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The Kentucky Warbler

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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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THE COVER

We thank our staff artist, Ray Harm, for this excellent painting of a Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*).

IN MEMORIAM: BURT L. MONROE, JR.

I am very thankful that the Kentucky Ornithological Society paid tribute to Burt L. Monroe, Jr. personally and in *The Kentucky Warbler* (KW, 70:3-4). Too often we do not express our appreciation for a lifetime of service and friendship until it is too late to do so.

Despite his national and international acclaim as an ornithologist, Burt remained a devoted member of the Kentucky Ornithological Society for 50 years, inexhaustibly trying to make the K.O.S. a high quality organization and elevating the level of ornithology in the state. The void in international, national and Kentucky ornithology created by his absence will not be filled easily. However, I am sure Burt would be most pleased if his legacy of ornithological interest was carried on by a strong Kentucky Ornithological Society. We will remember him most, not as the consummate professional ornithologist, but as in the picture below; an avid birder, friend and advocate for ornithology.



Burt L. Monroe, Jr.

THE SPRING SEASON, 1994

ANNE L. STAMM

While this was a relatively cool spring with temperatures averaging below normal in the Louisville area for both March and May, but it was 3.6 degrees above normal in April. Precipitation also averaged below normal in Louisville in March and May. However, south of Bowling Green, precipitation was above normal. The transient lakes at Woodburn were unusually high in late February through most of May, thus making suitable habitat for waterfowl.

Ducks, with few exceptions, were in low numbers since many had already moved northward by early March. There were no reports of large hawk flights. Shorebird migration was fairly good in western Kentucky from Hickman south in Fulton County, from early March through April. Vireo migration was later than usual and warblers were noted particularly from April 17 to 30, but numbers were low. Frederick W. Loetscher wrote that "Most years we've had more transient warblers in 5 minutes than this entire season."

Rare to uncommon species of birds reported this spring included the following: Red-necked Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, American White Pelican, Upland Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, Swainson's Warbler, and Lark Sparrow.

A good number of nesting reports were included in the spring reports; these will be included in the nesting season summary. Apparently observers are giving more attention to this phase of bird study so that a more accurate evaluation may be made of the present status of the breeding birds of the state. Some changes in habitat during recent years have undoubtedly caused changes in bird populations.

Abbreviations: BCNP = Beargrass Creek Nature Preserve, Louisville, Jefferson County; BPS = Big Pond Sanctuary, Grayson County; BCNP = Boone Cliffs Nature Preserve, Boone County; Bur = Burlington, Boone County; CEL = Camp Ernst Lake, near Burlington, Boone County; CRL = Cave Run Lake, Rowan County; CL = Chaney Lake, Warren County; EBPP = East Bend Power Plant, Boone County; GPP = Ghent Power Plant, Boone County; Hick = Hickman, Fulton County; HWMA = Homestead Wildlife Management Area, Ohio County; LPew = Lake Pewee, Hopkins County; LCWMA = Lake Cumberland Wildlife Management Area, Pulaski County; LBL = Land Between the Lakes; Lin = Linville Lake, Rockcastle County; Lou = Louisville, Jefferson County; Mad = Madisonville, Hopkins County; MD = Markland Dam, Gallatin County; MCNP = Mammoth Cave National Park, Edmonson County; McE = McElroy Lake, Warren County; MCFH = Minor E. Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan County; NBSP = Natural Bridge State Park, Powell County; OFL = Owsley Fork Lake, Madison County; Pet = Petersburg, Boone County; PCP = Pulaski County Park; SHB = South Hickman Bottoms, Fulton County; SH = Science Hill, Pulaski County; SBC = Somerset Bird Club, Pulaski County; Chaney and McElroy Lakes are the transient lakes south of Bowling Green, Warren County.

COMMON LOON — No major movement noted, but one to four birds were present at eight locations from March 15-18.

PIED-BILLED GREBE — Three near Elizabethtown, Hardin County, March 1 (KC, JP); three at OFL, March 6 (AR, TR); six at SHB, April 1 (CP); and "common" at CL and McE last week of March and one still there on May 10 (WM).

HORNED GREBE — Three to four at CRL, March 4 and 18 (FB); 35+ at McE March 19 (JB, PB); 11 at the transient lakes, last week of March (WM); and two in breeding plumage at CRL, April 17 (FB).

RED-NECKED GREBE — One present at a gravel pit pond, south of Pet, March 12 (documentation submitted — LMc); five at OFL, March 6 (AR, TR) and three there, March 26 (SBC); these birds are extremely rare transients and winter visitants and as yet have not been approved by the Kentucky Bird Records Committee.

EARED GREBE — A pair at I-65, Three Springs Road marsh, south of Bowling Green, Warren County, March 4, but they remained only part of the day. Also, two observed sporadically for most of the last half of March, either at McE or at nearby Silver Springs Swamp/Marsh, but were gone by mid-April (WM).

