



The Horned Lark

Kansas Ornithological Society

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From the President's Pen

By Cheryl Miller

In February, I ran across a Facebook post detailing an alleged sexual assault by a birder in Georgia. A few days later another post appeared alleging serious misconduct by a birder in Ohio. Both incidents allegedly involved well known individuals within the birding community.

By its nature, birding puts us in isolated areas. Sometimes we are alone and other times we are with only one other person. I believe the great majority of these outings are safe and enjoyable. I also believe this is what KOS members want and deserve.

The KOS board has agreed to adopt the statement issued by the American Ornithological Society on field safety. You may find more about AOS's position at <https://bit.ly/38F8h6G>. AOS's statement reads as follows:

"The professional ornithological societies of the Americas are committed to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for everyone in the field of ornithology and for all who participate in birding and other forms of nature appreciation. Among its many gifts, the natural world provides immeasurable solace, connection, comfort, wonder, and peace to those who enjoy it, and this should never come with risk, anxiety, or endangerment. While we represent different societies, we are united as a community around these principles. Individual behaviors that prohibit others from safely engaging in ornithology will not be tolerated by our societies, and we will each do our part in advancing these shared ethical ideals."

Personal trespasses that put others at harm must not be tolerated.

In late February, I encountered trespassers on our family property. They scared the crap out of me. They didn't have permission to be on our land and I had no idea what their intentions were. Was I at personal risk? (Being female adds dimensions to this question males don't usually worry about.) Who were they? Were they armed? Why did they think they could do whatever they wanted there? Were they hiding something on the property?

On the surface, it may not seem to be a big deal to trespass, but it is to many landowners. It's akin to stepping out your door to enjoy your backyard in town and finding a stranger there. It's an unsettling, not to mention angering, experience.

Respect boundaries. Ask permission. Abide the response.

As the pandemic continues, the KOS board has decided to hold the annual spring meeting as a virtual event May 7-9. Look for more information about the format and how to join the fun.

Stay well,

- Cheryl

KOS 2021 Spring Meeting will be virtual. See page 3!

From the Keyboard

By the Editor

There's been a lot of things happening recently. Things have happened to cause us to think about personal safety, personal responsibility, personal accountability. If it hasn't occurred to you yet, you need to realize that not everyone in this country has the same freedoms and sense of safety that we may be familiar with. We all have the right to enjoy the outdoors safely and that entails each and every one of us to protect and respect each other, the outdoors and the birds that we all love. Please take time to read Cheryl's column on Page 1 and the KOS statement on Page 9.

The clichés are many, varied, true, tired and timely. "It's darkest before the storm", "There's a light at the end of the tunnel" and I could go on for this entire column. We've been enduring the pandemic for over a year now. As much as we may put on a good face and say we're doing okay, it wears on everyone. But we keep doing what is right and safe and if you can get vaccinated I encourage you to do so. I recently passed over one of those "thresholds" that made me eligible a little sooner than some so happily took my shots!

Hopefully things will continue to improve and we can return to face to face KOS meetings soon. I miss seeing a lot of you in person. Technology is amazing but virtual meetings aren't quite the same as in person meetings. I want to shake your hand and have a cup of coffee with you. We are getting there, but it just won't be this spring. But don't let that hinder you from getting outside and enjoying migration that is now underway.

My birding time has suffered over the past year. Which had far more to do with moving out to the farm than anything pandemic related. Oh, don't get me wrong, there's great birds here at the farm. But it was a protracted move sorting through decades of things kept (that really didn't need to be kept and certainly not moved), and then trying to get the house in town ready to sell. While that process is still ongoing the end is in sight!

We can go back to clichés and talk about closing a door on that part of our life or starting a new chapter, blah, blah, blah. We've all heard it, but there will be a sense of relief when we hand the keys to a new owner. Getting rid of those keys will open up a door fully that will allow me more time to be outside, with the birds. It's a Sunday morning as I write this. Outside I hear the Northern Cardinals and a Tufted Titmouse and the ubiquitous crows. They all announce that spring is here and somewhere to the south streams of neotropical migrants are winging their way north. A thought that makes any birder of any age giddy!

So get out there and enjoy the spring. Look out for yourself, look out for nature, and look out for each other. It's the right thing to do.

- Chuck



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KOS Spring Meeting 2021, May 7 - 9, 2021

The “Go Birding at Public Lands Near You” Tour

In keeping with health and safety recommendations, KOS will not be gathering in person for our annual spring birding field trips. We intend to have “socially distanced” spring field trips this year. Our goal is to “challenge” birders to visit one or more of the public lands listed below. We will bird from noon on Friday May 7 through noon on Sunday May 9. We will have a virtual compilation via Zoom at 1 p.m. on Sunday. We will also have a Friday night virtual trivia challenge, because it has been so popular and may be becoming a new tradition, and a Saturday evening virtual social hour. Both the trivia and social hour will be at 7 p.m.

