



The Official Newsletter
of the
Kansas Ornithological Society

The Horned Lark

613 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441-3359

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**This is the last regular mailing you will receive if you have not paid your 2001 dues.
See details on page 15!**

From The Keyboard -

The first is the last. This little message from me to you is not written until the rest of the newsletter is done. It's March. Spring is less than a week away. As I write this, a half packed suitcase and pile of birding paraphernalia rests on the bed behind me. Once this article is finished and I reproof everything one last time, and still miss something, I'll finish packing so I can leave in 36 hours for the Big Bend area of Texas.

Winter is slow to leave this year. It came early, it hit hard and often, and it doesn't want to leave. Birders everywhere are ready for spring to arrive, very ready. Spring migrants are just starting to filter into the state and they may be wondering why as the north wind howls. They may not know for sure why, but they are driven by the undeniable urge to nest. They are driven by the cycle of life.

It seems that everything cycles and everything has life and passing. Pete Janzen announces that he will write one more Birding Roundup, and then his cycle is over. Scott Seltman started that feature, I took it over for several years before Pete volunteered to take it. Now Pete is ready to hand it off to Lloyd Moore. Mark Land, who has written and designed the kids feature, The Bird's Nest, for the past several years, will also write but one more installment. We need someone to step forward to pick that up. If we want future generations to be able to appreciate the natural world that we have, we must not forget to help the children learn to love the world around them.

We now also say goodbye to the trusty old Rare Bird Alert telephone hotline. While I will miss its passing as much as anyone, it is time to move on with technology. But it is nearly spring, and with spring comes new life. We cast off the shackles that have held us tight all winter long. We look forward to rebirth and what awaits us around the next bend. Happy Spring and good birding in this year's spring migration to you all!

chuck

Who's Who in KOS - 2001

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ANNOUNCEMENTS!

KOS Spring Meeting

May 4 - 6, 2001

**Cross Timbers area
(Chataqua/Montgomery Counties)**

See registration information inside.

Details on page 17

See Newsletter insert for registration form

Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas

The *Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas*, by Willam H. Busby and John L. Zimmerman, is due to be published in mid-April 2001, by University Press of Kansas, Lawrence Kansas. University Press is already taking pre-publication orders. The book is \$35 plus postage and handling. You can call University Press at 785-864-4155 or visit their World Wide Web page at: <http://www.kansaspress.ku.edu> to place your order.

KOS Items Available

If you would like to purchase KOS T-shirts, sweatshirts, window stickers, etc. then you need to contact the KOS Business Manager, Dave Williams at 1100 W. 21st St., Lawrence, KS 66049, (785) 843-1159, or via e-mail at DaveWmsKS@aol.com

International Migratory Bird Day

If any Wichita area KOS members are interested in setting up a booth at the Sedgwick County Zoo on May 5th for the zoo's celebration of Conservation/International Migratory Bird Day, please contact Chuck Otte, John Schukman or Greg Farley as soon as possible!

Want to go to Africa?

Max Thompson has advised us that he will be heading up a birding/mammal trip to Kenya and Tanzania, July 15 - 31, 2001. The price is quite reasonable out of Wichita. I've seen the itinerary and all I can say is that it's too bad I'll be busy with a county fair! For more details, cost and a copy of the itinerary you can contact Max Thompson at maxt@sckans.edu or (316) 229-6304.

Upcoming Meeting Locations

Please note the upcoming tentative spring and fall meeting locations. Mark your calendars, look for more information in coming issues and plan to attend!

Fall 2001 - Wichita, Great Plains Nature Center

Spring 2002 - Junction City/Geary County

Fall 2002 - ??????????????????????

Spring 2003 - Emporia

Fall 2004 and Beyond - Volunteers and locations needed!

**The KOS Rare Bird Alert Hotline
has been discontinued.**

See related story on bottom of page 19.

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Gulls on the Fly

by *John Rakestraw*

Gulls are considered by many to be among the most difficult groups of birds to identify. Each species displays a dizzying array of plumages as the birds mature, and individual birds can show a great deal of variation. Always up for a challenge, the birding community has put out a great deal of information on gull identification. Numerous articles and books give birders instruction on what to look for when identifying gulls. We now know to look for the colors of irises, gapes, and orbital rings; the degree of gonydeal angle; the color of the legs; and the facial expression on the gull. If you find a very cooperative gull and own a very good spotting scope, these field marks will help you identify the bird. But in the real world, many gulls are found flying out over the water at a considerable distance from the birder.

One field mark that is often neglected in the literature is the wing tip pattern. Visible from a great distance, this field mark is always useful in gull identification and is extremely reliable on adult birds. I first noticed this last December while I was watching flying gulls at a reservoir in southwest Ohio. Amidst a large flock of Bonaparte's Gulls was a bird that immediately caught my attention. It was the exact same color as the Bonaparte's on the mantle, wings and tail, and showed a similar pattern on the face, but the wing tips were blatantly different. Instead of having a large white wedge on the leading edge of the upper wing, this bird had a small solid black triangle on each wing tip. This mark, combined with the pale gray upper wing and white under wing, is only found on adult Black-legged Kittiwakes. Even though the bird was too far out to show bill or leg colors, and the constant motion of the flock made careful size comparison impossible, the wing tip pattern clinched the ID.

I next applied this field mark search on the Oregon coast in January. My birding experience on the west coast is measured in hours, not years, so I was definitely feeling out of my element. I knew I should be seeing Herring Gulls, a species that I identify at a glance in Ohio. But amidst the many Western and Glaucous-winged Gulls (and hybrids of these two species), the Herrings were not standing out. Then I saw one fly. The limited black on the wing tips and the largely white under wings screamed out, "Herring Gull."

Mew Gulls, though closely related to Ring-billed Gulls and similar in pattern, also stood out because of the slightly greater amount of white in the wing tip pattern. On

swimming birds at close range, I could see that Mew Gulls have smaller bills and a "gentler" facial expression than Ring-billed Gulls. But in flight, it was the wing tip pattern that enabled me to make the ID.

The occasional Laughing Gull in Kansas stands out from the numerous Franklin's Gulls by the Laughing Gull's extensively black wing tips and dark under wings. The upper wing pattern of the rare Black-headed Gull is nearly identical to that of Bonaparte's Gull. But the dark under wing on the Black-headed is a dead give-away.

Most field guides illustrate gulls in flight. Some books go into great detail about the patterns on individual primary feathers, but this degree of detail is not terribly useful at any distance. Try to see the pattern of the entire wing tip as a whole; as a single field mark you can recognize at a glance.

In the field, be sure you determine the age of a gull before using the wing tip for identification. The patterns on an adult will be very different from those of a first, second, or third year bird, depending on the species. While aging young birds can be challenging, adults usually stand out by their mantle colors and by their unmarked white tails. (Heerman's Gull and Black-tailed Gull are the only North American gulls with dark tails as adults.)

Wing tip patterns on immature gulls are not always as obvious as on adult birds, but they are still very important for identification. On some species, like Thayer's Gull, the wing tip pattern is the most reliable field mark.

Studying wing tip patterns will not suddenly make gull identification easy. Immature gulls will always be tricky, and there will always be hybrids and aberrant individuals that will make you want to give up on gulls all together and go look at easy groups like sparrows and fall warblers. But on most adult gulls, and a good number of immature birds, the wing tip pattern is an obvious and reliable field mark visible from a great distance. If a gull lets you get close enough, by all means, take a look at the orbital ring and the angle of the gonys. But for gulls on the fly, concentrate your efforts on the wing tips.

John can be contacted at rakestraw@dayton.net

Remember KOS.... If you would like to help the Kansas Ornithological Society's future growth consider leaving a memorial trust for the Society or including the KOS in your will. If you would like more information feel free to contact any of the Board Members.

Gardening for Hummingbirds

by Tom & Sara Shane

(Editor's note: For the past several years, the Shane's have worked to develop a hummingbird friendly backyard at their home in Garden City, Kansas. The results have been anywhere from excellent to astounding! This information was originally posted to the KSBIRD-L Internet discussion list and they agreed to share it with the KOS membership. They want to point out this this is what works for them in Garden City. Your results may differ!)

The first group is the most popular/frequently used.

1. Agastache (*Agastache rupestris*) - although we regularly have only one plant, an individual hummer will usually make a complete round to every flower on a given feeding bout.
2. Lady-in Red Salvia, aka Scarlet Sage (*Salvia coccinea*), is a very popular plant among the visiting hummers. It seems fairly cold tolerant and will often survive the first light frosts of autumn.
3. Traditional Red Salvia, essentially your Wal-Mart variety (*Salvia* sp.), is fairly popular with many of the hummers, especially the Calliope. We usually plant 5 - 6 14 inch square pots with this flower. When it freezes, we haul them into the garage overnight. As of early November 2000, those plants next to the house were still blooming, those out in the yard had frozen.
4. Trumpet Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) is one our most popular hummingbird plants. We now have three varieties: a red orange, a yellow, and a goldflame hybrid. The Broad-tailed Hummingbirds especially use these plants. House Finches are big competitors for these flowers, apparently eating the bases of the tubular flowers. We usually take down our finch feeders during hummingbird migration to discourage them from entering the yard. Three or four House Finches can completely strip a vine of blossoms in several hours. Depending on the year, we always end up with a few berries. In 2000 we had an above average crop. We had a Bullock's Oriole that came in one January afternoon, several years ago, and fed on these berries.
5. Scarlet Runner Bean (*Phaseolus coccineus*) is often visited, even though we usually have only one trellis of the plant. They are fairly susceptible to hot weather and

several years ago the entire stand was wiped out by some disease before they started blooming.

