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MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT FOR 1970

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Twenty-one mid-winter bird counts were taken by members of the Kansas Ornithological Society between 19 December 1970 and 10 January 1971. Coverage was about average for the past ten years. The total number of individuals reported (1,032,744), though less than half of the 1969 total, is nevertheless the second highest count on record. Again the high number was due largely to the presence of large blackbird flocks. Over 775,000 blackbirds of various species were recorded at Baxter Springs and over 20,000 starlings were seen at Junction City.

The total number of species recorded (119) exceeds the average for the last ten years but is seven less than last year. Three species were reported on the mid-winter count for the first time: Saw-whet Owl (Wichita), Scrub Jay (Dodge City), and Black-throated Green Warbler (Udall). A fourth species, Cape May Warbler, was also present at Udall during the count period. Wichita reported the greatest number of species (81) and the largest number of unusual species.

Two species reported without supporting details are listed as questionable in Table 1. Several other species were omitted from the count summary because of their unusual nature and lack of convincing evidence. Among these were the Swainson's Hawk (Emporia, Wichita), Northern Shrike (Fostoria), Sharp-tailed Sparrow (Great Bend), and Chipping Sparrow (Great Bend, Wichita). Four Emporia observers (led by Roger Boyd) observed what they unanimously called a black phase Swainson's Hawk. The winter status of this species remains uncertain and special effort should be made to confirm the identity of these questionable birds. Sight records must, however, be accepted with great caution because of the great variability of plumages of wintering Kansas *Buteos*.

Most counts reported little open water producing a sharp decrease in the number and variety of ducks and shorebirds. Few northern finches were reported and there was no confirmed sighting of Northern Shrikes. Sparrows (except for the White-crowned) were generally more numerous than last year as were House Finches (Dodge City) and American Goldfinches. Red-breasted Nuthatches, Cedar Waxwings and Myrtle Warblers (only 2 seen) were scarce.

Among the more unusual or interesting sightings for Kansas mid-winter counts were the following:

Oldsquaw (Wichita). Last reported at Kansas City in 1964.

Harlan's Hawk. Sightings are included in Table 1 under Red-tailed Hawk. Birds were reported from Baldwin (3), Dodge City (1), Manhattan (1), and Wichita (3). They were also reported during the count period at Emporia and Great Bend.

Least Sandpiper (Wichita). One was reported without details.

Saw-whet Owl (Wichita). New for the count. One reported was without details.

Scrub Jay (Dodge City). New for the count. One bird was seen in Dodge City on several occasions between 30 December and 9 January by several people including Mrs. Joan Challans.

Long-billed Marsh Wren (Emporia). One was reported by James H. Shields in undergrowth of a wooded ravine near a stream.

Water Pipit (Junction City). One was seen by Tom Shane and Celia White along an open underflow ditch below Milford Dam.

Black-throated Green Warbler (Udall). New for the count. One was present from 16 December until the first week of January (M. C. Thompson).

Cape May Warbler (Udall). Not seen on count day but present in area from 16 December to 28 January (M. C. Thompson).

Evening Grosbeak (Junction City, Udall). Apparently a small influx this year (also at Dodge City and Hays). Last reported on the count in 1967.

Le Conte's Sparrow (Baldwin). Three birds seen; reported from Baldwin for the second consecutive year.

Savannah Sparrow (Topeka). One seen in the bluestem hills SW of Topeka by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Jackson.

Baldwin City (15-mile circle, center junction of highways 56 and 59, Douglas County). December 28; 30 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.); open country 25%, brushland 30%, woodland 25%, lakes 15%, town 5%; temperature 19–34°F; wind E at 5 mph; partly cloudy; lakes partly frozen; miles: 143 by car, 14 on foot; 19 observers in 4 parties: Mrs. Mervin Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. I. L. Boyd, Roger Boyd, Craig Brown, Susan Davidson, David Embry, Mrs. Marshall Faulh, David Ford, Katherine Kelley, Mrs. Marno McKaughan, R. F. Miller, Victor Nelson, Mike Nutt, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Pressgrove, Mrs. Arlene Warren, Phyllis Whittier, and Amelia J. Betts (compiler).