Sign up to participate in Zoom sessions will be via a Google Form link, to be posted to the KOS website, KSBIRD-L, and Facebook soon. If you have questions regarding registration contact Jeff Calhoun at jeffcalhoun11@gmail.com or Jenn Rader at jennrader34@gmail.com. To insure you get the Zoom links please register before 5 p.m. on May 7. You can also sign up to cover a specific location (or multiple locations) during the meeting weekend with Jeff Calhoun. A list of "field trips" and participants may be posted closer to the event weekend. You don't have to participate in all of the virtual events, you can pick and choose! For the record, the spring virtual meeting “local committee” is comprised of Jenn Rader, Rachel Roth, Jeff Calhoun, Kurtis Meier, and Chuck Otte (and Chuck wishes to extend his thanks to the other members for jumping in and helping!!) Reminders for registration will also be posted on Facebook and the KSBIRD-L listserv.

The compilation on Sunday afternoon will accept sightings from the public lands listed below, including all associated wildlife and recreation areas. You won't have to say WHICH public lands you visited at the compilation but we do encourage you to eBird your sightings for posterity. When you register, Jeff may ask some members if they are willing to “lead” socially distanced groups for part of a day to help newer birders learn some good birding areas. If you want to bird by yourself, that is perfectly acceptable, and understandable. Below is the list of public lands. Have fun and contact any of the committee members with questions!

Big Hill Lake, Labette County
Cedar Bluff Reservoir (includes Cedar Bluff State Park), Trego County
Cheney Lake (includes Cheney State Park), Kingman, Reno, and Sedgwick Counties
Clinton Lake (includes Clinton State Park), Douglas County
Council Grove Lake, Morris County
Crawford State Park, Crawford County
El Dorado Lake (includes El Dorado State Park), Butler County
Elk City Lake (includes Elk City State Park), Montgomery County
Fall River Lake (includes Fall River State Park), Greenwood County
Hillsdale Lake (includes Hillsdale State Park), Miami County
Historic Lake Scott State Park, Scott County
John Redmond Reservoir, Coffey County
Kanopolis Lake (includes Kanopolis State Park), Ellsworth County
Kaw River State Park, Shawnee County
Keith Sebelius Reservoir (includes Prairie Dog State Park), Norton County

Kirwin Reservoir, Phillips County
Little Jerusalem Badlands State Park, Logan County
Lovewell Reservoir (includes Lovewell State Park), Jewell County
Marion Reservoir, Marion County
Meade State Park, Meade County
Melvorn Lake (includes Eisenhower State Park), Osage County
Milford Lake (includes Milford State Park), Geary, Clay and Dickinson Counties
Mushroom Rock State Park, Ellsworth County
Perry Lake (includes Perry State Park), Jefferson County
Pomona Lake (includes Pomona State Park), Osage County
Sand Hills State Park, Reno County
Toronto Lake (includes Cross Timbers State Park), Greenwood County
Tuttle Creek Lake (includes Tuttle Creek State Park), Pottawatomie and Riley Counties
Waconda Lake (includes Glen Elder State Park), Mitchell County
Webster Lake (includes Webster State Park), Rooks County
Wilson Lake (includes Wilson State Park), Russell County

Have you considered including KOS in your estate? Contact Treasurer Max Thompson for details on how to make this happen.

Kansas Birding Roundup, Fall 2020

(August – November)

Chuck Otte, compiler

This is the report of the fall birding season in Kansas, August through November. While astronomical fall does not begin until late September, ornithological fall is the time of southbound migrations. The first trickle of migration appears with shorebirds and hummingbirds in late July and really gains steam in August and September lingering on until the southbound waterfowl migration wraps things up in October and November.

With extreme weather conditions, widespread wildfires, and short natural food supplies in western states, we should have known we were in for an interesting fall season. Early on it became very apparent that we were going to have an invasion of western species, but we also had more than our fair share of southern species wandering north. Mountain Bluebirds moved well east matching some of the good invasion years of the 1990s. Again, this fall we had good numbers of western hummingbirds in the southwestern portion of the state including an Anna's Hummingbird in Dodge City.

A wintery storm with snow and cold weather the end of October caused a fallout of American Woodcocks around the state resulting in four new county records. Pete Janzen compiled these reports which were primarily from 26 October to 1 November. Forty reports totaling 41 birds from 25 counties provided a fairly graphic image of where Woodcocks were migrating when the storm occurred! While most were feeding in residential lawns one was found frozen following the storm and another literally flew into the wall of a coffee shop right in front of someone waiting at the drive through (it was taken to a nature center, where it recovered and was released!)

Several southern species, likely venturing north on post-breeding dispersal brought excitement to many birders. White Ibis, all immatures, were found in Neosho, Sedgwick, Stafford and Sumner. Swallow-tailed Kites are becoming almost annual late summer visitors being seen this year in Butler, Douglas, Geary and Harvey Counties.

