



# The Horned Lark

Kansas Ornithological Society

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## From the President's Pen

By Jenn Rader

For this edition of the President's Pen, I wanted to share some news and information about the world of birds that HOLA readers might find of interest. Some of you may keep up with these things, so I apologize for ringing the bell late. You can instead look at this article as your call for action!

BirdLife International's *State of the World's Birds Report* (May of 2022) says that 49% of the world's birds are in decline and one in eight species is currently threatened with extinction. The United States has 87 globally threatened species. Expansion and intensification of agriculture are listed as the biggest threat to the world's birds. (<https://www.birdlife.org/papers-reports/state-of-the-worlds-birds-2022/>)

The iconic Lesser Prairie Chicken has been Federally listed as threatened in northern portions of its range (including Kansas) and as endangered in southwest portions of its range. An estimated 90% of Lesser Prairie Chicken habitat is gone from their former range. (<https://www.fws.gov/press-release/2022-11/lesser-prairie-chicken-listed-under-endangered-species-act>)

Kansas (and North America) has a resurgence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) for the fall and winter 2022/2023 season. (<https://www.agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/division-of-animal-health/animal-diseases/avian-influenza>)

Not the greatest of news but, we have reason to hope, and as Kansas birders, we can do something about it.

Folks with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and eBird rolled out a new tool for tracking bird populations called eBird Trends. The tool provides a fine-scale

view of where bird species are increasing and decreasing. If you ever needed a bigger excuse to attend a Christmas Bird Count or just go birding, here it is! Our observations as Kansas birders matter. (<https://science.ebird.org/en/status-and-trends/trends-maps>)

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act was passed by the House this summer and awaits the votes of the Senate. RAWA would provide much-needed funds for states, territories, and tribes to implement Wildlife Action Plans, address threats to wildlife, and aid conservation efforts. (<https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Policy/Recovering-Americas-Wildlife-Act>)

Wildlife viewing is one of the fastest-growing US outdoor activities and people are taking notice. (Example: <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/among-alaska-tourists-birders-are-the-biggest-spenders/>) Please check out these wildlife viewer studies on a national (<https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/111539>) and local level (<https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/112308>).

Cutting to the point, as bird watchers, we have a voice. We have power to help the species we enjoy, which in turn helps us as humans in a multitude of ways. For my part, I want to be a better steward of our natural resources and help others do the same, in whatever way I can. What will you do with your Kansas Birdwatcher Power?

A quick thanks to all who could attend our Fall KOS Meeting in Atchison, and helped make the meeting possible. Have a great CBC season and I hope to see you out in the field!

- Jenn

# From the Keyboard

By the Editor

As another year comes to a close, we hopefully are seeing our world and our lives return closer to normal or whatever the new normal will look like after the last three years. KOS held an in-person fall meeting and plans are under way for a KOS spring meeting in Concordia the first weekend in May. I think are all glad to see people face to face again and enjoy the camaraderie that birding often brings us!

Weather wise it's been a crazy year across our state. As of December 1st the entire state was in some level of drought with over half the state in extreme or exceptional drought. The last category is the "worst" level for drought that is used and one third of Kansas was at that level. The current drought extends to the south and southwest. While recent precipitation events in the southwest has helped, many birds are on the move and reflected in sightings being reported across the state. Seeing some of these species can be exciting, but we need to remember why we are seeing these extremes and what it likely portends. KOS President Jenn has given us some additional reading to reflect on in the cold winter months.

One of the challenges in understanding the impact of changing climates AND mankind on ecosystems and especially bird life is that for many species of birds we do not have a good handle on when and where they are. That first became obvious to me in 2001 as I commenced the County Check-list Project. To put it simply, we had bird sightings from where birders had birded. For many of our western Kansas Counties, there hadn't been much birding done there. In the 20+ years since that was started, over 6,500 new county records have been generated.

New tools have come along and technology can provide even more clues. While imperfect (any record keeping system is), eBird has provided an incredible wealth of information. Now we are hearing more about the Motus Wildlife Tracking System that allows birds (nearly all wildlife actually) to be fitted with tiny electronic transmitters that can be detected by electronic listening stations. No longer do we have to have a birder seeing or hearing a bird to record its presence and movement, they literally become self reporting. The KOS Board is investigating how the Society can support some of these efforts. Like all electronics, it isn't inexpensive, but the potential benefit can not be overlooked! Look for more information on this project in future issues, but for now you can visit <https://motus.org/> and start exploring.

As I prepare to tie a string around this issue and move it down the road, I want to wish all of you a very Happy New Year and thank you for being a KOS Member (see note about it being time to pay dues on Page 12). We exist because of our unifying love of birds. If you know a bird lover that isn't a member, give them a gift of a KOS Membership for 2023! Happy Holidays everyone!

