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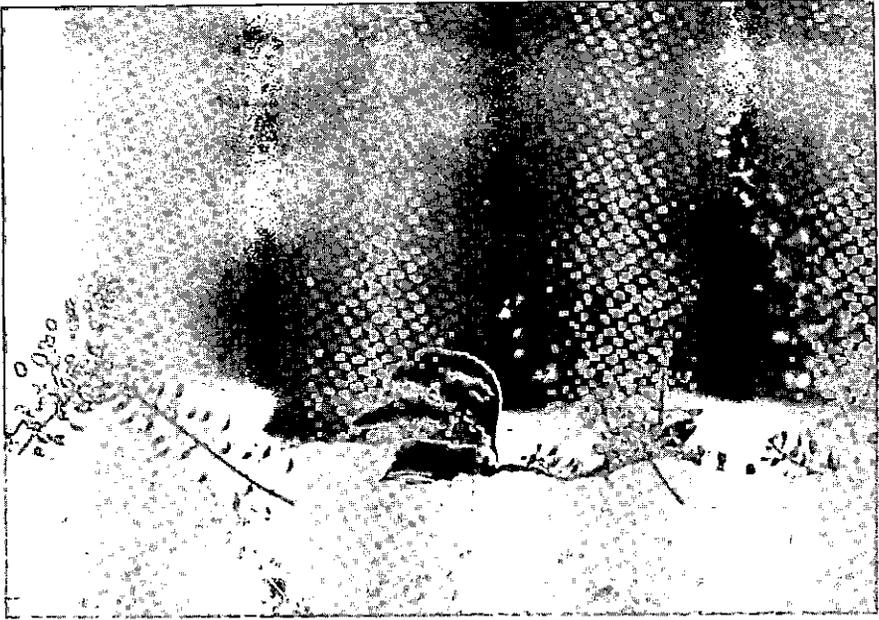
The Kentucky Warbler

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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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THE COVER

We thank Philippe Roca for our cover photograph of this chilly incubating Killdeer taken in April.

THE MIGRATION PATTERNS OF SELECTED EMBERIZIDS AND FRINGILLIDS IN CENTRAL KENTUCKY

GARY RITCHISON

INTRODUCTION

A variety of methods have been used to study the migration of birds, e.g., radar, radiotelemetry, and ceilometers. However, most studies of bird migration involve field work with no more equipment than a pair of binoculars. Much of what is known about the seasonal timing of bird migration in North America and in Kentucky comes from such studies. Much, however, remains to be learned. For example, although early or late migration dates may be known, the time of peak migration or the length of time that individuals remain in an area may not be known. Such information is more difficult to collect because some method is needed to determine relative numbers or to identify individuals. The objective of the present study was to use mist nets to collect information concerning the timing and extent of migration of several emberizids and fringillids in Madison County, Kentucky. Specifically, the objective was to examine the extent and timing of migration of the Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*), Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*), Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), White-crowned Sparrow (*Z. leucophrys*), Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*), Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*), and House Finch (*C. mexicanus*).

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study was undertaken from 1 January 1983 through 10 March 1985 at the Central Kentucky Wildlife Management Area, located 17 km SSE of Richmond, Madison Co., Kentucky. The area is characterized by low rolling hills and consists of old fields and corn fields interspersed with woodlots of varying sizes and with tree-lined streams. Common plant species in the old fields included meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*), foxtail (*Setaria* spp.), Japanese brome grass (*Bromus japonicus*), daisy fleabane (*Erigeron strigosus*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), and goldenrod (*Solidago altissima*). Wooded areas included eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginianus*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), honey locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*), hickory species (*Carya* spp.) oak species (*Quercus* spp.), red-bud (*Cercis canadensis*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*). About 10--15 percent of the area consisted of corn fields.

Birds were captured in mist nets (2.1 m x 9.2 m) placed in narrow rows (10-20 m wide) of woody vegetation adjacent to old fields or corn fields. Four feeding stations containing sunflower seeds were maintained in the study area from 1 September 1983 through 31 March 1984 and from 1 September 1984 through 10 March 1985 and nets were sometimes placed near these stations. Three or four nets generally were set up each day and each net was checked at least once per hour. Most mist netting occurred between 0700 and 1200 h. One mist net set up for one hour resulted in one "net hour." The mean number of net hours per day during the study was approximately 12 and, therefore, 12 "net hours" equalled one "net day." Although mist netting continued through the summer (June and July), birds captured during this period were assumed to be residents and,

therefore, were not included in the analysis. All captured birds were fitted with U.S. Fish-and-Wildlife Service aluminum bands.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the study period, mist nets were set up on 352 days, for a total of more than 4200 net hours. More than 2700 individuals representing over 60 species were captured during this period. As noted in the introduction, banding results for eight of these species will be examined. A total of 1240 individuals of these eight species was captured, with Song Sparrows being captured most frequently (276 individuals).

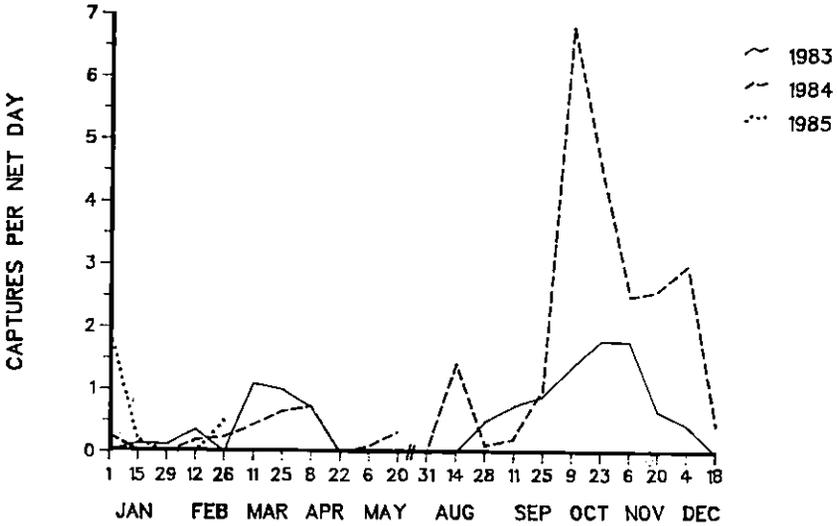
Mengel (1965) considered the Field Sparrow to be a common resident in Kentucky, although less numerous in the winter. Banding data reveals that these sparrows occurred in the study area throughout the year, with fewer captures from mid-January through February (Fig. 1). Fall migration appeared to be rather extended with many individuals captured between early October and mid-December. Small peaks were noted from mid-March through mid-April in both years of the study (Fig. 1). These dates generally coincide with those noted by Monroe (1976), who suggested that Field Sparrows are most abundant in the Louisville region from early March through mid-November. Very few individuals were captured after mid-April (Fig. 1), suggesting the end of the spring migration and the establishment of breeding territories by resident individuals.