While these post breeding southern species are a treat, the real action started showing up in western and southwestern Kansas in September when many western species irrupted into Kansas likely due to several previously mentioned reasons. Woodhouse's Scrub-Jays were literally too numerous to mention so only new county records are listed below. Steller's and Pinyon Jays were present but not near the numbers as the Scrub-Jays.

Morton County lived up to its migrant trap reputation although other western counties joined in the fun with many western species including the western flycatchers, a good offering of Red-breasted Nuthatches (which were already showing up in August), Mountain Chickadees and Cassin's Vireos. Cassin's Vireos, Plumbeous Vireos and Blue-headed Vireos were formerly lumped together in the Solitary Vireo complex. As we are still trying to get a good handle on the occurrence of especially the western species, Cassin's and Plumbeous, both of those species are on the Kansas Bird Records Review list. Yet with all of the Cassin's Vireo records that were popping up in eBird reports from September, 18 to be exact, the KBRC received exactly three reports from one observer (thank you to that one observer!) While we recognize the value of eBird, it is not a substitute, nor does it want to be, for bird records committees.

Without a doubt, the highlight of the season was the Yellow-eyed Junco found by Sara Shane at Lake Scott State Park and subsequently seen and photographed by dozens. It will be the first record for the state, pending acceptance by the Kansas Bird Records Committee. Birders are well known to speculate about what will be the next new species for the state list, but I didn't hear anyone mentioning this species that is not known to be prone to vagrancy!

Any report marked as having been turned in to the Kansas Bird Records Committee (KBRC) should be considered tentative until review by the Committee is completed. Thank you to everyone who reports and contributes sightings for this report. Please forward any noteworthy sightings to me at cotte@twinvalley.net or mailed to 11319 Dundon Rd, Milford KS 66514.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number and Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Surf Scoter	5 at Perry Lake	Jefferson	10/25	KC
Surf Scoter	2 at Pony Creek Lake	Brown	10/30	MLg
Surf Scoter	1 at farm pond east of Newton	Harvey	11/03	CS
Surf Scoter	1 at Pratt County Lake	Pratt	11/05	MPr
Surf Scoter	1 at Shawnee Mission Park	Johnson	11/14	KC
Surf Scoter	1 at Wilson Lake	Russell	11/16	KMD
Surf Scoter	1 at Bone Creek Lake	<u>Crawford</u>	11/20	AxM

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Surf Scoter	2 at El Dorado Lake	Butler	11/21	KG, BL, PM
Surf Scoter	1 at Clinton Lake	Douglas	11/25	RB, NP
Surf Scoter	1 at Kanopolis Lake	Ellsworth	11/27	DK, RS
White-winged Scoter	1 at Pomona Lake	Osage	10/24	LSm
White-winged Scoter	14 at Lake Olathe Park	Johnson	10/27	KKI
White-winged Scoter	1 at Elkhart WTP	Morton	10/30	MN
White-winged Scoter	3 at Pony Creek Lake	Brown	10/31	DMz
White-winged Scoter	4 at Cheney State Park	Reno	11/01	AM
White-winged Scoter	1 at LaFarge Sandpits	Sedgwick	11/01	KG
White-winged Scoter	2 at Perry Lake	Jefferson	11/11	DMz
White-winged Scoter	2 at Cedar Lake	Leavenworth	11/12	m.ob.
White-winged Scoter	2 at Ulysses WTP	<u>Grant</u>	11/25	NV
Black Scoter	2 at Tuttle Creek Lake	Riley	10/27	TC
Black Scoter	1 at Perry Lake	Jefferson	10/28	KC, DP
Black Scoter	1 at Pomona Lake	Osage	10/30	CM, SN
Black Scoter	2 at Melvern Lake	Osage	11/13	KC, DP
Black Scoter	1 at Elm Creek Lake	Bourbon	11/22	MGo
Black Scoter	2 at La Cygne Lake	Linn	11/22	MGo
Black Scoter	1 at Clinton Lake	Douglas	11/24	RB
Black Scoter	2 at LaFarge Sandpits	Sedgwick	11/25	MN
Black Scoter	7 at Kanopolis Lake	Ellsworth	11/27	DK, RS
Long-tailed Duck	1 somewhat early arrival at Perry Lake As many as 4 present on 11/25	Jefferson	10/16	CM, SN
Long-tailed Duck	1 at QNWR	Stafford	11/16	MLg
Long-tailed Duck	1 at Pony Creek Lake	Brown	11/20	JM
Long-tailed Duck	1 at Melvern Lake	Osage	11/26	ENR
Red-necked Grebe	1 at Perry Lake	Jefferson	11/11	KC, DP
Red-necked Grebe	1 at Bone Creek Lake	<u>Crawford</u>	11/20	AxM
Red-necked Grebe	1 at Tuttle Creek Lake	Riley	11/20	TC
Western Grebe	1 at Perry Lake, easterly	Jefferson	10/16	KC
Western Grebe	1 at Melvern Lake	Osage	10/25	JM
Western Grebe	1 at Pony Creek Lake	Brown	10/29	MLg
Western Grebe	1 at Lake Parsons	Neosho	11/01	ABu
Western Grebe	1 in Shawnee	Johnson	11/07	ABa
Western Grebe	2 at Clinton Lake	Douglas	11/20	MLg
Black-billed Cuckoo	1 late at Elkhart Cemetery/Shelterbelt	Morton	10/19	DT
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1 immature in Satanta, westerly and late	Haskell	10/09	MR
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1 lingering and late in Dodge City	Ford	10/15	CMM
Mexican Whip-poor-will	1 heard at CNG, KBRC	Morton	9/15	SK
Anna's Hummingbird	1 at feeder in Dodge City, KBRC Still present 11/11	<u>Ford</u>	10/13	CMM
Calliope Hummingbird	1 adult male coming to feeder in Grinnell	<u>Gove</u>	8/09	CF
Rufous Hummingbird	1 juvenile female at feeder in Grinnell	<u>Gove</u>	8/08	CF
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	1 in Kinsley	<u>Edwards</u>	8/11	HA
Yellow Rail	1 at Clinton Lake Model Airplane Field	Douglas	10/01	KC, ML
Whooping Crane	2 south of CBWA, first of season	Barton	10/16	CW fide
Whooping Crane	16, 15 adults, 1 immature, QNWR	Stafford	10/28	RL
Whooping Crane	Last of the season seen at QNWR	Stafford	11/19	RL
American Golden-Plover	QNWR, a regularly observed individual An individual(s) was seen through the entire summer season and into the early fall period.	Stafford	8/02	m.ob.
Ruddy Turnstone	1 at Atchison County Lake	<u>Atchison</u>	8/30	DMz, GSc
Pectoral Sandpiper	1 at Big Playa near St. Francis	<u>Cheyenne</u>	9/24	HA, MK

