



The Horned Lark

Kansas Ornithological Society

Summer, 2014

Vol. 41, No. 2

Hooded Oriole Photographed in Kansas



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From the Keyboard

By the Editor

Birding makes moments better, even grand moments.

In May, I had the opportunity to go to Stavanger, Norway (on the south-western coast it is that country's oil export hub) on a business trip. It was an exciting opportunity to bird. Many of the warblers and other migrants coming out of Central African rainforests breed on Scandinavia's high moors, feeding off the abundance of the tundra and northern forests; many waterfowl come north too.

It was a short trip and there was not a lot of time to bird between work but the sun didn't set till 10:30 so there was enough time in the evenings for short jaunts. A short walk away was a small lake with dozens of great-black-backed and lesser black-backed gulls. During one dinner along the pier that abutted the hotel, I watched a GBBG compete with pigeons for scraps of food. That same evening I spotted a grey heron on the roof above the café where I was having an over-priced beer.

On my last day in country, I hiked up to a well-known landmark, the Preikestolen. It's a promontory that looks out over the Lysefjord, one of Norway's most famous tourist sites. Along the way I heard a mys-

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In memorium

By Chuck Otte

This message is directed at those folks who have been around KOS since the late 1960s and early 1970s. I learned this evening that Celia White Markum passed away early this morning in hospice in Harlingen Texas. Celia was 96. Celia was a KOS board member in the late 60s and early 70s serving as president of KOS in 1970-71. Celia was quite active until the past couple of years when age finally slowed her down. Celia spent much of her life in Junction City and I had the privilege to get to know her over the years and spend time birding with her. She was a class act and a grand lady. She will be missed by all who knew her.



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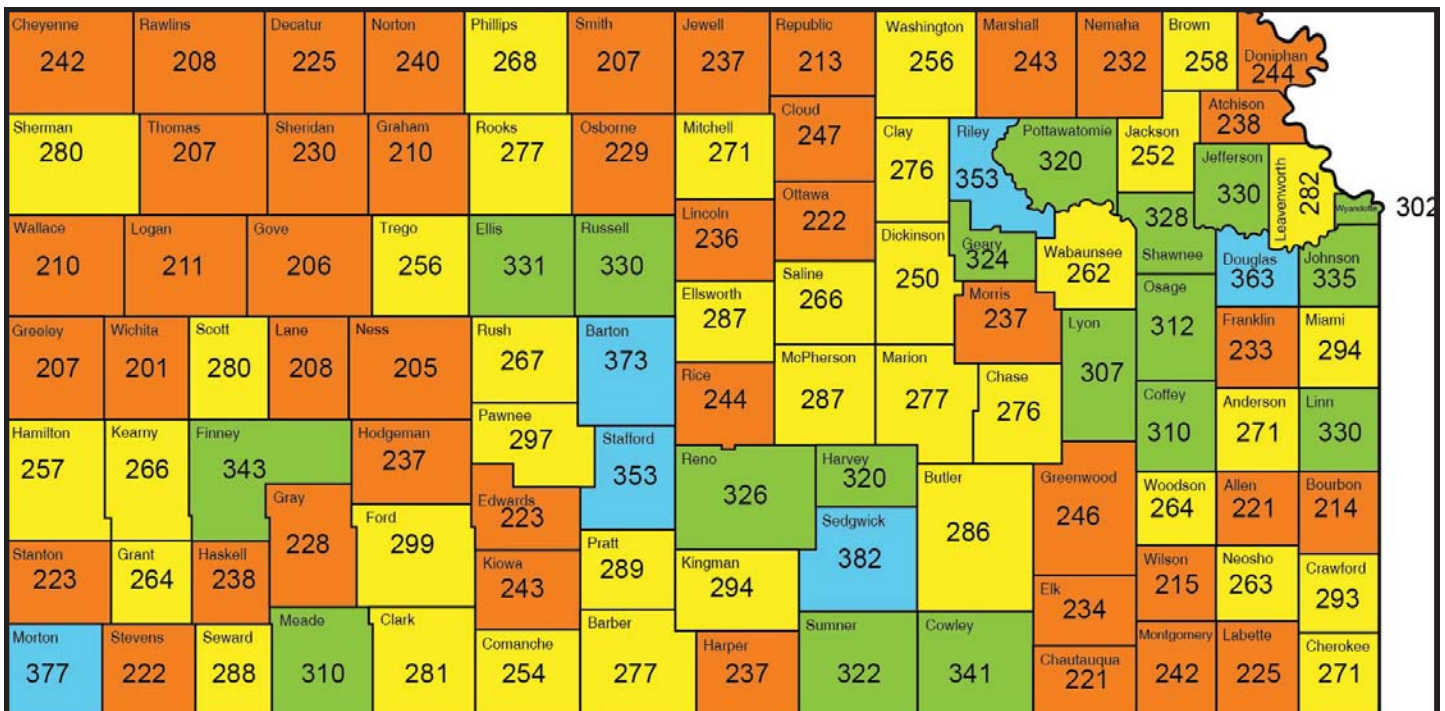
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No County below 200,

By Pete Janzen

On May 10, 2014, Jeff Calhoun and I decided to spend as much time as was required to get at least one new species of bird for Wichita County's all-time species list. This would remove the last of Kansas' 105 Counties from the Chuck Otte (under 200 species) "List of Shame" that had been generated some years ago. After mediocre stops in Marienthal and the Leoti lagoons, I followed a hunch and talked Jeff into temporarily ditching Leoti in favor of a pathetic stand of trees along White Woman Creek discovered by Kevin G. last year, euphemistically designated "Sherwood Forest". This turned out to be a lucky call. For the record, the bird that put the last county in Kansas over 200 species was a male Hooded Warbler calling from within a massive pile of dead tumbleweeds in a dessicated stream channel in the shadow of one of the larger cattle feedlots in NW KS. This was followed about 30 minutes later by an Indigo Bunting, #201 for Wichita County. I understand that later this summer, Chuck will be updating the maps to show all those counties that have less than 250 species. So it's just like my sales job....you achieve a seemingly amazing goal, so the sales manager sets the bar even higher for the next round! It's a testimonial to the dedication of the county listers in Kansas that we actually achieved 200 species in all 105 counties in Kansas. Some of them can be quite challenging indeed. There are certainly some where 250 seems to be utterly impossible to ever achieve even with decades of future effort but I think that this is an achievable number in at least half or two-thirds of them.



Kansas 2013-14 Winter season roundup

Jon King, compiler

The winter of 2013 - 2014 was cold and dry. After a mild fall, temperatures plunged rapidly in December. According to the *High Plains Climate Data Center*, December temperatures in the east were 2-6 °F below normal, but generally within 2 °F of normal in the west. By February, temperatures averaged 7.4 °F below normal statewide, and locally more than 10 °F below normal in the northeast. This was the states 13th coldest February in 120 years. Kansas' long-standing dry spell continued this winter. The east was abnormally dry (D0) while the west suffered from severe drought (D2) and locally extreme drought (D3) (*US Drought Monitor*).

Freeze-over at Kansas reservoirs was more extensive than usual with such cold conditions. Webster, Cheney, Wilson, and L. Afton were mostly, but not completely, frozen this winter (J. Van de Kopple, P. Janzen, M. Rader). Most northeast Kansas reservoirs were frozen at one point (M. Gearheart), while Melvern and Pomona were frozen most of the winter (J. Malcom). These conditions concentrated waterfowl on remaining open water areas. Wyandotte County L. was popular with Kansas City area birders for this reason, and at one point the lake was holding some 30,000 Canada Goose, 20,000 Mallard, and 75 Trumpeter Swans in Jan. However, Wilson L. once again produced the most "inland seabirds" this winter including all three scoters, Long-tailed Duck, and Pacific Loon. Despite the deep-freeze, 32 species of waterfowl were recorded this season, or 33 if the Taiga Bean Goose reported at Wilson L. is accepted by the Kansas Bird Records Committee.

Gulling in Kansas was generally good this winter. Earlier in the season gull numbers were excellent along the Kansas R. and L. Quivira, which is situated just south of the Kansas R., was quite popular with Kansas City area birders for this reason. The lake produced eight gull species total with seven species seen on 28 December. As harsher weather set in, gulls were especially concentrated in the south-central region at sites such as Cheney Res. and Winfield City L.. Elsewhere, this was the most productive winter for gulls at Melvern L. in a long time (J. Malcom). Notable species this winter included two Great Black-backed Gulls and an Iceland Gull. Unlike waterfowl and gulls, wintering shorebirds were generally scarce this year as could be expected. However, Kansas did have its first winter Solitary Sandpiper this year.

Fruit-eating passerines such as the American Robin and Cedar Waxwing were generally in short supply this year except in the Red Hills where these species and Mountain Bluebird were abundant. With all the robins, waxwings, and bluebirds in the Red Hills, Merlin and accipiter numbers were also above average. Wintering sparrow numbers were "low", "very low", "down", and "in the basement" across the state this season. Rare passerines of note this season included a Say's Phoebe in southeast Kansas, a winter Sprague's Pipit, a Golden-crowned Sparrow, and a Lesser Goldfinch in northeast Kansas.