Banding results for Song Sparrows were very similar to those for Field Sparrows (Fig. 1). Song Sparrows are also residents in the study area, however, as with Field Sparrows, there was an obvious influx of migrants in early October of both years (Fig. 1). Mengel (1965) also noted that few migrants pass through Kentucky prior to the first or second week of October. Unlike Field Sparrows, Song Sparrows continued to be captured throughout the fall and winter (Fig. 1). Mengel (1965) noted that while Song Sparrows may become a little less numerous in Kentucky during the winter, they are still common.

White-throated Sparrows are winter residents in Kentucky, with greater numbers found in western Kentucky than in other parts of the state (Mengel 1965). These sparrows first appeared in the study area in late September, with the number of migrants peaking in mid- to late-October (Fig. 2). Alsop (1970) reported an early date of 14 October in Hancock County while Wilson (1969) noted an early arrival date of 10 September (1964) in Barren County. Monroe (1976) reported three early sightings in the Louisville region: 2 August (1962), 31 August (1955), and 8 September (1964).

Although most White-throated Sparrows appeared to be transients, many apparently spent the winter in the study area. I captured 202 White-throated Sparrows during the study and 49 of these birds were subsequently recaptured. The mean length of time between the date of first capture and the date of the last recapture was 48 days (range: 2-126 days). Examination of the recapture data reveals a bimodal distribution (Fig. 3a), suggesting that while most birds were transients others probably overwintered in the study area. Further, some birds may have overwintered in or at least migrated through the study area in successive years, as one individual was captured during both winters (5 March 1983 and 28 November 1983). Although White-throated Sparrows were last captured in the study area in early March, previous reports indicate that individuals may remain in Kentucky much longer. Alsop (1970) noted a late date of 2 May (1965) in Hancock County while Monroe (1969) reported a sighting on 2 June.

FIELD SPARROW



SONG SPARROW

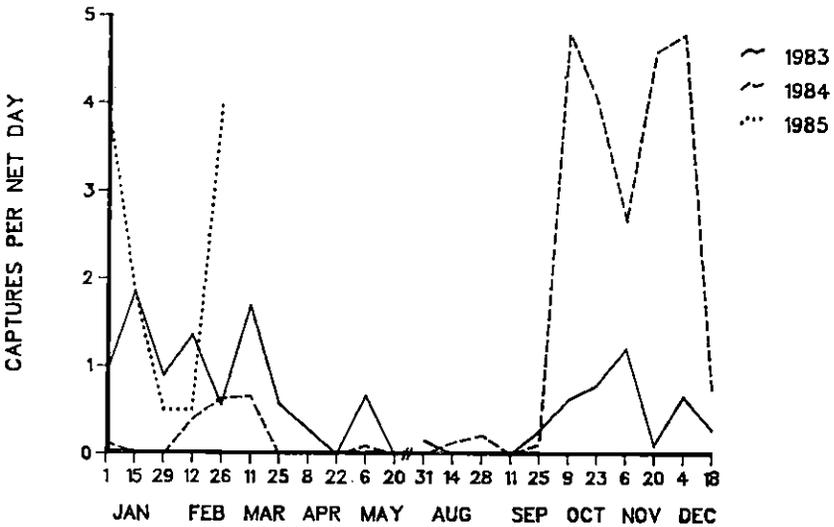
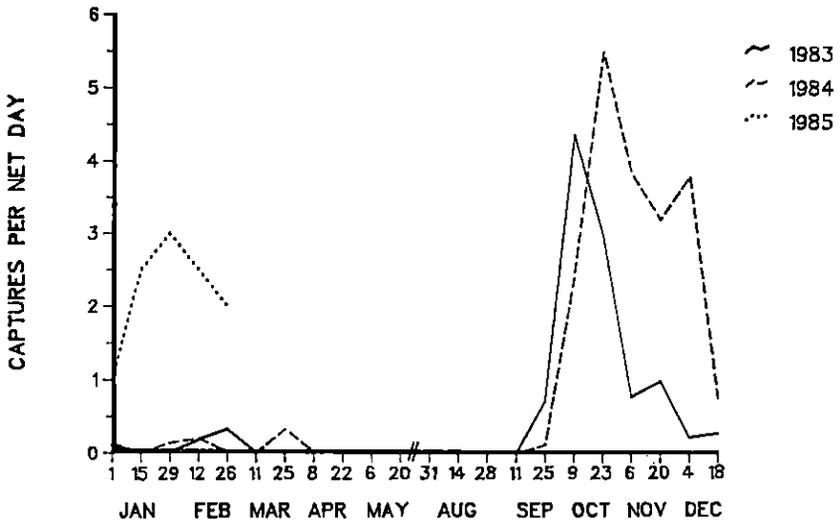


Figure 1 Number of new individuals captured per net day for the Field Sparrow and Song Sparrow (values are averages for 14 day periods beginning on the dates indicated).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW



DARK-EYED JUNCO

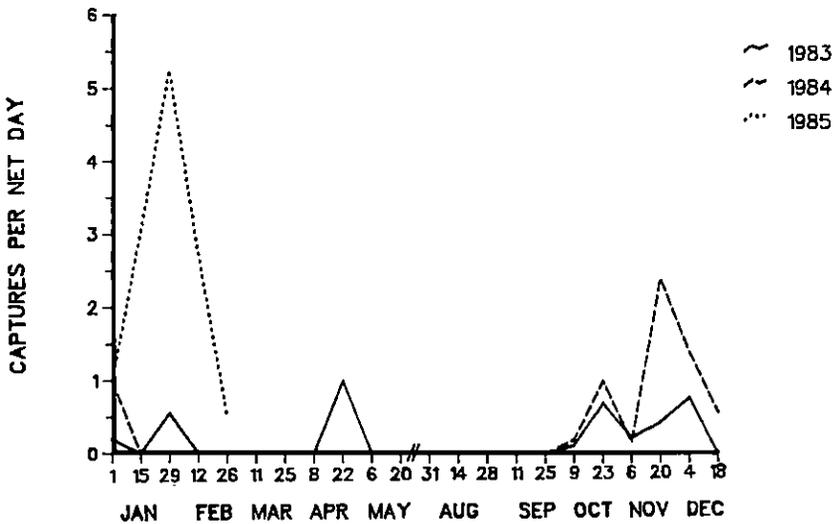


Figure 2. Number of new individuals captured per net day for the White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco (values determined as in Figure 1).