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
American Woodcock	1 found frozen in yard, Oberlin	<u>Decatur</u>	10/27	VR
American Woodcock	1 at yard water feature, Larned	<u>Pawnee</u>	10/28	DMY
American Woodcock	2 in different locations, Dodge City	<u>Ford</u>	10/31	CMM, JC
American Woodcock	1 feeding on lawn, Clay Center	<u>Clay</u>	11/1	LC
Wilson's Phalarope	1 late at Slate Creek Marsh	Sumner	10/21	MT
Red-necked Phalarope	1 at Atchison County Lake	<u>Atchison</u>	9/08	GSc
Red Phalarope	1 at QNWR, good photos	Stafford	11/08	SR
Parasitic Jaeger	1 at CBWA	Barton	9/07	DBr
Sabine's Gull	1 immature at Wilson WA	Russell	9/27	MR
Sabine's Gull	2 immatures at a playa	Cheyenne	9/26	KC, MK
Sabine's Gull	1 immature at Kyle Marsh	Jefferson	10/04	DMK, MP
Sabine's Gull	1 at Linn County Park	<u>Linn</u>	10/17	EB
Sabine's Gull	1 at Wilson Lake	Russell	10/17	MR
Little Gull	1 at Melvern Lake, KBRC Still present 10/26	<u>Osage</u>	10/18	DMK, MP
Wood Stork	1 at Lake Scott	Scott	8/23	CF
Magnificent Frigatebird	1 flying over QNWR, KBRC	<u>Stafford</u>	11/06	TB
Magnificent Frigatebird	1 flying near CBWA, KBRC	<u>Barton</u>	11/08	RP
Magnificent Frigatebird	1 at Clinton Lake Dam, KBRC	Douglas	11/10	LSm
Red-throated Loon	1 at Wilson Lake	Russell	11/22	MR
Red-throated Loon	1 at Cheney SP	Kingman	11/28	TE
Yellow-billed Loon	1 at Wilson Lake, KBRC Still present 11/30	Russell	11/15	MR
Green Heron	1 lingering at KCP&L wetlands	Johnson	11/01	m.ob.
White Ibis	1 immature at Slate Creek WA	Sumner	8/05	FSQ
White Ibis	1 immature southeast of Wichita Still present 8/22	<u>Sedgwick</u>	8/22	SW
White Ibis	2 juveniles at Neosho WA At least one still present 9/05	<u>Neosho</u>	8/29	ABu
White Ibis	1 immature at QNWR	Stafford	9/27	AK
Osprey	1 in top of a pine tree in Oakley	<u>Logan</u>	9/26	KC
Swallow-tailed Kite	1 at Riverfront Park, Lawrence, KBRC Still present 8/16	Douglas	8/07	LDC, m.ob.
Swallow-tailed Kite	1 on the north edge of North Newton, KBRC Still present 8/17	<u>Harvey</u>	8/13	TvS, m.ob.
Swallow-tailed Kite	1 along I-70 at Junction City, KBRC This bird is likely the same one seen in several parts of Junction City the next several weeks. Still present 8/27	Geary	8/15	PB, KSm
Swallow-tailed Kite	1 at north end of El Dorado 2 birds seen on 8/30, at least one still present 8/31	Butler	8/27	BB
Golden Eagle	1 at Perry Lake dam	Jefferson	10/15	MP
Golden Eagle	1 at Hillsdale Lake	Miami	10/26	WC
Red-shouldered Hawk	1 westerly at rural residence	Russell	8/11	DK
Red-shouldered Hawk	1 at Clark SFL	<u>Clark</u>	9/03	DBr
Red-shouldered Hawk	1 near Ottawa SFL	Ottawa	10/20	KK
Broad-winged Hawk	1 in Leoti, a westerly migrant	<u>Wichita</u>	8/16	SSH, TSh
Ferruginous Hawk	1 immature at Lake Olathe Park	Johnson	10/07	RW
Barred Owl	1 at Elkhart Cemetery/Shelterbelt	Morton	11/03	CE
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1 immature at Elkhart Cemetery/Shelterbelt	Morton	10/08	AH
Red-naped Sapsucker	1 male at CNG, Middle Spring	Morton	10/05	BP, CK
Hammond's Flycatcher	1 at CNG, Middle Springs, KBRC	Morton	9/04	DBr
Hammond's Flycatcher	1 at Concrete Jungle in Tribune	Greeley	9/15	TE, PJ, CVB

