



The Horned Lark

Kansas Ornithological Society

Summer, 2015

Vol. 42, No. 2



**Piratic Flycatcher at Scott Lake State Park, Kansas. First spotted, May 8, 2015.
Photo © Andrew Burnett.**

From the Keyboard

By the Editor

This is my last edition of the Horned Lark. In July, I start a new position as an operations officer in a military intelligence battalion. The new position is a significant increase in responsibility and time and therefore I've decided to leave the post of editor. Kansas has incredible birding and while it was possible for me to create a newsletter while living in Germany, it is better I think that someone closer to the people and the place take over.

I first started as the editor of the Horned Lark in January 2013. My tenure in Kansas was a year and a half at that point and I was a novice birder. I found the KOS while cruising thru the internet looking for birding groups because I was desperate to get better. I happened upon my first guided tour in April of that year, discovered the KS listserv, and learned about the open position and volunteered for it. I enjoyed writing and thought it a match. I was voted into the position in October at the 2012, KOS fall meeting.

To me this is kind of remarkable but is a hallmark of the KOS—openness to even an amateur like me who's only qualification was that I just liked birds. Along the way I learned a little bit about ornithology and met a few of the people who practiced it and who were doing the work of biological conservation in Kansas. I remember my birding trip with John Schuckman around Fort Leavenworth looking for warblers. It was with John that I spotted my first Prothonotary Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush. His ear for birds, particularly warblers was incredible. We stomped into the Fort Leavenworth lowland flood plain of deciduous forest and craned our necks at hundred-year-old hickories and oaks looking for Cerulean Warblers; none were spotted. But that summer, along the Jack's Fork River in the Adirondacks, I got a good long glimpse at what is one of my favorite birds. Then there were the fantastic field trips with the KOS in the spring and summer. There was one trip with Pete Janzen and Matt Gearheart out to a birdy marsh somewhere in southeastern Kansas I can't remember at the moment where I spotted my lifer Marsh Wren. And of course, freezing during a CBC. There are many other good memories and friendships made.



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mgearheart@designwithinsight.com

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The Eagle's Roost—message from the President

By Matt Gearheart



Some canopy birding from the terrace at Horsethief Canyon, Scott Lake State Park, 2 May 2015, during the Spring KOS meeting; L to R: Tom Shane, Dan Kilby and Wayne Dahl. Photo by Sara Shane

Kansas Birding Roundup, Winter 2015

(Dec – Feb) Chuck Otte, compiler

It's difficult to talk about seasonal bird sightings without taking into account the weather. After a sudden cool off in November, December and January had slightly above average temperature, then February turned off cloudy and cold again. While there were the usual rounds of snowstorms, much of the state experienced below average precipitation and snowfall for the period.

Lakes and reservoirs that didn't freeze up in November, pretty well stayed open into January allowing for water birds to linger later than normal. Eared Grebes were quick to take advantage of this open water, delaying their departure to points south until well into January. All three scoter species were recorded during the period and good numbers of American Black Ducks were recorded mainly from eastern Kansas. Shorebirds also lingered well into the period making their presence known on some Christmas Bird Counts. A Dunlin either spent most of the season at Quivira or made a quick return with sporadic reports through the period.

Every once in a while we have a winter of exceptional gull reports. This winter season appears to have been one of them. Iceland, Lesser and Great Black-backed Gulls all put on a good showing. Reno County seemed to be a real hot spot but Lesser Black-backed Gulls were confirmed from no less than eight different locations from Cheyenne Bottoms eastward! Thayer's and Glaucous Gulls, once good material for this report are now relegated to the annually "expected" category especially at the larger reservoirs or wherever gulls gather!

Northern Shrikes are expected in central and western Kansas every winter. If you draw a line from Barber County in the south to Nemaha County in the north, the expected range would be west of this line. Sightings to the east of this line are noteworthy. This was a good winter for Northern Shrike sightings with several being very reliable for several months through the winter.

It was not an exceptional winter for western corvids. One Western Scrub Jay in Grant County and a couple of Common Raven reports pretty well summed it up. Of interest to everyone was a small wren that Jeff Calhoun found and was able to record its very non-typical Winter Wren call, at Scott Lake on December 20th. It is not included in this report as the Kansas Bird Records Committee has yet to act upon it. It may be an abnormal Winter Wren or it could be the first state record Pacific Wren. Stay tuned!

Any wintering warbler other than Yellow-rumped is of interest. A very cooperative and reliable Orange-crowned Warbler was present at a Johnson County residential feeder through late February. A Black-headed Grosbeak made a surprise appearance at a Riley County backyard.

