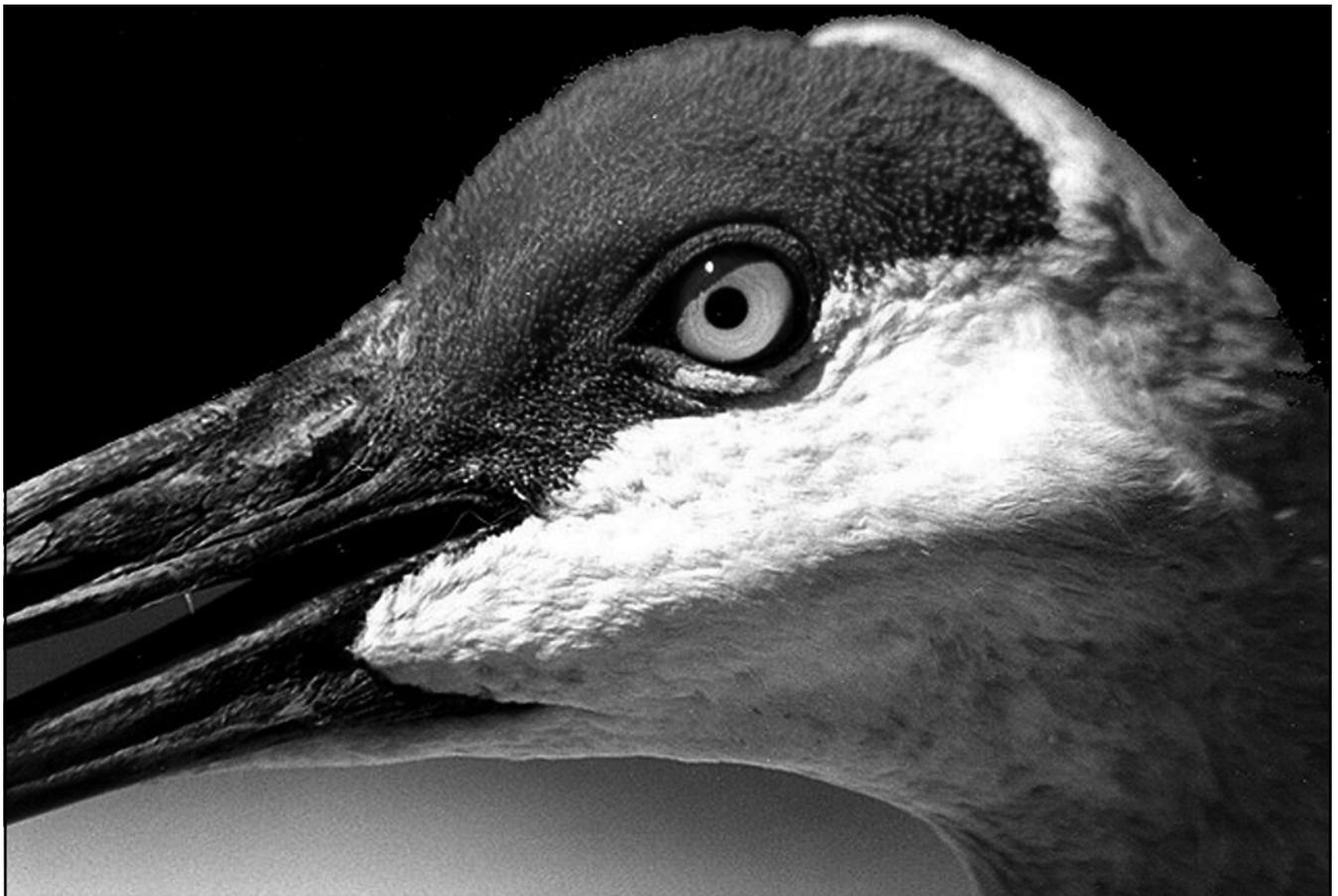


THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

A Quarterly Journal of Bird Sightings from the Cleveland Region

SINCE 1905

VOLUME 102 NUMBER 3



JUNE, JULY & AUGUST 2006

The Cleveland Bird Calendar

Summer 2006

Volume 102 Number 3

ISSN 1557-8798

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The Cleveland Bird Calendar was founded in 1905 by Francis H. Herrick of the Western Reserve University. It is published quarterly by the Kirtland Bird Club and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

The purpose of the Calendar is:

- To provide information on the movement of birds through the Cleveland region;
- To monitor population densities of resident birds;
- To help determine patterns of vagrancy for rarely encountered species.

Readers are encouraged to make every effort to identify and help preserve sensitive habitats and migrant stopover points.

A **subscription** to *The Cleveland Bird Calendar* is a benefit of Kirtland Bird Club membership: \$28/Couple; \$17/Single; \$8/Student

Mail your payment to:

Mary Anne Romito, Kirtland Bird Club
4310 Bush Ave; Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Cover photo: Sandhill Crane
Photographed by Scott Wright at Sandy Ridge Reservation, Lorain County, 2001.

