

# Kansas Ornithological Society

## BULLETIN

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### MIDWINTER BIRD COUNT FOR 1974

Max C. Thompson

The 1974 midwinter bird count in Kansas was run in 25 areas of the state with one new area, Salina, being added and two from 1973 deleted (Baxter Springs and Linn Co.). A record 379 persons participated in the counts with the 43 observers at Lawrence being the highest number. A total of 131 species was seen. This total number of species is the second highest in the history of the KOS counts, being surpassed only by the record 137 seen in 1973. The highest number of species (87) was recorded by Manhattan, followed by Emporia (78) and Great Bend (73). An all time record high number of birds, 10,639,860, was seen. This total was swelled by the staggering count of 10,349,149 seen at Great Bend to 154 seen at Goodland.

The weather was cooperative on most counts. The mildness of the winter to that time may account for the high numbers of some species. Northern and Rocky Mountain species were conspicuous by their absence. The only notable ones being the Snowy Owl and Winter Wren which appeared in record numbers.

Three birds were added to the all time species record. Two Brown Towhees were seen on the Morton County count, the second time the species has been recorded from the state. Three Rufous-crowned Sparrows were also recorded in Morton County at Point-of-Rocks, the spot they were last seen on May 21, 1950. The other new bird for the count period was a Varied Thrush seen at Goodland. The bird was observed carefully by several observers for 10 minutes and a photograph taken. This is only the second record for the state, the last being a specimen taken at Garden City on October 17, 1891 (specimen location unknown). One other species new to the count was deleted. The Wichita count recorded six Ringed Turtle Doves. These birds have apparently become feral and were known to have bred this past summer. It was said that they have been feral now for several years. This nucleus should be observed to see if further increases take place.

Twenty-six species were recorded in record high numbers: Eared Grebe, White-fronted Goose, Bufflehead, Ferruginous Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Merlin, Screech Owl, Snowy Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Common Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Carolina Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, House Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, American Goldfinch, Tree Sparrow, Field Sparrow and Harris Sparrow.

The major portion of the counts were prepared neatly and accurately. There were a few that had wrong totals, one compiler missing the total by 3,771 and the species number by 11. Most compilers had problems with counting forms as species (they are subspecies) and counting such categories as *Buteo* sp., meadowlark sp., blackbird sp., as full species. The lack of many unusual birds alleviated the Editor of questioning some sightings. Those that were unusual were well documented.

The Olathe count had the oldest participant in 1974. Dr. Ray Wackley participated with vigor having celebrated his 92nd birthday on December 25.

**Baldwin.** 38 deg. 48 min. N, 95 deg. 16 min. W, center junction of U.S. highways 56 and 59; habitat coverage; open country 10 per cent, brushland 40 per cent, woodland 15 per cent, lakes 25 per cent, town 10 per cent.—Dec. 15; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cloudy. Temp 34 to 34 deg. Wind NW, 5-20 m.p.h. Lakes open, ground muddy. Twenty-three observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours, 36 (14 on foot, 22 by car); total party-miles 276 (11 on foot, 265 by car): Amelia Betts (compiler)—Baldwin City, KS 66006), Ivan and Margaret Boyd, Susan A. Davidson, L. E. Eberwein, Ruth Faulh, Robert M. Glazier, Lori and William A. Glover, Kelly Irwin, John and Pat Jardon, Katharine Kelley, Todd Kepple, Eulalia and Eugene Lewis, Marno McKaughan, Tim North, Kip Richards, Royce A. Ruegsegger, Muir Shultz, Rhoda and Karl Spear. Species seen during count week: Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Field Sparrow.

**Camp Naish.** Wyandotte Co.; habitat coverage: open grassland 20 per cent, brush 30 per cent, woodland 50 per cent.—Dec. 30; 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Partly cloudy to clear in a.m., cloudy with sleet and rain (trace) in p.m. Temp. 30 to 42 deg. Wind E, 6 m.p.h. Eight observers in 1 party. Total party-hours, 8.5 (8 on foot, .5 by car); total party-miles 15 (10 on foot, 5 by car): Ray Ashton, Byron Berger, Ken Davidson, Susan Gillahan, Richard Gillerman, Tom Patton, Larry Williams and Stan Roth (compiler—532 Oklahoma, Lawrence, 66044).