WESTERN GREBE — At least four were reported at McE, March 27-April 2 (WM); these birds as yet have not been approved by the Kentucky Bird Records Committee.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN — A flock (± 100) "spent several weeks on the Tennessee River about one or two miles upstream from the union of the Tennessee and the Ohio Rivers." The birds often fed along the north bank in Livingston County, March 30-April 17, only one bird present April 13-17 (CP). This is the largest group to be reported in the state.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT — Migration was not as pronounced as last fall: 50 at LBL, April 17 (JB, PB); 70 at MD, May 6 (LMc); 35 roosting in trees along the Ohio River at the I-275 bridge, May 7 and 15, while 22 were on the Ohio River at Rabbit Hash, Boone County, May 7 (LMc); smaller numbers elsewhere.

GREAT BLUE HERON — Few reports submitted; "numerous and widely scattered" in western Kentucky (CP); six in Daviess County, March 12 and 13 (M. Brown *vide* AP); and two at LPew, March 4 (JH).

GREAT EGRET — Two at CEL, April 3, singles at three locations in Boone County, April 9 (LMc); "numerous" in western Kentucky (no date CP); two at the Army Depot, Madison County, April 19 (WD); and one at CL, May 23 (WM).

SNOWY EGRET — One report: five at SHB (several locations, no date — CP).

LITTLE BLUE HERON — A group at SHB, April 23 (CP) and one at Sledd Creek embankment, Kentucky Lake, Marshall County, May 18 (MMi).

CATTLE EGRET — Several flocks totaling ± 70 birds at SHB, mid-April through May on a number of occasions (CP); one near OFL, May 8 (AR, TR); and 12 near McE, May 24 (WM).

GREEN-BACKED HERON — This species has been scarce in some sections of Kentucky; one at MCNP, May 5 (JB, PB); and two at BPS, May 15 (KC, HC).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON — One at Lentz's Pond, Louisville, Jefferson County, May 5 and 8 (JB, PB).

SNOW GOOSE — One at McE, March 4-6 and 29 (WM); five at Shakertown, Mercer County, March 12 (FL); and three at a pond near Faubush, Pulaski County, April 2 (JE1).

CANADA GOOSE — A flock of 85 at McE, March 4 (WM); two at LPew, March 4; and 25 in Daviess County, April 5 (AP, MP).

WOOD DUCK — Five at McE and seven at CL, March 12 (WM); seven at Caneyville, Grayson County, April 9 (KC, JP); and six at SHB, April 23 (CP).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL — Two at McE, March 4 (WM), four there, March 19 (JB, PB), seven at Lick Creek, Boone County, March 27 (LMc); and 23 in the vicinity of Bondurant, Fulton County, April 1 (CP).

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK — Three at LPew, March 22 (KC, JP); present at McE, April 9 (no number — KC, JP).

BLUE-WINGED TEAL — Returned to the transient lakes on March 12 and remained "common" through March 31 (WM); 40 at SHB, March 24 (CP); one still present at Riverfields, Louisville, Jefferson County, May 5 (JB, PB); and a male at CL, May 10 (WM).

NORTHERN SHOVELER — Present at CL and McE, March 12 (WM); three at LPew, March (JH); 85 at SHB (north west of Open Pond), March 24 (CP); 18 at Lentz's Pond, Louisville, Jefferson County, March 26 (JB, PB); and two pairs at McE, May 10 (WM).

GADWALL — Thirty-five at SHB, March 24 (CP); and 23 to 34 at various times during March from the Danville area (no specific location — FL). Highest count at CRL was 10 on April 1 (FB).

AMERICAN WIGEON — Fairly "common" at the transient lakes from March 12 to 31 (WM); and 60 at SHB, March 24 (CP).

CANVASBACK — Few reports: at least 15 at McE and "more" at CL, March 4 (WM); one (female) at PCP, March 13-16 (JE1).

REDHEAD — "Large numbers" were present at the transient lakes, March 4 (WM); 45 at Lin, March 8, where such numbers are few (AR, TR); 34 at PCP, March 9 (JE1); four at McE, March 19 (JB, PB); and two at CRL (dam area), March 18 (FB).

RING-NECKED DUCK — The maximum number at LPew was 59 on March 4 (JH); present at CL and McE on the same date (no number — WM); 31 at PCP, March 9 (JE1); 150+ at Cooley's Lake, Wayne County, March 13, 70+ at Thurston's Pond, Wayne County, March 13 (JE1).

GREATER SCAUP — Small groups were at McE, March 4 (WM); 21 noted at PCP, March 9, and one still there March 16 (JE1).

LESSER SCAUP — Large numbers present at both CL and McE on March 4 and were especially "abundant" from March 12 to 23 (WM).

OLD SQUAW — Three males at CRL on March 4 (FB).

COMMON GOLDENEYE — Eleven at McE, March 4 (WM); and four at SHB, March 24 (CP).

BUFFLEHEAD — Twenty at McE, March 4 (WM); 16 was the highest count at LPew, March 15 (JH).

