

THE BIRDS OF CEDAR POINT AND VICINITY.

BY LYNDS JONES.

LAND BIRDS.

While the definite division of the birds into Water Birds and Land Birds is, to my mind, a good deal artificial because some so-called Land Birds live more in the vicinity of water than some so-called Water Birds do, it never-the-less serves a sufficiently worthy purpose to be defensible. Certain it is that Land Birds furnish us with more reliable data for working out most migration problems because the influence of large bodies of water upon their movements is greater. Also, they average much more approachable and are found near our homes and our work. It is, therefore, with less of effort that they are studied.

The physical features of the islands have been treated with sufficient fullness. It may not be out of place to remind the reader that Pelee Island, like Point Pelee, has a considerable growth of red cedar trees bordering the southward extending point, which form rather dense thickets, especially along the eastern border of the point. On the mainland of the region under consideration the only evergreen woods are cedar thickets nearly a mile in extent east of the summer resort grounds of the Cedar Point Company, and occasional cedar thickets along the lower reaches of Vermillion River; small and scattered growths of pines and hemlocks also along the lower reaches of the Vermillion and Black Rivers, growths that were clearly considerable areas of marketable timber when the country was first settled, and occasional thickets of red cedar on the sandstone knolls in the northern part of the Oberlin and Vermillion quadrangles. It is doubtful if these evergreen areas have ever had any considerable influence upon the distribution of the birds. Undoubtedly the thinning of the woods in general has exerted a far more potent influence upon distribution in general, of the Land Birds, just as the occupation of the swamps at the mouths of nearly all streams has exerted a profound influence upon the distribution of the Water Birds.

In any case the birds which migrate across the region are probably little influenced by minor changes in physical features, however much breeding birds may be influenced. Of course the destruction of nesting areas—by drainage of swamp lands, the cutting of timber, the clearing of brushy tangles,—must result in a shifting, at least, of the local nesting. There have been not a few changes of this sort, as we shall see as the discussion by species proceeds.

81. *Colinus virginianus*.—Bob-white.

Mr. Baird states that there were a few in 1901 at Cedar Point, but there is no mention of the species by any other observers at the Lake Laboratory. I flushed two about half way on the sand spit January 6, 1908. These are the only ones observed on the sand spit by the writer. None have been reported from the islands to my knowledge. On the mainland the numbers vary considerably, but it cannot be called a common bird anywhere nor at any time within twenty years. Elderly persons speak of the Quail as one of the common game birds in the earlier days. It seems probable that the increasing population of the region is largely responsible for the depletion in numbers, since at the present time the numbers remain about constant from year to year, evidently due to the number of gunners. Twice in late winter coveys of less than twenty birds have been known to pass a night on the Oberlin campus within five rods of the trolley line, where cars were passing every hour up to midnight. One of the coveys remained on the campus for several hours of the day and were seen by many persons. The favorite nesting place is in the tangle of grasses and bushes along a line fence. There are numerous instances of the semi-domestication of this species, so that a considerable flock not only fed with the chickens but roosted about the premises all winter.

82. *Bonasa umbellus*.—Ruffed Grouse.

There was at least one bird ranging along the sand spit, westerly, in the winter of 1906-07, as evidenced by fresh tracks on several occasions. I can find no other reference to this species for the sand spit. On the islands it is not known now, but in the earlier days it was found on the larger islands. On the mainland it is nearly extinct because there are almost no woods where it can elude the hunter. As late as twenty years ago the Ruffed Grouse was a familiar bird in the deeper woods and the wooded parts of the stream gorges. Another decade will probably end his career in the region under discussion—a victim of civilization.

EXTINCT.

Tympanuchus americanus.—Prairie Chicken.

The only record for the region known to me is that reported in the Revised Catalogue of the birds of Ohio, 1903. Professor E. L. Moseley reported a capture near Sandusky in 1880. This also appears to be the last reported capture for the state. It is doubtful whether this species could have found congenial surroundings in the region under consideration at any time. It is more likely that its occurrence was in the vicinity of Castalia.

EXTINCT.

Meleagris gallopavo silvestris.—Wild Turkey.

Formerly common over the whole area, but has been extinct for at least forty years. A specimen in the Oberlin College museum, said to have been captured on the college campus, bears the questioned date of 1858. I can find no reliable data as to when the last was recorded.

EXTINCT.

