



The Horned Lark

The newsletter of the Kansas
Ornithological Society

March 2005

Vol. 32, No. 1

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From the field

I sometimes wonder if my non-birding friends think I'm instead engaging in nefarious behavior when I say I'm going birding. They give polite responses, but the looks on their faces more often communicate "is she *really* doing that?"

Three of my friends recently came to appreciate why I bird. They went with me to see the Snowy Owl near Oxford.

We found the owl perched on a hedge post a quarter-mile from the road, and watched it preen and scout for prey. Suddenly, it pushed off from the post and flew high, crossing the road and flying in front of the moon. Magnificent! My companions were impressed.

They suddenly understood why I spent a lot of my free time chasing birds. They wanted to know more about birding and the species I pointed out on the way home. They asked when I'd go birding again; one wanted to go soon. I love corrupting my friends!

This issue

KOS members have plenty of organized birding opportunities this spring. The KOS meeting will be in Pratt April 22-24, and **Lee Queal** and **Ken Brunson** have put together a great itinerary. The Wings 'N

Wetlands festival, based in Great Bend, is the following weekend, and there's more birding at the Red Buffalo Ranch near Sedan on April 30.

KOS life member **Jeff Cox** wrote an article on his re-enactment of the first Independence CBC

conducted by Alex Wetmore in 1904. He includes comparison data for the two counts and also reports on the Abilene re-enactment by **Jim Mayhew**.

President **Gene Young** has a challenge for each of us and **Mark Corder** brings us the Fall Roundup. You may also read more about the November Whooping Crane shootings and learn how to contact KDWP Commissioners.

Good birding!—CKM



Photo by David Seibel © 2005.

The Eagle's Roost: message from the president

It's an honor to be back as president of KOS after a short hiatus from Kansas, and I look forward to seeing you at future KOS events. I'm writing to give a few acknowledgments; ask for your participation; and solicit your ideas.

First and foremost, I want to thank **Tom Shane**, our outgoing president. I greatly appreciate your time and effort as a volunteer, Tom, and I want to especially acknowledge your support of student research over the years. Because of your commitment to the Student Research Fund, I'm making it a priority this year. Thank you, Tom!

I also want to thank **Chuck Otte** for his tenure as *The Horned Lark* editor. I don't begin to comprehend how much time you spent on *The Lark*, but I know it was considerable. On behalf of KOS, thank you, Chuck.

Of course, I want to thank all of the outgoing and incoming KOS board members and editors for your time, energy, and willingness to volunteer.

Finally, I want to thank the KOS membership, for it is your support that makes KOS what it is.

As the new KOS president, I have two challenges for KOS members: to publish in the *KOS Bulletin* or *The Horned Lark*, and to help us develop a strong Student Research Fund. With your continued support we can help KOS grow and prosper, and contribute to our knowledge and understanding of the birds of Kansas.

I invite you, whether professional scientist or amateur observer, to submit articles, papers and manuscripts for inclusion in the *Bulletin* or *The Lark*. While the *Bulletin* mostly involves scientific analyses and research involving birds, it also contains many great articles written by non-professionals. Many KOS members are willing to provide suggestions for your manuscript if you are nervous about presenting such material in the *Bulletin*. There is a wealth of knowledge to share. Additionally, I encourage students to publish research results in the *Bulletin*—begin building your *curriculum vitae* and research credentials now! To submit material for the *Bulletin*, contact Cal Cink at calvin.cink@bakeru.edu

The Lark has several features, and I would like to see individuals step up with some new ideas. I know we're a creative bunch. Cheryl Miller, editor, would love to hear from you. Contact her at avian67226@hotmail.com.

Kansas is fortunate to have so many schools with students conducting research on various aspects of the avifauna within the state. KOS frequently sponsors student research and we all benefit by having scientific papers presented at the annual fall meeting. We raise funds for research through the silent auction. Each year KOS members step up to the plate, raising hundreds of dollars through this activity alone. What ideas and suggestions do you have to generate more money for the

Student Research Fund? Please contact me or any of the board members so we may discuss them at our next board meeting.

Again, I thank you for your contributions to KOS. As president, I will provide more avenues for your participation and let you know how *you*, the general membership, can help KOS continue to produce quality publications and meetings, and increase our knowledge about the birds of Kansas.

Eugene A. Young

President

New member checklist

Please welcome new members who joined during the period September 1, 2004-January 18, 2005. Members live in Kansas unless noted otherwise.

- ___ **Jeff Davidson**, Eureka
- ___ **Mr. & Mrs. Bill Falk**, Topeka
- ___ **Helen Hewins**, Overland Park
- ___ **Corina Jung**, Manhattan
- ___ **Laurie Kosminski**, Kansas City, Missouri
- ___ **Lori Lind**, Independence, Missouri
- ___ **James Malcolm**, Auburn
- ___ **Shannon Nilz**, Hays
- ___ **John O'Neill**, Kansas City, Missouri
- ___ **Timothy Parker**, Manhattan
- ___ **Keith Rief**, Hoisington
- ___ **Shayne Unsworth**, Manhattan
- ___ **Richard and Elisabeth Vanderlip**, Manhattan



KOS spring meeting, April 22-24, Pratt

by Lee and Jane Queal

The 2005 Kansas Ornithological Society spring meeting is set for the weekend of April 22-24, and is based in Pratt. We will make field trips into Barber, Comanche and Kiowa counties as well as take a good look at birding sites in Pratt County.

Pratt is located 75 miles west of Wichita, 58 miles southwest of Hutchinson, 50 miles south of Great Bend, and 72 miles east of Dodge City. It is the operational headquarters of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

Three full-day trips will take birders into a wide variety of ecosystems. Two of the trips will include visits to Lesser Prairie Chicken leks in Kiowa County and visits to prairie dog towns for an opportunity to view Burrowing Owls. These day-long field trips will be offered only on Saturday. Local birders will guide folks who do not wish to go on the longer trips on tours around the Pratt area.

All trips will leave at designated times from the parking lot of the old Wal-Mart store (immediately south of the K-61/U.S.-54 junction and just west of McDonald's).



