

---

## OCCURRENCE OF THE HOARY BAT (*LASIURUS CINEREUS*) IN OHIO<sup>1</sup>

JACK L. GOTTSCHANG

*Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cincinnati,  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45221*

### ABSTRACT

Few specimens of the hoary bat have been reported from Ohio in the past, but there are now records of adult bats from Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Loraine, Ottawa, Portage, Ross and Wood Counties. Pregnant females and/or very young bats have been taken in several counties, indicating that the hoary bat breeds in Ohio. The birth of a hoary bat in Ohio during the middle of May is reported from Hamilton County. The earliest record for *Lasiurus cinereus* in Ohio is May 14 and the latest record, October 14. It is suggested that this bat may be more common in Ohio than previously supposed.

Although the hoary bat is our largest and most striking bat, records of its occurrence have accumulated very slowly over the past 50 years. Findley and Jones (1964), in discussing the seasonal distribution of the hoary bat throughout its entire range, included but two records of this species from Ohio. These two females were taken in the northeastern part of the state, although the exact county was not designated for either. One bat was taken in July, the other in September. There are enough additional unpublished records of the hoary bat from Ohio so that I believe they are worth reporting at this time.

The first reference to *Lasiurus cinereus* in Ohio was by Kirtland (1838), who stated that it was rare. A. W. Brayton (1882) was of the opinion that it "might" occur in southern Ohio. The first specimen reported as actually taken in Ohio was captured alive in Kent, Portage County, 12 August 1919, by Mr. A. R. Balch (Hopkins, 1919). The sex is not recorded and the only measurement given is the total wing spread: ". . . 16.225 inches". Goodpaster (1941) called the hoary bat rare in southwestern Ohio; no data are included for the one specimen reported from Cincinnati, Ohio. Bole and Moulthrop (1942) state, "The great hoary bat is a rare species in Ohio, and is in most places a 'bat of passage'." These authors examined only four specimens, three from Lorain County and one from Cuyahoga County, and I believe that these are the same specimens reported by Findley and Jones (1964).

---

<sup>1</sup>Manuscript received July 21, 1965.

There are nine hoary bat specimens in the Ohio State Museum collection that have not been previously reported. Six of these are from Columbus, Franklin County, two are from Put-in-Bay, Ottawa County, and one is from Grand Rapids, Wood County. Two additional specimens are recorded in the card catalogue file, but I have been unable to locate them in the collection. One missing specimen is reported to be a female from Bainbridge, Ross County, the other a, ". . . young, found dead on sidewalk, 21st and Oak (Columbus, Franklin County)."

Mr. Michael Kulczycki of the Cleveland Natural Science Museum has kindly supplied the data for a hoary bat caught by a house cat in Cleveland, Ohio, on 14 October 1965. The specimen was brought to the museum where it has been mounted for display.

During the last week in May, 1964, I was given a live, young hoary bat by Dr. George McDuffie. The bat was found hanging on the bark of a tree in a woodlot in Hamilton County, Ohio. I was able to keep the young bat alive four days, during which time it ate several small insects. Although the bat moved actively about the cage when disturbed, it was apparently unable to fly. Exact information concerning growth rate is not available, but Hamilton (1943) states that growth of the young hoary bat is rapid and that they are able to fend for

TABLE I  
Measurements (mm) and comments concerning specimens of *L. cinereus* taken in Ohio

Date	County	Sex	Total Length	Tail	Hind Foot	Ear	Tragus	Fore Arm	Tibia	Thumb	Wing Spread
1899	Franklin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5/20/09	Franklin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6/05/10	Franklin	♀	"Containing two young."				—	—	—	—	407
8/12/19	Portage	—	First specimen reported from Ohio.				—	—	—	—	409
6/09/41	Franklin	♀	128	58	11	17	8	52	23	10	386
6/09/41	Franklin	♀	63.5	22	10	8	4	23	8	8	—
8/23/42	Ottawa	♂	128	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	238
8/16/50	Ross	♀	"Caught by a man cutting weeds."				—	—	—	—	—
7/13/51	Franklin	—	"Young, found dead on sidewalk, . . ."				—	—	—	—	—
9/14/57	Ottawa	♂	128	56	12	18	8	54	25	10	230
10/02/62	Franklin	♀	111	52	10	16	7	57	24	12	398
6/06/64	Hamilton	♂	87	31	11	11	6	40	30	—	265
10/12/64	Wood	—	120	45	—	17	7	—	26	11	350
10/14/65	Cuyahoga	—	133	59.5	13.5	—	—	—	—	—	—

themselves within a month after birth. In consideration of the measurements and weight of this young bat, I have assumed a minimum age of two weeks for it. This would mean that the animal was born during the first or second week of May. This is the first record of the birth of a hoary bat in southwestern Ohio. It is further interesting because it is believed that the adult females in the eastern United States move farther north in the spring before producing their young (Findley and Jones, 1964). However, a few births have been recorded from this same general latitude in eastern Pennsylvania in mid-May and in central Indiana in June (Poole, 1932; 1938; Lyon, 1936; Provost and Kirkpatrick, 1952).

The hoary bat, *Lasiurus cinereus*, is known to occur in nine counties in Ohio. Pregnant females and/or very young bats have been taken in several counties, indicating that the hoary bat breeds in Ohio. The earliest record for this species in Ohio is approximately May 14 and the latest record, October 14. Dr. Milton B. Trautman of the Ohio State Museum has told me of seeing these large bats flying about his home in Columbus and I have frequently seen them in Cincinnati. Dr. Russell Mumford, Purdue University, has recently informed me that *L. cinereus* is common in Indiana. In light of these observations and considering

the wide distribution of known records for the state, it is quite possible that the hoary bat is more common in Ohio than previously supposed.

Diagnostic measurements and comments concerning the specimens discussed in this paper are included in Table 1. I would like to thank Dr. David H. Stansbery and Dr. Milton B. Trautman of the Ohio State Museum for allowing me to use the Ohio State collection and for helping me locate specimens in the museum. I am indebted to the Ohio Biological Survey for providing funds for traveling expenses.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Bole, B. P., Jr. and P. N. Moulthrop.** 1942. The Ohio recent mammal collection in the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Sci. Publ. Cleveland Mus. Nat. Hist. 5: 89-95.
- Brayton, A. W.** 1882. Report on the mammals of Ohio. Geol. Surv. Ohio: 4, Part 1, 1-185.
- Findley, J. S. and Clyde Jones.** 1964. Seasonal distribution of the hoary bat. J. Mamm 45: 461-470.
- Goodpaster, W. W.** 1941. A list of the birds and mammals of southwestern Ohio. The J. Cincinnati Society of Nat. Hist. 22: 1-47.
- Hamilton, W. J., Jr.** 1943. The Mammals of Eastern United States. Comstock, Ithaca, N.Y. 432 p.
- Hopkins, L. S.** 1919. The hoary bat in Ohio. Ohio Jour. Sci. 20: 35-37.
- Kirtland, J. P.** 1838. Report on mammals. Geol. Surv. Ohio, Second Annual Report, 160-161, 175-177.
- Poole, E. L.** 1932. Breeding of the hoary bat in Pennsylvania. J. Mamm. 13: 365-367.
- . 1938. Notes on the breeding of *Lasiurus* and *Pipistrellus* in Pennsylvania. J. Mamm. 19: 249.
- Lyon, M. W., Jr.** 1936. Mammals of Indiana. Amer. Mid. Nat. 17: 1-384.
- Provost, E. E. and C. M. Kirkpatrick.** 1952. Observations on the hoary bat in Indiana and Illinois. J. Mamm. 33: 110-113.
-