Baxter Springs (15-mile circle, center Baxter Springs airport, Cherokee County). December 27; 8 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); open grassland 25%, cultivated field and roadside 25%, brush 25%, lake 20%, woodland 5%, temperature 28–44°F; no wind; cloud cover 75%; no snow cover; lacustrine water 20% open; miles: 40 by car, 7 on foot; 1 observer in 1 party: James D. Rising (compiler).

Camp Naish (500 acre reservation, 3 miles E Bonner Springs, Wyandotte County). December 30; 6 party-hours (8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.); open grassland 10%, brush 30%, woodland 55%, lakes, streams, and rivers 5%; temperature 35–49°F; wind S at 5 mph; cloudy to partly cloudy in a.m., cloudy in p.m.; precipitation 0.3"; miles: 2 by car, 15 on foot; 6 observers in 2 parties: Byron Berger, Becky Hixon, Ed Crumet, Craig Duncan, Kathy Schott, and Stan Roth (compiler).

Coffey-Lyon Counties (15-mile circle, center midway between Hartford, Kansas and John Redmond Reservoir). December 19; 41 party-hours (7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); grassland 35%, cultivated fields 35%, wooded areas 25%, open water 5%; temperature 20–30°F; wind NNW at 10–15 mph; no snow cover; miles: 86 by car, 20 on foot; 4 observers in 1 party: C. W. Comer, Marc Marcellus, Lyle Stemmerman, and Edward Ryan (compiler).

Dodge City (15-mile circle, center 2 miles E St. Mary of the Plains College in Dodge City to include Duck Creek to 5 miles N, Ford County Park and Lake, Arkansas River, Good Samaritan Home Grounds, St. Anthony Grounds, cemetery, townsite of Dodge City, and 5 shelter belts). December 29; 24 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); fields and pastures 62%, wooded areas 30%, farmyards 3%, town 5%; temperature 24–51°F; wind SW to S at 5–15 mph; clear to partly cloudy; no snow cover; waters mostly frozen; miles: 229 by car, 16 on foot; 7 observers in 3 parties: Maurice Bleumer, Duane Boyd, Joyce Davis, Kenneth Dick, Bob Lampe, Caroline Shultz, and Joan Challans (compiler).

Ellis County (15-mile circle, center Hays to include Fort Hays State campus and Farm, Big Creek, Smoky Hill River, Rohr-Jacobs Lake, Harold Kraus Farm, Fort Hays Experiment Station). December 28; 8.5 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); fields and prairies 50%, flood plain forest 35%, swamps 5%, institutions and towns 10%; temperature 17–44°F; wind NW at 5–10 mph; cloudy in a.m., clear in p.m.; most waters frozen; river open; miles: 35 by car, 6 on foot; 4 observers in 1 party: Mrs. Richard Mermis, Marvin Rolfs, Miss Jean Stouffer, and G. W. Tomanek (compiler).

Emporia (15-mile circle, center 1 mile S Lang, to include Emporia, Neosho Rapids, Lyon County State Lake, NW corner of John Redmond Reservoir). December 26; 66.5 party-hours (5:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.); pastures and cultivated fields 60%, deciduous stream margin woodlands 25%, streams and ponds 10%, residential 5%; temperature 20–45°F; wind W at 5–15 mph; sky clear; patches of snow; all standing water frozen except Lyon County State Lake; miles: 661 by car, 37 on foot; 21 observers in 8 parties: Walter Boles, Jan Boyd, Roger Boyd, Linda Brandley, Teresa Brandley, Dori Comer, Jeffery Comer, Stephen Comer, Henry Davison, Beth Dayton, Alice Emerson, Anne Emerson, Dan Larson, Gil Leisman, Marie Leisman, Ronda Parks, Ed Schulenberg, Jean Schulenberg, Margaret Schulenberg, James Shields, and C. W. Comer (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: American Widgeon, Redhead, Townsend's Solitaire, Cedar Waxwing.