The Dark-eyed Junco is a common to abundant transient and winter resident throughout Kentucky and a common summer resident on Black Mountain in Harlan County (Mengel 1965). Juncos were first captured in the study area in mid-October and last captured in mid-February (1984) or early March (1985) (Fig. 2). Alsop (1970) reported an early arrival date of 17 October (1964) and a late departure date of 8 April (1965) in Hancock County. Monroe (1976) noted early and late dates of 27 September (1955) and 25 May (1963), respectively, in the Louisville area. Stamm (1985a) reported the arrival of single juncos in the Louisville area on 26 September (1984). Mengel (1965) suggested that although a few juncos may arrive in late September, they are not common until early November. In the spring, Mengel observed that a decline in numbers is evident by March.

Seventeen of 119 banded juncos were subsequently recaptured. The mean length of time between the initial capture and the last recapture was 27 days (range: 1-88 days). As with White-throated Sparrows, examination of the recapture data reveals a bimodal distribution (Fig. 3b). However, it appeared that few individuals remained in the study area for long periods of time, only 3 birds were recaptured more than 29 days after the initial capture. One individual was captured in both winters of the study (7 February 1983 and 5 December 1984), indicating that individuals may overwinter in or migrate through the same areas in successive years.

Purple Finches are uncommon to common transients and winter residents in Kentucky (Mengel 1965). These finches were first captured in the study area in mid-November and last captured in the study area in mid-February in 1983 and in mid-March in 1984 (Fig. 4). A total of 127 of these finches was captured during the study and the longest period between an initial capture and subsequent recapture was two days, suggesting that individuals did not remain in the study area for long periods. Mengel (1965) also observed that Purple Finches are somewhat erratic in numbers and movements. Observations in recent years reveal the erratic behavior of these finches in Kentucky. In the fall of 1985, most observations of Purple Finches were made in November (Stamm 1986). In the fall of 1984, Stamm (1985a) reported that some observers had not seen any of these finches by the end of November, however, an influx was noted from mid-January through February of 1985 (Stamm 1985b). In the fall of 1983, Purple Finches were absent in some areas and low in numbers elsewhere (Stamm 1984a). An influx was finally noted in mid-January 1984 (Stamm 1984b), while another was noted from 28 April through 1 May 1984 in central and northern Kentucky (Stamm 1984c). Bent (1968:274) also commented on the erratic migrations of Purple Finches, referring to their migration as "somewhat erratic and irregular, varying in direction and extent."

Only 17 Fox Sparrows were captured in the study area. The earliest date of capture in the fall was 4 November (1983) while the latest capture date in the spring was 7 April (1984). It appeared that few Fox Sparrows overwintered between 8 December and 18 February. Most Fox Sparrows were captured between 4 November and 8 December (5 individuals) and between 18 February and 20 March (9 individuals). Mengel (1965) noted that Fox Sparrows are occasionally observed in mid-to-late October but are more common in November. He further noted that this species is rarely recorded after mid-April.

Although Mengel (1965) classified the White-crowned Sparrow as a fairly common to common winter resident, only 17 individuals were captured in the present study. Three of these were captured in mid-October

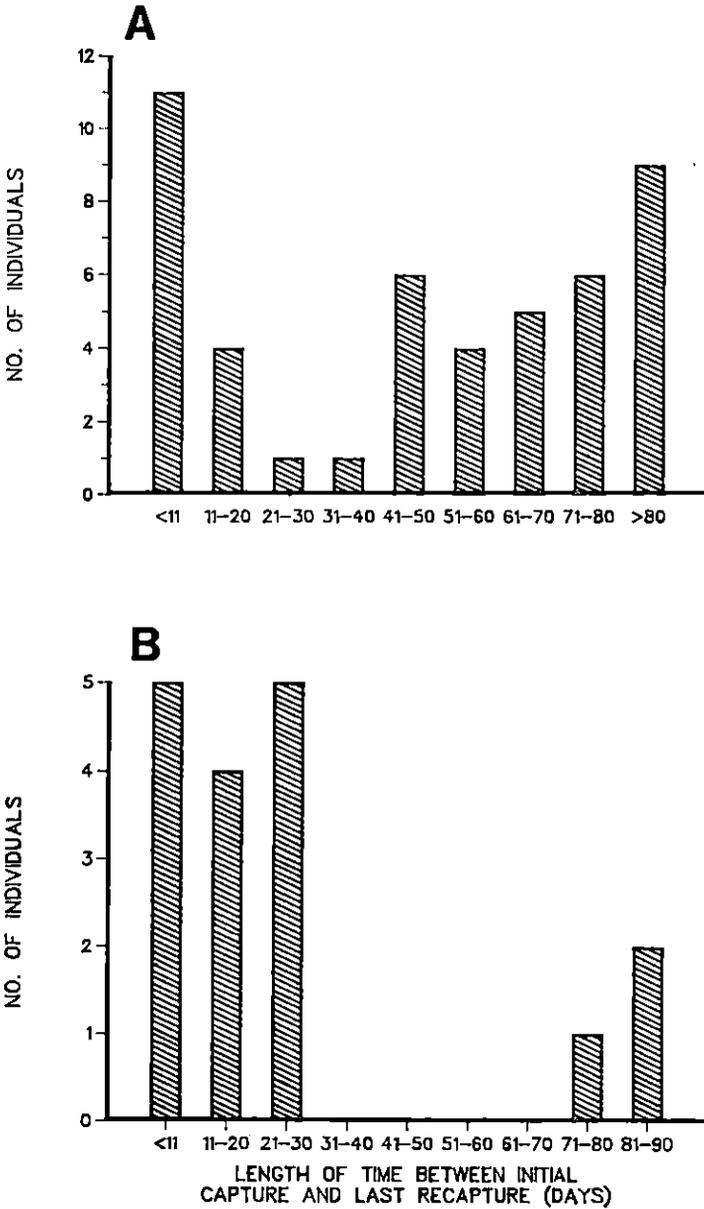
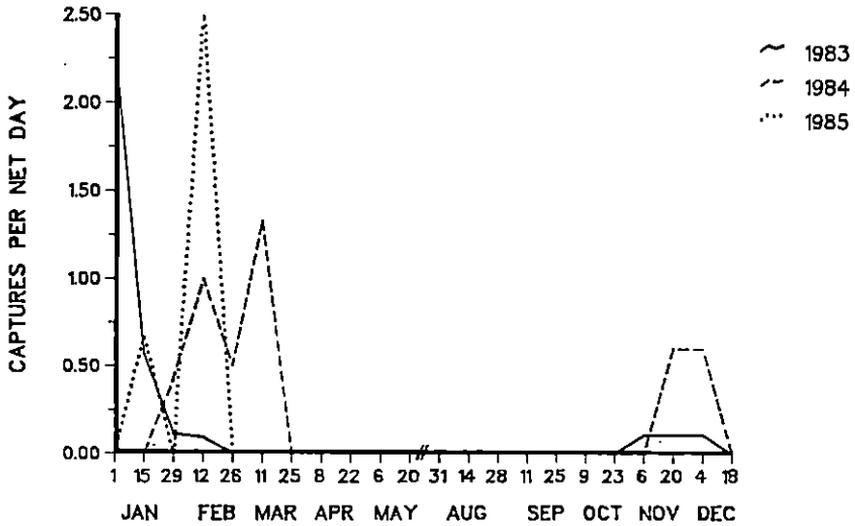


