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### MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT FOR 1974

Charles A. Ely

The 1973-1974 Kansas mid-winter count was a memorable one in many respects. Kansas Ornithological Society members made a record 26 counts between 15 December 1973 and 8 January 1974. The total of 689,620 individuals exceeds all but the very high counts of 1969 through 1971 when large blackbird roosts were counted. This year, mild weather at the beginning of the count period produced more than 180,000 waterfowl of 24 species and a host of other "warm weather species". Northern invaders were low in numbers and scattered in distribution. Totals of no less than 53 species equaled or exceeded previous highs. Included were many waterfowl, ten hawks, seven woodpeckers and even the House Sparrow. Although some new highs were clearly attributable to weather, other highs are more likely due to the added counts (especially in western Kansas) and to more intensive coverage of old areas.

The 137 species officially accepted greatly exceeds the previous high of 128 (in 1971 and 1972) and at least seven species were reported for the first time: Black-crowned Night Heron and American Bittern (Quivira); Brant sp. (Elk City); Ross' Goose (Great Bend); White-winged Scoter (Kansas City); Ladder-backed Woodpecker and Sage Sparrow (Morton Co.). As in past years, reports of Swainson's Hawks (Quivira) and Chipping Sparrow (Wichita) were deleted. Also deleted due to lack of substantiating details were: Eastern Kingbird (Lawrence), Franklin's Gull and Rose-breasted Grosbeak (both at Wichita). Reports of Blue and Snow Geese are lumped as are the various races of Red-tailed Hawk. Both Kansas races of Common Flicker (Yellow-shafted and Red-shafted) and Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon and Slate-colored) are, however, listed separately in Table 1 and the species totals. Four additional species were recorded during the count period: Wood Duck (Emporia), Turkey (Morton Co.), Long-eared Owl (Great Bend), Dickcissel (Manhattan). The most abundant species was the Red-wing with about 245,000 individuals.

Emporia produced the high count with 85 species, closely followed by Manhattan with 83. The number of observers varied from 36 at Manhattan (10 parties) to one at Baxter Springs. At least 293 persons participated in the 1973-74 count. Lawrence had the most extensive coverage - from 3 a.m. to 7 p.m. Several groups used taped owl calls and Junction City and Winfield, using them for the first time, each obtained two of their three owl species in this manner.

Weather affected many counts. For example, the first scheduled Junction City count was held in a blizzard (45 species) so was repeated under better conditions and a more respectable 60 species. Much of the state had snow cover and sub-zero temperatures following the count period, with bird mortality reported from Hays and light mortality or major bird movements (chiefly robins) from other areas.

Black-crowned Night Heron. New for the count; three at Quivira N.W.R.

American Bittern. New for the count; four at Quivira.

Brant sp. New for the count; flock of 15 reported (no details) at Elk City Reservoir. Two seen earlier at Cheyenne Bottoms (Martinez).

Ross' Goose. New for the count; one at Cheyenne Bottoms and present several weeks.  
Snow Goose. The breakdown by color phase (blue first, snow second) was as follows: Baxter Springs (10:28); Coffey-Lyon (10:30); Elk City (4,000:8,000); Emporia (0:55); Great Bend (6:8); Lawrence (1:0); Linn County (0:3); Quivira (5:15).

White-winged Scoter. New for count; one well seen (on water and in flight) at Wyandotte County Lake by Kaul, Sink and Ziegler on 22 December.

Goshawk. Singles at Lawrence and McPherson (adult); seen after count period near Great Bend (18 January, Schwillig) and near Webster Reservoir (26 January, Rolfs).

Harlan's Hawk. Reported from Emporia (since 1 November); Kansas City (6), Lawrence, Manhattan, McPherson (count period), Topeka and Wichita (2).

Bald Eagle. Numbers almost doubled with most of the birds at Great Bend (23), Manhattan (17) and Quivira (61). Byron Walker reported 29 (16 adults) at Cheney Reservoir on 20 January. Cedar Bluff Reservoir has at least 30 with many adults.

Osprey. Reported for third year; first count record for Manhattan (2 birds).

Lesser Yellow-legs. Reported for second year; 10 at Quivira.