Fostoria (Fostoria, NW to Blue River in Pottawatomie County). January 1; 8 party-hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); open grassland 50%, cultivated field 13%, brush 30%, woodland 6%, lake and river 1%; temperature 30–40°F; wind NW at 15 mph; clear until 2:00 p.m. then partly cloudy; snow cover 100%; ponds frozen; miles: 43 by car, 2 on foot; 7 observers in 2 parties: Mrs. Florence Gould, Mrs. Reid Green, Bernard Plummer, Rowena Plummer, Howard Webster, and Eunice Webster and Mabel Willis (compilers). Additional species seen in count period: Ring-necked Pheasant.

Great Bend (15-mile circle, center at Barton County Community Junior College including Cheyenne Bottoms Waterfowl Management Area, Arkansas River, Walnut Creek and Great Bend). December 27; 30 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); open grassland 10%, cultivated fields 30%, brush 20%, woodland 10%, lake and river 30%; temperature 24-43°F; wind N to NW at 0-10 mph; 0-5% cloud cover; no snow cover; water areas 80% ice cover; miles: 132 by car, 9 on foot; 14 observers in 4 parties: Barbara Brown, Charlie Brown, Chuck Davis, Edmund Martinez, Mary Martinez, L. O. Nossaman, Sherman Nystrom, Bob Schmidt, Bill Thornton, Shirley Thornton, Garth Thornton, Lance Thornton, Shawn Thornton, and Marvin Schwillig (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Golden-crowned Kinglet, Common Grackle, Common Goldeneye.

Halstead-Newton (15-mile circle, center 5½ miles NE Halstead to include Little Arkansas River, Sand Creek, Sand Prairie Natural History Reservation, and Harvey County Park). December 27; 40.5 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); hedgerows and farmlands 49.4%, woodland and wooded streams 34.3%, prairie and pastures .1%, shrubby prairie and pasture 8.8%, and farmyards, towns and cemeteries 6.6%; temperature 24-40°F; wind S at 0-10 mph; cloudy in a.m., partly cloudy in p.m.; no snow cover; ponds frozen; rivers mostly open; miles: 246 by car, 19 on foot; 18 observers in 5 parties: Darlene Auernheimer, Douglas Auernheimer, Roy Auernheimer, Myrtle Buckley, Ruby Buckley, Mrs. Walton Goode, Paul Jantzen, Pete Jantzen, Leona Krebil, Robert Regier, Steve Regier, Ruth Rose, Alma Ruth, Bill Stein, Milly Stein, Brian Warkentin, Joe Yoder, and Stan Senner (compiler).

Junction City (15-mile circle, center I-70 roadside park W Junction City). January 10; 23 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); deciduous woods 20%, grassland 30%, evergreen woods 5%, cultivated fields 35%, lake and stream 10%; temperature 25-35°F; wind NE at 15 mph; 100% snow cover; partly cloudy; miles: 170 by car, 4 on foot; 9 observers in 5 parties: Ed Dailey, Jo Dailey, Margaret Fechner, Bruce Mills, Stephen Mills, Norma Peterson, Ed Verbeke, Celia White, and Bob LaShelle (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Prairie Chicken, Ring-necked Pheasant, Brown Creeper.

Kingman (15-mile circle, center Kingman County Game Management Area, Penalosa). December 27; 8 party-hours (7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); open grasslands 70%, cultivated fields 2%, brush 8%, woodland 10%, lake or river 10%; temperature 18-43°F; wind S at 5-8 mph; lake 90% frozen; no snow cover; partly cloudy; miles: 29 by car, 7 on foot; 8 observers in 1 party: Walter E. Boles, Douglas J. Caywood, C. W. Comer, Dan Larson, Charley L. Shoemaker, Danny Walker, June J. Walker, and Bryon Walker (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Gadwall, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Herring Gull, Rusty Blackbird.