- Chuck



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# Fall KOS meeting paper abstracts

**Rainfall mediates population dynamics in a mobile grassland songbird.** Silber, K.,<sup>1</sup> A. Louthan<sup>1</sup>, N.E. Freeman<sup>1</sup>, T.J. Hefley<sup>2</sup>, W.A. Boyle<sup>1</sup>

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In mobile species, population growth is determined by births, deaths, and movement in and out of the population. Each vital rate may vary in response to environmental conditions, such as weather variability and land management. The Central Great Plains of North America is a highly dynamic biome that is subject to spatial and temporal variation in weather and land management, and grassland species have developed flexible life history traits and behavior in response to this variability. For example, grassland birds often move to other sites, which ultimately may influence population growth. However, we know little about the importance of movement for population growth relative to variation in other vital rates such as births and deaths. Understanding the relative importance of each vital rate is essential for developing accurate predictions of population growth, particularly under variable weather conditions. We assessed changes in Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) population growth from 2013-2020 at the Konza Prairie Biological Station in NE Kansas. Using vital rate estimates from an integrated population model, we found the population growth rate varied more in response to adult apparent survival (i.e., true survival and emigration) than to fecundity, juvenile survival, or immigration. We also found rainfall impacts individual vital rates, thereby determining annual population growth rates and population persistence. Our study elucidates that quantifying movement rates within mobile species in highly variable environments will be critical for predicting trends in population growth.

**Evaluating the avian and vegetative communities on strip mined land.** Luke Headings\*, Andrew George, Christine Brodsky (Department of Biology, Pittsburg State University)

The Mined Land Wildlife Areas (MLWAs) of Southeast Kansas represent a diverse patchwork of ecosystems in varying stage of succession, including grasslands, shrublands, and forests. The goal of

our study is to assess the conservation value of strip-mined land for bird communities. We conducted fixed radius point counts and vegetation sampling at 84 locations in SE Kansas and SW Missouri during the summers of 2019 – 2022. We also conducted nest searching and monitoring efforts to estimate nest survival for three shrub-nesting species: Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*), and Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*). A total of 89 species were detected, including 14 species of greatest conservation need. We located and monitored 186 nests from our three focal species, 18% of which fledged young. Preliminary analyses indicate that reclaimed mined land may support similar bird communities to unmined areas. However, it remains unclear if sites dominated by invasive plant species are negatively affecting individual species' presence or nesting success. Ongoing work will continue to evaluate the relationships between mined land vegetation and bird communities to inform habitat restoration on the MLWAs.

**The effects of thirty years of forest management on Neotropical migrant songbirds.** Mary C. Marine (\*) & Andrew D. George, Department of Biology, Pittsburg State University

Natural resource management can play a considerable roll in the demography and community dynamics of songbirds. With the widespread decline of North American birds, it is essential to understand the short- and long-term effects of timber harvest on forest birds and how land management can best support their habitat. The Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project (MOFEP) is a landscape-scale, long-term experiment which seeks to understand how Neotropical migrant songbird communities respond to even-aged, uneven-aged, and no-harvest forest management. Thirty years into this 100-year project, much has been learned about the impacts of silviculture on bird nest survival, abundance, and community composition. Findings have revealed how mature forest species and early successional species respond to management at differing scales, and how community structure changes in the decades following timber harvest. Results from MOFEP can be applied by managers to support target

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# Kansas Birding Roundup, Spring 2022 (March – May) Chuck Otte, compiler

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This is the report of the spring birding season in Kansas, March through May. Reports for this season reflect the warmer than average conditions that the state experienced from winter on through spring. Almost across the board, migrants arrived anywhere from slightly to moderately early. Additionally, many wintering or spring migrant species lingered longer than normal. In spite of the dry conditions many waterfowl lingered in many locations. While some of these are clearly injured individuals, many were free flying.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck populations continue to grow across the state with more counties reporting them and numbers in some areas are rapidly increasing. 47 were reported at Wolf Park in Ellinwood in late April. This area has been noted for breeding pairs and these numbers can be expected to just continue to grow.

Several hummingbird species were noted in western Kansas during the season. Some of these are likely migrants that are merely moving north and looking for food outside their normal range due to drought conditions in the Rocky Mountain west. A hummingbird on a nest in the Elkhart Cemetery/shelterbelt area was photographed and confirmation was received from hummingbird experts of the first Black-chinned Hummingbird breeding record for Kansas!

Lesser Black-backed Gulls were once an extreme rarity in much of the USA including Kansas. The first confirmed record in Kansas was from Cowley County in February 1996. By 2007 it had been removed from the Kansas Bird Records Committee Review List and quite honestly, it is now not unheard of to see Lesser Black-backed Gulls nearly any month of the year somewhere in Kansas.

A sighting of two Anhingas in Cherokee County set off a stampede of birders to the southeast corner of the state in mid-May. The birds were relatively consistent in their location and would continue to be seen off and on through the end of the period and beyond!

Lesser Goldfinch is another species that causes one to wonder how much longer they will be listed in these reports. They routinely show up across the state and often show excellent site fidelity at back yard feeders.