HOODED MERGANSER — Fourteen at McE, March 4 (WM); seven at a Pet pond, March 21 (LMc); three at Lentz's Pond Louisville, Jefferson County, March 26 (JB, PB); eight on LPew, March 31 (JH); and one in a Pet gravel pit, May 7 (LMc).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER — Numerous records: eight at Lin, March 8 (AR, TR); CRL, March 4-April 1, maximum of 45 on March 17 (FB); four at McE, March 19 (JB, PB); 11 at EBPP, March 27 (LMc); one in Ohio River Basin, Louisville, May 8 (JB, PB); four female at MCFH, May 3 and three on May 18 (FB).

RUDDY DUCK — Eight at McE, March 4 (WM); one at CEL, April 5 (LMc); two at MCFH, March 30 and three there, April 1 (FB).

BLACK VULTURE — Observed regularly at both GPP and EBPP throughout the period (LMc); two at MCNP, April 23 (JB, PB).

OSPREY — Numerous records: one bird at MCFH, March 30-April 1 (FB); one at Pet, April 3 and 19 (LMc); singles over SH (two locations), April 9 and 17 (JE1); one to two at MCFH, April 9, 10, 16 (FB); five at LBL, April 17 (JB, PB); one at Old Pumphouse Road pond, Somerset, Pulaski County, April 18, and one at PCP, April 25 (JE1); two at Army Depot, Madison County, April 19 (WD); seven at MCFH, April 17 and five there, April 23 (FB); single birds at Warsaw, Gallatin County, May 1 (LMc), and OFL, May 8 (AR, TR).

BALD EAGLE — One to two adults and one immature at MCFH on various dates March 4-25, but two immatures there March 30 (FB); an adult at OFL, May 27 (AR, TR).

NORTHERN HARRIER — Eight at SHB, March 24 (CP); two at HWMA, May 12 (KC, HC) and one there May 28 (KC, JP); and one in Boyle County, April 30 (FL).

COOPER'S HAWK — Two at BPS, all season (KC, HC); one in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

BROAD-WINGED HAWKS — Small numbers (1-4 birds) in five counties.

WILD TURKEY — One to five birds at MCNP, April 16, 23 and May 5 (JB, PB); one in Casey County (no date — FL).

AMERICAN COOT — Good numbers this spring: 200+ at the transient lakes, March 4 and remained in large numbers through the month, at least 500 at McE alone, March 31 (WM); also present at LPew from March 4-April 25, with a maximum of 188 on March 31 (JH); various numbers at CRL from March 18-April 10, with a maximum of 250 on April 9 (FB).

SANDHILL CRANE — One hundred fifty to 200 noted near Milemarker #128 on Western Kentucky Parkway and 100-150 along Hwy. 1375, Hardin County, March 1 (KC,

JP); 113+ in small flocks over Boyle County, March 4 (FL); 100 in a field along Hwy. 60 in Hancock County, March 3 (AP, MP); two at Berea, Madison County, March 8 (AR, TR); "large flocks" noted in the river bottoms near Maceo, Daviess County, March 12 (M. Brown *vide* AP); two at BPS, April 11 (KC), and three remained at CL, March 4 from the 231 noted February 23 (WM, HS).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER — One at McE, March 14, and 17 there, May 23 (WM); one at SHB, April 23 (CP); five at MCFH, May 7 and one there, May 18 (FB).

LESSER GOLDEN PLOVER — 500+ (probably 1000---three flocks on the ground, of several hundred each, and large flocks in flight) at SHB, April 23 (CP, HCh).

SEMPALMATED PLOVER — Five records: 15 at Lick Creek, Boone County, May 7 (LMc); 15 at McE, May 10 (D. Chaffin *vide* WM); three, north of Monticello, Wayne County, May 19 (SS); one at MCFH, May 7 (FB); 15+ at McE, May 23 (WM).

GREATER YELLOWLEGS — During early March through April this species was widely scattered from Hickman south in Fulton County (CP); two in flooded field near Woodburn, Warren County, March 14 (WM); two in Wayne County near Pulaski County line, March 30 (JE1); one at Elk Creek, Hopkins County, April 20 (JH); small numbers in Gallatin County, May 6 (LMc); eight at MCFH, May 7 (FB); and one at McE, May 10 (D. Chaffin *vide* WM).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS — This species also widely scattered from Hickman on south from early March through April (CP); two at MCFH, May 7 (FB); and several reports of one to five birds at the transient lakes from March 14-May 28.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER — Six reports: one at MCNP, April 23 (JB, PB); 14 in Calloway County, April 24 (MMi); four at CEL, May 6, and eight at EBPP, May 7 (LMc); two at MCFH, April 17-May 6, five there May 7 (FB); and two at Dewey Lake, Warren County, May 10 (WM).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER — First reported at MCFH, March 30 and peaked there with 15 on May 7 (FB); small numbers at the GPP and Warsaw Sewage Ponds, May 6 and EBPP May 7 (LMc); and four at Dewey Lake, Warren County, May 10 (WM).

UPLAND SANDPIPER — Three noted in Warren County, April 16 (JB, PB); and singles in three locations in Hickman Bottoms, Fulton County (CP).

WHIMBREL — Two noted at McE, May 23 (WM).

