

CUYAHOGA VALLEY TOWPATH TRAIL CENSUS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2023
(CVTTC)

HISTORY & FACTS of the SEPTEMBER CENSUS

SEPTEMBER	13-YEAR TOTALS of SPECIES / INDIVIDUALS							
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 09/01/2017.
- Highest Temperature on September Census : 95-degrees F on 09/03/2011.
- Longest Time Afield on September Census : 11 hours & 20 minutes on 09/09/2022.
- Shortest Time Afield on September Census : 5 hours & 50 minutes on 09/03/2011.

LAST SEPTEMBER'S FIELD REPORT

09/09/22	TOTAL SPECIES:	60	START / END TIME:	6:55am - 5:15pm		
	TOTAL BIRDS:	714	TIME AFIELD:	11:20	FT. MI.:	14.00
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 ~ 83F		
OBSERVERS:	John Henry and Douglas W. Vogus.					
CONDITIONS:	Some fog at start, quickly burning off and turning sunny with blue skies; sunny with clouds at 11:00am, turning mostly sunny and warm with light southerly breezes.					
TRAIL CONDITIONS:	Good.					
RIVER CONDITIONS:	Low and clear.					

NINE YEARS AGO on the TOWPATH TRAIL

On 09/06/2014 we set a census high for one of Ohio's most common, though introduced, species of birds, the ever-present House Sparrow. Never far from human habitation, this species is most prevalent along the census route at the small villages of Boston and Peninsula, and areas with plenty of outbuildings like the Akron Compost Facility and Szalay's Sweet Corn Farm & Market (plenty of hand-outs) and the business areas that make up the northwest end of the Merriman Valley.

SEPTEMBER 2023's BIRD SPECIES PROFILE

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*)

DESCRIPTION: Common city bird, more robust than native North American sparrows. Head is large, bill is heavy and conical. **MALE:** Back and wings buff-brown; underparts pale gray; black bib; cheeks pale gray, chestnut nape. **FEMALE:** Is often confused with some North American sparrows and finches - has dingy, unstreaked breast, bold buff-colored line over each eye; noisy chirps and chatter distinguish it; has no black bib; light buff-brown above, dark streak through eyes. **IMMATURE:** A dingier, buffier version of the female.

LENGTH: 5 & 1/2" to 6 & 1/4" **WINGSPAN:** 9 & 1/2" to 10" **WEIGHT:** 27 grams

VOICE: Although a songbird, has no identifiable song, but utters a repeated, and constant, "cheep, cheep, cheep." Calls include a throaty "jigga," usually given by agitated birds, and a soft "chirv," often heard in flight.

HABITS: Gregarious, often found in large, noisy flocks. In summer, eats Japanese beetles, click beetles, leaf beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, caterpillars, aphids, moths, flies. Also spiders and small fruits, succulent plants, eats seeds of crabgrass and other weeds into winter, along with oats, wheat, corn, and other waste grain and garbage. Bullies other birds at feeders, including much larger Northern Cardinal, eating millet, milo, thistle, sunflower seeds and chips, suet and peanuts. Roosts in noisy flocks in city trees and thick bushes (until leaves fall), then places such as ivy-covered walls of buildings, evergreens, or under eaves of buildings.

HABITAT: Cities, parks, industrial areas, farms, etc. - never far from human habitation.

NESTING: In courtship, group of males with wings drooped, almost scraping ground, circle female; fight each other viciously for her favor, tumbling about on ground; promiscuous male copulates frequently with female, up to 14 times in succession. **NEST:** Favors manmade nest-boxes, which they fill with grass, straw, chicken feathers, cotton, string, etc. Occasionally in thick blue spruce tops or old apple tree cavity, but usually behind blinds, shutters of houses, under eaves or rafters of buildings, common in stripmall store signage letters - look for the large, dome-shaped mounds of dried grasses. **EGGS:** Arthur Cleveland Bent (1958) reported eggs in every month of the year, but usually from April to September; 3 to 7 eggs, commonly 5 eggs, white, pale blue, or pale green, marked with a few gray or brown dots. **INCUBATION:** Mostly by female, 11 to 14 days, young leave nest at 15-17 days old; 3 to 4 broods per year.

