

New Locality for the Pileated Woodpecker  
in Lyon County

The Pileated Woodpecker has, for several years, been observed regularly along the Neosho River  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles E. of Emporia. Seven miles up river from here (in similar bottomland woods) nine of us saw a single bird prior to the Christmas Bird Count. This area is about 2 miles northwest of Emporia and has been casually birded at this season for at least 5 years. Next week on 19 December a party of 3 of us saw one bird in this area on the CBC.

On 11 January 1977 I returned to the area with the hope of locating the bird and noting local behavior. The wind was calm, the sky clear and the temperature below zero. I first heard a Pileated call while still a quarter mile from the frozen, snow-covered riverbed and approached cautiously since the bird was very wary on previous occasions. Suddenly not one but TWO Pileateds flew into plain view some 70 meters ahead. Surely my presence was noted but it apparently did not alarm them. The two were observed from 10:55 until 12:15. At one point one bird was less than 30 meters away, but I could not positively determine sexes.

Each bird foraged at several different boring sites. Usually they called before leaving one position for another and during flight. Once one called and the two exchanged boring stations in their familiar long swinging flight like a couple of trapeze performers. Each of the two most frequently used sites was about 10 meters above ground. One was roughly 20 cm. in diameter in a dead stump; the other was a little larger in diameter and in a living tree. One bird also foraged very near the base of a huge oak for several minutes.

A Common Flicker became interested in one of the digging sites but was continually driven off in one of three ways (in order of decreasing occurrence): 1) chased off the trunk; 2) Pileated flew directly at the flicker to a distance of a meter or less; 3) wing-flapping bluffs.



Perhaps their sexes can be determined on the next trip. Hopefully, if they are a pair and if there is an adequate food supply, they may remain in the area and nest in what seems to be a choice locality not occupied for several years.

Larry Helbert, Box 2, Allen, Kansas 66833.

#### Membership News

Sixteen members sent in their 1977 membership dues before Valentine's Day and 50 others had done so in late January prior to the notice in the January Newsletter. But, this still leaves almost 150 unpaid members. I hope a good share of those send their dues to Eugene R. Lewis, 1285 MacVicar, Topeka 66604 before I make out the reminder cards late this month.

By vote of the last spring meeting, I do not send receipts unless you request them or unless you are a new member. I certainly thank the almost 300 members who have made this job easier and more enjoyable by sending their dues on time. I was in the retail business for almost 41 years but I never liked to send out "duns."

Amelia J. Betts, Membership Secretary.

#### NOTICE

The Board of Directors will be recommending to the membership at the Spring Meeting the adoption of a family membership category in the dues structure. After some careful reconsideration the board would like to submit what we feel is an improved version of the proposed amendment. It will require amending the constitution as follows:

ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 4 shall be changed from:

The annual membership dues for regular members shall be \$3.00 (all of which goes for subscription to the K.O.S. Bulletin), for sustaining members - \$6.00 (of which \$3.00 goes for subscription to the Bulletin), and for student members (to include only Grade and High School students) - \$1.00.

to read

The annual membership dues for regular members shall be \$3.00, for sustaining members - \$6.00 and for student members (grade and high school only) - \$1.00. Family memberships shall be available as follows: (with only one copy of each publication for each family) regular - \$3.00 plus \$2.00 for each additional member, sustaining - \$6.00 plus \$4.00 for each additional member. (The first \$3.00 for either regular, sustaining or family membership goes for subscription to the K.O.S. Bulletin). Members may contribute to the general or to special funds of the Society at any time.

Jean Schulenberg, President

## Eldest KOS Member ?

"Amazing 97-year old member gives K-NEA a half-century of primers" reads a head-line in the May 28, 1976 issue of the Kansas Magazine. This "amazing" woman -- Mrs. Ida Faddis of Iola, Kansas -- had retired in 1954 after 54 years of teaching, mostly in the first grade. The article mentions her interest in birds and flowers and her organization of a Junior Audubon Society in Washington School of Iola.