Lazuli Buntings are always a treat during spring migration especially for feeder watchers in the eastern part of the state. After several years of many reports from the Flint Hills region and east, we received very few reports this year. Why or when these things occur are apparently beyond our comprehension, but one of the reasons why we keep watching the birds!

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](mailto: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>
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	20 at Wilson Lake, Minooka Park	<u>Russell</u>	4/12	DK
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	1 observed at the KSU Beef Unit ponds	Riley	4/30	MMf
Trumpeter Swan	2 at Goodland WTP	<u>Sherman</u>	4/11	m.ob.
Trumpeter Swan	1 late continuing at Neosho WA	Neosho	5/13	PJ, KG
Greater Scaup	2 at Coon Creek Fishing Lake	Graham	3/26	KC
Long-tailed Duck	1 lingering at Perry Lake Last seen 4/20	Jefferson	4/18	MMH
Long-tailed Duck	1 lingering in Wichita Still present 4/28	Sedgwick	4/21	TE

<b>Species</b>	<b>Number and Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Observer(s)</b>
Greater Roadrunner	1 somewhat northerly	Ellsworth	3/15	RyW
Greater Roadrunner	1 west of Brookeville along K-140	<u>Saline</u>	4/12	DR
Common Poorwill	1 found injured at farmstead	<u>Gray</u>	5/01	KM
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1 male at feeders in Goodland	Sherman	5/08	CK
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1 female at Arkalon Park	Seward	5/10	DH
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2 females at Lake Coldwater	Comanche	5/11	TL
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1 male at backyard feeders, Holcomb	Finney	5/20	AZ
Black-chinned Hummingbird	1 adult male at feeders, Dodge City	Ford	4/24	CMM
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Female on nest (first breeding record for KS) Morton*		5/10	SMi
Broad-billed Hummingbird	1 at feeder north of Wakefield, KBRC	<u>Clay</u>	5/20	SB
King Rail	1 at Baker Wetlands	Douglas	5/19	SL, ML, SSc
Common Gallinule	2 at Neosho WA	Neosho	4/20	ABu
Common Gallinule	1 at Baker Wetlands	Douglas	5/07	JyM
Sandhill Crane	3 in flight, west of Columbus	Cherokee	3/03	HB
Sandhill Crane	11 in flight near Tuttle Creek Res	Pottawatomie	3/05	VP
Sandhill Crane	1 over Baker Wetlands	Douglas	4/01	JyM
	Still present 4/10			
Sandhill Crane	10 in flight near Topeka	Shawnee	4/11	GC
Black-necked Stilt	1 early at CBWA	Barton	3/21	JdC
Semipalmated Plover	1 in flooded fields	<u>Wilson</u>	4/30	HA
Snowy Plover	2 easterly at Neosho WA	Neosho	4/24	ABu
Snowy Plover	1 at Satanta WTP	<u>Haskell</u>	5/14	MR
Whimbrel	1 at Kiowa SFL	Kiowa	5/06	TL
Long-billed Curlew	1 easterly near Elk City	<u>Montgomery</u>	4/13	EdM
Hudsonian Godwit	1 westerly at Ford SFL	Ford	4/17	JC, CMM
Hudsonian Godwit	1 westerly at Liberal WTP	<u>Seward</u>	4/26	DB
	Still present 5/12			
Hudsonian Godwit	1 in flooded field near Humboldt	<u>Allen</u>	5/02	CG
Hudsonian Godwit	1 at Satanta WTP	<u>Haskell</u>	5/15	MR, JnR
Marbled Godwit	1 along US 281	<u>Smith</u>	5/08	MR
Sanderling	1 along dam at Scott SP	<u>Scott</u>	5/07	CF
Dunlin	1 early at QNWR	Stafford	3/13	VK
Least Sandpiper	1 overwintering or early returning, SCWA	Sumner	3/13	MT
Red-necked Phalarope	1 at Pratt Hatchery ponds	Pratt	5/03	EW
Red-necked Phalarope	1 at playa northeast of Greensburg	Kiowa	5/21	TL
Black-legged Kittiwake	1 continuing juvenile, John Redmon Res	Coffey	3/01	MLd
	Continuing 3/03			
California Gull	1 at CBWA	Barton	5/17	KC
Iceland Gull	1 at CBWA	Barton	3/17	RP
Iceland Gull	1 at Hillsdale SP	Miami	3/22	MLd
Iceland Gull	1 at Cheney WA	Reno	4/08	MN
Glaucous Gull	1 adult at SCWA	Sumner	3/04	EY
Glaucous Gull	3 at CBWA	Barton	3/06	DA
	1 present 4/25			
Great Black-backed Gull	1 at Reno Co. Landfill	Reno	3/18	DwM, FMi
Great Black-backed Gull	1 adult near Wilson Lake	Russell	4/16	MR
	Still present 4/18			
Magnificent Frigatebird	1 at Clinton Reservoir	Douglas	5/2	KMD
Anhinga	2 along Southwest Boone Lake Rd, KBRC	<u>Cherokee</u>	5/13	CG, m.ob.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Number and Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Observer(s)</b>
Brown Pelican	1 at Cedar Bluff SP Still present 4/04	<u>Trego</u>	4/02	TE
Least Bittern	1 at Baker Wetlands	Douglas	4/29	DBr
Tricolored Heron	1 at QNWR	Stafford	5/14	DH, LK
White-faced Ibis	1 along US 281	<u>Smith</u>	5/08	MR
Black Vulture	2 somewhat westerly at Sedgwick Co Zoo	Sedgwick	3/14	JB
Black Vulture	1 northeast of Meade along US 54	Meade	5/01	PR
Golden Eagle	1 easterly over Douglas SFL	Douglas	4/24	TK
Snowy Owl	3 still continuing at CBWA Last reported 3/11	Barton	3/01	KC, DP
Lewis's Woodpecker	1 north of Protection	<u>Comanche</u>	5/10	TL
Cassin's Kingbird	1 near Syracuse Most spring records are from Morton County	Hamilton	5/19	KM
Western Wood-Pewee	2 at Scott SP	Scott	5/27	NT
Gray Flycatcher	1 at Middle Springs, CNG Still present 5/10	Morton	5/01	JG
Say's Phoebe	1 at Clinton SP Marina	Douglas	4/17	KC, m.ob.
Vermilion Flycatcher	1 adult male at QNWR	<u>Stafford</u>	4/03	KCp
White-eyed Vireo	1 on Thompson Creek Rd	<u>Kiowa</u>	4/18	LK
White-eyed Vireo	1 at Lakewood Park, Salina	<u>Saline</u>	4/27	KK
White-eyed Vireo	1 westerly at Ford SFL	Ford	4/28	TL
Yellow-throated Vireo	1 at Arkalon Park	<u>Seward</u>	5/10	DH
Cassin's Vireo	1 at CNG	Morton	4/23	AdM
Cassin's Vireo	1 southwest of town of Kiowa, easterly	<u>Kiowa</u>	5/06	TL
Philadelphia Vireo	1 at Frazier Park, Ulysses	<u>Grant</u>	5/29	LK
Northern Shrike	1 easterly near Spring Hill Continuing 3/29	Johnson	3/12	MYB
Fish Crow	2 slightly early at SCWA	Sumner	3/04	EY
Fish Crow	1 westerly in Lindsborg	McPherson	5/08	KK
Chihuahuan Raven	2 near Manter	Stanton	4/22	BG
Chihuahuan Raven	1 south of Ford County Landfill	Ford	4/28	TL
Common Raven	2 south of Hamilton County SFL	Hamilton	3/12	ACGL
Barn Swallow	1 early in Wellington	Sumner	3/20	MN
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1 at MDC WA	Linn	5/18	MMH
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3 at Dillon Nature Center	Reno	5/28	JrC
Brown-headed Nuthatch	1 continuing in Garden City Last reported 4/21	Finney	3/02	SSh
Brown Creeper	1 lingering, El Dorado SP	Butler	4/24	NSt
Brown Creeper	1 lingering at Atchison County Lake	Atchison	4/29	DMz
Curve-billed Thrasher	2 adults with young in nest, Holcomb	Finney	5/07	AZ
Wood Thrush	1 at Hugoton Storm Runoff Ponds	<u>Stevens</u>	5/14	SMi
Common Redpoll	1 female/imm at feeders in Kansas City Continuing 3/22	Wyandotte	3/01	SvS
Common Redpoll	1 at feeder in Fredonia	<u>Wilson</u>	3/02	DdM
Common Redpoll	1 continuing at feeder near Bonner Springs Last reported 3/16	Leavenworth	3/03	KC
Common Redpoll	1 at feeders in Ellsworth Last reported 3/12	Ellsworth	3/03	RSz
Lesser Goldfinch	1 continuing in Manhattan Last reported 4/27	Riley	3/01	MMf