Ectopistes migratorius.—Passenger Pigeon.

There appears to be no record of a nesting or even roosting in the region, but there are many accounts of the vast flights of these birds. Accounts which I have been able to gather seem to agree substantially that most of the flights were in a northerly and southerly direction, which would indicate that the birds crossed the lake. It would hardly seem probable that so vast a company could turn abruptly in either direction upon reaching the lake without influencing the direction of flight of those as far inland as twelve miles. Some of the older men state that the last flight noted was about 1872.

83. *Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*.—Mourning Dove.

Common everywhere from about the middle of April until the middle of October, wintering in favorable localities in small numbers. The birds which winter begin singing in the warm days of February. During the winter the birds may be found in small companies or singly about farm premises or in corn fields which have not been husked, apparently sleeping in the corn shocks. They are pretty certain to be found where stock is fed fodder and hay if there be a haystack convenient in a field some distance from human dwellings. I have not found them in winter on the sand spit, but during the season of breeding there are many there as well as on the larger islands. I have never noticed this species making long flights out over the lake. After the small grain has been gathered into the barn and the stubble either plowed under or fed closely, the Doves are to be found in the corn fields, where they seem to eat quantities of weed seed, but do not molest the corn. They seem to spend the moulting time in the corn fields. Early nests are usu-

ally made above the ground, but the late nests are as likely to be on the ground as above it. I have one set of four and one of three eggs. The larger set was pretty clearly occupied by two females and one male.

84. *Cathartes aura septentrionalis*.—Turkey Vulture.

It has seemed practically impossible to convince the makers of the paragraphs on Geographical Distribution in our Check List that



Photo by A. L. Princehorn

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*).

the time honored statement concerning this bird that it is of rare occurrence north of the Ohio Valley is no longer applicable. No less than six pairs nested in the immediate vicinity of Birmingham, Ohio, my country home, during the seasons of 1908 and 1909. In summer and autumn it is a common thing to see from half a dozen to twenty of these great birds circling about the Vermillion River gorge. This is no new thing, but has been the same during my entire residence in northern Ohio. I would not call the species common over the whole area, but rather of regular occurrence, and

certainly not rare. The arrival is about the middle of March (March 7, 1903), and the departure about the middle of October. Most of the nests actually found have been in hollow logs lying flat on the ground. Occasionally a standing hollow tree is used.

85. *Circus hudsonius*.—Marsh Hawk.

A regular resident in small numbers. It is actually less numerous than the Turkey Vulture. During the winter it is most often seen hawking over the marshes at Cedar Point, and for most of the spring and early summer it is largely confined to the same re-



Photo by Lynds Jones

Marsh Hawk (*Circus hudsonius*).
Nest in the marsh vegetation.

gion because it is nesting there, but at other times one may be seen flying about the more open parts of the whole region. The nests found have been in the coarse vegetation of the marshes, built up two or three feet from the water. The accompanying illustration was taken from a nest in the marsh. Four individuals is the most I have seen at one time at the marshes. Snakes constitute a considerable portion of the summer ration of this bird, and many mice are eaten in winter. If this hawk is migratory to any degree I

have failed to detect it. Pretty clearly the individuals which are seen at the marshes remain there pretty constantly the whole year, for one of them is distinctively marked.

86. *Accipiter velox*.—Sharp-shinned Hawk.

Tolerably common the year through, but occasionally in great numbers for a day or a week during the height of the migrations, the whole length of the sand spit; elsewhere not much increased in numbers. It is seldom seen outside of thick shrubbery except in its low, swift flight from one copse to another, or when busily engaged eating a bird. My observations indicate that its migrations pretty closely correspond with the migrations of the Olive-backed Thrushes, upon which it feeds greedily. Thus, on April 29, 1907, and April 27, 1908, dates when the thrushes were swarming, these hawks were more numerous than I have ever seen them and were fattening on thrush flesh. In a walk half the length of the sand spit there were many spots where thrushes had been caught and eaten; among them only one Hermit Thrush, all the others Olive-backs. During the winter this hawk not infrequently dashes into town for a taste of English Sparrow. Rarely small companies are seen circling and soaring high in air. I have never seen them making flights northward over the lake.

87. *Accipiter cooperii*.—Cooper's Hawk.

