BIRDS OF MAGEE MARSH WILDLIFE AREA AND VICINITY

Welcome to the marshes of western Lake Erie, one of the most productive areas of biodiversity in the state of Ohio. The Magee Marsh Wildlife Area covers about 2,200 acres, but together with the protected marshes that surround it, about 11,400 acres of coastal wetlands are owned and managed by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additionally, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation, owns the 1,850-acre Maumee Bay State Park located at the western end of the region covered by this checklist. The map on the back of the checklist depicts the area covered by this list.

Magee Marsh is known throughout Ohio and far beyond as an excellent birding spot. In 2000, Wild Bird Magazine ranked Magee in the top 10 of North American birding locales, and with good reason. This checklist includes 348 species; 82% of all bird species ever spotted in Ohio. Also, the proximity of Lake Erie causes migrating birds to gather in this area, sometimes in mind-boggling numbers. One of the best spots in North America to observe spectacular numbers of migrant songbirds is the Magee Marsh "Bird Trail," the milelong boardwalk that bisects a 34-acre patch of swamp forest at the end of the causeway road.

Spring is the premier birding season here; of the 348 species so far recorded in the area, 310 have been found from March through May. Birding is interesting at any season, though, and the marsh region is vital for breeding birds. One hundred and forty-one species have been documented nesting in this area; that's over 75% of all species that nest in the entire state each year! Finally, birders love to find rarities and Magee Marsh and vicinity have a fantastic track record in that regard. Seventeen species with five or fewer Ohio records have been found, and three species with only one record to date were discovered here.

CHECKLIST KEY

SEASON

- Spring (March through May)
- Sti Summer (June through July)
- FAIL (August through November)
- ₩I Winter (December through February)

ABUNDANCE

- A Abundant (large numbers and shouldn't be missed)
- C Common (easily seen in suitable habitat)
- U Uncommon (probably present, but not certain to be seen)
- O Occasional (only detected once to a few times each season)
- R Rare (occurs only every few years)
- X Accidental (only one to a few records)
- * Nests locally

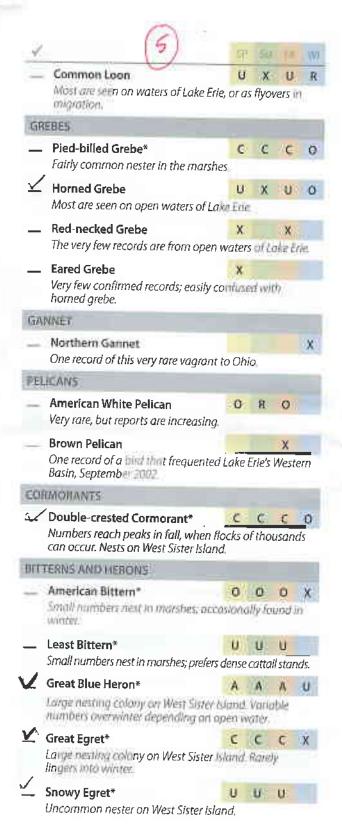
COVER ARTWORK: Jennifer Brumfield





Only a few records, from the open waters of Lake Erie.

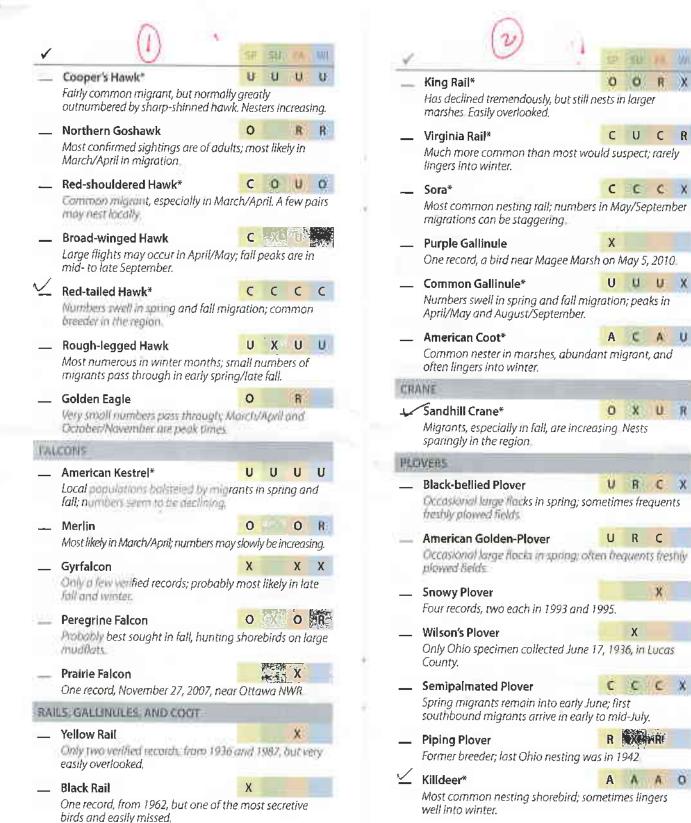
Very few records, all from waters of Lake Erie.