Species	Number and Location	County	Date	Observer(s)
Lesser Goldfinch	1 west of Skiddy	Geary	3/11	MGo, KC, JCA
Lesser Goldfinch	1 near river, Ellsworth	Ellsworth	4/03	DK, RSz
Lesser Goldfinch	2 at feeders in Garden City	Finney	4/20	SSh
Lincoln's Sparrow	1 slightly early, Syracuse Cemetery	Hamilton	3/12	ACGL
Rusty Blackbird	2 late at Augusta Lake	Butler	5/02	DH
Worm-eating Warbler	1 along Flint Hills Nature Trail	Miami	4/23	PS
Worm-eating Warbler	1 at Elkhart Cemetery area	Morton	4/24	AdM
	Still present (or different one) 5/12			
Louisiana Waterthrush	1 early at Overland Park Arboretum	Johnson	3/19	ML
Golden-winged Warbler	1 in Oak Park, Wichita	Sedgwick	5/05	GC
Blue-winged Warbler	1 north of Horton	<u>Brown</u>	5/12	LDM
Orange-crowned Warbler	1 continuing overwintering bird	Sedgwick	3/09	ALC
Connecticut Warbler	1 at Heritage Park, Olathe, KBRC	Johnson	5/11	GCh
Connecticut Warbler	1 at Kaw River State Park, Topeka, KBRC	Shawnee	5/21	LgS, m.ob.
MacGillivray's Warbler	1 along Salt Creek	Reno	5/03	FMi
Hooded Warbler	1 somewhat early, Overland Park Arboretum	Johnson	4/16	MGo
Hooded Warbler	1 westerly at Oak Park	Sedgwick	4/23	MN
Hooded Warbler	1 westerly at Elkhart Cemetery area	Morton	5/10	PG, MZ
Northern Parula	1 westerly in Coolidge	Hamilton	4/17	SSh
Northern Parula	1 westerly at CNG	Morton	5/10	PG, MZ
Magnolia Warbler	1 at Arkalon Park	<u>Seward</u>	5/10	DH
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1 female at Arkalon Park	<u>Seward</u>	5/10	DH
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1 at Hugoton Storm Runoff Ponds	<u>Stevens</u>	5/14	SMi
Pine Warbler	1 continuing overwintering bird	Douglas	3/09	RB
Pine Warbler	1 continuing overwintering bird	Douglas	3/12	CC
Prairie Warbler	1 at Wyandotte Co Lake	Wyandotte	5/06	KC, DP
	Continuing 5/14			
Western Tanager	1 adult male at feeders in Great Bend	<u>Barton</u>	5/03	JM
Western Tanager	1 at Venango Public Use Area, Kanopolis	Ellsworth	5/12	RJ
Lazuli Bunting	1 easterly at Neosho WA	Neosho	5/15	DMK, MP
Indigo Bunting	1 very early, Manhattan	Riley	3/20	MMf
Painted Bunting	1 male at Valley View Cemetery	Finney	5/03	QN
Painted Bunting	1 male at feeders in Ulysses	<u>Grant</u>	5/03	PA
Painted Bunting	2 on Ft. Hays St Univ campus	Ellis	5/04	VK