**Coffey-Lyon Co.** Centered midway between Hartford and John Redmond Dam.—Dec. 21; 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 32 to 42 deg. Wind W 5 m.p.h. Five observers in 1 party. Total party-hours 9.5 (6.5 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles 80 (20 on foot, 60 by car): Mike Long, Marc Marcellus, Christopher, Edward J. (compiler—1820 Canterbury Rd., Emporia 66801) and Philip Ryan.

**Dodge City.** 37 deg. 46 min. N, 99 deg. 58 min. W, 2 miles east of St. Mary of the Plains College campus, to include Duck Creek to 5 miles north, Ford Co. Park and lake, Arkansas River in designated area. Good Samaritan Home grounds, cemetery and residence area of Dodge City and shelterbelts.—Dec. 14; 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Temp. 33 to 38 deg. Wind SSW to NW 18 to 22 m.p.h. Eleven observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours 27 (7 on foot, 20 by car); total party-miles 199 (9 on foot, 190 by car): Maurice Bleumer, Joan Challans (compiler—2415 Hart, Dodge City, 67801), Joyce Davis, Julia Oehrle, Dora Rneick, Mrs. Don Schultz, Jerry Steiner. Seen during count period: Hairy Woodpecker, Belted Kingfisher, Bewick's Wren, Bald Eagle.

**Elk City Reservoir.** Dec. 21; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 26 to 43 deg. Wind NE, 5 to 10 m.p.h. Three observers in 1 party. Total party-hours 10 (2 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles 78 (3 on foot, 75 by car): Sylvia Albright (compiler—Box 258, Longton, 67352), H. L. Albright, Gregory Hutchins.

**Ellis Co.** 38 deg. 47 min. N, 99 deg. 23 min. W (as described in 1973)—Jan. 6; 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Clear. Temp. 20 to 40 deg. Wind 5-20 m.p.h. Most water open, only drifted snow on ground. Five observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours 12.5 (6 on foot, 6.5 by car); total party-miles 60 (5 on foot, 55 by car): Steven Anschutz, Richard Hill, John Schukman (compiler—314 W. 7th, Hays 67601), G. W. Tomanek, Jerry Wilson.

**Emporia.** 38 deg. 27 min. N, 96 deg. 05 min. W, centered 1 mile south of Lang, as described in 1972.—Dec. 15; 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Overcast in a.m., mostly cloudy in p.m. Temp. 27 to 35 deg. Wind NW, 15 to 30 m.p.h. No snow, water open, seed crop fair, farm crops abundant. Twenty-seven observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours 124 (56 on foot, 68 by car); total party-miles 917 (73 on foot, 843 by car): Alan Bosomworth, John and Ruth Breukelman, Randy Clark, Bob Gress, Mary Headrick, Carleen and Larry Herbert, Barbara Johnson, Marvin Kuehn, Dorothy Laird, Jacob Miller, Steve Perry, Winona Rhoades, Dennis Ronse, Edward and Helen Ryan, Edward, Jean (compiler—Route 1, Admire, 66830) and Margaret Schulerberg, Tom Shane, Jim Shields, Ross Silcock, Bob and Janet Spencer, Bruce and Kathleen Tabor. Seen during count period: Common Merganser.

**Fostoria.** Fostoria, NW to Blue River in Pottawatomie Co. Open grassland 50 per cent, Cultivated field 13 per cent, brush 30 per cent, woodland 6 per cent, lake and river 1 per cent.—Dec. 31; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Clear to partly cloudy. Temp. 30 to 42 deg. Wind NW, calm. Snow cover 50 per cent. Four observers in 1 party. Total party-hours 8; total party-miles 40 (1 on foot, 39 by car): Bernard Plummer, Eunice Webster (co-compiler—Box 5, Fostoria 66426), Howard Webster, Mabel Willis (co-compiler—Blaine 66410). Seen during count period: Ring-necked Pheasant, Bald Eagle, Robin, Horned Lark, Loggerhead Shrike, American Goldfinch.

**Goodland.** 39 deg. 16 min. N, 101 deg. 47 min. W, S to Smoky Gardens, St. Lake, NW to Darnauer Farm, Ruleton Community, E to Goodland.—Dec. 23; 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Temp. 16 to 28 deg; Wind NNE 10 to 25 m.p.h. Seven observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours 11 (4 on foot, 5 by car); total party-miles 74 (4 on foot, 71 by car): Ronnie Barkley (compiler—301 W. 8th, Goodland 67735), Elaine Ellison, Pam Gray, Nadine Henry, Mickey Moore, Pam Peter, Wallace Welton.