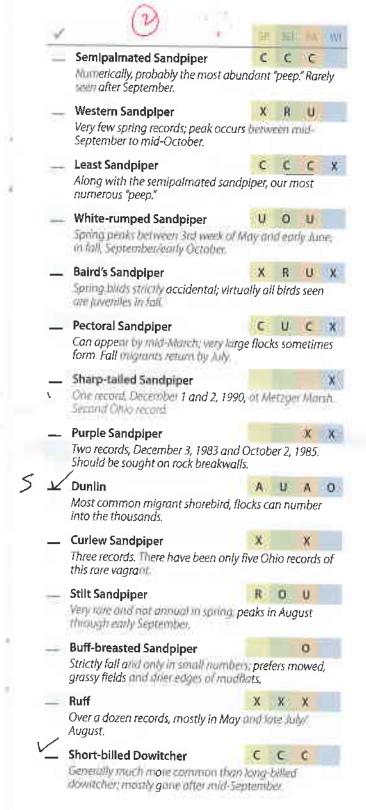
SU FR W Little Blue Heron* 0 0 Very rare nester on West Sister Island. Tricolored Heron R R Very rare visitor, not recorded annually. Cattle Egret* 0 0 0 Has bred on West Sister Island in very small numbers. Green Heron* CCC Not a colonial netter like other herons; nests singly in shrubs by water. Black-crowned Night-Heron* UUU Common nexter on Wirst Sister Island; hardy and will avenvinter in small numbers Yellow-crowned Night-Heron Very rare and irregular visitor, not recorded annually. IBISES. Glossy Ibis OXO Rare and irregular, but seems to be increasing White-faced Ibis Only a few records; non-breeders difficult to distinguish from glossy life **VULTURES** Black Vulture X Only a few records, but increasingly seen north of its usual range. Turkey Vulture* C U U Numbers swell significantly in migration, otherwise not very common in this region. HAWKS: KITE EAGLES: AND ALLIES Mississippi Kite Two records, May 11, 1985, and May 19, 1996. UOU Numbers of this fish-eater are increasing; may someday nest in this area. Bald Eagle* C C C This region supports Ohio's greatest density of nesting eagles. Northern Harrier* COCU Rate and inegular nester; numbers peak in spring and fall milaration. Sharp-shinned Hawk

and April.

Peak numbers occur in spring migration: late March







Best sought on Lake Erie beaches; more common in fall.

documented flock was 49 birds.

Sanderling



Has bred in southeast Michigan, could possibly nest in this region someday. × Pomarine Jaeger Only about three indisputable records, all subadult birds. Parasitic Jaeger At least a few indisputable records, but many records clouded by identification issues. -13-

CCX

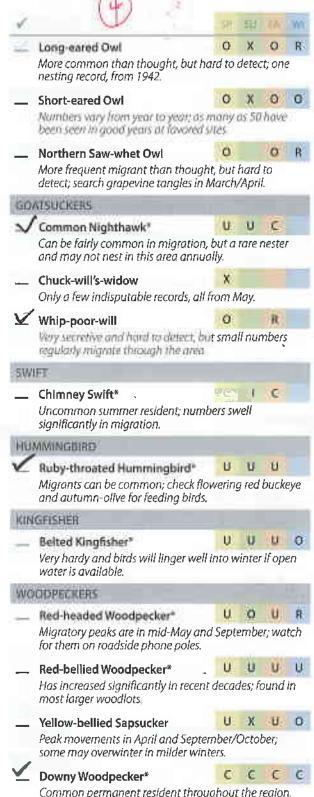
By far the most common gull; sometimes outnumbered

1998.

Ring-billed Gull*

by herring gull in mid-winter.





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not be present every year.

Very rare in this region due to limited habitat, and may



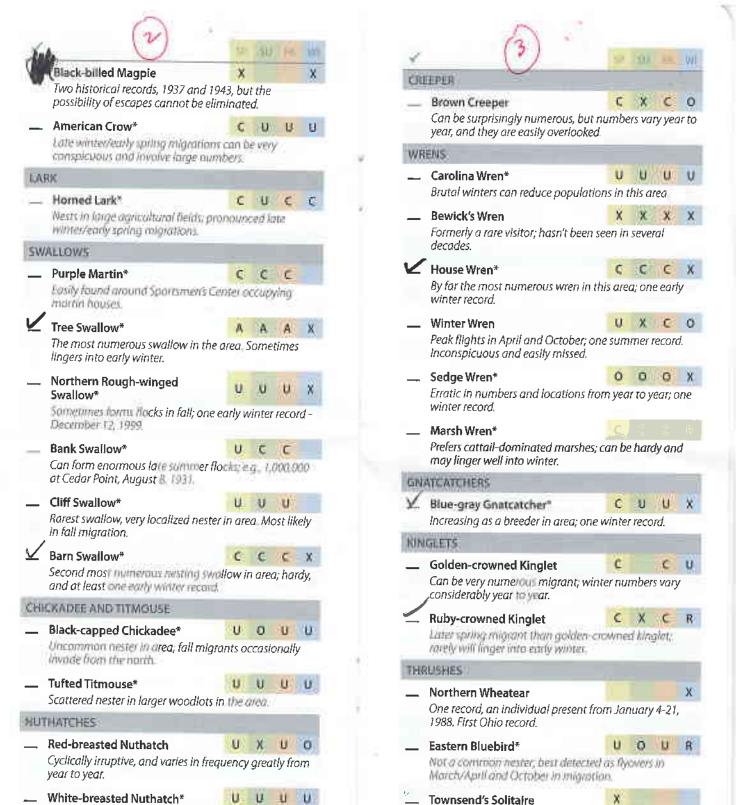
X X

One found at Ottawa NWR November 4, 2001 lingered until December 12. Third Ohio record.

