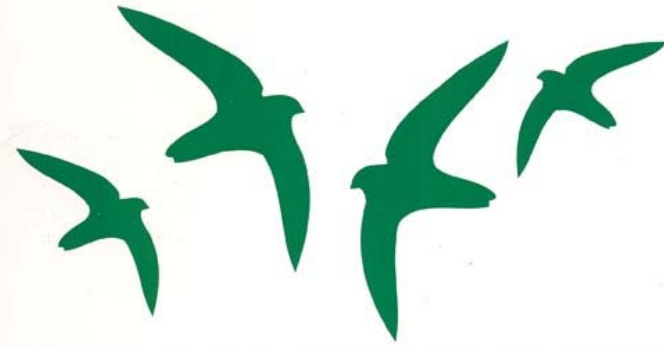




**WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY**

2008

**Rocky River**



# IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

This site is part of a global network of places recognized for their outstanding value to bird conservation



**Important Bird Area**



**Cleveland Metroparks**



# Forest Bird Survey Project

- WCAS has completed year 3 of a 5-year survey of breeding birds in forests of the Rocky River valley.
- Cleveland Metroparks is using our bird survey data in their grant requests to acquire private parcels of land in the Rocky River watershed in order to protect them in perpetuity.
- WCAS is communicating the results to community officials and citizens to raise their awareness of the importance of land conservation in the Rocky River watershed.



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# **Forest Bird Survey Project**

## **Summary of the Year 3 Survey**

- Conducted forest bird survey during 2008 breeding season.
- Conducted from May 25, 2008 through July 15, 2008.
- Surveyed 65 points throughout the Rocky River Valley.
- Points were located in Rocky River, Mill Stream Run, Hinckley & Rising Valley and private land.



# Forest Bird Survey Project

## Observers and Recorders

- Collected bird abundance data at the 65 point count stations.
- Used strict protocols to ensure consistent data collection.
- Turned data in to Coordinator for compilation.



# Forest Bird Survey Project

## Findings of the Year 3 Survey

- 195 survey sheets were tallied.
- Every survey had some species observed.
- The least number observed at any one point was one species.
- The greatest number observed at any one point was 41 individuals.
- Most points had 5 to 15 species observed.
- These facts are comparable with 2006 & 2007 findings.



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# Forest Bird Survey Project

| <b>Categories</b>        | <b>2006</b> | <b>2007</b> | <b>2008</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Individual birds counted | 2098        | 2261        | 2296        |
| Surveys conducted        | 180         | 186         | 195         |
| Species counted          | 74          | 67          | 75          |



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# Forest Bird Survey Project

| <b>Total No. by<br/>Reservation</b> | <b>2006</b>       | <b>2007</b>       | <b>2008</b>       |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Rocky River<br>Reservation          | 760 Birds         | 776 Birds         | 643 Birds         |
| Mill Stream<br>Run<br>Reservation   | 709 Birds         | 912 Birds         | 814 Birds         |
| Hinckley<br>Reservation             | 629 Birds         | 573 Birds         | 839 Birds         |
| <b>TOTAL<br/>Number</b>             | <b>2098 Birds</b> | <b>2261 Birds</b> | <b>2296 Birds</b> |



# WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY

## Top 10 Birds by Year

|                        | 2006 |
|------------------------|------|
| American Robin         | 197  |
| Red-eyed Vireo         | 183  |
| Northern Cardinal      | 159  |
| Blue Jay               | 105  |
| American Goldfinch     | 103  |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 82   |
| Black-capped Chickadee | 79   |
| Wood Thrush            | 74   |
| Eastern Wood Pewee     | 70   |
| Downy Woodpecker       | 69   |

|                        | 2007 |
|------------------------|------|
| American Robin         | 201  |
| Red-eyed Vireo         | 198  |
| Northern Cardinal      | 198  |
| Blue Jay               | 135  |
| Black-capped Chickadee | 103  |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 80   |
| American Goldfinch     | 78   |
| American Crow          | 77   |
| Wood Thrush            | 74   |
| Eastern Wood Pewee     | 73   |

|                         | 2008 |
|-------------------------|------|
| Red-eyed Vireo          | 193  |
| Northern Cardinal       | 176  |
| American Robin          | 163  |
| Black-capped Chickadee  | 143  |
| Blue Jay                | 92   |
| House Wren              | 79   |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker  | 78   |
| Wood Thrush             | 78   |
| Eastern Tufted Titmouse | 74   |
| Downy Woodpecker        | 67   |