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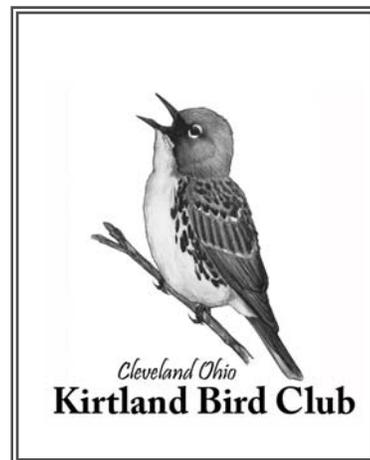
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We welcome your participation. Readers are encouraged to submit field reports, artwork, papers and digital photographs to Fred Dinkelbach:

6320 Greenwood Pkwy, Apt 406.,
Sagamore Hills, Oh 44067

OR e-mail:

seasonalreports@kirtlandbirdclub.org

In order to publish the correct information, please label the photos:

[bird_location_date_photographer.jpg](#)

Due dates for seasonal field reports are as follows:

Winter SeasonMarch 10
Spring SeasonJune 10
Summer SeasonSeptember 10
Autumn Season.....December 10

Seasonal report forms are available at:

www.kirtlandbirdclub.org/cbc/cbc.htm

All reports are archived at
The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Cleveland Bird Calendar Archives on-line:

Club volunteers are scanning and converting past issues into searchable PDFs. The completed issues are published and can be found at www.clevelandbirdcalendar.com.

THE CLEVELAND BIRD CALENDAR

A Quarterly Journal of Bird Sightings from the Cleveland Region

SUMMER

JUNE, JULY & AUGUST 2006

Volume 102

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You and Your Friends are Invited...

The Kirtland Bird Club welcomes you to its monthly meetings
the first Wednesday of each month, except July and August at 7:30 PM at

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Or, join a field trip to one of the local birding hot spots.

See the Web site for the up-coming meetings, programs and trips;

www.kirtlandbirdclub.org.

Summer 2006

New Editor Named

by Delores Cole

With great pleasure, and relief I must add, I am happy to say that Fred Dinkelbach has agreed to be our next *Cleveland Bird Calendar* (CBC) editor. Fred will step into Kevin Metcalf's shoes starting with the fall issue of Volume 102.

He resides in Summit County near the Cuyahoga Valley National Park where he's participated in and led bird walks and censuses since 1990. His wife, Cheryl, attended some of the same walks, beginning in 1992. Not until 1998, however, when Fred lowered his binoculars, did they finally meet and then marry the next year.

Fred is a past president of the Kirtland Bird Club, 2003 to 2005, and is a volunteer for the Cleveland Museum of

Natural History. Please join me in welcoming Fred to *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*.

A thank you goes to Vic Fazio for helping us out and writing the "Season Report" for this Summer issue of Volume 102, Number 3. Also much thanks to Susan Jones and Clyde Witt who have put in extra work to get this "editorless" issue out.

I also thank past editor, Kevin Metcalf for making a huge effort to fit this volunteer work into his hectic schedule.

Now I hope you will take a moment to review the CBC submission guidelines below.

Guidelines for contributing to *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*...

The Cleveland Bird Calendar exists today, after more than 100 years of publication, because of your contributions and financial sponsorship. Quarterly issues are based on observations sent in to the editor as seasonal reports. Articles, photographs and drawings are also an important part of the publication. I encourage all of you to participate in this publication by sharing your observations, observation accounts, surveys, articles, short stories, experiences, photographs and drawings. The CBC can only be successful and interesting if you share your birding experiences with our new editor. Feel free to contact him with any submission questions and finally, get out there, bird ... share your experiences!

~ The seasonal report can be submitted directly to the editor, hand written or typed, by mail; or in a list format such as Excel, by email. Only include observations from the Cleveland Region which consists of the following counties: CUYAHOGA, GEAUGA, LAKE, LORAIN, MEDINA, PORTAGE and SUMMIT.

~ Seasonal report information consists of the following:

1. Name of observer;
2. Date of observation (early and late dates are important to note);
3. Location;
4. County;
5. Species observed;
6. Number of species;
7. Comments

Note: add relevant comments about the observation; either about habitat or specifics of the bird. The length of time a bird is observed in an area is equally important for less common species. For all migrating species early and late dates are important. Refer to *The Birds of the Cleveland Region* 2004 edition to confirm these dates.

It is much easier for the editor if your seasonal reports are submitted in taxonomic order. Copies of the forms, including an Excel template and a species list in the current taxonomic order, are available at Kirtland Bird Club monthly meetings and on the club's website at www.kirtlandbirdclub.org. Deadlines for reporting are listed below. We cannot guarantee that your information will be considered for inclusion if it is submitted late.

Submission Deadline Schedule:

Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb) - 10 March

Spring (Mar, Apr, May) - 10 June

Summer (Jun, Jul, Aug) - 10 September

Fall (Sep, Oct, Nov) - 10 December

All images and drawings are reproduced in grayscale. They can be submitted in any format; prints, slides, or electronic files. Please indicate if you would like the photograph returned by including a self-addressed envelope. If you have a great quantity of large-size files for e-mailing, please check with Fred before sending as a CD mailed may be more appropriate. Please label photographs in .jpg format including all the following information in for the file name:

Bird name_location_99992006_photographer name.JPG

Authors of short stories, brief accounts and articles of interesting observations, or series of observations, can send these handwritten or as Word documents directly to the editor. We welcome short stories, accounts and articles of any size. Please include your name and email address on the document.

For ideas on what to write review any of the past issues archived on www.ClevelandBirdCalendar.com. This will give you examples of what has been accepted and published in the past. We encourage you to share your experiences with us whether from your backyard or from the field. If you have a question about a topic please contact the editor.