It is not sufficiently numerous to certainly determine its status. It is occasionally seen in winter, but the indications are that it is pretty regularly migratory. It is found at the nesting place about the middle of April, and remains in that vicinity well into July. Several have been seen at Cedar Point, but there is no good evidence of a nesting there. It should be found nesting in the vicinity of Lakeside, across the channel, and west of Marblehead. The peculiar metallic "tick, tick, tick," which constitutes the call of this hawk makes identification easy while it is nesting. Its fondness for poultry and pigeons is pretty likely to result in its final extermination. In the vicinity of Oberlin it builds its nest in large trees in the deepest woods available, as far as practicable from the ground. Crows and Jays attack it viciously.

88. *Astur atricapillus*.—Goshawk.

For some unaccountable reason this hawk has not come within my field of vision. There is a specimen in the Oberlin collection which was collected near Oberlin, so that this gives it a proper place on the list. I have no question that the Goshawk is of more or less regular occurrence in this region, as well as in surrounding regions, and it will certainly be learned and properly noted.

89. *Buteo borealis*.—Red-tailed Hawk.

Tolerably common over the whole region, and often remaining in usual numbers all winter when there are mice and squirrels enough; otherwise going south to the limit of snow. A pair has regularly nested near the east end of the Cedar Point marshes, and one or both birds have often been seen soaring over the mainland edge of the marsh. I have seen them west of Marblehead, and on North Bass island. None were seen at Pelee island, nor at any of the other large islands. Occasionally several of these large hawks may be seen in company of several species, circling and moving northward in spring. Nests are placed in as inaccessible trees as possible, frequently on the brow of the bluff bordering the rivers. The birds are staunch defenders of the nest, and excellent providers.

90. *Buteo lineatus*.—Red-shouldered Hawk.

Our commonest large hawk, breeding in practically every woods, even to the scattering remnants of big timber. It is present all the year when the winter supply of mice is sufficient, otherwise it accompanies the Red-tail southward, returning with the warm days of early March. Large flights of this hawk have not been noted in this state, but were occasionally witnessed in Iowa. It is persecuted by poultry raisers without cause. The seeming incapacity of the average person for distinguishing one hawk from another—if, indeed, there is any desire to do so—will probably continue to result in the destruction of considerable numbers of this useful hawk because it is more easily approached than its larger and more destructive relative, the Red-tail. The nesting time of this hawk is about two weeks later than that of the Red-tail, coming in the last of March. Nests are much more accessible than those of the Red-tail, being built in trees less difficult to climb and nearer the ground. There has been some decrease in numbers in the last decade, but the species is still common.

91. *Buteo platypterus*.—Broad-winged Hawk.

Sometimes common for a day or so during the migrations, but unusual in winter and rather scarce in summer. The considerable flights noted which have been distinct migrations have come during the last week of April and the first ten days of May. The two most conspicuous of these flights were May 2, 1904, when a large company, associated with six Red-tails, four Red-shoulders, three Rough-legs, three Sparrow, two Marsh, and two Bald Eagles, was watched from the top of a sand-stone knoll two miles south of Oak Point. The Broad-wings disappeared to the northeast, but all of the others returned apparently to their nesting places. The Red-tails occasionally screamed, but none of the others was heard. There was a very lit-

tle fighting between the Red-tails and the Rough-legs. All of the birds were circling upward, but the Red-tails and Red-shoulders did not ascend far. The other occasion was April 29, 1907, at Rye Beach, where the numbers were too great to be counted. These Broad-wings were near the ground when first seen, but rapidly ascended in spirals, all the while moving nearly parallel to the lake shore in an easterly direction. When they disappeared from view high up they were still drifting eastward over the land. In this company there were Sparrow, Marsh, and Rough-legged Hawks, four of each, which did not accompany the Broad-wings far. When these birds were first seen they were about two miles west of the east end of the marshes, and therefore within plain view of Kelley's Island. It seems likely that they had arrived over the Sandusky river route, and therefore reached the lake shore, or the marshes, near Sandusky. It is difficult to account for their easterly course if, as seems almost certain, they were bent on reaching the Canada side. At their elevation of several hundred feet they must have been able to see not only Kelley's, but also Pelee Island, and probably also Point Pelee. If they were afraid to cross such an expanse of water they ought to have had sense enough to cross by the island route, and if they were not afraid to cross anywhere what was the sense in their cringing along the shore? If this were an isolated instance one might argue unfamiliarity with the route, but the same direction has been taken on each of six such migrations. It may be, therefore, that this species is following an hereditary instinct.