RUDDY TURNSTONE — Seven at McE, May 21 (WM).

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER — Few records: present in Fulton County south of Hickman during March and April (no number—CP), two to five at MCFH, May 6 and 7 (FB).

WESTERN SANDPIPER — At least three, south of Hickman, Fulton County, during April (no specific date — CP).

LEAST SANDPIPER — Noted with other shorebirds in Fulton County during March and April (CP); 25 at McE, May 23 (WM); and three at MCFH, May 6 and 10 there May 7 (FB); 4 were north of Monticello Wayne County May 19 (SS).

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER — One at MCFH, May 7 (FB); 10 at McE, May 23 (WM).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER — Ninety, south of Hickman, Fulton County (no date — CP); two at McE, March 14 (WM); and March 19 (JB, PB); nine, in Wayne County, near the Pulaski County line, March 30 (JE1); and one at MCFH, May 7 (FB).

DUNLIN — One at GPP, May 6 (LMc); one in breeding plumage at MCFH, May 7 (FB); eight at McE, May 23 (WM); six at SHB (no date — CP).

COMMON SNIFE — Sixty at SHB “were variously observed in March and April” (CP); also, noted in Daviess County, March 15 (no number — AP).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK — Three near Burlington, March 7-April 9 and two at Middle Creek, Boone County, May 7 (LMc); four at BPS, March 13 (KC); present in Daviess County, March 15 (no number — AP); one at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (hereafter BSFNRR), McCreary County, May 13 (SS, RE).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE — One (female) at McE, May 19 (JE1)

LAUGHING GULL — One at McE, May 23 is the first record for that area (WM).

BONAPARTE'S GULL — Thirteen in wet field along Hwy. 90 in Wayne County, March 30 (JE1); 100 was the high count at EBPP, April 3 (LMc); 500 at LBL, April 16 (JB, PB); few at MCFH, with a high count of only 20 on April 1 (FB).

RING-BILLED GULL — The high count at MCFH was 220 on March 27 (FB); maximum at East Bend, Boone County was 175, March 27 (LMc); flock of 100+ in Hancock County, March 3 (AP, MP).

CASPIAN TERN — Six at Falls of the Ohio, Jefferson County, May 8 (JB, PB); three at MCFH, May 18 (FB).

COMMON TERN — Two at MCFH, May 7 (FB).

FORSTER'S TERN — Four at MCFH, May 6, and 19 there on May 7 (FB).

LEAST TERN — Six near Lake #9, Fulton County, May 18 (CP).

BLACK TERN — Two at MCFH, May 6-7 (FB).

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO — One at BSFNRR, May 5 (SS, RE); five at Dewey Lake, Warren County, May 9 (WM).

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO — First arrival at Mad, April 29 (JH); one at Maceo, Daviess County, May 1 (AP, MP); two at BPS, May 12-31 (KC, HC); two at Dewey Lake, Warren County, May 12 (WM); and at least seven in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

COMMON BARN OWL — One perched, April 1, Boyle County (FL).

COMMON NIGHTHAWK — Birds were late in arriving; first observation in Morehead area, Rowan County was April 27 (FB) and at BPS, May 9 (KC).

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW — One at BPS, April 22 (KC, HC); heard in Hopkins County, April 25 (Bonnie West *vide* JH); heard at Mad, April 29 (D.W. Hancock *vide* JH); two in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

WHIP-POOR-WILL — First heard in Hopkins County, April 10 (Bonnie West *vide* JH); and near BPS, April 13 (KC, HC).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD — One (male) arrived at BPS, April 11 (HC) and at SH, April 12 (JE1); two at LBL, April 17 (JB, PB); and one at BCNP, May 1 (JB, PB).

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER — One at BSFNRRRA, May 5 (SS, RE).

EASTERN WOOD PEWEE — One arrived later than normal at Mad, April 26 (JH).

WILLOW FLYCATCHER — Two near Pet, May 31 (LMc).

EASTERN PHOEBE — One at OFL, March 11 (AR, TR); and others arrived along Hwy. #110, March 12-14 (KC); three at MCNP, March 19 (JB, PB).

EASTERN KINGBIRD — Arrived later than usual — last week in April.

TREE SWALLOW — A flock of 15 at Lake Reba, Madison County, March 8 (AR, TR); 75 at MCFH, March 27, peaked at 150 on March 30-April 1 (FB); 30+ at OFL, March 26 (JE1); and 33 at LPew, April 8 (JH).

CLIFF SWALLOW — Largest concentrations included: 50 at LBL (JB, PB) and at MCFH, April 16 (FB); also, 50 to 60 over Rough River, Grayson and Breckinridge Counties, May 20 (KC, HC); and 12+ at bridge near Bradfordville, Marion County, May 27 (FL).