6. Cardinal Climber, aka Cypress Vine, (*Quamoclit sloteri*) is very popular among most of the hummers and is certainly worth planting. They are like small red morning glories. Sara scratches the seed and soaks in water before planting. It is certainly not cold hardy. We are convinced the plant will kill in the 33 -34 degree temperature range.

This second group of plants are often used by hummingbirds but not as much as the first group.

7. Bush Sage (*Salvia* sp.) We have two colors that are used often by the Rufous Hummingbirds as well as other species. So far they have been fairly cold hardy, not freezing back to the ground the winter of 1999/2000. They are also blooming profusely even now, early November 2000, after several hard freezes.

8. Ivy Geranium (*Geranium* sp.) is another plant found at nurseries that is used in hanging baskets. We usually purchase two or three each year since they are almost impossible to keep over winter and still bloom the next year. It seems like just certain individual hummingbirds will use this plant, and that individual will use it a lot.

This third group contains good hummingbird flowers, but bloom too early for our hummingbird season.

9. Trumpet Vine (*Campsis radicans*) is a popular hummingbird flower; however it is almost finished blooming when the post-breeding migration gets started. 2000 was an exception, with flowers staying on a couple weeks longer providing some good foraging sites.

10. Traditional Porch Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) is a great plant for hummers but the peak bloom is in early summer.

11. Sycamore Tree (*Plantanus occidentalis*) is a phenomenal hummingbird magnet. After a feeding bout on flowers or sugar water feeders, hummingbirds will often fly up into our 35 year old sycamore and perch. If we can find the perching bird we will then observe the

- - continued next page

-- *Gardening for the Birds*

little guys flycatching on a regular basis until the next trip down to the flowers or feeders. Sycamores seem to be loaded with small insects, apparently an important part of a hummingbird's diet. Other tree species will probably be good sources of insect prey.

Most flowers or seeds we can get at our local nurseries. Some of the hard to get items can be found at some of the mail order places. Two that we think have fairly good selections are:

High Country Gardens in New Mexico
<http://www.highcountrygardens.com>

Wayside Gardens in South Carolina
<http://www.waysidegardens.com>

Plant a hummingbird garden. The little guys are a lot of fun to watch. Once you get to see a fair number of hummers and are able to make comparisons, they are a lot easier to identify. Even though we have two new field guides on the market, a lot of improvement is still needed. Buy some of the books with actual photos of hummingbirds. We think that gives us a better handle on identification. Unfortunately, the hummingbird photographers have chosen to publish books with mostly photos of males. A big publishing hit just waiting is for a book with lots of photos of female and immature hummingbirds.

Tom & Sara can be reached at shane@pld.com

Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend **April 27-29, 2001** **Great Bend, KS**

The Great Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau is organizing this birding festival centered around Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Activities will include birding and informational tours of Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira; talks on bird identification, backyard habitat enhancement for wildlife, and wildlife photography; youth activities; and social events. Cost is \$40 per adult, \$20 for children. This includes 1 evening refreshment, 2 Continental breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 dinner, 1 afternoon break, 4 field trips and 4 educational workshops. If you are interested in attending, contact the Great Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau at 316-792-2750 or cvb@greatbend.com. The abbreviated agenda follows.

Friday, April 27th

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Registration, Networking, Refreshments, Entertainment
Optional: Sunset Tours of Cheyenne Bottoms 5:30 – 8:30p.m.

Saturday, April 28th

Sunrise – 9:00 a.m. Birding At Cheyenne Bottoms
Continental Breakfast (8:00 – 9:00 a.m.) - Headquarters
9:00 – 11:30 a.m. Informational Tours Of Cheyenne Bottoms & Nature Conservancy
11:45 – 1:00 p.m. Lunch – Holiday Inn (Convention Center West)
1:15 – 2:15 p.m. Workshops
2:15 – 2:30 Break
2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Workshops
5:30 – 8:00 p.m. Sunset Birding Tours
7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Come and Go. . .Networking. . .Salad/Deli Buffet (Convention Center West)
1:30 - 4:00 p.m. Saturday Afternoon Youth Activities – Brit Spough Park & Zoo

Sunday, April 29th

Sunrise – 9:00 a.m. Birding at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge
Continental Breakfast – Quivira Visitor Center
Funded in part by a grant from the U.S. National Ramsar Committee.

FALL SEASON ROUNDUP

August 1, 2000 through November 30, 2000
by Pete Janzen

This one of the most memorable fall seasons in many years for Kansas birding. A variety of factors contributed to this, but many Kansas birders will probably look back on this fall as the benchmark for many years to come.

The single most significant event had to have been the massive invasion of western birds from the Rocky Mountains and points west. Triggered for the most part by a hard drought across the west, this movement was very broad. Birders in Morton County and other areas in western Kansas were treated to a series of fascinating finds, including the addition of Juniper Titmouse to the state checklist, as well as a Williamson's Sapsucker, which had a rather shaky status on the state checklist. Many other western rarities made showings. A number of the western jay/corvid species began appearing in late September, and Mountain Chickadees staged perhaps their biggest invasion of the state ever recorded. Morton County is also proving to be one of the better to add those hard-to-find eastern warblers to your state list, but in the fall, more than in the spring. Some have known this for years, but check out some of the things that turned up this year!

Beginning in early August, an amazing series of rare hummingbird sightings began, and continued until the very end of September. These sightings were not limited to western Kansas, and western hummers were noted all the way to the Missouri state line. Larned and Garden City led the way with these sightings, but many other locations contributed reports as

well. Just check out the list below. It's just amazing, no other word for it.

Sabine's Gulls were at perhaps their highest numbers ever, with at least 21 reported statewide, some of them lingering much later than expected. Another species with all-time highs was the Buff-breasted Sandpiper. Huge flocks appeared across the eastern half of the state, with many lingering for weeks. In the last week of August, things probably peaked. At least 1000 of this species were reported that week in widely separated locations. Wonder how many more were out there at the non-birded golf courses, airports, and sod farms of Kansas? I think it is fair to say that a major percentage of the entire world population was on the ground here that week.

Another species which was well-reported was the Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Reported from 8 counties, this was the best showing in a long time, if not ever. This may be a function of the KSBIRD listserv, which featured a fairly animated discussion of field marks, favored habitat, and behavior of this species. Maybe it was just a good year for Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, or maybe communication and the spread of knowledge had a lot to do with it.

In the "go figure that" department was a juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger which appeared in a wheat field in rural Washington County, and remained for several days, and which may have been present for weeks before being reported to birders! Careful study of close-up video resulted in a verdict on which

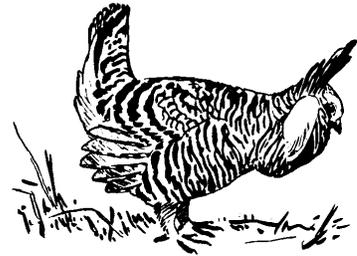
jaeger species this bird was. Things sort of calmed down in October, but with the month of November came a flurry of new outstanding rare bird reports, including: Vermillion Flycatcher at Pratt, Chihuahuan Raven at Arkansas City, Barrows Goldeneye and Gyrfalcon at Wichita, and a Harris's Hawk near Geuda Springs.

Combine all the above with a host of equally interesting sightings listed below, and it all adds up to a great season of birding. This was a good fall to be out in the field.

A last announcement: Sometime in the next year I would like to pass on the job of writing this column. If you or someone you know might be interested, I'd be happy to discuss that with you. [Ed. Note - Lloyd Moore has agreed to take over this duty later this year.]

Key to symbols: Underlined status indicates an unusual species, location of sighting, or date of occurrence. **Boldfaced** species are exceptionally rare sightings. **Boldfaced and underlined** species are new to the state checklist.

