

KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Fort Hays Kansas State College
Hays, Kansas 67601

Volume 3, No. 7
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Ten Best Birds of the Year -- 1975-76

Marvin Schwillling

Contestants were:

1. Saw-whet Owl - Dorothy Laird, Bob Cress, Dennis Ronsse & Gerald Wiens
2. Varied Thrush - David and Kent Seibel
3. Hermit Thrush - Roger Boyd
4. Cape May Warbler - Marvin Rolfs
5. Bewick's Wren - Marvin Rolfs
6. Curve-billed Thrasher - Marvin Rolfs
7. Rock Wren - Sebastian Patti
8. Cattle Egret - Bob Means
9. Hooded Warbler - Mary Louise Myers and Sebastian Patti
10. Evening Grosbeak - Rachel Haren
11. Western Grebe - Nanette Johnson and Jo Garrett
12. Western Grebe - Elizabeth Cole
13. Wood Duck - Allen Jahn
14. Snowy Owl - Allen Jahn
15. Black Phoebe - Tom Shane
16. Curlew Sandpiper - Ed Martinez
17. Black-necked Stilt (nesting) - Ed Martinez
18. Long-eared Owl - Steve Hickok
19. Western Bluebird - Christmas Count
20. Fulvous Tree Duck - Pratt
21. Red-breasted Nuthatch (carrying nesting material) - Marvin Schwillling
22. Cooper's Hawk (nesting) - Marvin Schwillling
23. Palm Warbler - Gene and Eulalia Lewis
24. Wood Stork - Pleasanton
25. Osprey - Kent D. Stucky
26. Ground Dove - Wilson County
27. Woodcock (nesting) - Woodson County, Jefferson County, Lyon County
28. Pine Warbler - Topeka
29. Inca Dove - Bethany College, November 13-14; Lindsborg - Dr. Glen Bellah
30. Inca Dove - Wichita Xmas count - Nathan & Geula McDonald - 11 November
31. Yellowthroated Warbler - Oxford, May 8, 1975 - Wallace Champeny
32. Pinyon Jay - Dodge City - all winter - Joan Challans

In choosing the top ten, consideration was given to previous state records or specimens, geographic location in state, season of sighting, nesting, etc., and just plain personal prejudice.

1. Black Phoebe Tom Shane Morton County

March 16 at Waterfowl Ponds 1 mile east of Point of Rocks - no specimens (no specimen from Okla.)

2. Western Bluebird Dan Kilby, Mike and Nancy Lesan Arkansas City

January 3 Christmas Count - no specimens

3. Wood Stork Frank Wood and Pleasanton
Ivan Sutton
July 17, also observed by many others. One specimen from Goodland and one sight record Cheyenne Bottoms.
4. Curlew Sandpiper Ed Martinez Great Bend
July 18-August 3. North side Pool 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms
5. Varied Thrush David & Kent Seibel Arkansas City
January 11, mature male (was No. 2 last year), Wallace Champeny
6. Curve-billed Thrasher Marvin Rolfs Hays
December 8-April 4. Captured and banded March 16. Good winter record. I believe only 2 previous records - one at Hays. Nesting south of Lakin (Non-migratory).
7. Cape May Warbler Marvin Rolfs Hays
May 14; listed as rare transient in east. 1 specimen
8. Black-necked Stilt Ed Martinez Great Bend
(nesting)
No date, flightless young. North edge Pool 1, Cheyenne Bottoms
9. Woodcock (nesting) Calvin Cink Jefferson Co.
Steven Clubine Woodson Co.
Jean Schulenberg Lyon Co.
May 28 - Jefferson County - 4 eggs; April 30 - Woodson County - two young; July - Lyon County.
10. Inca Dove Lindsborg (Bethany McPherson Co.
College) Dr. Glen Bellah
Nathan & Geula McDonald Wichita
November 13-14 - Dr. Glen Bellah; November 11 through Christmas - Nathan & Geula McDonald

Honorable Mention

1. Ground Dove Larry Houf and Chanute
Richard Hager
October 7 - Wilson State Fishing Lake - four previous records
2. Palm Warbler Gene and Eulalia Lewis Great Bend
Marvin Schwillling
November 22 - listed as uncommon transient in east - this date is about one month past previous fall records.