The few nests found have invariably been in the smaller stream gorges situated well up in trees growing from the bottom of the gorge. The immediate vicinity of Cedar Point is therefore not suitable for the nesting of the Broad-wing.

92. *Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*.—Rough-legged Hawk.

A winter visitor in small numbers, tarrying, sometimes, into May. Contrary to my experiences with this hawk in other localities, it is not found here about the marshes in winter, but hunting over the fields and meadows. It is hardly more than occasional, and some winters is not noted at all. My dates of occurrence are too few and too scattering to give any indication of the times of migration. This is one of the mouse hawks feeding largely upon such small mammals.

93. *Aquila chrysaetos*.—Golden Eagle.

One was recorded about the middle of the sand spit, March 2, 1908, which is the only one recorded for the immediate vicinity of Cedar Point. There are several other winter records for the east-

ern part of the region. It is pretty certain that this eagle is a wanderer from other regions.

94. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*.—Bald Eagle.

Breeding pairs actually known are situated as follows: One in the extreme northeastern part of the region: one at Oak Point, about seven miles west of the first one mentioned; one about two miles up stream from the mouth of Vermillion River, about seven miles from the Oak Point nest; one near Rye Beach, near the east end of the marshes; one west of Marblehead; one on each of the following islands: Kelley's, Put-in-Bay, North Bass. This eagle is therefore a familiar bird over the whole region under discussion. About two-thirds of the nesting birds have the adult white head and tail from year to year. Apparently most of the pairs raise two young each year, so that several eagles must leave the region between one nesting period and the next. In the summer and autumn immature birds are seen more often than mature ones. Some may be killed by gunners, but if so they are careful to keep the occurrence a secret, for the penalties for killing an eagle are severe. Because there are practically no Ospreys nesting in the region the eagles are under the necessity of doing their own fishing or food capturing. That the eagles do catch live fish well out in the lake is proved by many observations. I have often suspected, however, that the most of the fish captured are those thrown out of the nets, which are numerous in the region of the sand spit—fish that were more dead than alive. I have never seen an eagle eating the fish cast up on the beach. When there is more ice than water surface eagles may be seen perched convenient to a water hole awaiting a favorable opportunity to make a capture. Fully adult Bald Eagles make use of the nest the year round, often occupying it together. They are ugly birds to be near when there are young in the nest, and would better be given large room. The constant increase in the bulk of the nest by the annual addition of nest material seems finally to result in the death of the nest tree and the consequent destruction of the nest when the tree falls. The nest at Oak Point and that at Rye Beach have thus been changed once in fifteen years.

95. *Falco peregrinus anatum*.—Duck Hawk.

There is a specimen in the collection of Mr. A. Hengartner, of Lorain, which was captured "Along the lake shore" in 1896. It has never been my fortune to meet this bird. There can be little doubt that it visits the region occasionally.

96. *Falco columbarius*.—Pigeon Hawk.

Decidedly scarce. There was one bird ranging along the middle reaches of the sand spit during the whole spring of 1908, apparently

intending to nest there, but evidently left before doing so. There are numerous records of single individuals in the region of Oberlin, most of them falling in the winter season. Whenever it has been found eating anything investigation has revealed its catch to have been a Tree Sparrow. Undoubtedly it catches mice when they are to be found.

97. *Falco sparverius*.—Sparrow Hawk.

Our commonest hawk. It is often as common in winter as the rest of the year, but some winters only a few remain. Such scarcity is coincident with a scarcity of field mice. In summer this hawk feeds extensively upon grasshoppers. There is a little evidence that a small northward migration occurs about the first of April. At least two pairs regularly breed east of the Lake Laboratory on the sand spit, and are likely to remain there during the winter. One pair has nested in the cupola of Council Hall, just north of the Oberlin campus, for at least twenty years. I have no records of this hawk for any of the islands.

98. *Pandion haliaëtus carolinensis*.—Osprey.

Records of its occurrence at the marshes are occasional. It visits the Oberlin Waterworks reservoir pretty regularly from the middle of April to the tenth of May. It was not recorded in 1906. There are no summer records even for the islands, so that it does not seem to breed in the region. Usually only a single bird is seen, but occasionally there will be two together.

99. *Aluco pratincola*.—Barn Owl.