**Locations and notes:** CBWA – Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, CNG – Cimarron National Grasslands, imm – immature, MDC – Marais des Cygnes, QNWR – Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, Res – Reservoir, SCWA – Slate Creek Wetland Area, 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:** Dorian Anderson, Pam Annis, Henry Armknecht, JC Avena (JCA), Daniel Bellich, Jeremy Birket, Hunter Bohn, Roger Boyd, Can Broers (DBr), Stacey Burfict, Andrew Burnett (ABu), Jeff Calhoun, Karen Carpenter (KCp), Kathy Carroll, Glen Caspers, Jodi Chambers (JdC), AiLeng Chen (ALC), George Chiu (GCh), Calvin Cink, Jeremy Coleman (JrC), Laurie DeMott (LDM), Tom Ewert, Christopher Frick, Chad Gardner, Malcolm Gold (MGo), Bob Gress, Kevin Groeneweg, Peter Grund, Joe Grzybowski, Dallas Hewett, Daniel Horton, Pete Janzen, Rita Johnson, Logan Kahle, Vinita Karki, Chad Killian, Dave Klema, Thomas Koffel, Kaleb Kroeker, Mark Land (MLd), Sherry Leonardo, Tony Leukering, Micky Louis, Joey Magerl (JyM), Mark Mayfield (MMf), Kathy McDowell (KMD), Mick McHugh (MMH), Debra McKee (DMK), Christi McMillen (CMM), Kurtis Meier, Don Merz (DMz), Andrew Miller (AdM), Dwight Miller (DwM), Edwin Miller (EdM), Franklin Miller (FMi), Jay Miller, Seth Miller (SMi), David Mills (DdM), Quentin Nolan, Mark Nolen, Robert Penner, Diane Persons, Mark Pheasant, Ved Prakash, Jenn Rader (JnR), Mike Rader, David Rintoul, Paul Roisen, Sara Scheil (SSc), Roger Schultz (RSz), Steven Seltman (SvS), Sara Shane (SSh), Logan Smith (LgS), Nick Stroot (NSt), Peter Sullivan, Nick Tepper, Max Thompson, Elizabeth Walker, Ryan Williams (RyW), Melissa Yates-Bruce (MYB), Eugene Young, Molly Zahn, Anthony Zukoff **Groups:** m.ob. – many observers, ACGL – JC Avena, Kathy Carroll, Malcolm Gold, Micky Louis

# Kansas Birding Roundup, Summer 2022 (June—July 2022) Chuck Otte, compiler

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This is the report of the summer birding season in Kansas, June and July. By convention the summer season is only two months long and is often muddled, as it was this year, by migrants that move late, or not at all, and on the back end, early returning migrants. We had all three. While many won't show up specifically in the list, I'll refer to them generally in this narrative.