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Gray Flycatcher	1 at CNG Middle Springs, KBRC	Morton	9/12	KC
Dusky Flycatcher	1 at CNG, Western Crossing	Morton	9/04	DBr
Dusky Flycatcher	1 at K-27 Park	Hamilton	9/13	AM
Eastern Phoebe	1 southeast of Leoti	<u>Wichita</u>	10/14	HA
Say's Phoebe	1 southwest of St. Paul	<u>Neosho</u>	11/05	ABu
Vermilion Flycatcher	1 at Wilson SP, KBRC	Russell	11/06	BK, DK
Northern Shrike	1 at Atchison County Lake, westerly	Atchison	10/19	DMz
Northern Shrike	1 easterly near Eudora	Douglas	11/04	DBr
Blue-headed Vireo	1 at Country Club Park, Liberal, late	Seward	11/27	JC
Pinyon Jay	6 at CNG, Point of Rocks Continuing 10/19	Morton	10/05	BP, CK
Steller's Jay	1 at CNG, Point of Rocks Continuing 10/19	Morton	10/06	BP, CK
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay	1 on River Rd near Lakin	<u>Kearny</u>	10/24	QN
Chihuahuan Raven	1 near Tribune	Greeley	10/17	HA, JC
Cave Swallow	1 at Slate Creek WA	Sumner	8/04	FSQ
Cave Swallow	1 juvenile north of Partridge	<u>Reno</u>	8/06	AM
Mountain Chickadee	7 total at CNG at several locations Were present at many locations in Morton County during the period	Morton	10/06	MRb
Mountain Chickadee	1 in Garden City	Finney	10/19	KM
Mountain Chickadee	1 at Grinnell residence	<u>Gove</u>	10/26	CF
Mountain Chickadee	1 at K-27 Park	Hamilton	10/30	TE, PJ
Mountain Chickadee	2 in Ulysses	Grant	10/31	TE, PJ
Rock Wren	1 in Beloit	<u>Mitchell</u>	10/17	CNN
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1 at Elkhart cemetery/shelterbelt, late	Morton	10/06	BP
Mountain Bluebird	1 female at Kill Creek Park	<u>Johnson</u>	10/15	MLd
Sage Thrasher	1 southwest of St. Paul, KBRC	<u>Neosho</u>	10/11	ABu
Evening Grosbeak	1 male at Overland Park Arboretum	Johnson	11/04	NDG
Cassin's Finch	1 at backyard feeder, Dodge City	Ford	10/17	CMM
Red Crossbill	1 immature feeding on sunflowers in Hays	Ellis	8/16	HA
Red Crossbill	1 flyover calling (Type 2), SE Wichita	Sedgwick	8/24	AM
Red Crossbill	3 at Pittsburg State University Campus	Crawford	11/09	MWc
Red Crossbill	1 in Elkhart	Morton	11/11	VRm, MRb
Lesser Goldfinch	1 at backyard feeder, Dodge City Still present 9/11	<u>Ford</u>	8/22	JC
Lesser Goldfinch	1 female at Sandsage Bison Range WA	Finney	9/22	QN
Lesser Goldfinch	1 at CNG, Cottonwood Picnic Area	Morton	11/11	VRm, MRb
Lesser Goldfinch	1 at feeders in Leawood	Johnson	11/30	CE
Snow Bunting	1 heard calling over Clinton Lake Dam	Douglas	11/20	KC, MLg
Lark Bunting	1 at Slate Creek Wetlands	Sumner	10/17	MT
Black-throated Sparrow	1 at CNG, Point of Rocks	Morton	10/19	DT
Brewer's Sparrow	1 at Elkhart WTP, late	Morton	10/05	BP, CK
Dark-eyed Junco	1 slightly early in Shawnee	Johnson	9/21	DB
Yellow-eyed Junco	1 at Lake Scott, photographed, KBRC Still present 11/30	Scott	11/02	SSh, m.ob.
Canyon Towhee	1 at CNG, Point of Rocks	Morton	9/12	WE
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	1 at Sandsage Bison Range WA	Finney	10/18	QN
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	1 at Scott SP Still present 11/28	Scott	11/22	SSh

