



Long-tailed Duck © Lana Hays

the passenger
Pigeon



January 2012
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JANUARY

Below we are reprinting an excerpt of "A Birder's Almanac", written by Bill Whan. Bill, a long-time Ohio birder and member of the state bird records committee, is an authority on the birds of Ohio. The almanac traces the migratory patterns of birds through the state of Ohio, month by month. The full text can be viewed online at: <http://www.ohiobirds.org/calendar/almanac/introduction.php>

Short days and cold nights dominate the environment in January. Birds are physiologically well suited to endure low temperatures, but cold weather can adversely affect their food supplies. With persistent deep snow, ground foragers must migrate, resort to feeders or odd niches, or die. Frozen water drives waterfowl first from ponds, then reservoirs, and in harsher winters from Lake Erie itself, while a few bodies of water where special circumstances prevail—springs, rapids, dam overflows—can host noteworthy local numbers of ducks. Hot-water outflows at Erie shore power plants invite hordes of diving waterfowl and gulls. Birds like rails and snipes and great blue herons may pass the winter at spring-fed wetlands, seeps, or sheltered ditches. The huge outflow of the spring at Castalia in Erie County never freezes, and is a magnet for ducks, most interestingly tender dabblers like gadwalls, wigeons, and shovelers seldom seen elsewhere in the state at this time.

For a few other birds, like insectivorous brown creepers, even feeble winter sunlight is enough to stir prey hidden in tree bark. Eastern phoebes may persist in mild January weather to take advantage of winter stoneflies. Acorns and other nuts, cockleburs, dried grapes, seeds, sumac, grasses, ragweed, sunflowers, locust beans, and the like persist to feed many



Snow Bunting © Lana Hays

others. Feeders tended by humans allow some birds to pass the winter further north than might otherwise be possible. Landscape plantings of hawthorns, crabapples, etc. are another important food source. Raptor numbers fluctuate from year to year with local abundances of rodents and smaller birds, just as the numbers of certain boreal birds—snowy owls, winter finches—vary with the supplies of food further north, dearths of which periodically bring them to Ohio. In recent years, small numbers of merlins have taken to wintering in urban settings in both the north and the south, and several golden eagles have wintered in Muskingum County, an eventuality unforeseen ten years ago.

As many as 150 bird species may be found in Ohio during January. Sparrows, blackbirds, goldfinches, and the resident species can be found in good numbers. Winter finches (red-breasted nuthatches, pine siskins, crossbills, redpolls, evening grosbeaks) can be uncommon or absent, often in biennial cycles, likelier recently in winters whose Decembers fall in odd-numbered years. Raptorial visitors like northern shrikes, rough-legged hawks, and harriers share the landscape with year-round predators. Variable numbers of owls of the north, like short-eareds, long-eareds, and saw-whets, roost winter-long in suitable habitats, while local owls, especially great horneds, may begin nesting late in the month.

In the northwestern marshes, fair-sized flocks of snow geese and tundra swans pass the winter. In the south, large roosts of both black and turkey vultures gather to do the same. A recent curiosity has been the number of rufous hummingbirds that persist, often at feeders, into January. In 2004, eight rufous hummingbirds were seen in January, one of them as late as the 23rd of the month, a new record date.

- Bill Whan

Bird Club meeting

Members Photo Night



thursday, january 19th
7:00 p.m.

sharon woods visitor center

Our speaker for the January program will be . . . you. Or at least it could be you, if you have some photos of birds you would like to share with members and friends. The February program, as in past years, will again be the very popular members photo night. At this program, we encourage all members to show some of their favorite photos and maybe tell us a little something about them. We also ask that each person limit the number of photographs to about 10 to 20 pictures to make sure that everyone gets a chance.

For those into digital photography, there is a digital projector available. We will be able to show digital photos from CD, DVD and possibly slides. Apparently slides are a thing of the past as no one has showed any at this program for a few years. If you plan to show slides let us know in advance. If you have pictures on another type of drive, please contact me in advance of the meeting to discuss how to show your photos. There will be a laptop available, but if you have one, you might want to consider bringing it.

This is always a fun and interesting evening. I hope you can come out and share some of your photos with us. If you don't plan to present any of your own, you still won't want to miss this program, as I'm sure you will enjoy the diverse photos of our talented membership.