The highlight of the season can probably be described in one word: Limpkinpalooza. This enigmatic, snail eating wader was once well confined to central and southern Florida. Over the last twenty or so years it has expanded west along the Gulf Coast and has now exploded north. Many birders expected it was only a matter of time before we had our first record in Kansas. What we didn't expect, when that finally occurred, was to have multiple reports in the state. The two-month season gave us reports from five counties with additional reports coming in during the early fall season as well. All of the reports were single birds, all quite well documented, with some seen by many observers. One cannot rule out that some could have been the same bird moving to different locations, but ultimately, each has to be treated as separate birds. Other nearby states were reporting Limpkin sightings this year as well. What does this say about future years? I guess we'll find out.

In spite of an ongoing drought, there were numerous waterfowl reports throughout the season. This is not unexpected. With the exception of species like the scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Greater Scaup and Barrow's Goldeneye, it is not unexpected to see most other species at scattered locations throughout the summer. We suspect that many have successfully nested, but given the normally secretive nature of nesting waterfowl, we often don't know if they were nesting individuals or simply birds that chose not to continue migration.

As with waterfowl, shorebirds can linger late, return early, fail to move on north and just generally cause confusion during the summer season. It seemed that this summer may have been an extreme with species like Pectoral Sandpipers and White-rumped Sandpipers being found throughout the summer season, often in double digit numbers. With the increasing numbers of birders and the enhanced record keeping capabilities of programs like eBird, we are continuing to fine tune our knowledge of bird distribution in Kansas not only geographically but over time as well.

Unlike Limpkins, Anhingas are already known from Kansas. Not routinely, not in large numbers, but they had been recorded. Summer 2022 may have just signaled a change, however. In recent years, increasing numbers of Anhinga sightings in states south and southeast of Kansas, gave us reason to expect an increase of Anhinga sightings, and perhaps like the Black Vultures, we may start to see them nesting in the state. Regardless, many Kansas birders had the opportunity to add Anhinga to their state list this season!

I remember an experienced Kansas birder telling me once that a June gull in Kansas was a rarity. But that was thirty years ago. For whatever reason it seems that somewhere across the state, you can find a gull(s) on any given day during June. While not necessarily a rarity, it is yet another indication of the changing times.

The impact of long-term drought in Kansas, and other western states, cannot be ignored. We are seeing evidence of it in every season recently. We had reports of Cassin's Sparrows and Western Wood-Pewees further east in the state than we usually expect. Likewise, the impacts of long-term climate change, and impact of humans on the larger landscape, are causing changes in the bird life of our state. We know that many bird species are tightly connected to habitat. As riparian timber expands west, we see species like Red-shouldered Hawk, Barred Owl and Pileated Woodpecker moving west and north along with it. As climates warm we are seeing, and will continue to see southern species establish themselves further north in the state and northern species slowly vacate the state, trying to find a climate that fits their needs. All birders, through their observations and reports are helping to track these changes over time. Thank you!

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](mailto:cotte@twinvalley.net) or mailed to 11319 Dundon Rd, Milford KS 66514.