Winter finches are frequently a wildcard for Kansas birders. A female finch was an ongoing distraction for Henry Armknecht in Ellis County for many weeks. It was finally confirmed as a female Cassin's Finch. A female Pine Grosbeak was seen at Milford Lake on the Junction City Christmas Bird Count. Another Pine Grosbeak was well seen on several occasions in late February in Garden City's Finnup Park. Common Redpolls put in appearances at feeders in Shawnee, Lindsborg and Horton.

Thank you to everyone who reports and contributes sightings for this report. Please forward any noteworthy sightings to me at otte2@cox.net or mailed to 613 Tamerisk Dr., Junction City, KS 66441

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Brant	1 in Pool 3A at CBWMA	Barton	2/12	CW
Trumpeter Swan	54 at Neosho Wildlife Area	Neosho	1/9	ABu
Trumpeter Swan	56 in field north of Wathena	Doniphan	1/16	DC
American Black Duck	1 at Wyandotte County Lake	Wyandotte	1/2	GP
American Black Duck	1 male at Lake Shawnee	Shawnee 1/10	JP, JMC	
	Continuing to 1/23			
American Black Duck	1 at Neosho SFL	Neosho	1/18	ABu
American Black Duck	1 at MDC	Linn	2/3	MMH
American Black Duck	1 at CBWMA	Barton	2/20	MR
Surf Scoter	1 immature male at Waconda Lake	Mitchell	12/22	HA, MR
White-winged Scoter	3 off the dam at Wilson Lake	Russell	12/6	DK, MR
	Continuing to 12/24			
White-winged Scoter	Auxiliary Lake at Jeffrey Energy Center	Pottawatomie	12/12	AS
Black Scoter	1 female at Fish Hatchery in Pratt	Pratt	12/12	MR
Black Scoter	1 female at Marion Reservoir	Marion	12/24	TE
Long-tailed Duck	1 at Minooka Park, Wilson Lake	Russell	12/5	DK
	Continuing to 1/3 – as many as 5 present			
Long-tailed Duck	2 at Marion Reservoir	Marion	12/24	TE
	Continuing to 1/2			
Long-tailed Duck	1 female at Wyandotte County Lake	Wyandotte	1/8	GP
	Continuing to 1/11			
Great Egret	1 late at Harvey County East Lake	Harvey	12/13	EM
Snowy Egret	1 late at Sedgwick County Park	Sedgwick	12/3	MHe
	Still present 12/17			
White-faced Ibis	1 late at QNWR Big Salt Marsh	Stafford	12/6	AW
Turkey Vulture	1 over Shawnee	Johnson	1/28	NC
Northern Goshawk	1 adult male on Ft. Riley	Geary	1/7	JKe
Golden Eagle	1 NE of Altoona with photos	Wilson	12/19	KHu
Golden Eagle	1 immature at Marais des Cygnes	Linn	12/27	NA
	Continuing to 2/14			
Virginia Rail	1 at Wilson Lake – Sylvan Park	Russell	1/22	DK
	Continuing to 2/8			
Virginia Rail	1 at BSM-QNWR	Stafford	1/30	MR
Virginia Rail	1 at Kiowa Creek Wetland	Comanche	2/6	JC
Sandhill Crane	Early migrants headed north at Wilson Lake	Russell	1/30	DK
Sandhill Crane	1 easterly at Wyandotte SFL	Wyandotte	2/20	CE
Greater Yellowlegs	1 at 71 st Street Canoe Launch, Wichita	Sedgwick	12/23	JC
	A total of 10 were seen the 24 th on the Derby/Belle Plain CBC along the Arkansas River			
Greater Yellowlegs	1 at QNWR	Stafford	1/30	BJ
Dunlin	1 late bird at QNWR Big Salt Marsh	Stafford	12/8	MR
	Continuing (?) 2/14			
American Woodcock	1 somewhat early bird at Rocky Ford SFA	Riley	1/14	BS
American Woodcock	1 calling below Clinton Dam	Douglas	1/28	JK
American Woodcock	1 male displaying at Neosho SFL	Neosho	2/9	ABu
American Woodcock	1 calling at Rocky Ford area, Manhattan	Riley	2/17	BS
Franklin's Gull	Adult in alternate plumage, Bismark Lake	Douglas	1/10	GP
Franklin's Gull	Adult in alternate plumage, SMP	Johnson	1/27	ML
<u>Iceland Gull</u>	1 first cycle at Hoskinson's Sand and Gravel	Reno	2/10	AM
	Continuing to 2/20			
Iceland Gull	1 at CBWMA	Barton	2/15	AB, NS
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull</u>	1 first cycle, 2 adults, Hoskinson's Sandpit	Reno	12/3	AM
	Continuing to 2/17 at various Reno County locations. As many as 7 reported in February.			
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull</u>	1 in 2 nd winter plumage at Marion Res.	Marion	1/1	PJ
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1 sub adult at Shawnee Mission Park	Johnson	1/14	ML
	Continuing 2/20, LBBGs also seen at Lake Quivira and Nelson Island, possibly same bird			
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1 at Tuttle Creek west River Pond Area	Riley	2/8	AB, NS

