

## COMMENTS ON THE SEASON — SUMMER 2011

By Craig Caldwell

After a very wet spring, the summer of 2011 started hot, and some areas continued to be wet as well. The first nine days of June saw widespread daily high temperature records set. Most were only a degree or two above the previous records but one exceeded the old value by five degrees. The same period also saw a moderate number of new daily rainfall records but on 10 and 11 June over four inches fell in the Cincinnati area. For the month as a whole, the southwest and east central parts of the state had two to three times their normal rainfall and Cincinnati exceeded its norm by more than 10 inches. By contrast the central west, northwest, and northeast received less than half of their normal rain.

July's temperatures were typical until about the 20<sup>th</sup>, when a period of many record daily highs began, though the greatest increase over an old record was three degrees. The same period also had many new daily rainfall records. The largest increase was on 24 Jul in Westerville: 4.02 inches fell, eclipsing the old day's record of 1.8 inches which had stood since 1971. June's drought worsened in most of the western third of the state, which had only a quarter of its normal rainfall for the month. However, counties in a north-south band through the middle of the state had up to triple their norm, and the rest of the state varied between 75% and 125% of normal. (Weather data are from <http://water.weather.gov> and <http://www.extremeweatherrecords.com>.)

This was the last year of data collection for the Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II (OBBA II). During this year, and especially during summer when most birds nest, many dozens of observers made special "block-busting" surveys to fill gaps in the data. The efforts during the two months of Summer 2011 resulted in over 88,500 individual observations with at least a few from every county. By contrast, there were approximately 47,200 Ohio entries in eBird during that period. (And of course there was some overlap between the two programs.) Combining all of the sources, 24 species were reported in every one of Ohio's 88 counties, and another 32 species were found in 80 to 87. One species, Dark-eyed Junco, was determined to breed in every county in which it was found – all five of them. The American Robin took the prize for the most widespread breeding; it was confirmed to nest in 86 counties and was

seen in the other two.

Here and in the Species Accounts you will see the phrase "confirmed to breed" or a similar one. "Confirmed to breed" is defined in the Spring "Comments on the Season" section. The notation of breeding confirmation or its lack in the following species accounts applies only to Summer 2011.

The Honda Wetlands Education Area, *Union*, a part of Glacier Ridge Metro Park, burst on the birding scene with breeding King and Virginia rails and Sora plus sightings of both bitterns, Wilson's Snipe, and American Woodcock. Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park, *Franklin*, also provided a large number of sightings.

The Lorain dredge spoil impoundment was very attractive to shorebirds for the first time in several years. The "sky ponds" on Riddle Road, *Sandusky* and *Seneca*, flooded again this year but not to the extent or duration which they did during the marvelous 2008. Conneaut retained its appeal and several other areas also provided refueling stops.

This issue has accounts for 242 species. Twelve are review species. Three of these review species, and some of the reports of two others, remain undocumented for the Ohio Bird Records Committee (OBRC). See the Spring 2011 "Comment on the Season" section for more information about review species, the OBRC, and how to document sightings.

Review species' names are underlined in the species accounts. Reports of sightings whose documentation has been accepted by the OBRC include the names of the observers; those for which no documentation was submitted or whose documentation was not considered sufficient are listed anonymously.

Taxonomic order and nomenclature are the same as in the Spring Species Accounts as is the treatment of county names and locations which occur many times.

### Abbreviations:

BRAS = Black River Audubon Society  
 BSBO = Black Swamp Bird Observatory  
 Conneaut = the mudflats to the west of Conneaut Harbor, *Ashtabula*, unless otherwise noted  
 CVNP = Cuyahoga Valley National Park, *Summit* (mostly) and *Cuyahoga*  
 Darby Creek = Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park, *Franklin*

Headlands = Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve, Headlands Beach State Park, and adjoining waters, **Lake**

Highbanks = Highbanks Metro Park, **Delaware**

Honda Wetlands = Honda Wetlands Education Area, **Union**, a part of Glacier Ridge Metro Park

Kelleys Island = the island and adjoining waters, **Erie**

Killbuck Marsh = Killbuck Marsh Wildlife Area, **Holmes and Wayne**

Killdeer Plains = Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area, **Wyandot**

Lorain = the dredge spoil impoundment at the mouth of the Black River in the city of Lorain, **Lorain**, unless otherwise noted

Magee = Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, **Lucas** and **Ottawa**

Mohican = Mohican State Park and State Forest unless specified as one of them, almost entirely **Ashland**

MP = Metro Park or MetroPark depending on the system

NF = National Forest

NP = Nature Preserve (except as part of CVNP)

OBBA II = Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II

ONWR = Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, **Lucas** and **Ottawa**

Sandy Ridge = Sandy Ridge Reservation, **Lorain**

SF = State Forest

SP = State Park

WA = Wildlife Area

Winous Point = Winous Point Shooting Club, **Ottawa**

Yoder Brothers = Aden, Atlee, David, and Levi Yoder