Lawrence (Douglas, Jefferson, and Leavenworth Counties, 15-mile circle, center on National Guard Armory, 2nd and Iowa Street). December 29; 63 party-hours (7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); open grasslands 15%, cultivated fields 10%, brush 20%, woodland 40%, lakes and river 15%; temperature 18-44°F; wind less than 3 mph; clear; miles: 225 by car, 46 on foot; 42 observers in 10 parties: M. Anderson, W. Balfour, B. Berger, J. Bishop, A. Bjelland, I. Boyd, R. Boyd, M. Cain, B. and H. Chewing, C. Clinton, C. Coleman, H. Downing, C. Duncan, M. Faulh, C. Fitch, H. Fitch, H. Garrett, J. Gilmore, E. and M. Hall, B. Hickson, K. Kelley, R. Klataske, A. Martin, E. Martin, L. Martin, M. and R. Mengel, F. Meyer, K. Nelson, T. Nomitsky, J. and R. Paddock, J. Paddock, S. Roth, H. Sherman, S. Sturgeon, B. and M. Trillich, D. Trillich, E. Turney, and R. Faulh (compiler).

Linn County (15-mile circle, center 1¼ miles E, 3 miles N of Mound City Post Office). December 26; 18.5 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); wooded streams and lakes 55%, fields and brushy fence rows 45%; temperature 21-41°F; wind SW at 10 mph; open ground; ponds and lakes partly frozen; streams running; miles: 168 by car, 7 on foot; 8 observers in 3 parties: Elva Bacon, Julius Bacon, Cecil Boots, Margaret Boots, Mabel Concannon, Ivan Sutton, Frank Wood, and T. T. Concannon (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Common Merganser, American Coot, Killdeer, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Manhattan (15-mile circle, center Kansas State University campus). January 2; 51 party-hours (7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); grassland 35%, forest edge 35%, lakes and rivers 10%, deciduous forest 10%, cultivated fields 5%, towns 5%; temperature 32-40°F; wind NE at 10-15 mph; overcast; no snow; most waters open; miles: 391 by car, 45 on foot; 35 observers in 5 parties: B. Bergstresser, M. Border, Curt Buchanan, D. Coppersmith, M. Den, S. Den, M. Davidson, B. Edmunds, L. K. Edmunds, T. Edmunds, B. Finney, S. Fretwell, K. Geyer, H. T. Gier, M. Gier, W. Howard, L. B. Johnson, R. Kowal, Eugene Lewis, Eulalia Lewis, M. B. Mulhollan, P. Mulhollan, K. Poling, L. R. Quinlan, M. Quinlan, L. Schwab, C. Smith, G. Smurthwaite, M. Swegle, J. L. Tatschl, S. Williamson, J. Wittwer, P. E. Zimmerman, S. J. Zimmerman, and J. L. Zimmerman (compiler).

Marion (15-mile circle, center Court House Square, Marion, Marion County). January 1; 8 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); openfield 5%, brush and timber 45%, stream and lake 50%; temperature 38-55°F; wind S at 15 mph; cloud cover 5%; no snow cover; no frozen water; miles: 52 by car, 3 on foot; 1 observer in 1 party: Eugene Enos (compiler).

Olathe (15-mile circle, center at intersection US-50-56 and K-7, to include Mill Creek, Cedar Creek, Gardner Lake, Lake Olathe, and Saddle Club Lake). January 2; 20 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); grassland 15%, cultivated fields 35%, deciduous woods 15%, lakes and streams 10%, town 5%, brush 20%; temperature 18-30°F; wind NW at 5-10 mph; clear in a.m., cloudy in p.m.; ground frozen; most waters frozen; miles: 156 by car, 14 on foot; 13 observers in 3 parties: Dennis Ammerman, Ivan L. Boyd, Margaret Boyd, James Bradley, Gene Crane, David Embrey, David Ford, Ethel Howler, Katharine Kelley, Christine McGavran, Joseph Sanders, Ray Wackley, and Dean Crane (compiler).

