The timing of spring migration in Ohio

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Hooded Merganser. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren (CC 2.0)

Tree Swallow. Photo by Matthew Shumar

Nashville Warbler. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren (CC 2.0)

Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren (CC 2.0)
Life cycle of birds

Veery. Photo by Andrew Weitzel
Life cycle of birds

Magnolia Warbler. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren (CC 2.0)
Why migrate?

- Abundant resources at northern latitudes
- Larger area to disperse
- Longer daylight
- Maximize reproductive success
Where did they go?

Eastern Whip-poor-will study conducted at Vinton Furnace

Archrival GPS tags deployed and then birds recaptured the following spring (Tonra et al. 2019)

Quantify winter home ranges (1 to 10 ha) found importance of forests and edges on the wintering grounds
How they migrate? Stopover habitat

- Provide food resources and cover
- Spend 7-times longer at stopover sites than in migratory flight
- Replenishing energy at each stop important to migratory schedule
- American Restarts delay departure when in poorer condition (Dossman et al. 2018)

Source: https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/03/bird-migration-interactive-maps/
The importance of stopover habitat

* Akesson and Hendenstrom, 2007
The importance of stopover habitat

- Every forest patch helps
- Birds must make stopover decisions after each flight
- Decisions on staying or leaving based on timing and energy
Stopover habitat

- Swainson's Thrush: Day of year was primary driver reflecting pressure to move on even in urban stopover locations

- Myrtle Warbler and American Restarts along Lake Erie show importance of refueling at critical site
Mid-February

- blackbirds
- American Woodcock
- waterfowl *(beginning)*
Early March

- waterfowl
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker* (February 12, 2021)
- Tree Swallow
- Eastern Phoebe* (February 13, 2021: VS)

(My yard, 2021, Vinton County)
Mid-March

- waterfowl (*peak*)
- raptors (*beginning*)
- American Woodcock (*territorial*)
- Swallows/martins (*late March*)

**American Woodcock**. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren (CC 2.0)
Late March to early April

- waterfowl *(still strong)*
- raptors *(peak, slowing)*
- Shorebirds *(beginning)*
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *February 12, 2021*
- kinglets *RCKI: March 31, 2021*
- Winter Wren
- Louisiana Waterthrush *March 23, 2021*
- Yellow-throated Warbler *March 31, 2021*
Early to mid-April

- waders
- shorebirds continue
- Eastern Whip-poor-will
- warblers really start arriving!
  - Black-and-white Warbler
  - Palm Warbler
  - Nashville Warbler
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
  April 4, 2021
- sparrows

Feb 1  Mar 1  Apr 1  May 1  Jun 1

Great Egret. Photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren (CC 2.0)
Late April through the first week of May

- vireos
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- House Wren
- thrushes
- warblers!!!
- orioles
Mid-May

- shorebirds *(still!)*
- flycatchers
- Swainson’s Thrush
- Blackpoll Warbler
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Late May into June

- cuckoos
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Scarlet Tanager
- Lincoln’s Sparrow
- Indigo Bunting
Explore further on eBird!