RANGE: Mainly resident in British Isles west to Siberia, south to North Africa, Middle East, southeast Asia (Burma); in Western Hemisphere, in North America, from central Canada and throughout United States south into Mexico, to Florida Keys, Bermuda, and West Indies; also in Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, and the Falkland Islands.

STATUS: Locally abundant. Year-round resident in cities, farms, and other human-transformed environments. **VAGRANT:** Several records for western Canada and Alaska, outside current range. Some Palearctic populations are in sharp decline, possibly due to changing land-use patterns.

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

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.
CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC
Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC	CCCCCCC

- CCCCCCC = 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.
- rrrrrrrrr = 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 House Sparrow on the Cuyahoga Valley Towpath Trail Census 2010 ~ present.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
JAN.	4	37	7	13	23	19	10	5
FEB.	36	51	14	13	12	15	22	21
MAR.	27	10	22	17	19	27	30	14
APR.	16	19	13	18	5	16	5	10
MAY	11	15	19	24	12	10	30	14
JUN.	18	31	21	23	19	21	31	14
JUL.	18	32	17	22	23	31	28	93
AUG.	8	15	14	24	10	15	4	19
SEP.	11	18	2	17	167*	none!	71	10
OCT.	42	12	8	12	15	16	61	19
NOV.	27	14	30	25	31	31	27	32
DEC.	18	72	58	12	41	63	5	13

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
JAN.	32	23	3	4	33	31	DID YOU KNOW?: The American Kestrel was formerly known as the "Sparrow Hawk"? Although not a hawk, but a falcon, in my youth I had but one sighting of an American Kestrel in our neighborhood. Where it came from, I had no idea. I was about 14 years of age, and this American Kestrel came from out of the sky and snatched a female House Sparrow from my Mother's wysteria bush. What a sighting and a win for the "good guys!"
FEB.	16	26	42	37	22	11	
MAR.	16	18	8	46	16	18	
APR.	16	26	18	12	12	12	
MAY	19	28	5	23	11	10	
JUN.	41	11	12	14	15	16	
JUL.	42	10	15	25	15	26	
AUG.	18	31	32	24	3	21	
SEP.	5	3	6	7	31		
OCT.	2	67	24	11	48		
NOV.	5	33	72	28	29		
DEC.	11	26	26	36	4		

- * = HIGHEST COUNT TOTAL ON CENSUS. (THE ONLY TIME TO DATE THAT WE'VE SURPASSED 100 HOUSE SPARROWS)
- BOLD #** = HIGHEST COUNT FOR THAT YEAR.
- none! = UNBELIEVABLY - NO HOUSE SPARROWS WERE SEEN. (HIGH TEMP. WAS 87 DEGREES - A FACTOR?)

DID YOU KNOW?:

You can find House Sparrows most places where there are houses (or other buildings), and few places where there aren't? Along with two other introduced species, the European Starling (The Towpath Traveler August 2017) and the Rock Pigeon (The Towpath Traveler December 2019), these are some of our most common birds. Their constant presence outside our doors makes them easy to overlook, and their tendency to displace native birds from nest boxes causes some people to resent them. But House Sparrows, with their capacity to live so intimately with us, are just beneficiaries of our own success.

The best way to find a House Sparrow is to visit an urban area and watch for a conspicuous, tame sparrow hopping on the ground (it might help to bring a sandwich or some birdseed). You can easily attract them with food and they may feed out of your hand. In the countryside, look out for bright, clean versions of the city House Sparrow around barns, stables, and storehouses. (* = not so sure about this statement - they are very wary and know YOUR limitations!) - D.W. Vogus*

Many people regard House Sparrows as undesirables in their yards, since they aren't native and can be menace to native species. House Sparrows are so closely entwined with people's lives that you probably will find them around your home without feeding them. They are frequent visitors to backyard feeders, where they eat most kinds of birdseed, especially millet, corn, and sunflower seed.