Photo by Kevin Groeneweg, © 2005.

Saturday trip descriptions

Trip 1: Southeastern Pratt County and Eastern Barber County, Isabel Wetlands Wildlife Area and Hargis Lake. Pete Janzen gave a detailed description of the Hargis Lake area in the December issue of *The Horned Lark*. **Janzen, Kevin Groeneweg, and Chris and Kristen Hase** will lead this trip. As plans for lunch are not clear at this time, participants may want to bring snacks or a sack lunch to get them through the day. This group will leave at 7 a.m.

Trip 2: Kiowa County, Red Hills and Swartz Canyon. Participants will look first for Lesser Prairie Chickens and Burrowing Owls in Kiowa County. Afterwards the group will head south into the Red Hills (Barber County) and Swartz Canyon (Comanche County) for the local specialty, the Rufous-crowned Sparrow. **Stan Roth and Ken**

Brunson will lead this trip into remote areas. Participants will need to bring a sack lunch or snacks to get them through the day. It is approximately 25 miles to the prairie chicken sites. This trip will leave at 6 a.m.

Trip 3: Kiowa County, Texas Lake and Pratt Sandhills. Participants will look for Lesser Prairie Chickens and Burrowing Owls, and then continue into central Kiowa County for birding around Greensburg. The group will then head back into northwestern Pratt County for the Texas Lake and Pratt Sandhills Wildlife Management Areas. Participants will stop for a meal in Haviland, but personal snacks might be helpful to have along. **Gregg Friesen and Jane and Lee Queal** will lead this trip. The trip will leave at 6 a.m.

Sunday trip descriptions

Sunday trips will be half-day, with tours in the immediate vicinity of Pratt. Birders will tour along the Ninescah River in eastern Pratt County, and into areas of northern Pratt County. A shorter version of the Kiowa County trip will be offered if necessary. Look for more details at check-in.

Schedule of Events

Friday, April 22

7:00 p.m.—Social, Room 73 at the Hillcrest Inn. The Hillcrest is located on the north side of U.S.-54 about 0.4 mile west of the K-61/U.S.-54 junction.

Saturday, April 23

6:00 or 7:00 a.m.—Leave for field trips, depending on destination.

6:30 p.m.—Catered dinner at Pratt County Fair Grounds (on K-64 south of Pratt).

7:30 p.m.—“Birds of Kansas,” by Mike Blair, KDWP photographer.

9:00 p.m.—Owling in nearby Lemon Park.

Sunday, April 24

6:00 a.m.—Leave for Lesser Prairie Chicken viewing in Kiowa County (trip is tentative, based on interest)

7:00 a.m.—Leave for Pratt County field trips.

Noon—Meet for compilation and lunch at KDWP headquarters.

(continued, p. 4)



KOS spring meeting, *continued*

Lodging: The Hillcrest Inn is the headquarters for the spring meeting and the location for the social Friday evening. Lodging is \$45 - \$50. Please make your reservations early: Pratt Community College is hosting baseball and softball tournaments the same weekend. The hotel number is (620) 672-6407. Advise them you are with KOS.

Other motels include Leisure Hotel (formerly Holiday Inn) (620) 672-9433; Super 8 (620) 672-5945; Days Inn (620) 672-9465; Budget Inn (620) 672-6468; and Evergreen Motel (620) 672-6431. All motels are located on U.S.-54. Several motel managers have indicated they will move up their continental breakfast time to 5:30 a.m. to accommodate birding guests.

For those who want to camp, there is a free campground (first-come, first-served) at Pratt County Lake, and there is a commercial RV facility one mile west of Pratt.

Registration: Please see page 16 for the registration form. The registration fee covers the cost of meals and related expenses. The catered Saturday evening dinner featuring beef brisket is \$15, and Sunday's lunch is an additional \$5. Please pre-register by April 15 and provide a head count for meals. A number of door prizes will be drawn Saturday evening; pre-registered participants will be eligible to win! Membership in KOS is not required for participation in the spring field trips.

Spring Field Trip Coordinators:

Ken Brunson, KDWP, 512 SE 25th, Pratt, KS, 67124. Phone (620) 672-0792 (office), (620) 672-7289 (home); E-mail: kenb@wp.state.ks.us;

Lee and Jane Queal, 1004 West Ninth, Pratt,

Future KOS Meetings

2005

Sept. 30-Oct. 2 Wichita

2006

April 28-30 Cross Timbers Region: Greenwood and Woodson Counties



KDWP

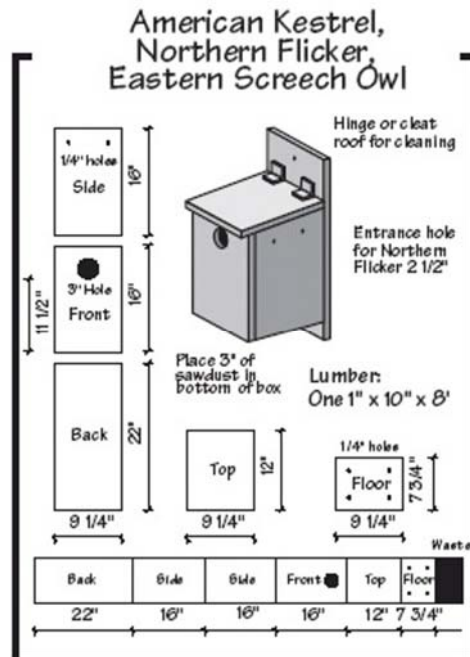
Non-consumptive use resources

It's the time of year when many of us are thinking about spring migration and cleaning out the birdhouses for new residents. Others may be thinking about summer activities involving nature for children and grandchildren. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks is one place to look for assistance with these activities.

KDWP offers numerous free brochures and educational materials to the public. The non-game page at the KDWP Web site allows viewers to download brochures with information on attracting hummingbirds and butterflies, bird feeder choices and birdhouse plans (www.kdwp.state.ks.us/nongame/nongame.html). One such plan is below.