<b>Species</b>	<b>Number and Location</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Observer(s)</b>
Mottled Duck	1 at CBWA	Barton	6/24	MGo
Mexican Violetear	1 at feeders near Baldwin City, KBRC Seen through 6/29	<u>Douglas</u>	6/24	RB
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	1 at feeders northeast of Newton Still present 6/08	Harvey	6/02	CS, m.ob.
Black Rail	4 vocalizing at Clark SFL	<u>Clark</u>	6/01	NT
Limpkin	1 west of DeSoto High School, KBRC	<u>Johnson</u>	6/04	SW
Limpkin	1 at MDC WA, KBRC	<u>Linn</u>	6/06	LK, m.ob.
Limpkin	1 along Neosho river near Emporia, KBRC	<u>Lyon</u>	6/22	CH
Limpkin	1 at Jacob's Creek Crossing, KBRC	<u>Coffey</u>	6/24	BC
Limpkin	1 at Neosho WA, KBRC	<u>Neosho</u>	7/03	CG, m.ob.
Mountain Plover	1 at CBWA	Barton	7/09	DMK, MP
White-rumped Sandpiper	41 at QNWR	Stafford	6/18	SMi
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1 slightly early at Neosho WA	Neosho	7/21	ABu
Pectoral Sandpiper	15 at Neosho WA	Neosho	6/16	ABu
Parasitic Jaeger	1 at CBWA	Barton	6/16	TyR, KKg
Anhinga	1 at York Rd Swamp, KBRC	<u>Labette</u>	6/14	CG
Neotropic Cormorant	1 at Tuttle Creek Reservoir	Riley	7/03	TC
Least Bittern	1 at York Rd Swamp	<u>Labette</u>	6/04	LK
Least Bittern	1 along Ninnescah River near Pratt	<u>Pratt</u>	7/01	MR
Tricolored Heron	1 at MDC WA	Linn	6/11	MB
Tricolored Heron	1 at QNWR	Stafford	6/25	TCn
Black Vulture	2 at Toronto Lake	<u>Woodson</u>	7/16	TSS
White-tailed Kite	1 in Ft Riley training area, KBRC	Riley	6/10	BrM, CO, JO
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	1 in restricted area	Barber	6/03	JCC
Crested Caracara	1 near Cassoday, KBRD	<u>Butler</u>	6/10	GS
Western Wood-Pewee	Up to 4 at Fynnup Park/Lee Richardson Zoo	Finney	6/01	LK, NT, m.ob.
Western Wood-Pewee	1 at Ford SFL	Ford	6/01	JC
Western Wood-Pewee	3 at Scott SP, known location	Scott	6/01	NT
Western Wood-Pewee	1 at Cave Creek mouth, restricted access	<u>Barber</u>	6/05	JCC
Alder Flycatcher	1 at Ford SFL	Ford	6/01	JC
Ash-throated Flycatcher	1 at Fynnup Park/Lee Richardson Zoo	Finney	6/01	LK, NT
Red-eyed Vireo	1 in Garden City, westerly	Finney	6/26	JC, MMk
Black-billed Magpie	1 on Konza Prairie	Riley	6/27	AA
Fish Crow	2 adults and 2 fledglings in Lindsborg	McPherson*	7/10	KK
Chihuahuan Raven	1 near Hugoton	Stevens	7/17	MN
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1 at feeders, Dillon Nature Center	Reno	6/09	MN
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1 at Chisholm Creek Park	Sedgwick	6/11	TE, RL
Red Crossbill	1 in Garden City	Finney	6/12	SSh
Red Crossbill	1 at feeders in Oberlin	Decatur	7/13	BrS
Red Crossbill	3 in Buhler	Reno	7/16	FMi, MMi
Marsh Wren	1 at McPherson Valley Wetlands WA	McPherson	7/18	LH
Lesser Goldfinch	1 in Garden City	Finney	6/14	SSh
Cassin's Sparrow	2 easterly at Old Emery Landfill, Wichita	Sedgwick	6/02	KG
White-crowned Sparrow	1 lingering in Manhattan	Riley	6/04	JGr
White-crowned Sparrow	1 lingering near Grinnell	Gove	6/05	CG
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	1 at Water Canyon	Comanche	6/03	JCC
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1 slightly late at Water Canyon	Comanche	6/03	JCC
Hepatic Tanager	1 at Fynnup Park/Lee Richardson Zoo	Finney	6/01	NT
Painted Bunting	1 second year male in Garden City	Finney	6/25	DLS
Painted Bunting	1 adult male in Dodge City	Ford	7/14	CMM

**Locations and notes:** CBWA – Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, KBRC – Kansas Bird Records Committee report filed, MDC – Marais des Cygnes, QNWR – Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, SFL – State Fishing Lake, SP – State Park, WA – Wildlife Area

**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:** Ari Anders, Michael Bader, Roger Boyd, Andrew Burnett (ABu), Ted Cable, Jeff Calhoun, Tom Cannon (TCn), Jacob C. Cooper (JCC), Bob Culbertson, Tom Ewert, Christopher Frick, Chad Gardner, Malcolm Gold (MGo), Jerry Grasso (JGr), Kevin Groeneweg, Connor Hauff, Lisa Hoffman, Logan Kahle, Karen Kluge (KKg), Kaleb Kroeker, Dan LaShelle (DLS), Roy Lyon, Debra McKee (DMK), Christi McMillen (CMM), Franklin Miller (FMi), Michael Miller (MMi), Seth Miller (SMi), Morgan Mink (MMk), Brian Monser (BrM), Mark Nolen, Chuck Otte, Jaye Otte, Mark Pheasant, Mike Rader, Terry Rosenmeier (TyR), Tom & Sam Schermerhorn (TSS), Carolyn Schwab, Sara Shane (SSh), Brian Simonsson (BrS), Greg Swick, Nick Tepper, Scott Widman, ***Groups:*** m.ob. – many observers

## KOS Fall 2022 Fall Meeting Compiled Bird Sightings List

*123 species — list compiled by Malcolm Gold*

Canada Goose	Red-tailed Hawk	Eastern Bluebird
Wood Duck	Eastern Screech-Owl	American Robin
Blue-winged Teal	Great Horned Owl	House Sparrow
Mallard	Barred Owl	House Finch
Green-winged Teal	Belted Kingfisher	Purple Finch
Northern Bobwhite	Red-headed Woodpecker	American Goldfinch
Wild Turkey	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Chipping Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Clay-colored Sparrow
Rock Pigeon	Downy Woodpecker	Field Sparrow
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Hairy Woodpecker	Fox Sparrow
Mourning Dove	Northern Flicker	White-crowned Sparrow
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Pileated Woodpecker	Harris's Sparrow
Common Nighthawk	American Kestrel	White-throated Sparrow
Chimney Swift	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Savannah Sparrow
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Lincoln's Sparrow
American Coot	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Swamp Sparrow
Black-bellied Plover	Willow Flycatcher	Eastern Meadowlark
American Golden-Plover	Eastern Phoebe	Western Meadowlark
Killdeer	Blue-headed Vireo	Red-winged Blackbird
Stilt Sandpiper	Red-eyed Vireo	Brown-headed Cowbird
Baird's Sandpiper	Blue Jay	Common Grackle
Least Sandpiper	American Crow	Great-tailed Grackle
Pectoral Sandpiper	Black-capped Chickadee	Ovenbird
Long-billed Dowitcher	Tufted Titmouse	Black-and-white Warbler
Wilson's Snipe	Horned Lark	Tennessee Warbler
Lesser Yellowlegs	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Orange-crowned Warbler
Willet	Purple Martin	Nashville Warbler
Greater Yellowlegs	Barn Swallow	Northern Parula
Franklin's Gull	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Bay-breasted Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Yellow Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Cedar Waxwing	Palm Warbler
American White Pelican	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Pine Warbler
Great Blue Heron	White-breasted Nuthatch	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Great Egret	Brown Creeper	Yellow-throated Warbler
Turkey Vulture	House Wren	Black-throated Green Warbler
Osprey	Sedge Wren	Summer Tanager
Northern Harrier	Marsh Wren	Northern Cardinal
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Carolina Wren	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Cooper's Hawk	Gray Catbird	Blue Grosbeak
Bald Eagle	Brown Thrasher	Indigo Bunting
Red-shouldered Hawk	European Starling	Dickcissel