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## Species of Note

| Species                         | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Wood Thrush                     | 74   | 74   | 78   |
| Black-throated<br>Green Warbler | 0    | 0    | 3    |
| Louisiana<br>Waterthrush        | 2    | 0    | 6    |
| Wild Turkey                     | 1    | 0    | 5    |
| Green Heron                     | 0    | 0    | 2    |
| Alder Flycatcher                | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Cerulean Warbler                | 1    | 0    | 4    |
| Eastern Bluebird                | 0    | 0    | 7    |
| Summer Tanager                  | *    | *    | Yes  |
| Cliff Swallow                   | *    | *    | Yes  |



SUMMER TANAGER © Dwight Chaser  
Found by Henry Fortlage



24 CLIFF SWALLOW nests found by  
Mary Anne Romito/Penny O'Connor



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## Notable Fluctuations

| Species                | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Black-capped Chickadee | 79   | 103  | 143  |
| House Wren             | 18   | 47   | 67   |
| American Redstart      | 6    | 10   | 28   |
| Carolina Wren          | 7    | 10   | 18   |



## Notable Fluctuations

| Species             | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|---------------------|------|------|------|
| Baltimore Oriole    | 48   | 38   | 19   |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | 9    | 5    | 3    |



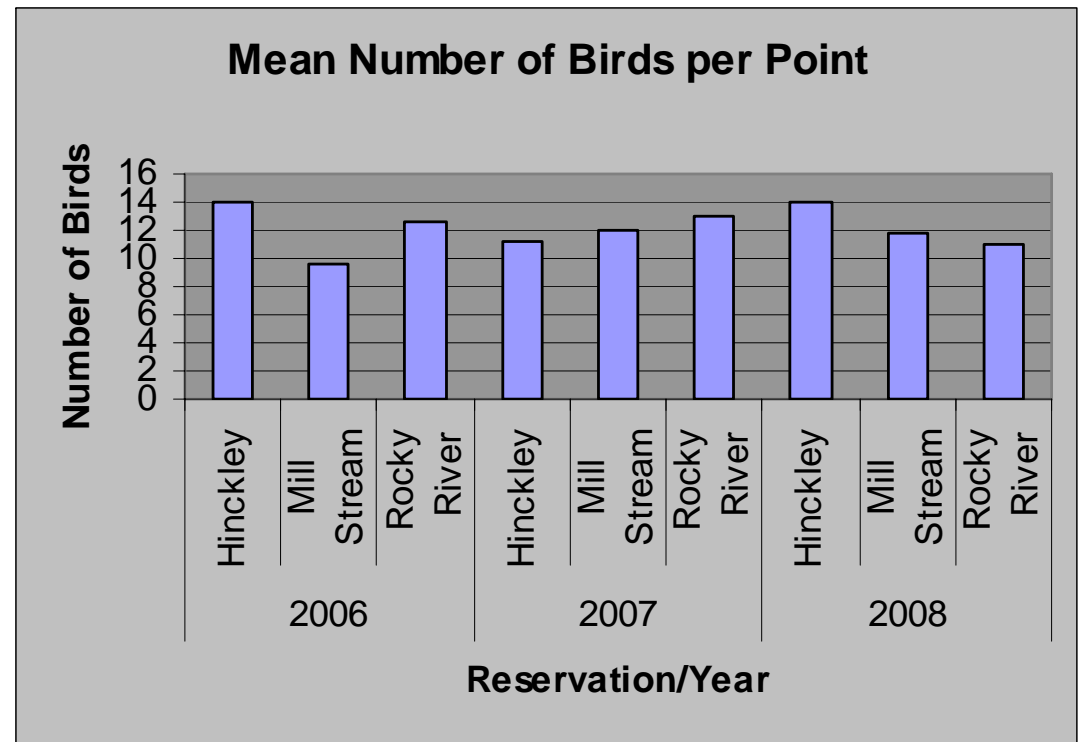
**WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY**