Please send all inquiries, submissions, etc., to editor:

Fred Dinkelbach
6320 Greenwood Pkwy, Apt 406
Sagamore Hills, OH 44067
330 468-1635
seasonalreports@kirtlandbirdclub.org

Delores Cole, president

Weather Report

by Dwight Chasar

June: Temperatures averaged 66.1°, 1.4° below normal. The high was 88° on the 17th– 18th and the low was 43° on the 11th. Lake Erie was 56° on June 1st and rose to 69° by the 30th. Rain occurred on eight days and totaled 4.84 inches, 0.95 inches above normal. The most rain in a 24 hour period was 2.57 inches on the 21st– 22nd.

July: Temperatures averaged 74.2°, 2.3° above normal. The high was 91° on the 17th and the low was 52° on the 6th. Rain occurred over 12 days, totaling 4.46 inches, 0.94 inches above normal. The most rain in a 24 hour period fell on the 27th– 28th and amounted to 1.12 inches. Lake Erie was at 77° at the end of the month.

August: Temperatures averaged 72.5°, 2.3° above normal. The high was 92° on the 1st and 2nd and the low was 50° on the 13th. Rain fell on eight days, totaling 2.21 inches, 1.48 inches below normal. The most in a 24 hour period was 1.27 inches on the 28th– 29th. Lake Erie water ended the month at 70°.

Seasonal Report

Underline denotes unexpected species in the region

HBSNP – Headlands Beach State Nature Preserve

MMSNP – Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve

CVNP – Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Mute Swan – Present throughout the season at HBSP, up to six appeared 9 August (RH). Eight adults and four fluffy young at Nimisila Reservoir, Summit County 5 June (RH).

Wood Duck – The 52 birds at HBSNP 11 July was a local high count (RH).

Blue-winged Teal – A male was in Hudson 17 July (DAC).

Northern Shoveler – One flew past Mentor Lagoons 31 August (LR, RH).

Red-breasted Merganser – A female (immature?) was at West Branch S.P., Portage County 19 July (GBe), a rare mid-summer record for Ohio.

Pied-billed Grebe – An adult with four young was at Wilbeth Rd., Akron 27 June (GBe). Evidence of successful breeding also came from Hudson, 12 August (DAC). Two were noted at Nimisila Reservoir 27 June (RH).

Great Egret – One over Orange, Cuyahoga County 27 June (GBe) and two in the CVNP 28 June (DAC) mark the average arrival in the area due to post-breeding dispersal from the Western Basin.

Least Bittern – One was present 3 June at HBSP, (RH).

Black-crowned Night-Heron – The 7 July arrival at the Shaker Lakes (LD) was in keeping with expectations.

Virginia Rail – Up to four present for the season at Jaite, CVNP (DAC). Two were at Chagrin River Park 9 July (NA, RB).

Sora – One in Cuyahoga Falls, Summit County 7 June (GBe) was of local interest.

American Coot – Three at Nimisila Reservoir 27 June (RH).

Common Moorhen – One was at Wilbeth Rd. 17 July (GBe). One was at Jaite, CVNP 30 June through 9 July (DAC).

Sandhill Crane – Successful breeding at Sandy Ridge Reservation (fide ODNR) was reported. The Sandy Ridge Reservation staff reported two eggs laid but the incubation was not successful. This is the third attempt for this couple.

Bald Eagle – The appearance of a bird at Shaker Lakes 21 July may mark the first mid-summer record for that park system. Another, or the same bird, was also detected 31 August (LD). An adult at Red Lock (CVNP) 10 June (DAC) was of local interest.

Osprey – Two nests at Nimisila Reservoir 5 June (RH). One bird near Lake Dorothy in Norton, Summit County 30 June and 29 July, with three birds there 26 July (RH).

Sharp-shinned Hawk – This species is a rare, although widely scattered breeder in Ohio. Confirmation of breeding in our area is extraordinary. From 3 June to 13 July, a male and female pair were observed at Brecksville Reservation (DAC). On 5 July a fledged young was observed being fed.



Photo by Dave Lewis

Sandhill Cranes
Sandy Ridge Reservation

Birding the park and preserve from the beginning of June to the last ten days of August, Acadian Flycatchers, American Redstarts, Wood Thrushes and Purple Martins filled my mornings.

Then strong northerly winds on 20 August brought the fall migration to the HBSP area. Sixteen species of warblers were observed on both 21 and 22 August. Magnolia Warblers and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Black-and-white Warblers and American Redstarts were the most numerous.

And all I can say about 31 August is—you had to be there! As Larry Rosche and I looked down the Woods Trail at Mentor Lagoons, birds were everywhere—zipping across the trail, flitting in the trees and bushes above and right beside us—nervously chasing insects at canopy level. Hundreds of warblers must have passed through Mentor Lagoons that morning and early afternoon. I met Jerry Talkington at the Nature Preserve after lunch.

Two Buff-breasted Sandpipers flew past us and we decided to head to Mentor Lagoons. Jerry spotted a Merlin on a dead tree; rare in the HBSP area in August. The bird, an adult male, was being harassed by Northern Rough-winged Swallows because it had just captured a swallow and had the victim in its talons. After a few moments of this swallow bombardment, the Merlin flew off and dropped its prey. The bird-filled last days of August were, I was sure, going to lead me to more of the same during September. Stay tuned!

Broad-winged Hawk – Three successful nests were reported from Brecksville Reservation (DAC).