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number and Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer(s)</u>
Green-tailed Towhee	1 along Plum Creek north of St. Francis	<u>Cheyenne</u>	9/27	MK
Ovenbird	1 late at CNG, Western Crossing	Morton	10/06	MRb
Worm-eating Warbler	1 at MDC	Linn	8/13	MMH
Worm-eating Warbler	1 at backyard pond, Topeka	Shawnee	9/05	GC
Worm-eating Warbler	1 at Baker Wetlands	Douglas	9/12	LSm
Golden-winged Warbler	1 at Burcham Park, Lawrence	Douglas	8/20	MZ
Golden-winged Warbler	1 at Lone Star Rd Woods	Wyandotte	9/04	KC
Blue-winged Warbler	1 at Pittman residence, Leavenworth	Leavenworth	9/23	GP
American Redstart	1 male at MDC. Likely a summer resident.	Linn	8/02	MMH
Cape May Warbler	1 in Elkhart	Morton	10/08	AH
Bay-breasted Warbler	1 early migrant in Shawnee	Johnson	8/21	DB
Bay-breasted Warbler	1 late in Lawrence	Douglas	10/28	PG, MZ
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1 in Dorrance	Russell	9/13	MR
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1 at Elkhart cemetery/shelterbelt Still present 10/17	Morton	10/06	BP
Black-headed Grosbeak	1 late in Ulysses	Grant	11/04	SG

Locations and notes: CBWA – Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, CNG – Cimarron National Grasslands, KBRC – Kansas Bird Records Committee report filed, MDC – Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge, QNWR – Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, SFL – State Fishing Lake, SP – State Park, WA – Wildlife Area, WTP - Water Treatment Plant.

Underlined county name indicates new county record. Underlined number indicates an exceptionally high count. County name followed by an asterisk (*) indicates a new confirmed breeding record.

Observers - Individuals: Henry Armknecht, Aaron Batteree (ABa), Dawn Bayless, Eric Bents, Tom Blandford, Roger Boyd, Dan Broers (DBr), Bob Broyles, Pam Bruns, Andrew Burnett (ABu), Ted Cable, Jeff Calhoun, Luann Callan, Kathy Carroll, Glenn Caspers, Walt Cochran, Lucas DeCicco (LDC), Wyatt Egelhoff, Corey Entriken, Tom Ewert, Christopher Frick, Nell Damon Galles (NDG), Malcolm Gold (MGo), Kevin Groeneweg, Peter Grund, Sam Guy, Alec Hopping, Pete Janzen, Mark Keller, Kevin Keltner (KKl), Anna Kilian, Steve Kingswood, Dave Klema, Chris Knight, Kaleb Kroeker, Bob Kruger, Mark Land (MLd), Bill Langley, Rachel Laubhan, Matt Longabaugh (MLg), Micky Louis, Jim Malcom, John Mal-lery, Patty Marlett, Alex Marine (AxM), Kathy McDowell (KMD), Mick McHugh (MMH), Debra McKee (DMK), Christi McMillen (CMM), Kurtis Meier, Don Merz (DMz), Donna Meyer (DMy), Andrew Miller, Carol Morgan, Sue Newland, Christiana & Nicholas Niewalk (CNN), Quentin Nolan, Mark Nolen, Rob Penner, Brandon Percival, Diane Persons, Mark Peterson (MPr), Mark Pheasant, Galen Pittman, Nicholaus Pumphrey, Mike Rader, Vickie Ray, Van Remsen (VRm), Sue Riffe, Mark Robbins (MRb), Emma & Nick Rosen (ENR), Roger Schultz, Carolyn Schwab, Greg Scott (GSc), Sara Shane (SSh), Tom Shane (TSh), Faith Shapley-Queen (FSQ), Logan Smith (LSm), Ken Smith (KSm), Travis Stebbins (TvS), Max Thompson, David Tønnessen, R. Tressler, Curt VanBoening (CVB), Nick Varvel, Mary Whitacre (MWc), Curtis Wolf, Rodney Wright, Suntesha Wustrack, Molly Zahn, John Zempel, Linda Zempel **Groups:** many observers (m.ob.)

The Future of In-person Meetings

The country/world has been in pandemic lock down for a year now. Currently the signs are showing improvement. More and more of folks are able to be vaccinated and case numbers are dropping. While we have all grown tired of “virtual life” there may now be a light at the end of the tunnel. I look forward to being able to gather again at KOS meetings, piling into cars together, shaking hands, sharing hugs, enjoying a cup of coffee around a table with a group of birders as we start the morning or enjoying a beer together at the end of the day. All of these things that we used to take for granted have been sorely missed by myself and others.