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<u>Species</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Observers</u>
Common Loon	1 near Tuttle Dam	8/12	Pott	DB, AF, DR
Western Grebe	17 at Cheyenne Bottoms	8/12	Barton	MG, ML
Clark's Grebe	1 at Cheyenne Bottoms 1 at Wilson	9/5 11/18-21	Barton Russell	RK MR
<u>Red-necked Grebe</u>	3 at Tuttle Reservoir	11/21	Riley	DB
<u>Neotropic Cormorant</u>	1 at Redmond Spillway 2 at Redmond spillway 2 adults and 1 imm. at Redmond spillway	8/7 8/18 9/1	Coffey Coffey Coffey	AS DG AS
American Bittern	still one present at Cheyenne Bottoms	11/4	Barton	RK
Snowy Egret	present at Cheyenne Bottoms through 1 in Ark city	11/01 <u>11/03</u>	Barton Cowley	RK GY
Great Egret	1 at El Dorado 5 near Eudora 1 in Ark City	11/01 11/2 11/03	Butler Douglas Cowley	DWe KS GY
Cattle Egret	12 on lawn in Colwich 3 south of Ark City	10/28 <u>11/08</u>	Sedgwick Cowley	PJ JN
Yellow-cr. Night Heron	1 at Wilson Lake	8/12	Russell	MR
White-faced Ibis	13 at Cheyenne Bottoms 6 at Quivira	<u>11/04</u> <u>11/04</u>	Barton Stafford	RK RK
Trumpeter Swan	2 on Quivira Rd. 6 collared birds along highway	11/18 11/24	Johnson Chase	ML DG, DL
Tundra Swan	1 or 2 at Quivira	11/16	Stafford	W&NB
American Black Duck	1 in Lawrence 1 near Sabetha 1 at Perry's Delaware Marsh	11/05 11/21 11/27	Douglas Nemaha Jefferson	AP MG RR
Blue-winged Teal	1 female on the river pond at Tuttle	<u>11/21</u>	Riley	DB
<u>Barrow's Goldeneye</u>	1 adult male at small pond in Wichita 1 adult male at Shawnee Mission Park	11/19-30 11/30	Sedgwick Johnson	W&NB, m.ob. ML
Red-breasted Merganser	1 female at Wichita sandpit	11/27	Sedgwick	PJ
White-winged Scoter	3 at Tuttle Res. 1 adult male at Twin Lakes, Wichita	10/20 11/20-22	Riley <u>Sedgwick</u>	DB PJ, m.ob.
<u>Black Scoter</u>	3 at Wilson	11/18	Russell	MR
Long-tailed Duck	1 along Marion Dam 1 at Glen Elder Dam 1 at Wichita sandpit	11/27 11/25 11/27	Marion Mitchell Sedgwick	CG WO PJ

Osprey	1 early at Tuttle 1 early near Wathena 1 late at Milford Dam	<u>8/12</u> <u>8/13</u> <u>11/13</u>	Pottawatomie DB, AF, DR Doniphan D&HC Geary CO
Mississippi Kite	1 im at Tuttle	8/12	<u>Pott</u> DB, AF, DR
Northern Goshawk	1 two miles south of Nekoma 1 on Quivira Road	11/17 11/18	Rush SS Johnson ML
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1 below Eldorado dam	8/17	Butler Dwe
Harris's Hawk	1 east of Geuda Springs	11/14-30	Cowley ES, m.ob
Red-shouldered Hawk	1 in Maple Grove Cemetery 1 in Maple Grove Cem. 1 near Geuda Springs	9/12 11/19 11/25	Sedgwick CG Sedgwick PJ Cowley JB
Broad-winged Hawk	2 immatures at Burcham Park 1 at Wilburton Crossing	9/4 <u>10/7</u>	Douglas RA Morton CG
Merlin	1 early at CB 1 at Tuttle 1 at Scott Lake	8/17 9/3 9/3	Barton RK Pott DR Scott T&SS
Peregrine Falcon	1 in downtown Topeka	10/30	Shawnee DL
Prairie Falcon	1 early at Quivira 1 early near Nekoma	8/8 8/9	Stafford CG Rush SS
Gyrfalcon	1 grey phase immature SW of Wichita	11/20-	Sedgwick L&TH, m.ob.
Black Rail	1 in the hand at Meade St. Lake	9/2	<u>Meade</u> TF
Whooping Crane	3 at Cheyenne Bottoms 9 at Cheyenne Bottoms and 7 at Quivira	10/30 11/04	Barton RK Barton/Stafford RK, m.ob.
Black-bellied Plover	3 near Colwich	8/21	Sedgwick CG
Mountain Plover	2 near Colorado line	9/1	Morton m.ob
Black-necked Stilt	1 at Marias des Cygnes	9/10	<u>Linn</u> MM
Marbled Godwit	1 at Elkhart sewer ponds	9/3	Morton LE, DW
Hudsonian Godwit	1 at Redmond Res.	9/1	Coffey AS
Ruddy Turnstone	1 at Clinton Lake 2 at Quivira 1 at Cheney Res 1 at Clinton 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	8/26 9/4 9/4 9/8 9/7 10/1	Douglas MM, GP Stafford MG, ML Reno PJ, ST Douglas DG Barton RK Barton TW
Semipalmated Sandpiper	3 at Tuttle	<u>11/25</u>	Riley TC

Red Knot	1 at Cheney Res.	9/4	Reno	PJ, ST
	1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	9/10	Barton	RK
Dunlin	2 at Quivira	9/4?	Stafford	PW
	8 still remaining at Quivira	11/11	Stafford	SS, m.ob.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	83 near Colwich in sod circle	8/9	Sedgwick	CG,PJ
	<u>Subsequent Colwich sod farm sightings: 230 on 8/13, 270 on 8/17, 350 on 8/22,</u>			
	25 on 8/28, 150 on 8/29, 120 on 9/15, 1 on 9/18			
	26 near Lawrence at sod fields	8/13	Douglas	JS, DW
	<u>Subsequent Lawrence sod farm sightings: 52 on 8/14, 31 on 8/17, 40 on 8/24 200 on 8/27,</u>			
	57 on 9/7, 35 on 9/8			
	<u>206</u> at Newton airport	8/16	Harvey	BD, GF
	6 at Winfield Gun Club	8/26	Cowley	GY
	<u>100</u> at Meyer turf farms	8/31	Johnson	AS
	2	9/1	Coffey	AS
	3	9/1	Osage	AS
	50 at Cheyenne Bottoms	9/6	Barton	RK
	6 at Clinton	9/9	Douglas	PW
	1 late at Quivira	10/9	Stafford	CG
1 late at Cheyenne Bottoms	10/30	Barton	RK	
Red-necked Phalarope	1 at Elkhart Sewer ponds	9/21	Morton	m.ob.
	1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	9/26	Barton	RK
	1 at Quivira	9/28	Stafford	Gap
	2 east of Liberal	10/2	Seward	LE
	2 at Elkhart ponds	10/7	Morton	SS, m.ob
<u>Red Phalarope</u>	1 in flight at Hell Creek, Wilson Res.	10/8	Russell	MR
Long-tailed Jaeger	1 immature in ag. Fields near Washington	9/7-10	Washington	DT, m.ob
Laughing gull	2 at Cheney Res	9/4	Reno	PJ, ST
California Gull	1 1 st winter at Ark R. Bridge	9/24-25	Sedgwick	CG, PJ
	1 first winter at Tuttle	10/22	Riley	TC
Glaucous Gull	1 2d winter in Lawrence	11/20	Douglas	PW
Sabine's Gull	1 juvenile at Wilson L.	9/20	Russell	MR
	1 at Elkhart Sewer ponds	9/23	Morton	m.ob.
	1 at McCoid L, Liberal	9/24	Seward	CH, SP
	1 juvenile at Ark. R/sandpit area	9/24-25	Sedgwick	CG, PJ
	2 at Tuttle Res. Outlet	9/26-10/1	Pott	TC, GS
	1-5 at Cheyenne Bottoms	9/27-11/05	Barton	RK, m.ob.
	6 on the Kaw R. at Lawrence	9/28-10/3	Douglas	JH, DW, m.ob
	2 at Milford	10/1	Clay	C&JO
	1 juv. at Marion Res	10/29	Marion	MG, ML
1 very late at Wichita sandpit	<u>11/29</u>	Sedgwick	PJ	
Common Tern	1 at Clinton Lake	8/26	Douglas	MM, GP
	3 at Ark R. bridge, Wichita	9/24	Sedgwick	CG, PJ
	5 at Lake Shawnee, Topeka	9/25	Shawnee	DG