**Junction City.** (as described in 1973). Cultivated fields 30 per cent, grassland 25 per cent, deciduous timber 15 per cent, evergreens 10 per cent, water (open) 20 per cent.—Dec. 22; 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. Partly cloudy to clear. Temp. 20 to 45 deg. Wind S 30 m.p.h. Fifteen observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours 38 (8 on foot, 30 by car); total party-miles 285 (16 on foot, 269 by car): Roxy Becker, Lorena Combs, Becky Finney, Steve Fretwell, Steve Hickok, Robert Kruger, Gregg Lagerberg, Robert La Shelle (compiler—105 W. 4th, Junction City 66441), E. M. Lewis, E. R. Lewis, Mike Quinlon, Jean Schulenberg, Margaret Schulenberg, Tom Shane, Celia White. Seen during count period: Cooper's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle, Loggerhead Shrike.

**Kansas City.** 39 deg. 03 min. N, 94 deg. 45 min W, centered near Morris (as described in 1972).—Dec. 21; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear in a.m., clear to partly cloudy in p.m. Temp. 26 to 39 deg. Wind NW 0-5 m.p.h. Snow cover 0 to 1 inch, water partly open. Thirty-one observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours 68 (25 on foot, 43 by car); total party-miles 370 (28 on foot, 342 by car): Carol David, Cathy Durie, Robert Fisher, JoAnn Garrett, Harry Gregory, Hugh Hadley, Nanette Johnson, Philip Kaul, Robert Lee, Jane Lippincott, Florence Lowe, Cleona McGuire, Jananne McNitt (compiler—10130 Pawnee Lane, Leawood 66206), Robert Means, Carol and Wendell Mohling, Jim and Mary Louise Myers, Louise North, Richard Parker, Dave Ranney, Terence Rhoades, Forrest and Ruth Roulund, Evelyn Schuttly, Kevin Sink, Robin Troutz, Kay Wahl, MaryAnn Waisanen, Jim Williamson, Dewey Ziegler (Burroughs Audubon Society). Seen during count period: Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Western Meadowlark, Lapland Longspur.

**Great Bend.** 38 deg. 22 min. N, 98 deg. 43 min. W, centered on Barton County Community Junior College (as described in 1973).—Dec. 21; 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Clear in a.m., mostly cloudy in p.m. Temp. 31 to 52 deg. Wind NNW in a.m., S in p.m.; No snow cover, water areas 15 per cent open, wildlife food crop good. Eight observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours 21 (4 on foot, 17 by car); total party-miles 221 (10 on foot, 211 by car): Bruce Christiansen, Laurel Dirks, Thayne Dirks, Edmund Martinez, Larry Nossaman, Sherman Nystrom, Frank Robl, Marvin Schwilling (compiler—Cheyenne Bottoms Refuge, Great Bend 67530), Jerry Stambaugh. Seen during count period: White-crowned Sparrow, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Goldeneye.

**Halstead-Newton.** 38 deg. 04 min N, 97 deg. 28 min. W, centered 5/4 miles NE Halstead (as described in 1973), hedgerows and farmland 45 per cent, woodland and wooded streams 43 per cent, farmyards, towns and cemeteries 5 per cent, shrubby prairies and pastures 3 per cent, prairies and pastures 3 per cent, marshes, ponds and rivers 1 per cent.—Dec. 14; 7:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Cloudy. Temp. 32 to 39 deg. Wind SE to NW 6 to 30 m.p.h. Rivers and ponds open. Twenty-five observers in 6 parties. Total party-hours 57 (27 on foot, 30 by car); total party-miles 302 (30 on foot, 272 by car): Clifford and Neil Armstutz, Dennis Andres, Roy Auernheimer, Steve Capel, Vic Claassen, Marion Deckert, Frank Fields, Rose Fritz, Jane Hershberger, Keven Hiebert, Paul and Lisa Jantzen, Mark and Scott Matthies, Jay Newton, Larry W. Nikkel, Dwight Platt (compiler—RFD 2, Newton 67114), Kamala and Richard Platt, Robert and Steve Regier, Myron and Nada Voth, Brian Warkentine. Seen during count period: Snowy Owl, Mockingbird.

