

CUYAHOGA VALLEY TOWPATH TRAIL CENSUS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2022
(CVTTC)

HISTORY & FACTS of the SEPTEMBER CENSUS

13-YEAR TOTALS of SPECIES / INDIVIDUALS									
SEPTEMBER	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	60 / 592	52 / 524	71 / 1,167	56 / 935	56 / 2,108	58 / 503	68 / 2,446	60 / 852	56 / 722
2019	2020	2021	2022						
59 / 1,441	67 / 591	61 / 748	60 / 714						

Most Species seen in September : 71 Species on 09/08/2012.

Most Individual Birds seen in September : 2,446 Total Birds on 09/02/2016.

Fewest Species seen in September : 52 Species on 09/03/2011.

Fewest Individual Birds seen in September : 503 Total Birds on 09/05/2015.

Species Average in September : 60.3 Total Species.

Total Individuals Average in September : 1,026.4 Total Birds.

Lowest Temperature on September Census : 51-degrees F on 09/01/17.

Highest Temperature on September Census : 95-degrees F on 09/03/2011.

Longest Time Afield on September Census : 10 hours & 40 minutes on 09/02/21.

Shortest Time Afield on September Census : 5 hours & 50 minutes on 09/03/2011.

LAST SEPTEMBER'S FIELD REPORT

09/02/21	TOTAL SPECIES:	61	TOTAL BIRDS:	748		
START / END TIME:	6:50am - 5:30pm		TIME AFIELD:	10:40	FT. MI.:	13.88
ROUTE:	Red Lock Trailhead south to Merriman Valley, with stops at Trail Mix in Peninsula and at Szalay's Sweet Corn Farm & Market for lunch.					
TEMP.:	55F ~ 75F	CONDITIONS:	Foggy and cool early; fog burning off at 8:00am and turning sunny with blue skies, breezy, and pleasant.			
OBSERVERS:	John Henry and Douglas W. Vogus.					
TRAIL CONDITIONS:	Good.	RIVER CONDITIONS:	Slightly above normal and muddy.			

FOUR YEARS AGO on the TOWPATH TRAIL

On 09/01/2018 we had our only sighting to date of a Caspian Tern. At the beginning of the hike south in the morning I noticed three of these terns zipping by at Red Lock, following the river south. A hard bird to find in the Cuyahoga Valley, it was one of those "right time at the right place" type of sightings - just a quick, fleeting glimpse of these relatives of the gull family. Though much more common where the Cuyahoga River empties into Lake Erie during both spring and late summer migration, as they prefer larger bodies of water with mudflats, sandspits, and breakwalls to congregate before their push south, this was only my second sighting of the species within the Cuyahoga Valley.

SEPTEMBER 2022's BIRD SPECIES PROFILE

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

DESCRIPTION: This, the largest tern in the world, is widespread in interior and coastal habitats but is rarely seen offshore. Its graceful flight is steady and powerful, with fairly shallow wing beats and wings not held strongly crooked. The heavy-bodied Caspian Tern is notably thickset and lacks tail streamers in its breeding plumage. Very stout red bill, with a black distal mark and pale tip. Extensive blackish panel on the underside of the primaries is diagnostic of all plumages. **BREEDING ADULT:** Black cap becomes streaked white in the fall. **WINTER ADULT:** Note the densely flecked black-and-white crown, which blends into a broad black auricular face mask. **JUVENILE & FIRST-YEAR:** Resembles winter adult, but juvenile fresh-plumaged in the fall, paler bill, orange to orange-red, legs often yellowish, becoming dark by winter.

LENGTH: 20" to 22" **WINGSPAN:** 46" to 51" **WEIGHT:** About 1 lb. 7 oz.

VOICE: Adult has a distinctive "rraah" or "ahrr" and a drawn out, upslurred "rrah-ah-ahr" in chases and when diving at colony intruders. Young into winter give a high whistled "ssiiuuh."

HABITS: Dives into water for small fishes until completely under surface, but also feeds from surface like a gull. Occasionally robs other seabirds of their catches. Also sometimes eats the eggs or young of other terns and gulls. Soars at times like a gull, circling to great heights, but flapping flight and manner of flying, with bill pointed downward when fishing, and of hovering are distinctly ternlike, but when migrating and flying high, points bill forward. Is least sociable of all terns and travels singly or in small groups.

