

CUYAHOGA VALLEY TOWPATH TRAIL CENSUS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2021

HISTORY & FACTS of the JUNE CENSUS

JUNE		11-YEAR TOTALS of SPECIES / INDIVIDUALS						
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
80 / 1,004	72 / 1,322	73 / 815	79 / 1,013	75 / 894	78 / 759	79 / 1,120	74 / 1,014	74 / 1,112
2019	2020							
74 / 1,177	79 / 770							

Most Species seen in June : 80 on 06/05/2010.

Most Individual Birds seen in June : 1,322 on 06/04/2011.

Fewest Species seen in June : 72 on 06/04/2011.

Fewest Individual Birds seen in June : 759 on 06/06/2015.

Species Average in June : 76.1 Species.

Total Individuals Average in June : 1,000.0 Individuals.

Lowest Temperature on June Census : 44 degrees F on 06/07/2014.

Highest Temperature on June Census : 89 degrees F on 06/04/2011.

Longest Time Afield on June Census : 11 Hours & 30 Minutes on 06/01/2019.

Shortest Time Afield on June Census : 7 Hours & 15 Minutes on 06/05/2010.

LAST JUNE'S FIELD REPORT

06/05/20	TOTAL SPECIES:	79	START / END TIME:	6:15am - 4:45pm		
	TOTAL BIRDS:	770	TIME AFIELD:	10:30	FT. MI.:	13.85
ROUTE:	Red Lock Trailhead south to Merriman Valley, with stops at Trail Mix In Peninsula and Szalay's Farm Market for lunch.					
			TEMP.:	68F ~ 86F		
OBSERVERS:	John Henry and Douglas W. Vogus; Izabelle Zager (Red Lock Trailhead to Ira Beaver Marsh Trailhead).					
CONDITIONS:	Cloudy, calm, humid, and buggy early; turning mostly sunny around 10:30am; then sunny and very warm with light south breezes; thunderstorms shortly after finishing.					
TRAIL CONDITIONS:	Good.	RIVER CONDITIONS:	Swift and muddy, but just about normal.			

TEN YEARS AGO on the TOWPATH TRAIL

On May 07, 2011 we set a census-high of 10 Yellow-throated Vireos seen along the 13-plus miles of the census route. We also tied that record on the May 08, 2019 census.

These aptly named vireos prefer the high treetops in the Cuyahoga Valley, especially the tall sycamores. But, the patient birder can be rewarded with close views of this beautiful summer resident when they occasionally venture out of the high canopy.

JUNE 2021's BIRD SPECIES PROFILE

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*)

DESCRIPTION: This is a large, colorful vireo and a strong, though slow-paced, singer. It moves slowly and deliberately, which combined with its camouflaged coloration, can make it difficult to locate high in the leaves of the tall shade trees it favors. This vireo often cocks its head as it surveys its surroundings or methodically searches for insects. The bright yellow spectacles, throat, and breast of this vireo are distinctive. Its wings are dark gray, with two bold, white wing bars and the belly is white. The crown and back are olive, the rump gray.

LENGTH: 5" to 6" **WINGSPREAD:** 9 & 1/2" to 10" **WEIGHT:** 16.6 to 17.9 grams

VOICE: **SONG:** Slow repetition of "de-a-ree, three-eight", burry, low-pitched 2- or 3-note phrases separated by long pauses; likened to a lethargic and hoarse Scarlet Tanager song.
CALL: A rapid series of harsh "cheh-cheh-cheh" notes.

HABITS: Summers in tops of tall trees of groves and open woods of oaks and maples and along riverbottoms of stands of sycamores, rarely in conifers. Forages in these leafy treetops for mostly insects: eggs and caterpillars of moths and butterflies, also adult moths, stink bugs, assassin bugs, scale insects, aphids, leafhoppers, sawflies, beetles, grasshoppers, dragonflies, crickets, cicadas, mosquitoes, midges; also sassafras berries and wild grapes.

HABITAT: Tall, mature hardwoods, preferring riparian corridors of undisturbed growth.

NESTING: **NEST:** An impressive, thick-walled, deep cup, 3-inches in diameter, suspended from fork of twigs of horizontal branch of beech, elm, oak, hickory, tulip-tree, sycamore, honey locust, or other hardwood, 3- to 60-feet above ground; outside of cup covered with green and gray lichens and mosses, held in place by masses of spider's silk with inside of cup lined with fine grasses or pine needles. **EGGS:** April (in the South) to July; 3 to 5 eggs, usually 4, white to cream or pink-white, strongly spotted, especially at large end, with browns and lavender.
INCUBATION: By both sexes, about 15 days; young leave nest about 15 days after hatching.

RANGE: **MIGRATION:** A long-distance, trans-Gulf migrant. Early spring migrant, with arrivals in southern states by mid- to late-March, mid-April farther north, and early May in the Great Lakes region. Nests from southern Manitoba, eastern North Dakota south to west-central Texas, east through west-central Minnesota east to southern Ontario and southern Quebec, southwest Maine down the Atlantic Coast to the Gulf Coast to central Florida. Fall migrations are from August to September, some as early as late July. Latest records are mid-October in northern and middle latitudes, early November in the South. **WINTER:** Tropical lowlands of Central America, Bahamas, Caribbean to northern South America. Rare in southernmost Florida, casual in southern California and southern Texas. **VAGRANT:** Very rare in the West, more in the spring than the fall.