3. Yellow-throated Warbler Wallace Champeny Oxford
(May 8)
4. Hooded Warbler Mary Louise Myers and Towanyak
Sebastian Patti
- November 7 and May 9-12. Rare summer resident; November is a late date.
5. Pine Warbler Maurice Nuss and Topeka
Orville Rice
- May 15 - transient in east - one specimen
6. Fulvous Tree Duck Orville Rice Pleasanton
Richard Wettersten Pratt
- August 10 at Marais des Cygnes W.M.A. and April 20, 1976 - Fish and Game headquarters - Pratt
7. Saw-whet Owl Dorothy Laird, Bob Cress, Lyon County
Dennis Ronsse, Gerald Wiens
- Rare and irregular resident.
8. Western Grebe Nanette Johnson, Jo Perry Lake
Garrett & Bob Fisher Wyandotte Lake
Elizabeth Cole
9. Cooper's Hawk (nesting) Marvin Schwilling Barber County
- April 6, 1976 - just north of Elm Mills, Barber County (listed as uncommon resident in eastern 1/3 of state -- this is west of central).

Boat-tailed Grackles nesting in Kingman Co.

Two colonies were found on April 30, 1976, one within the Kingman Game area and the other (also on state land) one mile to the west. Both colonies were nesting in the heavy growth of sand bar willows at the shallow ends of young ponds. The nests were about two feet above the water which was about 30 inches deep.

The colony in the Kingman Game area had two males and two females with four nests on May 1. A single nest checked and photographed on May 17 had 4 eggs. I did not disturb the other nests. On June 1 all the birds (both colonies) were gone and the nests were either missing or in disrepair, so nesting was unsuccessful. Perhaps they will return next year. Marvin Schwilling tells me that the first year colony at Cheyenne Bottoms was unsuccessful. Byron Walker.

Dingus Natural Area - On 6 and 7 May 1976 we observed the following "new" species in the area: Solitary Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Bay-breasted Warbler, Ovenbird, Yellow Warbler and Savannah Sparrow (in field to east). John Zimmerman and Steve Fretwell.

Some unusual spring records from Cowley County
(continued from November)

Black-and-white Warbler: Although there are no nesting records for Cowley Co, this species may well be nesting here this year (1976). One was seen at the Chaplin Nature Center as late as 20 June.

Magnolia Warbler: One female was banded on 16 May and a female and two males were banded on 27 May 1976.

Cape May Warbler: One female was seen with a family of Carolina Chickadees on 16 May, feeding in cedars on the Southwestern Campus. It was called to close range by "squeaking" and was observed for several minutes. This is the second record for Cowley Co.

Blackburnian Warbler: One male was seen and heard singing on the Southwestern Campus, 16 May, in close association with a chickadee family.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: One male was seen on the Southwestern Campus, 14 May feeding in the tops of cedars with a family of chickadees and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. A male was netted at the banding station on 15 May. These are the 3rd and 4th co. records.

Palm Warbler: One seen at Tunnel Mill Park in Winfield on 2 May 1976 is the second record for Cowley Co.

MacGillivray's Warbler: A female banded on 29 May is the 4th Co. record.

Yellow-breasted Chat: Although commonly netted at Max Thompson's banding station during migration, there are no recent nesting records from Cowley Co. A pair may have nested at the Chaplin Nature Center this year, however, as one was seen and heard singing there on 20 June.

Wilson's Warbler: One banded on 27 May was 8 days beyond the usual departure date for Cowley Co.

Canada Warbler: A male was banded on 27 May.

David Seibel, 601 North 3rd St., Arkansas City, Kansas 67005.

SHORT NOTES

Parasitic Jaeger: One was observed at very close range on 1 November as it fed on a road-killed cottontail about 8 miles North of Garden City, FINNEY Co. The nearest sizable water area is Tennis Lake about 5 miles away. The jaeger was repeatedly flushed by passing traffic but continued to return to the cottontail. Marvin Schwilling and Al White.

Curve-billed Thrasher: One was seen in sandhills southwest of Lakin, KEARNY co. on 2 November. The only cholla in the area held two nests, apparently of this species. A pair had been identified here by Keith Baird about 2 years ago and the pair is apparently resident. If substantiated, this would be the first breeding in Kansas. Marvin Schwilling and Al White.

KOS SPRING MEETING

The KOS Spring Meeting will be held at Newton the weekend of April 30-May 1, 1977. Please mark these dates on your calendar and plan to attend. An interesting program is being planned. Dwight Platt, Bethel College, North Newton, 67117.

Aerial Waterfowl Survey -- Milford Reservoir

The aerial survey conducted in early November produced the following:

Mallard	11,500	Scaup (sp.)	384
Black Duck	1	Golden-eye	6
Gadwall	73	Canvasback	1
Green-winged Teal	3	mergansers	98
Shoveler	1	Coot	42
Wood Duck	2	grebes	100+
Pintail	2	White Pelican	5
Bufflehead	43	"dark" eagles	2

Reported by Celia White (by phone). Ed.