FISH CROW — Two birds in Hickman Bottoms, Fulton County (two locations), March 24 (CP).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH — One at a feeder at Mad, April 14 (JH); one still present at BCNP, May 1 (JB, PB); one at PCP, May 2 (JE1); and the latest one at BPS, May 6 (KC, HC).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET — Twelve at BCNP, April 13 (JB, PB); one singing at Mad, April 21 (JH).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER — Six arrived at Dewey Lake, Warren County, March 31 (WM); 20+ at BCNP, April 13 (JB, PB) and 30+ at MCNP, April 16 (JB, PB).

VEERY — Few reported: one to two birds observed in Edmonson, Jefferson and Powell Counties.

GRAY-CHEEKED, SWAINSON'S, and WOOD THRUSHES — All three species arrived later than normal and were in low numbers.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD/BROWN THRASHER — None of the former species have been seen at BPS since the BIG SNOWSTORM, January 17 (KC). The Brown Thrasher arrived at LPew on March 22 (JH) and at BPS, April 10 (KC).

WATER PIPIT — Twenty-five at McE, March 19 (JB, PB); present at the transient lakes on March 23 while on an Ornithology class field trip (WM).

CEDAR WAXWING — Five reports. The greatest concentration was at BPS with 50-60 birds, April 22 (KC).

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE — One at Kentucky Horse Park, Fayette County, April 21 (WD).

WHITE-EYED VIREO — One at Mad, April 11 (JH); one at BPS, April 12 (KC); one at BCNP, April 18 (JB, PB).

BELL'S VIREO — One singing at HWMA, May 12 (HC, KC).

SOLITARY VIREO — One at BCNP, April 29 (JB, PB); three at MCNP, April 30 (JB, PB); and four at Dewey Lake, Warren County, May 12 (WM).

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO — Two at BCNP, April 13, two to four at MCNP, April 16 and 23 (JB, PB); one at Mad, April 28 (JH).

WARBLING VIREO — Two at LBL, April 17 (JB, PB); one singing north of Monticello, Wayne County, May 19 (SS); one at LPew, April 25 (JH).

PHILADELPHIA VIREO — One at BCNP, April 29 and May 1 (JB, PB).

RED-EYED VIREO — Arrival dates included one at BPS, April 13 (KC), four at MCNP, April 16 (JB, PB), one at Mad, April 22 (JH).

TENNESSEE WARBLER — Two arrived at BCNP on April 24 (JB, PB) and at Mad on April 25 (JH); numbers were low. A rather late straggler was still present in northeast Louisville on June 4 (DN).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER — One at BCNP, April 13 and 27 (JB, PB).

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER — First observation at Mad, May 3 (JH); "abundant" in Warren County, May 12 (WM).

MAGNOLIA WARBLER — Two at BPS, April 2 established an early arrival date (KC).

CAPE MAY WARBLER — One at BCNP, April 24 (JB, PB); present at Bur, April 23-May 10 (LMc); later sightings included single birds at five other locations.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER — One at NBSP, April 30 (JB, PB).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER — Ten to 15 at BPS, April 25 (KC, HC).

PINE WARBLER — First heard at Mad, March 4 and still present there May 31 (JH); one at PCP, March 10 and six there, March 11 (JE1); one at BPS, March 12-13 (KC); two at MCNP, April 23 and four at NBSP, April 30 (JB, PB).

PRAIRIE WARBLER — Three were singing at BPS and surrounding area as early as April 4 (KC); highest count at MCNP was five (JB, PB); and at least 15 in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

PALM WARBLER — Good numbers at Rough River State Park, Grayson County, May 1 (LMc *et al*); low numbers elsewhere.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER — Good numbers at Rough River State Park, May 1 (LMc).

CERULEAN WARBLER — The report of seven at MCNP, April 23 was encouraging (JB, PB); two in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

WORM-EATING WARBLER — Eight at NBSP, May 28 (JB, PB).

SWAINSON'S WARBLER — Two on opposite sides of Kentucky 444, Calloway County (MMi, CP); heard two and saw one, same location, May 24 (MMi); and one again at same location May 28 (several observers); one at Red River Gorge, Powell County, May 28 (JB, PB).

CONNECTICUT WARBLER — One (female) at LCWMA, May 8 (JE1).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT — First observation in Hopkins County, April 20 (JH); at least nine in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

SUMMER Tanager — A pair at BPS, April 10-May 31 (KC); five in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS); and several sightings at Mad during May (JH).

SCARLET Tanager — One to two birds reported in six counties: Breckinridge, Daviess, Edmonson, Hopkins, Jefferson, and Trigg, while five were seen in Cumberland County.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK — Maximum counts at the following locations included: 10 at BCNP, eight at NBSP, and five at BPS, while one was at Mad.

BLUE GROSBEAK — Two at HWMA, May 12 (KC, HC); and a few in the Danville area (FL, WK).

INDIGO BUNTING — First arrival was at Mad, April 12 (JH); highest count was 37 or more in Cumberland County, May 30 (SS).

DICKCISSEL — Frederick Loetscher reported a "good year" for this species in the Danville area (Boyle and southern Mercer counties); five in east Jefferson County, May 8 (JB, PB); give in Hopkins County (two locations), May 5 (JH); one near Pet, May 7 (LMC); and 10-12 in Ohio County, May 12 (KC, HC).

