



The Horned Lark

Kansas Ornithological Society

June/September, 2021

Vol. 48, No. 2

From the President's Pen

By Cheryl Miller

On a recent bird walk at Chisholm Creek Park, we spent more time looking at wildflowers and tree fruit than watching birds.

Plenty of baby this-and-that flitted around, following their parents, and a lot of young birds investigated wild cherry trees. The expected species were present at the park and nothing was out of the ordinary. We were definitely experiencing the summer doldrums.

It made for a great day of studying habitat and pollinators.

Chisholm Creek Park has restored prairie, marshes and riparian habitats. This mix attracts a broad diversity of birds throughout the year. The key elements necessary for survival—water, food and shelter—are present.

In wet years, such as this, wildflowers and forbs are abundant, and trees put on loads of fruit. We should have enough seeds and insects going into the fall and winter to support winter residents.

Key residents in habitats such as these are pollinators, which play a critical role in assisting plants with fertilization and production of seeds and fruit. Though most of us are familiar with colonial European honeybees as pollinators, mason bees and bumblebees are native to North America and are

more efficient as agents for plant fertilization. Butterflies, moths, hummingbirds and bats are also great pollinators.

Although we are drawn to birds, they won't be present without appropriate habitat, and the habitat won't flourish without the elements necessary for it to attract and support life. It is all interconnected. This in itself makes it important to study where birds live, know their fellow inhabitants, and understand what we can do to support these systems.

However, one life system we don't want to support is the coronavirus. By now, I think we'd all hoped that the pandemic would be over. The delta variant of the virus has made its way to Kansas, and the KOS board has been monitoring its impact here and on neighboring states.

Because of this situation, the KOS board has decided that given the prevalence of the Delta variant, the fall meeting will be similar to that of fall 2020. Paper sessions will be held virtually. In person field trips are being planned.

In the meantime, take time to find new ways to enjoy the summer doldrums and study your local patch. Fall migration will begin soon, and we'll have more opportunities to observe new arrivals in their habitats.

- Cheryl

From the Keyboard

By the Editor

In mid-August an astute birder noticed a tern near the dam at Marion Reservoir that didn't fit the characteristics of any of the terns on the current Kansas Bird Check-list. Lisa correctly identified it as a Royal Tern. Her checklist showed up on eBird and set off a stampede for Marion Reservoir. Those that raced there on Saturday evening saw it, but it did not reappear on Sunday. (Thankfully excellent photographs were obtained of this bird and a Kansas Bird Records Committee report has been filed and will be reviewed soon.)

Jaye and I do not normally chase rare birds all over the state. A Royal Tern is a first state record, but a species we have seen on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts on numerous occasions. BUT, it was a first state record AND Marion Reservoir is only about an hour away. So we decided to take a drive on Sunday morning. There was quite a crowd present from all over the state, but the tern was a no-show. But you know what? We didn't care. We spent considerable time visiting with birding friends that we haven't seen in-person in over a year. There were handshakes, slaps on the back and there may have even been a few hugs among vaccinated friends! The gathering, hoping to see a first state record was as much a social event of friends, old and new, bonded together by the love of birds.

I'm not going to lie and tell you that lists and records don't matter to me. We all know far better than that—I'm all about records and won't deny that. But birding is as much a social event for many of us and I came to realize that during this pandemic. Sure, we all love birds, we love seeing them, helping the newbies find them and identify them and even learning from each other. But the social aspect of chasing a rarity, going on a field trip or participating in a Christmas Bird Count cannot be dismissed. Whether we want to admit it or not, the human being is a social species and that socialization is important to us as birders as well.

So it is sad that we have to make the Fall Meeting a virtual one again. Cheryl mentioned it in her column on page 1 and on the facing page are the details. I miss the camaraderie of in-person meetings but until we can put this virus behind us we just have to be careful.

If you look closely at the masthead of this issue you will see that it says June/September. There will only be three issues of the Horned Lark this year. Partially this is due to uncertainty of what we were going to do and part to saving a few dollars. The December issue will have the spring AND summer Birding Roundups as well as the abstracts of the papers that will be presented, just like always. Which means when the December issue hits your mailbox it's liable to be a jumbo issue. The *KOS Bulletin* has also hit some pandemic rough spots but issues are being finished up and will eventually arrive as well. In the meantime, be patient my friends, stay safe, and enjoy the birds!

- Chuck



Statement of non-profit status and copyright: The Kansas Ornithological Society is a 501(c)3 organization created for the study, conservation and enjoyment of wild birds. The Horned Lark is the membership newsletter of the society and all material contained herein is copyrighted.