If you have any questions concerning this program feel free to contact me at bobonick@msn.com, (513) 829-2118

-Steve Bobonick

around the valley . . .

Audubon Society of Ohio

Field trip

Sunday, January 29th, 8:00 a.m.

Location: Mitchell Memorial Forest

Leader: Mike Busam, (513) 755-0057, mbusam@gmail.com

Meet: Wood Duck Trail Parking Lot at MMF

Field trip

Sunday, February 26th, 8:00 a.m.

Location: East Fork State Park & Harsha Lake

Leader: Joe Bens, (513) 353-4229, joebens@live.com

Meet: South swimming beach parking lot

Oxbow, Inc.

Field trip

Friday, January 6th, 7:00 p.m.

Location: Shawnee Lookout Park

Leader: John Klein, (513) 941-4877

Meet: Shawnee Lookout Golf Course Parking Lot

Cincinnati Nature Center

Bird walks

Saturday, Jan. 14th – Darlena Graham

Saturday, Jan. 28th – Lester Payton @ Long Branch Farm

Meet your guide in the Rowe Woods parking lot at 8 a.m.

Bird Club file

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Saturday, January 21, 2012

8:00 a.m.

Camp Dennison Pits and Little Miami River Environs
Leader: Bob Foppe, 685-2739 or e-mail fopsinc@aol.com

January weather can be unpredictable so we think it's always a good idea to plan a trip closer to home during this month. As in the past few years this January trip will begin at the Camp Dennison gravel pits. Over the years these gravel pits have been one of the best winter waterfowl spots in this region and conveniently located right inside the I-275 beltway. The Camp Dennison gravel pits almost always has open water, even in the coldest winters, and has always attracted a great diversity of waterfowl and waterbirds, usually in significant numbers. Waterfowl numbers have been down somewhat this year. Some speculate that this year's mild early winter and the increased usage by Indian Hill residents (who now own and use the area as a private recreation area that they have named Grand Valley) may be why the numbers are down this year. While total numbers were down, the recent Cincinnati Christmas Bird Count still managed fourteen species of waterfowl, two species of grebes, coots, gulls and raptors including a Bald Eagle.

Our trip leader Bob Foppe knows the area as well as anyone. After viewing the pits he plans to head to one or two other nearby spots in the Little Miami Valley. Bob plans to end the trip down river at Armleder Park. Armleder has become a local birding hotspot and the varied habitat in the park, including riparian woodland and a good expanse of grassland, attracts a great diversity of species. There are level and mown paths through the park but they can get wet and muddy so wear waterproof footwear. Dressing warmly on a January field trip would be a good idea to.

Bob should end the trip a little after noon. A scope is almost necessary, if you expect good looks at all the birds in the pits. Plenty of scopes should be on hand, so if you don't have one don't let that stop you from coming. Restroom stops will be made along the way. If you have any questions feel free to contact Bob.

Meeting Place: We will meet in the parking lot of AIM, which is the name of the business which is located on the east side (same side as the pits) of Glendale-Milford Rd./Route 126. The management of AIM has graciously agreed to allow us to park and view the pits from their parking lot. Thanks to Bob for setting this up. This is the business at the extreme north end of the Camp Dennison gravel pits, just south of Fletcher Rd. and the bridge over the Little Miami.

Jay Stenger

Field Trip Co-ordinator
(513) 522-8147
jaystenger@cinci.rr.com



Northern Harrier © Allan Claybon

eld trips



Directions From the North: Take I-275 exit # 54 Wards Corner Rd. and go south about 1.5 miles into Miamiville. At the stop sign turn left onto Rt. 126 (called Center Rd. here). Go east a short distance to a stop sign and turn right. You are still on Rt. 126. Go across the bridge and past Fletcher Rd. and turn left into the AIM parking lot.

Directions From the South: Take US 50 towards Milford. Just before the bridge leading into Milford, turn left onto Glendale-Milford Rd./Route 126. Go north on Route 126 about 2.5 miles, through the village of Camp Dennison and continuing past the gravel pits on your right. Turn right into AIM's parking lot, located at the extreme north end of the gravel pits.