There are four records as follows: A male, taken in Oberlin by E. Rose, March 17, 1891, the first record; probably a male taken in a barn in New Oberlin by I. H. Squires, December 20, 1898; one taken in the Oberlin cemetery by Tillotson, April 3, 1907; one seen at Rye Beach by the writer, May 14, 1909. Whether there is an increase of this owl in the region remains to be seen. Apparently there is a tendency to an increase in other parts of the state.

100. *Asio wilsonianus*.—Long-eared Owl.

None have been observed except in the Oberlin quadrangle. There it is to be found in suitable places the year through in small numbers. In the winter it may be found perched in evergreen trees, or trees to which the dry leaves are still clinging, usually well within cover of the gorges. Groups of half a dozen birds in one tree are often met with. At the nesting season they go out into the larger woods in pairs, nesting either in open deserted crows' nests or in hollow trees.

101. *Asio flammeus*.—Short-eared Owl.

It has been occasionally seen hawking over the marshes, and more often over fields and meadows at twilight. It appears to be more numerous near the lake shore, where it may be found in winter sleeping beneath the overhanging banks which border the lake in many places. Usually more than one bird is thus startled from its hiding place, but I have never seen more than one while it is feeding. The latest spring date is March 12, 1898. All other records are strictly winter records.

102. *Strix varia*.—Barred Owl.

This is our commonest large owl, occurring regularly the year through in the larger woods and in the stream gorges. It readily responds to an imitation of its calls, often coming within easy range. It may occasionally be seen at twilight flying from one woods to another, but is seldom found away from fairly thick woods. I have yet to find a nest outside of a hollow in a tree. Individuals which are so foolish as to retire for the day sleep to a leafy tree are almost certain to be rudely awakened and driven about by Blue Jays and Crows, their perpetual enemies. Sometimes such individuals ultimately retire to the darkness of a hollow tree, but more often try to shake off the tormentors by flying from place to place. I have seen them catch rabbits and red squirrels.

103. *Cryptoglaux acadicus*.—Saw-whet Owl.

One was found in the cedar thickets near the Lake Laboratory, March 30, 1907. This owl is seldom met with, and then in the vicinity of the lake shore. Mr. A. Hengartner, of Lorain, told me that he had found it at Oak Point on more than one occasion, but I have never met with such good fortune. I doubt if it is more than casual in the region.

104. *Otus asio*.—Screech Owl.

Common over the whole region, except the smaller islands, all the year. In Oberlin it nests in most of the college buildings to which it can gain ready access, and in many hollow trees and in several barns. One can not get beyond the sound of its voice at night in any of the stream gorges. At least three pairs nested within ear-shot of the Lake Laboratory in 1907 and 1908. I have found it on the sand spit wherever there was sufficient cover.

There is no question that all of the owls thus far listed are of great benefit for the large numbers of rodents which they destroy. The Barred Owl may occasionally eat forbidden flesh, but only when he is driven to it by lack of his usual fare. Rarely the Long-eared Owls, when they are in considerable force, may attack poultry or

even small dogs, but they are normally not injurious in their feeding habits, but rather decidedly beneficial.

105. *Bubo virginianus*.—Great Horned Owl.

It has decreased from tolerably common fifteen years ago to decidedly scarce over the whole region. I know certainly of but three pairs in the whole of the Oberlin and Vermillion quadrangles, and none elsewhere. That specimens are occasionally brought in by farmers is an indication that there are more of these birds than one might suspect. They are so certain to visit the chicken yard that is handiest to their retreat that their total extinction is only a question of time. While they nest in the deepest woods they wander about and may be found almost anywhere during the part of the year when not breeding.

106. *Nyctea nyctea*.—Snowy Owl.

Occasionally reaches the region at times of southward flights in the winter. Sandusky taxidermists receive specimens much more frequently than do taxidermists elsewhere in the region.

107. *Surina ulula caparoch*.—Hawk Owl.

The only occurrence known to me is a specimen in the collection of Mr. R. E. Jump, which he captured near Oberlin some time in the seventies. This occurrence can hardly be called accidental because southward flights of this species range well across the state.