KOS Board of Directors

https://ksbirds.org/kos/kos_officers.html

President

Cheryl Miller, Wichita, KS
avian67226@gmail.com

Vice-President

Jenn Rader, Galena, KS
jennrader34@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary

Chuck Otte, Milford, KS
cotte@twinvalley.net

Membership Development Coordinator

Jeff Calhoun, Dodge City, KS
jeffcalhoun11@gmail.com

Treasurer

Max Thompson, Winfield, KS
maxt@cox.net

Business Manager

Malcolm Gold, Overland Park KS
malcolmgold@gmail.com

Editor, KOS Bulletin

Gene Young, Arkansas City, KS
eugene.young@noc.edu
youngg6264@yahoo.com

Editor, The Horned Lark

Chuck Otte, Milford, KS
cotte@twinvalley.net

Past-President

Matt Gearheart Lenexa, KS
mgearheart@designwithinsight.com

Directors at Large:

Kurtis Meier, Garden City, KS
kurtis.meier@ks.gov

Kylee Sharp, Lawrence, KS
kyleesharp@gmail.com

Dave Rintoul, Manhattan, KS
drintoul@ksu.edu

Rachel Roth, Wichita, KS
lilbluestem@gmail.com

KOS Fall Meeting 2021 — Virtual

October 9, 2021

As Cheryl mentioned in her column on page 1, after due consideration of risks associated with the ongoing pandemic, and in light of the rapid explosion of the Delta variant, the KOS Board felt it was crucial to help its members remain safe and the traditional fall meeting was shelved again in favor of a virtual version. The entire KOS Board of Directors is hopeful that by spring 2022 things will be cleared out enough that we will be able to return to our traditional spring meeting/field trips.

Again this year we will have a virtual paper session with presentations being recorded by the authors and the videos will be posted on KOS's YouTube channel. If you wish to submit a presentation please review the information at <https://ksbirds.org/kos/Fall2021/2021Papers.htm> for instructions and deadlines. Instructions on how to view the videos will be on the Fall Meeting information page (link at the bottom of this page.)

On Saturday, October 9th you are encouraged to go birding during the day on your own. We are also organizing a few regional field trips. Details of those will be on the Fall Meeting webpage. We will not be holding a compilation Zoom gathering like we have the last two meetings. Field trip leaders will report the birds seen on their outings. If you decide to bird on your own just email the check-list or the link to your eBird list to ksornsoc@gmail.com.

One of the most important things we do at our fall meeting is to elect the KOS Officers and Board of Directors for the coming year. We will be doing this electronically again and once you register on-line you will be sent information and a ballot prior to the meeting. These ballots must be returned via email by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 9th.

There will be a Zoom gathering 7:00 p.m. Saturday, October 9th. At this gathering the awards for best student papers will be announced as will the results of the elections. There will also be some time spent reviewing the birding highlights of the day.

The Board decided not to award either the Boyd Award or the Avian Conservationist Award this year and to wait until we are able to again meet in person. Likewise, best bird of the year will wait until we can again gather in person and will include all the time from the previous best bird of the year announcements. (And by the time that happens we will have several new state records vying for that honor!)

Registration and additional information about field trips, etc. can be found on the Fall Meeting webpage at: https://ksbirds.org/kos/Fall2021/kos_2021_fall_meeting.htm

Kansas Birding Roundup, Winter 2020-21 (December – February) Chuck Otte, compiler

This is the report of the winter birding season in Kansas, December through February. Many exceptional birds continued from fall into the winter season along with relatively mild weather. That was until some of the coldest weather in over 30 years dove into and across the state in mid-February. Two weeks of frigid, below zero windchills and actual temperatures reaching -20, and colder, drove birders inside and birds to the feeders!

The Yellow-eyed Junco that was first observed at Scott State Park in November continued to be found throughout the entire season seeming to be quite content to act like a Dark-eyed Junco. It even survived the brutal cold spell in mid-February. It's consistency gave many birders the opportunity to observe this first state record bird.

Likely due to the fairly mild early there were a lot of species that lingered well into winter include many reports of Eared Grebes. We normally expect just a few stragglers to remain into the Christmas Bird Count season in mid-December but the numbers were lingering this year were rather amazing.

For years we have grown used to having wintering Sandhill Cranes in the Red Hills region and sometimes even in the large central marshes. But for several winters we've also been seeing regular wintering Sandhill Cranes in scattered locations in eastern Kansas. Often it has been a single bird which leads one to suspect an injury, but in nearly all cases the bird is seen flying, feeding and otherwise acting normally.

Gulls continue to be interesting and confusing. An entire three pages of gulls that at one time would have been review species could have been added from this season. Are these gulls becoming that more common or are we finally saturating some areas with enough birders on a regular enough basis that we are finding out how more common they really are? Possible hybrids and confusing plumages continue to excite or confound Larophiles and Larophobes.