Potwin Community, Butler Co.

Illness and a death in the family caused me to miss both KOS meetings and most birding has been in our own back yard. An albino jay was noted in June. His peers did not take kindly to him and he was not seen after the third day. For the second year a Baltimore Oriole nested here and each year the nest was taken over by House Sparrows as soon as the young orioles were gone. A female grackle successfully raised three cowbirds and tended them for at least three days after fledging. After the Bicentennial week-end rains thousands of acres of Butler County were flooded. Five kingfishers spent considerable time in our yard.

The man of the house made four bluebird houses: 1 in our yard; 2 for farm families; 1 near a farm pond. Ours housed two broods of House Wrens, one a field mouse and two were not occupied. We use a starling distress call to keep starlings away from the martin house and feeder.

A pair of shrikes feeding young were observed by Lucy and David Langrell (avid birders from Wilmington, Delaware) on 26 August, 1½ miles east of Potwin. They also counted 17 pheasants along Missile Base Road on 29 Aug.

Our family now boasts FIVE generations of birders: Great-Great Grandmother Margaret (Wyandotte Co.); Great Grandmother Clare; Grandmother Jan (Cook Co., Illinois), Father Tim Guhr (Potwin) and Hannah Guhr (15 months who points and says "see" at almost every bird). Oh well, you can't start too young. Clare E. Redding, Box 138, Potwin 67128.

MORE SHORT NOTES

Yellow Rail: I saw one in a roadside ditch with heavy grass and water on October 17, 1976, east and south of Inman, McPherson Co. It was feeding and I watched it for 5 minutes and had a very good look at it. Allen Jahn.

Common Nighthawk: On September 5 a large flight of over 1000 nighthawks passed over Oberlin, Decatur Co. Also in the flight were Barn Swallows and Chimney Swifts. Ren Lohofener.

Mid-winter Bird Count

The official Christmas Bird Count period is Saturday December 18, 1976 through Sunday, January 2, 1977 inclusive. All KOS members are encouraged to participate in their local counts and all compilers are invited to send a copy of their results to me for inclusion in the March BULLETIN. We use the same official rules as the Nat. Aud. Soc. and many compilers merely send in a copy of their NAS report. I will send copies of KOS forms to all compilers who submitted counts last year. If you are a compiler and do not get a form soon, just write me or send a copy of your NAS report.

It takes at least one MONTH to get the Bulletin into the mail after all material has been received so we're setting a deadline of JANUARY 22. We would also like to include information on some of the unusual birds outside the count period. Have you ever wondered what happened to some of the unusual birds that turn up on Christmas counts? How long they stay? Whether they survive the winter, etc. If you get any such observations please send them in and they will be included in the March Bulletin and later Newsletters.

MORE SHORT NOTES

Whooping Crane: At least 7 were seen in northcentral Kansas during the opening weekend of duck season. Four were seen near Paradise, Russell Co. on 22 October. Newspapers reported seven at Kirwin Reservoir and 3 near Oberlin about the same time. The latest tally for the species is 66 birds in the Texas flock and 6 in the New Mexico (transplant) flock. C. Ely.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: I saw 2 in the area sometimes referred to as Tuttle Bottoms off hgw 77. They were quite close and reminded me of a turtle dove with long legs. Dave Ranney, Seneca.

Great-tailed Grackle: First report from Riley Co. No more than 2 males were observed at any one time at the feedlot north of the main KSU campus. First seen on 2 May and present throughout May. John Zimmerman.

Pinon Jay: Two birds were storing grasshoppers in crevices of trees in the Leoti city park, WICHITA co. on November 18. Marvin Schwilling also reports that one is wintering in Pratt. Charles Ely & Ren Lohofener.

Snowy Owl: A dark bird was seen near the Wakefield arboretum, Geary Co. on 5 November. This is the first Kansas report for the year. Celia White.

Scoters: An adult male Common Scoter was on the KFFGC ponds at Pratt from 20 October through 5 November; a juvenal Surf Scoter was present from 29-31 October. Marvin Schwilling.

of Jim Myers

The many friends/will be pleased to hear that he is now home and recuperating after major surgery. He is out of danger and is concentrating on recovering the 22 pounds lost while ill. Mary Louise reports no influx of birds of any kind at Towanyak. It seems to us this is just as well -- she is busy enough as it is.

The next Newsletter will appear in January -- please send in your news and observations by 15 January. Renne Lohofener, FHKSC, Hays 67601.