Snowy Owl. First seen at Cheyenne Bottoms on 17 December (Bartels) with a maximum of three on the 21st; at least one remained until early February.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker. New for count; male along Cimarron River north of Elkhart, Morton County by Sebastian Patti on 8 January.

White-necked Raven. Reported from Morton County (calls heard) and Goodland (not heard).

Northern Shrike. A single bird, carefully identified near Topeka.

Lark Sparrow. One seen and heard singing at Lawrence is one of our few winter records.

Sage Sparrow. New for the count. Six feeding at spilled grain along highway north of Elkhart on 8 January. Identification rechecked following day.

Baldwin City (as described 1973). December 27; 24 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.); brushland 30%, woods 30%, open country 20%, lake 10%, urban 10%; temperature 26-36°F; wind SW, 0-5 mph; lakes partly frozen, ground muddy, snow cover; miles: 142 by car, 13 on foot; 16 observers in 3 parties: Ivan and Margaret Boyd, Jan and Roger Boyd, E. R. Hall, John and Pat Jardon, Katharine Kelley, Marno McKaughan, Ray Miller, Barbara and Martin Pressgrove, Bobby Selzer, Muir Scultz, Mary Swan, and Amelia Betts (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Cooper's Hawk.

Baxter Springs (as described 1973). December 23; 9 party-hours (6:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.); cloud cover 95-75%; temperature 42-50°F; wind SSW, 3-10 mph; water 50% frozen, snow cover 1%; miles: 25 by car, 7 on foot; 1 observer: James Rising.

Camp Naish (as described 1973). January 6; 10 party-hours (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.); cloudy and snow flurries in a.m.; temperature 12-19°F; wind N, 6 mph; 5 inch snow cover; miles: 5 by car, 12 on foot; 5 observers in 1 party: Ray Ashton, Richard Gillerman, Marty Mills, Marc Thiry, and Stan Roth (compiler).

Coffey-Lyon Counties (as described 1973). December 27; 9 party-hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.); temperature 22-36°F; wind N, 5 mph; miles: 60 by car, 20 on foot; 4 observers in 1 party: Gilbert Leisman, Marc Marcellus, Philip Ryan, and Edward Ryan (compiler).

Dodge City (as described 1973). December 28; 22 party-hours (8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); temperature 22-49°F; wind SW, 2-3 mph; miles: 168 by car, 7 by foot; 6 observers in 3 parties and 5 feeder watchers: Joyce Davis, Hazel Moore, Julia Oehrle, Dora Renick, Carrolaine Shultz, Judy Young, and Joan Challans (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Townsend's Solitaire.

Elk City Reservoir (as described 1973). December 16; 9 party-hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); temperature 30-35°F; wind NW, 10-15 mph; miles: 26 by car; 2 observers in 1 party: Hilbert Albright, and Sylvia Albright (compiler).

Ellis County (as described 1973). December 15; 18 party-hours (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.); fog and low overcast in a.m., high overcast in p.m.; temperature 20-32°F; water open, 3-inch snow cover; miles: 150 by car, 10 on foot; 8 observers in 3 parties: Ken Brunson, Jeff Hart, Rick Hill, Marvin Rolfs, John Schukman, Larry Todd, Gerald Tomanek and Charles Ely (Compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker Mockingbird, Purple Finch, House Finch.

Emporia (as described 1973). December 16; 125 party-hours (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.); overcast to clear; temperature 9-28°F; wind N-NW, 4-20 mph; water partly open, no snow; miles: 766 by car, 78 on foot; 25 observers in 12 parties: Walter Boles, Alan Bosomworth, John and Ruth Breukelman, Stephen Fretwell, Larry Herbert, Barbara Johnson, Marvin Kuehn, Dorothy and Richard Laird, Jacob Miller, Don Redeker, Curtis and Winona Rhoades, Edward and Helen Ryan, Kathy Schott, Edward and Margaret Schulenberg, Thomas Shane, James Shields, Lisa Stevens, Bruce and Kathleen Tabor, and Jean Schulenberg (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Blue-winged Teal, Shoveler, Wood Duck, Common Grackle.