Also available on-line is the KDWP Education Resource Library. Books, tapes, computer programs, skins and skulls and learning kits are available for a two-week checkout period. These materials are available to schools and home schools, organizations and individuals who want to learn more about the environment. The only cost associated with this program is the postage for returning materials (and any replacement costs for damaged or lost property). Visit the library Web site: www.kansaswildlife.org/reg/.

For more information about non-consumptive use resources available through KDWP, contact **Ken Brunson** at kenb@wp.state.ks.us.



Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. Used with permission.

Favorite Kansas birding spots: Texas Lake and Pratt Sandhills Wildlife Management Areas

By Lee and Jane Queal

There are a number of good birding areas in and around Pratt, site of the 2005 KOS spring meeting. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Headquarters, the 100-year-old Fish Hatchery and Pratt County Lake comprise one set of well-known birding sites located within the Ninnescah River complex. Another is Isabel Wetlands, adjacent to K-42 in the southeast corner of Pratt County. Lemon Park and Greenlawn Cemetery in the city of Pratt offer more birding opportunities. Also, there are numerous bridge crossings along the Ninnescah River, both east and west of Pratt. These are associated with private lands, but provide excellent birding opportunities throughout the year.

However, there are two prime birding areas in the northwest part of the county worthy of your attention—the 1,200-acre Texas Lake Wildlife Management Area and the 6,000-acre Pratt Sandhills Wildlife Management Area. While these sites are only four or five miles apart, they are quite different. Texas Lake is a terminal basin receiving most of its runoff water from a large watershed to the southwest, and lies in what A. W. Küchler described as Bluestem-Grama mixed prairie. The Pratt Sandhills are located at the southern edge of what Küchler called the *Andropogon-Calamovilfa* Sand Prairies. Careful observers will see the transition from mixed prairie to sand prairie

immediately north of the Texas Lake site.

KDWP acquired the bulk of the Texas Lake property in the mid-1970s and the majority of the Pratt Sandhills WMA in 1969. Texas Lake includes wetland units and grassland. Staff manage the grassland with periodic burning and removal of volunteer cottonwood and elm trees. Farmers owned what is now Pratt Sandhills WMA in the early 20th century, and many land parcels were wind-eroded during the 1930s. To suppress the erosion, land owners planted many east-west shelter belts and re-seeded the area to native grasses. In addition to the grasslands, ephemeral wetlands occur, but they are rarely present for more than a few weeks.

Birders may access both areas from U.S.-54, 13 and 14 miles west of Pratt. The Texas Lake turnoff is well-marked at SW 130th Avenue. The access to Pratt Sandhills is obvious at SW 140th Avenue, one mile further west.

Birding at Texas Lake provides opportunities to view most species of dabbling ducks and shorebirds. In season you might find Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Phalaropes, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted Sandpipers, American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts, as well as all the peeps. Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasants are common in the area. Sandhill Cranes and Canada Geese frequently roost on

the property or on adjacent private lands in both spring and fall.

Approximately halfway between the Texas Lake and Sandhills properties you will find a large prairie dog town on private land. It is viewable from the road and is on the east side of NW 140th Avenue. The dog town usually hosts one or two broods of Burrowing Owls. You might see Upland Sandpipers, too.

The Pratt Sandhills still has a remnant population of Lesser Prairie Chickens, but no consistent leks have been located in recent years. Greater Roadrunners are occasionally in this area, and Wild Turkeys, Northern Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasants are common.

The native prairie habitat, interspersed with shelter belts, red cedar and shrubby species (primarily sand plum) is home to a variety of birds in season including Bell's Vireo, Eastern Bluebird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Spotted Towhee, Dicksissel, Orchard Oriole, Sprague's Pipit, Black-billed Magpie and Grasshopper, Lark, Vesper and Chipping Sparrows. Short-eared Owls are commonly found in the late fall and winter.

The township roads through both the Texas Lake and Pratt Sandhills sites have limited maintenance. Travel with 2WD vehicles may be difficult in periods of extremely wet weather. Detailed maps can be accessed at www.kdwp.state.ks.us/office.html#stwa.



Local festivals provide opportunities for more birding

Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend, April 29-May 1

The Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend, April 29-May 1, is expected to attract birders across the continent for three days of birding, tours, presentations and fun at Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Management Area and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

"This weekend is always amazing," said **Rob Penner**, chairman of the festival committee. "We see lots of birds at two of the hottest birding sites in the United States. Everyone has a great time at the gatherings and exhibiting their skills at the Bird Call Identification contest."

Program activities include a bird identification workshop on Friday, tours and presentations on Saturday and sunrise birding tours



Sunday. Transportation and experienced guides are part of all birding tours. There will be many opportunities to visit Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira.

Well-known wildlife photographer **Bob Gress** will be one of the presenters for the Saturday education seminars. Gress will give tips on photographing birds and share some of his techniques for

capturing compelling natural images.

Registration for the festival is required and pre-registration is strongly recommended. The Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend is organized by the Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau and is sponsored by Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Management Area, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge/Friends of Quivira, U.S. National Ramsar Committee, Kansas Ornithological Society, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, The Nature Conservancy, Audubon of Kansas, Great Bend Chamber of Commerce and the City of Great Bend.

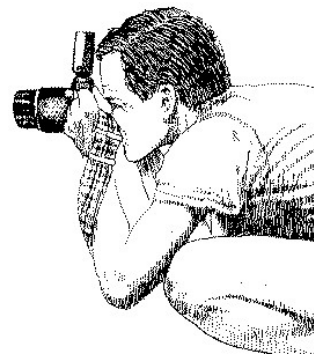
For more information about the Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend, contact the Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau at (620) 792-2750, or E-mail information@visitgreatbend.com. Registration forms are available at www.cheyennebottoms.net/visitor_events.html.

Red Buffalo Ranch Birding, April 30

The Red Buffalo Ranch and Audubon of Kansas are teaming up to offer a fun-filled day of birding and other touring activities Saturday, April 30. The 5,000-acre property near Sedan is owned by Bill Kurtis, Kansas native and documentary host.