LARK SPARROW — One or a pair at two pastures (about a mile apart) in western Mercer County, April 16 and on a few subsequent dates (FL, WK).

HENSLow SPARROW — Two along Cemetery Road, Ohio County, May 12 (HC, KC).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW — Highest count was 40 at Mad, April 21 (JH); one still present at LCWMA, May 28 (JE1).

BOBOLINK — A count of 100+ in northern Gallatin County, May 6 was noteworthy (LMC); 26 in eastern Jefferson County, May 8 (JB, PB); 17 near Dewey Lake, Warren County, May 10 (WM); and found at six or eight meadows in Boyle County (FL, WK).

ORCHARD/NORTHERN ORIOLES — Arrival date for both species was April 20 (AP, MP); numbers low for both.

PURPLE FINCH — Fifteen at MCNP, April 16 (JB, PB); five to six still at BPS, April 30 (KC *et al.*).

PINE SISKIN — Eight at Burnside, Pulaski County, April 20 (Linda McClendon *vide* JE1); three at BPS, April 23 (KC); 15 at feeder on Garland Road, Pulaski County, April 25 (JE1); and one at Mad, May 3 (JH).

EVENING GROSBEAK — Two (male and female) at BPS, April 22-23 (KC, HC); two at Garland Road, Pulaski County, April 25 (JE1); flock of 12 to 18 at Green Valley Acres, Rowan County, March 1-30 and last observed (one female) there, April 9 (FB).

Contributors — Jane Bell (JB), Pat Bell (PB), Fred Busroe (FB), Happy Chambers (HCh), Herbert Clay (HC), Kathryn Clay (KC), Wayne Davis (WD), Jackie Elmore (JE1), R.G. Emmott (RE), James W. Hancock (JH), William Kemper (WK), Frederick W. Loetscher (FL), Lee McNeely (LMc), Wayne Mason (WM), Mike Miller (MMi), Doxie Noonan (DN), Kay Parker (KP), Clell Peterson (CP), A.L. Powell (AP), Millie Powell (MP), Joyce Porter (JP), Arthur Ricketts (AR), Tina Ricketts (TR), Herbert Shadowen (HS), Stephen J. Stedman (SS).

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DENSITY AND HABITAT USE OF HAWKS WINTERING AT THE BLUEGRASS REGION OF KENTUCKY

BRAD A. ANDRES

Introduction — The fields and pastures of Kentucky's Bluegrass region potentially provide substantial habitat for hawks that winter in open landscapes. However, few studies have focused on the wintering ecology of hawks in central Kentucky. Sferra (1984a) estimated hawk densities along roadsides in 4 physiographic regions of Madison County and investigated patterns of habitat use in American Kestrels and Red-tailed Hawks (Sferra 1984b). Both species used pasturelands and old fields to a greater extent than was represented in the landscape. Because Sferra (1984b) surveyed across broad habitat gradients, I undertook a study to determine the specific use of field habitats by hawks wintering in a single physiographic region, the Bluegrass.

Study Area and Methods — To measure the abundance and habitat use of wintering hawks, I established a 17.9 km (11.1 mile) roadside survey route in western Clark County, Kentucky. The starting point of the route was located 10.5 km (6.5 miles) west of Winchester adjacent to the border with Fayette County. Agricultural fields

and pastures, common to the Bluegrass, dominated the landscape along the route. After an initial reconnaissance, I delineated 7 habitat types that were indicative of habitats along the route: 1) residential — buildings and mown yards, 2) Long stems — grazed, grass stems ≥ 15 cm (6 inches), 3) short stems — grazed, grass stems <15 cm, 4) overgrown — perennials, stems >50 cm (19.7 inches), 5) bare soil, 6) cropped — stubble in rows, and 7) woodlots. To determine the distribution of habitat types along the survey route, I quantified the habitat on each side of the survey route at 0.32 km (0.2 mile) intervals ($n=110$ points).

I conducted hawk surveys at weekly intervals from 5 November 1985 to 21 March 1986. A single, constant observer, travelling 16-24 km/hour (10-15mph), counted all hawks observed within 0.40 km (0.25 miles) of either side of the road. Surveys began 1.5 hours prior to sunset and were completed by sunset. Surveys were only conducted when visibility was good and wind speed was <24 km/hour. I recorded the species, sex (Kestrels, Harriers), age (*Accipiters*, Red-tails, Harriers), color morph (Rough-legs), and behavior (perched or flying) of each individual encountered. The perch sites of perching birds were recorded as woodlot edge, fencerow, single tree, telephone wire or pole, fence-post, ground, or hay bale. The immediate habitat where each hawk occurred was also noted; the hunting behavior of hawks was sometimes used to assign habitat types. For example, the habitat assigned to a hawk perched on a woodlot edge but scanning the adjacent field was the field type.