# Notable Fluctuations

| Species              | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|
| Veery                | 13   | 2    | 15   |
| Ovenbird             | 20   | 7    | 12   |
| Hairy Woodpecker     | 15   | 6    | 17   |
| Yellow Warbler       | 18   | 11   | 23   |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | 3    | 11   | 1    |
| Northern Flicker     | 25   | 27   | 13   |

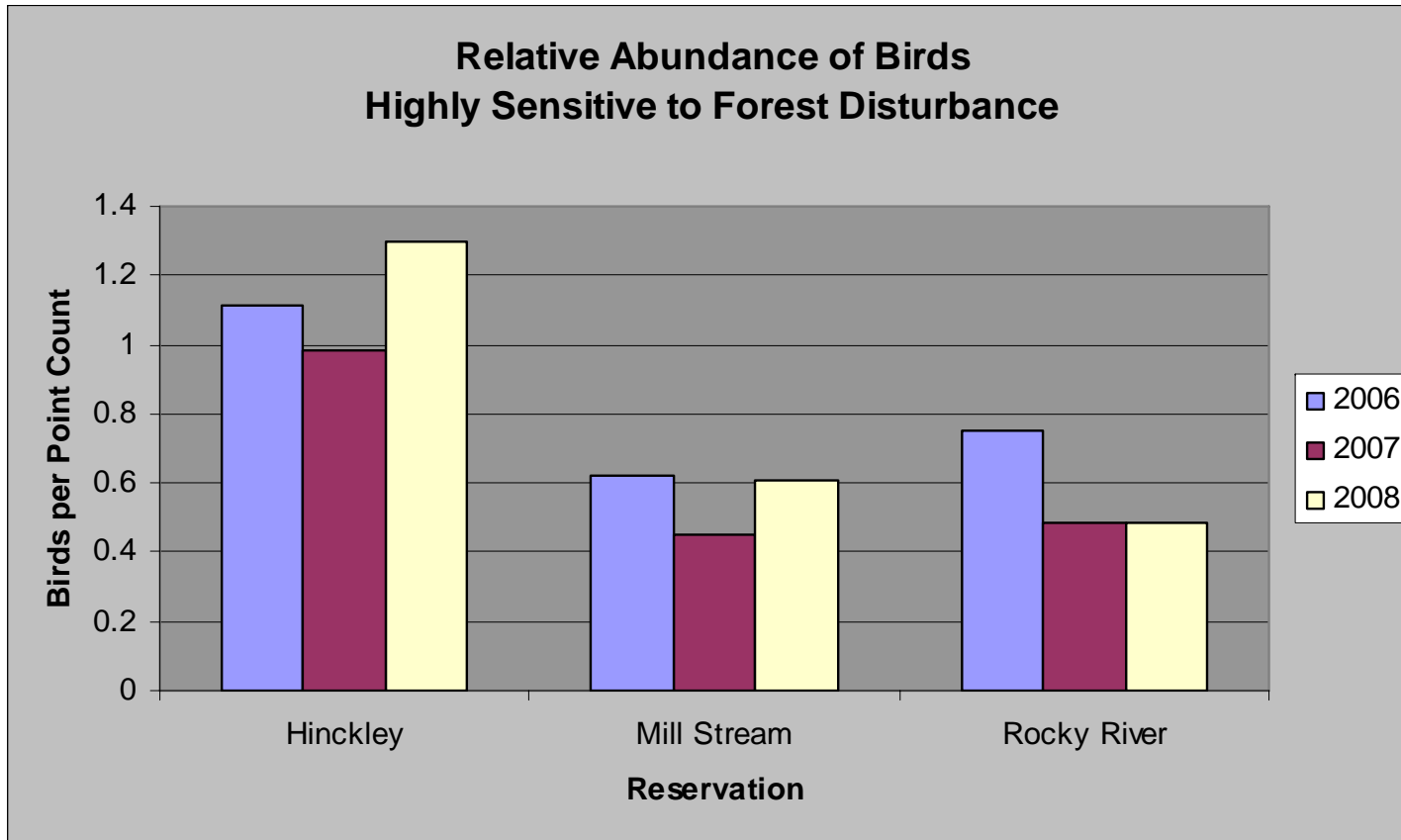
The average total number of birds seen per point count ranges from almost 10 to 14 birds.