Nearly four miles of maintained trails cross the Middle Caney River in this

unique Cross Timbers region of Kansas. Participants will bird at several hotspots during the day, including the Sedan City Lakes. These lakes are featured on the Tallgrass



"Prairie Parkway" Birding and Natural Heritage Trail.

For registrants who wish to stay overnight, lodging is available at the Ranch Guest House, the River Cabin and the Livery B&B. These accommodations and ranch activities have been featured in *The New York Times* and, more recently, *The CBS Morning News*. Other lodging and camping options are available in nearby communities.

Costs at the ranch include \$5 for wagon tours and \$7.50 for lunch. The special lodging rate for ranch accommodations is \$40 per person based on double occupancy. Rooms with queen beds are available for \$65 for two people.

Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis. Make reservations by calling (888) 522-5089 or E-mail: rbgift@ksok.biz. Visit the Red Buffalo Website at www.theredbuffalo.com.



Kansas Fall Season Roundup

August 1 – November 31, 2004

Mark Corder, compiler

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number and Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer/s</u>
Tundra Swan	2 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	11/13	DK, JC, JA
White-winged Scoter	1 at Shawnee Mission Lake	Johnson	11/02	ML
Long-tailed Duck	1 at Lyon Co. State Lake	Lyon	11/07	GP
	1 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	11/07	RW
	2 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	11/14	SP, CH, MR
Pacific Loon	1 at Perry Lake	Jefferson	11/06	GP, MM
White Ibis	1 seen flying in south Lawrence	Douglas	9/16	AN
Black Vulture	1 at Schermerhorn Park	Cherokee	8/04	DH
Mississippi Kite	<u>170+</u> in kettle over Garden City	Finney	8/20	T&SSh
Swainson's Hawk	<u>837</u> seen between I-35 and Ark City	Sumner & Cowley	10/01	GY
Golden Eagle	1 soaring above Shawnee Miss. Pk.	<u>Johnson</u>	11/11	ML
Black Rail	1 flushed along Cimarron River Others reported calling at Meade State Park and several other locations.	Meade	10/02	TF
Whooping Crane	3 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	10/13	LH
	7 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	10/16	?
	3 flew over Seltman farm	Rush	11/06	DSe, StS
	18-22 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	11/06	QNWR Staff
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	11 at Lawrence Sod Farm	Douglas	8/01	KS
	50+ in field 2mi N. of Raymond	Rice	8/03	MK
	12 at Colwich sod farms	Sedgwick	8/07	D&FV
Red-necked Phalarope	1 at Rolla sewage lagoons	Morton	9/05	PJ, CG, KG
<u>Red Phalarope</u>	1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	Barton	9/15	SS, StS
White-winged Dove	1 at feeder in Salina	Saline	9/04	NH
	<D> 1 in Burdett	Pawnee	11/13	LS
	<u>59</u> in maple tree Garden City	Finney	11/27	T&SSh, LE, BP


Format key may be found on page 11.



<u>Species</u>	<u>Number and Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer/s</u>
Inca Dove	1 at residence in Arkansas City	Cowley	8/16	GY
	18 at Garden City residence	Finney	11/19	T&SSh
<u>Snowy Owl</u>	1 at Johnson Co. Comm. College	Johnson	<u>10/20</u>	NB
<u>Barred Owl</u>	1 at Cimarron Riv. Bridge on K-27	<u>Morton</u>	9/24	MT,SP,SS,MR
Long-eared Owl	10 at Lyon Co. State Lake	Lyon	11/14	DG, JS, JM
N. Saw-whet Owl	1 found dead on U.S.-24	Riley	11/13	JN
	1 at CNG Work Station	Morton	11/13	SP, CH, MR
Calliope Hummingbird <D>	1 imm male at residence in Larned	Pawnee	8/16	D&KK
	2 at residence in Larned	Pawnee	8/17	SS
Broad-tailed Hummingbird <D>	1 adult female at Pratt res.	Pratt	8/20	LL
	1 adult female at Garden City	Finney	9/05	T&SSh
	1 at feeder in Elkhart	Morton	9/03	SP,DS,MM,GP
<u>Broad-billed Hummingbird</u> <D>	1 male at Garden City res.	Finney	10/10	PR,L&BR, M:ob
Rufous Hummingbird	1 adult male at Wichita residence	Sedgwick	8/19	KG
	1 at feeder in Elkhart	Morton	9/04	PJ, CG, KG
	1 adult female at feeder	Riley	9/15-17	DB
	<i>(Bird appeared at a feeder at a home on Tuttle Creek Lake. In one photo taken a band can be seen on the right leg. However, it could not be read.)</i>			
	1 at Prairie Village residence	Johnson	11/27	AM, ML
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	3 at Middle Springs, CNG	Morton	9/05	PJ, CG, KG
	2 at Boy Scout Area, CNG	Morton	9/06	PJ, CG, KG
Hammond's Flycatcher	1 at Boy Scout Area, CNG	Morton	9/05	PJ, CG, KG
Cordilleran Flycatcher <D>	1 at Middle Springs, CNG	Morton	9/05	PJ, CG, KG
Say's Phoebe	1 NW of Larned (late)	Pawnee	<u>11/23</u>	SS
Northern Shrike	1 at Cedar Bluff	Trego	11/13	SS
Cassin's Vireo	1 at North Fork of Cimarron	Morton	9/05	PJ, CG, KG
Western Scrub Jay	1 at Garden City residence	Finney	11/10	L&BR
Clark's Nutcracker	1 at Johnson golf course	Stanton	9/ ?	PB

Format key may be found on page 11.