Composition of the wintering hawk assemblage was determined by calculating the percentage of total observations for each species and calculating the average density (based on a width of 0.8 km) across the season. The percentage of observations, for each species, occurring in each habitat type was calculated for each weekly survey. Percentages were averaged across the entire season to determine a mean relative use of the habitat type. I used normal variance estimates to compare the use of habitats, within common species, to their availability (one-sample Z -test with Bonferroni adjustment for multiple tests). Analytical treatment was restricted to the most abundant species and habitats that had $>1\%$ of the observations. Perch site selection by common species was examined by calculating the percentage of observations in each perch site category. Lastly, phenology was determined by plotting the average number of hawks, by 2 week periods, across the period of study.

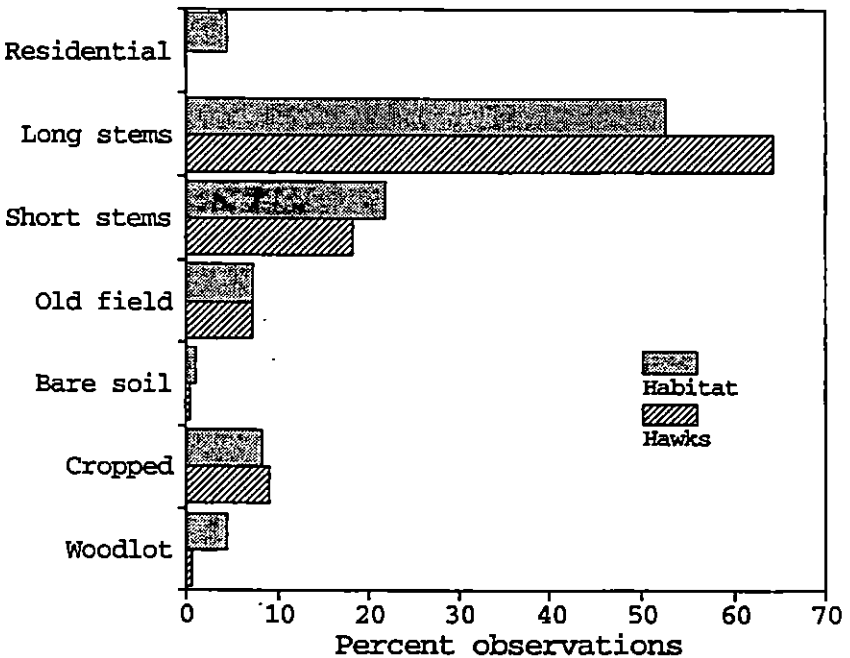
Results and Discussion — From 5 November 1985 to 21 March 1986, I conducted 19 weekly surveys on which I recorded 369 hawks of 5 species or species groups; 3 species (Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Rough-legged Hawk) constituted 97% of the observations (Table 1). Mean density of all species along the roadside route was 1.35 ± 0.09 (± 1 SE) hawks/km² (3.50 hawks/mile²). The age ratio of Red-tailed Hawks was skewed toward adults (2.5 adults: 1 sub-adult). Male and female American Kestrels were present in equal proportions (1.1 males: 1 female). The majority of Rough-legged Hawks were light morphs (2.8 light: 1 dark).

Overall, hawk species (combined) used available habitats in proportion to their distribution in the landscape (Figure 1). However, individual species differed in their habitat use patterns. Whereas Red-tailed Hawks were distributed evenly among habitat types, American Kestrels and Rough-legged Hawks used grazed fields with long

Table 1. Relative abundance and mean density (+1 standard error [SE] of the mean) of hawks wintering in Clark County, Kentucky, 1985-1986.

Species	Percent of all observations	Density (birds/mile ²)	
		X	SE
Red-tailed Hawk	46.1	1.61	0.10
American Kestrel	33.6	1.17	0.11
Rough-legged Hawk	17.3	0.61	0.11
<i>Accipiter</i> spp.	1.6	0.06	0.02
Northern Harrier	1.4	0.05	0.02
All species	$n = 369$	3.50	0.23

Figure 1. Percent habitat and percent observations of all hawk species in habitats made along a roadside route in Clark County, Kentucky, winter 1985-1996.



grass stems to a greater proportion than their availability (Table 2). American Kestrels were adverse to using cropped fields and Rough-legged Hawks to using overgrown fields. Although hawk species overlapped in their use of field habitats, their choice of perches varied (Table 3). Most American Kestrels perched on telephone wires or poles (73%), whereas Rough-legged Hawks favored single trees (81%). Red-tailed Hawks perched along fencerows and in single trees in equal proportions ($\approx 43\%$).

Although relatively stable numbers of hawks were present in the study area from mid-December to late-February, patterns of temporal abundance varied among species (Figure 2). American Kestrels were present in relatively constant numbers throughout the period. One-half of the resident Red-tailed Hawks departed by early-March. However, a pulse of migrants appeared in late-March (Figure 2). Rough-legged Hawks were not present until mid-November and departed by mid-February; no Rough-legs were found on 21 March (Figure 2). Seasonal changes in hawk abundance follow patterns reported in Monroe *et al.* (1988) and Sferra (1984a).