This was not a year to see irruptive northern finches. Red-breasted Nuthatch, Purple Finch, and Pine Siskin were all quite scarce with single reports of Common Redpoll and Evening Grosbeak. Although winter finches were lacking, other northern species such as Snowy Owl and Northern Shrike made a good showing. This was an invasion year for Snowy Owl, especially in the east United States. Kansas birders reported 14+ Snowy Owls this season. Extralimital reports of Northern Shrike have increased recently, and this was another good year for the species, especially in northeast Kansas.



Michael Harding, Marbled Godwits.

Thanks to all those observers who reported their sightings via eBird or KSBIRDS-L, and special thanks to H. Armknecht, A. Burnett, J. Calhoun, G. Friesen, M. Gearheart, P. Janzen, M. Land, J. Malcom, R. Penner, M. Rader, S. Seltman, and J. Van de Kopple for their insights regarding this winter season. For further information on the winter season, please see the forthcoming Kansas CBC summary published in the KOS Bulletin which was not consulting in making this report.

Bean Goose: Possible. A flyover was reported at Wilson L. (*Russell*) (MR,RP) on 1/25. Unfortunately the bird was not subsequently relocated. The observers noted a strange 3-note call, a plain belly, white “U” on tail, orange legs, and a dark bill with a yellow patch towards the middle/end and a dark tip. This would represent a first state record if accepted. This bird was reportedly of the “Taiga” species.

Trumpeter Swan: Increasingly common. Highest counts: 35 at Neosho WA 1/25 (AB) and 75 at WYCL 1/12 (MG,BAS). West-most reported were 2 at Webster Res. 12/13 – 1/4 (MZ,ZK) and 1 in Barton 1/16 (RP).

Tundra Swan: A good showing with an estimated 17 individuals reported at 6 locations excluding Quivira or CBWA. All sightings: 3 at BSM 12/2 (BJ), 3 (2 ad., 1 imm.) with photo at Neosho WA 12/7 with 2 remaining 1/25 (AB), 1 at Wilson L. (*Russell*) 12/10 (MR), 2 ad. in *Bourbon* 12/31 (MH,NV,RR), 1 ad. photographed at SMP 1/3 (DS,JG,MG), 3 ad. photographed at Olathe L. 1/3-4 (RW), and several birds at WYCL 12/28 – 2/7 (mo) with a maximum of 4 there 1/2 (DS).

Mute Swan: Free-flying individuals are appearing in fall and winter recently, as in Nebraska (*North American Birds Vol. 64 No. 1, Southern Great Plains*). Sightings: 2 on the Republican R. (*Geary*) 12/15 (JK), 2 at Milford L. (*Geary*) 1/18 (BG), and 1 ad. associating with Trumpeter Swans at Neosho WA 12/27 into Mar (AB).

American Black Duck: 1 at WYCL 1/4 - 2/2 (MA,PH), 1 photographed at JEC 1/24

Table 1. Winter Water-bird High Counts, Dec 2013 - Jan 2014				
Species	Count	Date	Location	Observer(s)
Greater White-fronted Goose	3,000	1/12	CBWA	BJ
Greater White-fronted Goose	2,200	2/21	CBWA	BJ
Snow Goose	171,000	2/17	CBWA	RP
Snow Goose	103,000	2/22	CBWA	RP
Ross's Goose	2,000	2/22	Cedar Bluff Res.	JVK
Ross's Goose	500	2/23	BSM	JnL
Ross's Goose	520	1/11	Coldwater L.	JnL,JsL
Cackling Goose	5,000	2/23	BSM	JnL,JsL
Canada Goose	26,000	1/4	Webster Res.	MR
Canada Goose	30,000	12/28	WYCL	MG
Wood Duck	43	1/11	Garden City	JC
Wood Duck	33	2/16	Wichita	BW
Gadwall	800	1/7	Johnson Co. WTP	JW
American Wigeon	400	2/23	Ford	JC
American Wigeon	200	12/10	Winfield City L.	MT
Mallard	25,000	12/10	Perry L.	MA
Mallard	35,000	1/26	Quivira	BJ
Mallard	20,000	1/26	WYCL	MG
Mallard	20,000	12/10	Winfield City L.	MT
Northern Shoveler	100	2/21	Johnson Co. WTP	MG
Northern Pintail	5,711	2/21	Quivira	BJ
Northern Pintail	8,500	2/23	Ford	JC
Green-winged Teal	1,157	2/21	BSM	BJ

Canvasback	110	3/25	L. Vaquero (<i>Shawnee</i>)	JH
Redhead	822	2/21	Quivira	BJ
Ring-necked Duck	284	1/1	Johnson Co. WTP	MG
Ring-necked Duck	284	1/1	Johnson Co. WTP	MG
Greater Scaup	25	12/1	Wilson WTP (<i>Ellsworth</i>)	MR
Lesser Scaup	415	12/14	<i>Sedgwick</i>	PJ
Bufflehead	115	1/5	Wilson L.	MR
Common Goldeneye	3,500	12/8	Kanopolis L.	MR
Common Goldeneye	6,500	1/5	Wilson L.	MR
Hooded Merganser	250	12/15	Clinton L.	JCo,MA
Hooded Merganser	159	1/26	Winfield City L.	MT
Common Merganser	5,000	12/23	Waconda L.	JVK
Common Merganser	5,000	1/3	Winfield City L.	MT
Red-breasted Merganser	25	12/29	Melvern L.	JM
Ruddy Duck	26	12/3	Melvern L.	MM
Pied-billed Grebe	15	12/14	<i>Sedgwick</i>	PJ
Common Loon	6	1/21	La Cygne L.	MM
American White Pelican	116	1/26	Cheney Res.	PJ,TE
Double-crested Cormorant	171	12/14	<i>Sedgwick</i>	PJ
Double-crested Cormorant	150	2/25	Wichita	EM
Great Blue Heron	50	12/9	L. Afton	PG
Great Blue Heron	55	12/29	Milford L. (<i>Geary</i>)	BS
Great Blue Heron	29	12/14	<i>Sedgwick</i>	PJ
American Coot	100	1/1	Wichita	JC,PJ,TE
American Coot	180	1/4	WYCL	JKi
Killdeer	14	2/26	<i>Reno</i>	AMi
Herring Gull	210	1/29	Cheney Res.	ER,JsL,KG
Herring Gull	265	12/19	Clinton L.	Jki
Ring-billed Gull	2,600	12/28	L. Quivira	MG,mo

(BMa).

American Black Duck x Mallard: 1 at WYCL 1/4 (MA,PH) with a possible hybrid reported there 1/12 (MG,BAS). This is a common hybrid in the east and observers should carefully scrutinize all KS Black Ducks.

Blue-winged Teal: Earliest and only: 1 in *Reno* 2/20 (CMi), 1 at CBWA 2/25 (CMi).

Surf Scoter: 1 imm. at Kanopolis L. (*Ellsworth*) 12/8 (MR), 1 at Wilson L. (*Russell*) 12/3-15 (DK).

White-winged Scoter: At Wilson L. (*Russell*) seen 11/22 - 12/15 (MR) with 1 ad. male, 1 ad. female, and 2 imm. there 12/15.

Black Scoter: 2 at L. Afton 11/28 – 12/3 (KG) with photos, at Wilson L. (*Russell*) seen 11/24 - 12/15 with 4 there 12/15 (MR).

Long-tailed Duck: 1 photographed at Cheney Res. (*Reno*) 12/1 (KG) continuing from 11/24, 1 photographed at Tuttle Creek Res. (*Riley*) 12/1-3 (ER), 2 at Wilson L. (*Russell*) 12/3 – 1/28 (DK) with a maximum of 2 12/15 (MR), and 1 at WYCL 12/26 (mo) with photos, the latter continuing into Apr.

Barrow's Goldeneye: 1 ad. male at Wilson L. (*Russell*) 12/2-15 (MR), 1 imm. male at SMP 2/6 (ML), and 1 ad. male photographed in Wichita 1/1-9 (JC,PJ,TE) as is usual during the past decade. 1 reported at L. Afton 12/2 (LL).

Common Merganser: This species was present in elevated numbers at several south-central KS locations, likely due to cold conditions. Elevated numbers were noted on Wichita sandpits while numbers at Cheney Res. were normal (PJ). 700 at Quivira 2/21 (BJ) was the first time such numbers have been recorded here in years. (BJ). Numbers were similarly elevated at Winfield City L. (MT).

Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser: 1 male photographed at Hillsdale L. 1/20 (NV, RR).