But, the article did not mention that Mrs. Faddis has been a member of K.O.S. since 1955 and has always paid her dues on time or in advance! She was 97 on July 18, 1976 and now lives at Stirling Heights Manor, 1110 E. Carpenter, Iola, Kansas 66749. I believe that she is our eldest member. Ray Wackley of Olathe is another K.O.S. nonagenarian. If there are others, I would like to know it.  
Amelia J. Betts.

## Blue Jay attacks dead sparrow

On the morning of Nov. 28 I found a female House Sparrow dead on the ground beneath a bush ten feet outside a south window and with a well-stocked bird feeder nearby. Almost immediately a Blue Jay descended from the bush directly above, dropped onto the sparrow and began pecking violently at its head and breast area, scattering breast and head feathers. The "attack" lasted three or four minutes after which the jay reentered the bush, wiped its bill and preened for a short time before departing.

I immediately recovered the dead sparrow and noted several areas of flesh torn from the head, but none from the breast. The sparrow was freshly dead with wings and body fully mobile, even though the outside temperature was 10 F with one-inch snow cover.

I did not see the jay attack the sparrow while alive so its death is a matter of conjecture. The cannibalism observed seemed unusual due to the abundance of nearby food and is evidently an extension of the Blue Jay's known habits of nest-robbing and young bird destruction. Earl S. McHugh, 6455 Overbrook, Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66208.

## House Finch in Baldwin

Katharine Kelly caught a male House Finch in a banding trap on February 22, 1977. It was quite different from the male Purple Finch of which she caught over 50. "Un-purple" finches (females and immatures) total about 150 so far this winter. Its identity was confirmed by Dr. Roger Boyd who banded many in his graduate work in Colorado. Photos of the bird, with comparisons with the Purple Finch, were taken by another Baker University professor, Calvin Cink. We believe this may be the farthest east for Kansas. It makes us wonder if we haven't banded some female or immature House Finches as well. We've had some that weren't as dark and heavily streaked as the book shows. Amelia Betts, Baldwin City, 66006.

(In the hand, brown House Finches have a dark, conspicuous "shaft-streak" down the middle of each undertail covert feather; in Purple

Finches the entire feather including the shaft is white. Purple Finches should have a conspicuous eye-stripe; House Finches don't. House Finches tend to have a "dingy" overall appearance rather than the sharp stripes of the House Finch. Ed.).

#### Bird Notes From Around Kansas

Many of the following notes are paraphrased from comments and reports submitted by CBC compilers(Ed.)

Benton: I had a small flock of Cedar Waxwings on our farm for the first time on Feb. 3-8. Also I have banded 9 Harris' Sparrows, 3 Cardinals and a Blue Jay since the first of the year. I have a subpermit under Dr. Dwight Platt of Newton. Judi Meyersick.

Dodge City: We had a Saw-whet Owl in early December and have recently had a Screech Owl and a flock of Evening Grosbeaks. The Scrub Jays have been at the feeder since October. Joan Challans.

Goodland: We saw 11 male and 2 female Mountain Bluebirds at Smoky Garden on 6 February. This is the earliest sighting we can remember. Ronnie Barkley and John Palmberg.

Junction City: A number of unusual or hybrid ducks were shot in the area this season. A presumed Brant X Mallard (weighing 7 or 8 pounds) will be mounted and displayed in the hardware store in Little Plains, Nebraska. An Old-Squaw and a Common Scoter from Milford will be displayed at the bait and tackle shop west of Junction City. A probable Canada X Blue Goose was shot at Cheyenne Bottoms by Brian Veach.

We had Snowy Owls at Longford (Dec. 5) and Wakefield (Nov. 5, Jan. 16, Feb. 19). A Snowy Owl and a Snow Bunting were seen at Milford L. on Feb. 13 at close range in a cove near the dam (John and Bob LaShelle). Although the lake was frozen solid the bunting was apparently feeding on the rocky shoreline. The owl was definitely grayish. When flushed it flew to the stump of a fallen, barkless tree -- the colors of the two blending perfectly. From the looks of the droppings it had perched there many times.

