we know of.

For years *The Ohio Cardinal* has featured a complete compilation of the state's Christmas Bird Counts—both "official" and "unofficial"—in its winter issue, but this time we cannot. National Audubon has experienced major problems with its

computerized compilations of CBC reports, and while we could have rounded up nearly all of the data the old-fashioned way, we have decided we cannot provide a truly complete summary on time until these problems are ironed out. We hope to present this feature in its entirety in the spring issue, on the assumption readers agree that a complete compilation will be worth waiting for. The lack of many data from CBCs has to some extent hampered the Reports that appear below, but we've done the best we could with what was available to us.

We warmly welcome the help and expertise of our new Design Manager, Jim Glover, with this issue. Jim recently retired after 34 years as an artist for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Among his many works with which our readers will be instantly familiar are the cover art of the Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas (1991) and the cerulean warbler logo for the Ohio Ornithological Society.

Finally, with this issue *The Ohio Cardinal*, like so many other state bird journals, will begin work under the sponsorship of a state organization--- in our case the Ohio Ornithological Society. From now on a subscription to the *Cardinal* will include membership in the OOS and a number of additional benefits that come with membership, including a quarterly newsletter, an OOS decal, an updated 40-page Ohio checklist in pocket-size form, and discounts on costs of OOS field trips and conventions, as well as privileges to nominate and elect OOS Board members. We eagerly anticipate joining an organization designed to focus the knowledge and effort and good will and cooperativeness of Ohio's many birders in the cause of aiding wild birds through education, research, advocacy, fellowship, and everyday enjoyment of our pursuit. Please ask interested friends to join us: write to us at the postal or e-mail addresses inside the front cover, and visit the OOS web site at www.ohiobirds.org. When you join, remember that a \$25 yearly membership covers only goods and services currently available to members; if you'd like to see more done we encourage you to enhance the OOS's capabilities and join at a higher level as a donor. Either way, please consider volunteering your time and the fruits of your birding endeavors to the Society . . . especially to the *Cardinal*! 🐦

Corrigenda

Two brants reported at Pleasant Hill Lk 17 Nov 2003 were in *Richland*.

The 30 Aug 2003 osprey should have been attributed to Medusa Marsh, in *Erie*.

What was described as an osprey nest in *Portage* in 26(3):124 later turned out not to be a nest.

The 3 Nov 2003 hummingbird in *Wayne* was a rufous hummingbird.

The 100 bobolinks of 28 Sept 2003 were found at MWW.

For the Record

Here are noteworthy records for previous seasons that for one reason or another were not published here earlier:

Greater White-fronted Goose: one was with Canada geese in *Ashland* 23 Nov 2003 (L. Hochstetler).

Northern Harrier: a pair near Cadiz, *Harrison* was regularly seen from spring through early Dec 2003 (T. Ford) in suitable breeding habitat.

Gyr Falcon: After study in these pages [3(4):45] documentation of a 22 Jan-15 Feb 1981 record of an imm

gray-morph gyr at ONWR. A. Wormington of Pt. Pelee, ON was persuaded that a gyr seen there 22 Feb 1981, a first local record, was the same individual.

Rufous Hummingbird: an imm ♂ stayed in Strongsville, *Cuyahoga* mid-Sept through 9 Nov 2001 (A. Adkins, ph fide L. Rosche).

The Reports follow the nomenclature and taxonomic order of the 7th edition of the *AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998), including the 44th Supplement (July 2003). Underlined names of species indicate those on the OBRC Review List; documentation is needed to add reports of these species to official state records, or to attributed records in the Reports. When supplied, county names appear *italicized*. Unless numbers are specified, sightings refer to single birds. Abbreviations, conventions, and symbols used in the Reports should be readily understood, with the possible exceptions of the following: BCSP=Buck Ck SP in *Clark*; BIWA=Big Isl WA in *Marion*; BSBO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CCE=Crane Ck estuary in ONWR; CVNP=Cuyahoga Valley Natl Pk in *Cuyahoga* and *Summit*; Dike 14=the Gordon Park impoundment in *Cleveland*; EFSP=East Fork SP in *Clermont*; eop=end of the period, in this case 29 Feb 2004; EHSP=East Hbr SP in *Ottawa*; fide= "in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another person; GLSM=Grand Lk St Marys in *Mercer/Auglaize*, HBSP=Headlands Beach SP in *Lake*; HBSNP=Headlands Beach SNP in *Lake*; HWSP=Hueston Wds SP (*Butler/Preble*); Killbuck=Killbuck Marsh WA in *Wayne/Holmes*; KPWA=Killdeer Plains WA in *Wyandot*; LSR=Lakeshore Reservation (MP) in *Lake*; Magee=Magee Marsh WA in *Ottawa/Lucas*; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP in *Lucas*; MP=Metropark; m obs=many observers; MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands in *Hamilton*; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ODOW=Ohio Division of Wildlife; ONWR=Ottawa NWR in *Ottawa/Lucas*; ONWRC=monthly bird census at ONWR; PCWA=Pickerel Ck WA in *Sandusky*; ph=photograph, Res=Reservoir; Res'n=Reservation; SF=State Forest; SNP=State Nature Preserve; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley WA in *Greene/Warren*; WA=Wildlife Area.