American White Pelican: Highest count: 116 at Cheney Res. (Kingman, Reno) 1/26 (PJ,TE). These birds were not present earlier in winter and PJ suspects these originated from places south. However, they quickly disappeared with a subsequent cold snap. Recall that American White Pelicans began accumulating at Clinton L. during a mild Feb last winter, with up to 453 present by 2/23.

Common Loon: Rare by mid-winter. Sighted at La Cygne L. from 12/26 into Mar with a maximum of 6 there 1/21 (MM).

Pacific Loon: 1 at Wilson L. (Russell) 12/15 (MR) continuing from fall is becoming typical at this location.

Horned Grebe: Rare by mid-winter; 1 was at WYCL 1/11-26 (MS).

Eared Grebe: Rare by mid-winter. 1 was at Melvern L. 12/29 (JMa).

Neotropic Cormorant: 1 at John Redmond Res. 12/19 (JM).

Great Blue Heron: Highest counts: 50 at L. Afton 12/9 (PG), 55 at Milford L. (Geary) 12/29 (BS) roosting, and 29 in Sedgwick 12/14 (PJ).

Black-crowned Night Heron: Late: 1 at LSM 12/16 (MR).

Plegadis sp.: Late: 1 at the Hildebrand sandpit (Stafford) 12/1 (AA). 8 in Reno 12/14 (MP).

Table 2. Snowy Owls in Kansas, Dec 2013 - Feb 2014

Qty	Date(s)	Location(s)	County(ies)	Observer	Comments
1	12/6	near Ogden	Riley	CO(rep.)	
1	12/7 - 12/9	Jct. K15 and K148, Linn Willow Creek Dairy	Washington	CO(rep.)	
1	12/10	Hwy 77, ~4 mi s of Geary SFL	Morris	JK(rep.)	
1	12/12 - 12/16	1st St. near Harvey/Butler line	Butler, Harvey	CS	HY female
1	12/13	~4 miles sw of Sabetha	Nemaha	GW	
1	12/15	Duvall Rd.	Russell	MR(rep.)	
3	12/28 - 2/22	Cheyenne Bottoms area	Barton	mo	max. of 3 1/27
1	1/1	2-3 mi s of Satanta		JCv	
1	1/9	s of Webster Res.	Rooks	MR(rep.)	
1	1/12	Jct. Armstrong & Lightville	Saline	SBr	
1	1/20	near Jct. Boyd Rd. and 54th Rd.	Shawnee	DH(rep.)	
1	1/31	~20 mi w of Verdigris R.		RK(rep.)	

Turkey Vulture: Two in Franklin 2/16 (SB), 1 at Delphos (Ottawa), 1 at Schermerhorn Park 2/22 (LH), and 1 in Topeka 2/26 (JBY,RB) were likely early migrants.

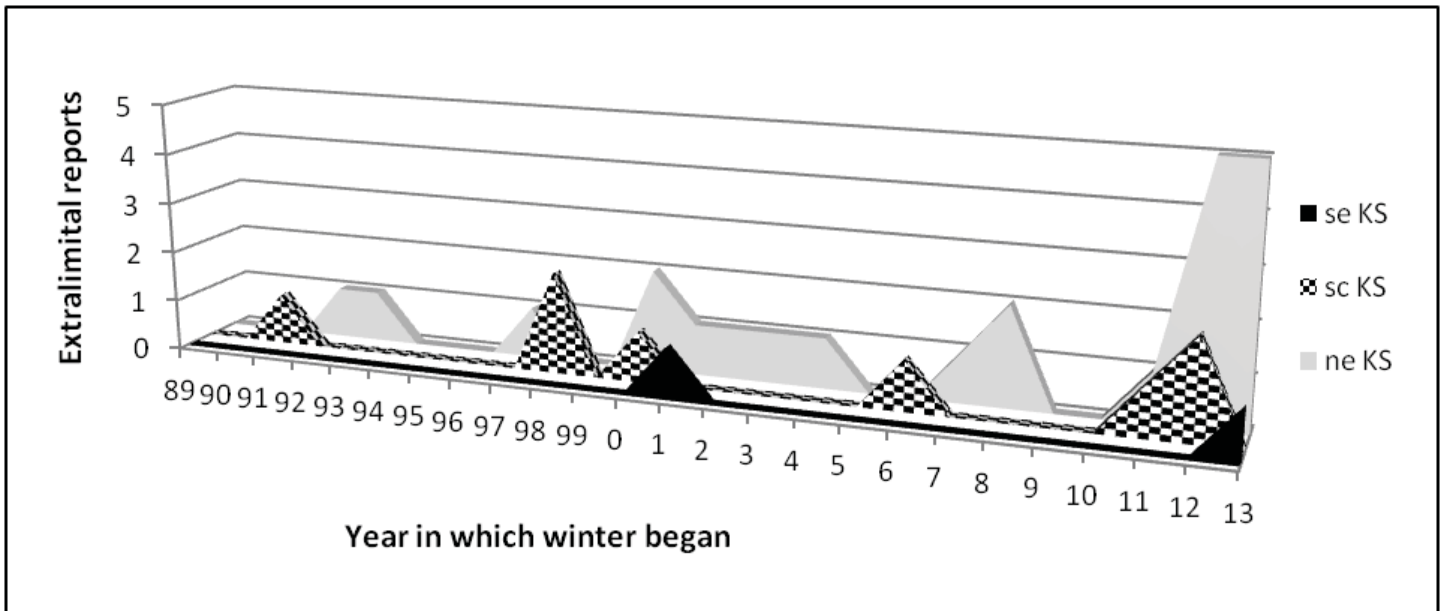
Bald Eagle: Largest concentrations were 115 at Waconda L. (HA,JVK), 115 at Webster Res. 2/22 (JVK), and 265+ at Cheney Res. (Kingman, Reno) 2/1 (PJ,WAS). Record high numbers were present at Cheney Res. this winter (PJ). Numbers were similarly elevated along the Kansas R. in Johnson and Wyandotte (ML).

Northern Goshawk: 1 sight record at Harvey County West Park 1/4 (GF).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Westerly for winter: 1 at Elm Mills (Barber) 1/7 (MR,mo), 1 at Barber SFL 1/11 (JnL,JsL), 1 ad. near Medora (Reno) 2/14 (EM). This species is increasing in south-central Kansas and can be seen in the Red Hills during winter now.

Red-tailed Hawk (Kriger's): 1 ad. photographed at Lyon SFL 11/29 – 12/18 (KLo).

Golden Eagle: Four easterly records from the Flint Hills: 1 in Wabaunsee 12/19 (JK), 1 1st yr in Morris 1/11 (JMa), 1 1st yr in Riley 2/3 (ABa), and 1 imm. at Tuttle Creek Res. (Riley) 2/26 (DB).



Sora: 1 at Wilson L. (Russell) 1/19 (MR).

Virginia Rail: 1 in Comanche 12/1 (JC), 1 at the Ulysses WTP 12/8 (JC), 2 at Quivira 12/16 (MR), 5 at Wilson L. (Russell) 1/19 (MR).

Sandhill Crane: Sandhill Cranes did not linger this winter, and they were not reported from the Red Hills where 1,000s are sometimes present. The only Jan eBird sightings were 20 at Quivira 1/12 (BJ), and 1 photographed at Woodston WA (Rooks) 1/11 (JVK).

Whooping Crane: Earliest and only: 2 at CBWA on 2/28 (MHa).

Greater Yellowlegs: 2 at BSM 12/19 (MR), 1 at the 71st St. Canoe Launch (Sedgwick) 1/14 (DE). Early migrants were 1 at Quivira 2/21 (BJ) with 3 at BSM 2/23 (JnL,JsL,SR), and 3 at CBWA 2/25 (ABa).

Solitary Sandpiper: 1 ad. photographed along the Arkansas R. near Derby 12/29-30 (JC). This is the first winter record.

Least Sandpiper: 4 at the Harper WTP (Harper) 12/1 (JC), 7 at Wilson L. (Russell) 12/3 (DK), 1 at Clinton L. 12/21 (JKi), 2 along the Arkansas R. near Derby 12/29 (JC), and 1 in Wichita 1/1 (CMi,JC,PJ,TE).

American Woodcock: Only sightings: 1 in Winfield 1/21 (JD), 1 "peenting" at Rocky Ford SFA (BS) despite a foot of snow, and 1 flushed at L. Fort Scott 12/15 (NV).

Franklin's Gull: 1 flyover at SMP 12/3 (ML), 2 basic plumage individuals at John Redmond Res. 12/7 (MG), and 1 alternate plumage individual at L. Quivira 12/28 – 1/4 (MC,MG).

California Gull: 1 ad. seen by many and photographed at L. Quivira 1/2-4 (GP), 5 at Winfield City L. 1/25 (MT), 1 1st cycle at CBWA 1/30 (MR), 1 ad. at Tunnel Mill Dam (Winfield) 2/2 (GY,MT), and 1 ad. at Melvern L. 2/23 (JMa).