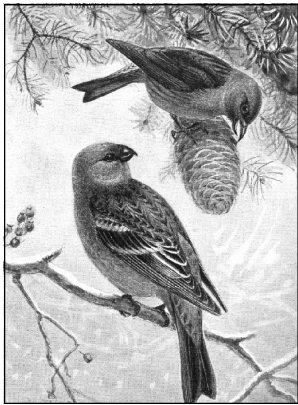


<u>Species</u>	<u>Number and Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer/s</u>
Violet-Green Swallow <D>	2 flying over Blue Rapids	Marshall	10/02	TP
Bushtit	2 in shelterbelt S. of Bloom 10-12 in Leoti	Clark Wichita	10/30 11/22	GP LH
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Very numerous statewide			
Mountain Bluebird	50 in Otoe Park, Wilson Lake 10 at Cedar Bluff	Russell Trego	10/30 11/21	DG TM
Townsend's Solitaire	1 in Wichita 1 at Meade State Lake 1 at residence in Newton 15+ at Cedar Bluff 2 in Otoe Park, Wilson Lake 2 at Clinton State Park 2 in Leoti 4 in Johnson 8 in Ulysses 8 at Wilson Lake 5 at Jetmore Cemetery 1 in Russell Springs 2 in Ness City	Sedgwick Meade Harvey Trego Russell Douglas Wichita Stanton Grant Russell Hodgeman Logan Ness	10/24 10/30 11/06 11/13 11/19 11/20 11/21 11/12 11/22 11/26 11/26 11/27 11/27	PJ GP RW SS MR GPa SS SP, CH, MR KH, SG MR DG, RF DB, TC, MR DB, TC, MR
				
<u>Varied Thrush</u> <D>	1 at Topeka residence	Shawnee	11/08	JB
Sage Thrasher	1 at Point of Rocks, CNG	Morton	9/06	PJ, CG, KG
Curve-billed Thrasher	1 goat pens N. of Elkhart	Morton	9/05	PJ
<u>Bohemian Waxwing</u>	1 in Marienthal 1 at Hays Ag Research Station 21 in Leoti 3 in Tribune 1 at Meade State Lake 1 in Valley View Cemetery 6 at Jetmore Cemetery 5 at Garden City cemetery	Wichita Ellis Wichita Greeley Meade Finney Hodgeman Finney	11/12 11/12 11/21 11/21 11/22 11/24 11/26 11/27	SP, CH, MR TM PJ, KG PJ, KG PJ, KG T&SSh DG, RF LE, BP
Blk-thrtd Blue Warbler	1 at Wichita residence	Sedgwick	10/19	D&FV
Pine Warbler	1 in Hugoton (singing) 1 at Maple Grove Cem., Wichita 1 in Sim Park, Wichita 1 at Hays Ag Research Station 1 at Greenwood Cem., Newton	Stevens Sedgwick Sedgwick Ellis Harvey	9/03 10/09 11/13 11/14 11/21	DS, SP, GP, MM MLi KG TM, GF GFr

Format key may be found on page 11.



<u>Species</u>		<u>Number and Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer/s</u>
<u>Prairie Warbler</u>	<D>	1 at Oak Park, Wichita	Sedgwick	<u>10/30-11/25</u>	PG
Green-tailed Towhee		1 at Point of Rocks, CNG	Morton	9/06	PJ, CG, KG
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sp.		1 at NESAs	Jefferson	9/29	GP
		1 at Slate Creek Wetlands	Sumner	10/16	KG
		3 at Baker Wetlands	Douglas	10/21	AP
		8 at Baker Wetlands	Douglas	11/01	AP
<u>Snow Bunting</u>	<D>	1 on Kansas River bank w of Perry	Douglas	11/12	BB
		1 on the dam at Lake Perry	Jefferson	11/13	GP
		1 at Quivira NWR	Stafford	11/13	BL
		2 at Clinton State Park	Douglas	11/26	KM
<u>Pine Grosbeak</u>		1 female in Sim Park, Wichita	Sedgwick	11/06	R&PB
		3 in Leoti	Wichita	11/12	SP, CH, MR
		1 female in Elkhart	Morton	11/13	SP, CH, MR
		4 in Ulysses	Grant	11/22	KH, SG
Purple Finch		Numerous statewide			
<u>Cassin's Finch</u>		1 at Fort's B&B, Ulysses	Grant	11/27	T&SSh
Red Crossbill		2 females in Leoti	Wichita	9/23	SP
		1 just north of Lawrence	Douglas	10/20	MRo
		20 on KSU campus	Riley	10/28	LJ
		9 at Maple Grove Cem, Wichita	Sedgwick	11/01	MLi
		5 at Hays Ag. Research Station	Ellis	11/08	TM
		9 in Otoe Park, Wilson Lake	Russell	11/10	MR
		15-20 at Hays Ag. Research Station	Ellis	11/11-14	TM, GF
		35 in Sim Park, Wichita	Sedgwick	11/13	KG
		8 in pines below Perry Lake dam	Jefferson	11/13	GP
		24 at Maple Grove Cem., Wichita	Sedgwick	11/13	MLi
		15 in Ulysses	Grant	11/22	KH, SG
		18 in Scott City	Scott	11/25	T&SSh
<u>Common Redpoll</u>		several (?) in Ulysses	Grant	11/22	KH, SG
Pine Siskin		Numerous statewide			
Lesser Goldfinch		1 black-backed form in Wichita (first reported on 7/25 at same residence)	Sedgwick	8/02-07	BR
	<D>	1 black-backed form in Olathe	Johnson	8/19-28	M&EC
		1 at Middle Springs, CNG	Morton	9/05-06	SP, GP, PJ
<u>Evening Grosbeak</u>		1 at Hays Ag. Research Station	Ellis	11/08	TM



Format key may be found on page 11.



Key:

- Underlined dates, locations or comments indicate unusual, late or early sightings.
- Underlined species indicates unusual species.
- Underlined species in bold** indicate species with no records or fewer than 10 records for Kansas.
- <D>indicates documentation was submitted to KBRC (Kansas Bird Records Committee).

Abbreviations: Cimarron

National Grassland (CNG), Nelson Environmental Study Area (NESAs), Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (QNWR).