In the Wakefield area on Feb. 25, 62 eagles were roosting in dead trees over the water. Only one Golden Eagle has been identified there this winter. Also in the area were 12 Sandhill Cranes, 28,000 ducks and 600 Canada and White-fronted Geese. Another Old-squaw has also been reported. Bob LaShelle.

Kansas City Area: (from Dec. 26 CBC). The large numbers of American Robins and Mourning Doves seems unusual; most of the robins were in a single flock of 100+ birds at Wyandotte Co. Lake. The virtual absence of Eastern Bluebirds, Harris' Sparrows and White-crowned Sparrows is perhaps attributable to the poor food crop in many parts of the area. The single Ruby-crowned Kinglet was at Wyandotte Co. Lake. Pine Siskins were all but absent this winter.

The true rarity of the count was a Rock Wren seen by Patti, Scott and Croker. It was flushed from a rock jetty which extends into the Kansas River. It was studied for a period of 45 minutes and was approached closely. Its bobbing action was noted many times as it hopped and walked along the jetty. All field marks were noted and the conspicuous tail pattern was particularly visible as the bird fanned its tail before landing after short flights. Sebastian Patti.

Kingman: We seem to have an invasion of Roadrunners. We know of two on the area and two others within the county. On July 12, Mr. Merle Bruch who farms on the Reno-Kingman county line asked me to identify three Long-billed Curlews in his wheat stubble field. Although all were of the same size one appeared to be an immature in the last stages of post-juvinal molt. On August 25 we saw two Long-tailed Jaegers while camped below the dam at McConoughy Reservoir in Nebraska.  
Byron Walker.

Lawrence area: (notes from Dec. 18 CBC). With the best coverage yet we still got only our third (tied) best species total. We did record local highs (at least for the past 10 years) for 22 species. One of these, Pileated Woodpecker, was the first ever locally. It was seen by Cynthia Clinton and Galen Pittman, 3 miles N of US 59 on Buck Creek in Jefferson Co. They had good views both in flight and clinging to a tree at distances as close as 50 feet. Tom and Erma Rodhouse saw a Prairie Falcon along the Wakarusa R. south of Lawrence. Jeff Cox.

Morton Co.: We saw 2 Merlins in the Elkhart cemetery on the Dec. 31 CBC. Nanette Johnson and Dwight Tanner saw and heard 4 Bushtits and observed one of them closely for quite some time. Johnson was first attracted to the birds by their very high call notes. She carefully described the bird as very small, without wing bars, generally gray all over, with a proportionately very long tail. The bird called constantly and reminded her of a kinglet by its nervous feeding actions. She has seen the species previously in the Black Mesa of Oklahoma.

We saw 209 Lark Buntings at 4 localities during the count period. At one place we found a flock of over 150 feeding in a small cattle lot and all participants saw them. The birds were very vocal and we frequently heard the soft "hoo-ee" call. Three smaller flocks were also seen: 25, 3½ miles north of Elkhart; 10 at Elkhart dump; 10-15, 2 mi. N 2 mi. E Elkhart. All had large buffy/white wing bars (patches in some individuals), large size (compared to Tree Sparrows nearby) and white-tipped tails. Tom Shane suggested that most were immatures.

Jeff Cox and I saw a single LeConte's Sparrow in tall grass at a waterfowl pond. All field characters including very short tail and jerky flight were noted. This observation seems far west for the species. Eight of us saw 2 Rufous-crowned Sparrows at Point of Rock on Jan. 2. Both were approached closely and all field marks noted. Three were seen at the same spot two years ago. Sebastian Patti.

Newton: Numbers on the Dec. 18 CBC were below the 16-year average for: Marsh Hawk, Mourning Dove, Common Flicker, Horned Lark, Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Golden-cro. Kinglet, Dark-eyed Junco, Tree Sparrow and Song Sparrow. Numbers were above average for: Am. Kestrel, Bobwhite, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Starling, House Sparrow and Red-wing. We had a Short-eared Owl on the Sand Prairie Reservation in January; otherwise nothing unusual. Dwight Platt.