Lesser Black-backed Gull	1 adult at Pomona SP	Osage	2/14	JM
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1 at CBWMA	Barton	2/15	AB, NS
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1 at Perry Lake	Jefferson	2/16	JK
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull</u>	1 2 nd year at La Cygne Lake	Linn	2/25	MMH
Great Black-backed Gull	1 1 st winter bird at Cheney SP	Reno	2/8	PJ
Great Black-backed Gull	1 1 st cycle at Clinton Lake	Douglas	2/20	JK
<u>Great Black-backed Gull</u>	2 immature at Hillsdale Lake	Miami	2/28	MGd
Forster's Tern	1 lingering at Lake Parsons	Neosho	12/15	ABu
Inca Dove	Coming to feeders in Garden City Continued through 1/9	Finney	12/6	TS
Inca Dove	1 at feeder in Dodge City	Ford	12/26	CM
White-winged Dove	<u>124</u> in Shane's yard, Garden City	Finney	1/7	TS
Greater Roadrunner	2 at farm near Udall	Sumner	12/2	MT
Snowy Owl	1 in SW portion of county	Rush	2/3	DKz
Snowy Owl	1 between Pools 4A and 4B CBWMA Continuing to 2/27	Barton	2/11	CW
Snowy Owl	1 on TNC property near CBWMA	Barton	2/12	RP
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	1 along Ninnescah River near Pratt	Pratt	1/31	PJ, TE
Pileated Woodpecker	1 at Kanopolis	Ellsworth	12/12	RH, JCo
<u>Pileated Woodpecker</u>	Pair, southeast portion of county	Stafford	1/2	AA
Northern Shrike	1 along 17 th Rd near Waverly	Coffey	12/13	MG
Northern Shrike	1 at Lyon SFL Continuing to 1/24	Lyon	1/2	JM
Northern Shrike	1 near Eisenhower Park, Melvern Lake Continuing to 2/14	Osage	1/11	JK
Northern Shrike	1 at Shawnee State Fishing Lake Continuing to 2/17	Shawnee	1/11	JM
Northern Shrike	1 on Council Grove CBC	Morris	1/10	mob
Northern Shrike	1 at Lassiter Marsh, Perry Lake	Jefferson	1/14	TM
Northern Shrike	1 at MDC	Linn	2/3	MMH
Northern Shrike	1 at Lackman Rd south of 239 th	Miami	2/28	ML
Western Scrub Jay	Fort's Cedar View B&B, Ulysses	Grant	12/28	MR
Fish Crow	1 heard and seen, El Dorado Res	Butler	1/10	EM
Common Raven	2 at CNG	Morton	12/27	MR, JR
Common Raven	1 near Syracuse, along K-27 highway	Hamilton	1/10	JC
Sedge Wren	1 at QNWR, Big Salt Marsh	Stafford	1/15	mob
Sedge Wren	1 below Clinton Lake Dam	Douglas	1/24	JK
Townsend's Solitaire	Shawnee Mission Park Continuing to 1/11	Johnson	12/10	TSw
Gray Catbird	1 lingering on CBC	Reno	12/18	AM
Gray Catbird	1 possible wintering bird in Wichita	Sedgwick	2/4	DL
Brown Thrasher	1 wintering or early returning, Big Hill Lake	Labette	1/16	WL
Smith's Longspur	1, Rural Reno County Continuing to 2/7	Reno	1/27	JM
Smith's Longspur	Several flushed, NE Comanche County	Comanche	1/23	JL
Snow Bunting	2 at a Ft. Riley training area	Riley	12/7	JKe
Snow Bunting	1 at TNC area near CBWMA	Barton	2/17	RP
Orange-crowned Warbler	1 coming to feeder (with photos) Continuing to 2/21	Johnson	12/3	BW
Orange-crowned Warbler	1 at Hudson Trail, Manhattan	Riley	1/11	BS
<u>Eastern Towhee</u>	2 westerly on Red Hills CBC	Barber	1/3	KG, PJ
<u>Eastern Towhee</u>	1 westerly for date at Wilson Lake	Lincoln	2/17	DK
Chipping Sparrow	1 at Shawnee Mission Park	Johnson	1/13	BB
Le Conte's Sparrow	1 lingering, Milford Lake Wildlife Area	Geary	12/12	JKe
Le Conte's Sparrow	2 on Red Hills CBC	Barber	1/3	KG, PJ
Le Conte's Sparrow	SE Kiowa County	Kiowa	1/28	JL
Nelson's Sparrow	1 at CBWMA, a late and westerly record	Barton	12/8	MR
Black-headed Grosbeak	1 coming to feeder in Manhattan	Riley	1/23	JKo