HABITAT: Medium to large lakes, shorelines, beaches, inlets, and sandspits.

NESTING: **NEST:** A hollow scrape on sandy island or eggs laid on bare rocky island, nest often lined with grasses, seaweeds, or mosses; also sometimes on floating plants in marsh. **EGGS:** Texas, April to June; elsewhere, May to July; 1 to 4 eggs, usually 2 to 3, pale, pink-buff, spotted, sometimes blotched, with dark brown. **INCUBATION:** 20 to 22 days; young fly about 28 to 35 days after hatching.

RANGE: Worldwide except for South America. In North America, nests in single pairs, in small groups, or in large colonies near big colonies of other terns and gulls in widely scattered places: on low sandy islands along Atlantic Coast from Virginia south and on islands in interior lakes and in marshes such as the Klamath region of Oregon; also singly or in groups of few pairs by themselves on islet; locally in interior from Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Manitoba and from eastern Washington, eastern Oregon, to western Nevada, northern Utah, and northwest Wyoming, and south through California (interior) in much reduced numbers to Baja California, in northeast Wisconsin, Michigan, southeast Ontario, western New York and Newfoundland; on coast of Virginia, South Carolina, southern Texas, southeast Louisiana and Florida. Winters from central California south through Baja California, along shores of Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean to Greater Antilles, casually north to North Carolina and in West Indies. Migrates along both coasts of U.S., less commonly along large rivers of interior. In Old World, breeds in largest concentration especially in southwest Siberia; also in Madagascar, Sri Lanka, and New Zealand; winters from Mediterranean region to southern Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

STATUS: Common in North America; stable or increasing. Major increases on Pacific Coast, in interior West, and in Great Lakes region have taken place in last 50 years.

Abundance Codes on the graphs below indicate the best time of year to find the Caspian Tern in Northeast Ohio.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.
		oo	rrruuuCCC	CCCuuuuuu	rrrrrrrrrrr
Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
uuuuuuCCC	CCCCuuuu	uuuuuuuu	uuuuurrrr	oooo	

- CCCCCCCC = Common to Abundant. Frequently encountered in this region during this time of year.
- uuuuuuuu = 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 Caspian Tern on the Cuyahoga Valley Towpath Trail Census 2010 ~ present.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
JAN.								
FEB.								
MAR.								
APR.								
MAY								
JUN.								
JUL.								
AUG.								
SEP.								
OCT.								
NOV.								
DEC.								

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
JAN.					
FEB.					
MAR.					
APR.					
MAY					
JUN.					
JUL.					
AUG.					
SEP.	3*				
OCT.					
NOV.					
DEC.					

DID YOU KNOW?:

The world champion among long-distance migrants is the Arctic Tern? From their nesting grounds in the Arctic - which extend as far northward as there is land, to Cape Morris Jesup in Greenland, at latitude 84N - Arctic Terns move southward to reach, or even circle, the Antarctic pack ice, where they have been noted as far south as latitude 78S. The round-trip journey from the nesting grounds can be

as long as 31,000 miles per year, or roughly a trip around the world. Some Arctic Terns live as long as 25 years, which could equal 600,000 miles in a lifetime!

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



A thing of beauty - the adult Caspian Tern is easily distinguished from gulls by color, call, shape, and actions.

(photo courtesy of: Rosamond Gifford Zoo)

SEPTEMBER'S DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW?: *Before 1934, nature lovers had nothing to help them make quick identifications of birds in the field? Then Roger Tory Peterson's first field guide was published, and with that the modern era of birdwatching began. Peterson's book quickly became the birder's bible, because it was small enough to tuck into a pocket, purse or picnic basket and was eminently practical to use. The sparse drawings highlighted only the most distinctive aspects of birds; the telegraphic copy gave only the most necessary information. With Peterson's manual in hand, just about anyone could easily identify and learn something about birds, and since then, millions of people using the field guide have done just that.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *When Peterson first approached the Houghton Mifflin Company with his idea for a bird-watcher's field guide, the publisher was understandably skeptical. After all, publishing is a risky business in the best of times, and in that year of the Depression, a "bird book" was an improbable gamble indeed. Or so it seemed. Peterson was even asked to forgo royalties until the field guide became successful. To everyone's amazement, the first edition sold out within weeks.*

DID YOU KNOW?: *To say that Roger Tory Peterson is simply the "Godfather of the modern bird guide" would not even scratch the surface of his vast accomplishments? I could easily write twenty-plus pages on his accolades, awards, etc. His "A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies" was the third bird guide I ever owned and I still have my father's copy of Peterson's "A Field Guide to the Birds" third printing from 1947.*

DID YOU KNOW?:

In an effort to encapsulate so much in so little space, the following is from a book on Roger Tory Peterson that was published while he was still alive. It gives a timeline at the end that highlights these moments.