Figure 3. Number of individuals recaptured during various intervals of time after the initial capture date. (A) White-throated Sparrow and (B) Dark-eyed Junco.

PURPLE FINCH



HOUSE FINCH

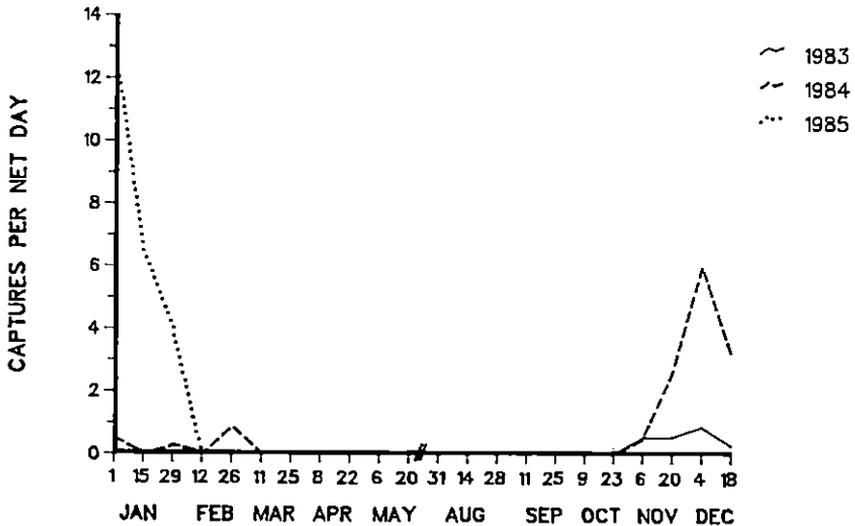


Figure 4. Number of new individuals captured per net day for the Purple Finch and House Finch (values determined as in Figure 1).

(19 October 1983, 17 and 20 October 1984) and the rest were captured between 5 January and 9 March. Mengel (1965) reported that White-crowned Sparrows usually arrive in Kentucky by mid-October and depart by early May.

Seven of the 17 White-crowned Sparrows were subsequently recaptured. Two of these individuals were first captured on the same date in 1983 (18 February) and then recaptured on the same date in 1985 (3 February). This suggests that some White-crowned Sparrows either overwinter in or migrate through the same areas in successive years. The mean length of time between initial capture and subsequent recapture for the other 5 birds was 23 days (range: 13-39 days).

The first sighting of a House Finch in Kentucky was on 16 February 1977 (Stamm 1978). Numbers have continued to increase since then, and House Finches now breed in some areas of the state (Stamm 1984, Jackson and Jackson 1986). House Finches were first captured in the study area in mid-November and last captured in early March (Fig. 4). More House Finches were captured during the second winter of the study (1984-1985), perhaps reflecting the increasing numbers of this species in Kentucky and throughout the eastern United States. A total of 182 House Finches was captured in the study area and only 6 individuals were recaptured in the same area. One individual was captured in successive winters (3 March 1984 and 17 December 1984), suggesting that some House Finches may overwinter in or at least visit the same areas in successive years. The mean length of time between the initial capture and last recapture for the other five birds was 23 days (range: 8-49 days). The low number of recaptures suggests that most of the House Finches were transients. In further support of this conclusion, one individual that was initially captured at the study area on 18 January 1985 was subsequently recaptured 9 days later in a trap at my home, about 13 km north of the study area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Kathy Williams, Keith Krantz, Bill Lynch, Jim Castle, Chris Kellner, and Tammy Ritchison for assistance in the field. This research was supported in part by funds from Eastern Kentucky University.

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- Department of Biological Sciences, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY 40475.

THE WINTER SEASON, 1986-87

ANNE L. STAMM

Winter temperatures during December, January and February were relatively mild throughout the state. The coldest weather occurred January 24-27, with some light snow. Covington hit a low of zero January 24 and the temperature in Louisville dipped to nine degrees on January 27. A sleet storm across the state on February 16-17 made it difficult for ground-feeding birds for several days. Some light snow followed the storm, but by the end of the month the temperature was up to 56 degrees in the Louisville area. Precipitation was below normal for the period.