**Kingman Game Management Area.** 37 deg. 38 min. N, 98 deg. 16 min. W, centered on headquarters of management area; woodland 60 per cent, open grassland 30 per cent, brush 5 per cent, lake and river 3 per cent, cultivated fields 2 per cent.—Dec. 21; 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mostly clear. Temp. 26 to 40 deg.; Wind S 1 to 15 m.p.h. Five observers in 1 party. Total party-hours 8 (5 on foot, 3 by car); total party-miles 43 (8 on foot, 43 by car): Edward and Patty Kane, Steve Sorensen, Byron Walker (compiler—Kingman Game Area, Penalosa 67121), June Walker. Seen during count period: Canada Goose, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Prairie Falcon, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Eastern Bluebird, Mockingbird.

**Lawrence.** 38 deg. 59 min. N, 95 deg. 15 min. W, centered on National Guard Armory, Iowa St. (as described in 1972). To maintain an equal percentage of habitat we added an area uncounched before to compensate for the Clinton Dam project.—Dec. 21; 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Temp. 31 to 40 deg. Wind SE calm-5 m.p.h. Thirty-two observers and 3 feeder watchers in 10 parties. Total party-hours 71 (30 on foot, 41 by car); total party-miles 342 (35 on foot, 307 by car): Mary Allen, Kerry Altenbernd, Ray Ashton, Edd Barrows, Byron Berger, Ivan Boyd, Scott Campbell, Bert and Helen Chewing, L. Eberwein, Ruth Fauhl (compiler—1923 Ohio, Lawrence 66044), Andy Finfrock, Leroy and Louise Fletcher, Helen Garrett, John Grula, E. R. and Mary Hall, Katherine Kelley, Phyllis Legler, Kathryn Nelson, Ruth Paddock, Marg and Eldon Perry, Galen Pittman, Stan Roth, Dwight Tanner, Marc Thiry, Polly Trillich, Brad Williams, Larry Williams.

**McPherson.** 38 deg. 26 min. N, 97 deg. 39 min. W, centered 1 mi. E, 6 mi. N McPherson (as described in 1973).—Dec. 14; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 38 to 33 deg. Wind S 15 m.p.h. Ten observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours 57.5 (6.5 on foot, 51 by car); total party-miles 210 (4 on foot, 206 by car): Wesley DeCoursey, Virginia Harris, Allen Jahn, Jeffrey Jahn, Loren Johnson, Maurine Lehmborg, Kenneth Lindblade, Dorraine Shannon, Jerry Shannon, Kent Stuckey (compiler—Route 1, Box 81, McPherson 67460). Seen during count period: Mourning Dove, Hairy Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Purple Finch, Carolina Wren, Rough-legged Hawk, Savannah Sparrow, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Red-shafted Flicker.



**Manhattan.** 39 deg. 11 min. N, 96 deg. 34 min. W, centered on Anderson Hall, KSU (as described in 1972).—Dec. 21; 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly clear. Temp. 18 to 48 deg. Wind N 1 to 5 m.p.h. No snow cover. Thirty-nine observers in 16 parties. Total party-hours 158 (109 on foot, 46 by car, 3 by canoe); total party-miles 491 (144 on foot, 342 by car, 5 by canoe): Joe Arruda, George Athey, David Benedict, Dan and Janean Bowen, David Burden, Sandy Bussing, Leona Combs, David Cox, Rosemary Deininger, Michael Donnelly, L. K. Edmunds, Phil Elliot, Clyde Ferguson, Steve Fretwell (compiler—Div. Biol., KSU, Manhattan 66502), Francis and Leonard Fuller, H. T. Gier, Bruce Groff, Joe Hawes, Steve Kingswood, Greg Lagerberg, Bob LaShelle, Eugene and Eulalia Lewis, Erich Marzolf, Norman Peck, Thomas Porter, Bill Pursley, Mike Quinlin, Ron Roy, Tom Shane, Christopher Smith, John Tatschl, Randy Todhunter, A. S. Tomb, Mike and Sondra Williamson, Mike Wood. Seen during count period: Snowy Owl.