For the second winter in a row Black Vultures have been found wintering in southeast Kansas. This makes it seem likely that they are established as a permanent resident near the Oklahoma border in southeast Kansas. Golden Eagles had far more confirmed reports in eastern Kansas than in recent years. At least one new county record for this species was confirmed during the season as the counties without a Golden Eagle record continue to dwindle in number.

Woodhouse's Scrub Jays continued through most of the season in western Kansas. They were reported from ten counties in the southwest corner of the state in the fall season. During the winter season they were observed in five counties and this was likely due to lack of birding in the region. The first report was from Stanton County on September 30 and the last report from the season was January 25th from Finney County. They not reported in February at all. In the fall season they were reported from two new counties for Kansas, Greeley and Kearny.

While confusion over proper identification of basic plumage Chipping Sparrows still happens regularly the number of confirmed wintering Chipping Sparrows continues to rise. Birder would be well off to study the plumage of non-breeding plumage Chipping Sparrows to reduce confusion and false reports.

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>
Trumpeter Swan	1 at Scott Lake	<u>Scott</u>	2/11	CF, AV
Tundra Swan	3 at watershed pond	<u>Ness</u>	1/01	JC, KG
Cinnamon Teal	2 males at QNWR, a casual winter species	Stafford	1/08	MR
Barrow's Goldeneye	1 male at Pomona Lake	Osage	1/07	MP
Barrow's Goldeneye	1 at Clinton Lake SP	Douglas	2/11	PG, m.ob.
Red-breasted Merganser	2 at Atwood Lake	<u>Rawlins</u>	12/01	AR
Red-necked Grebe	1 continuing at Bone Creek Lake	Crawford	12/05	AxM

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Red-necked Grebe	1 at Wilson Lake Still present 1/02	Russell	12/26	JR
Red-necked Grebe	2 at La Cygne Lake Still present 2/13	Linn	1/08	JRy
Western Grebe	1 easterly at Bone Creek Lake Still present 12/21	Crawford	12/05	AxM
Clark's Grebe	1 late at Wilson Lake	Russell	1/03	MR
Inca Dove	1 at feeders at Pratt Fish Hatchery	<u>Pratt</u>	12/31	BF, DPK
Anna's Hummingbird	1 male coming to feeder in Augusta This individual had been coming to a feeder and was molting into adult Plumage. Photos taken end of January showed it in almost full adult plumage.	Butler	12/09	PJ and others
Sandhill Crane	1 late near Perry Lake Was seen off and on through much of the period	Jefferson/Douglas	12/14	STM
Sandhill Crane	1 late near Edgerton	Johnson	12/19	KE
American Avocet	1 lingering at CBWA	Barton	12/05	HB
American Avocet	2 at QNWR	Stafford	1/18	GC
Baird's Sandpiper	1 at QNWR	Stafford	2/06	AM, MM
Least Sandpiper	2 lingering at Cheney SP Still present 1/23, at least 1 still present 2/05	Reno	12/02	MN
American Woodcock	1, Lexington Lake Park, late	Johnson	12/10	JW
American Woodcock	1 at Black Jack Park, late	Douglas	12/11	NP
Lesser Yellowlegs	1 lingering at QNWR	Stafford	12/26	ABy
Greater Yellowlegs	1 lingering near New Salem	Cowley	12/05	MT
Greater Yellowlegs	1 lingering at QNWR Still present 2/06, 7 present on 2/06	Stafford	1/02	SS
Greater Yellowlegs	4 at Linn County Park	Linn	1/10	KC
Greater Yellowlegs	1 at Cheney WA	Reno	2/04	MN
Yellow-billed Loon	1 at Wilson Lake continuing from fall Still present 2/03	Russell	12/01	BG, DK
American Bittern	1 quite late at CBWA	Barton	1/12	LJ
Least Bittern	1 at Baker Wetlands, rare winter record Still present 2/03	Douglas	1/28	GC
Great Egret	1 late at Miola Lake Still present 2/01	Miami	12/30	MMC
White-faced Ibis	2 late at CBWA	Barton	12/01	TSy
White-faced Ibis	1 lingering at Baker Wetlands Still present 12/10	Douglas	12/02	PG
White-faced Ibis	1 late at QNWR	Stafford	12/26	ABy
Snowy Owl	1 north of Allen along US-56 Hwy Still present 12/22	Lyon	12/21	MGo
Snowy Owl	1 between Paola and Osawatomie	Miami	12/30	MGo
Snowy Owl	1 near Baldwin City	Douglas	1/11	KE
Snowy Owl	1 near Mayetta	Jackson	2/24	DMz
Osprey	1 at Linn Co Park Still present 2/06	Linn	1/10	KC
Golden Eagle	1 easterly at Big Hill Lake	<u>Labette</u>	12/26	MW
Northern Goshawk	1 near Medicine Lodge	Barber	1/02	PJ
Northern Goshawk	1 south of Marion, KBRC	Marion	12/25	KG
Northern Goshawk	1 adult near Sabetha Lake	Nemaha	1/21	JRw
Harris's Hawk	1 in Minneola, KBRC Still present 2/06	Clark	1/07	VT

