

APRIL 01, 2023 - CUYAHOGA VALLEY MONTHLY TOWPATH TRAIL CENSUS.

ROUTE: Red Lock Trailhead south to Merriman Valley, with a stop at Trail Mix in Peninsula.

TIME: 7:15am - 4:00pm TEMP.: 49F ~ 63F ~ 44F COND.: Cool early with south winds, turning sunny with blue skies and no clouds;

turning warm with us feeling overdressed; front moved in from the west at 11:50am, turning dark and gray at 12:00pm, with the worst

of it appearing north of us, just south of Peninsula; by 12:10pm the stormfront reached us just south of Lock 28 (Deep Lock); rumbles

of thunder had us putting on our rain gear; the storm reached us with small hail for about three minutes, temperatures dropping, then

rain and into a full-scale thunder and lightning storm with high winds and heavy rain from south of Deep Lock to Szalay's first, northern-

most corn field - some gusts of at least 50-plus miles per hour; storm and dark gray skies moved off east with brief, partial clearing;

cloudy and windy from Szalay's northernmost field to just south of Ira Rd. Cloudy with temperatures dropping even more for rest of

census, turning colder with us now feeling underdressed; winds shifting to west then northwest; light sprinkles/sleet from 3:40pm to

end of hike at 4:00pm - basically, all four seasons in just under nine hours!

TRAIL CONDITIONS: Horrible; plenty of wet and sloppy conditions with much puddling from first rain storm coming through at 3:00am;

As we reached Hunt Farm Visitor Center after our noon storm, the extent of the damage was known: a large cottonwood was snapped

off at the base and had crashed into the Hunt Farm Visitor Center on Bolanz Rd. The damage could have been worse for the little

seasonal visitor center, part of the tee scarred the side of the building and knocked off some of the downspouting on the front porch

and the two metal trash cans and "George Washington bench" took direct hits from the tree and were squashed like aluminum cans

and splintered to pieces, respectively. A CVNP park ranger was there photographing the damage, as did we; another tree came down

in the Bolanz Rd. parking lot, covering about four parking spaces, but luckily no one was parked there - after all, only an idiot would be

out in this weather! Another tree across the Towpath Trail there and a large black walnut along the trail was snapped off at the base,

more proof that this was either some seriously fierce direct-line winds or some sort of a microburst; from there, on top of all the

puddling and sloppy conditions, the rest of the trail was littered with large to small branches or tops of trees. Thankfully, all of this

was just south of us by about a half-mile, or "bird forensics" would be piecing this write-up together as our final hike!

RIVER COND.: High, swift and muddy - almost no rockbars or sandbars showing.

FT. MI.: 13.85 OBS.: John Henry, George Novosel (Red Lock Trailhead to Ira Trailhead), Douglas W. Vogus.

#### I. MAMMALS: 9 SPECIES.

1. Eastern Cottontail - 1 (Fifth April Record on Census)

2. Woodchuck - 1
3. Eastern Gray Squirrel - 1 (black morph)
4. Eastern Fox Squirrel - 3
5. Red Squirrel - 5
6. American Beaver - 2 (Second April Record on Census & Tied Census High from 08/2014, 06/2015 & 02/2019)
7. Coyote - 1 (laying down in Szalay's open corn field during the storm, maybe we should have joined him - First April Record on Census)
8. Common Raccoon - 1 (Third April Record on Census)
9. White-tailed Deer - 6 (6-pt. buck, 3 does, 2 yearlings)

## II. BIRDS: 50 SPECIES, 759 TOTAL BIRDS.

(NOTE: m = male; f = female; ? = bird was seen but not sexed; \* = bird was heard calling but not sexed)

1. Canada Goose - 101 (two nests)
2. Wood Duck - 30 (20m, 10f)
3. American Black Duck - 8 (4m, 4f)
4. Mallard - 14 (8m, 6f)
5. Common Merganser - 6 (f)
6. Pied-billed Grebe - 1 (Ira Beaver Marsh)
7. Mourning Dove - 10
8. Killdeer - 7
9. Great Blue Heron - 24
10. Turkey Vulture - 21
11. Osprey - 1 (Second April Record on Census)
12. Bald Eagle - 1 (immature)
13. Red-tailed Hawk - 10
14. Eastern Screech-Owl - 2 (gray morph) (Third April Record on Census)
15. Belted Kingfisher - 4 (2m, 1f, 1\*)
16. Red-bellied Woodpecker - 8 (1m, 1f, 6\*)
17. Downy Woodpecker - 7 (2m, 5\*)
18. Hairy Woodpecker - 5 (2?, 3\*)
19. Northern Flicker - 5 (2m, 2f, 1?)
20. Pileated Woodpecker - 4 (1?, 3\*)
21. Eastern Phoebe - 10
22. Blue Jay - 12
23. American Crow - 63
24. Black-capped Chickadee - 10
25. Tufted Titmouse - 19
26. Tree Swallow - 33
27. Barn Swallow - 1 (Fourth April Record on Census)
28. Golden-crowned Kinglet - 20 (1m, 10f, 8?, 1\*)
29. White-breasted Nuthatch - 7 (2m, 1?, 4\*)
30. Winter Wren - 3
31. Carolina Wren - 11
32. European Starling - 17
33. Eastern Bluebird - 6 (2m, 1f, 1?, 2\*)

34. American Robin - 41
35. House Sparrow - 12
36. House Finch - 6 (5m,1f)
37. American Goldfinch - 24 (8m,4f,10?,2\*)
38. Fox Sparrow - 2
39. American Tree Sparrow - 17
40. Dark-eyed Junco - 4 (2m,2f)
41. White-throated Sparrow - 7
42. Song Sparrow - 51
43. Swamp Sparrow - 5
44. Eastern Towhee - 1 (\*)
45. Red-winged Blackbird - 41 (31m,8f,1\*)
46. Brown-headed Cowbird - 7 (5m,2f)
47. Rusty Blackbird - 2 (m)
48. Common Grackle - 23
49. Louisiana Waterthrush - 1 (creek and ravine at first footbridge south of Peninsula - Second April Record on Census)
50. Northern Cardinal - 30 (25m,5f)

Unidentified Passerines - 4

### III. REPTILES: 4 SPECIES, 1 UNKNOWN.

1. Common Snapping Turtle - 3
2. Red-eared Turtle - 6
3. Midland Painted Turtle - 284
4. Unknown Snake - 1 (about two-feet long and caught by a Red-tailed Hawk along the Towpath Trail just after the storm)

### IV. AMPHIBIANS: 5 SPECIES.

1. Northern Spring Peeper - many calling
2. Western Chorus Frog - many calling
3. Green Frog - 1 (Fourth April Record on Census)
4. Wood Frog - (14 seen and many calling)
5. Northern Leopard Frog - 1 (Second April Record on Census)

### V. FISHES: 1 SPECIES.

1. Central Mudminnow - 17 (Third April Record on Census)

Douglas W. Vogus - Akron, Ohio.