Waterfowl was scarce in some areas, perhaps due to the mild winter. The wild food crop was unusually poor and Robins, Cedar Waxwings, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers and Purple Finches were in lower numbers than usual.

A few species remained beyond normal departure dates and were reported on the CBCs (See *Ky. Warbler*, 63:13, 1987). A Long-eared Owl was found in Grant County. Other rare and unusual species included the following: Pomarine Jaeger, Laughing Gull, Thayer's Gull, Brewer's Blackbird and Black-throated Gray Warbler.

Abbreviations — BWMA = Ballard Waterfowl Management Area in Ballard County; BBC = Beckham Bird Club; CBC = Christmas Bird Count; LBL = Land Between the Lakes.

Loons through Storks — Few Common Loons lingered in December: one at Lake Pewee on December 5 (JH); ten at LBL on December 20 (CBC); one in Calloway County on January 3. Pied-billed Grebes were widespread in late December, but in small numbers except for the 75 that lingered at Lake Pewee until January 11 (BPB, C. Justis) and the 30 at an inlet of Kentucky Lake, February 1 (LR). A single Double-crested Cormorant was present at Shippingport Island, December 13 (DN, BBC); and two there on December 21 (S, DS, FS). Great Blue Herons were widespread during December with a count of 46 at Clark Fish Hatchery, December 18 (BA); common at Jonathan Creek (CP); seven at Dix Dam in early February constituted "an unprecedented concentration" in that area (W. Kemper *vide* FL). A Wood Stork, a rare vagrant in Kentucky, was observed in Hopson Bay on Lake Barkley on November 11-16 (LS, RR); two on November 28 (BT) where they were seen on various dates until January 2 (LS).

Waterfowl—Two migrant Tundra Swans continued into early December at BWMA (CW) and two at Honker Bay, February 1 (*vide* ER). Geese were in lower numbers than in recent years. Wintering Snow Geese totaled 9,000 at BWMA in December and February (CW). Three adult Ross' Geese and an immature mingled with the Snow Geese, December 7 at BWMA (BPB, J. Robinson), but six were there during the period (CW). Last year the Canada Geese peaked at 62,000 at BWMA, but this year peak numbers totaled 31,600 to 39,000 (CW). Wintering ducks also seemed to be greatly reduced in numbers. Only 5,000 ducks were present in January at BWMA (CW). Some 150 Mallards had returned to the Mayfair Basins at Louisville on February 21-23 (JK). There were 105 Gadwall at Dozier Lake on January 18 (JH) and 75 at Lake Pewee, December 5 (BPB). Canvasbacks were scarce in late December, but numbers increased in January and February. Highest counts included 55 at lake Pewee, January 3 (JH) and 475+ above Barkley Dam on February 22 (BPB). Redheads were in low numbers, but 125 were at Barkley Dam, February 25 (BPB), while 400 Ring-necked Ducks were at Lake Pewee, January 14 (JH). As usual, a few Greater Scaup were present at Louisville during the period (BPB). Two Oldsquaws were reported: one at Jacobson Park, Lexington and one at Cave Run Lake the week of February 21 (JW). A White-winged Scoter was observed at Dix Dam, February 1 (Wm. Kemper *vide* FL) and three at Smithland Dam, February 22 (BPB). American Goldeneye were reported in low numbers except for the 350 on northern Lake Barkley, February 1 (BPB, D. Ebel). An interesting record was that of the 40 Bufflehead at Clark Fish Hatchery, December 18 (BA). Common and Red-breasted Mergansers were present in very low numbers, but 100 Hooded Mergansers were seen at Lake Pewee on December 5 (BPB), 36 there on January 6 (JH) and 75 on January 11 (BPB).

Hawks — Migrant Turkey Vultures had returned to Lake Cumberland State Park, Russell County by February 7 where 17 were counted (JEL). Two Ospreys were seen during the period at BWMA (CW—no date given). Wintering Bald Eagles were found in good numbers: more were seen during December and January at LBL than in previous years (ER); some 28 sighted at BWMA (CW). Others reported included one up river from West Point, January 1 (LR); one at Otter Creek and one at West Point, January 9 (S, DS, FS); one north of Warsaw, Gallatin County, January 10 (LMc) and one near Harrods Creek, Oldham County (T. Love). The state total number of Bald Eagles on the January survey was 195 (JD). The pair of Bald Eagles continued to be active at the nest at BWMA (previously reported) and incubation appeared to be in progress (CW). Northern Harriers were in lower numbers than last winter as were Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was observed eating a small bird in the back yard of a Louisville resident, February 20 (BS). Red-shouldered Hawks seemed to be doing better than four years ago. Small numbers of Rough-legged Hawks were observed occasionally. A Golden Eagle was spotted at BWMA, January 9 (*vide* CW). American Kestrels were in good numbers, especially in Grayson County (KC). A Peregrine Falcon was reported in Hart County, January 9 (SK — no details).

Wild Turkeys through Shorebirds — Wild Turkeys were observed in Breckinridge County (KC). American Coots remained later than usual: a total of 459 on the LBL December 20 CBC, 332 at Lake Pewee, December 29 and 395 there on January 14 (JH). The 25 American Coots on the

Mayfair Basins February 21-23 were probably early migrants (JK). Sandhill Cranes were still migrating over Louisville in December: a flock of 160 on December 10 (KC); a flock of 100 on December 11 (R. Monroe *vide* BM); a pair on the Fayette/Clark County line, December 18 (BA) and four early migrants appeared at BWMA in late February and were still present on March 4 (CW). The flight song of the American Woodcock was first heard at Madisonville, February 20 (JH), at Louisville, February 22 (BPB), east of Leitchfield, February 23 (DN) and at Eubank, February 27 (JEL), all much later than usual.