species, or to implement management strategies that balance needs of forest songbird communities as a whole. We provide a synthesis of previous MOFEP research, discuss applications, and share future directions of one of the most comprehensive studies of upland forest bird ecology to date.

**Developing a Motus network to study grassland bird movements.** W. E. Jensen<sup>1</sup>, W. A. Boyle,<sup>2</sup> A. D. George<sup>3</sup> <sup>1</sup>Emporia State University, Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia, KS 66801, <sup>2</sup>Kansas State University, Division of Biology, Manhattan, KS 66506, <sup>3</sup>Pittsburg State University, Department of Biology, Pittsburg, KS 66762

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is an international network of automated telemetry receiver stations that offers an effective method to study movements of small animals. Birds tagged with coded radio transmitters are detected as they pass within ~15 km of any station in the network, and all detections across the network are centrally stored and disseminated. The network has rapidly grown from covering regions of the northeastern USA and southeastern Canada to stations in most continents on Earth. Whereas many Motus users are interested in tracking migrant birds over continental scales, we aim to fill an urgent information gap regarding regional movements of many declining, grassland birds in Kansas. This guild of birds appears to exhibit unusual flexibility in where they breed from year to year, and even within years, but we have much yet to learn about these movements. While sparse coverage of receivers is appropriate for detecting large-scale movements, the kinds of movements we aim to understand occur over 10s to 100s of kms. Our goal is to place a receiver station in every county in Eastern Kansas. We are targeting core grasslands, such as the Flint Hills, in addition to surrounding fragmented grasslands to understand how landscape configuration influences movements. In collaboration with many entities, Kansas now has 12 operational receivers, with commitments for several more. We share here what new scientific insights this emerging network can provide and public education opportunities that will improve local knowledge of bird movements and our grasslands.

## Dr. Roger Boyd KOS Avian Conservationist of the Year Awardee



L—R Jenn Rader, KOS President, Dr. Roger Boyd, Dr. Calvin Cink, nominator

Dr. Boyd joined the biology faculty of Baker University as an Assistant Professor in the fall of 1976. He was promoted to full tenured Professor and was a full-time faculty member for 29 years before becoming full time Director of the Baker University Natural Areas and Senior Professor in 2005. He retired from Baker in 2018 as Emeritus Professor of Biology after 42 years of service to the university. The quality of his teaching is reflected in a number of awards including the Distinguished Faculty Award at Baker University and Environmental Educator of the Year (1990-1991) from the Burrough's Audubon of K.C. He was always an energetic and well-organized teacher who loved interacting with his students, particularly in the field trips that were an integral part of his courses. He inspired generations of students to appreciate the value of conservation and for some to pursue careers in related fields. Roger's significant contributions to bird conservation throughout his career extend not only from his teaching at Baker University, but also his field research on a variety of threatened species of plovers, terns, and passerine bird communities. His management efforts in preserving and expanding the Baker Wetlands Natural Area near Lawrence are also noteworthy. (Please go to: [https://ksbirds.org/kos/Roger\\_Boyd\\_ACY\\_2022.htm](https://ksbirds.org/kos/Roger_Boyd_ACY_2022.htm) to read the full citation.

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## It's Dues Time Again!

If it's the last Horned Lark issue of the year then it's time to pay dues again! The paper form is above, or you can pay on line at: [https://ksbirds.org/kos/kos\\_member.html](https://ksbirds.org/kos/kos_member.html). At only \$20 a year for an individual membership, it is a bargain!

## Plan to Attend the Spring KOS Meeting!

May 5—7, 2023  
Concordia, Kansas

Birding to locations in Cloud County and surrounding areas including, but not limited to, Jamestown Wildlife Area, Talmo Marsh, locations along the Republican River. Look for details in the March issue or sooner at <https://ksbirds.org>. Plan to come and bird with your friends once again!