



The Passenger Pigeon

The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

December 2006 Vol 42 No. 9

December Meeting:

There will not be a December meeting, nor will there be any December field trips. Please consider taking part in a Christmas Bird Count or Winter Bird Count near you. We'll see you in January for the annual Member's Slide Night.

Note: Please be sure to double-check that you've paid your 2006-2007 Bird Club dues. If there's a "dot" on your address label, that means that we hadn't received your dues as of November 30. If you receive the newsletter via email, please check your records to see if you have paid your dues. Thank you!

Inside this issue:

- 2006-2007 Christmas and Winter Bird Count Season 1-3
- Warren County Rufous Hummingbird Photos and Notes 3

The 2006-2007 Christmas and Winter Bird Count Season

Here are details on the local National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts. Each of these counts requires a fee of \$5.00 payable to National Audubon, which is used to help offset the costs of conducting the counts and publishing the results. There is no charge for feeder watchers, or for participants under age 18. Audubon Miami Valley is offering to pay the nominal \$5.00 fee for first-time participants on the Hamilton-Fairfield and Oxford CBCs, both of which are being held on December 16.

The Cincinnati Bird Club has traditionally been the sponsor and organizer of the area's largest and arguably longest running Christmas Bird Count, the **Cincinnati CBC, which will be held on December 30**, as well as the Ohio River CBC on December 16, the

East Fork CBC on December 17, and the Western Hamilton County CBC on December 23.

The Cincinnati CBC as we know it today was organized in 1947 by Karl Maslowski and a few other birders after their return to the area following military service during World War II. Locally, this count has to be considered "The Granddaddy of Them All," and it tends to draw more participants than other area counts.

If you object to the NAS participation fee, which some people do for reasons we won't bore you with in these pages, there are some alternatives. The Hamilton County Park District conducts a free count in all the county parks on Saturday, December 9. You can contact them at 521-7275 to sign up for your favorite

park. Also, the Clermont County Park District counts in their parks on Saturday, January 6. Contact Keith Robinson at 513-876-9013 to join them. The Hamilton County and Clermont County Park District counts are worthy causes, and their dates don't conflict with any of the NAS counts in our area. We hope that birders will consider helping out their local parks this winter, if possible.

Here is a list ordered by date of upcoming NAS Christmas Bird Counts:

Caesar Creek Lake CBC:

Thursday, December 14. Contact Jim O'Boyle at 897-1050 or James.F.O'Boyle@lr102.usace.army.mil. This count will be held for the second time this year, and will include Caesar Creek State Park, Spring Valley Wildlife Area, Fort

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)
Ancient, Little Miami River, Clinton County Parks, Roxanna-New Burlington gravel pits, and Todd's Fork.

Ohio River CBC:

Saturday: December 16. Contact Joe Bens at 353-4229 or jbens@cinci.rr.com. The area is centered on the Oxbow, and includes the Oxbow, Shawnee Lookout, and nearby areas in Ohio, Indiana and northern Kentucky.

Hamilton-Fairfield CBC:

Saturday, December 16. Contact Mike Busam at 755-0057 or mjb@schaffer.cc. The area includes Gilmore Ponds, Hamilton Riverside Park, Joyce Park, Drabo Gravel Pits, Kerns Nursery, and parts of the Great Miami River.

Oxford CBC:

Saturday, December 16. Contact Larry Sherman 513.523.2458 or shermalw@muohio.edu. Beginning at 7:30 am at Miami University's Ecology Research Center on Somerville Road, this CBC covers 176 square miles around Oxford, Ohio.

Whitewater (Brookville Lake, Indiana) CBC:

Sunday, December 17. Contact Bill Buskirk billb@earlham.edu

Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge CBC:

Saturday, December 16. Compiler: Jason Lewis, email: jason_lewis at fws.gov, telephone 812-273-0783 office or 812-701-2309 cell. Volunteers should meet at the refuge office by 7:30 am to watch the refuge video. Groups will depart from the refuge office at 8:00 am; please do not be late. Volunteers are asked to contact Jason Lewis, Wildlife Biologist, if you plan to count for Big Oaks NWR; however, anyone who shows up by 7:30 am on count day will be allowed to participate regardless if they notified us ahead of time. Volunteers should bring a lunch and beverages, be willing to stay at least until noon, and dress appropriately. Please contact the refuge office by calling 812-273-0783 or email with questions or to confirm your participation.

East Fork Lake CBC:

Sunday, December 17. Contact Joe Bens at 353-4229 or jbens@cinci.rr.com. The area is centered on East Fork Lake, and includes locations in Clermont County.

Paint Creek CBC:

Sunday, December 17. Contact Steve Wagner at 831-7606 or waggies5@hotmail.com. The area includes Paint Creek Lake and Rocky Fork Lake State Parks.

Western Hamilton County CBC:

Saturday, December 23. Contact Ned Keller at 941-6497 or keller@one.net. The area includes Miami-Whitewater Forest, Mitchell Forest, Winton Woods, Mt. Airy Forest, and Spring Grove Cemetery.

Cincinnati CBC:

Saturday, December 30. Contact Jay Stenger at 522-4245 or jaystenger@cinci.rr.com. The area includes the Cincinnati Nature Center, Lunken Airport, Woodland Mound, and other nearby areas in eastern Hamilton County and western Clermont County.

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge CBC:

January 1, 2007. Compiler: Donna Stanley, email: donna_stanley at fws.gov, telephone: 812-522-4352. address: Muscatatuck NWR, 12985 E. U.S. Hwy. 50, Seymour, IN 47274. Meet at 7:30 am in the Refuge Visitor Center.

— Information compiled by Ned Keller, Jay Stenger, and Mike Busam.