Indigo Bunting	1 female at Ironwoods Park	Johnson	12/28	CE
Yellow-headed Blackbird	1 in town of Muscotah	Atchison	12/3	DM
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Near Spring Hill	Miami	12/9	JH
Pine Grosbeak	1 female at Milford Lake	Geary	12/28	EW
<u>Pine Grosbeak</u>	1 at Finnup Park, Garden City	Finney	2/19	AV
	Also seen on 3/10 and 3/11			
Cassin's Finch	At feeder in Hays	Ellis	1/18	HA
	Continued through 3/29			
Red Crossbill	North Lawrence coming to feeder	Douglas	2/14	GP
Red Crossbill	1 on KSU campus, Manhattan	Riley	2/26	BB
Common Redpoll	1 at feeder in Shawnee	Johnson	12/9	NC
Common Redpoll	1 male at feeder in Lindsborg	McPherson	1/15	RK
<u>Common Redpoll</u>	1 at feeder in Horton	Brown	2/1	DM
Common Redpoll	1 at feeder in Shawnee	Johnson	2/28	DR

Locations and notes: BSM-QNWR – Big Salt Marsh, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, CBC – Christmas Bird Count, CBWMA – Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Management Area, MDC - Marais des Cygnes Area, QNWR – Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, SFL – State Fishing Lake, SMP – Shawnee Mission Park, SP – State Park, TNC – The Nature Conservancy, Underlined species name indicates new county record. Underlined number indicates an exceptionally high count.

Observers: Nic Allen, Henry Armknecht, Aaron Austin, Aaron Balogh, Brett Budach, Andrew Burnett (ABu), Jeff Calhoun, Donna Chance, Nancy Clark, Judith Collins (JCo), Corey Entriken, Tom Ewert, Matt Gearheart, Malcom Gold (MGd), Kevin Groeneweg, Jennifer Hammett, Mary Herold (MHe), Robert Highgate, Kristy Hughes (KHu), Pete Janzen, Barry Jones, Don Kazmaier (DKz), Jeff Keating (JKe), Jon King, Dave Klema, Jim Koeliker (JKo), Robert Kruger, Douglas Lamoureaux, Mark Land, Wayne Landwehr, Jonathan Lautenbach, Jim Malcom, Terry Mannell, Ethan Maynard, John McConnell (JMC), Mick McHugh (MMH), Christi McMillen, Don Merz, Andrew Miller, Joseph Miller, Joanne Parker, Robert Penner, Galen Pittman, Jenn Rader, Mike Rader, Debbie Reasoner, Brett Sandercock, Al Schirmacher, Tom Shane, Nate Shipley, Terry Swope (TSw), Max Thompson, Adam Vesley, Art Weigand, Emily Weiser, Bryan White (BW), Curtis Wolf, mob – multiple observers

2015 KOS Spring Meeting Species List.

184 species, 12 new county records. Ten counties visited: Finney, Gove, Greeley, Kearny, Lane, Logan, Ness, Scott, Wallace, Wichita.

New county records: Double-crested Cormorant (Lane), Cattle Egret (Wichita), American Golden Plover (Ness), Long Billed Curlew (Gove), Short Billed Dowitcher (Lane), Barred Owl (Scott), Tree Swallow (Lane), Common Yellow Throat (Greeley), Northern Parula (Wichita), Black-throated Blue Warbler (Wichita), Palm Warbler (Scott and Kearny).

2015 KOS Fall Meeting Call for Papers

Emporia State University Oct 2-4

The Kansas Ornithological Society invites you to our fall meeting. Traditionally, papers are presented by students, professors, professionals, and birders. The Fall 2015 Meeting will be held at Emporia State University, (<http://www.emporia.edu/campus-map>) in Emporia, Kansas, October 2 - 4, 2015. Paper presentations are on Saturday, October 3. Details are included below. More information about KOS is available at the web site: (http://www.ksbirds.org/kos/Fall2015/2015_KOS_Fall.htm)

KOS also sponsors some student research projects. Details are available at <http://www.ksbirds.org/kos/StuResearch.html>. This fund supports student members attending Kansas schools. We want to encourage studies investigating the scientific aspects of birds found in Kansas (study area not limited to Kansas). Awards are for one year with grants ranging from \$100-\$750.

Please forward this information to any staff or students who may be interested. Also, please feel free to contact me with any questions or for more information.

