

Delaware County Bird Club NEWSLETTER



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Restoration through Mitigation Banking

Trusting the Process, From A Birds Eye View, If You Build It, They Will Come

The presentation will showcase several S+W project sites, including active and future properties within Delaware County, and discuss real monitoring data and outcomes. It will also walk through the process of how a site develops over time—from initial construction and planting, through early establishment and adaptive management, to a fully functioning wetland and stream system. Additionally, it will highlight the surprising biodiversity supported by these restored systems, particularly bird species. Many sites have documented a wide range of waterfowl, wading birds, and migratory species, demonstrating the ecological value of mitigation banks not just as regulatory tools, but as thriving wildlife habitats and birding hotspots.

Brandon Johnson is a Wetland Biologist with Stream and Wetlands Foundation, where he works on the restoration and long-term monitoring of stream and wetland restoration projects across the state of Ohio. His role is a mix of hands-on field work and technical support—spending time conducting wetland delineations,
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Brandon Johnson

DELAWARE COUNTY BIRD CLUB PROGRAMS

The Delaware County Bird Club in-person meetings and program presentations have resumed. They take place on the fourth Monday of each month, September through April, except in November and December when they are held on alternate days to accommodate the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Meetings are held in the lodge at Deer Haven Park at 4183 Liberty Road, Delaware Ohio, 43015. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., programs begin at 7 p.m., and are followed by reports of local bird sightings and socializing. Meeting dates can also be found on the Preservation Parks of Delaware County calendar: <https://preservationparks.recdesk.com/Community/Calendar>

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The Carolina Paroquet from Dawson's Birds of Ohio

THE CAROLINA PAROQUET from William Leon Dawson's "The Birds of Ohio" 1903. This account is one of the iconic descriptions of this species that used to be a feature of Ohio's avifauna, but it is long gone. A lesson for all of us.

No. 161. CAROLINA PAROQUET.

A. O. U. No. 382. *Conurus carolinensis* (Linn.).

Synonyms.-CAROLINA PARRAKEET; PARAKEET; PARROQUET.

Description.-Adult: Head and neck all around bright yellow; forehead, lores and cheeks orange-red; remaining plumage bright green, most of the feathers with blackish shafts, variegated with faint bluish and yellow-green on wings; the bend of the wing orange, the edge yellow; the inner webs of wing-quills fuscous; tail regularly graduated, dull yellowish green below; bill white; feet flesh color.

Young: Plain green. - Length 12.00-13.50 (304.8-342.9); wing 7.00-7.60 (177.8-193.); tail 5.25-7.00 (133.3-177.8); bill .90 (22.9).

Recognition Marks.-Little Hawk size; bright green, with orange and yellow head.

Nesting.-Not known to have bred in Ohio, but probably did so. Nest, formerly described as in hollow trees, but now believed to nest in loose colonies, each nest being placed near the end of a horizontal branch in a cypress or other tree; a loose bunch of sticks, something like a Mourning Dove's. Eggs, 2-5, white. Av. size r.40 X L.10 (35.6 X 27.9).

General Range.-Formerly Florida and the Gulf States north to Maryland, the Great Lakes, Iowa and Nebraska, west to Colorado, the Indian Territory and Texas, and straggling north-eastward to Pennsylvania and New York. Now restricted to Florida, Arkansas and Indian Territory, where it is only of local occurrence.

• Range in Ohio.—Formerly common, but now extinct. MANY causes have conspired to bring about the total extermination within our bounds of this once abundant bird, but the chief cause was "Der Fluch der Schönheit" (the curse of beauty). It was not possible that in an age of guns and women a creature of such prominence and beauty should have been spared to grace our landscape with its living green. Brilliant plumage and a dashing figure were alone sufficient to doom their possessor to destruction - and worse, namely millinery appropriation - but when to these were added a strident voice and a fondness for fruits and young grains, the case became quite hopeless.

There are gray-haired men still among us who remember the shrieking companies of "parrots" which used to haunt the bottom lands and go charging about the sycamores like gusts of mad leaves; but to-day only the cunning plume-hunt-



Plate 26 Carolina Parrot.

er or thrice-lucky ornithologist may penetrate to the remaining fastnesses of the species in the everglades of Florida.