Fostoria (as described 1973). December 28; 8 party-hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.); clear to partly cloudy; temperature 30-32°F; wind SW, 5-8 mph; snow cover; miles: 43 by car, 1 on foot; 5 observers in 1 party: Florence Gould, Bernard and Rowena Plummer, Howard Webster, and Eunice Webster (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Greater Prairie Chicken, Brown Creeper, American Goldfinch.

Goodland (15-mile circle, center 7½ miles W Goodland). December 30; 7 party-hours (7 a.m. to 4 p.m.); streamside 40%, cultivated fields 35%, woodland 10%, residential 15%, overcast; wind NNW-NNE, 4-15 mph; intermittent snow, light in a.m., moderate in p.m.; water partly open, 1-5 inch snow cover, wild food crop good; miles: 63 by car, 1 on foot; five observers: Ronnie Barkley, Steve Cochran, Pam Gray, Kaye Smith, Wallace Welton, and John Palmquist (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Blue Jay, Robin, Cedar Waxwing.

Great Bend (as described 1973). December 22; 25 party-hours (8 a.m. to 10 p.m.); 70% thin cloud cover; temperature 33-50°F; wind NE, 0-5 mph; water areas 95% frozen, no snow cover; miles: 93 by car, 23 on foot; 11 observers in 3 parties: Nadine Amerine, Bruce Christiansen, Laurel Dirks, F. D. Forbes, Mickey Frownfelter, Paul Homes, Edmund Martinez, Larry Nossaman, Sherman Nystrom, Frank Robl, and Marvin Schwilling (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Lesser Scaup, Longeared Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Meadowlark, Song Sparrow.

Halstead-Newton (as described 1973). December 15; 51 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); woodland and wooded streams 40%, hedgerows and farmlands 30%, shrubby prairies and pastures 11%, prairies and pastures 7%, farmyards, towns and cemeteries 7%, marshes, ponds and rivers 5%; partly cloudy; temperature 23-34°F; wind NNE, 0-6 mph; rivers open, ponds mostly frozen; miles: 276 by car, 35 on foot; 23 observers in 6 parties: Roy Auernheimer, Vic Claassen, Thaine Dirks, Barbara Duerksen, Keith Funk, Lisa and Paul Jantzen, Peter Janzen, Bob Kruger, Mark Matthies, Jay Newton, Norman Pankratz, Kamala and Richard Platt, Robert and Steve Regier, Donald Stout, Myron, Nada and Warren Voth, Brian Warkentine, James Wulf, and Dwight Platt (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Bluebird, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin.

Junction City (as described 1973). January 6; 25 party-hours (5 a.m. to 7 p.m.); cultivated fields 30%, grassland 25%, water 25%, deciduous timber 15%, evergreen 5%; cloudy to clear; temperature 10-20°F; wind N, 10 mph; water 98% frozen, 4 inch snow cover; miles: 228 by car, 4 on foot; 8 observers in 3 parties: Lorena Combs, Jane Dundon, Steve Hickok, Avis Jackson, John LaShelle, Tom Shane, Celia White, and Robert LaShelle (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Pied-billed Grebe, Lesser Scaup, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Bobwhite, Herring Gull, Brown Thrasher.

Kansas City (as described 1973). December 22; 56 party-hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) includes 8 hrs. at feeders; clear; temperature 20-40°F; wind NW, 5-10 mph, water partly open; snow cover 0-1 inch; miles: 343 by car, 25 on foot; 21 observers in 7 parties and 1 feeder watcher: Steve Bugbee, Elizabeth Cole, John Ethridge, Robert Fisher, JoAnn Garrett, Harry Gregory, Nanette Johnson, Philip Kaul, Robert Lee, Mick McHugh, Robert Means, Ruth Michaels, Jim and Mary Louise Myers, Stan Nelson, Don Nepstad, Sebastain Patti, Dave Ranney, Walter Ross, Kevin Sink, Dewey Ziegler, and Jananne McNitt (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Shoveler, Redhead, Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Kingman (as described 1973). December 28; 9 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); woodland 60%, open grassland 30%, brush 5%, lake and river 3%, cultivated fields 2%; mostly cloudy; temperature 26-40°F; wind NE, 1-5 mph; miles: 28 by car, 7 on foot; 3 observers



in 1 party: Danny Walker, June Walker, and Byron Walker (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Common Goldeneye, Cooper's Hawk, Ring-billed Gull.