Merlin – An adult male fed on a swallow at Mentor Lagoons 31 August (JT, RH).

Peregrine Falcon – Despite being regular shoreline migrants through August, two immature birds 29 Aug, and one the following day at HBSNP mark the first August records of the species at this local hotspot (RH).

American Avocet – An immature was at HBSNP 28 August (JT, RH).

Spotted Sandpiper – Downy young were found at Wilbeth Rd. 26 June (GBe). Downy Young also noted at Chagrin River Park, Lake County 9 July (NA).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper – Two were at HBSNP 31 August (JT, RH).

American Woodcock – Banding studies along the shoreline of Lake Erie have previously established a post-breeding dispersal in late summer. A bird found in a vacant lot off Scranton Rd. in Cleveland 24 July (DR) fits this dispersal pattern.

Bonaparte's Gull – An early arrival appeared at HBSNP 7 July (RH). The species was inland to West Branch State Park by 19 July (GBe).

Lesser Black-backed Gull – One was present at HBSNP from 2 July to the end of the period (RH). This marks the earliest fall arrival of the species in Ohio; among the earliest for the Lake Erie Basin.

Great Black-backed Gull – The 40 birds at HBSNP 10 June (RH) is among the larger June concentrations for the Central Basin of Lake Erie.

Caspian Tern – The mid-August passage through the area lakes was well marked with up to 10 at Nesmith Lake, Summit County 12 August (GBe).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo – Positive comments dominated the reports for this species.

Common Nighthawk – Few migrant flocks reported. About 70 appeared over Sagamore Hills 24 August (DAC).

Chimney Swift – The late August staging included 310+ at Reimer School, Akron 29 August (GBe). Area observers are encouraged to take up monitoring these con-

centrations. In addition, Rob Harlan wonders about summer roosts:

“Of course, fall roosts are well-known, but I wasn't as familiar with roosts at other times of year. At the old Wadsworth Post Office building, there is a large open chimney, and swifts have apparently roosted there in the fall for years. We noted a roost there in late May, 1000+ birds on 23 May, but they were still there in the summer also: 365 birds on 6 July between 9:15-9:35 p.m. and 425 birds on 26 July between 9:02-9:17 p.m. How typical are roosts at this season elsewhere?”

Olive-sided Flycatcher – Foretelling a good fall migration, three birds were at HBSNP 24 August (RH).

Alder Flycatcher – One singing in a Wadsworth, Medina County, power line cut 10 June (RH) was the latest of the spring migrants.

Least Flycatcher – An individual on territory through 20 June in the CVNP (DAC) was locally unusual.

Purple Martin – The 500 at HBSNP 16 August (RH) was a good count in recent years. This was surpassed by an outstanding 1,200 at Nimisila 12 August (GBe).

Bank Swallow – The 1,400 at HBSNP 16 August (RH) marked the peak staging of the species.

Yellow-throated Vireo – Thought to be in healthy numbers on breeding grounds.

Blue-headed Vireo – Continued signs of increase locally. Up to five singing birds at Brecksville Reservation through July (DAC).

White-eyed Vireo – One at HBSNP 22 and 31 August (RH) was of interest as are any Lake Erie shoreline records in fall. Another was at Wildwood Park 28 August (NA).

Marsh Wren – Up to five pairs at Jaite, CVNP, throughout the season (DAC).

Sedge Wren – One along the Towpath, CVNP, 8 June (MR) was of local interest. Whether as a consequence of atlas survey

efforts, or a real expansion into northeast Ohio, this species was remarkably wide-spread farther east in the state this season.

Hermit Thrush – A nest with young noted at Happy Days Ledges, CVNP, 6 August (DAC).

Northern Mockingbird – Five were present along the Scranton Peninsula near downtown Cleveland 3 July (DR).

Northern Parula – An early migrant was at Mentor Lagoons 28 August (JT, RH).

Pine Warbler – An estimated 10 territories at Nimisila Reservoir (RSH).

Blackpoll Warbler – An early arrival was at HBSNP 21 August (RH).

Connecticut Warbler – An early fall migrant appeared 21 August at Mentor Lagoons (RH).

Grasshopper Sparrow – One at the Coliseum, CVNP 10 June (DAC).

Henslow's Sparrow – One at the Coliseum, CVNP 10 June (DAC).

American Tree Sparrow – An individual was intensely scrutinized 7 June at Mentor Lagoons (RH). There are no prior acceptable summer records for Ohio.

White-crowned Sparrow – A bird in song was detected 6 and 10 June at HBSNP (EB, RH). There are only a limited number of prior summer records for Ohio.

Dark-eyed Junco – A 1 July observation for HBSNP was a first monthly record for the area (RH). Seven years since the first nesting record, several family parties were noted in Brecksville Reservation for the “best year ever” (DAC).

We gratefully acknowledge

*Barbara Andreas & G. Dennis Cooke, Bob Beck,
Howard Besser, Donald Burlett, Steve & Beth Cagan,
Craig Caldwell, Caroline & Robert Chandler, Steve Cherico,
Delores Cole, Patricia Coley, William Craig, Fanny Dale,
Bill Deininger, Fred & Cheryl Dinkelbach, Vic Fazio,
Laura Gooch, Nancy Howell, Mary Lou Hura, Judy Hurley,
Sally Isacco, Winnetta Kennedy, Joe McCullough, Wilbur McQueen,
Perry Peskin, Bert Szabo, Jerry Talkington,
Michael & Joanne Wrobel, and Eileen Zimlich*

as well as the

Key Foundation

for their generous support of the Cleveland Bird Calendar.