Observers: Jim Arterburn, Pat Buckhaults, Doris Burnett, Nathan Behrends, Roy & Pat Beckemeyer (R&PB), Joanne Brier, Bill Busby, Ted Cable, Mark & Elaine Corder (M&EC), Jeff Cox, Lisa Edwards, Tom Flowers, Greg Farley, Gregg Friesen (GF), Richard Field, Dan Gish, Chet Gresham, Kevin Groeneweg, Sam Guy, Paul Griffin, Dave Henness, Nancy Highgate, Kellye Hart, Leon Hicks, Chris Hobbs, Pete Janzen, Lowell Johnson, Don & Kathy Kazmaier (D&KK), Marvin Kuehn, Dan Kilby, Mark Land, Linda Loomis, Matthew Linnabary (MLi), Betty Leader, Mick McHugh, Terry Mannell, Jim Malcolm, Ann Martin, Kathy McDowell, Adolfo Navarro, Jackie Nooker, Sebastian Patti, Galen Pittman, Gerry Parkinson (GP), Tom Parker, Alexis Powell, Brandon Percival, Mike Rader, Mark Robbins (MRo), Ben Rogers, Phil Rich, Leonard & Betty Rich (L&BR), Scott Seltman, Steven Seltman (StS), Diane Seltman (DSe), David Seibel, Kylee Sharp, Tom & Sara Shane (T&SSh), Jon Strong, Layton Strong, Max Thompson, Don & Fran Vannoy (D&FV), Rod Wedel, Gene Young.

Compiler's Narrative:

Numerous finch, nuthatch and waxwing reports streaming in from various sites (principally western counties) in early November accentuated unusual sightings this fall. Compared to a year ago, when only one unusual finch (Cassin's) made this report, this fall was a banner season for finches.

In recent history, Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks have not invaded the state in the numbers seen and documented during this reporting season. Townsend Solitaires also made an impressive appearance with eight individuals reported at the Fort Cedar B&B in Ulysses, eight at Wilson Lake and an incredible fifteen seen at Cedar Bluff!

A very cooperative male Broad-billed Hummingbird at the Rich residence in Finney County dazzled listeners from all over the region for several weeks before being "retired" to the Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City. (The bird will be a first state record if accepted by the KBRC) Another highlight was the Varied Thrush reported in November from a Topeka residence. The Prairie Warblers seen for nearly a month in Wichita's Oak Park

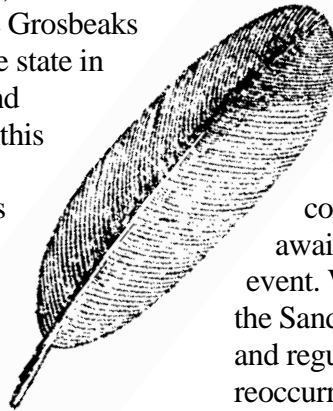
have to be among the more notable records.

Significantly, no species of gulls made this fall report. And, only four species of waterfowl made the list compared to eleven a year ago. Also of note were several bird species that stayed well beyond their normal fall departure dates.

Unfortunately, birders will remember fall 2004 for the shooting of two Whooping Cranes near Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. The birding and conservation communities anxiously await the outcomes of this event. Will we see adjustments to the Sandhill Crane hunting season and regulations to prevent a recurrence of this tragedy?

I thank Lloyd Moore for assisting with this report. It is an understatement to say his experience and expertise were invaluable. Also, I give many thanks to all who provide the reports forming the database for the Roundup. Please submit documentation of rare or unusual birds to the KBRC. Electronic submission forms are available online at <http://ksbirds.org>, or you may send them to **Chuck Otte**, KBRC Secretary, 631 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441.

You may reach **Mark Corder** at buddesystem@msn.com or 232 S. Cherry, Olathe, KS 66061.



AN ANTIQUE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

by Jeff Cox

Shortly before Christmas, 2004, I saw this message from **Tom Shane** on the KS-BIRDS listserv:

“Jim Mayhew is going to make the 100th anniversary Abilene count on Christmas Day this year. ... It is too bad someone can not run a similar anniversary count in Independence. Then again, who would want to try to follow in [Alexander] Wetmore's footsteps?”

Maybe I'm a sucker, or maybe I just like Christmas Bird Counts, but this really piqued my interest. Independence is about 80 miles from Tulsa, so even though I had never birded there I thought I might give it a try. I responded to Tom's message and received encouragement and birding information from several Kansas birders. I planned to wait until New Year's weekend, but it turned out I was free on December 26, so I seized the moment.

Alexander Wetmore was born in 1886 in North Freedom, Wisconsin, and grew up there. His mother suffered from poor health and they moved to Independence, Kansas, in 1904; Wetmore graduated from high school there the following year. He earned his A.B. degree from the University of Kansas in 1912 and later earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from George Washington University. He went on to a distinguished career in ornithology and museum administration, becoming one of the foremost American

ornithologists of the mid-20th century, and serving as Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution from 1945 to 1952.

Archivists from the Smithsonian Institution graciously provided me with copies of Wetmore's field notes from December 1904, including his CBC. It has the list of species shown in Figure 1 but no indication of where he went on his count. (Note that for many years *Bird-Lore* did not include introduced species in the published count lists, so House Sparrows – Wetmore used the older name, English Sparrows – did not make the published list. His journal shows that he found 25 of them. He also counted Gambel's Sparrow as a separate species, but the AOU now considers it a subspecies of White-crowned Sparrow.) His field notes from earlier in

is also one mention of a trip near the “cement works” southeast of town. I assume Wetmore was on foot for his Independence count, although I suppose he might have had a horse; I doubt he had a motor vehicle. I am sure whatever optical equipment he had would be no match for my Bausch & Lomb Elites, but I consider that just compensation for my deficient hearing.

Wetmore did his Independence CBC on Christmas Day, 1904, between 8:40 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. I matched his times exactly. Results are presented in Table 1.

I started my count in the southeast corner of Riverside Park and spent about two hours in that area – walking up to the south end of the zoo (I did NOT count the peacocks or emus). I walked west into the cemetery and then down to the railroad bridge. I drove south along South 2nd Street to the edge of town, east on College Avenue and back north along Cement Street, past the still-operating cement works. Cement Street was perhaps the least birdy place I have been in some time, but otherwise I found birds steadily throughout the morning.