As has been stated elsewhere, the KOS Board felt that trying to do an in-person spring field trip simply was not advisable at this time so we are repeating last year’s “bird where you are” weekend event in May. When the KOS Board met in late January (virtually of course), it was decided that it was just too early to make a decision one way or the other about our Fall Annual Meeting. The Board will meet again in early May to discuss the fall meeting and will let everyone know just as soon as we have decided. Whether it’s this fall, or spring of 2022, know that we all are looking forward to once again meeting in person! - Chuck

Statement on Ornithological Field Safety

Over the past year several incidents across the country involving birders, including, but not limited to, racism and sexual assault, have forced a lot of uncomfortable, but necessary, discussions about the hazards and perils that birdwatchers have faced whether as a hobbyist birdwatcher, an aspiring field ornithologist, or a scientific researcher. While we think of Kansas as being a friendly place and Kansas birders a welcoming group, we simply cannot assume that and must strive to always be mindful of the potential risks. We must also do our part, as individuals and a society, to make our birdwatching outings inclusive and safe.

The professional ornithological societies of the Americas (see list below) quickly came together in solidarity with a statement affirming their commitment to maintaining the safety of everyone participating in ornithological field activities, including bird watching, or exploring the natural world. This is not just an issue in birdwatching, but in all facets of enjoying the outdoors. The Board of Directors of the Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS) has had some valuable discussions on this topic and intend to keep discussing it and taking steps to help participants in KOS activities feel safe and included. The KOS Board has adopted the statement developed by the professional ornithological societies of the Americas. *Note that KOS wants everyone to remember that “ornithology includes “birdwatching”*. This statement was developed by the following professional ornithological societies:

The professional ornithological societies of the Americas are committed to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for everyone in the field of ornithology and for all who participate in birding and other forms of nature appreciation. Among its many gifts, the natural world provides immeasurable solace, connection, comfort, wonder, and peace to those who enjoy it, and this should never come with risk, anxiety, or endangerment. While we represent different societies, we are united as a community around these principles. Individual behaviors that prohibit others from safely engaging in ornithology, will not be tolerated by our societies, and we will each do our part in advancing these shared ethical ideals.

American Ornithological Society
Association of Field Ornithologists
BirdsCaribbean
CIPAMEX
Neotropical Ornithological Society
Raptor Research Foundation
Society of Canadian Ornithologists-Société des ornithologistes du Canada
The Waterbird Society
Western Field Ornithologists
Wilson Ornithological Society

It is vitally important that each and everyone one of us be ever mindful and respectful of those around us. We each have differing levels of trust and safety. We have to respect that some will have a higher level of safety than others and that we don't put anyone at anytime into an uncomfortable situation, either by action or word.

We all love birds and the greater outdoors. Our enjoyment of it should include helping others safely enjoy it. As individuals and an organization, we must all make this statement our solemn promise.

Syracuse, Kansas: The Oldest Christmas Bird Count West of Wichita

By Tom and Sara Shane

For the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) tradition in the western half of Kansas to have begun in Hamilton County near the little town of Coolidge in 1914 seems to have been at first glance a strange mystery. Raymond T. Shanstrom had returned home to his family's farm after graduating from Fairmount College (now Wichita State University) that spring. On 26 December 1914 he ran the first western Kansas CBC around the family place called the Riverside Farm, a mile east of Coolidge. He was a very active student at Fairmount College, being on the baseball team and helping his biology professor Austin P. Larrabee organize a student Audubon Society group of which Raymond was president his senior year of 1914. The students made bird counts around Wichita, plus they built bird houses and installed them on the campus. Raymond ran the first Coolidge CBC in 1914 and a second count in 1920.

Both the 1914 and 1920 counts were conducted on 26 December from 11 am to 4 pm. In 1914 he located 19 species including "12 Magpies and 1 Bald Eagle." In 1920 he had 25 species including "6 Prairie Chicken, 1 Golden Eagle, 16 Magpies, 5 Redpolls and an Arkansas Goldfinch." The early Coolidge count area is included in the modern Hamilton County count of Syracuse discussed below.

The count in Hamilton County was not run again until 20 December 1987 when a part of the crew for the Cimarron National Grassland and the Black Mesa, OK CBCs decided to run several early counts along the Arkansas River including Lakin and Syracuse. Participants were Sebastian Patti, Mick McHugh (the compiler for the Lakin CBC), Mike Rader, Sara Norman, Tom Shane and Scott Seltman who compiled the Syracuse CBC. Over the 34 years from 1987 to 2020, the Syracuse count has been completed for 22 of those years. Scott Seltman was compiler for 2 years, Art Nonhof for 17, Mavis Long for 1 and Jeff Calhoun for 2. The median species count total is 54 with a range of 26 - 65.