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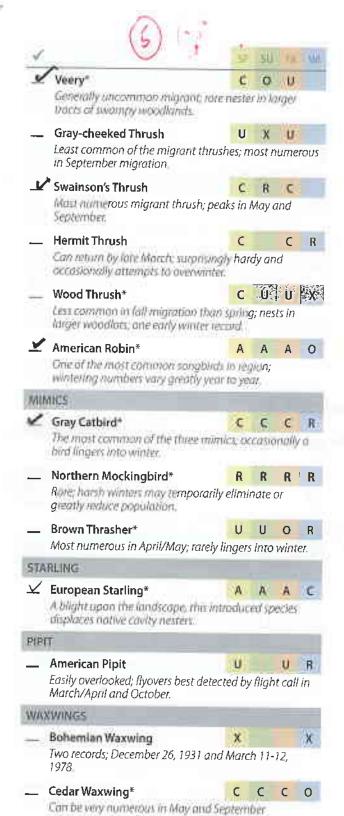
early to mid-May. **- 17** --

Stages spectacular migrations along the lake shore in



Scattered nester in larger woodlots in the area.

One record, May 24-25, 1970.





migration; winter flocks enatic year to year.

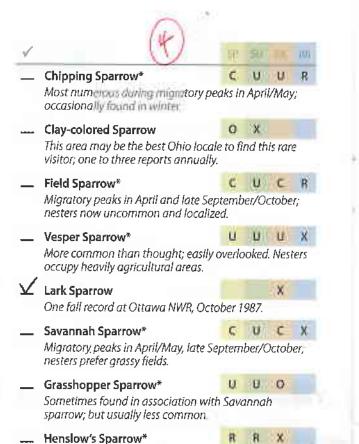


= \$0 / / (WH. ✓ Blackpoll Warbler CR C Can become locally abundant in fall; spring birds have lingered into June Black-throated Blue Warbler Not typically seen in large numbers. Late spring migrants can linger into June. Palm Warbler 0 The bright yellow eastern subspecies hypochrysea has occurred a few times Pine Warbler More likely in spring, but only small numbers pass. through. Can appear by late March. ✓ Yellow-rumped Warbler The most common migrant warbler; rarely overwinters One or two records of "Audubon's" subspecies. Yellow-throated Warbler Expanding northward, but still only rarely detected here One fall record Prairie Warbler One of the rarer migrant warblers; only a few records annually. Townsend's Warbler One record, April 7, 1973 First Ohio record. Black-throated Green Warbler CX One of the more numerous warblers, and can occur in fairly large numbers. Canada Warbler 0 Very similar to Wilson's warbler in timing and frequency, but generally less common in fall. ✓ Wilson's Warbler C 0 Late spring migrant, sometimes lingering into June. Seldom numerous, one day high is 30 birds. Yellow-breasted Chat* OR Occasional spring migrant; may no longer nest in the area annuallic **SPARROWS** Eastern Towhee* CUUR Migratory peaks are April and October; small numbers nest in the area; rarely overwinters. American Tree Sparrow

American Tree Sparrow

Amives by face October; mostly gone by mid-April Can

be quite common in writer.



Very rare, irregular visitor; very localized breeder and '

Rare, but likely more frequent than thought. Most likely

Similar to Le Conte's sparrow in timing and frequency;

Most frequent during late March/early April; rarely overwinters.

Most common nesting sparrow; numerous year round.

Narrow migratory peak in mid-May; secretive, easily

Common marsh nester, particularly where cattails

Most numerous migrant sparrow; a few have lingered

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missed. Has lingered into June, and winter.

dominate; small numbers winter in marshes.

into summer; small numbers overwinter.

RX

C C C C

C C C O

doesn't nest annually,

Le Conte's Sparrow

Nelson's Sparrow

Fox Sparrow

Song Sparrow*

Lincoln's Sparrow

Swamp Sparrow*

✓ White-throated Sparrow

in late September/October.

but may be somewhat more frequent.





No recent records in this region, last confirmed Ohio record was in 2008.

Purple Finch Most likely in late April/early May peak, fall and winter numbers vary yearly, but can be common

UU Non-native, first detected in this region in 1978 Now vear-round resident.

Red Crossbill Very few records of this notoriously erratic winter visitor, most likely detected as flyovers



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Magee Marsh!

Map depicts region covered

by checklist Support the Friends of