Herring Gull: Significant concentrations were 265 (~250 ad., ~15 imm.) at Clinton L. 12/19 (JKi) and 210 at Cheney Res. 1/29 (ER,JsL,KG). Numbers were similarly elevated at Winfield City L. (MT).

Thayer's Gull: An estimated 13 individuals reported in Coffey, Douglas, Ellsworth, Jefferson, Johnson, and Reno. Highest Count: 4 (1 ad., 3 imm.) at L. Quivira 12/28 (MG,mo).

Iceland Gull (Kumlien's): 1 ad. photographed at Webster Res. 2/21 (JVK) is Kansas' west-most record. There are still fewer than 10 accepted records (KBRC) and this species has been reported in 2 of the past 10 winters (*The Horned Lark* vol. 31 – 40). However, this is the second consecutive winter in which the species was reported.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: An estimated 9 individuals reported in Coffey, Douglas, Johnson, Kingman, Miami, Osage, Reno, and Rooks.

Glaucous Gull: An estimated 13 individuals reported in Coffey, Cowley, Douglas, Ellsworth, Jefferson, Johnson, Kingman, Miami, Reno, and Russell. Highest Count: 4 (1 ad., 3 imm.) at L. Quivira 12/28 (JW).

Great Black-backed Gull: An increasingly likely vagrant, which has been reported in 4 of the past 10 winters (*The Horned Lark vol. 31 – 40*). However, this is the third consecutive winter the species has been reported. A 1st cycle was at L. Quivira 12/21 (MG,ML) and an ad. was at Cheney Res. (Reno) 1/26 (PJ,TE).

Burrowing Owl: 1 in a Pawnee road 12/22 (MHa,SH) after a snow storm.

Snowy Owl: This was a major invasion year for Snowy Owl, primarily in the e US. However, Kansas was not left out (Table 2).

Long-eared Owl: Reported at Lyon SFL as usual with maximum of 4 on 1/18 (TAS), and elsewhere only report was 4 at Webster Res. 1/26 (JVK).

White-winged Dove: Good counts were 18 in Elkhart 12/28 (JRa,MR) and 10 in Manhattan 12/16 – 2/15 (JR), but Garden City is still the White-winged Dove capitol of KS with 141 at the Shane residence 1/11 (SSh,TS).

Rufous Hummingbird: 1 ad. male at an Olathe feeder 12/6 (MG (rep.)), which was banded.

Peregrine Falcon: As usual, a Peregrine Falcon was in downtown Topeka with sightings 1/6 – 2/1 (JMa).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Westerly sightings for winter: 1 in Harvey 12/14 (EM), 4 in Saline (BG).

Pileated Woodpecker: Expanding westward along south-central KS drainages and 1 along the Chikaskia R. in Harper 12/1 (JC) was a good example.

Eastern Phoebe: Poor showing this winter. Only report was 1 at Buckner Valley Park (*Hodgeman*) 1/12 (Jeff Calhoun). Absent on the Red Hills CBC where now expected in winter.

Say's Phoebe: Increasingly reported as a vagrant during winter in the Midwest, likely due to dry conditions in the w US (*North American Birds Vol. 6 No. 2, The Changing Seasons*). Reported once in KS during the past 10 winters (*The Horned Lark Vol. 31 - 40*). This winter 1 was photographed at a recently manured garden in Labette 12/31 – 1/8 (AB, MH, NV, RR) with photos taken.

Northern Shrike: Extralimital reports are increasing in recent winters, especially in ne KS (figure 1). Extralimital sightings: 1 ad. at Shawnee SFL 12/13 – 2/1 (CM) with photo, 1 ad. at Neosho WA 12/31 - 1/18 (AB,MH,NV,RR) with photo, 1 just s of Lyon SFL 1/3 (JMa), 1 at Melvern L. 1/18 (JMa), 1 ad. at Hillsdale L. 1/21 (GYe) with photo, and 1 ad. in Linn 1/15 (MM).

Western Scrub-Jay: Sightings: 1 photographed at Finney Game Refuge 1/11 (JC), 2 at Cimarron NG (Morton) 1/24 (SS,TC), and 1 present for 3+ weeks in Johnson City during Feb (JC(rep.)).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Poor showing. Statewide reported on 0.35 % of checklists in Jan, while Jan average over past 12 years is 5.0 % (*eBird*).

House Wren: 1 photographed at Scott SP 12/1 (SSh) was late.

Sedge Wren: Early in winter it was easy to find at Quivira 12/1 (BJ), 2 were at Neosho WA 12/1 with 1 there on 12/15 (both AB), and 1 was at Quivira 12/16 (MR). Later, 1 was at Dyck Arboretum (*Harvey*) 1/11 - 15 (EM).

Marsh Wren: Highest Count: 6 at Wilson L. (*Russell*) 1/19 (MR).



Osprey eats fish, taken at Augusta City Lake April, 2014 by Mike Nolan.

Carolina Wren: 1 photographed at Scott SP 12/1 (SSh). Despite harsh conditions, Carolina Wren numbers seemed steady in south-central KS (MT,PJ).

Bewick's Wren: Rare in Linn, with 1 on 1/19 (MM) only a mile n of last winter's sighting there.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Numbers were above average in the Wichita area during Dec (JC).

Mountain Bluebird: Excellent showing in the Red Hills with new all-time high count of 2,018 on the Red Hills CBC 1/4 (PJ). 1,440 was the previous high-count. Notable single-party counts in Barber were 628 (JC) and 369 (ER,PJ) both on 1/4, and 250 in Comanche on 2/7 (JnL).

Townsend's Solitaire: A good season for Townsend's Solitaire in the Stockton, Wilson, and Dodge City general areas (JC,JVK,MR). Easterly sightings: present at Lyon SFL 11/30 – 2/16 (MG) with maximum of 2 there 12/15 – 1/15, 1 at Tuttle Creek Res. (Pottawatomie) 12/15 (BS), and 1 at Milford L. (Geary) 1/11 (LM).

American Robin: Numbers down in the Topeka, Wilson, and Stockton general areas (JMa,JVK,MR), while numbers in the Red Hills area were excellent (JC,PJ).

Gray Catbird: A good winter for this species in several Midwestern states (eBird). Sightings: 1 in Barber 1/9 (JnL,JsL), 1 at Leavenworth Landing Park 2/4-10 (MS). This species has been reported in 3 of the past 10 winters (*The Horned Lark vol. 31 - 40*).



Hooded Oriole, May 1, 2014, Douglas County
Photo by Dan Huffman

Brown Thrasher: 5 sightings: 1 in Shawnee 1/26 (GC,JMa), another in Shawnee 1/2-5 (GC), 1 in Harvey 2/8 (EM), 1 in Chautauqua 2/13 (RP), and 1 in Pawnee from early Dec to early Feb (SS).

American Pipit: 5 sightings: 1 in Reno 12/1 (KG), 1 in Riley 12/7 (BS,FS,JsL,SR), another in Riley 12/10 (ER), 1 in Miami 1/20 (MH,NV), and 3 at L. Parsons 2/23 (AB).

Sprague's Pipit: 1 flushed from a grassy two-track and called in Comanche 1/25 (JnL). There are few winter records of this species and Sprague's Pipit is not mentioned during winter in the past 10 years (*The Horned Lark vol. 31 - 40*).

Cedar Waxwing: Numbers were down in the Wilson and Stockton general areas, but good in Wichita (JC,JVK,MR) and excellent in

the Red Hills. The Red Hills CBC recorded 2,315 on 1/4, shattering the previous high count of 697 (PJ).

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Rarely but regularly reported in south-central KS during winter. Sightings: 8+ in 13,000 Laplands in Ford 12/14 (Jeff Calhoun), 30 flushed from a Reno roadside 1/12 (PJ), 3 at CBWA 2/17 (RP) with Laplands, 1 Comanche 2/27 (JnL).

McCown's Longspur: 1 in Pratt 12/6 (JnL) with photo and another in Pratt 1/7 with Laplands (JnL).

Smith's Longspur: Westerly sightings: 1 in Kiowa 2/9 (JnL), 25 in Comanche 12/16 (JnL). Highest count was 50 1/25 near Udall (GY,MT) and the northern-most were near Lyon SFL with a maximum of 36 in that area on 12/18 (Cole Wolf, Matt Baumann).

Orange-crowned Warbler: 3 sightings: 1 in Leavenworth 12/3 (JB), 1 at Maple Grove Cem. 12/14 – 1/1 (KG), 1 in Manhattan 1/17 (BS).

Pine Warbler: 1 ad. male and 1 imm. male/ad. female photographed at Maple Grove Cem. 12/14(KG).

Eastern Towhee: Only reports: 2 males in Rooks 1/4 (MR), 1 in Riley present from mid Dec until at least 2/16 (TC), 1 male in Linn 1/25 (MM). This species is rare and regular in c KS during winter (SS).