To submit an abstract: Include the title of the presentation, the list of authors (use an asterisk to indicate the speaker), the institutional affiliation of the authors (if applicable), and a brief abstract of up to 250 words. Abstracts will be printed in the KOS meeting program. When you submit the abstract, please provide three additional pieces of information:

- 1) The multimedia equipment you will need
- 2) Presentations will be 15 min, including questions. If you need a shorter or longer time slot, please let Robert Penner know.
- 3) Whether you are eligible and would like to be considered for a student presentation award. If so, what type of program (undergraduate, graduate, or doctorate).

Paper abstracts are due by September 15; please send in MS Word to Robert Penner at rpennner@tnc.org or <mailto:rpennner@tnc.org>. In the subject line of the e-mail, please indicate the meeting and give your surname: "KOS 2015: Jones."

Example abstract: Interspecific competition with wildcats limits populations of jay-hawks in northeast Kansas. Willie T. Wildcat (*), Division of Biology, Kansas State University. Ongoing declines in autumn populations of jay-hawks (*Cyanorufa chalkii*) are a topic of conservation concern in Kansas. To assess the role of interspecific competition with wildcats (*Felis purpura*) as a factor contributing to observed population trends, I conducted three-hour observation bouts of captive animals in large enclosed arenas. In competition trials, jay-hawks demonstrated a strong aversion to environments saturated with royal purple. Thus, interspecific competition from wild felids may be a limiting factor that controls foraging and reproductive success of jay-hawk populations in the state of Kansas. Effective conservation strategies for jay-hawks should include keeping cats indoors.

Robert L. Penner II
Cheyenne Bottoms
& Avian Programs Manager

The Nature Conservancy
593 NE 130 Avenue
Ellinwood, KS 67526



Official Nomination Form

2015 Kansas Ornithological Society

Dr. Ivan L. Boyd Recognition Award

The Boyd award is given to a member(s) of the Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS), usually each year, for outstanding contributions and service to the society. The Boyd Award is in recognition of the contributions of Dr. Ivan Boyd who was a KOS Founder, Charter Member, and the first president of KOS. He was also a Bulletin Editor and helped start the Baldwin Christmas Bird Count in 1942, which is the longest running CBC in the state.

Nominations should provide a list of the nominee's contributions to KOS. Contributions could include such things as number and years of offices held, committee involvement, papers presented at KOS, papers published in the Bulletin or Horned Lark, number of CBC's compiled, and years of membership; this is not an exclusive list and other contributions to the society may be provided. Current KOS Board members are not eligible to receive an award. The Board may select more than one recipient each year or may choose not to name a recipient in a given year.

NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL AUGUST 1ST.

Nomination Form

To make a nomination send this form with attachments to Matt Gearheart, 20714 Crickett Lane, Lenexa, KS 66220 or email to mgearheart@designwithinsight.com

Name of Nominee:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Nominator's Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

** Attach a typewritten description of no more than two pages, both sides of paper may be used, giving a detailed account of specific work the nominee has accomplished for KOS. Contributions could include such things as number and years of offices held, committee involvement, papers presented at KOS, papers published in the Bulletin or Horned Lark, number of CBC's compiled, and years of membership; this is not an exclusive list and other contributions to the society may be provided.**



All photos are curtesy of Jeff Hansen, Topeka. They can be found at his website: www.kansasnativeplants.com.



**Official Nomination Form
2015 Kansas Ornithological Society
Avian Conservationist of the Year**

The Kansas Ornithological Society's Avian Conservationist of the Year Award 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. This award will be presented during the fall annual meeting.

NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL JULY 1ST.

Nomination Form

To make a nomination, send this form with attachments to: Robert L. Penner, 593 NE 130 Avenue, Ellinwood, KS 67526 or to rpenner@tnc.org

Name of Nominee:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Nominator's Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

****Attach a typewritten description of no more than two pages, both sides of paper may be used, giving a detailed account of specific work the nominee has accomplished. Past and current achievements, organization membership or any other information the nominator feels pertinent will be considered.**