The 2007 Ohio Winter Bird Atlas

The Ohio Winter Bird Atlas project is entering its fifth year this January. A number of local birders are involved with this interesting state-wide effort to document the distribution patterns of birds in Ohio during the month of January.

Created by Vic Fazio and put through a trial run in 2002, the Ohio Winter Bird Atlas is administered today by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory.

Following is a brief news piece from the Black Swamp Bird Observatory about the 2007 Ohio Winter Bird Atlas:

“The Black Swamp Bird Observatory is coordinating the 2007 Ohio Winter Bird Atlas and we need your help! The Atlas is conducted during the month of January anywhere in Ohio and we are looking for people to count birds on a weekly basis if possible (1-4 hours a morning at your favorite birding spot or pick a quadrangle block near you from the Ohio Gazetteer DeLorme.)

Anything you can do would be great! This is a great opportunity to venture out with friends and contribute to the Ohio winter bird knowledge. More information is available on the website www.bsbo.org or call the Observatory (419-898-4070) and we will send you an information packet or answer your questions.”

For additional information, please see the Ohio Winter Bird Atlas page on Black Swamp Bird Observatory's new website:
http://www.bsbo.org/winter_bird_atlas/winter_bird_atlas.htm

Warren County Rufous Hummingbird

An immature female Rufous Hummingbird spent November 1 through the 22nd at the Teresa and Larry Yowler Residence in Lebanon, Warren County. Allen Chartier banded the bird on November 14, and supplied the following photos and notes. (If you want to see these photos in color, please consider receiving your *Passenger Pigeon* online...)



The bird was aged as hatch-year (immature) based on the presence of shallow groovings or corrugations on about 70% of the upper mandible. (Visible only with a 10x loupe). . . . The pattern of iridescent gorget feathers on the throat can sometimes be helpful in determining the sex of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds. This bird had 10 clustered together in the center of the throat. This pattern could occur in either immature males or females.



The upper tail coverts and rump were entirely green. The rufous on the base of the central rectrix (r1) was restricted to about the basal 25%, and was completely covered by the green upper tail coverts (bottom photo). These characters suggested this bird was a female. . . .



The wing measurement of 45.48 mm was 2.08 mm longer than any age of male Rufous or Allen's given in Stiles (1972), so this measurement is a strong indication that the bird was female.



The Passenger Pigeon

The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

December 2006 Vol 42 No. 9

Cincinnati Bird Club
Newsletter Editor
7577 Whitehall Circle West
West Chester, Ohio 45069
Email: mjb@schafter.cc

Are Your Dues Due?

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September 2006 - May 2007 birding year, please fill out the form below and mail it in along with your membership fees.

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

www.cincinnatibirds.com/birdclub/index.php

Bird Club Membership

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

_____ Individual \$12.00 _____ Family \$15.00 _____ Student \$6.00

**Make your check payable to Cincinnati Bird Club, and mail to:
Peg Gatch, 11 Mound Avenue, Milford, OH 45150**



“Bonus Material” Here are larger versions of the Rufous Hummingbird photos that appear in this issue of the *Passenger Pigeon*. As a “bonus” we’ve included a wing photo, and some additional material from Allen Chartier’s documentation write-up for the Ohio Bird Records Committee. Special thanks to Allen Chartier for sharing his photographs and notes on this hummingbird, and to Teresa, Larry, and Hannah Yowler for sharing the bird and their home with a number of interested birders.

“Given that the bird was a hatch-year (immature) female, using Stiles (1972) we can determine whether this bird was a Rufous or Allen’s Hummingbird using several additional measurements and observations. The presence of notching and/or emargination on the second rectrix from the center (r2) is one feature that can often be observed in the field to confirm Rufous. This individual had no significant emargination on either web of the second rectrix (see photos), which would make this bird impossible to identify in the field. Using Figure 3 in Stiles (1972), the shape most closely matched figure Ca. Given that the diagnostic shape of r2 was not present, the widths of two other tail feathers, the central rectrix (r1) and the outermost rectrix (r5) needed to be measured. . . .

“The width of the central rectrix (r1) was measured as 8.17 mm. This is near the low end of the range for immature female Rufous (7.8-9.5 mm) given in Stiles (1972), and near the upper end of the range for immature female of nominate (*S. s. sasin*) Allen’s (6.9-8.2 mm). It is near the middle of the range for the sedentarius subspecies of Allen’s (7.3-8.4 mm). So, the width of the central rectrix is suggestive of Rufous, but not conclusive. The width of the outer rectrix (r5) was measured as 3.98 mm. This is broader than the maximum range for immature female Allen’s (max. 3.3 mm) for both subspecies, and so provides the only conclusive and diagnostic support to the identification as Rufous Hummingbird.



“Tail measurements are often not very useful. This bird’s tail measurement of 27.3 mm is above the maximum for immature females of the nominate subspecies of Allen’s (Stiles gives no corresponding measurement for immature female *S. s. sedentarius*). So tail length is somewhat useful in this case. Also, the wing measurement of 45.48 mm is above the maximum for immature females of both nominate and *sedentarius* subspecies of Allen’s, so supports the identification as Rufous Hummingbird.

Molt: There was no body molt evident on this bird. The outer 4 primaries (p7-p10) were old and worn, and the inner primaries (p1-p5) were recently replaced and contrastingly shiny black. The 6th primary was not in evidence, so likely recently shed and just beginning to grow in. The first (central), 2nd, and 5th rectrices appeared fresh, while the 3rd and 4th appeared old and worn.

Fat/Weight: The bird had a fat code of 1 (0-3 scale) and weighed 3.8 grams, slightly above average for an immature female planning to overwinter.” Photos and notes courtesy of Allen Chartier.