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Pileated Woodpecker	1 near Lovewell Reservoir	<u>Jewell</u>	12/17	HA
Fish Crow	1 calling near Johnson Co WTP, early	Johnson	1/17	KC, MGo, CE
Fish Crow	3 early in Lawrence	Douglas	2/25	KS
Chihuahuan Raven	1 in flight, vocalizing	Hamilton	1/29	KM
Eastern Phoebe	1 lingering at Wellington Lake	Sumner	12/07	FSQ
Eastern Phoebe	1 at Sedan City Lake	Chautauqua	1/12	PM
Eastern Phoebe	1 at Cheney WA	Reno	1/23	JMi
Eastern Phoebe	1 at La Cygne Lake	Linn	1/23	CE
Eastern Phoebe	1 calling at Clark SFL	Clark	1/25	JMi
Say's Phoebe	1 easterly and lingering at Wellington Lake	Sumner	12/08	FSQ
Mountain Chickadee	1 continuing in Grinnell Still present 2/04	Gove	12/04	KE
Mountain Chickadee	3 in Garden City	Finney	12/19	SSh
Mountain Chickadee	2 at CNG	Morton	1/02	AAMJ
Mountain Chickadee	1 at Hugoton Storm Runoff Ponds	Stevens	1/12	JM
Mountain Chickadee	2 at Finnup Park/Lee Richardson Zoo Still present 1/20	Finney	1/13	QN
Mountain Chickadee	1 at feeders in Ulysses	Grant	2/11	SG
Hermit Thrush	2 in the Norton WA	<u>Norton</u>	12/09	HA
Varied Thrush	1 at Perry Lake, Old Military Trail Still present 1/04	<u>Jefferson</u>	12/24	MGo
Varied Thrush	1 in backyard, Junction City Was seen periodically by homeowner though 1/27	<u>Geary</u>	12/29	MS
Pine Grosbeak	1 adult male at feeder in Leawood	<u>Johnson</u>	2/18	NB
Red Crossbill	5 at private tree farm	Kiowa	2/19	JC
White-winged Crossbill	1 at feeders in Dodge City Still present 12/08	Ford	12/06	CMM
White-winged Crossbill	1 present at feeders near Seneca Still present 1/31	<u>Nemaha</u>	12/30	WB
Common Redpoll	1 at feeder near Piper	Wyandotte	12/26	DD
Common Redpoll	1 at Stockdale Park	Riley	12/31	KC, DP
Common Redpoll	1 near Ellinwood	Barton	2/13	RP
Lesser Goldfinch	1 at feeder in Leawood	Johnson	12/05	CE
Lesser Goldfinch	2 at Perry Lake At least one still present 2/18	<u>Jefferson</u>	12/13	MRb
Lesser Goldfinch	1 at feeders in Winfield	Cowley	1/08	MT
Lesser Goldfinch	1 at Cheney WA	Reno	1/22	MN
Lesser Goldfinch	1 in Junction City	Geary	2/11	COI
Smith's Longspur	2 near Belleville	<u>Republic</u>	2/06	SS
Lark Bunting	1 somewhat easterly winter record	Clark	1/09	JC
Chipping Sparrow	1 lingering in Leawood Still present 12/12	Johnson	12/04	CE
Yellow-eyed Junco	1 continuing at Lake Scott SP Continued through the winter period	Scott	12/03	BG
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	1 at Lake Scott SP Still present 2/03	Scott	12/06	BrM
Baltimore Oriole	1 very late at backyard feeders Still present 12/23	Johnson	12/18	DB
Northern Waterthrush	1 at Cheney Reservoir, rare winter record Still present 1/23	Reno	1/03	AAMJ
Common Yellowthroat	1 at Clark SFL	Clark	1/25	JMi, AM

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Palm Warbler	1 at Tuttle Creek SP Still present 12/26	Pottawatomie	12/13	LM
Painted Bunting	1 male, rare winter record, Newton Still present 2/01	Harvey	1/24	CS
Dickcissel	1 late, near La Crosse	Rush	12/01	HA