108. *Coccyzus americanus*.—Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

This is much the commoner of the two cuckoos, even during the height of the spring migration, when the Black-bill is more numerous than at other times. The median date of spring arrival is May 10, the earliest record being May 6, 1899 and 1907. I am strongly inclined to the belief that some individuals, at least, arrive a week or ten days earlier than even May 6, since nests with a full complement of eggs have been found by the middle of May. The latest recorded date for fresh eggs is August 15, 1899. Autumn dates are scattering. There are three October dates: 1st, 1906; 17, 1908; 21, 1907. Other dates fall within August and September. The late autumn dates would also seem to indicate an earlier arrival than the records show. The birds are very secretive during the first days of their arrival, and are not readily discovered. Nests are placed in the shrubbery bordering woods, or in back lot tangles. They seem to be placed almost anywhere in suitable tangles along the whole course of the sand spit, where I have found more individuals than elsewhere in the region, both during the migrations and during the nesting season. The call of this cuckoo is one of the characteristic sounds in the vicinity of the Lake Laboratory.

While the young are being fed in the nest great numbers of tent caterpillars are consumed.

109. *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*.—Black-billed Cuckoo.

Median dates of arrival are May 11, the earliest being May 5, 1896. The birds are most numerous during the third week of May, but after that time thin out to few individuals during the whole summer. My records indicate that the birds depart southward about the beginning of the last week in September. At any time they are outnumbered three or four to one by the Yellow-bill. Occasionally eggs of the Black-bill are found in the nest of the Yellow-bill, but I have never noted a return of the compliment (?) on the part of the Yellow-bill. The nesting places of this cuckoo are much the same as those of the other, but the nests average rather more slovenly made.

110. *Ceryle alcyon*.—Belted Kingfisher.

Common along the courses of the larger streams, in the vicinity of the large ponds, and along the lake front and over the marshes. Individuals which are able to find suitable fishing places remain all winter. I have never seen one in winter in the vicinity of the sand spit. While there are usually areas of open water somewhere in the marshes at all times, the Kingfishers do not seem able to find suitable cover in their vicinity or are crowded away by the gulls and ducks. Individuals often fly well out over the lake to fish. Nests are dug into any convenient bank, even the steep sloping sides of the sand dunes in spite of their tendency to cave off and ruin the prospect. The median date of arrival is March 24, the earliest being March 12, 1906 and 1908. The average departure of the bulk is about the middle of October. There is little variation in the numbers, and no instances of any marked flights.

111. *Dryobates villosus*.—Hairy Woodpecker.

A common resident over the whole of the mainland portion of the region, but not seen on the islands, and only casual on the sand spit during the spring. I have failed to find any nesting pairs in the wooded west end of the point. This Woodpecker is not unusual as a nesting bird in the orchards of Oberlin, but is more numerous at all times in the woods. It is frequently more numerous in town during the snowy parts of winter, when it will visit the lunch counter with other birds. In the woods in winter this species ranges with the regular company of woods birds, being in about the proportion of three to five of the Downy Woodpecker, and usually being about the last of the company to respond to the whistled calls of Chickadee or Tufted Titmouse. It often resents being thus

fooled by vigorously giving its rolling call as it flies swiftly away after discovering the source of the calls. Nest holes are often dug in trees that appear sound on the exterior but have a dead heart. Four of these birds in the writer's orchard have done great service in ridding the trees of insect eggs and larvæ all winter and summer, for they nested in trees left untrimmed for their especial benefit. Some of them pretty regularly visited the lunch counter at the house while the trees were covered with ice.

112. *Dryobates pubescens medianus*.—Northern Downy Woodpecker.

A common and familiar resident over the whole region except the small islands. It is rather more numerous in towns in winter than at other times, being one of the most regular patrons of the lunch counter until nesting time. It is one of the best conservers of the orchards where it feeds all the year and seems to prefer to nest. It is among the first to respond to calls when the winter company is being located, and among the last to pass on with the restless host in search of other feeding places in the woods. At the lunch counter it gives place only to larger birds. Several pairs nest on the sand spit, one near the Lake Laboratory, and it is regularly found all winter long on visits to the sand spit. I have never been able to detect the least suggestion of the migratory instinct of this and the former species. If actions count for individuality then it seems pretty clear that individuals remain the year through in rather narrowly restricted localities. Males have been seen occupying the old nest hole on winter nights, while the female was forced to dig a shallow hole in a tree not far distant. Mating is in progress from the first warm days of January until actual nesting begins in late April.