Chipping Sparrow: 1 photographed amongst Tree Sparrows at Kaw Point Riverfront Park (Johnson) 2/16 (KL), 1 at a feeder in Reno 12/22-26 (JM). Reported in 6 of the past 10 winters (*The Horned Lark vol. 31 - 40*).

Vesper Sparrow: 1 visiting a feeder in Reno 12/26 (JM) with photos. Reported in 4 of the past 10 winters (*The Horned Lark vol. 31 – 40*).

Lark Bunting: Only reported was 1 s of Nekoma (*Rush*) 12/8 (DKz), although little data from sw KS were available this season.

Savannah Sparrow: Scarce in ne KS with and the only significant flocks noted were in se KS. For example, 11 in *Neosho* 1/5 (AB) or a group of 21 in *Cherokee* (MH,NV,RR).

Golden-crowned Sparrow: Adult amongst Tree and White-crowned Sparrows at Cimarron NG 1/24 (SS,TC). Although annual by the late 1980s (*Birds of Kansas*), it was reported in only 4 of the past 10 years (*The Horned Lark Vol. 31 – 40*).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: 1 photographed in *Johnson* 1/25 (JW).

Rusty Blackbird: Highest count: 250 in *Butler* 1/5 (BB) with photos by BGr.

Great-tailed Grackle: Highest count reported was 5,000 near Mulvane Casino 12/8 (GY).

Purple Finch: Scarce. In *Douglas*, *Johnson*, and *Shawnee* reported on 0.22 % of checklists during Jan, while the Jan average over past the 10 years is 7.8 % across these counties (*eBird*).

Common Redpoll: 1 made a brief appearance at a *Johnson* feeder 12/29 (RA).

Pine Siskin: Scarce. Statewide reported on 0.23 % of checklists in Jan, while the 10 year Jan average is 7.2 % (*eBird*).

Lesser Goldfinch: Two reports from Garden City: 1 photographed on 1/18 (SSh), 1 black-backed ad. male at the Shane residence for several weeks in Feb (SSh). Elsewhere a male visited a feeder ~3 mi n of Baldwin 12/15-17 (BBu) – a first for the relatively well-birded *Douglas*. This species has been recorded in north-east Kansas during 2 of the past 10 years (*The Horned Lark vol. 31 – 40*; *eBird*).

Evening Grosbeak: 1 male seen sporadically throughout much of the period in North Newton (FB).

Observers: Andrew Burnett (AB), Aaron Balogh (ABa), Burrough's Audubon Society (BAS), Bob Broyles (BB), Bill Busby (BBu), Byron Grauerholz (BG), Bob Gress (BGr), Barry Jones (BJ), Brandon Magette (BMa), Brett Sandercock (BS), Carol Morgan (CM), Cheryl Miller (CMi), Carolyn Schwab (CS), Doris Burnett (DB), Doug English (DE), Dan Hoobler (DH), Dave Klema (DK), Don Kazamaier (DKz), David Seibel (DS), Ethan Maynard (EM), Ed Raynor (ER), Fred Bartel (FB), Frank Stetler (FS), Glenn Caspers (GC), Galen Pittman (GP), Ginger Winder (GW), Gene Young (GY), Greyson Yerby (GYe), Jon Boyd (JBy), Jeff Calhoun (JC), Jacob Cooper (JCo), Jack Conover (JCv), Jane Doris (JD), Jenny Gearheart (JG), Jeff Keating (JK), Jon King (JKi), Jonathan Lautenbach (JnL), Joseph Lautenbach (JsL), Joseph Miller (JM), Jim Malcom (JMa), John Row (JR), Jenn Rader (JRa), Jonathan Van de Kopple (JVK), Jeff Witters (JW), Kevin Groeneweg (KG), Kevin Leonard (KLo), Kyle Lindemer (KL), Lawrence Herbert (LH), Larry Londagin (LL), Lynette Muller (LM), Mike Andersen (MA),

(Continued on page 15)



Dave A. Rintoul, Tuttle Brown Pelican, April 22, 2014.

KOS Spring 2014 Field Trip Compiled Checklist

May 2 - 4, 2014

Species	Clay	Dickinson	Geary	Morris
Canada Goose	X	X	X	X
Wood Duck	X		X	X
Gadwall	X		X	
Mallard	X	X	X	
Blue-winged Teal	X	X	X	X
Northern Shoveler	X	X	X	X
Northern Pintail	X			
Green-winged Teal	X		X	
Redhead	X			
Ring-necked Duck			X	
Lesser Scaup				X
Bufflehead	X			
Hooded Merganser	X			
Common Merganser	X		X	
Ruddy Duck	X		X	
Northern Bobwhite	X	X	X	X
Ring-necked Pheasant	X	X	X	X
Greater Prairie-Chicken		X	X	X
Wild Turkey		X	X	X
Common Loon			X	
Pied-billed Grebe			X	
Horned Grebe	X		X	
Eared Grebe		X	X	
Double-crested Cormorant	X	X	X	X
American White Pelican	X	X	X	
American Bittern			X	
Great Blue Heron	X	X	X	X
Great Egret	X			
Snowy Egret		X	X	
Little Blue Heron				X - NEW
Green Heron	X			X
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron			X	
White-faced Ibis	X			
Turkey Vulture	X	X	X	X
Osprey	X		X	
Mississippi Kite			X	X
Bald Eagle	X	X	X	
Northern Harrier				X
Cooper's Hawk	X		X	
Red-shouldered Hawk			X	X
Broad-winged Hawk			X	
Swainson's Hawk	X	X		X
Red-tailed Hawk	X	X	X	X
American Coot	X	X	X	X
Black-necked Stilt	X			
American Avocet	X			

American Golden-Plover	X			X
Semipalmated Plover	X			
Killdeer	X	X	X	X
Spotted Sandpiper	X	X	X	X
Solitary Sandpiper	X		X	
Greater Yellowlegs	X			
Willet	X		X	
Lesser Yellowlegs	X		X	X
Upland Sandpiper	X	X	X	X
Hudsonian Godwit	X			
Marbled Godwit	X			
Stilt Sandpiper	X			
Baird's Sandpiper	X		X	
Least Sandpiper	X		X	
Pectoral Sandpiper	X		X	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	X		X	
Long-billed Dowitcher	X			
Wilson's Phalarope	X		X	X
Bonaparte's Gull	X			
Franklin's Gull	X	X	X	X
Ring-billed Gull	X			
Forster's Tern	X	X	X	
Rock Pigeon		X	X	X
Eurasian Collared-Dove	X	X	X	X
Mourning Dove	X	X	X	X
Great Horned Owl			X	
Barred Owl		X	X	X
Common Nighthawk			X	
Common Poorwill			X	
Chuck-will's-widow			X	
Eastern Whip-poor-will			X	
Chimney Swift		X	X	X
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			X	X
Belted Kingfisher				X
Red-headed Woodpecker	X		X	X
Red-bellied Woodpecker	X	X	X	X
Downy Woodpecker	X	X	X	X
Hairy Woodpecker	X	X	X	X
Northern Flicker	X	X	X	X
Pileated Woodpecker				X
American Kestrel			X	
Peregrine Falcon			X	
Eastern Wood-Pewee			X	
Willow Flycatcher			X	
Least Flycatcher	X	X	X	X
Eastern Phoebe	X	X	X	X
Great Crested Flycatcher	X	X	X	X
Western Kingbird	X	X	X	X
Eastern Kingbird	X	X	X	X
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	X	X	X	X

Loggerhead Shrike		X		X
White-eyed Vireo			X	
Bell's Vireo	X	X	X	X
Yellow-throated Vireo			X	X - NEW
Blue-headed Vireo			X	
Warbling Vireo	X	X	X	X
Red-eyed Vireo		X	X	X
Blue Jay	X	X	X	X
American Crow	X	X	X	X
Fish Crow				X
Horned Lark	X	X	X	X
Purple Martin		X	X	X
Tree Swallow	X	X	X	X
N. Rough-winged Swallow	X	X	X	X
Bank Swallow	X			
Cliff Swallow	X	X	X	X
Barn Swallow	X	X	X	X
Black-capped Chickadee	X	X	X	X
Tufted Titmouse	X	X	X	X
White-breasted Nuthatch	X	X	X	X
House Wren	X	X	X	X
Sedge Wren			X	X
Carolina Wren		X	X	X
Bewick's Wren				X
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	X	X	X	X
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	X			X
Eastern Bluebird	X	X	X	X
Swainson's Thrush			X	X
Wood Thrush			X	
American Robin	X	X	X	X
Gray Catbird	X		X	X
Brown Thrasher	X	X	X	X
Northern Mockingbird	X	X	X	X
European Starling	X	X	X	X
American Pipit	X			X
Cedar Waxwing		X	X	X
Louisiana Waterthrush		X	X	X
Black-and-white Warbler			X	X
Prothonotary Warbler			X	X
Tennessee Warbler			X	
Orange-crowned Warbler	X	X	X	X
Nashville Warbler			X	X
Kentucky Warbler			X	
Common Yellowthroat	X	X	X	X
Northern Parula	X	X	X	X
Yellow Warbler	X	X	X	X
Yellow-rumped Warbler	X	X	X	X
Spotted Towhee			X	X
Eastern Towhee		X		X
Chipping Sparrow	X	X	X	X