Average number of birds seen is fairly consistent across reservations.



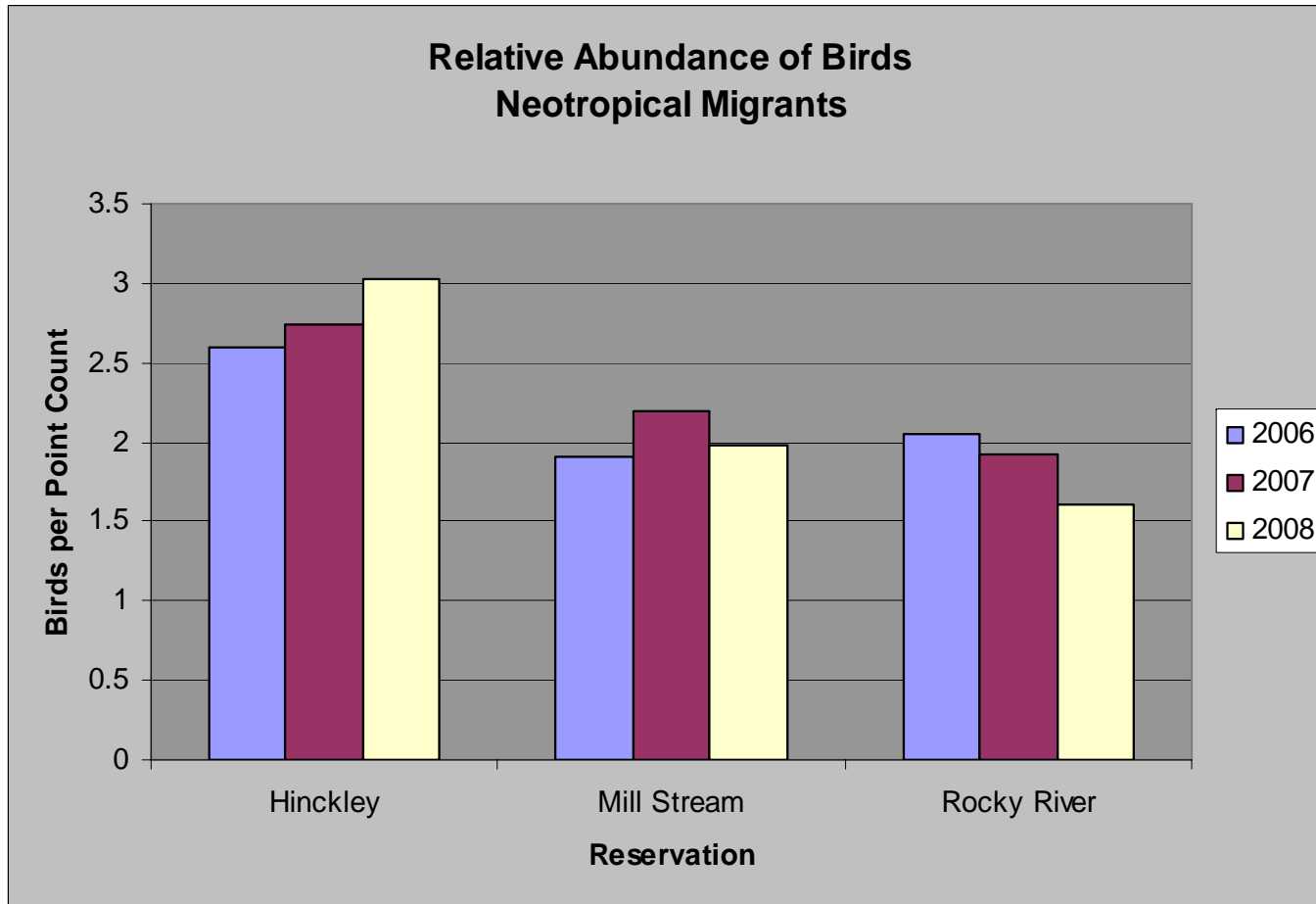
| Year | Reservation | Mean | Std Dev | Minimum | Maximum |
|------|-------------|------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2006 | Hinckley    | 14.0 | 3.5     | 7       | 23      |
|      | Mill Stream | 9.6  | 4.1     | 2       | 24      |
|      | Rocky River | 12.7 | 6.0     | 2       | 30      |
| 2007 | Hinckley    | 11.2 | 3.9     | 3       | 22      |
|      | Mill Stream | 12.0 | 5.4     | 1       | 28      |
|      | Rocky River | 12.9 | 5.9     | 4       | 34      |
| 2008 | Hinckley    | 14.0 | 5.0     | 5       | 28      |
|      | Mill Stream | 11.8 | 6.7     | 4       | 41      |
|      | Rocky River | 10.9 | 4.6     | 4       | 27      |