Locations and notes: CBWA – Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, CNG – Cimarron National Grasslands, KBRC – Kansas Bird Records Committee report filed, 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, Dawn Bayless, Heidi Beardsley, Niki Bowen, Alice Boyle (ABy) William Brannan, Jeff Calhoun, Kathy Carroll, Glenn Caspers, Dan Dundon, Kelli Egbert, Corey Entriken, Brian Fisher, Christopher Frick, Malcolm Gold (MGo), Bob Gress, Kevin Groeneweg, Peter Grund, Sam Guy, Pete Janzen, Lauren Jarboe, Dave Klema, Brandon Magette (BrM), Jim Malcom, Sam & Terry Mannell (STM), Patty Marlett, Alex Marine (AxM), Marina McClure (MMC), Mick McHugh (MMH), Debra McKee (DMK), Christi McMillen (CMM), Kurtis Meier, Don Merz (DMz), Andrew Miller, Andrew, Anthony, Michael, & Joseph Miller (AAMJ), Joseph Miller (JMi), Michael Miller, Lynette Mueller, Quentin Nolan, Mark Nolen, Cheri Olson (COl), Duane Panek (DPk), Rob Penner, Diane Persons, Mark Pheasant, Nicholas Pumphrey, Mike Rader, Art Reisman, Janet Reynolds (JRy), Mark Robbins (MRb), John Row (JRw), Jethro Runco, Kim Sain, Tim Salisbury (TSy), Carolyn Schwab, Scott Seltman, Sara Shane (SSh), Faith Shapley-Queen (FSQ), Mica Stites, Max Thompson, Vern Tunnell, Adam Vesely, Marion Weidemann, Jeff Witters **Groups:** Many observers (m.ob.)

Recent updates to the Kansas Ornithological Society's Birds of Kansas Check-list

The Kansas Bird Records Committee (KBRC) has been busy in recent months reviewing records and have added some new species to the official Kansas state list. The Yellow-eyed Junco that spent November of 2020 to the end of March 2021 at Scott Lake State Park was quite unexpected. This is a species of Mexico and southeastern Arizona that is not known to be a wanderer, in fact it has traditionally been considered quite sedentary. Kudos to Sara Shane for originally finding it and then to all the birders that over the nearly five months that it was present viewed it and took such amazing photographs of it.

At their 2019 Annual Meeting the KBRC re-examined the 2014 record submitted as a Taiga/Tundra Bean Goose from Wilson Lake, Russell County, in January 2014. Previously, these two species had been lumped as Bean Goose. While the details and drawing submitted were not sufficient to determine if it was a Taiga of Tundra Bean Goose, it did eliminate any other possible species. The record was accepted but because it does not differentiate to the species level it will not be added to the KOS checklist at this time.

While not new species, two species previously on the checklist as hypothetical were documented with photographs in the past two years and removed from the hypothetical list. A Eurasian Wigeon seen at a sandpit in Kearny County was photographed in March 2019 and this record was accepted. Although this was the tenth record for this species in Kansas this was the first record documented with physical evidence.

In April 2020 a Black Phoebe was seen and photographed at the Cimarron National Grasslands. This record was accepted as the second record for this species and the first documented with physical evidence thus removing it from the hypothetical list. Two other Black Phoebes were also documented in the spring of 2020. Those records are detailed in the pending June 2021 KOS *Bulletin* which will contain the Annual Report for 2020.

The annual summer update of the North American Check-list from the American Ornithological Society included one common name change that impacts the Kansas check-list. The Mew Gull was split into essentially a European and North American species. The European Mew Gull now becomes the Common Gull and the North American Mew Gull is now the Short-billed Gull.— *Chuck Otte, KBRC Secretary*

The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: The Species Range expansion since 1875 in Kansas

By Thomas Shane

If we had a top ten list of the most beautiful and unique birds of Kansas, the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher would most certainly be included. Not all Kansans are fortunate enough to be living in the bird's range since it does not occupy the northwest 2/5ths of the state. We live on that line here in Finney County with a few pairs summering on the golf courses and occasionally in a lone tree further southeast of town in the sandhills.

The topic of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher's range occasionally comes up on the internet discussion groups. It was a topic I also thought about from time to time. I had a majority of the essential literature in my library, so I set off to research the topic from the Kansas literature only. Missouri and Nebraska literature could shed light on the Kansas expansion of the species, however, I decided to try and understand Kansas first.

The following listing of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher publications will give the reader a general idea of time and extent of the bird's range expansion in Kansas from 1875 to 2020. The number of references is disappointingly small. What a shame Tom Say's notes were stolen in 1820.

Nineteenth Century

Goss' catalogs (1883 & 1886): "Summer resident; quite common in southern Kansas." Goss' Birds of Kansas (1891): "Summer resident; quite common in southern parts of the State." They are quite common from 38 degrees southward through the Indian Territory. Lantz's review (1899): "Summer resident in southern Kansas; common. The first authentic record for Kansas is its capture at Neodesha, May 13 1875, by Colonel Goss."