Personal Note: The village of Indian Hill now owns the Camp Dennison gravel pits and has renamed them Grand Valley. Indian Hill is continuously developing the pits as a recreational outdoor facility for its residents. Access to the gravel pits is restricted to Indian Hill residents and neighbors who pay their water bills to the Village of Indian Hill. This increased usage over the past five years, as compared to before Indian Hill ownership, has certainly had gradual negative affects on the waterfowl usage of the pits. But non-the-less, waterfowl continue to use the area although in obviously smaller numbers. While interior access to the pits is closed to non-residents, (which is probably a good thing, as it keeps usage down) the pits can still be viewed with a scope from the periphery. I personally still prefer the name we birders have always called the spot, the "Camp Dennison gravel pits". I mean after all, that's what they actually are and all the pretty names you can think of isn't going to change that fact. And besides, that's what local birders have called the place ever since CBC founder and naturalist, the late Worth Randle, first put the Camp Dennison pits on the birding map 50 years ago.

Audubon Christmas

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Below are the preliminary results for the five local Christmas Bird Counts organized by the Bird Club, as part of the National Audubon Society's 112th Christmas Bird Count.

Ohio River CBC

Date: December 17, 2011

Compiler: Paul Wharton

Number of participants:

Total species: 82

Canada Goose 1313
Grtr. White-fronted Goose 6
Wood Duck 4
Gadwall 421 (high #)
American Wigeon 75
American Black Duck 300
Mallard 9711 (high #)
Greater Scaup 3
Northern Shoveler 18
Northern Pintail 135
Amer Green-winged Teal 87
Canvasback 14
Redhead 31
Ring-necked Duck 75
Bufflehead 6
Hooded Merganser 46
Ruddy Duck 12
Wild Turkey 101
Pied-billed Grebe 46 (high #)
Double-crested Cormorant 2
Great Blue Heron 82
Black Vulture 50
Turkey Vulture 4
Bald Eagle 5
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1
Cooper's Hawk 8
Red-shouldered Hawk 4
Red-tailed Hawk 41
American Kestrel 11
Peregrine Falcon 4
American Coot 131
Sandhill Crane 42
Killdeer 52
Ring-billed Gull 15
Rock Pigeon 619
Mourning Dove 339
Eastern Screech-Owl 3
Great Horned Owl 1
Belted Kingfisher 4
Red-bellied Woodpecker 45
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 2
Downy Woodpecker 59
Hairy Woodpecker 4
Northern Flicker 19
Pileated Woodpecker 10
Blue Jay 30

American Crow 3341
Horned Lark 4
Carolina Chickadee 292
Tufted Titmouse 108
White-breasted Nuthatch 25
Brown Creeper 4
Carolina Wren 76
Winter Wren 2
Golden-crowned Kinglet 19
Eastern Bluebird 55
Hermit Thrush 1
American Robin 2214
Northern Mockingbird 26
Brown Thrasher 1
European Starling 8992
American Pipit 1
Cedar Waxwing 1
Yellow-rumped Warbler 39
Common Yellowthroat 2
Eastern Towhee 61
American Tree Sparrow 541
Field Sparrow 20
Savannah Sparrow 4
Fox Sparrow 12
Song Sparrow 710
Swamp Sparrow 256
White-throated Sparrow 249
White-crowned Sparrow 84
Dark-eyed Junco 115
Northern Cardinal 285
Red-winged Blackbird 73
Eastern Meadowlark 10
Rusty Blackbird 29
House Finch 80
American Goldfinch 224
House Sparrow 111
Count week species (1):
Lesser Scaup

Hamilton/Fairfield CBC

Date: December 17, 2011

Compiler: Mike Busam

Number of participants:

Total species: 71

Canada Goose 751
Cackling Goose 1
Mute Swan 1
Wood Duck 2
Gadwall 3
American Wigeon 4
Mallard 425
Northern Shoveler 4
Ring-necked Duck 38
Bufflehead 4
Hooded Merganser 2
Osprey 1
Bald Eagle 3
Northern Harrier 1
Sharp-shinned Hawk 2
Cooper's Hawk 7
Red-shouldered Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 33
American Kestrel 6
Wild Turkey 10
Pied-billed Grebe 10
Great Blue Heron 22
American Coot 75
Sandhill Crane XX
Killdeer 48
Ring-billed Gull 47
Herring Gull CW
Rock Dove 822
Mourning Dove 462
Eastern Screech Owl 2
Great Horned Owl 6
Barred Owl 1
Belted Kingfisher 16
Red-bellied Woodpecker 48
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 3
Downy Woodpecker 63
Hairy Woodpecker 7
Northern Flicker 14
Pileated Woodpecker 5
Blue Jay 39
American Crow 86
Horned Lark 11
Carolina Chickadee 196
Tufted Titmouse 41
White-breasted Nuthatch 30
Brown Creeper 18
Carolina Wren 47
Winter Wren 2
Golden-crowned Kinglet 12
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 2
Eastern Bluebird 17
Hermit Thrush 2
American Robin 726
Northern Mockingbird 12
European Starling 4624
Eastern Towhee 3
American Tree Sparrow 71
Field Sparrow 8
Fox Sparrow 1
Song Sparrow 91
Swamp Sparrow 2
White-throated Sparrow 136
White-crowned Sparrow 4
Dark-eyed Junco 22
Northern Cardinal 187
Red-winged Blackbird 378
Rusty Blackbird 50
Common Grackle 102
Brown-headed Cowbird 105
House Finch 56
American Goldfinch 154
House Sparrow 53

West. Hamilton Cty. CBC

Date: December 18, 2011

Compiler: Ned Keller

Number of participants: 46

Total species: 86

Canada Goose 912
Mute Swan 2
Wood Duck 2
Gadwall 88
American Black Duck 37
Mallard 945
Northern Shoveler 4
Northern Pintail 1
Green-winged Teal 23
Redhead 2
Ring-necked Duck 158
Hooded Merganser 9
Wild Turkey 59
Pied-billed Grebe 7
Great Blue Heron 41
Black Vulture 22
Turkey Vulture 101
Bald Eagle 1
Northern Harrier 7
Sharp-shinned Hawk 6
Cooper's Hawk 12
Red-shouldered Hawk 21
Red-tailed Hawk 69
Rough-legged Hawk 1
American Kestrel 12
Merlin 1
American Coot 21
Sandhill Crane 210
Killdeer 93
Wilson's Snipe 2
Ring-billed Gull 1136
Herring Gull 30
Rock Pigeon 956
Mourning Dove 700
Great Horned Owl 3
Barred Owl 2
Short-eared Owl 2
Belted Kingfisher 27
Red-headed Woodpecker 4
Red-bellied Woodpecker 167
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 24
Downy Woodpecker 160
Hairy Woodpecker 17
Northern Flicker 37
Pileated Woodpecker 30
Eastern Phoebe 2
Blue Jay 441
American Crow 5212
Horned Lark 3
Carolina Chickadee 1012
Tufted Titmouse 286
Red-breasted Nuthatch 7

Bird Count Results

White-breasted Nuthatch 143
Brown Creeper 29
Carolina Wren 234
Marsh Wren 1
Golden-crowned Kinglet 22
Eastern Bluebird 149
Hermit Thrush 3
American Robin 3781
Gray Catbird 1
Northern Mockingbird 91
Brown Thrasher 1
European Starling 33847
Yellow-rumped Warbler 5
Eastern Towhee 27
American Tree Sparrow 449
Field Sparrow 44
Savannah Sparrow 2
Fox Sparrow 2
Song Sparrow 569
Swamp Sparrow 70
White-throated Sparrow 365
White-crowned Sparrow 37
Dark-eyed Junco 456
Northern Cardinal 890
Red-winged Blackbird 54
Eastern Meadowlark 3
Rusty Blackbird 60
Common Grackle 102
Brown-headed Cowbird 52
Purple Finch 1
House Finch 249
Pine Siskin 38
American Goldfinch 471
House Sparrow 369

Cincinnati CBC

Date: December 26, 2011
Compiler: Jay Stenger
Number of participants: 106
Total species: 89
(*indicates count record):

Canada Goose 958
Mute Swan 1
Wood Duck 17*
Gadwall 18
American Wigeon 2
American Black Duck 3
Mallard 616
Northern Shoveler 18
Canvasback 1
Redhead 1
Ring-necked Duck 60
Greater Scaup 2
Lesser Scaup 1
Bufflehead 17
Hooded Merganser 76
Ruddy Duck 4
Wild Turkey 48