1908: Born August 28, 1908 in Jamestown, New York.

1920: At age eleven he first becomes interested in nature after joining a Junior Audubon Club; he begins drawing birds. A year later he develops a passion for butterflies and moths.

1922: He buys his first camera, a Primo no. 9 4x5" plate camera, and shortly after switches back from pursuing butterflies to studying birds. He buys a bird guide by Chester Reed and a four-power LeMarie opera glass from an advertisement in "Bird Lore."

1923: He begins keeping lists and daily logs of notes on birds. (He now estimates that in his lifetime he has seen nearly five thousand of the world's nine thousand species.)

1925: At age sixteen he graduates from Jamestown High School with distinction in design and mechanical drawing. Just after his seventeenth birthday he is employed by the Union-National Furniture Factory in Jamestown to decorate Chinese-lacquer cabinets under the supervision of Willem Dieperink von Langereis. He publishes his first article in "Bird Lore." He attends his first annual convention of the American Ornithologists' Union (A.O.U.) in New York City in November and submits two of his first watercolors to its exhibition of bird art. He meets Ludlow Griscom, pioneer of field identification using field glasses, and Louis Agassiz Fuertes, the renowned bird painter, whose work has influenced him.

1926-27: He attends the Art Students League in New York City; studies under distinguished teacher Kimon Nikolaides (author of "The Natural Way to Draw") and leading painter John Sloan. He takes classes in basic drawing and life drawing from models (using charcoal and later oil on canvas).

1928-31: He competes for and receives a place at the National Academy of Design, where he studies under Raymond Nielson, Vincent DuMond, and Edmund Dickinson. He draws and paints from models. He attends bimonthly meetings of the Linnaean Society in New York, where he meets members of the Bronx County Bird Club (which he joins), nine young men who teach him the tricks of identifying birds in the field, making it possible for him to consolidate information and give it artistic form in his first field guide, published in 1934. During this period he acts as counselor of nature study at a YMCA camp in Michigan (one summer) and then at Camp Chewonki in Maine (five summers).

1931-34: He teaches art and natural history at River's School, a private school for boys in Brookline, Massachusetts (now in Weston). Pupils in his class include Elliott Richardson, later Attorney General of the United States. (In 1974 Richardson nominates Peterson as the teacher who influenced him most. Subsequently Peterson is named "Teacher of the Year" and given the Golden Key Award from the American Association of School Administrators.)

In 1932: He publishes three articles on duck identification in "Field and Stream," using schematic illustrations that presage his first field guide.

In 1933: He presents the first significant exhibition of his bird paintings (four canvases in oil) at the annual convention of the American Ornithologists' Union in New York.

In April 1934: "A Field Guide to the Birds" is published by Houghton Mifflin in Boston after Peterson is introduced to the publisher by John B. May, state ornithologist of Massachusetts. The editors are Francis H. Allen, Paul Brooks, and, later, Austin Olney and Harry Foster. The first

edition, which covers the birds of North America east of the Great Plains, includes 425 species with over 500 drawings in color and black-and-white by Peterson. The system of identification is visual rather than phylogenetic: similar-looking birds are assembled schematically on pages and key field marks or characteristics are identified with arrows. The first printing of 2,000 copies sells out within three weeks, and the book is immediately reprinted. There have since been four revised and expanded revisions. A reported forty-seven printings and more than seven million copies of Peterson's two North American field guides to birds (East and West) have been sold.