First Half of Twentieth Century

Isley's birds of Sedgwick, County (1912): "Noted one bird June 12, 1907. Dr. Mathews notes this species as rare but increasing. It is said by Garner Taylor to be quite common a few miles south of Wichita." Bunker's list (1913), added a specific year: "A summer resident; not uncommon in southern Kansas. They were common in the south part of the state in 1911." Linsdale's Notes on Summer Birds of Kansas (1927), (June to Aug, 1921): "A nest of this species was found in a tree along a road about one half mile south of the hatchery at Pratt on June 15. Others were seen in Barber County on June 19." He also explored Finney, Kearny, Hamilton and Gove counties with no Scissor-tailed Flycatchers observed. Alexander's notes on Wellington, KS (1930): "The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher is frequently seen here during the summer, generally arriving late in April." Long's thesis (1935): "Common summer resident in southern and central Kansas." A summary of observations include: a colleague on September 5, 1934 observed Scissor-tailed Flycatchers as far north as Chanute driving from Oklahoma. West of the Flint Hills it had arrived north to the Salina area. From May to June 1934 several were seen around Lawrence including a pair. It is reported as occasional at Coolidge. Downs and Breukelman's Lyon County birds (1941): "Occasional Summer Resident."

Second Half of Twentieth Century

Porter on north-central Kansas birds (1951), KOS Bulletin Tordoff's checklist (1956): "Common summer resident in southern and central Kansas; nesting west to Morton County, north to Cloud County, east to Neosho

County.” *Ely’s, Ellis County distributional list* (1971): Uncommon transient and low density summer resident. *Rising’s western Kansas summer birds* (1974): “Common in central and south-central Kansas west to Stevens County along the Cimarron River, to Finney County along the Arkansas River, and to Sheridan County along the Saline River; breeds in low density in Morton County and probably in Kearny County,” Western Kansas maximal densities are reached in Comanche and west to Meade County. *Thompson and Ely’s, Birds in Kansas*, (1992), Uncommon to common transient and summer resident in southern and eastern Kansas, becoming rare northward; includes map.

Twenty-first Century

Janzen’s birds of Sedgwick County (2007): “Common migrant and summer resident.” He also writes, “Isley (1912) saw only one during the entire study, but he noted that Mathews considered the species rare, but increasing. Scissor-tails were considered common a few miles south of Wichita. Mead also commented in his writings (1986) that he had found them on his journeys to the Red Hills area, in contrast to their absence in Sedgwick, County in the late nineteenth century.” *Busby and Zimmerman Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas project* (2001), species maps. *Cable and Seltman, Cimarron National Grassland Birds* (2011): “Uncommon migrant and rare summer resident.” *Thompson, Ely, Gress, Otte, Patti, Seibel and Young’s, Birds of Kansas* (2011): “Common to uncommon summer resident in the east and south; uncommon to rare in the west,” includes map. *Otte, Kansas Bird Species County Maps*: online (2020), <https://www.ksbirds.org/checklist/maps/STFL.jpg>.

The early authors all wrote that the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was common in the south, but data were only available for Wichita and southwest. Luckily I read Goss (1891) the second time and found buried in his Florida notes that the flycatcher was quite common from 38 degrees south. That cleared up a big void in southeast Kansas. His longtime home was in Neosho Falls just south of the 38th parallel. Janzen’s 2007 synthesis of the flycatcher records of Isley and Meade certainly opened a curtain for that area. It was unfortunate that Bunker (1913) did not list the counties as to how far west he visited in 1911. We did learn that the flycatchers did persist in the extreme drought that year. It was the year that the Kansas National Forest was killed from Garden City to the Colorado line. The combination of Linsdale’s 1921 breeding record for Pratt (1927) and Long’s 1934 records from Salina, Lawrence and Chanute advanced the expansion zone considerably. Why Tordoff (1956) did not include Long’s data on Lawrence, KS is a mystery. Dr. Porter’s (1951) report on Ottawa County breeding Scissor-tailed Flycatchers did lead the way for Tordoff to extend the range two counties farther north. Rising (1974) added some western Kansas relative abundance data from the mid-1960s with the species common west to Stevens, Finney, and Sheridan counties. Sheridan County has never been reported in the literature since. Thompson and Ely (1992) show a northwest boundary from Morton, Hodgeman, Ellis, Cloud and Doniphan counties. Thompson et al. (2011) along with Otte (2020) show an identical line of breeding distribution from Morton to Jewell to Doniphan counties. Busby and Zimmerman (2001) show a highly irregular line of distribution from Stevens to Marshall counties, then curving back southeast to the Kaw River and on to Johnson County, using confirmed atlas blocks. See included map of the historic boundaries.

It took ninety years from the earliest observation of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher range expansion reported by Isley in 1907 south of Wichita to reach the Nebraska border in about 1997 during the KBBAT project. I’m not sure if the species will ever breed in Cheyenne County, Kansas. From the expansion pattern of the last century, the safest bet is that breeding Scissor-tailed Flycatcher will reach South Dakota first.