Caspian Tern	1 at Cheney 2 at ElDorado Lake 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	9/9	9/5 <u>Butler</u> 9/7	<u>Reno</u> DWe Barton	CG RK
White-winged Dove	1 at Topeka feeder		8/24-25	Shawnee	JB
Inca Dove	1 at feeder in Garden City 2 in Hugoton 7 in Hugoton		8/13 8/23 9/22	Finney Grant Stanton	T&SS MR BF
Eur. Collared Dove	1 in Greensburg 1 in Satanta 5 in Ness City 3 in Linn		8/23 8/22 8/28 thru August	Kiowa Haskell Ness Washington	EF MR SS DT
Many other reports of Eurasian Collared Doves came in. These are all new county records.					
Long-eared Owl	1 near Maize		11/25	Sedgwick	CG
Common Nighthawk	1 foraging with gulls at Redmond		10/29	Coffey	MG, ML
<u>Anna's Hummingbird</u>	1 adult male at Olathe feeder 1 possibly this species at Wichta feeder 1 at Larned feeder 1-2 at Nekoma feeder 1 likely this species at Manhattan feeder		8/19 9/2 9/6 9/8-10 10/23	Johnson Sedgwick Pawnee Rush Riley	MC JN DK, SS D&SS DB
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	1 adult male in Garden City yard 18 females and imm. at 3 Garden City yards		9/10-15 8/27-9/26	<u>Finney</u> Finney	T&SS MO, B&LR, T&SS
<u>Black-chin. Hummingbird</u>	1 probable immature at Satanta feeder 9 females and imm. at Garden City feeders 2 adult males at feeders 1 at Elkhart feeder		8/22 8/25-9/30 8/29 9/2	Haskell Finney Pawnee Morton	MR MO, T&SS OS BP,CG, m.ob.
Calliope Hummingbird	1 female at feeder 6 mi. n. of Garden City 1 female at feeder near :Larned 1-3at feeders in Larned 1 fe. Photographed at Liberal 13 females and imm at 3 Garden City yards 1 imm at Satanta feeder 1 at Hugoton feeder 1 at Lone Star 1 female at feeder near Wilson 1 female at Wilson feeder 2 males in Cawker City 1 female at Nekoma feeder 1 female at Larned feeder 1 at Nekoma feeder		8/5-12 8/9-13 8/13-9/1 8/12 8/17-9/29 8/22 8/23 8/24 9/3 9/8 9/7-11 9/8 9/9-12 9/16	Finney Pawnee Pawnee Seward Finney Haskell Grant <u>Douglas</u> Russell Russell <u>Mitchell</u> Rush Pawnee Rush	M&PR, TS D&SS, m.ob. DK, m.ob. LE MO, B&LR, T&SS MR MR PW MR MR HA D&SS LH DS
Costa's Hummingbird	1 probable imm. male at Larned feeder 1 probable female at Elkhart feeder 1 probable female at Lawrence feeder		8/12 9/23 9/25	Pawnee Morton Douglas	PJ, SS MC,BF GP, MM

Rufous Hummingbird	24 individuals in 4 Garden City yards 1 at feeder near Maize 1 at feeder near Nekoma 1 at Olathe feeder 3 at once at Larned feeders 1 imm at Satanta feeder 1 at Wichita feeder 1 at Overland Park feeder 3 at various Elkhart feeders 1 at Winfield feeder 1 at Wilson feeder 1 at feeder near Sterling 1 at Larned feeder	8/7-9/26 8/11 8/12 8/19 8/21-26 8/22 8/26 9/3-6 8/31-9/4 9/5 9/8 9/12 9/12	Finney Sedgwick Rush Johnson Pawnee Haskell Sedgwick Johnson Morton Cowley Russell Rice Pawnee	MO,B&LR, ES, T&SS CG D&SS MC DK MR H&SG D&LB CG, BP, m.ob MT MR BH OS,SS
<u>Broad-tailed Hummingbird</u>	19 females and imm. at 4 Garden City yards 1 ad. Male and 1 ad. Fem. at GC feeder 1 at GC feeder 1 female at Elkhart feeder 1 in Larned 1 female at Satanta feeder 1 female at Nekoma feeder 1 at Lone Star feeder 1 adult female at Larned feeder 1 at Pratt feeder 1 female at Elkhart feeder 1 female at Larned feeder	8/6-9/30 Finney 8/17 8/19 8/21-26 8/22 8/24 PW 9/12 9/13 9/20 9/26	Finney ES Finney Morton Pawnee Haskell Rush Douglas Pawnee Pratt Morton Pawnee	BC, MO, B&LR, T&SS ES MO CG SS MR SS PW OS,SS KB BP DK, SS
<u>Williamson's Sapsucker</u>	1 in Elkhart alley-1 st confirmed state record	9/23	Morton	SP, EP, m.ob.
Red-naped Sapsucker	4 observed in all 2 at Meade Lake 1 at Elkhart Cemetery	9/20-23 10/8 10/7	Morton <u>Meade</u> Morton	m.ob. RK SP
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1 near Redmond 1 at Oak Park, Wichita 1 at Maple Grove Cemetery 1 at Boy Scout area	9/1 9/3 9/11 9/21	Coffey Sedgwick Sedgwick <u>Morton</u>	AS HG CG BP
Alder Flycatcher	2 at Quivira	8/21	Stafford	CG
Hammond's Flycatcher	at Boy Scout area and also Cem. Shelterbelt	9/1	Morton	CG,BP, m.ob
Cordilleran Flycatcher	1 at Boy Scout area	9/3	Morton	CG, BP
Dusky Flycatcher	1 fed all day in yard	8/28	Finney	T&SS
<u>Gray Flycatcher</u>	1 fairly well described at Cheyenne Bottoms 1	9/13 9/30	Barton Morton	RK SS, m.ob
Vermillion Flycatcher	1 near KDWP headquarters	11/01	Pratt	KB, CG
Cassin's Kingbird	1 at Elkhart sewer ponds 8 in all, various locations	9/2-3 9/20-23	Morton Morton	m.ob. m.ob
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	1 east of Topeka	10/23	Shawnee	TW

Northern Shrike	3 near Syracuse 1 near Perry Lake	11/26 11/27	Hamilton <u>Jefferson</u>	T&SS RR
Philadelphia Vireo	1 at Quivira	8/12	Stafford	MG,ML
Blue-headed Vireo	1 at Maple Grove Cemetery, Wichita 1 at Boy Scout area	<u>11/08</u> <u>11/10-11</u>	Sedgwick <u>Morton</u>	CG CH, m.ob.
Cassin's Vireo	1 at cemetery shelterbelt Multiple birds-6 in one day 1 1 at Meade Lake	9/1 9/1-4 9/30 10/8	Morton Morton Morton <u>Meade</u>	DG, m.ob. m.ob. MR, m.ob RK
Plumbeous Vireo	1 at cemetery shelterbelt 2	9/1 9/20-21	Morton Morton	m.ob. m.ob
<u>Western Scrub Jay</u>	4 at separate locations along the Cim. R. 2 probably this species near McPherson 2 along Cim. River	9/30 11/03 11/10	Morton <u>McPherson</u> Morton	TC,MR,SS RD SP, ASg, m.ob.
<u>Steller's Jay</u>	1 at the Boy Scout area	10/1	Morton	TC, MR
<u>Pinon Jay</u>	100+ at various locations 7 at Boy Scout area 1 with 2 Blue Jays at farm near Garden City	 10/7 10/27	 Morton Finney	 Morton m.ob CG, m.ob PR
<u>Clark's Nutcracker</u>	1 in Hays	9/7	Ellis	GF, m.ob
Chihuahuan Raven	1 north of Elkhart 2 near Ark City	11/10 11/14	Morton <u>Cowley</u>	PJ, m.ob. GY
Tree Swallow	1 late at Frontenac sewer ponds	<u>11/11</u>	Crawford	RM
Violet-green Swallow	1 at Elkhart sewer ponds 1 at CB in mixed swallow flock 1 at Quivira	9/2-3 9/6 10/9	Morton Barton Stafford	m.ob. RK CG
Mountain Chickadee	1 at Boy Scout area 12 in one day around county 1 at Garden City feeder 25 in one day around county 2 in Garden City	10/1 10/7 11/07 11/10 11/20	Morton Morton <u>Finney</u> Morton <u>Finney</u>	TC, MR SS, m.ob T&SS PJ, m.ob MO, T&SS
<u>Juniper Titmouse</u>	1 first state record at Boy Scout area 1 at Boy Scout area	9/30 10/7	Morton Morton	TC, MR, SS SP
<u>Bushtit</u>	<u>30</u> in Elkhart Cemetery	11/09-12	Morton	MT, m.ob.
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2 in Garden City	8/21	Finney	BC
<u>Pygmy Nuthatch</u>	1 in Nekoma yard 1 in Elkhart alley	9/10 9/23	<u>Rush</u> Morton	SS m.ob
Carolina Wren	1 banded at Meade State L.	8/26	<u>Meade</u>	TF

Rock Wren	1 lingering bird at Point of Rocks	11/0-10	Morton	BP, m.ob.
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1 late in Wichita yard	10/15	Sedgwick	BM
Hermit thrush	1 at Boy Scout area	9/4	<u>Morton</u>	CS
Swainson's Thrush	several early migrants in Wichita 1 on Elm Creek	8/4 8/4	Sedgwick Barber	JN DA
Mountain Bluebird	10 at Cheney	11/25	Kingman	DD
Townsend's Solitaire	40 county wide 1 near Blue Springs 1 yard bird near Maize	9/30 10/29 11/25	Morton Marshall Sedgwick	TC, MR TP CG
Sage Thrasher	1 at Western Crossing	9/30	Morton	TC
Curve-billed Thrasher	1-2 near Work Station	11/11-12	Morton	CG, m.ob.
Gray Catbird	1 late in Elkhart alleys	11/10	Morton	MM, m.ob.
<u>Bohemian Waxwing</u>	1 in Garden City yard	11/18	Finney	T&SS
Blue-winged Warbler	1 at Burcham Park, Lawrence	10/1	Douglas	DM
Orange-crowned Warbler	1 early in Garden City	8/7	Finney	BC
<u>Virginia's Warbler</u>	1-2 at Boy Scout Area	9/1-2	Morton	m.ob.
Chestnut-sided Warbler	2 at Burcham Park, Lawrence 1 at Meade Lake	9/17 10/8	Douglas Meade	RA RK
Magnolia Warbler	1 Woodson St. Lake	10/19	Woodson	JW
Black-throated Blue Warb.	1 east of Wilburton Ponds 1 at Morton Co.	9/22 9/30	Morton Morton	m.ob TC, m.ob
Bay-breasted Warbler	1 at Meade Lake 1 imm female at cemetery	10/8 9/21	<u>Meade</u> <u>Morton</u>	RK CG, mob
Black-throated Gray Warb.	1 female at work station	9/2	Morton	m.ob.
Black-throated Green War.	1 1 st year female-late date	<u>10/28</u>	<u>Morton</u>	SS
Townsend's Warbler	1 adult male at Scott Lake 5 observed 1 in tree row near Cheyenne Bottoms <u>15 observed in all</u>	9/3 8/31-9/3 9/14-17 9/20-23	Scott Morton Barton Morton	T&SS m.ob. RK m.ob.
Pine Warbler	1 at Boy Scout area 1 at Burcham Park, Lawrence 1 at Maple Grove Cemetery	9/1 9/30 10/2	<u>Morton</u> <u>Douglas</u> Sedgwick	CG, BP RA, DS, m.ob CG
<u>Prairie Warbler</u>	1 at Cimm. Rec. area	9/2	<u>Morton</u>	m.ob.