	Baldwin City	Baxter Springs Camp	Relish	Coffee- Lyon Cos.	Dodge City	Ellis Co.	Emporia	Postoria	Great Bend	Halstead- Newton	Junction City	Kingman	Lawrence	Linn Co.	Manhattan	Marion	Osage	Pittsburg	Topeka	Udall	Wichita	Total
Pied-billed Grebe						1													3	3	5	14
Great Blue Heron							2		2													9
Canada Goose			1,500				350		9,852		75			100	1,180				2	6	41	13,112
White-fronted Goose								21	23													2
Snow Goose	300		3,000																			3,300
Mallard	110	9	1,000			3	2,078	35	5,586	238	4,019	210	6	2,500	2,355	132	13		651	2,700	495	22,136
Black Duck																						2
Gadwall									12						48							145
Pintail						1			272						1							5
Green-winged Teal	1		35				1		302		5	9		3								230
Blue-winged Teal (?)															50		32					455
Shoveler									4													4
American Widgeon								2	110		2				12						2	203
Wood Duck																						4
Redhead									3		1				8				17			48
Ring-necked Duck											5				47							75
Canvasback										1	9				6				6			30
Lesser Scaup							2				3								6			13
Common Goldeneye							8				9	6			20				21	1	6	72
Bufflehead																			1			3
Old Squaw																						1
Duck sp.	150							2,000														2,150
Hooded Merganser										5									2			7
Common Merganser			1,500						153		65	1	16		97				150			1,993
Goshawk													3									1
Sharp-shinned Hawk													1		1							10
Coeper's Hawk										1												6
Red-tailed Hawk	71	9	10	5	6	60	16	12	21	33	5	62	46	38	5	35		8	74	50	48	5
Red-shouldered Hawk															2							13
Rough-legged Hawk	2	1		25	15	6	7	28			2	6	8	4								614
Ferruginous Hawk				1	2			3			2										2	113
Butec sp.						5	4			9												12
Golden Eagle				1	4			1														18
Bald Eagle			5	6	2	1		11			1	3	3	4								7
Marsh Hawk	19	1	9	21	5	58	10	34	14	17	9	58	30	21	2	9	2	15	34	14		36
Prairie Falcon				3				7	1		1											382
Sparrow Hawk	15	7	2	21	1	16	9	6	10	9	6	25	12	31	5	8	1	22	18	19		13
St. Prairie Chicken						65	1													14		80
Bobwhite	34	3	19	24	45	30	134	40	14	80	65	10	110	30	240	16	16	9	67	145	42	1,173
Ring-necked Pheasant					33	2				68	13				4	6						10
American Coot						8																173
Killdeer		15								1	6				3				1			64
Common Snipe	3					3	1				3			1	1							43
Least Sandpiper																						22
Herring Gull		1						3							4							1
Ring-billed Gull		39	250					23					92		72							13
Rock Dove		19	24		77	146	5	3	61	46	7	323		157	8	9	4	268	176	322		652
Mourning Dove	75		32	55			18	101	6	14	14	5	179	9	201	2	4	2	8	74	50	1,705
Barn Owl				2					2													4
Screech Owl	1			1				2	1						3							2
Great Horned Owl	6	2	2	3	7	5	12	1	9	1	2	7	8	2	8	2	5	2	1	8	4	12
Barred Owl		1		1				4			1	1	2	1								97
Long-eared Owl																						13
Short-eared Owl				1				3		12	1				5							5
Saw-whet Owl (?)																						29
Belted Kingfisher	6	2		1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	2		24	3			4	6	5	65
Yellow-shafted Flicker	40	10	5	18	7	2	75	57	5	16	22	8	72	20	68	4	13	18	33	44	15	552
Red-shafted Flicker				1	5	2	5	1	5	3	5	4	3		14				5	4	7	64
Flicker sp.																						5
Red-headed Woodpecker	72	3	1																			1
Pied-billed Woodpecker																						539
Red-headed Woodpecker	53	37	17	2			65	28	3	5	7	9	28	24	113	2	9	31	45	50		203
Yellow-bel. Sapsucker	5	1																				18
Hairy Woodpecker	9	3	4	3	2	2	11	10	4	5	5	25	5	16					6	13	11	139
Downy Woodpecker	71	15	12	14	3	5	53	10	4	24	9	6	90	13	86	5	32	13	32	23	20	540
Horned Lark	89			10	983	818	4,187	1	576	739	7	3	121	3	105	150	25	137	110	20		8,094
Blue Jay	104	51	35	50	3		106	29	5	69	21	13	86	48	191	14	29	76	98	116	82	1,226
Scrub Jay					1																	37
Black-billed Magpie					36	1																2,428
Common Crow	149	32	12	35	21	21	157	100	217	394	46	18	89	58	159	7	79	39	90	409	306	2,107
Black-capped Chickadee	153		37	75	93	36	337	67	24	79	62	34	314	74	333	6	85		153	85	60	2,223
Carolina Chickadee		59																		44		99
Tufted Titmouse	64	27	30	1			53	10		6	13	1	59	35	95		11	26	39	51	16	537
White-brstd. Nuthatch	10			5	1	2	18	7	3	2	6		9		45	1	2					126
Red-brstd. Nuthatch						3	2			1	8				2							20
Brown Creeper	3	8	1			1	7	2	1			6	1	10		1	6	9	7	3		66
Winter Wren			2	1			1				1				1							6
Bewick's Wren																						3
Carolina Wren	16	8	15	1			9	1			3		17	4	31		7	12	10	6	4	144
Long-billed Marsh Wren																						1
Mockingbird	17	9		1			16		1		1	1	22	13	6		14	5	5	8	5	125