Map Legend

Records of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:

Long dashed lines between large circles, from Goss 1891.

Solid lines between medium hexagons, from Linsdale 1927 and Long 1935.

Solid line between medium circles, from Tordoff 1956.

Long dashed lines between small circles, from Thompson and Ely 1992.

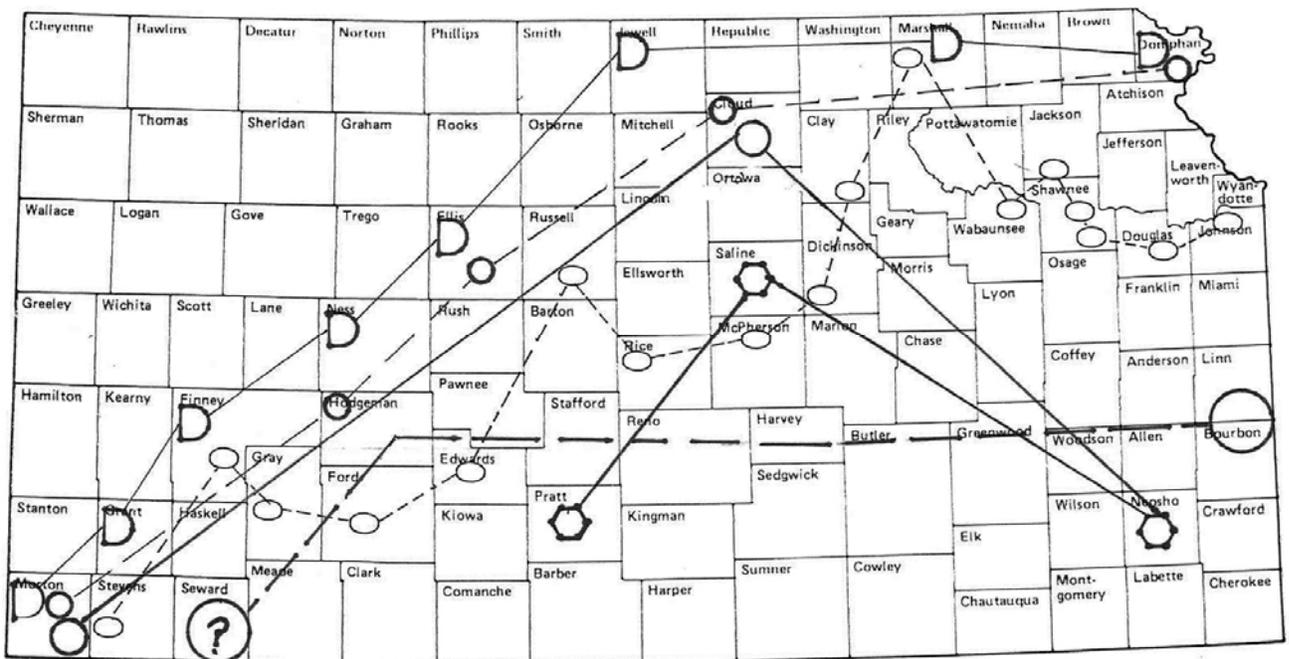
Solid line between large Ds, from Thompson et al. 2011.

Short dashed line between ovals, was confirmed nesting records from the 1992 – 1997 KBBAT project, Busby and Zimmerman 2001.

Full references for the above literature can be found in the following:

M. C. Thompson, C. A. Ely, B. Gress, C. Otte, S. T. Patti, D. Seibel, E. A. Young. 2011. Birds of Kansas. Univ. Press of Kansas.

T. G. Shane. 2012. A Two-Hundred Year History of Ornithology, Avian Biology, Bird Watching, and Birding in Kansas (1810 – 2010). Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln. <<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/zeabook/12/>>



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

KOS 2021 Spring Bird List

The Spring KOS Meeting was not held in person due to ongoing concerns regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. But birders want to bird so individuals and small groups went out birding over the traditional KOS Weekend (May 7 - 9). An online virtual compilation was held and the following list of 194 species was compiled from birding that occurred all across Kansas that weekend.