Palm Warbler	1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	9/4	Barton	RK
Louisiana Waterthrush	1 at Burcham Park	9/4	Douglas	RA
Kentucky Warbler	1 at Boy Scout area	9/4	<u>Morton</u>	LE, DW
Canada Warbler	1 banded at Meade L. 2d Co. Record	9/2	Meade	TF
	2 at Bucham Park, Lawrence	9/9	Douglas	RA
	1 at Maple Grove Cemetery	9/11	Sedgwick	CG
Prothonotary Warbler	1 adult male banded at Meade L.	8/17	<u>Meade</u>	TF
Summer Tanager	1 at Boy Scout area	10/7	Morton	CG, m.ob
Western Tanager	1 in Garden City	8/18	Finney	ES
	1 in Maple Grove Cemetery	9/25	<u>Sedgwick</u>	PJ
	1 male at Scott St. Lake	9/30	Scott	T&SS
Canyon Towhee	1 at Point of Rocks	10/7	Morton	LE, m.ob.
Green-tailed Towhee	1 at Boy Scout area	9/22	Morton	m.ob.
Dark-eyed Junco	1 Gray-headed race at an Olathe feeder	11/24	Johnson	DWs
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	1 at point of Rocks	9/1	Morton	m.ob
	1 out of habitat at the Boy Scout area	10/28	Morton	SS
Brewer's Sparrow	1 in Garden City yard	10/1	Finney	T&SS
Henslow's Sparrow	1 at Chisholm Creek Park, Wichita	9/17	<u>Sedgwick</u>	CG, PJ
<u>Nel. Sharp-tailed Sparrow</u>	5-6 at Slate Creek Wetlands	10/15	Sumner	CG, JN, m.ob.
	2 at Baker Wetlands	10/17-11/6	Douglas	AP, m.ob
	2 at Nelson Exp. Research area	10/18	Jefferson	GP, DS
	1 at Hell Creek Area, Wilson Lake	10/21	Russell	MR
	at least two at Bottiger Mitigation Area	10/22	?????	D&HC
	1 at Cheyenne Bottoms	11/02	Barton	RK
	1 immature at Quivira	11/11	Stafford	SS
Song Sparrow	1 singing at last year's Cheney L. nest site	8/6	Reno	CG, PJ
White-crowned Sparrow	1 very early at Redmond	<u>9/1</u>	Coffey	AS
<u>Pyrrhuloxia</u>	1 at Lake McKinney	10/25	Kearney	BPe, PG
Painted Bunting	<u>4 females observed</u>		9/2-3	<u>Morton</u> m.ob.
	1 at Boy Scout area	9/23	Morton	BP
	1 late male at Elk Falls yard	9/26	Elk	GJW
Red Crossbill	1 at Cimm. Work Station	9/1	Morton	m.ob
	1 female at Hesston feeder	"fall"	Harvey	NP
	6 in Wilson	10/20	Ellsworth	MR
	3 at Belle Plaine Cemetery	11/03	Sumner	L&TH
	7 at CB HQ and another flock in Great Bend	11/4	Barton	RK

Red Crossbill, cont.	2-5 at Elkhart feeders and Work Station 10 at Burrton Cemetery	11/9-12 11/13	Morton Harvey	SP, MT, m.ob. CG
Purple Finch	1 female at feeder 1 molting male at same feeder 1 female near Mulvane 1 female at Elkhart sewer ponds 1 male at Lenexa feeder	9/1 9/2 11/03 11/10 11/25	Sedgwick Sedgwick Sedgwick <u>Morton</u> Johnson	JN JN L&TH MG, DW, m.ob. NF
<u>Cassin's Finch</u>	1 collected near Wilburton Crossing 1 near Richfield 1 near Richfield	9/22 10/7 11/10	Morton Morton Morton	MT, m.ob. CG, m.ob. PJ, MG, m.ob.
<u>Lesser Goldfinch</u>	2 at Cimmaron. Rec. Area 3	9/3 9/30	Morton Morton	m.ob. m.ob
Evening Grosbeak	1 in Wichita residential area 1 female in Elkhart 1 at KC feeder 1 female in Elkhart	8/29 9/23 10/11 11/10	Sedgwick Morton Johnson Morton	JN m.ob AS GP, m.ob.

Observers: Dennis Angle, Robert Antonio, James Barnes, William and Nancy Beard, Joanne Brier, Ken Brunson, Dave and Linda Bryan, Doris Burnett, Barbara Campbell, Herb and Donna Chance, Mark Corder, Duane DeLong, Rich Duerksen, Lisa Edwards, Ann Feyerharm, Bob Fisher, Nancy Fitzgerald, Eric Friesen, Gregg Friesen, tom Flowers, Matt Gearheart, Paul Gilleland, Dan Gish, Harry and Sharron Gregory, Chet Gresham, Joe Harrington, Bob Heater, Leon Hicks, Tyler Hicks, Chris Hobbs, Pete Janzen, Don Kazmaier, Rich Kostecke, Mark Land, Dan Larson, Robert Mangile, Mick McHugh, Bert McClard, Debbie McKee, John Northrup, Marie Osterbuhr, Chuck and Jaye Otte, William Otto, Norman Pankratz, Tom Parker, Gerry Parkinson (GPa), Galen Pittman, Alexis Powell, Eric Preston, Bruce Peters(BPe), Mike and Pam Ramsey, Dave Rintoul, Richard Rucker, Jethro Runco, Omar Schartz, Carolyn Schwab, Emaline Scott, David Seibel, Tom and Sara Shane, Kylee Sharp, Andy Siglar, Guy Smith, Eddie Stegall, Art Swalwell, Dan Thalman, Max Thompson, Phil Wedge, David Weible (DWe), Don Weiss(DWs), Dave Williams, Jim Wilson, Tracy Wohl, m.ob. = multiple observers.

Membership Renewal Time!

This is the last regular mailing you will receive if you have not paid your 2001 dues. KOS values your membership and hopes that you will renew for the coming year. Don't lose out on any of the benefits KOS offers. Please fill out and mail the enclosed renewal form today. If you have any questions regarding the status of your membership, contact the Membership Coordinator, Mike Stewart, at mstewart@lynworth.com or 913-651-2565. If you have already paid your dues, then you can ignore this notice. But why not save the form and pass it along to a non-member birding friend or buy a gift membership for a friend or family member!

Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas

The *Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas*, by William H. Busby and John L. Zimmerman, is due to be published in mid-April 2001 by University Press of Kansas, Lawrence Kansas. University Press is already taking pre-publication orders. The book is \$35 plus postage and handling. You can call University Press at 785-864-4155 or visit their World Wide Web page at: <http://www.kansaspress.ku.edu> to place your order.

Blackbird Control at Feedlots near Cheyenne Bottoms

by Helen Hands

About 30 or so years ago, the winter blackbird roost at Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area (CBWA) developed, perhaps in response to the development of confined cattle feeding operations in the Great Bend area. Now it is common to see millions of blackbirds “tubing” out of the Bottoms in the morning and back in the evening. Some people may view these huge flocks as another neat thing to see at the Bottoms. Others may dismiss the blackbird flock as unnatural believing that they concentrate and winter at the Bottoms only because they have adapted to a year round food source at Man’s feedlots. Still others dislike the blackbirds because they cut into their profit margins.

For several years, feedlot operators near CBWA and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (QNWR) have sought assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal Damage Control program, now called Wildlife Services (WS), to minimize the number of starlings and blackbirds (primarily red-winged, plus smaller numbers of yellow-headed and Brewer’s blackbirds, cowbirds, and grackles) consuming and defecating on cattle feed. Techniques utilized have included shooting and a chemical repellent called Avitrol. A small number of birds are poisoned with Avitrol, which causes them to make distress calls and fly abnormally. This behavior tends to scare away the rest of the birds. Most of the poisoned birds die. All lethal and non-lethal blackbird control operations require a state permit, routinely issued by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

In the last few years, WS has tested a new control agent, Starlicide or DRC-1339, at feedlots near Great Bend. According to WS, this chemical is slightly toxic to most birds and most toxic to starlings, blackbirds, crows, and magpies. WS studies have shown that DRC-1339 is only slightly toxic to mammals and raptors and birds that have consumed DRC-1339 are not toxic to scavenging birds and mammals. DRC-1339 is said to kill birds slowly, quietly, and apparently painlessly. DRC-1339 works so slowly that most poisoned birds die at the roost (cattail marsh or trees in towns or around rural homes), rather than at the feedlot.