Jaeger through Gulls — A jaeger was discovered at Kentucky Dam by Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. on February 22 who put it out on a "bird alert". There was some difference of opinion by several critical observers as to which jaeger species was present. Photographs taken on February 25 by Palmer-Ball "are equivocal", but his slides taken on March 4 "clearly and definitively identify the bird as a Pomarine", according to Bruce Peterjohn, regional editor, Middlewestern Prairie Region, *American Birds*. Thus Kentucky will have its first record of a photographically verified Pomarine Jaeger. Slides taken by Doxie Noonan on March 1 are still under review. There was some uncertainty as to whether there was more than one jaeger involved during the period February 22 through March 24. Jaegers are known to be difficult to identify as to species and the writer believes that judicious collecting of specimens is desirable. Quite unusual was the winter record of an adult Laughing Gull at Kentucky Dam, February 1 (BPB, LR, D. Ebel); another, or possibly the same bird on February 22 at Barkley Dam (BPB) and below Kentucky Dam on February 23 (DN), 25 (BPB, LR, KC) and 26 (CP). Fair numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls were present in late December (CP); a few above Kentucky Dam, February 22 (BPB). Ring-billed Gulls were more numerous this winter than for the past two years. They peaked at 12,000 at Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake, February 1 (BPB); about 100 to 150 at the Falls of the Ohio, most of the winter, but 600 there on February 21 (BPB). The flock of 132 in a pasture along Highway 55, one mile from the entrance to Green River Lake on February 22 was of interest (LR). Herring Gulls were present, but in very small numbers, with the exception of the 500-1,000 at Kentucky Dam, February 1 (BPB). Also, on the same date and place an adult and two first-year Thayer's Gulls were present (BPB, LR, D. Ebel) and on February 23 a first-winter bird was there (DN).

Owls through Creepers — An injured Long-eared Owl was found alongside a road near Williamstown, Grant County on February 6 (KCa). The bird is currently undergoing rehabilitation by Raptor Incorporated in Cincinnati, Ohio. Eastern Phoebes lingered into December at several locations, and three had returned to Greenbo Lake State Park by February 14 (BA). Horned Larks were down in numbers compared with last year, but 100 were seen in Breckinridge County, February 2 (KC). An American Crow roost of "several thousand" was observed at the mouth of Green River at the junction of Daviess and Henderson Counties (RI); an estimated 5,000 in Henderson County on January 11 were probably associated with this roost (BPB). Wintering Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread in small numbers except for the 30 at Otter Creek and 110 at Bernheim Forest CBCs. Good numbers of Brown Creepers were observed in the Louisville area by Robert Brown.

Wrens through Shrikes — The Carolina Wren population was much improved over last year (m. ob.). A Bewick's Wren was reported in the

Falls of Rough area all during the winter months (U. Byrd *vide* KC). The House Wren at the Mayfair Basins on February 8 was unexpected (BBC). Golden-crowned Kinglets were widespread in late December and in good numbers, while Ruby-crowned Kinglets were down from last year. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet fed almost every day at a Danville feeder during February (FL) and one was seen in the Lexington cemetery on January 9 (BPB). The Eastern Bluebird population was slightly less than last year. Hermit Thrushes were scarce and American Robins were in lower numbers this winter, both of which may have been due to the shortage of wild fruits. Mockingbirds seemed to be "down" in the Danville area (FL) and slightly down in numbers all across the state (m. ob.). Scattered Brown Thrashers lingered into the CBC period but were not reported later except for one at Madisonville, January 27-28 (JH). Cedar Waxwings were in small numbers the early part of the season, but an influx of 245-250 appeared at Kentucky Dam on February 22 and remained until March 3 (CP). Loggerhead Shrikes appeared to be up slightly over last winter (m. ob.).

Warblers through Grosbeaks — The Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler population was much below that of normal winters. The Black-throated Gray Warbler reported last season was still present in the Lexington Cemetery on January 14 (DS, S, FS). A Palm Warbler lingered until December 7 in the Danville area (FL). Tree Sparrows were scarce in most locations, but were fairly common in Boone County during December and January (LMc). A Chipping Sparrow was reported at the Lexington Cemetery in early December and again on January 24 (BPB). Numbers of White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows were down from last year. Lapland Longspurs were scarce with a few singles reported in early December including one at BWMA, December 6 (BPB) and two in Breckinridge County, February 2 (KC). A flock of 10-20,000 Red-winged Blackbirds was noted in the bottoms of Newburgh Dam, Henderson County on January 11 (BPB, C. Justis). Good numbers of Rusty Blackbirds were present in the Danville area, but no Brewer's were seen since the three on the CBC, December 20 (FL). Winter finches were in low numbers in some sections of the state. No Purple Finches were seen in Daviess and McLean Counties (RI), scarce at Madisonville (JH), Louisville (S), and very low at Danville (FL), but 75 to 100 fed in late February at Big Pond Sanctuary, Grayson County (KC). House Finches continued to increase in numbers with highest counts at Science Hill, Pulaski County where 200+ were seen on February 10 (JEl). Pine Siskins and American Goldfinches were in lower numbers than in some recent years. Evening Grosbeaks were present in small numbers (1 to 10) in locations in the following counties: Marshall, Calloway, Trigg (CP), McLean (RI), Hart (SK), Grayson (KC), Jefferson (S), Monroe (RS), and Boyle (FL), but 70-80 frequented feeders in a suburban section of Murray from mid-January to February 27 (WB).

Correction — The record of a Short-eared Owl at SWMA on October 9, 1986 (Ky. War. 63:10, 1987) should be October 19.

Contributors — Brad Andres (BA), Wally Brines (WB), Robert Brown (RB), Kathy Caminiti (KCa), Kathryn Clay (KC), Jim Durell (JD), Jackie Elmore (JEl), James W. Hancock (JH), Ramon Iles (RI), Steve Kistler (SK), John Krull (JK), Frederick W. Loetscher (FL), Tim Love (TL), Burt L. Monroe, Jr. (BM), Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. (BPB), Clell Peterson (CP), Lene Rauth (LR), Ed Ray (ER), Russell Rogers (RR), Bernice Shannon (BS), Russell Starr (RS), Anne L. Stamm (S), F. W. Stamm

(FS), Louise Stokes (LS), Donald Summerfield (DS), Bill Thatch (BT), Jim Williams (JW), Charles Wilkins (CW).

— 9101 Spokane Way, Louisville 40222.

THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPRING MEETING April 24-26, 1987

The 64th annual spring meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society was held at Cumberland Falls State Park on April 24-26, 1987.