I will make just a few comparisons of Wetmore's species list and mine, but first some comments about a few of Wetmore's species determinations. In addition to Wetmore's field notes, I obtained Wetmore's list from the online CBC database at www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/index.html. Wetmore's hand-

Species	Count
Red-shouldered Hawk	1
American Sparrowhawk	1
Hairy Woodpecker	6
Downy	1
Red-bellied	3
Flicker	20
Prairie Horned Lark	58
Bluejay	46
American Crow	50
Meadowlark	100

Figure 1. Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7006, Box 133, f.1.

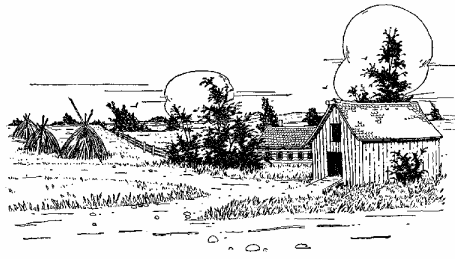
December indicate that he spent much time along the Verdigris River north of town. Wetmore also specifically mentioned visiting the cemetery and crossing the Verdigris on the railroad bridge; both of these locations are on the northeast part of town, near present-day Riverside Park. There



written summary in his field notes lists “Meadowlark 100,” “Chicadee [sic] 16,” and “Bluebird 12.” It was not unusual in those days to list species generically if there was only one species commonly found in the area. The CBC database treats those entries as “meadowlark sp. 100,” “chickadee sp. 16,” and “bluebird sp. 12.” Wetmore’s notes for 7 January 1905 specify *Sialia sialis* (Eastern Bluebird) for a bluebird he collected near Independence. That is the expected species there, so I have listed his bluebirds as Eastern. I am certain the bluebirds I saw were of the eastern species. Wetmore collected a series of 13 chickadees near Independence and determined that all of them were Carolina Chickadees, so I have listed his CBC chickadees as Carolinas; I am reasonably certain the chickadees I saw were Carolinas. Wetmore collected specimens of both Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, with Eastern being more common. I am certain he considered the ones listed under “Meadowlark 100” to be Easterns.

A big change from 1904 to 2004 is the increase in introduced species. Wetmore found but one introduced species—the House Sparrow—mentioned above, but I added Eurasian Collared-Dove, Rock Pigeon, European Starling, and House Finch. Wetmore recorded no water birds; I recorded two species (Canada Goose and Ring-billed Gull), both of which have increased dramatically in numbers in recent years. On the other hand, Wetmore recorded four species of prairie birds that I did not find:

Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and the two meadowlark species (although I did find meadowlarks inside the city limits shortly after I finished my count). There is still much open country within a few miles of Independence, and on the drive up I noticed a highway sign directing travelers to “The Little House on the Prairie.” The events that Laura Ingalls Wilder recorded in her book of the same title had



taken place only about 30 years before Wetmore arrived on the scene, when the area truly was open prairie.

From time to time during my count, it occurred to me that a century and a day before, Alexander Wetmore might have stood in the very spot I was, and could have been seeing the same species of birds. Independence has not been subjected to the rampant development of many parts of the country, but what would he think if he personally re-enacted that first count? It was not the first Christmas Bird Count Wetmore had participated in. CBCs began in 1900, in response to a call by Frank Chapman in *Bird-Lore* for bird-watchers and sportsmen to go out and count birds on Christmas Day, rather than shoot them. If you examine an old copy of *Bird-Lore* for the results of that very first Christmas count, under North Freedom, Wisconsin, you will see the name Alick Wetmore. He was then 14.

Epilogue (1): On Christmas Day, 1904, at the same time Wetmore was conducting his Independence CBC, Edward W. Graves was conducting his own CBC in Abilene, KS. But Graves started five minutes later, so Wetmore could truly claim the first CBC in Kansas. Graves’s count was the one **Jim Mayhew** re-enacted on December 24, 2004. Graves recorded 19 species and 305 individuals. Mayhew recorded 25 species and 397 individuals. Complete totals for both counts are included in Table 1. We don’t know much about Mr. Graves. Mayhew doesn’t think he ever lived in Abilene, but he apparently had relatives there. He did conduct three more CBCs after 1904; two in 1905 and one in 1908.

Epilogue (2): Alexander Wetmore graduated from high school in 1905 and enrolled at the University of Kansas that fall. He conducted a Christmas Bird Count in Lawrence (the first for Lawrence) on December 23, 1905. Curiously, his journal for that date makes no mention of the Christmas count. His narrative for that day begins:

“This morning Dallas Harma [?] and I took a mule team and were gone all day driving about twenty-five miles, making a circle around Blue Mound. It was rather sharp and frosty out.”

This December will mark the centennial of that CBC. If anybody can round up a mule team and wants a partner to re-enact that count, give me a call.

Jeff Cox may be reached at 5363 S. Irvington Ave., Tulsa, OK 74135; E-mail: jcdcox@peoplepc.com





Table I
Comparative Results
of Independence and Abilene, Kansas, Christmas Bird Counts
1904 and 2004, respectively

Species	I*-1904 total	I-2004 total	A**-1904 total	A-2004 total
Canada Goose		200		
Mallard				1
Great Blue Heron				3
Northern Harrier			1	1
Red-tailed Hawk		2	1	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	1		
American Kestrel	1			1
Ring-billed Gull		1		
Rock Pigeon		23		25
Eurasian Collared-Dove		1		3
Mourning Dove				2
Belted Kingfisher		2		
Red-headed Woodpecker		1		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	3	12	2	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2		
Downy Woodpecker	10	2	4	1
Hairy Woodpecker	6		3	
Northern Flicker	20	11		2
Pileated Woodpecker		2		
Blue Jay	40	20		2
American Crow	50	35	22	6
Horned Lark	58		62	1
Black-capped Chickadee			9	2
Carolina Chickadee	16	10		
Tufted Titmouse	7	6		
Red-breasted Nuthatch		4		
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	10		
Brown Creeper	11		1	
Bewick's Wren			1	