*It is through the generosity of our supporters that publication
of this and all quarterly issues are possible.*

If you would also like to be a contributor to this important records journal, please contact the Kirtland Bird Club,
216-556-0700

Date:

June 26, 2006

Weather:

Overcast with short periods of sun.



Photo by Judy Semroc

Time:

5:25 p.m. to 5:35 p.m.

Temperature range:

82 – 84 degrees F.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*)

Singer Lake Wetlands, Summit and Stark County Line,— June 26, 2006

Location: Singer Lake Wetlands complex – southern Summit and northern Stark counties, Ohio. First spotted bird off of Deer Pines Tr. flying above the wetland which is part of the Newell Preserve owned by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. The bird likely took off from an adjacent wetland within the Singer Lake complex, as it was flying lower to the ground (30' to 50') when it was first spotted. The bird flew in lazy circles gaining altitude and flying in a northerly direction. It was observed from approximately 5:25 p.m. to 5:35 p.m. until it gained altitude and left the area heading northward. Photos were taken from 5:27 p.m. to 5:28 p.m. We had been in other parts of the wetland complex from 2:30 p.m. until 5:45 p.m. but were in the area of the Heron Rookery from 3:20 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. which is where it had likely been before flying over the Newell Preserve Wetland.

Submitted June 27, 2006
Judy Semroc



Photo by Paula Lozano

Kirtland's Warbler

Headlands Beach State Nature Preserve

Because of a production error in the previous issue (Volume 102 Number 2) Paula Lozano was not credited for this excellent photo.

29th Greater Akron Audubon Society Summit County Bird Census

JUNE 16 – 25th, 2006

1555	Canada Goose	88	Hairy Woodpecker	646	Cedar Waxwing
35	Mute Swan	158	Northern Flicker	60	Blue-winged Warbler
151	Wood Duck	36	Pileated Woodpecker	1	Northern Parula
972	Mallard	215	Eastern Wood-Pewee	511	Yellow Warbler
1	Blue-winged Teal	125	Acadian Flycatcher	8	Chestnut-sided Warbler
1	Ring-necked Duck	1	Alder Flycatcher	10	Black-throated Green Warbler
74	Wild Turkey	84	Willow Flycatcher	10	Yellow-throated Warbler
4	Pied-billed Grebe	4	Least Flycatcher	6	Pine Warbler
18	Double-crested Cormorant	151	Eastern Phoebe	22	Cerulean Warbler
432	Great Blue Heron	121	Great Crested Flycatcher	38	American Redstart
4	Great Egret	98	Eastern Kingbird	2	Prothonotary Warbler
48	Green Heron	19	White-eyed Vireo	1	Worm-eating Warbler
175	Turkey Vulture	39	Yellow-throated Vireo	25	Ovenbird
13	Osprey (6 young)	7	Blue-headed Vireo	4	Louisiana Waterthrush
1	Bald Eagle	125	Warbling Vireo	2	Kentucky Warbler
4	Sharp-shinned Hawk	413	Red-eyed Vireo	1	Mourning Warbler
30	Cooper's Hawk	719	Blue Jay	346	Common Yellowthroat
38	Red-shouldered Hawk	499	American Crow	178	Hooded Warbler
7	Broad-winged Hawk	8	Horned Lark	3	Yellow-breasted Chat
105	Red-tailed Hawk	183	Purple Martin	132	Scarlet Tanager
9	American Kestrel	344	Tree Swallow	189	Eastern Towhee
7	Virginia Rail	256	N.Rough-winged Swallow	470	Chipping Sparrow
3	Sora	109	Bank Swallow	150	Field Sparrow
10	Common Moorhen (7 young)	362	Barn Swallow	68	Savannah Sparrow
1	American Coot	846	Black-capped Chickadee	6	Grasshopper Sparrow
183	Killdeer	344	Tufted Titmouse	1	Henslow's Sparrow
21	Spotted Sandpiper	5	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1116	Song Sparrow
91	Ring-billed Gull	292	White-breasted Nuthatch	95	Swamp Sparrow
37	Herring Gull	2	Brown Creeper	2	Dark-eyed Junco
305	Rock Pigeon	176	Carolina Wren	1320	Northern Cardinal
786	Mourning Dove	372	House Wren	167	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
7	Black-billed Cuckoo	4	Marsh Wren	332	Indigo Bunting
31	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet	130	Bobolink
4	Eastern Screech-Owl	83	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1851	Red-winged Blackbird
2	Great Horned Owl	155	Eastern Bluebird	92	Eastern Meadowlark
15	Barred Owl (2 young)	52	Veery	1270	Common Grackle
11	Common Nighthawk	4	Hermit Thrush	423	Brown-headed Cowbird
347	Chimney Swift	192	Wood Thrush	44	Orchard Oriole
73	Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	2789	American Robin	268	Baltimore Oriole
56	Belted Kingfisher	896	Gray Catbird	10	Purple Finch
4	Red-headed Woodpecker	1	Northern Mockingbird	323	House Finch
219	Red-bellied Woodpecker	22	Brown Thrasher	1242	American Goldfinch
348	Downy Woodpecker	2277	European Starling	1471	House Sparrow

Total Species: 129 Total Birds: 31961 Party Hours: 397 + 5 owling

Volunteers spent a record number of hours scouring Summit County. Weather was normal except for heavy rain on the 21-22nd. The county's varied habitats and lakes yielded 129 bird species. Most species' numbers reflect recent census trends.