This past winter KDWP reviewed an environmental assessment (EA) entitled “Bird Damage Management at Livestock Feeding Facilities in the

Kansas Wildlife Services Program.” The purpose of the EA was to evaluate several alternative ways of handling bird damage at feedlots so that the method WS uses is in compliance with all applicable regulations. The alternatives evaluated were:

1. Lethal control by WS at livestock feeding facilities using DRC-1339 only
2. Technical assistance only by WS
3. Bird damage management (BDM) by WS at feedlots using an Integrated Wildlife Damage Management approach (using a variety of lethal and non-lethal techniques depending on the situation)
4. Non-lethal BDM only by WS
5. No action at feedlots by WS.

Alternative 3 is WS’s preferred alternative. Because WS is going to the trouble of preparing this EA to use DRC-1339, apparently they consider non-lethal methods ineffective in most cases. There is some discussion of the effectiveness of non-lethal methods in the EA, but much less is said about these than DRC-1339 and Avitrol.

WS anticipates that their activities annually would occur at no more than 10 feedlots, currently occurring around CBWA and QNWR, and result in killing up to 3 million starlings, about 1 million red-winged blackbirds, and about 50,000 each of common grackles, brown-headed cowbirds, great-tailed grackles, and Brewer’s blackbirds. According to the EA, killing about 4 million starlings and blackbirds a year in Kansas would not significantly affect the populations of any of these species, and the death of this many birds in a cattail marsh (CBWA probably has the largest blackbird roost of any of the cattail marshes in the state) would not harm it. So, if you’re birding at or around CBWA next winter, you may see large numbers of dead starlings and blackbirds. If this concerns you or you would like more information, contact Tom Halstead of WS at Kansas State University. His phone number is 785-532-1549 and address is Wildlife Services, Division of Biology, 232 Ackert Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506-4901.

*Helen is a Wildlife Biologist for the
Kansas Dept of Wildlife and Parks
helenh@wp.state.ks.us*

KOS Spring Meeting, May 4 - May 6, 2001

Chautauqua & Montgomery Counties

This spring's Kansas Ornithological Society meeting will be held in Chautauqua and Montgomery counties, with possible forays into other nearby counties.

There is no registration fee for this trip, because all participants are responsible for their own meals and lodging. However, we request that you register for the weekend, using the enclosed form, so that the committee can have an idea of how many people to expect. This will help in determining how many trip leaders are needed.

May 4...Friday evening get together (6 to 9 p.m):

Shelter House at Independence Riverside Park: At northernmost stop light on Hwy 75 (aka Penn Ave) and south edge of cemetery. Proceed about 3 blocks east on Oak St. then turn north. The sandstone shelterhouse is just north of Fountain and south of Dinosaur sculpture.

May 5...Saturday Morning: Meet in Dillon's parking lot just east of Super 8 Motel at 6 a.m. to leave on birding trips with guides if prior arrangements have not been made.

May 6...Sunday noon: Meet at Card Creek Campground Shelterhouse for compilation. (Card Creek is west of Independence on Hwy 160 about 5 miles. Follow sign by turning north and following hard-top road 3 miles to its end (also good area for warblers and vireos).

Motels: A block of rooms has been reserved for KOS at the Super 8 motel, 2900 West Main 620-331-8288 (mention KOS for group rate: \$39.49 plus tax/single or \$46.69 plus tax/double).

Other motels on West Main:

Microtel, 2917 W. Main, 620-331-0088
Best Western Prairie Inn, 1-800-528-1234
Lamplighter Inn, 2320 W. Main, 620-331-4655
Apple Tree Inn, 201 N. 8th, 620-331-5500

Public Birding Areas:

- 1) Elk City Wildlife Area: 24 miles of trails, 12,000 acres.
- 2) Copan Wildlife Area: 1/2 mile West of Caney, 2340 acres.
- 3) Berentz/Dick Wildlife Area: on Montgomery-

Chautauqua County Line, 1350 acres.

4) Montgomery State Fishing Lake: South of Independence, 408 acres.

5) Big Hill Reservoir and Wildlife Area: 5 miles east of Cherryvale in Labette County, 2000 acres.

6) Two City Lakes near Sedan in Chautauqua County.

Maps of these areas will be available Friday evening. Also some private land will be available for birding.

This area is unique in Kansas. Part of the area is often referred to as the Cross Timbers, remnants of a dense ancient forest made up of scrubby oak dominated by post oak and blackjack oak. In 1831, while traveling through what is now part of Oklahoma, statesman-writer Washington Irving encountered this area and described it as the forests of cast iron. An excellent article on the cross timbers area was written up in the October 2000 issue of Natural History.

While there may have been a fair amount of birdwatching done in this area, there is not an abundance of good reports to document sightings. In the preliminary round of county checklists production, here are some of the counties in the Spring Meeting area and their species totals: Montgomery - 196, Chautauqua - 152, Labette - 155 and Elk - 204. I certainly hope we can improve some of those counts! Before you go to the spring meeting, visit the KSBIRD website, <http://ksbirds.org>, and print out the county checklists so that you can report new county records. There are good birds in this area! During the KBBAT field data collection period, a Swainson's Warbler was found by Ed Miller in a KBBAT block in Montgomery County. Who knows what else we'll find in May!

Local chairman for the spring meeting is Ed Miller. Completed registration forms (see newsletter insert) or information should be sent to Ed at:
Edwin Miller
218 Bermuda Drive
Independence, KS 67301-1816

Or by e-mail to:
Ejm916@yahoo.com

Phone inquiries may be made by calling Ed at 620-331-6295

**KOS Winter Board Meeting
February 24, 2001
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS**

Attendance:	Mike Stewart	Dave Williams
	Gene Young	Dan Larson
	Jan Boyd	Dave Rintoul
	Bill Busby	John Schukman

Chairman John Schukman called the meeting to order. Gene Young moved to approved the minutes from the fall board meeting, Jan Boyd seconded, and the motion was approved.

KBRC Report: Dave Rintoul explained that a change in the bylaws to alter election procedures was being developed. Greg Farley and Carolyn Schwab are new committee members and there are three open postions. Dave noted that most KBRC business is conducted on the web and the group meets infrequently, thus reducing the time and travel commitments of members.

Newsletter Editor Report: Chuck Otte was not present but provided a written report. Pete Janzen is handing off the birding roundup to Lloyd Moore.

Bulletin Editor Report: Max Thompson was not present but provided announcements through Gene. The March bulletin is at the printer. They have material through the June issue. This is Max's last year as editor and possible candidates to replace him were discussed. A new editor will hopefully be announced at the fall meeting. Much of the work associated with this position is producing the March (winter bird count results) issue, and possible ways to streamline the process with electronic submission of count results were discussed.

Treasurer's Report: Dan Larson presented a finance sheet. As discussed at the fall board meeting, the costs of providing a member with publications exceeds current income from dues. Possible solutions discussed were raising membership dues, using income from interest accounts, and raising income by incorporating advertising into the Horned Lark or KSBIRD-L. It was decided not to raise dues but to seek another source of income to defray publication costs. The Treasurer's report was approved.

Membership Report: Mike Stewart provided a printed report and noted that membership stands at 373, a decrease of 43 from 416 member on 2/13/99. Mike outlined ideas to encourage timely membership renewal and recruit new members. Mike made a motion to reinstate Bird Life of South Africa as an exchange member. John seconded the motion and it passed. Mike explained that he had received requests for complementary copies of KOS publications. This topic has come up at previous board meetings. A motion to provide complementary copies to a British abstracting service was passed. Gene made a motion to revisit the complimentary copy process. The motion was seconded and passed.

Business Report: New Business Manager Dave Williams said printing has been successfully transferred to Lawrence. Inventory of sale items is good for most items. More sweatshirts (8 left) are needed. The checklist inventory is good (7000) but they date from 1998 and we may want to update them fairly soon. When asked about the recommendation to add a sale manager position, Dave said it wasn't a problem now but he'll keep this possibility in mind.

New Business

John said that he'd been asked about the availability of student research funding. Currently, \$3069 is in the budget for student research. Proposals go to Tom Shane. Research fund policies were reviewed.

Future Meetings:

- 1) The Great Bend Birding Festival is scheduled for 27-28 April. Several KOS members will serve as field trip leaders and the distribution of KOS materials was recommended.
- 2) KOS spring field trip will be in southeastern Kansas on the weekend of May 5-6. Details to be announced.
- 3) Fall 2001 meeting will be in Wichita and spring 2002 field trip will be in Junction City.