INTERESTING FACTS:

The House Sparrow was introduced into Brooklyn, New York, in 1851. By 1900 it had spread to the Rocky Mountains. Two more introductions in the early 1870s, in San Francisco and Salt Lake City, aided the bird's spread throughout the West. House Sparrows are now common across all of North America except Alaska and far northern Canada.

The House Sparrow takes frequent dust baths. It throws soil and dust over its body feathers, just as if it were bathing with water. In doing so, a sparrow may make a small depression in the ground, and sometimes defends this spot against other sparrows.

The House Sparrow prefers to nest in manmade structures such as eaves or walls of buildings, street lights, and nest boxes instead of natural nest sites such as holes in trees.

Due to its abundance, ease to raise and general lack of fear towards humans, the House Sparrow has proved to be an excellent model organism for many avian biological studies. To date, there have been almost 5,000 scientific papers published with the House Sparrow as the study species.

House Sparrows aggressively defend their nest holes. A scientist in 1889 reported cases of House Sparrows sometimes evicting other birds from nest holes, including Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, and Purple Martin.

House Sparrows in flocks have a pecking order much the way chickens in a farmyard do. You can begin to decipher the standings by paying attention to the black throats of the males. Males with larger patches of black tend to be older and dominant over males with less black. By wearing this information on their feathers, sparrows can avoid some fights and thereby save energy.

House Sparrows have been seen stealing food from American Robins and piercing flowers to drain them of nectar.

The oldest recorded House Sparrow was a female, and at least 15 years, 9 months old when she was found in Texas in 2004, the same state where she had been banded. Two wild House Sparrows, banded in Kent, Ohio, were caught again in a trap a half mile from where banded, were each 13 years, 4 months, old.

MANAGING HOUSE SPARROWS AND EUROPEAN STARLINGS

From Cornell University's < nestwatch.org >

Please note that the methods described below are only for controlling House Sparrows and European Starlings, which are not protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and that is illegal to harm or harass any native species, including their nests and eggs.

Invasive exotic species are those introduced species which benefit from their new environment such that they increase their population range significantly over time. Invasive species are currently recognized as one of the main threats to global biodiversity. House Sparrows and European Starlings were both introduced in the 19th century. They are now permanent residents found across the United States and Canada, almost always near areas of human habitation and disturbance (e.g., cities and suburbs) or areas with a reliable food source, such as barns or granaries. Both species nest in structures ranging from gutters and downspouts to thick shrubs and bushes, but readily use nest boxes when available. They out-compete native cavity-nesting birds, and are known to destroy nests and eggs, and kill nestlings and adults while taking over an occupied nest site.

DETECTING HOUSE SPARROWS AND EUROPEAN STARLINGS

As a nest box monitor, your goal is to provide a safe environment for local cavity-nesting species to breed. For the reasons outlined above, we strongly encourage that you do not allow House Sparrows or European Starlings to breed in your nest boxes. We recommend that you take measures to prevent them from breeding in your boxes. Unfortunately, a completely sparrow-proof nest box does not exist. There are several styles that seem to deter the sparrows for a while, but ultimately, if these birds are desperate, they will eventually use the box.

Because European Starlings are a larger bird, they are less of a problem when it comes to competition with bluebirds and other smaller cavity-nesting species. Simply restricting the size of the entrance hole of a nest box should give the smaller birds access while keeping starlings out. If your target species are larger cavity-nesting birds, like American Kestrels, you may have to actively deter starlings from your area.

PASSIVE CONTROL

Placement - *The most successful method for preventing exotic species from breeding in your nest boxes is simply to move your boxes. Only place your boxes in areas that do not have these birds. House Sparrows and European Starlings prefer to be near human habitations, and starlings also frequently inhabit agricultural areas with abundant grain. Therefore, placing your nest boxes in natural areas away from densely-populated locations will prevent many non-target birds from ever finding them.*

Avoid Feeding - Another simple way to reduce the number of House Sparrows and European Starlings around your property is to avoid feeding them. House Sparrows prefer smaller seeds like millet, cracked corn, and milo, which are plentiful in inexpensive bird seed mixes. European Starlings, on the other hand, like premium black-oil sunflower seeds.* (* = once again, your editor strongly disagrees with this outdated thought. European Starlings only resort to black oil sunflower seeds once all other food sources have been devoured or the weather has been extremely cold for a prolonged time period. Starlings will prefer your suet cakes intended for woodpeckers long before they resort to cracking seeds. These observations come from years of winter bird-feeding experience.)