Pratt-Sawyer: (Notes from Dec. 23 CBC). Neil Johnson flushed a Poor-will from a clump of little bluestem on a warm, rather steep hillside approximately 10 yards from a warm water stream (sandhill soil seep). This was some 8 yards from sandhill plum brush. The bird flew a half circle through creek bottom timber and I saw it briefly as it headed back toward the grassy hillside. I saw two Field Sparrows myself but the 50 reported seems more than expected. Marvin Schwilling.

Marion Reservoir: Four Snowy Owls entered the area between 13 and 22 December; three were seen on 5 January; two on January 19. Stephen Capel.

Manhattan area: (notes from Dec. 18 CBC). Among the unusual were: 22 Buffleheads -- exceeding the previous 28-year high of 8; Goshawk - identified by Clyde Ferguson party from 50 yards (in flight) for 2nd CBC record; Peregrine - 5th record (John Kelley); House Wren - 1st CBC record (Dave Temm and Chris Smith party); American Goldfinch (767) - highest count; LeConte's Sparrow - apparently winters regularly in low density in proper habitat; Vesper Sparrow - 2nd CBC record (Tim Craig). John Zimmerman.

Olathe: A Snowy Owl was seen in the city limits in early Nov. J. Bradley.

Longton: This year we have had a female Evening Grosbeak at our feeder for two days only. Sylvia Albright.

Oxford: This has been a good year for feeding sparrows. I had 6 species at one time during the snow: 100+ Harris, 3 White-throat, Song, 3 Tree, 2 White-crown, 3 Fox. Purple Finches have just started feeding the past two or three days (24 Jan.).

I saw a Prairie Falcon over the Arkansas River on Christmas day; saw one about the same time and in the same area last year. I guess my most memorable sighting for the year was a Peregrine perched along the Ark River, May 13, 1976. Watched it through my scope for 45 minutes until dusk. It had nearly pure white breast coloring with very faint cross streaks, The wind was in the north that evening and nothing was flying. Wallace Champeny.

Wichita: The LeConte's Sparrow seen on the Wichita CBC (Louis Bussjaeger) was along the Big Ditch in west Wichita. Nathan McDonald saw an immature Goshawk, noting particularly the light stripe through its eye. Wallace Champeny.

Kansas City Area: A Varied Thrush was seen near Shawnee, Johnson Co. on 16 January (S. Patti) and was still present on the 29th (Jeff Cox, et al.) (I have no details as to who first found the bird or whether it is still present. Ed.)

#### NOTICE

As of this moment we have NO material for EITHER the April Newsletter or the June Bulletin! Neither publication can survive without support from the membership so please send in news for the Newsletter to Ren Lohofener. If you have material of a more formal nature send it to Charles Ely for the Bulletin -- both of us are at Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays 67601. If you are reluctant to prepare your first manuscript, we'll help you. I twisted arms to get sufficient material for the March Bulletin but I'm running out of arms. Surely with spring approaching you must have bird sightings and news to share with fellow birders. C. Ely.



## Harvey County Parks and Recreation Dept.

ROOM 104 COURTHOUSE  
NEWTON, KANSAS 67114

PHONE 316-283-7232  
EXTENSION 198

Plans are now being finalized for the Spring Meeting of the K.O.S. at Newton on April 30 and May 1. Co-sponsors of this meeting are Bethel College and the Harvey County Parks and Recreation Department.

The Saturday paper session will be held at the Fine Arts Center of Bethel College. The College is located on K-15 on Main Street of North Newton. Watch for the signs that will direct you to the building. The Saturday evening Annual Banquet will be held at the Newton Ramada Inn at I-35 and East 1st Street. The meal will be buffet style. The speaker for the evening will be Dr. Richard Balauf who is Director of Education at the Kansas City Museum. His unusual slide narrative is entitled "Listen to the Earth" and should be enjoyed by all.

An informal get-together will be held for early arrivals from 7:30 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. on Friday evening, April 29 at the new activity shelter at Camp Hawk County Park. To get to Camp Hawk, take Newton Main Street south, two miles out of town and look for a blue and white sign at the northwest corner of South Main and a gravel road. The sign points the way to Camp Hawk, 1½ miles west on the gravel road. Refreshments will be served and nature movies and/or slides of local birds, mammals, and reptiles and amphibians will be shown.