Lawrence (as described 1973). December 22; 69 party-hours (3 a.m. to 7 p.m.); temperature 27-34°F; wind S, 2 mph; miles: 443 by car, 37 on foot; 29 observers in 11 parties: Mary Allen, Ray Ashton family, Bert and Helen Chewning, Cynthia Clinton, David and Jan Conrad, Jeff Cox, Ken Davidson, Casey Fauhl, Andy Finrock, Cathy Fugen, Henry Fitch, Helen Garrett, Mary and Raymond Hall, Richard Johnston, Ethel Martin, Kathryn Nelson, Mark Ohlde, Jane and Jim Parker, Rachelle Rasing, Stanley Roth, Fred Sullivan, Mark Thiry, Polly Trillich, and Ruth Fauhl (compiler).

Linn County (as described 1973). December 22; 25 party-hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.); mostly clear in a.m., partly cloudy in p.m.; temperature 20-40°F; wind SE, 10-12 mph; miles: 186 by car, 6 on foot; 12 observers in 4 parties: Ivan and Margaret Boyd, Roger Boyd, Mabel Concannon, Lloyd Fox, Barbara and Martin Pressgrove, Ann and Donald Stuart, Ivan Sutton, Frank Wood, and T. T. Concannon (compiler).

Manhattan (as described 1973). December 22; 99 party-hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.); forest edge 70%, grassland 10%, lakes and rivers 10%, deciduous forest 5%, cultivated fields 3%, residential 2%; scattered clouds; temperature 27-47°F; wind S, 5-15 mph; water open, no snow cover; miles: 373 by car, 85 on foot; 36 observers in 10 parties: W. Boles, D. Bowen, P. Conway, David and Mathew Cox, K. Dericksen, L. K. Edmunds, P. Elliott, C. Ferguson, B. Finney, S. Fretwell, Mr. and Mrs. L. Fuller, S. Geist, Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Gier, Mr. and Mrs. J. Gifford, D. Goode, B. Johnson, B. Kruh, Dick and Erich Marzolf, N. Peck, M. Quinlan, T. Shane, C. Smith, J. Strickler, J. Strickler, Jr., P. Thompson, G. Ward, S. Williamson, P. Woolley, Paul and Stephen Zimmerman, and John Zimmerman (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Dickcissel.

McPherson (as described 1973). December 15; 24 party-hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.); temperature 20-26°F; wind N, 5-10 mph; miles: 162 by car, 4 on foot; 7 observers in 4 parties: Mrs. Harold Beam, Virginia Harris, Jeffry Jahn, Kenneth Lindblade, Victor Peterson, Kent Stucky, and Allen Jahn (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Harlan's Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Killdeer, Cedar Waxwing, Oregon Junco.

Morton County (15-mile circle, center 7 miles N, 2 miles E. Elkhart). January 8; 9 party-hours (9 a.m. to 7 p.m.); grassland and cultivated farms 85%, wooded flood plain 13%, ponds 1%, urban 1%; overcast with snow in a.m., clearing in p.m.; temperature 15-30°F; wind N, 15-35 mph; ponds frozen, 3 inch old snow; miles: 73 by car, 4 on foot; 3 observers in 1 party: Elizabeth Cole, Betty Ann Patti, and Sebastian Patti (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Sharp-shinned Hawk, Pigeon Hawk, Turkey, Common Crow, Townsend's Solitaire.

Olathe (as described 1973). December 29; 23 party-hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.); mostly clear in a.m., clearing p.m., temperature 20-35°F; wind N-NE, 1-5 mph; water open; wild food crop excellent; miles: 136 by car, 10 on foot; 13 observers in 3 parties: Ivan and Roger Boyd, Barbara Bradley, Dean and Mark Crane, Ethel Hower, Jean Hiersteiner, Katie Jensen, Christine McGavran, Robin Mills, Michael Perry, Martin Pressgrove, and James Bradley (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Screech Owl, Brown Creeper.