Pittsburg (15-mile circle, center Kansas State College of Pittsburg). December 23; 27.5 party-hours (5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); fields and pastures 50%, brushy roadsides 25%, streamside woods 20%, strip pit areas 5%; temperature 21–35°F; wind NW at 12–25 mph; sky clear; soil moist, lightly frozen; streams moderately low and open; ponds moderately full with light ice; no snow cover; miles: 56 by car, 14½ on foot; 3 observers in 3 parties: Gladys C. Galligar, Theodore M. Sperry, and Mrs. Bessie Boso (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Sharp-shinned Hawk, Winter Wren.

Topeka (15-mile circle, center State Capitol Building, to include Kansas River, Shunganuga and Soldier Creeks, Lake Jivaro, Lake Shawnee, Lake Sherwood, Mt. Hope Cemetery, Menninger Foundation-West Campus, Gage Park, Municipal Airport). December 26; 28 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); urban 25%, farmland 30%, pastureland 25%, mixed woodland 15%, lakeshore 5%; temperature 21–45°F; wind E at 5 mph; sky clear; no snow cover; creeks frozen; lakes and Kansas River 50% open; miles: 287 by car, 14 on foot; 25 observers in 4 parties: Andrew L. Barber, Linden Barber, Peggy M. Barber, Kurt Buchanan, Ray Chancellor, Doris Copper-Smith, Marge Davidson, Ann Douglas, Edna Douglas, Mrs. Reid Green, Gwen Haegert, Phyllis Henney, Roger Hoffmaster, Howard P. Jackson, Linda Jackson, Mrs. Arnold Johnson, Eugene Lewis, Eulalia Lewis, Pearl Maus, Aubrey J. McCallum, June McCallum, Mark Pheasant, Raymond Serrano, Grace H. White, and Orville O. Rice (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Screech Owl, Barred Owl.

Udall-Winfield (15-mile circle, center on water tower at Winfield State Training School, Winfield, Kansas). December 19; 48 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); lakes 5%, river and streams 30%, pasture and open fields 65%; temperature 23–38°F; wind N at 5 mph; sky clear; ground wet; miles: 548 by car, 17 on foot; 16 observers in 6 parties: Wallace Champeny, Jeff Cox and brother, Floyd Dowell, Richard Hill, Ron Jones, Janice Laws, Kent Seibel and brother, N. H. White, Lena White, Agnes Williams, Phyllis Williams, Ross Williams, Donna Witt, and Max Thompson (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Myrtle Warbler, Cape May Warbler.