1934-43: He is elected a full member of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1935; a fellow in 1948; and later becomes vice president. He joins the staff of the National Audubon Societies in 1934 as educational director. Acts as art director of "Bird Lore" (now "Audubon" magazine); he illustrates most of the covers at first, and from 1935 to 1950 writes the column "Bird's Eye View." The educational leaflets with marginalia build the yearly membership of the Junior Audubon Clubs from 100,000 annually to 400,000. Later (1960 to 1964) he becomes secretary of the National Audubon Society and continues as a special consultant. He becomes associated with stamp program of the National Wildlife Federation beginning in 1938 (with fourteen songbird paintings), first as artist, then as art director, and later as consultant. He is still active with the federation in choosing and arranging the annual collection of thirty-six commissioned art works that are published as stamps to raise funds for wildlife conservation and the purchase of wetlands.

In 1938: He begins a series of color stories for "Life" magazine, using his paintings, writing, and photography to present a broad spectrum of bird studies for a national audience. He revises the requirements for the Boy Scouts' Bird Study Merit Badge, and prepares the official booklet about the badge.

1940-43: Although he has volunteered earlier to work with pigeons as message carriers, he is drafted into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Fort Belvoir, where he becomes first sergeant. His original assignment is in designing camouflage, but he is reassigned to producing instruction manuals because of his background with field guides. His field guide principles are used by artists and writers under the supervision of Joseph Kastner of "Life" magazine to prepare a "plane-spotting manual" for that magazine, which will be used later by the Air Corps as a basis for a training manual for plane identification. Later he is transferred to the Air Corps in Orlando to help pioneer research on the effects of DDT on wildlife. He befriends Rachel Carson during this period. They are fellow directors of the District of Columbia Audubon Society. Carson's work at the Fish and Wildlife Service has been preceded by Peterson's DDT work at Orlando. She has learned her birds from his field guide.

1944: He receives the William Brewster Memorial Award, the highest honor of the American Ornithologists' Union, for his contributions to ornithology.

1947: The Peterson Identification System is extended by Houghton Mifflin to cover other nature subjects. The Peterson Field Guide Series, of which Peterson is the editor, now embraces more than fifty titles (not including the Peterson First Guides, which are for beginners).

1950: He receives his first literary award for nature writing, the John Burroughs Medal. Gus Munzer begins printing large lithograph of his paintings for Quaker State. He befriends James Fisher, Britain's best-known ornithologist; they travel together to Gotland Island in the Baltic and then to Finland. They are to co-author books and articles. Via Fisher he meets and works with Prince Philip, Lord Alanbrook, Sir Julian Huxley, Sir Peter Scott, Keith Shackleton, Eric Hosking and other leading English birders. Peterson and Scott later help to pioneer the World Wildlife Fund.

1952: He receives an honorary Doctor of Science degree from Franklin and Marshall College, the first of twenty-two honorary doctorates he will receive.

1953: He makes a transcontinental tour of North America with James Fisher that will result in the book, "Wild America," published by Houghton Mifflin in 1955. A film, "Wild America," made in 1953, will be shown in Russia in 1957. It is the first film on American wildlife to be shown in the U.S.S.R.

1954: He authors and illustrates "A Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe" with Guy Mountfort and Phil Holum. He receives his first major international award: the Geoffrey St. Hilaire Gold Medal from the French Natural History Society.

1960's: He participates in international bird protection conferences in Tokyo, Cambridge, and Amsterdam and in scientific expeditions to Patagonia in 1960 (Yale), Galapagos in 1964, and Antarctica in 1965.

1961: He receives the Gold Medal of the New York Zoological Society.

1968: He first joins Lindblad Travel on an expedition to Antarctica. From then on travels with Lars-Eric Lindblad are to be a perennial part of Peterson's life, including seventeen trips to Antarctica, two to Tristan da Cunha (the most remote inhabited island in the Atlantic), and excursions to the Arctic, Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa (including the Okavanga in Botswana and the Serengeti). He will be instrumental in the creation of a national park at Lake Nakuru in Kenya.

1970's: He begins an active campaign to prevent DDT spraying in Connecticut. He begins an active effort to bring the Osprey back to New England. Approximately 150 known pairs within a radius of 10 miles from Old Lyme had declined to fewer than 10 pairs by the 1970's because of the DDT syndrome. (They have since made a comeback.) He becomes honorary president of the International Committee for Bird Protection (ICBP).

1971: He receives the Conservation Medal of the National Audubon Society.

1972: He receives the Gold Medal of the World Wildlife Fund from Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands in the presence of Prince Juan Carlos (now King of Spain). He is the first American to receive this award.

1973: He receives the Joseph Wood Krutch Medal from the Humane Society of the United States. He begins a series of limited edition lithographs from his paintings for Mill Pond Press, printed under the supervision of Bob Lewin.