The Friday evening session was called to order by the president, Fred Busroe, who welcomed those present. The meeting was then turned over to vice-president Jim Williams, who outlined the following day's schedule of field trips and programs, and introduced the evening's speakers. Gary Ritchison opened the session with an interesting discussion on vocal behavior of Eastern Screech Owls. Lynda Andrews followed with an update on the status of Bald Eagle nests in western Kentucky. Robert Manns briefly highlighted his discussion of optics to be presented on Saturday afternoon. Blaine Ferrell and Jeff Jones presented slides and highlights of their recent Alaska trip, and Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. concluded the program with an update on the Kentucky Breeding Bird Atlas. A social hour followed the evening session.

Saturday morning field trips included a 6:00 A.M. walk around the lodge area, and 8:00 A.M. trip to Forest Service Road #4504 led by Fred Busroe, and an 8:00 A.M. trip along Trail #12, led by Bert Powell. The afternoon program began at 2:00 P.M. at the lodge and was led by Robert Manns, who provided an informative discussion on binoculars and spotting scopes. The Board of Directors met at 4:00 P.M.

The evening program began at 7:30 P.M. in the conference room of Dupont Lodge. Fred Busroe introduced the evening's speakers, Dr. Haven Wiley, who provided an in-depth program on the nature and characteristics of bird song, with emphasis on several warbler species. Following the program, note was made of a book sale for members to take place at the fall meeting, which will be held September 25-27 at Natural Bridge State Park. The 1988 spring meeting was tentatively set for Otter Creek Park on April 29-May 1. A request was made for interested parties who might consider conducting the annual audit of the KOS. Jim Williams led the group in compiling the day's bird list, which totalled 79 species.

A Sunday morning field trip was held at 8:30 A.M. Additional birds observed on Sunday brought the weekend total to 81 species. Total registrations for the spring meeting were 77.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lee McNeely
Recording Secretary

ATTENDANCE AT THE SPRING MEETING, 1987

Members and guests who registered totaled 77. Twenty-one cities in Kentucky, plus four other states were represented.

BEREA: Art and Tina Ricketts, Ralph and Patricia Thompson.

- BOWLING GREEN: Blaine and Priscilla Ferrell, Jeff Jones, W. B. and Ruth Mathes, Herbert E. and Jackie Shadowen.
- BURLINGTON: Lee and Lynda McNeely.
- BUCKHORN: Eileen Sandlin.
- CARLISLE: Wendell and Virginia Kingsolver.
- CHAVIES: Paulena Duff.
- FALLS OF THE ROUGH: Judith Williams.
- FRANKFORT: Lynda Andrews, Scott and Pat Hankla, Howard Jones.
- HAZARD: Dennis Sandlin, Donnie Spencer.
- JACKSON: Wanda Armstrong.
- LEITCHFIELD: Montelle and Alita Wilson.
- LEXINGTON: Marie Sutton, Andy and Mary Uterhart, Jim and Gerry Williams.
- LOUISVILLE: Patricia and Jane Bell, Robert K. Brown, Kathryn Clay, Arthur Figg, R. L. and Virginia Hectorne, Sue Henderson, Carol Hyatt, Don Jones, Judy Jones, Harriet A. Korfhage, Tim Love, Jeff and Carol Owens, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., F. W. and Anne Stamm, Donald Summerfield, Chester and Scottie Theiss.
- MACEO: Bert and Mildred Powell.
- MOREHEAD: Fred and Joanna Busroe.
- MURRAY: Clell Peterson.
- OWENSBORO: Lydia Greenwell, John Humphrey, L. E. and Elinor Wilson.
- PRINCETON: Robert and Emelene Roland.
- RICHMOND: Gary Ritchison.
- SCIENCE HILL: Jackie and Diane Elmore.
- STANLEY: Thomas and Anna Lee Stevenson.
- CARRBORO, NORTH CAROLINA: R. Haven and Minna Wiley.
- ATLANTA, GEORGIA: Robert and Didi Manns.
- KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE: Sylvia Britt, Ron and Audrey Hoff.
- PASADENA, CALIFORNIA: Violet Simpson.

BIRDS OBSERVED AT THE SPRING MEETING, 1987

Birds observed on Saturday field trips within a 15-mile diameter circle centered at Cumberland Falls State Resort Park include: Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Spotted Sandpiper, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Whip-poor-will, Chimney Swift, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downey Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, American Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, White-eyed Vireo, Solitary Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Golden-

winged Warbler, Northern Parula, Cape May Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rufous-sided Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeak and House Sparrow for a total of 79 species. Rock Dove, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Red-winged Blackbird and Eastern Meadowlark were seen outside the 15-mile diameter circle bringing Saturday's total to 84 species. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird and three Red-cockaded Woodpeckers observed by Bob Brown and party on Sunday brought the weekend total to 86 species.

FIELD NOTES

FIRST DOCUMENTED RECORD OF THE BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER IN KENTUCKY

On the afternoon of 28 November 1986, Andres discovered a Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) in the Lexington Cemetery, located just northwest of downtown Lexington, Fayette County. The bird was first detected when it alighted on a weeping beech at eye level. The yellow spot on the lores immediately confirmed its identity. The bird then flew off with a group of chickadees, titmice and other small passerines and was observed for several minutes foraging in the crown of a large oak. After the warbler disappeared with the flock, Andres alerted Palmer-Ball and other local birders.

Palmer-Ball joined Andres and Sarah McClellan at the cemetery approximately an hour and a half after the initial sighting. After nearly an hour of searching for the bird, it was relocated, still associating with the group of small passerines. The warbler was continually observed for an hour as it moved with the flock through most of the southern half of the cemetery. Although specific identity of the warbler was discernable, overcast skies prevented age and sex recognition.

The Black-throated Gray Warbler remained in the Lexington Cemetery throughout December and was last observed on 14 January 1987. During this time many birders were rewarded with excellent views of this rare visitor. Perhaps cold weather caused the exodus, or unfortunately, the demise of the warbler.

The most distinctive, although not most easily distinguishable, characteristic of the bird was the yellow spot on the lores. The gray crown was bordered by a white supercilium. Gray-black cheeks gave way to a white throat, which initially appeared darker under poor light conditions. Separating the white throat from the white breast and belly was a thin, necklace of gray streaks similar to that of a Cerulean Warbler. The sides and flanks were streaked with gray. The color of the back was medium gray suffused with a light wash of brown visible only at very close range. The wings were blackish with two obvious wingbars. The retrices were dark except for the outer pair or two which appeared entirely white forming a tail pattern like that of a junco. The crissum was white and the

legs were dark. The call-note was indistinguishable from that of a Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*). Based on the presence of a white throat and a wash of brown in the back, the bird was judged to be in first year plumage and probably a female.