Wichita (15-mile circle, center confluence of Arkansas and Little Arkansas Rivers). December 26; 32 party-hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.); field 30%, brushland 10%, creeks, rivers and ponds 50%, woodland 10%; temperature 15–46°F; wind N at 2–10 mph; sky clear; most waters frozen; miles: 142 by car, 21 on foot; 21 observers in 4 parties: J. Walker Butin, Phil Butin, Rick Butin, Jane Cadwell, Terry Cadwell, Wallace Champeny, Jeffrey Cox, Leona Duncan, Don Ferguson, James Fisher, Ralph Geary, Larry Gray, Ken Kaufman, Dan Kilby, Pam Kilby, John Prather, Eddie Stegall, Savilla Stegall, Keith Tillotson, Ralph Wiley, and Kenneth Slaughter (compiler). Additional species seen in count period: Common Redpoll.

THE MISSISSIPPI KITE (*ICTINIA MISISSIPPIENSIS*)

DAVID SEIBEL

(David is a fourteen year old Jr. High student at Arkansas City. He has been intensely interested in birds for several years and plans to become an Ornithologist. His paper is presented here with minimum editing. Ed.)

My younger brother, Kent, and I found a Mississippi Kite nesting in our vicinity during the summer of 1970. The kite was first sighted around the last of May and next on June 12. We saw the adult and a young one (subadult, Ed.) on June 21, and on that day we found the nest. On June 23 they began incubating the egg. Every morning, while one sat on the nest, the other one got sticks and repaired the nest. The egg hatched on July 14, after three weeks (*sic*) of incubation.

Mississippi Kites are extremely brave, and on July 18 the female proved it by swooping at my head. On that day the young kite could first be seen above the edge of the nest. Every afternoon, until the young one was several weeks old, one of the parents spread out its wings and shaded the young one from the heat.

The young one was fed at an average of once every fifteen minutes. The main food was cicadas and Chimney Swifts. As far as I know, this is the first record of kites eating Chimney Swifts or birds of any kind. At first, they ate all but the head, wings, tail, and feet. They left these in one bunch, fastened together, with a few feathers on top.

Before eating the swifts they plucked most of the body feathers. The kites did not eat the Chimney Swifts on the wing. When eating other things, such as cicadas, they eat on the wing. They extend their talons down and out, bend down their head, and eat, looking up often. They fly in wide circles, about fifty feet in diameter, and glide, flapping their wings occasionally.

On July 24, six days after the young was first seen on the edge of the nest, it began to get pinfeathers. By July 28 its tail and wing feathers were almost fully developed, but the rest of its body was mainly downy. When it rained on the night of July 31, the parents sheltered the young. When it rained on August 9, they didn't shelter it.

By August 2, the young kite almost had the complete immature plumage. According to my observations, it takes two years for the Mississippi Kite to attain full adult plumage. In the immature plumage there are dark chestnut streaks down the breast, sides, and stomach and the back is dark grayish-brown. Above the eyes are light areas, the upper edge of these being fringed with tan, and the rest of the head is blue-gray. The tail is dark; almost black, with light bars across it. The second year plumage is like the adult plumage except for light bars on the underside of the tail. In the adult plumage the back is pearly gray, growing lighter going up, and the head is almost white. The under parts are light gray, much lighter than the back. The tail and wing tips are black. In the secondaries adjacent to the black primaries the color is sienna, and next to that is a little white, but these are visible only when it is flying at a certain angle. Underneath, the secondaries are noticeably lighter in color than the rest of the wings.

On August 8 and 14, a subadult kite, apparently the young from last year's nest flew up to the nest tree. It had been seen with one of the adults quite often before the nest was found, and apparently while one was building the nest the other was caring for the young one.