Clay-colored Sparrow	X	X	X	X
Field Sparrow	X	X	X	X
Vesper Sparrow	X			X
Lark Sparrow	X	X	X	X
Savannah Sparrow	X		X	X
Grasshopper Sparrow		X	X	X
Henslow's Sparrow				X
Le Conte's Sparrow				X - NEW
Song Sparrow	X			
Lincoln's Sparrow	X	X	X	X
White-throated Sparrow	X		X	X
Harris's Sparrow	X	X	X	X
White-crowned Sparrow	X	X	X	X
Summer Tanager	X	X	X	X
Scarlet Tanager			X	
Northern Cardinal	X	X	X	X
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				X
Black-headed Grosbeak			X	
Blue Grosbeak		X		
Indigo Bunting	X		X	X
Dickcissel	X	X	X	X
Bobolink				X
Red-winged Blackbird	X	X	X	X
Eastern Meadowlark	X	X	X	X
Western Meadowlark		X	X	X
Yellow-headed Blackbird	X	X	X	X
Common Grackle	X	X	X	X
Great-tailed Grackle			X	X
Brown-headed Cowbird	X	X	X	X
Orchard Oriole	X	X	X	X
Baltimore Oriole	X	X	X	X
House Finch			X	X
American Goldfinch	X	X	X	X
House Sparrow	X	X	X	X
180 species total	118	91	142	119
X = species seen in that county				
X - NEW = a new species to the county checklist				

(Continued from page 11)

Mike Cooper (MC), Matt Gearheart (MG), Mike Hudson (MH), Mike Harding (MHa), Mark Land (ML), Mick McHugh (MM), Michael Pearce (MP), Mike Rader (MR), Michael Steward (MS), Max Thompson (MT), Michael Zajic (MZ), Nick Varvel (NV), Pete Hosner (PH), Pete Janzen (PJ), Rita Alexander (RA), Roger Boyd (RB), Rob Penner (RP), Robert Reed (RR), Rodney Wright (RW), Sandra Beck (SB), Steve Burr (SBr), Shawn Harding (SH), Samantha Robinson (SR), Scott Seltman (SS), Sara Shane (SSh), Topeka Audubon Society (TAS), Ted Cable (TC), Tom Ewert (TE), Wichita Audubon Society (WAS), Zach Kesler (ZK)

Abbreviations: adult (ad.), Big Salt Marsh at Quivira NWR (BSM), central (c), Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area (CBWA), cemetery (Cem.), east (e), immature (imm.), Jeffrey Energy Center (JEC), lake (L.), Little Salt Marsh at Quivira NWR (LSM), north (n), National Grassland (NG), reservoir (Res.), representative (rep.), river (R.), south (s), State Fishing Lake (SFL), Shawnee Mission Park (SMP), State Park (SP), west (w), Wildlife Area (WA), Wyandotte County Lake (WYCL)

KOS Perspectives: The news in Summer, across five decades

BEST BIRDS OF THE YEAR: FOR THE PERIOD MAY 1, 1963-APRIL 30, 1964, NOMINATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS: WHITE-WINGED JUNCO, WICHITA, CARL S. HOLMES; PINON JAY, LINN CO., FRANK WOOD (MRS. EUNICE DINGUS); YELLOW-THROATED (SYCAMORE) WARBLER, APR 15, BALDWIN, IVAN BOYD; DITTO, APR 28, JOHNSON CO., MARY L. MYERS; GOSHAWK, DEC, JAN, APR, JUNCTION CITY, JOCK LASHELLE; 9 RED CROSSBILLS, AUG 1, MANHATTAN, GENE LEWIS; PHILADELPHIA VIREO, MAY 2, LAWRENCE, R. M. MENGEL; DITTO, MAY 11, LINN CO., MRS. EUNICE DINGUS; PILEATED WOODPECKER, APR 28, JOHNSON CO., MARY L. MYERS; SAGE THRASHER, JUL 17, MORTON CO., D.A. EASTERLA; ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER, JUL 17, MORTON CO., R. BURKETT.

THE TABLE BELOW LISTS NINE CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF FIRST DATES RECORDED FOR THREE SPECIES AT CAMP TOWANYAN, JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS, BY MARY LOUISE AND JIM MYERS. THIS KIND OF INFORMATION IS EXTREMELY USEFUL.

1964

SPECIES	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964
EASTERN PHOEBE	3/26	3/17	3/26	3/13	3/27	3/11	3/17	3/11	3/12
WHIP-POOR-WILL	4/6	4/21	4/19	4/22	4/12	4/20	4/20	4/15	4/21*
CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW AT LAKE QUIVIRA, APR 3.	5/4	4/24	4/24	4/29	4/28	4/24	4/24	4/25	4/21

MEMBERS OF KOS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED NESTING RECORDS TO THE KANSAS BREEDING BIRD SURVEY MAY BE INTERESTED TO LEARN THAT MUCH OF THOSE DATA HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO A REPORT ENTITLED THE BREEDING BIRDS OF KANSAS, WRITTEN BY YOUR EDITOR (UNIV. KANSAS PUBL. MUS. NAT. HIST., VOL. 12, NO. 14, PP. 575-655). SUCH MEMBERS (INDEED, ANYONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED) CAN OBTAIN A COPY UPON PERSONAL OR WRITTEN REQUEST OF THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS, LAWRENCE, KANSAS.

1974

President Thompson reported on the April 7, 1974, meeting of the Board at the Dingus Natural Area near Mound City, Kansas. 160 acres of mixed oak-hickory forest has been donated by Wilson and Eunice Dingus to the Nature Conservancy. KOS has the option of leasing or acquiring the land from Nature Conservancy. The Board recommends that the Society lease the area for a period of 5 years with Bob Weese and Mr. and Mrs. T. T. Concannon of Mound City to serve as a Management Committee. Orville Rice moved to empower the Board to work out a 5-year lease agreement. The motion was seconded and carried.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

With support from the Kansas Fish and Game Commission's non-game program funded by your chickadee check-off money, I will be beginning a study of the habitat requirements of the Henslow's Sparrow in Kansas. Part of this work involves determining the western limit of the species' range in the state. This line will occur somewhere in the following counties: Smith, Jewell, Republic, Osborne, Mitchell, Cloud, Gussell, Lincoln, Ottawa, Barton, Ellsworth, Saline, Rice, McPherson, Stafford, Reno, Harvey, Pratt, Kingman, Sedgwick, Barber, Harper, Sumner. Generally I believe the limit will fall along the area of transition between the tallgrass and the mixed grass prairies. If you spend any time in these counties and know of pastures that have not been burned for at least two years (including the spring of the year you are there), could you see if any Henslow's Sparrows are there this season? Then tell me the location of the field (an "X" on a county map would be great) and whether there were any Henslow's Sparrows there. Not finding Henslow's Sparrows is just as important as finding Henslow's Sparrows. So please let me know where you did not find Henslow's Sparrows, as well as where you did find them. Send your reports to me, John L. Zimmerman, Division of Biology, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506.

1984

PRELIMINARY ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

Set aside the dates of September 29 and 30, 1984 on your calendar for the Annual Meeting to be held in Topeka. The meeting was originally scheduled for a week later in Kansas City, but the Regional Accubon meeting there prompted the change to Topeka. The date change was due in part to the Accubon conflict and to scheduling problems in Topeka. This will be the first meeting in Topeka in 18 years and the fourth since KOS was founded in Topeka April 1949. We intend to have a good meeting, and interesting field trips will be lined up for you. Please plan to attend!

Gene Lewis

AS OF January 1984 the following people are listed as Charter Members of KOS.

- Amelia Betts, Baldwin City, KS
- Margaret Boyd, Baldwin City, KS
- Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Dingus, Lenexa, KS
- Henry S. Fitch, Lawrence, KS
- Mrs. W. H. Gier, Rogers, AR
- Dr. E. Raymond Hall, Lawrence, KS
- Mary F. Hall, Lawrence, KS
- Grace Hobson, Lawrence, KS
- Grace Holcombe, Topeka, KS
- Katherine B. Kelley, Baldwin City, KS
- Philip B. Menninger, Topeka, KS
- E. Maurice Nuss, Topeka, KS
- Olin S. Pettingill Jr., Wayne, ME
- Richard H. Schmidt, Newton, KS
- Theodore M. Sperry, Pittsburg, KS
- Bernice Tatum, Kansas City, KS

KOS Perspectives: The news in Summer, across five decades

1994

Is Your Landscape "For The Birds?"