The variability of sightings among point counts is large ranging from 1 bird to 41 birds.



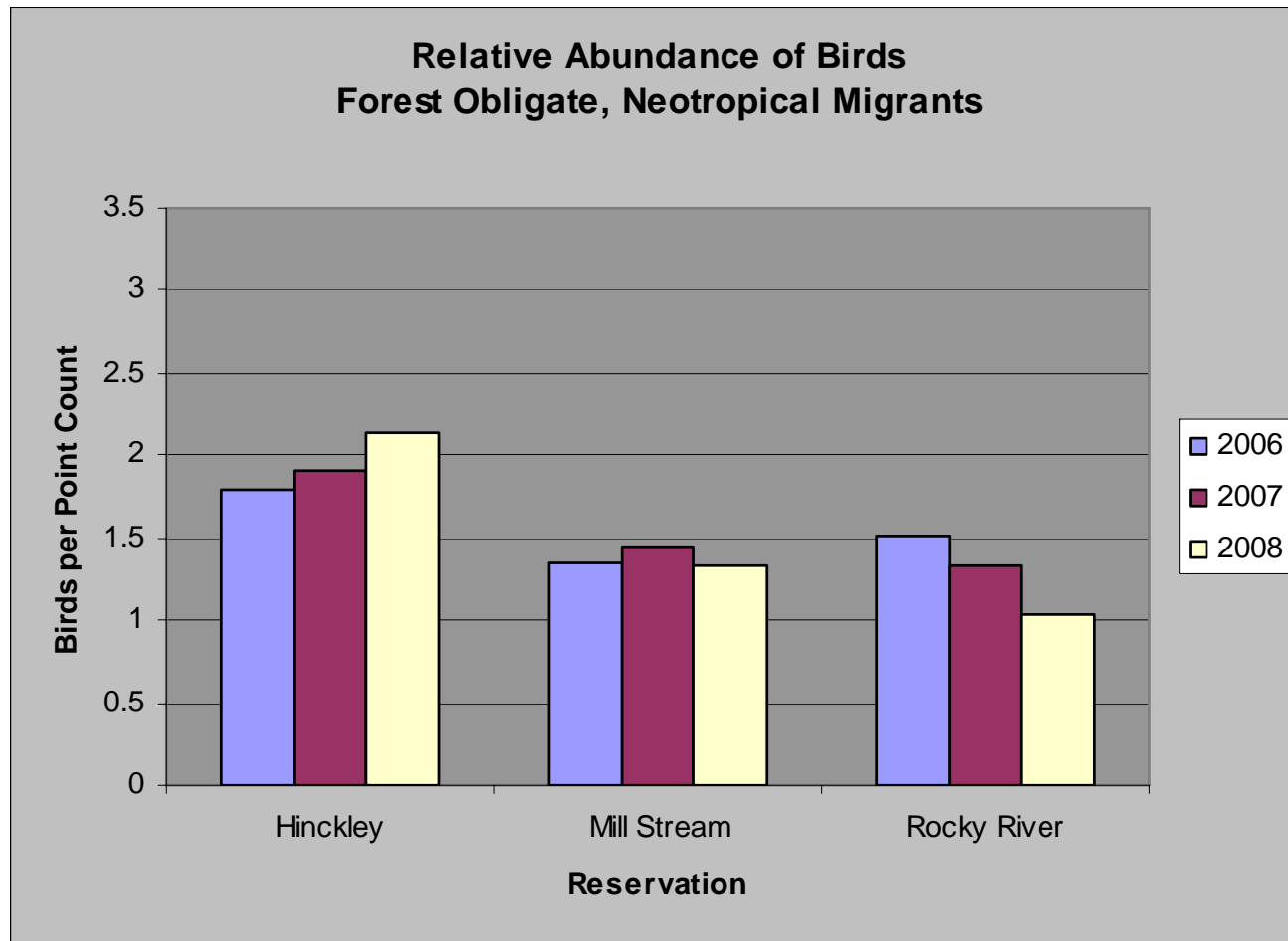
Hinckley Reservation has a higher frequency of birds counted that are sensitive to forest disturbance.