Canada Goose	Forster's Tern	Horned Lark	Ovenbird
Trumpeter Swan	Common Loon	Tree Swallow	Worm-eating Warbler
Tundra Swan	Double-crested Cormorant	N. Rough-winged Swallow	Louisiana Waterthrush
Wood Duck	American White Pelican	Purple Martin	Golden-winged Warbler
Blue-winged Teal	Great Blue Heron	Barn Swallow	Black-and-white Warbler
Northern Shoveler	Great Egret	Cliff Swallow	Prothonotary Warbler
Gadwall	Little Blue Heron	Carolina Chickadee	Tennessee Warbler
Mallard	Cattle Egret	Black-capped Chickadee	Orange-crowned Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Black-crowned Night-Heron	Tufted Titmouse	Nashville Warbler
Lesser Scaup	White-faced Ibis	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Mourning Warbler
Hooded Merganser	Black Vulture	White-breasted Nuthatch	Kentucky Warbler
Ruddy Duck	Turkey Vulture	Rock Wren	Common Yellowthroat
Northern Bobwhite	Osprey	House Wren	American Redstart
Wild Turkey	Cooper's Hawk	Carolina Wren	Northern Parula
Ring-necked Pheasant	Bald Eagle	Bewick's Wren	Magnolia Warbler
Pied-billed Grebe	Mississippi Kite	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Blackburnian Warbler
Eared Grebe	Red-shouldered Hawk	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Yellow Warbler
Rock Pigeon	Broad-winged Hawk	Eastern Bluebird	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Swainson's Hawk	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Blackpoll Warbler
White-winged Dove	Red-tailed Hawk	Swainson's Thrush	Palm Warbler
Mourning Dove	Great Horned Owl	Wood Thrush	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Burrowing Owl	American Robin	Black-throated Green Warbler
Common Nighthawk	Barred Owl	Gray Catbird	Canada Warbler
Chuck-will's-widow	Belted Kingfisher	Brown Thrasher	Wilson's Warbler
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Red-headed Woodpecker	Northern Mockingbird	Summer Tanager
Chimney Swift	Red-bellied Woodpecker	European Starling	Northern Cardinal
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Downy Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
American Coot	Hairy Woodpecker	House Sparrow	Black-headed Grosbeak
American Avocet	Northern Flicker	House Finch	Blue Grosbeak
Black-bellied Plover	Pileated Woodpecker	Pine Siskin	Lazuli Bunting
Killdeer	American Kestrel	American Goldfinch	Indigo Bunting
Whimbrel	Ash-throated Flycatcher	Grasshopper Sparrow	Painted Bunting
Hudsonian Godwit	Great Crested Flycatcher	Lark Sparrow	Dickcissel
Marbled Godwit	Western Kingbird	Lark Bunting	
Sanderling	Eastern Kingbird	Chipping Sparrow	
Baird's Sandpiper	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Clay-colored Sparrow	
Least Sandpiper	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Field Sparrow	
White-rumped Sandpiper	Eastern Wood-Pewee	White-crowned Sparrow	
Pectoral Sandpiper	Acadian Flycatcher	Harris's Sparrow	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Alder Flycatcher	White-throated Sparrow	
Western Sandpiper	Least Flycatcher	Vesper Sparrow	
Long-billed Dowitcher	Eastern Phoebe	Savannah Sparrow	
Spotted Sandpiper	Say's Phoebe	Song Sparrow	
Solitary Sandpiper	Loggerhead Shrike	Lincoln's Sparrow	
Lesser Yellowlegs	White-eyed Vireo	Eastern Towhee	
Willet	Bell's Vireo	Yellow-breasted Chat	
Greater Yellowlegs	Yellow-throated Vireo	Eastern Meadowlark	
Wilson's Phalarope	Blue-headed Vireo	Western Meadowlark	
Bonaparte's Gull	Philadelphia Vireo	Orchard Oriole	
Franklin's Gull	Warbling Vireo	Bullock's Oriole	
Ring-billed Gull	Red-eyed Vireo	Baltimore Oriole	
Caspian Tern	Blue Jay	Red-winged Blackbird	
Black Tern	American Crow	Brown-headed Cowbird	
	Fish Crow	Common Grackle	

List compiled by Chuck Otte at the virtual compilation on May 9, 2021. Thank you to everyone who led groups birding on that weekend and to all who participated in the virtual compilation or emailed Chuck sightings afterwards.

See page 3 for details on the KOS Fall 2021 Virtual Meeting and look for a planned in-person spring meeting May 2022. In the meantime, stay safe, wear a mask and please get vaccinated!

KOS Membership

New Member Renewal

Please clearly mark your choice of membership category below.

- Student \$5
- Individual \$20
- Family \$25
- Sustaining Individual \$30
- Sustaining Family \$35
- Contributing \$45 or more
- Life Member \$300 (or two consecutive annual payments of \$150)



Name Daytime phone or email

Address City State Zip Code

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

**Support
Kansas Ornithological
Society Inc.**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

amazonsmile

Non-discrimination Statement

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.

Notes!

Please look at page 3 for information on the virtual fall meeting.

Christmas Bird Count (CBC) season for KOS purposes will be December 12 thru January 12. Please notify Chuck Otte (contact details on page 2) of the date and details of your CBC if you are the compiler!