The flight of the Parrakeets was described as being graceful and very swift, comparable in both respects to that of the Passenger Pigeon. The birds moved about in companies of from fifty to five hundred individuals; and when making extended flights or when coming down to feed, the flock fell into a V-shaped figure, somewhat like that affected by the Canada Geese. Although appearing rather awkward in confinement, where their movements were restricted, the birds moved easily through the branches of a tree, now swinging head downward to reach a drooping seed, now regaining the perch by the aid of the powerful beak, which was used as a third (or first) hand. The birds were very noisy, especially during flight and at meals, screaming and chattering like nothing else in all the wood. But during the middle of the day they rested silently in the dense forest, or cooed tenderly if it were the mating season.

Their favorite food was the cockle-burr (*Xanthium canadense*) which grows abundantly in low places. Besides this they ate wild fruit of many kinds, - persimmons, wild grapes, pawpaws, - as well as beech nuts, acorns, and the round seed-ball of the sycamore.

When the settlers came, wheat in the milk was found to be

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very toothsome, and the bounties of the orchard irresistible. If reports are true these gay Philistines did not always stop when their bellies were full but sometimes wantonly destroyed the growing crops of our hard-working fathers. Toward evening the companies retired to the seclusion of great hollow trees, mostly sycamores, where they "hung out," or rather hung up, for the night. The great beak, which did duty for both hands and face daytimes, must needs render additional service, as a hammock-hook, at night.

It was in hollow trees also that they nested, according to the most reliable of the accounts which have come down to us. In comparatively recent times Mr. Brewster has established the fact on good authority that they breed, at least in the South, in colonies in cypress trees,--the nest being a mere bunch of sticks placed at the forks of horizontal limbs, and containing, as is supposed, up to four or five white eggs. It is still probable, however, that in the Middle States they once nested as described by Audubon and Wilson.

Many strange stories are told of this bird which, at this late date, it is impossible definitely to discredit or verify. Here is one which has the sanction of recent authority. In the "Birds of Indiana," Prof. A. W. Butler publishes the following paragraph, as supplied to him by Prof. John Collett:

"In 1842, Return Richmond, of Lodi (Parke County), Indiana, cut down in the cold weather of winter a sycamore tree some four feet in diameter. In its hollow trunk he found hundreds of Parakeets in a quiescent or semi-torpid condition. The weather was too cold for the birds to fly, or even to make any exertion to escape. Mr. Richmond cut off with his saw a section of the hollow trunk some five feet long, cut out a doorway one foot by two in size, nailed over it a wire screen of his fanning-mill, rolled this cumbersome cage into the house and placed in it a dozen of the birds. They soon began to enjoy the feed of fruit, huckleberries and nuts he gave them, and he had the pleasure of settling absolutely the question of how they slept.

At night they never rested on a perch, but suspended themselves by their beaks, and with their feet on the side of their cage. This was repeated night after night of their captivity."

There is every reason to suppose that the Carolina Parakeet was locally common throughout the state at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1831 Audubon notes their marked decrease in numbers: "Where twenty-five years ago they were plentiful, scarcely any are now to be seen. At the present day very few are to be found higher than Cincinnati, nor is it until you reach the mouth of the Ohio that Parakeets are to be met with in considerable numbers."

Can you identify this?



Answer will be in our next issue. Mystery bird for April was photographed near the Strait of Hormuz in March 2026. This is both a test of your ID skills, and your reference skills (internet? books?) because obviously these gulls are not the same as we have here in Ohio.

Last Month's answer: Mystery bird for March was a Hairy Woodpecker, photographed at our suet feeder on 5 February 2026.

In 1838 Caleb Atwater writes: "A few years since Parakeets, in large flocks, lived in the woods along the Ohio River from Miller's bottom downwards, and along the Scioto River, upwards from its mouth to where Columbus now stands. They are still in the bottoms below Chillicothe, near the river, where there is proper food for them to eat, and birds enough for them to torment with their squalling noise."

The last authentic record is that made by William S. Sullivan, LL. D., in July, 1862, when he saw a boisterous flock of twenty-five or thirty individuals in the elms of the Capitol Square in Columbus.

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collecting vegetation and soil plot data, monitoring hydrology, assessing stream habitat, and helping lay out planting and restoration areas, while also contributing to mapping, data analysis, and reporting. He started with S+W during an undergraduate internship at The Ohio State University and has continued to build experience across dozens of sites. The part of the job that he enjoys most is the balance of field work and problem-solving and getting to see the restoration projects develop and wildlife return over time.