D.W. Vogus

Bird enthusiasts must accept that wherever there is abundant food, so too there will be House Sparrows and European Starlings. If you do feed wild birds, offer foods that these species do not appreciate, such as such as safflower for Northern Cardinals, nyjer or "thistle" for finches, and nectar for hummingbirds. Avoid putting out mealworms and suet, and scattering seed on the ground. Feeders with short perches and small ports are also less attractive to these two species.

Exclusion - Starlings cannot squeeze through a hole smaller than 1 & 1/2", so an entrance hole of this size or smaller will exclude starlings from boxes intended for smaller birds. House Sparrows can fit through entrance holes as small as 1 & 1/4"; therefore cavity-nesting songbirds using nest boxes are vulnerable to House Sparrow competition. There currently is no scientifically-documented way to exclude House Sparrows that works permanently, but some monitors have observed that Gilbertson PVC boxes are often avoided by House Sparrows. Your best bet may be to use a more active method of managing House Sparrows. If you prefer, you may alternatively choose to offer only boxes that are not as vulnerable to exotics.

Timing - Because House Sparrows and European Starlings do not migrate, they have a competitive advantage when it comes to having first pick of suitable nest boxes. By waiting to open your nest boxes until migratory birds return, you can ensure that they have a chance of finding an unoccupied site. Simply plug the entrance hole of your boxes until nesting season begins. Note that this means your resident chickadees, titmice, and nuthatches may also have to wait for the migrants to return.

ACTIVE CONTROL

Because House Sparrows and European Starlings are exotic species, they are not protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Therefore, nest box monitors are legally allowed to remove or harass them. Below we list some humane, legal actions for controlling or deterring these two species.

Nest Removal - Once House Sparrows have started nesting, remove their nesting materials every few days to discourage them. You may have to continue doing this for at least a week before the birds will tire of continually building a nest that is never completed and move elsewhere. While it is true that the birds will eventually seek a new nesting site, a second problem arises if they find a new site in another nest box that contains an active bluebird or swallow nest. House Sparrows will usurp the nest, often killing the inhabitants of the nest box. Therefore, this method works best with a single backyard nest box.

Incubation Fake-out - Another method involves tricking the birds into incubating eggs that will never hatch. The logic behind this method is that the adults will remain occupied with their nest and leave the native birds in your area alone. Addling (vigorously shaking the eggs), freezing, oiling, poking a pin-hole, or boiling the eggs renders them nonviable, and the female will con-

tinue to incubate longer than the usual incubation period. The drawback to this method is the same as if nesting material was removed: the birds will eventually lay another clutch, often in a new nesting site that may contain an active nest. Many experienced nest monitors concede that nest removal and prolonged incubation are temporary stop-gaps and not long-term solutions; they work best once nesting is already initiated by the unwanted species and the monitor is unable to effectively trap the exotics.

Trapping - Where populations of exotic species are high, trapping may be the only effective means of managing invasive species. Once you have a bird trapped, it is best to humanely euthanize it as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary stress to the bird. Sparrow traps must be checked hourly to ensure that no native birds become trapped, and trap operators should have the necessary identification skills to ensure that only House Sparrows are detained. There are several humane methods for trapping exotic birds, such as: 1) In-box Trap; 2) Funnel Trap; 3) Trio Trap; and 4) Repeating (Elevator) Trap.