KOS Perspectives: The news in Summer, across five decades

1965

HYBRID BIRDS IN KANSAS

ANIMAL SPECIES ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL UNITS THAT ARE STUDIED BY BIOLOGISTS. YET, SOMETIMES IT IS DIFFICULT TO RECOGNIZE WHAT A SPECIES IS. MOST STUDENTS OF BIOLOGY HAVE FOUND IT USEFUL TO DEFINE A SPECIES AS A POPULATION OF ANIMALS THAT FREELY INTERBREEDS IN THE WILD. WITHIN SUCH A POPULATION THERE IS, HOWEVER, NATURALLY-OCCURRING VARIATION. ANYONE WHO HAS STUDIED ANIMALS KNOWS THIS: SOME SQUIRRELS ARE LARGER THAN OTHERS; SOME CARDINALS ARE REDDER THAN OTHERS; SOME MICE HAVE LONGER TAILS THAN OTHERS. MANY OF THESE VARIATIONS CAN BE INHERITED AND CAN BE PASSED ON FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. WHILE CERTAIN TYPES OF VARIATION MAY BE HARMFUL OR LETHAL, IN GENERAL, VARIATIONS ARE VALUABLE TO A SPECIES BECAUSE THEY MAKE THE SPECIES FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ADAPT TO NEW OR CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS. THUS, IF THERE IS A GENERAL COOLING TREND, AND IF LARGER ANIMALS SURVIVE LONGER IN COOLER ENVIRONMENTS THAN DO SMALLER ANIMALS, LARGER ANIMALS WITHIN THE POPULATION WILL TEND, IN TIME, TO REPLACE SMALLER ONES. FURTHER, IF GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS FROM A POPULATION IMMIGRATE TO A NEW REGION, THE IMMIGRANTS ARE LIKELY TO ENCOUNTER CLIMATIC AND BIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS DIFFERENT FROM THOSE USUAL FOR THE SPECIES. THE NEW IMMIGRANT GROUP WILL TEND TO BECOME DISTINCT FROM THE ORIGINAL GROUP AS CERTAIN VARIANTS THAT ARE PECULIARLY ADAPTED IN SOME WAY TO THE NEW ENVIRONMENT ARE SELECTED FOR. AFTER TIME, THIS IMMIGRANT GROUP MAY BECOME SO DISTINCT THAT PEOPLE STUDYING THEM MAY NAME THEM AS DIFFERENT SPECIES. HOWEVER, SUCH A PROCESS OF DIVERGENCE IS GRADUAL, AND EVEN BY STUDYING TWO POPULATIONS OF ANIMALS AT THE SAME TIME, IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE TWO POPULATIONS ARE TWO SPECIES OR MERELY UNITS OF ONE SPECIES. IF THESE TWO POPULATIONS HAVE SECONDARILY COME TO OCCUPY THE SAME GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE, HOWEVER, HYBRID INDIVIDUALS CAN BE LOOKED FOR. IF SUCH HYBRIDS, OR INTERMEDIATE INDIVIDUALS, ARE COMMONLY FOUND, THEN MOST BIOLOGISTS CONSIDER THAT THE TWO GROUPS BELONG TO THE SAME SPECIES. THIS DECISION IS SOMEWHAT ARBITRARY, BUT NONETHELESS SEEMS TO BE A USEFUL WAY TO GROUP THE ANIMALS.

IN KANSAS, MANY GROUPS OF BIRDS HAVE, IN THE PAST, BEEN GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVIDED INTO SEPARATE EASTERN AND WESTERN POPULATIONS. MANY OF THESE HAVE BECOME QUITE DISTINCTIVE, EVEN IN THE FIELD: THE YELLOW-SHAFTED AND RED-SHAFTED FLICKERS; THE BALTIMORE AND BULLOCK ORIOLES; THE INDIGO AND LAZULI BUNTINGS; THE ROSE-BREADED AND BLACK-HEADED GROBBEAKS; THE RED-EYED AND SPOTTED TOWNEES. ALL OF THESE APPARENTLY CLOSELY RELATED SPECIES HAVE RECENTLY COME TO OCCUPY SOME COMMON GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE IN KANSAS AND HYBRIDIZE IN THE STATE TODAY. THUS, WHILE THESE SPECIES APPARENTLY HAD SEPARATE RANGES IN THE PAST, AND APPARENTLY DEVELOPED DISTINCTIVE PLUMAGES WHILE THEY WERE SEPARATE, THEY DID NOT DIVERGE ENOUGH TO RETAIN THEIR DISTINCTIVENESS ONCE THEY SECONDARILY CAME TO OCCUPY THE SAME RANGE.

THE BULK OF THE HYBRIDS BETWEEN BALTIMORE AND BULLOCK ORIOLES OCCUR IN A ZONE BETWEEN THE RANGES OF THE "PURE" BALTIMORE AND BULLOCK TYPES. WITHIN THIS ZONE OF HYBRIDIZATION, THERE IS A GRADUAL CHANGE FROM BULLOCK-LIKE TO BALTIMORE-LIKE INDIVIDUALS AS YOU MOVE FROM WEST TO EAST. HOWEVER, HYBRID ORIOLES OR BULLOCK ORIOLES ARE RARE IN EASTERN KANSAS. THE HYBRID ZONE OF THE FLICKERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS NOT SO DISTINCT. CERTAIN FLICKERS THAT BREED IN EASTERN KANSAS AND "PINK-SHAFTED", AND MANY FLICKERS THAT BREED IN WESTERN KANSAS ARE APPARENTLY "PURE" YELLOW-SHAFTED. THESE DIFFERENCES IN THE HYBRID ZONES MAY REFLECT THE DIFFERENT HABITS OF THE SPECIES OF BIRDS INVOLVED, OR THEY MIGHT INDICATE THAT FLICKERS HAVE BEEN HYBRIDIZING IN KANSAS FOR A LONGER TIME THAN HAVE ORIOLES. BIRDMATCHERS IN KANSAS SHOULD BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR HYBRID BIRDS, FOR THESE ARE INTERESTING AND THEY MAY TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE SPECIES INVOLVED.