Rare Bird Alert phone line: Gene Young announced his resignation from the RBA. After discussion of the declining use of the RBA phone line and various options, Mike motioned to do away with the RBA phone line. The motion was seconded and passed.

Membership Brochures and Directory: Mike asked whether the board felt it would be cost productive to print out and distribute membership brochures. The idea of using extra KOS checklists as advertising was brought up. Mike will get estimates for a sticker to place over checklists to be used in this fashion. Should the KOS directory, last done in 1999, be updated? After discussion, Gene made a motion to put the directory, checklist, and brochure each on a 3-year rotation. The motion was seconded and approved. The brochure will be done in 2001, the directory in 2002, and the checklist in 2003.

Archival of Bird Records: The various types of bird records maintained in KS (KBRC, Ksbird-L, CBC, BBS, etc.) were discussed. No action was taken on this topic.

Dingus Natural Area: Status of the area was briefly discussed: management needs, possible interest in property by The Nature Conservancy, etc. No action was taken.

Youth Activities: Incorporation of youth birding activities at existing KOS functions was suggested.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Submitted by
Bill Busby, Secretary

The End of the (Hot)Line

As you can tell from reading the KOS Winter Board Meeting minutes, the board voted to end the KOS Rare Bird Alert (RBA) phone line. I feel a little like the executioner announcing this news.

Since the 1980's, many of us regularly called the RBA to leave news of our sightings or to hear the latest bird news from around Kansas. The demise of the RBA can be traced directly to the growth of the Internet. All over the country, telephone hotlines are falling into disuse, as those regular users hook up to the Internet with computer, electronic mail and state or regional bird discussion lists. Calls to the Kansas RBA had dwindled to one or two a week, and most of those were leaving no messages. Most or all of these regular RBA callers now have e-mail and are probably subscribed to the Kansas Bird Discussion List (KSBIRD-L).

When Jerry Reeck and I started KSBIRD-L about five years ago, I never anticipated this outcome. Yet, as in many other states, once the active RBA users "got on line", the rare bird information was being exchanged in near real time, over the Internet. Read your e-mail once or twice a day and you could get the news straight from the birder who saw it. You didn't have to wait for a phone report to be recorded and then call to see if there were any updates. It came to you without much effort at all. Details are being worked out to post regular Kansas rare bird alerts on the appropriate Internet sites, for those in and out of state birders who aren't getting the daily news on KSBIRD-L. But I guess for now, it's the end of the line.

Chuck Otte

Birds of the Texas Panhandle A Review by Thomas G. Shane

Birds of the Texas Panhandle: Their Status, Distribution, and History by Kenneth D. Seyffert (Number Twenty-nine in the W. L. Moody, Jr., Natural History Series). Available from Texas A & M University Press, Lewis St., Lindsey Bldg., 4354 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4354. 2001: 501 pp. + xv, 11 Illustrations by Carolyn Stallwitz, 4 numbered and 5 unnumbered tables, 1 map. \$24.95 + \$4.50 SH, paperback (hardcover available). Phone 800-826-8911, FAX 888-617-2421, or e-mail <http://www.tamu.edu/upress/BOOKS/2001/seyffert.htm>

George Miksch Sutton's influence is not only present today through the dozens of students he mentored, but also is apparent by the numerous amateur ornithologists he helped and supported during his illustrious life. Ken Seyffert's book is one more shining example of the influence and encouragement given by Sutton even 18 years after his passing. A quick scan through the very complete Literature Cited section of Seyffert's book reveals that he published more papers in the Bulletin of the Oklahoma Ornithological Society than he did in the Bulletin of the Texas Ornithological Society. This was in no way Ken's disloyalty to Texas but was because of Sutton's generosity of time and interest in all people that were devoted in some manner to birds. This is an outstanding example of why all state ornithological societies should recruit and include academicians from their state universities.

Seyffert opens with appropriate acknowledgments then moves to an introduction that is comprehensive but not long. This is followed by a "Plan of Work" with map and explanations guiding the reader through the 406 species accounts. The book passes this reviewer's only litmus test and that is the species accounts of common birds are longer than those of the rare birds. This separates the good ornithological treatises from the books for birding only. Seyffert's book is valuable to the bird interests of both groups.

A species account opens with a brief line on *Status*, followed by the longest paragraph of each account on *Occurrence*. This portion has a wealth of information including data on the percent of Christmas Bird Counts a species was recorded along with the average number

observed for about 6 counts. Data from Winter Bird Population Studies along with Breeding Bird Censuses conducted and published by Seyffert are given. Excellent summaries are presented for the 14 Panhandle Breeding Bird Surveys giving the high and low counts. Data from the Texas Breeding Bird Atlas Project also are presented for numerous species. A paragraph on *Nesting* follows for those breeding species giving dates of nest building through observations on juvenile birds. Cowbird parasitism records also are included. The last paragraph of the species accounts includes a summary of known museum *Specimens*.

A special section following the species accounts is titled, "Species of Uncertain Occurrence". This list of 37 birds certainly will be one of interest to the Kansas listers. Reading about the numerous and convincing reports of the Black Swift are very exciting even to a non-lister. Following that is a very useful checklist of known species for all 26 counties of the Panhandle. This list alone gives the reader a good idea of the relative abundance of each species recorded for the Texas Panhandle. It would have been even better if the author would have overlaid the breeding status for each county in the list.

The only shortcoming for an otherwise fabulous book is the untitled tables. Most are no problem to the reader except Table 2, which is a wonderful data set on the monthly occurrence of the Northern Flicker that is placed in the Hairy Woodpecker account. The Texas A& M editors are certainly accountable for this error. Distribution maps for about a dozen species such as the Golden-fronted Woodpecker that are limited to a specific habitat region of the Panhandle would have been a great help to those of us with limited knowledge of Texas geography. It would have helped those authors preparing maps for future national field guides, eliminating errors that have occurred for many species for decades.

Ken Seyffert has written an outstanding book which has been greatly enhanced by the Carolyn Stallwitz line drawings. Her cover painting of the Horned Lark standing on a cow pat next to a pretty yellow aster

Continued on page 22

Reflections on a Big Year, Part I

by Chet Gresham

[Editor's Note: Over the past decade, or so, there have been several attempts made to grasp that illusive, and perhaps fictional, title of Kansas Big Year Record holder. The two most recent attempts, by Galen Pittman and Mike Rader, were chronicled in these pages, so it is only fitting that Chet's run at the record also be detailed. All three of these gentlemen have approached their attempt differently. They all had different goals and styles, and they all succeeded in eclipsing the previous reported record. And as Chet will detail, there were a lot of lessons learned along the way. Lessons about birds, lessons about themselves and lessons about humankind. The second installment will appear in the June Horned Lark. Enjoy! ceo]

Birding has always been liberating for me. I get to leave everything behind and become immersed in my surroundings. I lose myself by allowing my senses to lead me. But I slowly began to lose this. Other concerns began to distract me from that one thing that freed me - birding.

After I graduated from Wichita State I believed the only thing an English major could do was to go on for a masters degree and teach. I felt I was on a track that would lead me towards a career, white picket fence, etc. But after my first year as a graduate student and instructor, I knew that the outdoors was where my future was. So I found a job surveying birds in the Olympic Mountains of Washington. And while I was there I refound that passion for birds.

I've tried to put into words why I go birding and it always comes out differently than before. When I try to make it tangible I realize it is the intangible that feeds my love of birds. But the goal seems to be the same - I want to find and observe birds. I go birding because I am amazed by birds. And that is where my big year came from.

The year begins --

After returning to Kansas in the fall of 1999 I was energized and ready to start birding in Kansas again. It had been a couple years since I had birded with regularity in Kansas. I also wanted to go places I had never been such as Cherokee, Linn and Comanche Counties. I didn't know my state and I wanted to learn. I

knew that seeing 300 species in Kansas in one year was a good accomplishment and meant visiting much of the state so I decided that was a good goal for the year 2000. I had heard that Mike Rader had set the record a couple years ago at 339 species. Since my Kansas life list was only one over his big year list I figured the record was out of reach. But January 1st rolled around with no Y2K disaster and so did the birds. My first bird of my big year was a Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco flitting away with his outer tail feathers shining in the morning light. It was a quiet start to a very long and sometimes frantic year.

A birding game --

Even though I never really thought I could break the record I started to ask questions like, "how many species would I need by February 1st or June 1st?", and, "where would I need to look for Fish Crow and Scarlet Tanager?" So I started gathering information from friends and just the act of planning excited me. It quickly became a kind of game. And as the year went on it waned between game, obsession, and frivolity. But in retrospect, the actual counting, the placing of a number on bird species is a game and can't be much more.