While no wildlife manager takes pleasure in euthanizing a pest species, it is upsetting and discouraging to find the injured or dead victims of preventable attacks in your nest box. Many raptor rehabilitation facilities will accept sparrows that have been euthanized humanely and without the use of chemicals. The North American Bluebird Society provides additional details on House Sparrow control and may have state or provincial affiliate members who can advise you on effective deterrents for your region, state regulations on wildlife relocation, and local organizations that accept harvested House Sparrows and/or European Starlings.

DID YOU KNOW?:

We now realize certain mammals, birds, insects, and plants evolved in specific localities, governed by evolutionary checks and balances to control their abundance. But this concept of ecology was poorly understood until recently. Previously, people imported species from around the world without any thought of how they would interact with native species.

Clubs such as the American Acclimatization Society of New York sponsored novelty wildlife introductions in the late 1800s. Under the leadership of drug manufacturer Eugene Schieffelin, this group imported a few of each of the species of birds mentioned in Shakespeare's plays. During 1890 and 1891, more than a hundred starlings were freed in Central Park.

For most Shakespearean birds - such as nightingales and skylarks - the habitats, climate, and food sources of North America were too different from those of their homeland. They soon perished. But cities in North America are much like cities in Europe, and starlings fared well. Within fifty years, their descendants formed what Roger Tory Peterson remembered as "black blizzards of birds," with flocks of thirty thousand or more swarming about the ledges of buildings in New York City. Starlings reached the West Coast by 1950. They now rank among the most numerous birds in North America.

House Sparrows represent a similarly ironic success story. Ancestral House Sparrows inhabited Eurasian savannas and adapted to the easy lifestyle of feeding on spilled grain and livestock wastes near human settlement. They found crevices around buildings perfect for stuffing with sprawling nests of straw and feathers. As domestic agriculture spread across Europe and North Africa, so did ever-expanding populations of House Sparrows.

DID YOU KNOW?:

Covies of these drab birds were imported and released in the United States several times beginning in the early 1850s? Promoters claimed they would eat cankerworms on shade trees. The diary of French composer Jacques Offenbach contains this passage from an 1876 visit to New York City, "From my window I can see in Madison Square a curious and charming detail. On the upper branches of the trees have been put little boxes half hidden among the leaves. They are for the sparrows recently brought from Europe. These little exiled birds are the objects of every kind of attention... they are respected like the pigeons of Saint-Marc."

It did not take long for House Sparrows to fall from favor. They thrived in cities, dining on partially digested grains deposited on streets plied by horse carts. They invaded farms, gobbling cereals from fields and storage bins, while spreading weed seeds in their droppings. They followed the railroads west, consuming grain that spilled from boxcars. House Sparrows arrived on the West Coast by the late 1800s.

Exotic European Starlings and House Sparrows exploited native bluebirds by nesting in cavities. Being larger and highly aggressive, starlings have no trouble seizing woodpecker holes and natural openings. They have even been seen evicting kestrels and screech owls from nests. A Colorado observer watched a starling harass a nest-drilling flicker by grabbing the flicker's neck in its beak and latching onto its back. During their last encounter, the starling held the struggling flicker in its grip for thirty minutes. When the flicker finally broke free, it deserted the den and the starling moved in. Starlings cannot squeeze into openings smaller than 1 & 9/16 inches in diameter, so properly sized holes on bluebird nest boxes will exclude them.

House Sparrows nest not only in natural cavities and bird houses, but under eaves, behind shutters, over light fixtures, and in barns and agricultural buildings. Since they can squeeze into holes 1 & 1/8 inches in diameter, there is no sure way to keep them from entering bluebird nest boxes. Male House Sparrows are extremely pugnacious while trying to attract mates. They will usurp the nests of bluebirds, wrens, chickadees, and other songbirds by breaking or throwing out eggs, killing nestlings, and occasionally killing adult birds. If a male sparrow cannot enter the tiny opening on a wren or chickadee box, it may perch on top and drive approaching adults away. House Sparrows are adaptable and prolific. As use of draft animals ended and agricultural practices modernized, sparrow populations began to decline. They compensated by roaming urban parking lots, picking impaled insects from car radiators and gleaning food scraps at fast-food restaurants. A male sparrow may defend as many as five potential nest sites and can support two females at the same time. Females raise two to three broods per season, averaging five young per brood.