WE SOLICIT YOUR NOTES ON THE SPRING MIGRATION. J. D. RISING, ASS'T. ED.

1975

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Rare Bird Hotline: I have had quite a bit of response on the suggestion for a rare bird hotline. It seems, after discussing it with a number of persons, that it would be better to organize it on a local level but coordinate it on a state level. Any local group can organize a telephone network to let persons know of "good" birds seen in the local area. If you would like to receive collect calls when "good" birds are seen in neighboring communities, please send me the following information:

1. Telephone number to be called.
2. Time of day when calling would be convenient.
3. Region from which you would be interested in receiving calls (for example, within 50 miles of your community)
4. Any guidelines on what type of birds you would like to be notified of.

This information will then be published as a supplement to the Newsletter

Natural Areas: A resolution was passed at the Annual Meeting encouraging local and state governments to set aside some areas of land that they own as small natural areas or maintain them for wildlife habitat. There is a state program to develop a system of natural and scientific areas. However it is probably up to you as a member to encourage your local government units to consider this type of land use. Are there some small pieces of land in your area that should be maintained for these uses? Maybe there is a roadside where prairie wildflowers could be protected. Or a small area of waste land that is a good birding area. What can you do to protect them?

Dingus Natural Area: KCS has now signed a lease with Nature Conservancy for the Dingus Natural Area, a beautiful woodland area near Mound City. A management committee will soon be developing guidelines for its management and use. You will be hearing more about it and I hope you will be able to visit this beautiful spot in the near future.

Membership: The Membership Committee has worked hard and been particularly effective this year. As of April 26, 71 new members had joined KCS this year and 371 members had paid up for 1975, 3 more than all of 1974. We have persons on the Membership Committee responsible for membership activities in all regions of the State except the northwest region. I have not been able to find anyone willing to push KCS membership in the northwest. So you people out there at Hays, get together and let me know who would be willing to coordinate membership activity in your area.

Thanks to all of you who have given time and effort to help KCS this past year. I look forward to similar cooperation this next year so that we can make KCS better serve bird study and bird conservation activities in the State.

Dwight Platt
RFD 2, Box 209
Newton, Kansas 67114



KOS Perspectives: The news in Summer, across five decades

*****1985*****

June 8 - Saturday/Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira

Meet at the Cheyenne Bottoms headquarters at 8:00 AM. We will bird until 1:00, break for lunch, and then head to Quivira to look for species we missed. Plan to stay late and listen for Black Rails. Be sure to bring your supper, plenty of drinking water, and mosquito repellent. White-faced Ibis, Snowy Plover, Black-necked Stilt, Least Tern, and Bobolink should all be present. We will try to minimize disturbance of nesting birds.

Labor Day Weekend - August 31, September 1 & 2/Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira

Birders who have never been to The Bottoms in late summer will be surprised at the numbers of birds that are present. Thirty species of shorebirds should be in the area along with many waterfowl and early passerine migrants. You can bird for one day or all three. Details of meeting times and places will be in the summer Newsletter.

WICHITA AUDUBON AFIELD

June 2 - Sunday/Birds of Chaplin Center

Meet at 7:00 AM at CNC parking lot. Bring sack lunch. Compilation and lunch at noon. Leader: Mike Lesan, 524-6332.

June 8 - Saturday/Spring Wildflowers at Lake Afton

Meet at 9:00 AM just inside east entrance. Leader: Bob Gress, 838-4130

July 6-9/Colorado High Plains and Rocky Mountains

Leaders: Dan Kilby and Ralph Wiley

Learning Shorebirds

by John Rakestraw

1995

While providing some of the most exciting and challenging birding in Kansas, the vast numbers of shorebirds that pass through our state can be very frustrating to the beginning birder. But it is possible to become comfortable with these birds if you take a little time to study them.

The first step to learning the shorebirds is to adjust your attitude. If you go into the field expecting to identify every bird you see from the start, it will be a very unpleasant birding experience. What makes shorebirds so challenging is not necessarily identifying them, but just seeing them well. Many of the diagnostic field marks on shorebirds can only be seen at close range. Study the birds that are close. Don't waste the entire morning trying to identify the birds that are half a mile away. You might be thinking, "There may be a Temminck's Stint among those Least Sandpipers." Maybe. But even if you do find something different, at a great distance your identification is going to be tentative at best. Your time will be much better spent studying the birds at the edge of the road. Studying the common birds up close is the way to learn the shorebirds. As your skill grows, you will be able to make identifications at greater distances.