Back to school --

But in the middle of winter in Sedgwick County the game turned to work and the reality was - brave the cold and wind and scan flocks of gulls and waterfowl and hope for something interesting. So this was when my learning began. I had never had the discipline to scan and rescan gulls, because I didn't want to do the work to learn what to look for. I would usually just scan and hope something obvious would pop out, but I realized that was defeating the purpose of birding. I wanted to learn about birds, not just stop, see some obvious rarity and then move on, so I started to study. I bought P.J Grant's, Gulls: A Guide to Identification and went to work. My first "rare" gull was a Lesser Black-backed Gull, but since it was an adult it stuck out like a sore thumb. My first real challenge was an immature Iceland Gull. My gull guide came in handy along with an hour of watching it and taking notes. It felt good to really learn a bird. But then about two weeks later I had a relapse into lazy birding when I saw a small all white gull and automatically called it an Iceland and even sat

- - Continued next page

- - *Chet's Big Year*

there videotaping it. It wasn't until I got home and watched the tape that I really looked at the bird and an Iceland Gull it wasn't. It was clearly a small Glaucous Gull. Later on I saw both the small Glaucous and the Iceland together. My first of many lessons not to get lax on identification. No matter how much you think you know it is never good enough unless you truly LOOK at the bird and SEE its diagnostic points.

Spring has sprung--

As winter went on I didn't feel like I was seeing a lot of species, but my list kept rising and by the end of February I had seen 141 species. But I yearned for spring birding. I wanted warblers and flycatchers and vireos and greens and yellows and blues and warmth. I had never been so keyed up for spring in my life. But when you are birding every single day spring can't sneak up on you. There was never a day I thought, "Wow, here it is!" So I just kept birding and gradually started to see new species filter in. I had always felt that Eastern Phoebes were the bearers of spring, but seeing one in February ended that idea. I think a Barn Swallow over the Elkhart Sewage Ponds on April 1st was my harbinger of spring this year, but it was probably every migrant I saw that made me glad it was spring and that I could see so many birds.

Birding car of the year --

In the beginning of 2000 my leased Saturn had 9,000 miles. This number rose exponentially. If there was an award for a birding vehicle of the year I think my car would win hands down. Some highlights would be driving around Brooks Landfill, results being two flat tires, driving the dreaded Liberal Sewage Lagoon road after a hard rain, which was touch and go and with my friend Matt Gearheart and I white-knuckling it all the way through. We somehow made it back to pavement. Tyler Hicks and I searching for Rufous-crowned

Sparrows in Comanche County and driving a cattle road that quickly became a thistle pasture, and then there is the total distance which came to over 40,000 miles. Not something I am exactly proud of. If there was anything that would have kept me from doing this it would be the fore knowledge of how many miles I would end up driving. Environmentally it is damaging and economically as well. Was it worth it? I can't really decide. But after a point I just couldn't stop. I was quickly caught up in it.

A bird in the hand --

There were two instances that tested my philosophy of birding or at least shaped it. During the joint OOS/KOS meeting in Black Mesa, Oklahoma, I had planned on staying in Kansas since I was in "big year mode." But I didn't plan well enough and missed going back to Kansas our second day there. The next day I of course found out a group of birders had found a first state record Flammulated Owl in Morton County! For some reason this totally devastated me. Of course I should be disappointed, but I just couldn't get over it. But slowly I came to realize that finding rarities isn't the only reason I go birding. The day the owl was seen I had seen a Golden Eagle perched on a telephone pole not 100 feet away! I had heard a Greater Roadrunner cooing and was that worse than finding a Flammulated Owl? I'm not saying if I could change things I wouldn't, but the idea is to watch birds and that was what I was doing. The Kansas boundary and the rarity of the bird are just particulars in the grand scheme of birding. I will always love seeing a rare bird, but if you saw every bird you looked for, they wouldn't seem as rare. So in the fall when I missed seeing a Juniper Titmouse (another first state record) in Morton county by about 2 seconds I was disappointed, but I realized it was just part of birding and not the most important.

- - *to be concluded in March 2001 issue*

- - *Book Review*

makes one dream about a trip to the Panhandle where thousands of acres of native prairie and grassland birds still remain. Sherman, Hansford, Ochiltree and Lipscomb counties of Texas are just a little over 34 miles south of Morton, Stevens, Seward and Meade counties of Kansas. Those Kansans interested in southern or central high plains ornithology and those listers making numerous vagrant quests to Morton County each year will want a copy of this book. You

will then be able to come to your own conclusions about the probability of finding an Acorn Woodpecker, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Cactus Wren, Verdin, Black-chinned Sparrow, Bronzed Cowbird, Hooded Oriole or Scotts Oriole in southwest Kansas.

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THE BIRD'S NEST



The kids page of the KOS newsletter

Number 17

focus on: Vultures



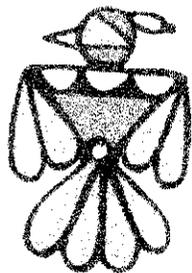
Gliding along on large wings the vulture watches for its next meal. It won't dive upon and attack its prey. It won't chase after it like a hawk or eagle will. No, the vulture is a *scavenger*. Its next meal is already dead. Vultures are the garbage men of the bird world. They eat *carrion*, the carcass of dead animals. This helps prevent the spread of disease among animals. Vultures are not the most lovable of birds. They aren't majestic like eagles. They're not as exciting as hawks and falcons. Yet they do lead a fascinating life.

There are three species of vulture in North America. The Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, and the nearly extinct California Condor. The new world vultures, those found in North and South America, are closely related to herons and storks. Their feet are weak and they cannot grasp prey like a raptor. They will approach their food carefully making sure it is dead. Then they will hop onto it before beginning to eat. Their wings are very large to provide lots of lift for flight. To lift from the ground vultures will spread their wing and hop a step or two flap slowly a few times and allow whatever wind there is to carry them aloft. Vultures can fly great distances without ever flapping their wings. This saves a lot of energy in case it is a long time between meals. Turkey Vultures can be seen lazily gliding with a gentle rocking motion on most days. They have a hooked bill for tearing that is not as strong as raptors have. Vultures also have a naked head. It is much easier to clean a naked head than a feathered head that has been in a dead animal.

New world vultures don't build nests. They find flat spots on the ground or in the hollow of a tree and lay eggs there. They usually *incubate* the eggs from five to seven weeks. The young are fed partially digested food which the parents *regurgitate*, or throw up. Young vultures remain in the nest for a long time. It can take a condor seven months before it can fly! After it leaves the nest a condor will continue to be fed by its parents for as long as a year!

As you watch for birds look for the vultures as the useful scavengers that they are and as another exciting part of nature!

did you know:



The word vulture comes from the Latin word *vultur* meaning tearer. Turkey Vultures were named because of their red head which resembles that of a turkey. Turkey vultures are also known as *buzzards*. Early colonists to this country thought they were the type of hawk they knew as buzzards from Europe.

Humans have made images of vultures as their gods for centuries. The Native American's *Thunderbird* honors the California Condor. King Tut of Egypt was buried with a necklace of the goddess Nekhbet, a griffon vulture, around his neck for protection.

feathered fun

WORD SCRAMBLE

can you unscramble the bird names in our puzzle to find the secret word?

The shaded boxes contain the letters to be used for the secret word

KTUYER
[] [shaded] [] [] [] []

CNOAFL
[] [] [shaded] [] [] []

AIRCTDB
[] [] [shaded] [] [shaded] [] []

ODEV
[] [] [shaded] []

UCNJO
[] [shaded] [] [] []

SECRET WORD
[] [] [] [] [] [] [] []



Two vultures were sick and tired of flying south on their own power year after year. So they decided to take an airplane instead. They saved up their money and headed for the airport. Since they had heard about airline food, on the way they each found a squashed rabbit in the road, and put in a bag around their neck to bring along. They bought their tickets and arranged for a window seat on the plane. Then the hostess asked if she could check their bags? They looked at the bags and said "No thanks, this is carrion!"



You can learn more about Vultures at your school or public library with books like these:

Vultures by Mark J. Rauzon
A Franklin Watts Book About Birds.
published 1997.

or

Vultures by Lynn M. Stone
A Carolrhoda Nature Watch Book
Published 1993

Where do you go to watch birds?

What's your favorite summer bird?

Do you have a question,
joke, or comment about
The Bird's Nest?

If so you can write to:

Mark Land
8447 Lamar
Overland Park, Kansas 66207



KOS Spring Meeting Registration Form

May 4 - May 6, 2001

I plan on attending the KOS Spring Meeting on the following days:

- Friday night, May 4, Riverside Park, Independence
- Saturday Field Trips, meet in Dillon's parking lot at 6 AM
- Sunday morning field trips and noon compilation

There is no registration fee for this trip, because all participants are responsible for their own meals and lodging.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number _____ E-mail address _____

Please return completed form to:

Edwin Miller
218 Bermuda Drive
Independence, KS 67301-1816

Or by e-mail to:

Ejm916@yahoo.com

Phone inquiries may be made by calling Ed at 620-331-6295

RELEASE

Please read and sign. This release must be signed before the registration can be accepted.

Each registrant named, both adult and minor, desires to participate in the field trips and other activities at this meeting of the Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS). Therefore, each registrant knowingly and voluntarily grants to the KOS and their officers, committee members, and any other persons engaged in activities in connection with this meeting, a full release from any claim, liability, or cost of any nature on account of personal illness or bodily injury, loss of life, or loss or damage to property directly or indirectly arising out of the registrants participation in this meeting.

Name (print) _____ Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Signature _____

Date _____ Date _____

(attach additional names and signatures as necessary)