Part II - Basics of Form and Shape

(This is the second of a four-part series)

by Chuck Otte

Landscaping is all too often thought of as something "too difficult for me to do, I mean with all those rules and everything. . . ." To which I reply, "Nonsense!" There are far fewer "rules" than anyone thinks, and the bottom line is that if you like it and it does what you want it to do, who cares if a few landscape architects are spinning in their graves!

There are a few basic things that you need to keep in mind though that might help you be happier with the end result 10 years from now. Let's start with 2 basic concepts, mass and void. Mass is trees, shrubs, gardens (flower, vegetable or both), decks, etc. Void is grass. A house with no trees or shrubs, only grass, is a house on a golf course. Now some people think that golf courses are great and that's what they want around their homes. Unfortunately, there aren't a lot of birds that are going to utilize a golf course fairway. On the other hand, a house built in the middle of timber with absolutely no turf area is all mass and no void. While this may be great for quite a few birds, most people need a little grass space or at least space around their home. When you merge mass and void you create areas around your home or "outdoor rooms."

Patterns or design or shape are controlled in the landscape by lines. Lines can be obvious lines like sidewalks or fences or they can become less obvious by carrying the lines from walks to fences or bed borders or hedges. Lines should be pleasing, natural flowing lines, large, sweeping, uninterrupted curves. If you look at nature you will find very few straight lines and right angles. Lines can also control movement, to help get "traffic from point A to point B." If you have nothing but grass in your front yard you might as well have a straight sidewalk going directly from the curb to the house to get people there as quickly as possible. Curves and line intersections create opportunities to stop at possible points of interest. Have a broad sweeping arc of a sidewalk with flower beds or shrub groupings along the way and you will slow down traffic and make them want to stop and enjoy the landscape.

Form takes line or shape and adds three dimensionality to it. The trunk, branches and leaves of a tree create the form of that tree. Generally we speak of upright or vertical form or, if it is low and spreading, of horizontal form. Within those groups, then, we can have some individual plants that are round, vase, weeping, pyramidal, columnar, oval and irregular. If you stop and think you can probably come up with plants that fit all of those categories. In the western 3/4 of Kansas the natural landscape tends to be dominated by horizontal forms due to the classic windswept conditions. As we

move into the eastern 1/4 of the state we start to forsake the Great Plains look for the Midwest or Eastern Deciduous forest look which tends to become much more vertical. Within your yard you can create a mix of both horizontal and vertical. I have one property line that has a wooden fence and layered plantings in front of it--a very horizontal look. On the south side of my house I have a much more vertical look, with larger trees providing shade and windbreak. As I work along my back property line the topography "climbs" up out of a low spot. I keep the low spot relatively low then take the height up as I go to the edge. This accentuates the low area and makes it look "deeper" than it really is.

We also use form to help blend the house into the landscape. Have you ever seen a house that just looked totally out of place? This is frequently the result of improper landscaping. Plants around the house should help balance and enframe the house and soften corners and edges. A corner is a very "harsh" view. There are very strong horizontal and vertical straight lines coming together. These can be softened with corner plantings of shrubs and small trees that hide or defuse the harsh straight lines. But make sure that the plants you ultimately choose will stay at or below the roof line or you will have made a bad problem worse. Make sure these corner plantings avoid plant forms that have straight lines, i.e. pyramidal (no Blue Spruce). Rounded forms are better. Plant larger shade trees around the sides and back of the house and to the sides of the front yard when possible. From the front view larger trees should frame the house, not cut it in two.

Grab a chair and walk around the house sitting down at numerous locations to look at your house and away from your house. Take a look and decide what you enjoy looking at and what you would just as soon not look at if you could help it. Then use form and shape to screen certain views or to call attention to certain other views. Create a layered look through the use of different textures, colors, slightly different heights or forms. Layering also tends to create more density which provides more cover and shelter for wildlife. Remember, in making this evaluation we aren't worried about which plant we are going to use yet. We just want to think what *form* or *shape* we want. And most importantly, start writing down what you want to add, remove or change. Remember that a landscape is not static, it is dynamic and ever changing which means that at certain times plants, even large trees, will need to be removed and replaced.

Next issue: *Selecting Plant Material and Finalizing the Plan*

On Being Listless

By Brian Barnette

Brian Barnette was a birding friend from Texas who enjoyed birding in Kansas. Brian died suddenly a few months ago. As a tribute to Brian I asked Chuck Otte if he would print the following essay written by Brian and previously published in *Visions*, a newsletter of the National Association for Interpretation (who have graciously allowed it to be reprinted). I had the fun of helping Brian add Thayer's Gull to his life list. But as Brian writes below, "*the real measure of life list was not in the length of list, but in the life it represented.*" --- Ted T. Cable, Manhattan, Kansas.

2004

Back on August 27, in the wee hours of the morning, my car was stolen.

Now, if you've ever seen my vehicle, your first reaction might be quite similar to mine: "What kind of sick, demented person would steal something that looked like that?" My ten-year-old Suburban, with 200,000 miles under its belts, was not exactly a thing of beauty. Its finish was equal parts paint and rust, the windshield had more cracks than a plumbers' convention, and it hadn't been washed in years. But it was paid for, and it ran, and it was mine. *Was*. Now there was just a big empty space on the street in front of my house.

Having never dealt with this situation before, I immediately set about trying to do all the right things. I called the police ("Stolen car? Don't call us, we'll call you.") The insurance company ("Don't you remember? Our records show that you dropped that coverage.") The Museum ("I'm going to be a little late...") My brother and sister ("Hey, guess what happened...") I also began trying to compile a list of the vehicle's contents--the stuff that was stolen with it. Camping gear. Tools. My snake sticks. A box of field guides.

It was while I was talking to co-worker Barb Peterman, whom I had called to bum a ride into work, that it hit me. *My life list!* My life list was in the box of stolen field guides!

Ouch.

A "life list" is the record of all the birds one has seen and identified. To a birder, it's the equivalent of a big game hunter's trophy room-- all the species "bagged" over a lifetime of pursuit in the wild. It may represent hours, days, perhaps even years spent seeking a particular bird, as well as chance encounters and surprise sightings. For convenience, most birders use the checklists that are included in their field guides. Mine was in my well-worn copy of Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds of Texas.

My list comprised a modest 300 or so species, observed over a period of about 30 years. In many cases, there was a notation of the date and locality of my first sighting of the bird. Of all the items in the car, it was the most irreplaceable. I could buy another tent. I could make some more snake sticks. But my life list! How could I

ever remember all the details it encompassed?

As I set about trying to reconstruct the list, I began to realize its true significance. For instance, they say you never forget your first one (birds... we're talking birds). I remember clearly the first unfamiliar bird that I successfully observed and identified. I was eleven or twelve at the time, on a hunting trip with my Dad in central Texas. I was sitting on a board nailed in the fork of a cedar elm, waiting for a deer to appear, when a small bird lit in the tree below me. I had no binoculars, so I trained the 2x telescopic sight on my rifle on the little ball of feathers. (If you're not familiar with optics, a 2x 'scope gives you approximately the same effect as looking through the cardboard tube from a roll of toilet paper).

The bird, in a gesture of cooperation quite atypical for its kind, overlooked my lapse in firearms etiquette and hopped around for several minutes so that I could get a good look at it. It was tiny, with a small, thin beak. It was mostly olive green with white bars on its wings and white rings around its eyes. And it had a bright red spot on the top of its head.

Later, back home, I found a copy of the Golden Guide to the Birds of North America in the Sanger-Harris book department at Big Town Mall (this was a while back). Sure enough, there he was, in living color-- the Ruby-crowned Kinglet. I had my first bird. I was hooked.

Now I was faced with a blank list... no entries at all. As I read off the names of the birds, other memories came flooding back. There was the female Redstart that I saw on a float trip down the Buffalo River in Arkansas... the Eurasian Sparrows that surprised us at the conference in St. Louis... and the Red Crossbills in the ponderosa pines at the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. I remembered the White-fronted (now White-tipped) Doves in the citrus groves down in Harlingen... the American Woodcock in the deep woods of the Big Thicket... and the Red-headed Woodpecker in my grandmother's East Dallas backyard. I saw again the bright orange bill of the Black Oystercatcher that we passed as we drove off the ferry in Vancouver... the

-- continued on page 10

-- *On Being Listless, conclusion*

yellow of the Goldfinch on the feeder outside Bruce Boardman's window in Stephenville... and the ridiculous red, blue, and green of a Painted Bunting on a Possum Kingdom morning. And there were the ones that were extra special because I saw them on our family's San Saba ranch: Pyrrhuloxia, Green Kingfisher, and Black-shouldered Kite.