113. *Sphyrapicus varius*.—Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Usually a common migrant, casual all winter. The median date of spring arrival is April 6, the earliest being March 18, 1905. The period of greatest numbers is from about April 12 to May 10. The last have gone north by the 21st of May. The first reach the region from the north during the last week in September and remain about two weeks. I have repeatedly seen birds drilling holes as if to nest, but none have ever been found in the region in summer. When the birds are numerous for any length of time they do considerable damage to certain species of trees, by drilling sap holes in such numbers as to weaken the tree. Hop hornbeams are attacked with serious effect, the bleeding of the tree causing it to put forth scanty foliage. White pines and spruces are also considerably damaged by extensive drillings. I have not observed much damage in the orchards, but on the contrary have some evidence

of help by these birds in ridding the trees of parasites. Along the sand spit, they are not as numerous in the migrations as in the mainland woods, but are certain to be met with in season.

114. *Ceophlæus pileatus abieticola*.—Northern Pileated Woodpecker.

The presence of a small colony only five miles southeast of the Oberlin quadrangle saves this species from the list of extinct birds. It was formerly fairly numerous in the woods of the region, and probably occurred on the larger islands, but for more than a score of years it has been almost unknown. There are specimens in the Oberlin College museum which were collected within the present limits of the town.

115. *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*.—Red-headed Woodpecker.

Often abundant during the summer, occasionally remaining all winter in small numbers where beech nuts are plentiful. The median date of arrival is April 27, the bulk arriving within a week. The bulk departs about the end of the second week of September, and the last by the beginning of the last week, a few straggling later, even well into October. The winters of 1896-97, and 1899-00 were notable for the considerable number of Red-heads which remained all winter in the larger woods. I have seldom found it really numerous on the sand spit, even during the migrations, but it is there in fair numbers in spring and summer. Occasionally birds are washed upon the lake shore during August, which might indicate a southward migration at that time. This woodpecker nests practically anywhere that a stick large enough for a nest hole can be found standing. Fence posts are frequently used, as well as buildings, and of course, telegraph and telephone poles. It eats a good deal of fruit in season, but also helps materially in keeping down insect pests in orchards. It is an adept flycatcher, practicing this habit of feeding more often in late spring and summer than otherwhiles.

116. *Centurus carolinus*.—Red-bellied Woodpecker.

A tolerably common resident, slowly increasing in numbers. I have not met it on the sand spit nor on any of the islands. The woods on the larger islands and at the west end of Cedar Point seem to be suitable for the Red-belly, but for some reason it is absent. It stays pretty closely in the larger woods all the year, but occasionally ventures out. It has been recorded twice in Oberlin in spring. I have seen it eating acorns and beech nuts, and suspected that it also ate other nuts and fruits. It rarely responds with the other woods birds to calls, but seems to prefer its own company to that of any other birds. It is unusual to find more than one bird in a woods.

117. *Colaptes auratus luteus*.—Northern Flicker.

Abundant in the migrations, common during the breeding season, regular in small numbers all winter. The great wave of migration which reaches us from the south varies from early March to the middle of April, weather conditions seeming to be the determining factor. The south-bound wave sweeps past during the first week of October. The individuals which remain all winter are to be found where grains, fruits and berries are abundant. Thus Flickers are certain to be found in growths of the sumach. A few individuals remain on the sand spit as long as there are wild grapes. After the grapes are gone individuals are seen flying across from the mainland apparently filled with memories of past feasts. A corn field from which the corn has not been husked is certain to harbor a few. As many as nine individuals have been known to live in Oberlin all winter, feeding upon the fruits of the vines which cover the sides of some of the college buildings. The river gorges furnish retreats in severe weather. Flickers visit the bird lunch counter all winter, but do not seem as much at home as the smaller woodpeckers do. Mate calls are given as early as the first warm days of February, but mating is not in full progress before the numbers are greatly increased by the arrival of the host of migrants. On the approach of nesting time there is a perceptible thinning of numbers, but the species must be regarded as common all summer long. It is not easy to tell whether the increase as autumn approaches is due to the return of birds from the north or the young hatched in the region. From the large proportion of birds in immature plumage one might be led to infer the latter. Families are likely to remain together until October, when the young of the year are fully able to shift for themselves. The "wick-i-up" call is likely to be given on any warm day of the fall or winter, but at other times the only note usually heard is the single prolonged call. This woodpecker is present on all of the larger islands all summer, and is tolerably common in the vicinity of the Lake Laboratory during the nesting season and all the fall.