More intact forest at Hinckley with fewer edges.



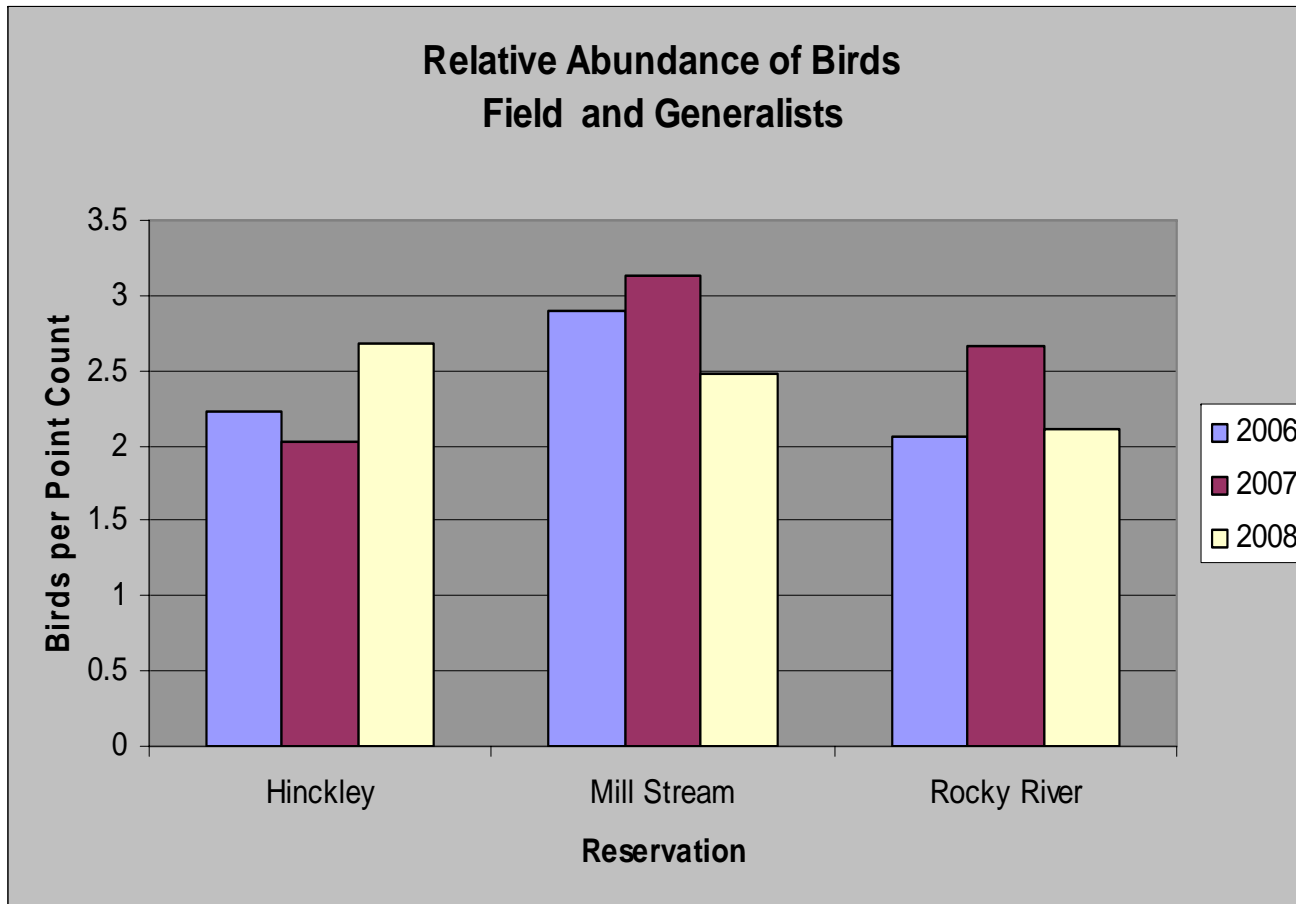
A higher frequency of neotropical migrant species, which include forest, field, and woodland species, were detected in Hinckley as well.