1974: He receives the Explorers Medal from the Explorers Club. A retrospective of his paintings is held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

1975: He gives the keynote address to the Earth Care Conference of the United Nations.

1976: He receives from King Carl XVI of Sweden the Linnaeus Gold Medal of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and is named "Swedish American of the Year." He begins with Virginia Marie Peterson an exhaustive study of bird distribution in North America for maps in the revised field guide to Eastern North America (390 maps done in three years) and the revised field guide to Western North America (440 maps done in six years).

1978: He is awarded the Order of the Golden Ark by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.

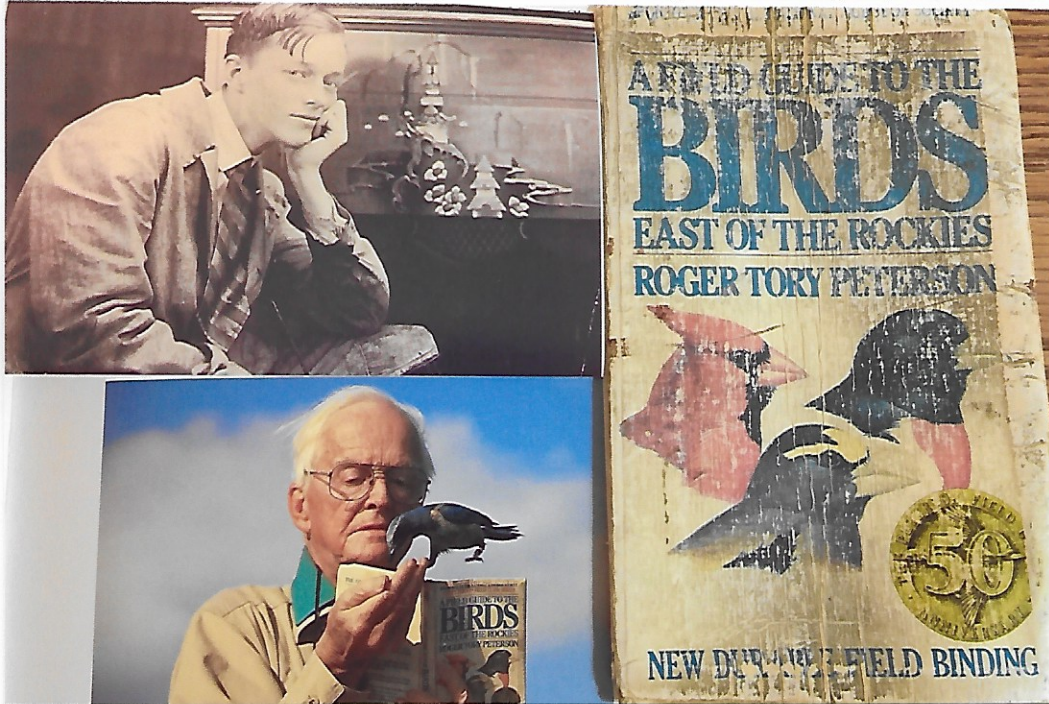
1980: He receives from President Jimmy Carter the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor awarded to an American civilian. First recipient of Ludlow Griscom Award from American Birding Association for excellence in field birding.

1983: He is nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

1984: On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the first edition of "A Field Guide to the Birds," the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., honors Peterson with a

major retrospective exhibition of his art and a publication, "Roger Tory Peterson at the Smithsonian." He also receives the James Smithson Bicentennial Medal from the Smithsonian Institution. He publishes the first of numerous articles for "Bird Watcher's Digest," becoming a regular bimonthly columnist. The column is called "All Things Reconsidered."

1993: The Roger Tory Peterson Institute building is dedicated in Jamestown, New York; the building has been designed by American architect Robert A.M. Stern. The mission of the institute, launched several years earlier, is "to inform society about the natural world through the study and teaching of natural history." **1996:** Passes away at age 88 in Old Lyme, Connecticut.



Young Roger Tory Peterson in the early furniture store days (top); The wise old sage in 1993 with a Florida Scrub-Jay (below); and the weathered cover of my 1980 edition of his field guide (right), that had been through many a rain storm and dropped once in Boston Run, back when I carried one. (photo by: Douglas W. Vogus)

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