Once you have convinced yourself to concentrate on the nearby birds that you can see well, the next step is to make side-by-side comparisons of different species. Note the differences in shape and behavior. The quickest way to learn a new species is to compare it to a familiar one.

The hardest aspect of identifying shorebirds is dealing with the different plumages. Each species has from three to five distinct plumages and is usually in the process of molting from one to another. Most field guides simply do not have the room to show all these variations. So you may have better luck focusing on the shape of the bird rather than on its coloring. What is the bird's overall shape? Is it short and plump or tall and lanky? The size and shape of the bill is probably the most important field mark to look for. Is the bill about the same length as the head or is it longer? Is the bill straight, curved, upturned, or is it straight with a little droop at the tip?

It is impossible for most people to accurately estimate the

size of a bird in the field. Instead of guessing that your mystery sandpiper is about ten inches long, compare the bird to something else. If you notice that your bird is slightly smaller than a nearby Killdeer, you can look up the length of the Killdeer and have a good estimate of the size of your bird.

I strongly recommend two books for those interested in learning the shorebirds. "The Complete Birder," by Jack Connor has an excellent chapter on shorebirds. Connor separates each species into different categories based on shape and choice of habitat. This helps you learn what to look for when trying to identify a new shorebird.

"Shorebirds," by Hayman, Marchant, and Prater describes every species of shorebird in the world. The strength of this book lies in the detailed text and the illustrations which show all of the different plumages. This book won't fit in your pocket, but it should definitely be in your car or backpack.

Listed below are a few hints that will help you to separate similar species.

GREATER/LESSER YELLOWLEGS: When you see these two birds side by side, you will wonder how you ever confused the two. The Greater Yellowlegs appears huge compared to the Lesser, and its large upturned bill reminds one of a godwit. When seen individually, however, the birds can appear nearly identical. The one thing to look for is the bill. If the bill is about the same length as the head, the bird is a Lesser. If the bill is obviously longer than the length of the head, the bird is a Greater.

LONG-BILLED/SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS: It's a Long-billed. If you get a close enough view, look for the subtle differences in plumage (see "Shorebirds," mentioned above, or "Advanced Birding" by Kenn Kaufman). Your best bet at identifying the few Short-billed Dowitchers that pass through Kansas is to listen to the alarm calls as the birds take off. The Short-bills give a "tu-tu-tu," similar to a Lesser Yellowlegs. The Long-bills give a high pitched "keek."

"There's a little Dingus in all of us."

by Jeff Cox and Millie Reed

Although the story of how KOS came into the position of Dingus Natural Area is interesting, the namesake family history is more so. Virginia native Hiram (Jasper) Dingus built the walnut-log cabin at the bottom of the hill west of Dingus Natural Area. Family legend (and the history of Linn County) indicates that Jasper was active in "Bleeding Kansas" and the border wars.

Jasper was one of the original Jayhawkers and narrowly missed being a victim of the Marais des Cygne massacre. He died in Mound City in 1900 in an apparent murder; he was ambushed after going to town to sell some cattle. A man followed

him and hit him on the head with a club, killing him.

Jasper Dingus married Elizabeth Wayne and they had several children. One of their sons, John Orum Dingus, was the father of **Ruth Dingus Fahl**, whom many long-time KOS members will remember as being active in KOS until the 1980s.

Jasper and Elizabeth Dingus were parents to Mattie, also. Mattie married John Bower and lived in Mound City with two sons, Cecil and Burnette Orum. B.O. Bower was **Jeff Cox's** maternal grandfather

and Mattie Dingus Bower was his maternal great grandmother.

A love of nature seems to run in the Dingus line. Cox is a biologist by training; **Eunice** and **Wilson Dingus** loved birds and nature; and Ruth Dingus Fahl was a naturalist and worked at the museum at KU for several years.

As a student in a zoology class at the University of Oklahoma, Cox once listened to a lecture where the professor referred to the coracoid process (a part of the scapula less developed in humans than in other mammals) as a "dingus little thingy." Cox said, "At first I took some umbrage, but I now know there's a little Dingus in all of us."



2005

It's time to renew your KOS membership!

New Member Renewal

Please clearly mark your choice of membership category below.

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Individual | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Family | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Individual | \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Family | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | \$45 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member | \$300 (or two consecutive annual payments of \$150) |



Please remit check or money order, payable to KOS, and mail this form and your dues payment to:

Max C. Thompson
1729 E. 11th Ave.
Winfield, KS 67156

Name

Daytime phone or email

Address