I*=Independence

A**=Abilene

Species	I-1904 total	I-2004 total	A-1904 total	A-2004 total
Carolina Wren	16	7		
Winter Wren	1			
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1			
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		1		
Eastern Bluebird	12	17		7
American Robin	60	12		45
Northern Mockingbird		5		
European Starling		135		75
Cedar Waxwing	58			
Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler	1	6		
lowhee sp.			1	
American Tree Sparrow			34	
Field Sparrow	1			
Fox Sparrow	1			
Song Sparrow	15	2		
White-throated Sparrow		2		
Harris's Sparrow	51		84	22
White-crowned Sparrow	18	2		
White-crowned (Gambel's) Sparrow	1			
Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco	250	39	30	7
Lapland Longspur	84			
Northern Cardinal	26	16	26	3
Western Meadowlark	2			
Eastern Meadowlark	100			
meadowlark sp.			23	6
Rusty Blackbird	6			
Purple Finch	17			
House Finch		32		39
House Finch	10	8	1	85
House Sparrow	25	12		55
Total Species	34	34	17	25
Total Individuals	981	641	305	397

Whooping Crane Shooting and Sandhill Crane Season Update

On November 6, 2004, seven adult hunters were hunting west of Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. It was opening day of the goose and Sandhill Crane seasons.

Three “cranes” rose and the hunters shot at them while looking into the sun. According to a Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks news release, 22 Whooping Cranes were seen at or near Quivira that day.

Later on the 6th, two injured Whooping Cranes were found three miles west of Quivira. Refuge staff captured the birds and rushed both to the Kansas State University veterinary hospital for treatment.

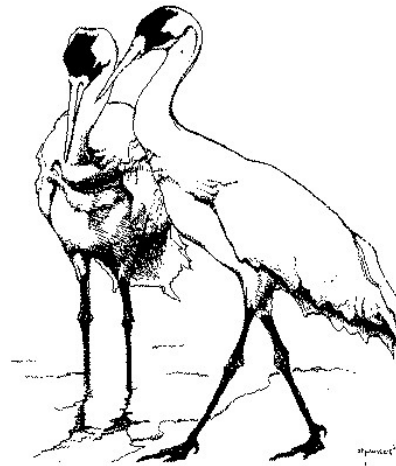
One crane had a badly mangled leg; it died November 10. The other bird, despite a broken wing and several body wounds, improved and was sent to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. It died of *aspergillosis*—a respiratory illness—on December 9. DNA analysis conducted at Kansas State revealed both of the cranes were male.

One Whooping Crane, believed to be the third bird fired upon, stayed at Quivira through mid-December. Whether it continued its migration south is unknown.

Concerns about crane season

In 1993, **Dave Rintoul** made recommendations to KDWP Commissioners about the proposed Sandhill Crane season.

The overlying concern, which remains today, was that a hunter would mistakenly shoot a Whooping Crane. One of Rintoul’s suggestions was to “delay the start of the season until Whoopers were all or mostly in Aransas.” Another was to “delay the timing of the start of the day’s shooting until sufficient light was available for hunters to make a



correct ID.” Crane silhouettes of both species are similar, albeit Whooping Cranes stand 6-12 inches taller than Sandhills.

Although some statistics report there are approximately 400 Whooping Cranes, the official Aransas/Wood Buffalo Flock peak count for December 2004 was 216.

“The Aransas population is the number to focus on,” said Rintoul. “And within that self-sustaining population, there are only 50 or 60 successfully breeding pairs.”

The recommendations Rintoul gave in 1993 were repeated by others at the KDWP Commissioner meeting January 20 in Topeka.

KOS president **Gene Young** said, “On behalf of KOS, I asked for consideration of delaying the season and moving back the shooting hours. I indicated that KDWP has a responsibility under the Endangered Species Act to protect and to enhance populations of the Whooping Crane. I asked the Commission to take its responsibilities seriously.”

Although a population increase of 440% for Whooping Cranes from 1961-2004 has been cited, a more conservative estimate of how fast the Aransas population has grown since 1993 may be gathered from the following peak population figures:

1993 population: 143

2004 population: 216

$73 \text{ divided by } 143 = 51.05\%$

increase over the 11-year period.

$51.05\% \text{ divided by } 11 = 4.64\%$

average yearly increase since 1993.

Population figures are available at www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/crane/Population.html and www.birdrockport.com.

What’s next

Members of the public may express their concerns regarding the Sandhill Crane season at KDWP Commission meetings. The commission advises Secretary Mike Hayden on planning and policy issues regarding KDWP. The next two meetings are scheduled for March 24 (Beloit) and April 21 (Pittsburg).

continued on p. 16



Registration Form

2005 KOS spring meeting
Pratt, April 22 - 24, 2005

I /We plan to attend the 2005 KOS Spring Field Trip:

Name/s _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Number _____ @ \$15.00 (includes Saturday dinner) \$ _____

Number _____ @ \$20.00 (Includes dinner and Sunday lunch) \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Please indicate how many plan to attend the birding trips on Saturday.

Trip 1 Trip 2 Trip 3 Local Pratt area

In submitting this registration I/we understand that KOS is not responsible or liable for any accidents or injury that might be associated with the 2005 Spring Field Trip.

Signatures

Date



Please pre-register by April 15 and make checks payable to Kansas Ornithological Society. KOS is unable to accept payment by credit card. Mail registration and checks to **Lee Queal**, 1004 West Ninth, Pratt, KS 67124.

Crane Update, *continued*

Commissioners will accept written communication, too.

Contact information may be found at www.kdwp.state.ks.us/about/about.html.

Constituents also may contact **Secretary Mike Hayden**, KDWP, 1020 S. Kansas Ave., Suite 200, Topeka, KS 66612; and **Governor Kathleen Sebelius**, Capitol, 300

SW 10th Ave., Ste. 212S, Topeka, KS 66612-1590.

Editor's note: Reports from The Wichita Eagle, The Hutchinson News, KDWP and the KSBIRD-L archive were used in researching this article. Thanks also to Gene Young and Dave Rintoul for their comments.

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