Pied-billed Grebe 26
Horned Grebe 1
Great Blue Heron 43
Black Vulture 455*
Turkey Vulture 505*
Bald Eagle 4* (2 ad., 2 im)
Northern Harrier 2
Sharp-shinned Hawk 4
Cooper's Hawk 21
(accipiter species 2)
Red-shouldered Hawk 43*
Red-tailed Hawk 103
American Kestrel 14
Merlin 1
American Coot 406
Killdeer 108
Wilson's Snipe 3
Ring-billed Gull 2346
Herring Gull 1
Rock Pigeon 783
Mourning Dove 765
Great Horned Owl 5
Short-eared Owl 1
Belted Kingfisher 47
Red-headed Woodpecker 1
Red-bellied Woodpecker 346
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 31
Downy Woodpecker 346
Hairy Woodpecker 55
Northern Flicker 92
Pileated Woodpecker 51
Blue Jay 474
American Crow 781
Horned Lark 1
Carolina Chickadee 1566
Tufted Titmouse 765
Red-breasted Nuthatch 8
White-breasted Nuthatch 325*
Brown Creeper 59
Carolina Wren 453
Winter Wren 6
Golden-crowned Kinglet 74
Eastern Bluebird 142
Hermit Thrush 8
American Robin 3114
Gray Catbird 1
Northern Mockingbird 140
Brown Thrasher 1
European Starling 54843
Cedar Waxwing 17
Yellow-rumped Warbler 64
Pine Warbler 1
Eastern Towhee 132
American Tree Sparrow 504
Field Sparrow 124
Savannah Sparrow 25
Fox Sparrow 15*
Song Sparrow 956
Swamp Sparrow 96

White-throated Sparrow 780
White-crowned Sparrow 87
Dark-eyed Junco 315
Northern Cardinal 1871
Red-winged Blackbird 189
Eastern Meadowlark 8
Rusty Blackbird 12
Brewer's Blackbird 6*
Common Grackle 4
Brown-headed Cowbird 1
House Finch 280
Pine Siskin 3
American Goldfinch 586
House Sparrow 484

East Fork CBC

Date: January 2, 2012
Compiler: Joe Bens
Number of participants:
Total species: 69

Canada Goose 347
Snow Goose 1
Black Duck 2
Mallard 91
Wood Duck 1
Lesser Scaup 3
Redhead 2
Horned Grebe 4
Pied-billed Grebe 22
Double-crested Cormorant 1
Great Blue Heron 16
Turkey Vulture 48
Black Vulture 8
Bald Eagle 2
Northern Harrier 1
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1
Copper's Hawk 2
Red-shouldered Hawk 8
Red-tailed Hawk 9
Rough-legged Hawk 1
American Kestrel 4
Common Loon 2
Wild Turkey 70
American Coot 7
Sandhill Crane 296
Bonaparte's Gull 61
Ring-billed Gull 4520
Herring Gull 1
Rock Pigeon 6
Mourning Dove 83
Screech Owl 3
Barred Owl 2
Great Horned Owl 1
Belted Kingfisher 10
Red-bellied Woodpecker 58
Downy Woodpecker 57
Hairy Woodpecker 9
Northern Flicker 55

Pileated Woodpecker 5
Blue Jay 55
American Crow 45
Carolina Chickadee 226
Tufted Titmouse 117
White-breasted Nuthatch 39
Brown Creeper 8
Carolina Wren 43
Golden-crowned Kinglet 19
Eastern Bluebird 54
American Robin 641
Northern Mockingbird 18
European Starling 19976
Cedar Waxwing 4
Yellow-rumped Warbler 30
Eastern Towhee 18
American Tree Sparrow 43
Field Sparrow 18
Song Sparrow 135
Swamp Sparrow 10
Savannah Sparrow 2
White-throated Sparrow 116
White-crowned Sparrow 1
Dark-eyed Junco 374
Northern Cardinal 498
Redwing Blackbird 15
Brown-headed Cowbird 2
Purple Finch 9
House Finch 87
American Goldfinch 80
House Sparrow 86

the passenger **Pigeon**



Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

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2011-2012 Dues:

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September 2011 - May 2012 birding season, please fill out the form below and mail it in along with your membership fees.

Visit us on the Web at:

<http://www.cincinnatibirds.com/birdclub/index.php>

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Make your check payable to Cincinnati Bird Club, and mail to our Treasurer:

Individual \$12.00 Family \$15.00 Student (under 18) FREE

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Bird Club Membership