Following, are a few observations about the census:

A Bald Eagle, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Worm-eating Warbler were each present for only the second time in the history of the count. Great Horned Owls were hard to find in spite of concerted efforts, but Barred Owls numbers were normal. Red-shouldered Hawk continued to increase. A Common Moorhen family was at the Hardy Road landfill. Woodcocks were missed. Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches and Carolina Wrens were found in record numbers, sharing a continued increase in permanent residents. Flycatching species seemed plentiful, with a record high for Eastern Wood-pewee. Rough-winged Swallow numbers were as expected, but Bank Swallows continued their downward trend from a high of 947 in 1994. Neotropical migrants are of concern, so record numbers of Wood Thrushes, Hooded Warblers and Orchard Orioles were welcome. Grassland species held their own in suitable habitat, with a high number of Eastern Meadowlarks. House Finches, while abundant, did not show an increase.

MANY THANKS to the following for the record number of hours volunteered:

Peg Bobel, Steve Borgis, Sandy Brown, Virginia Buerki, Garnet Byrne, Robert Capanna, Phil Chaon, Dwight & Ann Chasar, Sue Chester, Ernie Cornelius, Pat Coy, Wayne Crouse, George & Sandy Cull, Phyllis Devlin, Fred Dinkelbach, Diane Dulzer, Paul Ellsworth, Craig Griffin, Marty & Anne Gulbrandsen, Judy Hendrick, Michele Hendrick, Larry Hunter, Mary Lou Hura, Nancy Ibsen, Diane Johnson, Susan Jones, Hedy Jones, Linda Kelliar, Winnie Kennedy, Ethan Kisler, Andrea Klein, Jim Knisely, Gene & Linda Kovach, Karl Liske, Fred Losi, Brad Lyell, Wilbur McQueen, Marie Morgan, Marc Nolls, Hope Orr, Bill Osborne, Jane Oswald, Wolfgang & Joyce Pelz, Marlo Perdicis, Ed Pierce, Mary Reinthal, Jim Reyda, Mary Anne & Tom Romito, Ronda Russell, Pat Rydquist, Jim Shaffer, Bert Szabo, Doug Vogus, Jim Vogus, Annette Webb, Janet Wertz, Bradley Wilkinson, Clyde Witt and Eileen Zimlich

Barn Swallows Use House Finch Nest

by Ann Chasar and Dwight Chasar

When the train station for the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad was built at Station Road in Brecksville, not only did it provide a place of rest for hikers, bikers, runners, train passengers and birders, it provided a place for Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) to nest. The swallows took to building their nests on the top of the ridge beam just under the roof peak of the station. One or two swallow nests were built each year, and by spring of the following year, CVNP workers removed the old nests, presumably to keep the station tidy, especially since these nests were just above the benches where human visitors sat. By spring of 2006, however, workers removed the nests and blocked the spaces (each about 30 inches long), save one, on the ridge beam with screening, presumably to prevent the swallows from building there again. This one unblocked space that remained already contained an active nest of House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) and presumably law or sympathy prevailed. The nest was not removed.



Photo by Dwight Chasar

Barn Swallows

Station Road Station, CVNP — June 27, 2006

When the Barn Swallows returned from spring migration, they were distraught that there was no place to nest on the ridge beam. They flew in and out of the station for several weeks, trying to find some real estate on which to build a nest. One pair tried to take up position at the opposite end of the one open space, opposite the House Finch nest about 30 inches away, but that did not seem acceptable to either party. After the House Finch young fledged, there were times when both the swallows and finches sat on the finch

nest at the same time, presumably the finch wanting to start a second brood and the swallow its first. The swallow prevailed and without any observable modifications to the nest that we could see, proceeded to lay eggs and incubate. Young were being fed by 20 June.

Both Bent (1963) and Brown (1999) reveal that, while Barn Swallows will reuse Barn Swallow nests, little documentation exists on their using the nests of other birds. They have been documented using an [Eastern] Phoebe nest (Bent 1942; Weeks 1977). A search of the SORA (Searchable Ornithological Research Archive) database did provide documentation of the swallow having used a Say's Phoebe nest (Kozma 1995). Thus, our observation seems unique and requires this documentation.

It should be of no surprise that we (Chasar 2004) would address this swallow's population trend as well. The graph shows the population trend of the Barn Swallow in Summit County, as determined from data collected in the Greater Akron Audubon Society summer bird count. While there is much data fluctuation in the early years, the fluctuation flattens out in the latter years. The trend line is nearly flat, indicating little change in this bird's population in Summit County over 28 years. The mean value of the data indicates that about one Barn Swallow is encountered about every party hour in the field. The Barn Swallow population in Ohio in general has increased significantly during this same time period (Earnst 1996).