STATUS: Fairly common and apparently stable, with some local fluctuations.

Abundance Codes on the graphs below indicate the best time of year to find the Yellow-throated Vireo in Northeast Ohio.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.
			rrrrr	uCCCCC	CCCCC
Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
CCCCC	CCCCC	uuuuuurr	rrrooo		

- CCCCC = Common to Abundant. Frequently encountered in this region during this time of year.
- uuuuuuu = Uncommon. Occurs regularly during this time of year but not frequently detected.
- rrrrrrrrrr = Rare. These birds can occur more or less annually but are easily missed in their scant presence in the region.
- OOOOOOO = Occasional. Limited history in this region and are not to be expected.
- ***** = Accidental. Few records in the past 60 years. Not expected in this region during this time of year.
- ||||||| = Fluctuating Abundance. May occur some years yet absent other years. Irruptive or overwintering birds.

History of the Yellow-throated Vireo on the Cuyahoga Valley Towpath Trail Census 2010 ~ present.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
JAN.								
FEB.								
MAR.								
APR.								
MAY	3	6	3	7	9	7	5	9
JUN.	4	10*	4	7	4	4	9	8
JUL.	4	4		5	2	4	4	2
AUG.	1		3	3				2
SEP.	2	1	3	2		1	1	1
OCT.	1	2						
NOV.								
DEC.								

	2018	2019	2020	2021
JAN.				
FEB.				
MAR.				
APR.				
MAY	3	10*	2	7
JUN.	9	5	8	
JUL.	3	6	2	
AUG.	1	1		
SEP.			2	
OCT.				
NOV.				
DEC.				

DID YOU KNOW?: The genus name, *vireo*, is from Latin, a kind of bird; and, according to some authorities, the green finch; "virere", to be green. The species name: from Latin "flavus", yellow, and "frons", forehead.

- * = HIGHEST COUNT TOTAL ON CENSUS.
- BOLD #** = HIGHEST COUNT FOR THAT YEAR.



Much easier to see when out of the treetop foliage, the aptly named Yellow-throated Vireo sings its husky song.

(photo by: Glenn Bartley)

JUNE'S DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW?: *When is a bird named after your last name but not named for you? When your older brother names it in your honor! Joseph Sabine (1770-1837) was the elder brother of Sir Edward Sabine (pronounced SAB-in). Sir Edward Sabine (1788-1883) was an eminent Irish astronomer and physicist. Both he and Joseph accompanied Sir John Ross on his first attempt to find the Northwest Passage. Joseph named this gull after his younger brother, from a specimen obtained from Melville Bay on the west coast of Greenland in 1818.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *Sabine's Gulls breed in the Arctic, where they are very conspicuous if you can make it to their marshy tundra habitat? If you can't travel that far north, try a "pelagic" (offshore) birding trip from the West Coast to see migrants in autumn, and to a lesser extent, in spring. They are seen considerably less often on East Coast pelagic trips. Some Sabine's Gulls do migrate across interior North America, and a few turn up on lakes and rivers annually, often after the passage of a cold front or storm.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *On September 25, 2016 Michelle and I had a Sabine's Gull at LaDue Reservoir in Geauga County, Ohio? Of course, its fall through winter plumage is nothing at all like its breeding plumage. At the time, it was my 321st. Ohio bird species. This dapper gull is not the kind you will find looking for handout french fries at the local McDonald's!*

DID YOU KNOW?: *Joseph Sabine also named another bird, the Black-billed Magpie of North America, which he called "Corvus hudsonius"? However, Carl Linnaeus had already named the European and Asiatic species of this bird "Corvus pica" in his 10th. Edition of "Systema Naturae", published in 1758. Therefore, Sabine's specific name was given to the North American subspecies now known as "Pica pica hudsonia".*



Early explorer and namesake, courtesy of his older brother, of the Sabine's Gull, Sir Edward Sabine.

(portrait courtesy of Britannica.com)

DID YOU KNOW?: *When a predator threatens a Sabine's Gull nesting area, the gull performs a distraction display, pretending to be injured and leading the predator away from the nest? This tactic is common among shorebirds, but rare among gulls.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *The Sabine's Gull is the only member of its genus? It's closest relative is the Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*) of the High Arctic. The two species diverged from a common ancestor about 2 million years ago.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *Among many other differences from typical gulls, Sabine's Gulls have an unusual molt schedule. Juveniles don't molt into their first-winter plumage until they reach their wintering grounds in the Southern Hemisphere. Adults on the wintering grounds molt all their feathers before beginning their northward migration to the Arctic breeding grounds. And they have a partial molt in late fall/early winter, once they've reached their wintering grounds.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *Almost more of a tern than a gull, the little Sabine's Gull is a captivating seabird with a charcoal gray head edged in black, a red eye-ring, and a black bill with a yellow tip. On boldly patterned wings that flash triangles of black, white, and gray, Sabine's Gulls swoop deftly over open ocean to seize crustaceans and small fish. In summer they nest in Arctic tundra, splashing through freshwater pools to catch insects, spinning in shallow water like a phalarope, or dashing on mudflats like a plover.*

See You on the Trail! ~ Doug



A "seagull" is just a "seagull"? The beautiful Sabine's Gull, in its exquisite breeding plumage, begs to differ!

(photo by: Daniel D'Auria)

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