**Morton Co.** 37 deg. 07 min. N, 101 deg. 52 min. W, centered 7 miles north, 2 miles east of Elkhart. All points within the Cimarron National Grasslands; 85 per cent grassland and cultivated farms, 10 per cent wooded floodplain, 3 per cent rocky slopes, 1 per cent ponds, 1 per cent urban.—Jan. 4; 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Clear. Temp. 18 to 42 deg. Wind SW 5-10 m.p.h. 1.5 inches old snow cover, ponds frozen, some open water. Eight observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours 20 (6 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles 233 (9 on foot, 224 by car): JoAnn Garrett, Earl McHugh, Jananne McNitt, Jacob Miller, Sebastian T. Patti (compiler—6528 Wenonga Terr., Shawnee Mission 66206), Jean Schulenberg, Ross Silcock and Larry Smith. Seen during count period: Northern Shrike.

**Olathe.** 38 deg. 52 min. N, 94 deg. 50 min. W, centered Junction of U.S. Highway 56 and Kansas 7 (as described in 1973).—Dec. 28; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 30 to 41 deg. Wind NE 2 m.p.h. Nine observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours 20 (5 on foot, 15 by car); total party-miles 139 (11 on foot, 128 by car): Barbara and James Bradley (compiler—Box 31, RFD 2, Lenexa 66219), Steven Brockway, Don Chesebro, Dean Crane, Margaret Gay, Ethel Hower, Marno McKaughan, Ray Wackley. Seen during count period: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Purple Finch.

**Pittsburg.** 37 deg. 73 min. N, 94 deg. 41 min. W, centered on Kansas State College; streamside woods 40 per cent, fields and pastures 60 per cent.—Dec. 21; 6:45 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Partly cloudy, fresh water partly open. Temp. 27 to 49 deg. Wind calm. Wild food crop good. Four observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours 38 (36 on foot, 2 by car); total party-miles 71 (14 on foot, 57 by car): Bessie Boso (compiler—RR 2, Box 120, Pittsburg 66762), Gladys Galligar, Robert Mangile, Theodore Sperry. Seen during count period: Barred Owl, Brown Creeper.

**Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.** 38 deg. 06 min. N, 98 deg. 29 min. W, centered on refuge sub-headquarters, to include Rattlesnake Creek, Little Salt Marsh, Big Salt Marsh.—Dec. 17; 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Clear sky. Temp. 24 to 40 deg. Wind SE 10 to 20 m.p.h. Four observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours 17 (2 on foot, 15 by car); total party-miles 111 (2 on foot, 109 by car): Wayne Dale, Charles R. Darling (compiler—Box G, Stafford 67578), Carl Marks, Laurence Veikley. Seen during count period: Hairy Woodpecker.

**Salina.** 38 deg. 50 min. N, 97 deg. 36 min. W, centered on corner of Santa Fe and Crawford St.—Dec. 14; 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 38 to 41 deg. Wind W 0-5 m.p.h. Heavy rain 80 per cent of time. Sixteen observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours 22.5 (3.75 on foot, 18.75 by car); total party-miles 190 (6.75 on foot, 183.25 by car): Jon and Marilyn Burch, Steve Burr, Anne Courter, Richard Courter, Dr. Fred Hargis, Virginia Hobson, Gregg Lagerberg (compiler—1846 Larson 67401), Robert LaShalle, Diedel Lentz, Dr. Chas. Marsh, Ivy Marsh, Jeff Martin, Cody Rowan, Dr. John Schwartz, John Wachholz.

**Topeka.** 39 deg. 02 min. N, 95 deg. 40 min. W, centered State Capitol Building (as described in 1971).—Dec. 28; 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mostly clear. Temp. 21 to 47 deg. Wind SE 5 to 15 m.p.h. Water partly frozen, wild food crop fair. Forty-three observers, 32 in 12 parties, 11 at feeders. Total party-hours 76 (33 on foot, 43 by car) plus 15 at feeders; total party-miles 414 (30 on foot, 384 by car): Janet and Kent Bailey, Andrea, Andrew and Peggy Barber, Virgil Basgall, Scott Bergmeier, Ray Chancellor, Arline and Robert Delker, Ruth Fauhi, Barney and Betty Gilmer, Harriet Graham, Gwen Haegert, Phyllis Henney, Howard, Linda, and Michael Jackson, Lauren James, E. R. and E. M. Lewis, Gene and Virginia Lockhart, Woodie Maus, June McCallum, Orville Rice (compiler—1625 W. 28th St., Topeka 66611), Valerie Stallbaumer, May Stannard, Audrey Switzer, Grace White, Anna Wilson (Topeka Audubon Society). Seen during count period: Snowy Owl, Brown Thrasher.