Bent, A.C. 1963. *Life Histories of North American Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows, and Their Allies*, Dover Publications, New York

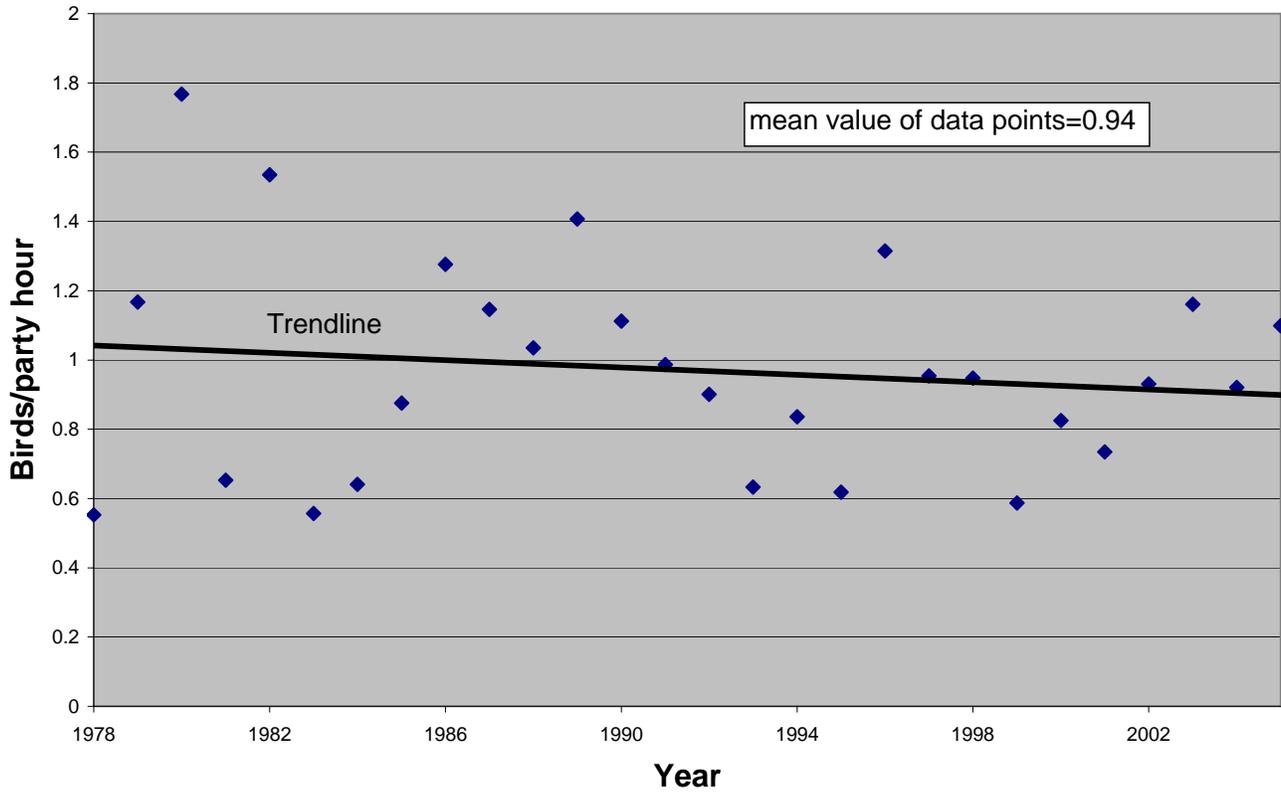
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Population Trend of Barn Swallow in Summit Co



Thanks to Our Field Contributors...

Nancy Anderson (NA)
 R. Beuck (RB)
 Gregory Bennett (GBe)
 Erik Bruder (EB)
 Dwight and Ann Chasar (DAC)

Leo Deininger (LD)
 Ray Hannikman (RH)
 Rob and Sandy Harlan (RSH)
 Mary Reinthal (MR)

Dave Riffle (DR)
 Larry Rosche (LR)
 Judy Semroc (JSe)
 Jerry Talkington (JT)

I work part-time, mowing about 25 acres at a farm in Thompson, Ohio. A couple of years ago I asked the owner, Nick Vitt, to let a couple of the fields grow so that Bobolinks would have a safe place to nest. He agreed and that first year I noticed several pairs of Bobolinks nesting in the three fields that we left uncut.

This year, again, the owner let me leave three fields uncut. I wanted to find a nest so Emil Bacik and I took the challenge in early July. We were driving on the road between two fields when we noticed a male Bobolink with a caterpillar in his bill. What was odd was that he was hanging around in a field that I mow! We sat in the car and watched the male. After about 10 minutes of the bird watching us, he finally flew to the ground. We scrambled out of the car and ran over to where we thought he landed. I'm sure we looked comical, two adults crawling carefully around on our hands and knees parting the grass and putting our ear to the ground. We could hear the babies chirping but we could not locate a nest.

We went back to the car and waited. Along came the female Bobolink with a juicy caterpillar. She was more wary than the male. About 20 minutes passed before she finally dropped to the ground. We watched and eyed up the area "somewhere between the hawkweed and that purple flower." We hopped out of the car and started looking, crawling around on our hands and knees again. By now, frustration set in. We felt like we were right over the nest. We could hear them but still could not find them.



Photo by Dwight Chasar

Female Bobolink
Coliseum Grasslands, CVNP



Photo by Brenda Barber

Bobolink Nestlings
Thompson Ohio — July 2006

We went back to the car and agreed to give it another shot. We went through the same waiting game with the female and finally on our third attempt, Emil found the nest. It was woven so far into the low grass that we had to part the grass to see the babies. This is a 10 acre field that I mow every two weeks. The nest was below the height of the cutting blades but what amazed me was that it did not get crushed by the tires of the tractor. I marked the area with a pylon and when I went back a week later the babies had fledged. For those uncut fields, several other Bobolink pairs used the taller grasses for nesting.