On August 8, twenty-five days after it hatched, the young kite flew to the ground and into a garage in the yard. It was trapped there by a cat so the owner chased out the cat and got Kent and me. We put it on a limb in the tree so that the parents could guard it. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon on August 8, since the young hadn't been fed in more than two hours, I climbed up on a ladder and fed it some hamburger meat, gave it some water, and then took some pictures of it. The parents fed it even when it was in the lower branches of the tree. It worked its way up by flying short distances and climbing some. On the morning of August 11, two days after it flew to the ground, it was back at the nest. This was a distance of approximately 30 feet.

Around noon on August 12, both adults came, apparently coaxing the young to fly. After a great amount of effort, the young took off and flew a while, getting better constantly, but having to flap its wings almost all the time. In a few days, however, it could soar fairly well, and before long it was almost as good as the adults. On August 13, the parents brought the young a live cicada, probably trying to teach it how to kill its own food, and it dropped it. They brought it several more and it killed every one of them.

The nest gradually wore down until it was nothing more than a tiny platform of sticks and straws because of the young one exercising its wings. It eventually blew down completely. The nest tree was cut down on September 4, and September 6 was the last time we saw them. The parents were still feeding the young one when they left.

Lesser Goldfinch in Kansas.—On 27 July 1970 Mrs. Chaplin observed a male Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*) sitting in a tree by her house on the Chaplin Wildlife Refuge 2¾ miles east and 2 miles south of Geuda Springs, Cowley County, Kansas. The refuge is located on the Arkansas River and is near the northerly penetration of oak woodland on the river. The male was observed again on the following dates: 28 and 30–31 July; 5, 8–9, 12, 14–15, 18 and 21 August. The identity was confirmed by Wallace Champeny on 31 July. On the above dates, the bird was at the bird bath and all identifying marks were seen at close range. The male was joined by a female on 15 August and was seen with him on the eighteenth and twenty-first. On 21 August, the female was seen carrying nesting material. The birds were not seen after 21 August and it is not known whether the pair actually nested. A male was previously seen on the Chaplin Wildlife Refuge for ten days in August 1960.

This, the first record for Kansas, is not unexpected. The unusual aspect is that it was observed so far east rather than in southwestern Kansas near its usual breeding area. Sutton (Oklahoma Birds, Norman, pp. 595-596, 1967) lists Oklahoma records only from the panhandle and the southwest corner of the State. The only breeding records are from Kenton, Cimarron County. Bailey and Niedrach (The Birds of Colorado, Denver, p. 780, 1965) do not list it as occurring in southeastern Colorado.

This sighting should be added to the hypothetical list until confirming specimens or photographs are obtained.—MAX C. THOMPSON, *Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas 67156* and HAZEL CHAPLIN, R.R. 1, *Arkansas City, Kansas 67005*.

Yellow-throated Warbler in Lyon County, Kansas.—On 13 April 1970 I noted a lone Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*) actively moving about in the upper branches of several kinds of deciduous trees not yet leafed out within the city of Emporia. After observing the bird for some minutes, I left the area but returned a short time later and collected it—the first specimen of its kind recorded for east-central Kansas.

The specimen (in Kansas State Teachers College collection) proved to be a male (weight 11.0 g., largest testis 3.5 × 3.5 mm). I had nearly mistaken the bird for Audubon's Warbler (*Dendroica auduboni*) not only because of its yellow throat but because of the early date. Even the early migrating warblers had not yet arrived in force in Emporia.

Evidently this warbler was observed by Goss on several occasions at Neosho Falls, Woodson County, during spring and summer months of the past century. Whether it still occurs there is not known. Observers in recent times have been searching for the species along the Spring River in extreme southeastern Kansas where the first two State specimens were collected so recently as 18 May 1968 (Rising and Niles, *Kansas Ornith. Soc. Bull.*, 20:7-8, 1969).—DAVID F. PARMELEE, *Department of Ecology and Behavioral Biology, James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455*.

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