While the bird was present in the cemetery, its foraging strategy was quite variable. During the first day of observation the warbler confined much of its activity to the upper levels of large deciduous and coniferous trees and was always in close proximity of the flock of small passerines. On subsequent visits, the bird was found with the large mixed-species flock that circulated through the cemetery or was found off by itself.

The bird was also observed foraging on the ground, in low shrubs and in small trees. In one instance, the warbler was studied in a crab-apple for forty minutes as it worked the tree in a slow vireo-like manner. Hovering behavior similar to that of kinglets was also noted.

Once the weather turned colder, the bird was most often found on or near the Henry Clay statue located near the entrance of the cemetery. It was repeatedly observed gleaning insects from the warm, vertical surfaces of the statue's stone pedicel.

This represents the first documented record for the Black-throated Gray Warbler in Kentucky. A previous spring record from Louisville was considered by Mengel (*The Birds of Kentucky* — 1965) to be hypothetical! Most records of stray Black-throated Gray Warblers in the eastern United States occur in late fall or winter.

— Brad Andres, Department of Zoology, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210 and Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., 8207 Old Westport Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40222.

ALBINISTIC RUSTY BLACKBIRD IN KENTUCKY

A spectacularly albinistic Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*) was found while sampling the dead bird population in a blackbird roost kill in Russellville, Logan County, Kentucky. The roost had been treated with PA-14 (a surfactant) on March 12, 1984 by the Kentucky Research Station, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The bird was found in one of the randomly-selected 0.9 m² sample plots used to estimate the size of the kill.

The head of the bird was almost completely white, whereas both the dorsal and ventral sides of the body were extensively dappled (see photograph). The wings were mainly black except for the 8th, 9th, and part of the 10th primaries on one wing and the 7th and 8th primaries on the other. These feathers were either partially or completely white. One of the rectrices also had considerable white in it. The specimen was identified as a male weighing 64.5 g with one wing chord measuring 117 mm and the other 114 mm (North American Bird Bander 1:25-27, 1976). This bird was one of 11 Rusty Blackbirds found among the 1685 blackbirds (*Icterinae*) and Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) counted on 33 plots. The specimen is now housed at the Western Kentucky University Biology Department in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

This is apparently the first albinistic Rusty Blackbird recorded in Kentucky. Allaire (Ky. Warbler 53:13-16, 1977) did not mention the species in his summary of Kentucky ornithological albinism cases, although

this aberration is not unknown in Rusty Blackbirds. (Bull. Nuttall Ornith. Club 4:27-30, 1879) records a "mottled" rusty from Detroit, Michigan, and Ross (Cassinia 47:2-21, 1963) mentions one museum specimen (U.S. National Museum) and two sight records of partially albino Rusty Blackbirds.

Although Gross (Bird-Banding 36:67-71, 1965) in his excellent summary of the incidence of albinism in North American birds did not mention Rusty Blackbirds *per se*, he numbered the family Icteridae (now subfamily Icterinae) among the 54% of the 93 North American bird families in which albinism had been recorded at that time. Of the 1847 individual albinism cases he compiled, Icterinae members comprised approximately 10% (188 individuals).

Several examples exist in the literature of relatively large percentages of individuals from isolated populations exhibiting varying degrees of albinism, presumably because the recessive gene for albinism was given a greater than usual opportunity for phenotypic display among inbred birds. Edson (The Auk 45: 377-378, 1928) recorded one such incident for Icterinae in Washington State where at least 40% of an estimated flock of 500 Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) exhibited substantial amounts of white. No such phenomenon was apparent among Rusty Blackbirds we examined in southcentral Kentucky in 1984. An additional 188 Rusty Blackbirds were found in sample plots following two other Russellville, Kentucky roost sprays in January and March 1984, but only the one bird mentioned here exhibited albinism.

— Allen R. Stickley, Jr., USDA/APHIS/Animal Damage Control Research, Kentucky Field Station, 334 15th Street, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101.



Albinistic Rusty Blackbird collected from a blackbird roost in Russellville, Logan County, Kentucky.

NEWS AND VIEWS

NORTHERN KENTUCKY BIRD CLUB ORGANIZES

The Northern Kentucky Bird Club, a local chapter of the Kentucky Ornithological Society, has been organized. Membership is concentrated, but not limited to, the northern tier counties of Boone, Kenton, Campbell and Grant. Activities currently include monthly field trips, spring and winter bird counts and the Kentucky Breeding Bird Atlas. A newsletter is published quarterly and dues are \$1.00 for individuals and \$2.00 for families. Monthly meetings are scheduled to begin in the fall of 1987. Anyone interested in joining or desiring more information may contact Lee McNeely, P.O. Box 463, Burlington, Kentucky 41005.

PURPLE MARTIN COLONY REGISTRY

The Colony Registry Program of the newly formed Purple Martin Conservation Association seeks the help of all persons in locating and registering Purple Martin colonies throughout all of North America in preparation for several projects designed to help this man-dependent species experiencing long-term declines within parts of its breeding range. If you know of someone who has a martin colony or is trying to attract one, or if you are interested in starting a colony yourself, please write to the P.M.C.A. You can further assist by looking for martin houses or gourds in peoples yards during your travels. If you locate some, please try to obtain the mailing addresses. The Purple Martin Conservation Association, P.O. Box 178, Edinboro, Pennsylvania 16412.

HELP NEEDED IN WARBLER SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to add to our knowledge of the location of occurrences of warblers in Kentucky and adjacent states and to assess annual changes in population numbers. My interest in this survey grows from the concern for habitat destruction in the wintering grounds of our warblers. Your participation in this survey should not require a lot of paper work or time. Simply, keep a tally of the number of warblers on a checklist that will be provided. If you are interested in participating, please write Aaron T. Trent, Route 6, Woodland Hills, Abington, Virginia 24210 for a checklist of warblers and an information sheet on breeding dates and habitat. Participants will receive a typed report of the year's results.