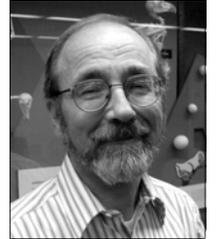
I chose not to look for the nest.

About the Authors



Brenda Barber grew up birding. She has led Audubon bird walks and has traveled to England, Sweden, Hungary, Morocco and Hong Kong for birding. She spends free time birding Mentor Headlands.

Dwight Chasar, former KBC president, leads bird walks in the CVNP year round and organizes/compiles the Spring and Fall CVNP bird censuses.



Ann Chasar volunteers in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Cleveland Metroparks, Brecksville Reservation. She and Doug Vogus began coordinating the GAAS Summer Bird Census in 2000.

Ray Hannikman, former editor of the CBC, began birding in 1970. Since 1994, most of his non-Ohio birding has been focused on South America –mostly Peru and Brazil.



Susan Jones has leads bird walks for Greater Akron Audubon Society and volunteers for Kirkland Bird Club as design director for this publication.

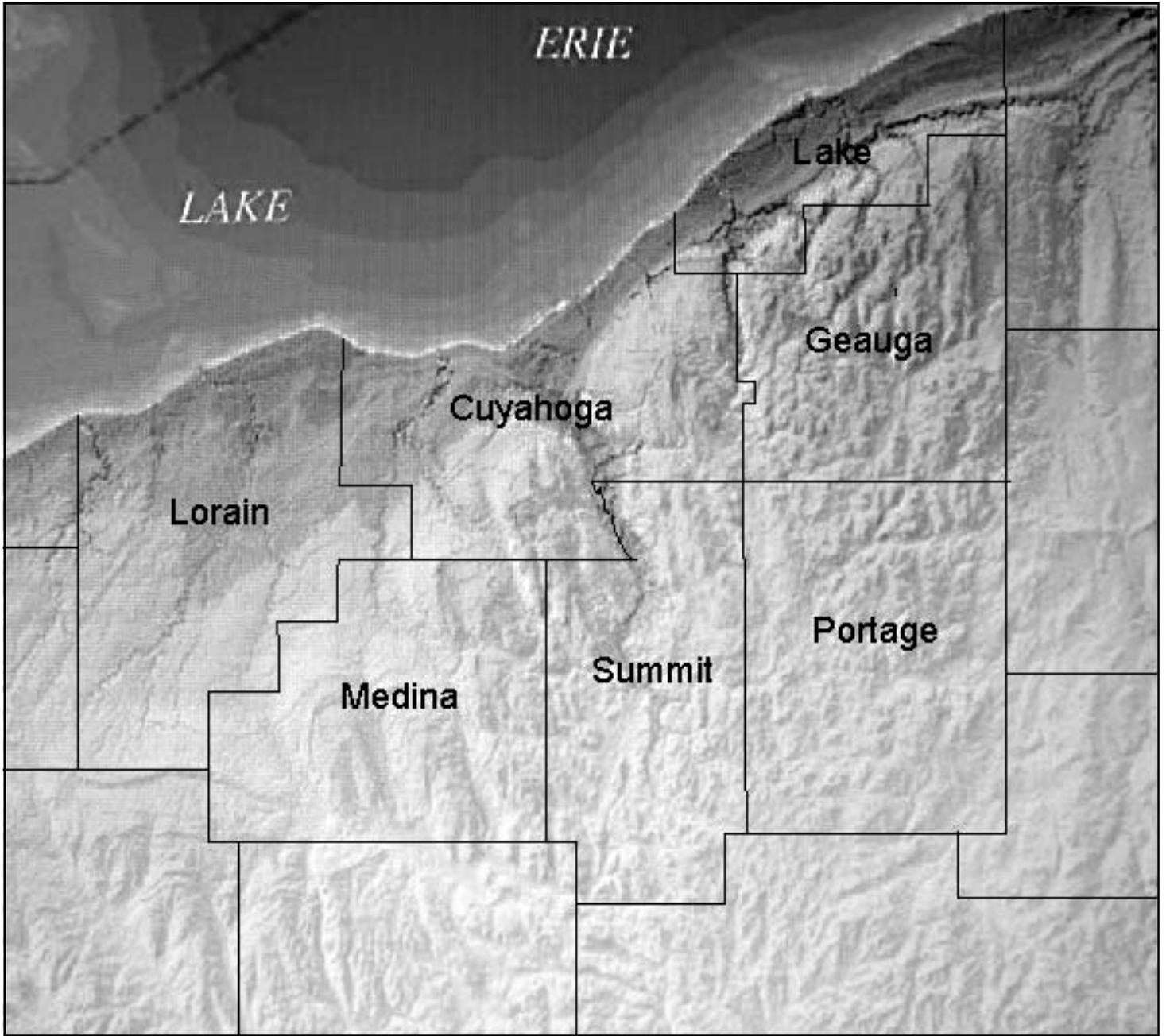
Judy Semroc is currently a field naturalist/conservation specialist for the Natural Areas Division of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



Doug Vogus has been birding almost since breathing! Doug spends most of his free time in the CVNP when not working on the Summer census with Ann Chasar.

Clyde E. Witt, is past president of the Greater Akron Audubon Society and has been its newsletter editor for 11 years.





*The seven counties of northeast Ohio included in the
Cleveland Bird Calendar region.*