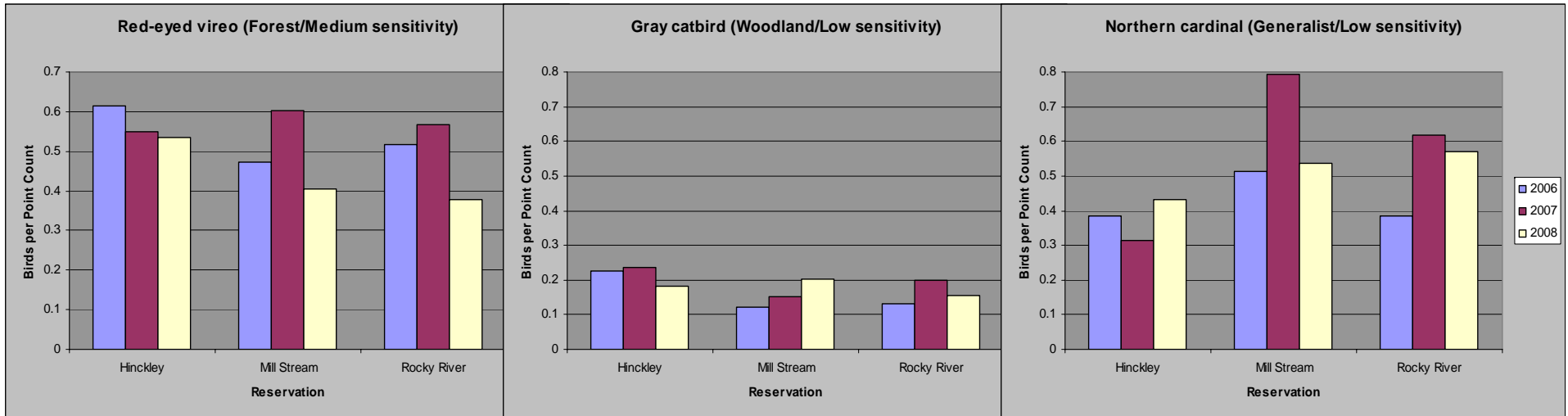
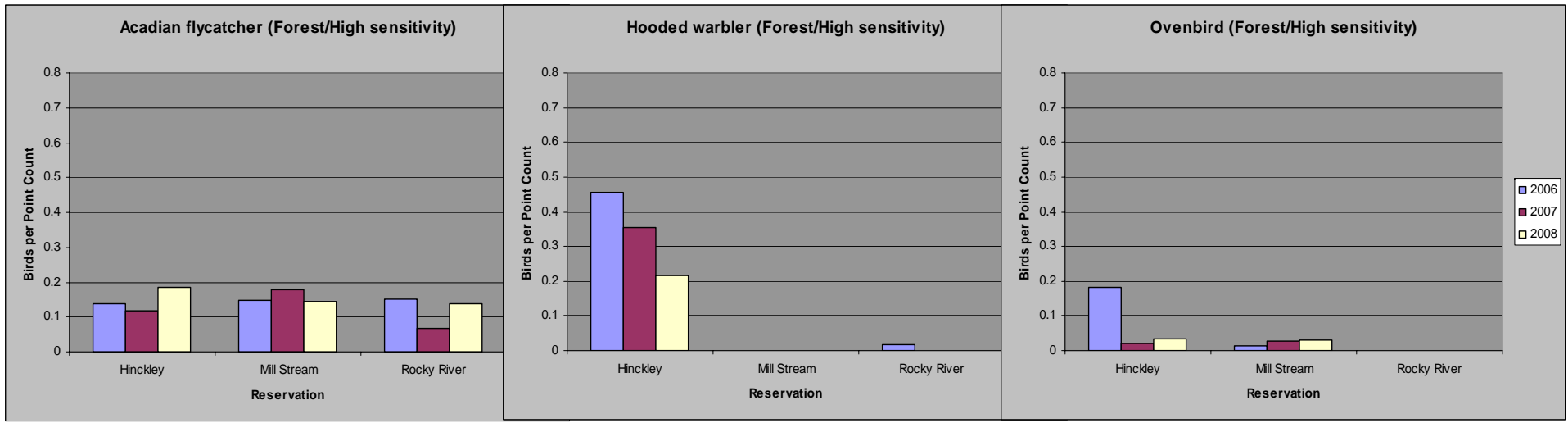


Of the neotropical migrants that are forest obligate species, more were detected in Hinckley Reservation.

More intact forest at Hinckley Reservation with fewer edges.



When looking at all birds including residents and migratory species, those that are generalists or prefer fields are found in generally equal numbers across reservations.



These charts show the relative abundance of six species found throughout the park district. They show that obligate forest species that are sensitive to disturbance are less frequent than other species. Of these, the Acadian flycatcher seems to be fairly stable in all three reservations, and the hooded warbler may be seeing some declines at Hinckley, but it is too early to tell much. It is very uncommon in MSR and RR probably because of the urban influence and smaller, less blocky forest. Red eyed vireos and cardinals are common and do well throughout the East Branch, apparently. Catbirds seem stable, and these numbers may be "normal" for them. "Normal" is difficult to define: for some species it may be that there aren't very many birds per count detected and there hasn't been for a while. The spikes probably mean nothing in the scheme of things - just typical variation.



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# Forest Bird Survey Project

## Recap of project goals

- Assist Cleveland Metroparks in their ongoing mission to identify tracts of land that are prime for acquisition in order to protect wildlife and habitat
- Assist other conservation entities in maintaining and protecting existing land for wildlife and habitat.



# Rocky River Important Bird Area

## Achievements

- WCAS published a Progress Report.
- Metroparks bought land.
- WCAS has completed 3 years of the survey.
- WCAS raised public awareness of the IBA.