We examined the data for five species that could be considered resident for most of the year. The southern half of the count circle is primarily sandsage prairie. This habitat is suited for the Scaled Quail and the Lesser Prairie-Chicken. It is the most intact habitat, but access is limited since frequent attention to the land is not needed by cattle ranchers who use their own trails. Over half of the sections of land in this region are not touched by a county road. The Scaled Quail was encountered only 9 times in 22 years, with high counts of 33, 50 and 82. The lack of access has certainly hindered the ability to count the Lesser Prairie-Chicken. The species has only been located twice in the 22 years of the census, with counts of 3 and 12. The Ferruginous Hawk was not limited to, but most frequently found, in the north half of the count circle containing native short-grass prairie on 21 of 22 counts. High counts were 17, 19 and 37. A 14,000 acre prairie dog town in the short-grass prairie was heavily used by this hawk as well as the Golden Eagle. Sadly, the extensive dog towns were poisoned a few years ago. The Golden Eagle, another majestic raptor of the High Plains, also utilized the various habitats found in the count circle. It was located on 16 of the 22 years, with high counts of 8, 8 and 9. The Black-billed Magpie was most often found in the riparian habitat along the Arkansas River and was observed 20 out of 22 years. During the early years of the Syracuse CBC, high magpie counts included 141, 236 and 320. After the arrival of the West Nile Virus around 2003, which decimated Corvid populations, the counts since have ranged from 0 – 15. On an earlier count, 67 magpies were observed feeding on a cow carcass several miles southeast of Coolidge.

The lure of the CBCs along the Colorado border are indeed heightened by the occasional influx of western species. The Cimarron National Grassland CBC is certainly blessed with more frequent encounters. Morton County is far closer to the mountain evergreens reaching the Kenton, OK area only 60 miles away along the Cimarron River. A bird must travel 190 miles along the Arkansas River from evergreen habitats around Cañon City, CO to reach Coolidge, KS. The following list of birds are those found on the recent 22 years of the Syracuse counts with species followed by the number of years observed: Inca Dove (2), Greater Roadrunner (1), Ladder-backed Woodpecker (3), Pinyon Jay (1), Woodhouse's Scrub Jay (3), Mountain Chickadee (2), Bushtit (1), Varied Thrush (1), Curved-billed Thrasher (3), Bohemian Waxwing (1), Evening Grosbeak (2), Common Redpoll (1), Red Crossbill (1), White-winged Crossbill (1), Cassin's Sparrow (1), and Pyrrhuloxia (1).

Tom's most enjoyable sighting was a western subspecies the year we obtained permission to walk the old Shanstrom farm, and observed a nearly pure flock of 50 Pink-sided Juncos. It was at that same time and place that Pamela Ramsey remembers the quarter mile hike through the tamarisk forest to the river bank. There were White-crowned Sparrows darting through the forest. On the Syracuse count Marie Osterbuhr always enjoyed the birds along a river that has flowed every year that we have made the count. The river rarely runs at Garden City. The most enjoyable observation that Dan LaShelle has made was of two Cassin's Sparrows in a CRP field northwest of Syracuse. He returned several days later and got additional good looks. Scott Seltman enjoyed the first year of the count when he got to see his first flock of 9 Bushtits in Kansas, and the day was topped off by an Evening Grosbeak sighting. Art Nonhof's most enjoyable find was on the south side of the river not too far west of K-27 highway when he located a Pyrrhuloxia. On a different count year, near the same area in an ancient cottonwood forest while with Art, Mike Ramsey got to learn the calls of the Red-bellied Woodpecker. Earlier that day, he did the same with a Marsh Wren near the river. Sara always enjoyed the climb north out of the river bottom while driving through the prairie dog towns. One morning we started out with a fresh inch of snow, no tracks, and a little bit of fog looking for birds, a fabulous white winter scene. A number of Ferruginous Hawks were perched on fence posts. We were able to pull very close before they took flight. On that loop we counted 13 Ferruginous Hawks.

If you have never been out west, come on out and enjoy Hamilton County!



CBC lunch, as usual, was at the county park south of Syracuse, 3 January 2021. Social distancing for CBC birders is a natural thing in western Kansas, since somebody most likely stepped in cow poo that morning. L to R: Marie Osterbuhr, Loretta McClure, Tom Shane, Karen Nonhof, Art Nonhof, Sara Shane, Quentin Nolan, and Kurt Meier. Mike and Pamela Ramsey stayed out in the sandhills since they were on a hot streak with Lesser Prairie Chickens and Lark Buntings. Photo by Karl Osterbuhr.

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Dues are Due!!!!

Many of you have already renewed your Kansas Ornithological Society membership for 2021. Thank you! If you haven't, or if you'd like to provide a membership as a gift, please take a few minutes to clip out the membership form above, write out your check and mail it all off to KOS Treasurer Max Thompson. Or, you can also renew online with credit/debit card, or PayPal, at: https://ksbirds.org/kos/kos_member.html. Just use the drop down box to select your membership level, click on the "Buy Now" button and you'll be taken to PayPal to complete the transaction.

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KOS is a non-profit organization committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and free from discrimination in our membership community and associated KOS activities because of race, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, gender, sexual orientation or age.