Pittsburg (as described 1973). December 29; 29 party-hours (7 a.m. to 6 p.m.); fields and pastures 70%, streamside woods 30%; temperature 29-46°F; wind N, 2-8 mph; miles: 28 by car, 12 on foot; 3 observers in 3 parties: Gladys Galligar, T. M. Sperry, and Bessie Boso (compiler).

Quivira (15-mile circle, center Quivira N.W.R. subheadquarters). December 17; 18 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.); mostly cloudy; temperature 25-40°F; wind S, 10-15 mph; miles: 73 by car; 3 observers in 2 parties: Wayne Dale, Charles Darling, and David Hefferman. Additional species seen during count period: Black Duck, Bufflehead, Goshawk, Cooper's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Mourning Dove.

Topeka (as described 1973). December 22; 83 party-hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.); parks 28%, cultivated fields 25%, woodland 19%, streamside 17%, residential 5%, pasture 4%, feed lots 2%; clear a.m., mostly clear p.m.; temperature 20-48°F; wind SSW, 5-15 mph;

water partly open, 0-1 inch snow cover, wild food crop good; miles: 364 by car, 56 on foot; 30 observers in 12 parties: Andy Barber, Mary and Virgil Basgall, Mary Brower, Rick Cotton, Arlene and Bob Delker, Bill Duke, Harriet Graham, Gwen Haegert, Phyllis Henney, Howard Jackson, Gene and Mareta James, Bob Lawson, Eugene and Eulalia Lewis, Gene and Virginia Lockhart, Ilene Mandelbaum, Woodie Maus, Aubrey and June McCallum, Ester Miller, Valery Stallbaumer, May Staward, Charlene Talbot, A. Q. Van Benschoten, Grace White, and Orville Rice (compiler). Additional species seen during count period: Gray Catbird, Myrtle Warbler, Western Meadowlark, Rufous-sided Towhee, White-throated Sparrow.

Udall-Winfield (as described 1973). December 27; 31 party-hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.); clear; temperature 23-43°F; wind N, 0-5 mph; water partly open, 0-5 inch snow cover; miles: 321 by car, 7 on foot; 10 observers in 4 parties: Janet Laws, Max Thompson, Donald Vannoy, Agnes and Ross Williams, Donna, Tammy and Vicki Wilt, Robert Wimmer, and Wallace Champeny (compiler).

Wichita (as described 1973). December 15; 39 party-hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.); clear in a.m.; mostly cloudy p.m.; temperature 23-36°F; wind NW, 0-12 mph; water partly open; miles: 175 by car, 21 on foot; 21 observers in 4 parties: Walter Broderson, John Lucy, Phil and Walker Butin, James Fisher, Susan Jehle, Ron Klatske, Mike and Nancy Lesan, Glen and Vivian Roberts, Kenneth Slaughter, Eddie and Savilla Stegall, Keith Tillotson, Durward Tucker, Donald and Fran Vannoy, Ralph Wiley, and Wallace Champeny (compiler).

**Morton County Distributional Notes.** - - I made three and four day visits to Morton County, Kansas, in June and August, 1972 and in January, May and July, 1973. The following observations supplement published data for several species:

Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) - - Jananne McNitt, Ross Silcock, (Raleigh, N. C.) and I observed a single sub-adult at a waterfowl pond about 7 miles north, and 1 mile west of Elkhart on 13 July, 1973. This is apparently the second Morton County record (Graber and Graber, Trans. Kans. Acad. Sci., 54:147, 1951) and one of the few for southwestern Kansas.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia misisippiensis*) - - The expansion of this species in Kansas has been nothing short of remarkable. In 1950, Richard and Jean Graber noted the species only once (along the Arkansas River near Syracuse, Hamilton County) during their lengthy field work in southwestern Kansas (Graber and Graber, op. cit., 148). In July 1963, two pairs were observed along the Cimarron River north of Elkhart but no breeding evidence was found (Johnston, Kansas Orn. Soc. Bull., 14:27, 1963). In July, 1964, the first Morton County nesting record was reported (Rising and Kilgore, Kansas Orn. Soc. Bull., 15:23). In mid-July, 1973, I found about 35 adult kites along 14 miles of the Cimarron (between the Wilburton bridge and a point 2½ miles east of the Colorado line) and another four or five birds near Elkhart. Several active nests along the river were noted but not inspected. It is unlikely that all of these birds were nesting.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos scalaris*) - - Jean Graber called this species "the commonest woodpecker after the Flicker (*Colaptes sp.*) along the Cimarron in Morton County" after prolonged field studies there in 1950 and 1952 (Graber, Wilson Bull., 66:150, 1954). Johnston listed the species as a "common, presumed resident . . . in Morton County" (Johnston, a directory to the birds of Kansas, Univ. Kans., Publ. Mus. Nat. Hist., 41:33, 1965). As recently as 1971 (but referring to the late 1960's) it was described as a "regular, low density on the Cimarron River in Morton County" (Ely and Thompson, Kans. Orn. Soc. Bull., 22:9, 1971). Yet in six recent visits there in January, May, June, July and August, only one individual was seen or heard despite a careful search. The possibility exists that this species was unable to compete successfully with other species such as the Downy (*D. pubescens*) and Hairy (*D. villosus*) Woodpeckers. It is therefore possible that the Ladder-backed Woodpecker's range extension into Kansas was only temporary.

Curve-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) - - Elizabeth Cole and I found a single bird at a dump 4 miles north, 1 mile west of Elkhart on 10 June 1972. This is apparently the first record for Morton County and the only one of six present Kansas records at hand (Ely and Davis, Kans. Orn. Soc. Bull., 19:14, 1968) recorded in an area similar to the species preferred habitat in northwestern Cimarron County, Oklahoma.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*) - - Edmund LeGrand (Raleigh, N. C.) and I found a single individual in the Elkhart Cemetery on 12 May 1972. This is apparently the first record for Morton County and one of very few from southwestern Kansas (Hamilton County, 28 April 1967, Ely and Thompson, op. cit., p. 10). The Elkhart cemetery is only eight miles from the Colorado line yet there is no "valid" record for that state (Colorado Field Ornithologist, 15:15, 1973).

Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*) - - Jananne McNitt, Ross Silcock and I saw two individuals 13 July 1973, 6 miles west, 4 miles north of Elkhart. Although the Grabers found this species to be relatively common during migration (Graber and Graber, op. cit., p. 172), I can find no mid-summer record for Morton County. There is no mid-summer record in the Oklahoma Panhandle (Sutton, Oklahoma Birds, Norman, p. 628, 1967) and the few records from southeastern Colorado are from September and October (Bailey and Niedrach, The Birds of Colorado, Denver, p. 824, 1965). Sebastian T. Patti, 6528 Wenonga Terrace, Mission Hills, Kansas 66208.

**Groove-billed Ani in Stafford County, Kansas.** On 15 July 1973, I observed a single Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) fly from a shelter belt to a utility wire along the Rattlesnake black-top road, 13 miles south and ½ mile east of Ellinwood and just west of Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

At first I believed the bird to be a Common Grackle but its flight pattern was so different that I decided to approach the bird more closely to make a positive identification. It was very tame and as I approached closely enough to see the over-sized bill, I immediately knew it was an ani. The grooves on the bill were very distinctive and easily observed.

There are a number of previous sight records and at least four late fall and winter specimens from Kansas. Johnston (A directory to the birds of Kansas, Univ. Kansas Mus. Nat. Hist., Misc. Pub. 41:29, 1965) lists specimens from Crawford, Marshall and Lyon Counties and Ely (Kansas Orn. Soc. Bull., 20:27, 1969) reports one from Labette County. Edmund F. Martinez, 5851 Hemlock, Great Bend, Kansas 67530.

**Color-marked cowbirds.** Over 2,800 cowbirds were banded and color-marked in west-central Kansas during 1973 as an aid in studying their movements and hopefully to determine their place of origin. Birds were marked with dark blue or yellow plastic leg streamers. Banding and color-marking will be continued in 1974 with red, yellow, or dark green leg streamers. Observers should report location and date of sighting, sex of bird and color of leg streamer. Richard A. Hill, Department of Biology, Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas 67601.

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