Sunday morning field trips are being contemplated to several locations. Trip possibilities range from an early morning birding trip to a novice trip with several experienced leaders who can point out field marks and aid the beginner in bird identification. Other trips could include Maxwell Game Farm in McPherson County where in addition to bird life, elk and buffalo may be observed, a trip to the Flint Hills to catch the courtship display of the prairie chickens, trips to the Harvey County Parks to see the Park Interpretive Center and Nature Trail at the West Park (one of the better birding spots in the area) and the nearby Sand Prairie Natural History Preserve. These trips are still in the planning stages so we would like some of your opinions. Please note any preferences for field trips on your registration forms.

Lodging in the Newton area includes the following motels and rates:

Ramada Inn	I-35 at First Street	(316) 283-6500
1 person-1 bed	\$15.00	2 persons-1 bed \$17.00
1 person-2 beds	\$17.00	2 persons-2 beds \$19.00 \$3.00 for extra person
I-35 Motel	I-35 at First Street	(316) 283-8850
1 person-1 bed	\$9.50	2 persons-1 bed \$12.50
1 person-2 beds	\$11.00	2 persons-2 beds \$14.50 \$2.50 for extra person
Townsmen Motel	Halstead	(316) 835-2200
1 person-1 bed	\$12.00	2 persons-1 bed \$14.00
2 persons-1 bed	\$16.00	3 persons-2 beds \$18.00

Camping at Harvey County West Park, about 12 miles west of Newton, will also be available at the rate of 50c per night with a \$1.00 per night charge for electrical hookup. There is no charge for tent camping.

A list of restaurants that open for early breakfasts will be available at the registration desk.

Don't forget to bring your best slides for the birdwatchers hour, Saturday after lunch.

Please return your pre-registration forms as soon as possible so adequate arrangements can be made for field trips and meals. Send the form and make checks payable to:

Dr. Dwight Platt, KOS  
Biology Department  
Bethel College  
North Newton, Kansas 67114



CALL FOR PAPERS

KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL SPRING MEETING  
APRIL 30 and MAY 1, 1977  
NEWTON, KANSAS

The Kansas Ornithological Society will hold its annual spring meeting at Newton, Kansas April 30 and May 1. The paper session will be on Saturday April 30. The program is now being composed and members are urged to participate by reading a paper. The success of our program depends entirely upon contributions of members concerning their projects, observations and experiences with birds in Kansas or elsewhere. If you can prepare and present a paper, please fill out the form below and mail before April 1.

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Detach along this line and mail to:

Dr. Steven Fretwell  
Dept. Zoology  
Arizona State University  
Tempe, Arizona 85281

CONTRIBUTED PAPERS SESSION , April 30, 1977

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF PAPER \_\_\_\_\_

TIME REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_ MINUTES. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_

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Detach along this line and mail to:

Marvin D. Schwilling  
115 W. Cleveland  
Pratt, Kansas 67124

BEST BIRD OF THE YEAR 1976-77

SPECIES \_\_\_\_\_ OBSERVER \_\_\_\_\_ LOCALITY \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

KOS SPRING MEETING

NEWTON, KANSAS      APRIL 30 & MAY 1, 1977

NAMES:

ADDRESSES:

Registration: \$1.00 per person      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Meals

Saturday afternoon at Bethel College cafeteria \$1.40      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday evening Banquet at Ramada Inn      \$4.25      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Buffet style)

Sunday afternoon lunch at Harvey County Park      \$2.25      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(West)

Persons Registering \_\_\_\_\_      Total Enclosed      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Get together at Camp Hawk Friday Night      Yes \_\_\_\_\_      No \_\_\_\_\_

Please check field trips of interest. Feel free to add other trips.

Early morning birding trip \_\_\_\_\_

Novice birders trip \_\_\_\_\_

Maxwell Game Farm \_\_\_\_\_

Flint Hills \_\_\_\_\_

County Parks & Sand Prairie \_\_\_\_\_

Others (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interested in leading a trip \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Dr. Dwight Platt - KOS  
Biology Department  
Bethel College  
North Newton, Kansas 67117