House Sparrows wreak havoc on bluebirds. Trail monitors know the evidence too well - an adult bluebird found dead in or near the box, with head feathers gone, revealing deep gashes in the skull, and often with eyes pecked out. Although usually the male sparrow attacks, sometimes the female will sneak in while adults are away. A nest that formerly held plump, healthy chicks becomes the site of a massacre. The lifeless bluebirds are pecked, bloodied, mutilated, sometimes dragged from the nest. If they remain in the box, they are usually buried under the debris of the House Sparrow's new nest.

House Sparrows and bluebirds did not evolve on the same continent. It is only through misguided human interference that sparrows rival bluebirds for nesting space. In this competition, House Sparrows win unless humans intervene. House Sparrows are fairly sedentary. They actively defend a small territory around their nest, fanning out within a mile or two to feed. If you can alleviate House Sparrows from nesting sites, you can provide a "safe zone" for bluebirds.

Alien House Sparrows are not subject to laws that protect native birds. It is legal to remove them and their nests. As for what you do after you catch them, opinions differ. For people who normally love birds, killing one is an unnatural act. Yet anyone who hopes to return bluebirds to suburban and agrarian areas needs to make a personal decision about House Sparrows. "Environmentalism is a matter of hard choices," wrote ornithologist Rick Blom. Simply releasing House Sparrows somewhere else may result in their invasion of other bluebird habitat. The quickest way to dispatch House Sparrows is to wring their necks. Corpses can be donated to wildlife rehabilitators, who feed them to birds of prey. People who cannot kill sparrows in hand have gassed them with car exhaust, drowned them, or placed them, bagged in plastic, in the freezer.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

My first birding experience that I can recall, the moment that "got the hooks" in me, possibly before my Mother or Father introduced me to the wonderment of birds, was when I was in a vacant lot in West Akron along Valdes Avenue while I was in second grade. I sat in a vacant back lot of dandelions watching a European Starling battle a Northern Flicker (then, the "Yellow-shafted Flicker," a name I am still partial to, to this day) for a nesting hole. The flicker was excavating its nest hole in a dead tree and the starling took it over. The flicker clung to the side of the tree and every time the starling stuck its head out of the flicker's now-lost nest hole, the flicker would slam its beak right between the starling's eyes. This went on for quite some time, with the starling eventually winning out. I have despised starlings ever since.

Patience a virtue in

By Karen Palmer
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Patience paid off for Dick Vogus.

He snapped a 50mm lens onto his Minolta 35mm camera, perched the camera on a tripod, parked himself in his pickup nearby and waited.

That was his method when his former wife Jean called and asked him to photograph a pair of eastern bluebirds nesting in a box on her lamp post on Manchester Road.

"It took a couple hours because

my camera isn't motorized, and I have an external cable. It took them about an hour to become accustomed to the camera on the tripod within a foot of their box. Then they started perching on the camera," Vogus said.

Vogus, who's semi-retired, worked on two-way radios for the police and fire departments for 38 years.

Based on his bird watching, Vogus said the female bluebird is more efficient at feeding her nestlings.

"She'll make two trips to the box to the male's one," he said.

bird photography

"Most bluebirds like open fields and the edge of woods but for some reason they liked (Jean's) house and her boxes. I'd like to see more people put up bluebird boxes. They depend on woodpeckers and other birds to make cavities in the trees. That's why they use the boxes."

Vogus said birds are difficult to photograph. More often, his camera is aimed at his three grandchildren.

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Dick Vogus waited to get photos of bluebirds. (Photo submitted)

(Article from the "Mansfield News Journal" and the editor's personal archives)

(Douglas W. Vogus)



The difference is in the details - to most, a sparrow is a sparrow. To true birdwatchers, this is Public Enemy #1. Knowing the difference between the non-native House Sparrow and Ohio's true resident and migratory sparrows is paramount. And in regard to survival of our native species, it truly is a matter of life and death. (photo by: Paul Fleet)

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