118. *Antrostomus vociferus*.—Whip-poor-will.

Except during the migrations confined to the stream gorges, and mostly along the lower reaches of the rivers. During the spring migrations it is scattered pretty generally over the whole wooded portions of the region, but is far less numerous away from the streams than elsewhere, except in the immediate vicinity of the lake. Twice the bird has been recorded on the Oberlin College campus, and at least one regularly spends a few days of the migration season on the banks of Plum creek near the Waterworks reservoir. Its spring arrival is usually a few days in advance of the

big spring wave which sweeps through about the first of May. I have no records later than July 30. After the birds cease singing it seems impossible to find them, or else they move southward earlier than one would be led to expect. The experiences of Taverner and Swales on Point Pelee prove that they do not leave before September. Probably there is no fly line across the region under consideration. On April 29 and May 13, 1907, Whip-poor-wills were in such numbers on the sand spit that an accurate count was impossible. In 1908 a pair evidently nested a few rods west of the Lake Laboratory, for it was present during the whole of the summer term—June 22 to July 30.

119. *Chordeiles virginianus*.—Nighthawk.

Irregular, but never common, as a summer resident. I have seen more individuals of this species flying over the high buildings of Cleveland in an hour of an evening than I have seen in a whole season in the region under consideration. Migrations occur in late August and early September, but the birds may be going east or northeast instead of southerly. In fact, I have noted more easterly migrations than southerly, at such times. Nighthawks probably reach this region during the first week of May, although more of my records fall later than the middle of May than during the first; however, the birds are too few in numbers to make one certain that the first seen are the first arrivals. My latest fall date is September 21, 1896. Nighthawks are seldom seen in the nesting season away from the larger cities, where they seem to nest on the tops of the tall buildings. Nests are occasionally found in woods.

120. *Chaetura pelagica*.—Chimney Swift.

The arrival and departure of the Swift are easily noted because the bird is one of the commonest and most conspicuous of our summer birds. The median date of arrival is April 20, the earliest being April 11, 1896, and the latest April 29, 1907, which is six days later than the next latest date. Weather conditions held the Swifts back in 1907. Recorded dates of departure are October 6, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 23, the last date being in 1899. These dates are seen to be coincident with the first cold October storm. During the spring and the nesting season, and until the young are flying about, more birds are seen in town all day than elsewhere, but from the time the young leave the nest until the southward departure more are seen in the country districts, particularly above woods, during the day. At evening twilight the birds return to their roosting place to pass the night, and are gone in the morning before most humans are stirring. No hollow tree nestings are known hereabouts, the birds using the chimneys for that purpose. For roosting the chim-

ney of some large building is commonly used, usually one of the college buildings or one of the churches in Oberlin. Of course there are no nesting places on the sand spit, so that birds seen there are those flying about feeding. On the larger islands they nest in the chimneys of dwellings mostly.

121—*Archilochus colubris*.—Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

Hardly common except occasionally in particularly favorable localities and under particularly favorable conditions. In fact, records of common fall in late summer and early fall when trumpet vines and jewel weed are prime for them. The median date of arrival is May 11, the earliest being May 3, 1896. The latest fall record is September 29, 1907. A nest nearly completed was found May 11, 1904, when the first record was May 6. There was a nest with eggs June 7, 1898, the first record for that year being May 14. Most of the nests found in this region have been in beech trees, an occasional one in apple. Baird (1901), and Rice (1906), mention it as not common in those years. The comment of Griggs (1900), is, "In small flocks about the frequent clumps of trumpet creepers." In 1907 I did not find it at all until August 1st, near the Lake Laboratory, and only an occasional individual in 1908, until the last week in July, when it became common about the trumpet creepers. I am not certain that this rather sudden increase was not due to the favorable food supply for the birds reared in the region rather than a distinct southward migration. The migrations which I have observed have occurred late in August. I am struck with the correspondence of action of these birds as seen on Pelee Island in late August as so fully and pleasingly described by Taverner and Swales for the birds on Point Pelee. More Hummers were noted heading for Middle Bass Island than for Middle Island and the Ohio shore in the last week of August, 1905, when I spent a week at the southern extremity of Pelee Island. On our sail from Middle Bass to Pelee Island we saw a number of Hummers steering a straight course from Pelee to Middle Bass, and all were keeping just above the water, dipping down between the waves. None flew directly with the wind, and none directly into it, but all quartered.