Gradually, it began to sink in... the real measure of a life list was not in the length of the list, but in the life it represented. Sure, it's a thrill to add a new bird to your total, and there's always a little good-natured one-ups-manship in comparing lists with other birders to see whose is longer. But that's not what's important. What matters are the memories-- of field trips and campouts, of family and friends-- the experiences that are somehow symbolized by the birds seen along the way. And while it was certainly disappointing to "lose" some of the species I had "bagged," there will be other opportunities. In the meantime, I've still got my memories... my 'nocs... and a brand new bird list to fill in. Only this time, I'm going to try to keep in mind that old adage, "Don't put all your egg layers in one basket." Or is it, "A bird list in the hand is worth two in the car?"

Oh, by the way, my Suburban turned up last week--minus my stuff, the battery, and the radio--but otherwise intact and operable. It's gratifying to know that even car thieves have some standards.



Dave A. Rintoul, Tuttle Brown Pelican, April 22, 2014.

(Continued from page 2)

terious and oft repeated song that I was finally able to match to a Willow-Warbler that finally paused in a tree long enough for me to spot and identify it. Over that day trip, I added nine new birds to my European list, and seven lifers.

I found that the expectation of being in Norway and finding new birds I might not get to see anywhere else made being outside sweeter because I was alive to expectation and possibility.

Arthur Schopenhauer, in a brilliant series of essays *Studies in Pessimism*, made the point that any accomplishment once achieved doesn't make you happier because you are left wanting still another accomplishment and then another. It is the nature of human ambition to never be satisfied with what was just won or to be so consumed by the expectations of fulfillment that the moments of life are not valued.

I've found that birding lends itself to this. For every lifer you see, there is the problem of less and less to add to that life list. So you add new lists: ones for each day, then by county and state, counts for the year, other continents, etc...

In the end, Schopenhauer is right—you never can be satisfied. But, without this drive for something other, you'd be bored. He goes on to say that "the delight in which a man has in hoping for and looking forward to some special satisfaction is a part of the real pleasure attaching to it enjoyed in advance."

For one day, I was satisfied.

Salina, KS—2014 Fall Meeting

The 2014 Fall Meeting of the Kansas Ornithological Society will be held in Salina on October 3-5. It was 1995 when we were in Salina the last time, so it's well past time to visit this great community again. Plans are to have the Friday evening social at Lakewood Discovery Center, located at 250 Lakewood Drive. We will then meet at Fitzpatrick Auditorium on the campus of Kansas Wesleyan University for the paper session, silent auction and general meeting. The banquet will be held at the Salina Country Club, located on 2101 East Country Club Rd on Saturday evening.

Sunday morning field trips will depart from the parking lot of Lakewood Middle School, 1135 E Lakewood Circle, across the street to the west of the Discovery Center and Lakewood Park. Probable destinations for field trip include: Kanopolis Lake, Ottawa State Fishing Lake, McPherson State Fishing Lake & Maxwell Game Refuge, and various Salina & Abilene area hotspots. More details on the meeting, motel room block and other overnight accommodations information and the registration form will be available in the September issue of the Horned Lark and on the KOS web site.



TownMapsUSA.com



Salina Country Club

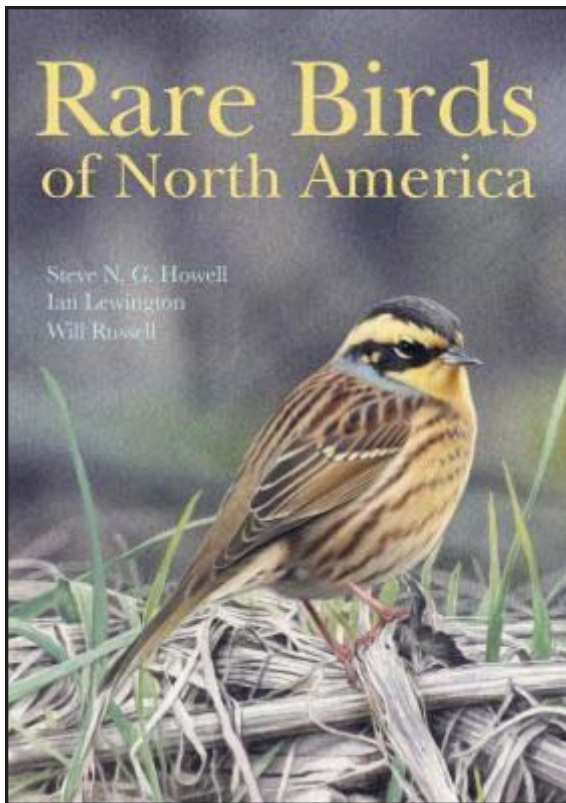


Lake Wood Discovery Center, Photos by Jim Mason from Natural Kansas.org



Book Review—*Rare Birds of North America*, by Edward J. Raynor

Book by, Steve N.G. Howell, Ian Lewington, and Will Russell



As an avid birder and vagrant predictor, I enjoyed reading Steve Howell and other's take on the rare and exotic birds sometimes or once found in the American Birding Association area (Alaska, Canada, and the lower 48 states). In particular, reading the full story about mega-rarities that I've observed in the northeastern region of this continent and Texas is probably the most entertaining aspect of this book. The authors provide theories of how birds arrived where they did, which is a routine yet often fruitless aspect of vagrant discussion by birders of all skill levels. Other than accurate dates of occurrence, excellent plates and plumage descriptions, and expected trajectories for future detection, the authors provide insight on different vagrancy patterns and migration scenarios rarely thought of in such detail as the authors provide. For example, as a relatively novice predictor of vagrant where and when scenarios I understand how austral migrants such as Fork-tailed Flycatchers are consistently detected on the Atlantic coast every year due to overshooting their southern hemisphere destinations and landing on peninsulas or islands in New England. However, what about the Asiatic vagrant that is routinely found on the Aleutians and/or coastal California islands? This book provides an understanding like no other of how these vagrants ended up there through terms new to my vocabulary such as a "drift overshoot" "vagrant. This term means: a vagrant

that initially overshoots its destination but also drifts longitudinally due to a storm originating from the east or west. What about Texas or Arizona mega-rarities? Ever heard of altitudinal vagrants? Another important aspect of this book that rarely if ever occurs in other publications on birds of North America is that it informs the reader about what we need to know to help fill gaps in our understanding of where these vagrants come from. Age data or lack thereof on vagrants is one topic addressed for understanding Spotted Redshank vagrancy, for example. One fun and probably controversial part of the book is the authors' questioning of decisions made by records committees throughout the continent. If you are a somewhat obsessive birder into memorizing vagrant dates and ranges of overshoots and the National Geographic Complete Birds of North America (Alderfer, J. 2005. National Geographic Complete Birds of North America. 640pp.) is becoming obsolete I recommend purchasing this book.

Nominations for the 2014 Avian Conservationist of the Year

The Kansas Ornithological Society's is seeking nominations for the 2014 Avian Conservationist of the Year Award which is given to an individual for making significant contributions to bird conservation and/or education. Nominations should be made for outstanding work in bird conservation, through the management or preservation of habitats, education or research. A nominee may be any professional, volunteer, educator or other person that has accomplished significant contributions in any of the areas listed. The nominee does not have to be a member of KOS, but the nominator must be a current member of KOS. The accomplishment should reflect a long-time commitment to bird conservation and/or education within the State of Kansas. Please consider nominating someone this year, we have a lot of great people doing some amazing things in the world of bird conservation. For a copy of the nomination form and a list of past winners visit. <http://www.ksbirds.org/kos/AvianConservationist.html>

This award will be presented during the fall annual meeting.

Robert L. Penner II
Cheyenne Bottoms
& Avian Programs Manager
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(620) 786-4745

The Nature Conservancy
593 NE 130 Avenue
Ellinwood, KS 67526



Scissor tailed flycatcher and Prairie Chicken in a tree both taken Saline County, by Kat Farres.

News and thoughts from KOS members

I was doing a little house cleaning tonight (no one fall over please!) and came across a reprint copy of Peterson's 1st Edition (1934) Field Guide to the Birds that someone gave me as a present several years ago. I have no idea why it was out of the bookshelf, but I sat down and started leafing through the pages.

By today's standard, it is rough. Most of the plates are in black and white - I think there's a total of four color plates in the whole book. The 2nd edition of this book and Peterson's 1st edition of Western birds were what I grew up on and spent my early years (we're talking grade school and high school here!) studying. Every birder out there should go out and buy a copy of this reprint (if you can find it). Even in black and white, the plates are still usable today and in fact in some ways may be preferred over the slick color plates in today's field guides or apps.

This was cutting edge field guide in the 1930s. It was the first book really written for the field birder, not the shotgun ornithologist. The text is simple and clean. Very concise and precise descriptions. Sure, some species have been split and lumped and many species have been renamed (quick, what's the current name of Pigeon Hawk and Duck Hawk?) But it is still very usable.

We all too often do ourselves a big dis-service by only looking at the photos in our field guides. Have you ever really read the preface? Have you sat down and read through your field guide like it was a novel? The amount of information that's in the text of these guides would solve a lot of arguments and mis-identifications if we actually READ them! — **Chuck Otte**

It's time to renew your KOS membership!

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