**Udall-Winfield.** 37 deg. 16 min. N, 96 deg. 59 min. W, centered on water tower at Winfield State Training School; pasture and fields 65 per cent, rivers and streams 30 per cent, lakes 5 per cent.—Dec. 21; 4 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clear. Temp. 34 to 47 deg. Wind S 0 to 5 m.p.h. Water open, wild food crop fair. Twelve observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours 33 (9 on foot, 24 by car); total party-miles 312 (15 on foot, 297 by car): Wallace Champeny (compiler—RR 1, Oxford 67119), Mike Lesan, David Seibel, Greg Swaiwell, Max C. Thompson, Don Vannoy, Agnes, Kris, and Ross Williams, Donna and Tammy Wilt, Robert Wimmer.

Wichita. 37 deg. 41 min. N, 97 deg. 20 min. W, centered at confluence of Arkansas and Little Arkansas Rivers, cultivated fields 35 per cent, residential 25 per cent, parks and woodlands 20 per cent, streambanks and ponds 20 per cent.—Dec. 14; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mostly cloudy in a.m., partly cloudy in p.m. Temp. 36 to 47 deg. Wind S to NW 10 to 30 m.p.h. Water open, wild feed crop fair. Twenty-five observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours 34 (20 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles 209 (20 on foot, 189 by car): Albert and Pearl Briggs, Walter Broderson, Louis Bussjager, John, Philip and Walker Butin, Wallace Champeny (compiler—RR 1, Oxford 67119), Frances Chesney, Leona Duncan, Anne Engber, Don Ferguson, James Fisher, Michael and Susan Hellems, Susan Jehle, Dan Kilby, Mike and Nancy Lesan, Eddie and Savilla Stegall, Durward Tucker, Don and Fran Vannoy, Ralph Wiley.

### *Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas 67156*

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher feeding Common Grackle young.** — On 19 June 1974, while bicycling past the location—3.2 km (2 mi.) south of Lawrence, Kansas—I saw two nests close to one another in a tree where earlier I had noticed a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscivora forficata*). I returned the next day at 20:00 CDT with binoculars to more closely observe the birds and nests. Both nests were about 9 m (30 ft.) up in a 12 m (40 ft.) black walnut tree (*Juglans nigra*). One nest was about 1 m south and slightly above the other. Two Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were seen and twice I observed one flycatcher chasing a Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) near this tree. While watching the south nest I saw a flycatcher fly to its rim and apparently feed young. A grackle came to a perch about 30 cm (1 ft.) away, and was very still and quiet. The flycatcher left the nest and the grackle moved closer. A flycatcher returned to a perch above this nest and threatened the grackle. This threat consisted of thrusting its head toward the grackle with bill open and wings lifted away from the body; a chatter-like call was given. The grackle responded by drawing its head back (giving the impression of hunching its shoulders) and pointing its bill at the flycatcher. At this time the second flycatcher came to and settled on the north nest to brood. The first flycatcher left the tree and the grackle moved to the south nest, where it fed young and departed. The second flycatcher was still on the north nest.

I returned almost daily to try to determine the progress of each nest and did not see any further feeding of the young in the south nest by either adult flycatcher, and it became clear that this nest was that of the grackle. Frequently, either or both Scissor-tailed Flycatchers would chase or harass the male or female grackle when they were near the nests, especially when they were leaving after feeding their young. Between 21 June and 25 June, during 200 minutes of observation, the grackles were chased after 11 of their 20 observed visits. Fitch (1950, Auk 67: 145-168) reported that Scissor-tailed Flycatchers are aggressive toward intruders near their nests. Two young left the grackle nest on 28 June; two young scissor-tails left their nest on 2 July.

I interpret this account as follows. Both nests apparently hatched young at nearly the same time—nestling periods given by Fitch (*op. cit.*) and Petersen and Young (1950, Auk 67: 466-476) suggests hatching in both nests about 17 June. Hatching synchrony and the closeness of the two nests seemingly led the scissor-tail to erroneously feed the young grackles. Other species of flycatchers have been known to feed young of other species (Bragg 1968, Auk 85: 321).

I thank R. F. Johnston and J. W. Koeppel for reading this paper. Peter E. Lowther, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045.

**Kansas Ornithological Society**

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