Roadside hawk densities for all species in this study exceed those found by Sferra (1984a) in Madison County, Kentucky. Densities were also higher than those on Bluegrass Christmas Bird Counts in 1984 (means/mile², red-tail = 0.2, rough-leg = 0.01, kestrel = 0.2). Because Sferra (1984a), and Christmas Bird Counts, surveyed across physiographic boundaries and included a broad array of habitat types, densities from this study should be interpreted as densities attainable in prime habitat for open-country hawks in the Bluegrass region of Kentucky. But why these high densities in Clark County? Qualitatively, I suspect that the habitat along the survey route differed from that in surrounding areas. Although Sferra (1984b) found similar high use of grazed pasturelands, mown hayfields, and old fields by American Kestrels and Red-tailed Hawks, densities were much lower than those in Clark County. Pastures, most likely, differed in their structural composition. The abundance of pastures comprised of grass stems that were > 15 cm probably attracted wintering hawks into western Clark County. Bart (1977) found that high grass cover was positively correlated with meadow vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) density. Moderately grazed fields could provide good habitat for voles that, in turn, provide good wintering habitat for hawks. Variability among hawk species in their selection of perch sites might minimize negative interactions and allow species to partition available resources. Partitioning of shared hunting habitat by differential perch site selection has been reported in several other studies. Hawks and eagles wintering on the short-grass prairie of Colorado selected different perch sites (Marion and Ryder 1975) as did red-tails and rough-legs in Illinois (Schnell 1968). Unlike other species, American Kestrels favored utility wire perches in Utah (Fischer *et al.* 1984). Ample perch sites of various types and high quality habitat appears to have led to a high density of hawks wintering in the Bluegrass region of Clark County.

Table 2. Mean percent hawk use [P(T)] and percent area [P(A)] of field habitats in Clark County, Kentucky, 1985-1986.

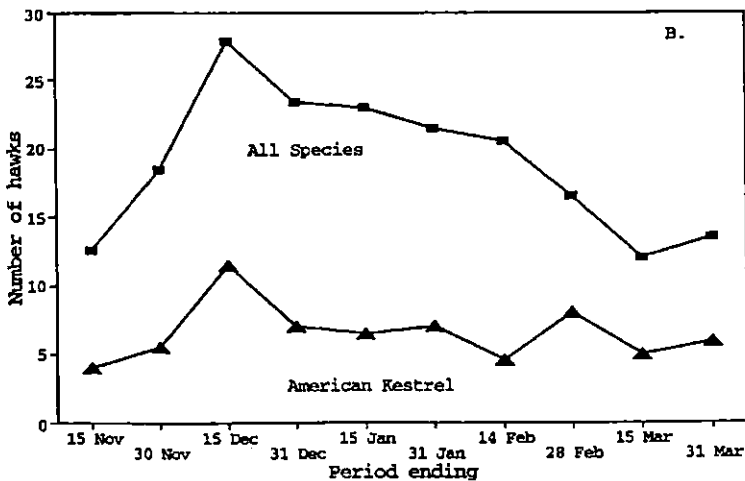
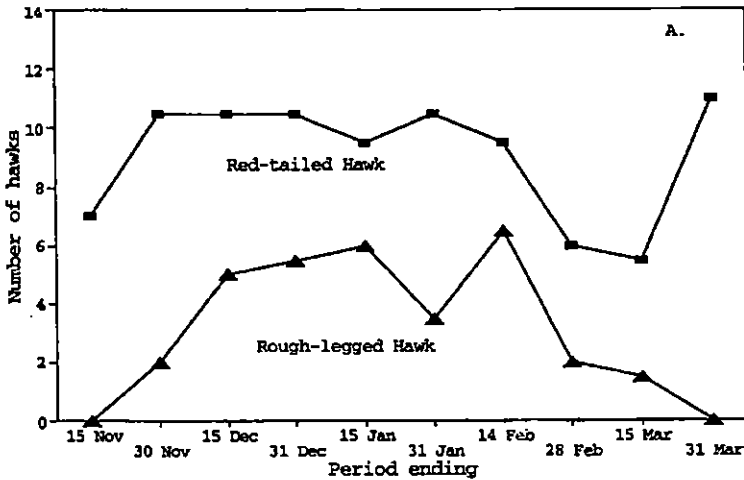
Field habitats	Red-tailed Hawk		American Kestrel		Rough-legged Hawk					
	P(A)	P(T)	P(T)-P(A)	P*	P(T)	P(T)-P(A)	P*			
Cropped	9.1	9.9	0.8	>>0.1	3.0	-6.1	≤0.001	6.7	-2.4	>>0.1
Overgrown, perennials	8.1	10.5	2.4	>>0.1	8.9	0.8	>>0.1	1.0	-7.1	≤0.001
Grazed, short stems	24.2	21.0	-3.2	>>0.1	15.0	-9.2	≤0.05	13.7	-10.5	≤0.05
Grazed, long stems	58.6	58.5	-0.1	>>0.1	73.1	14.5	≤0.001	79.6	21.0	≤0.005

*z — values computed by large sample approximation of the binomial test.
Differences within species were significant if $P \leq 0.01$.

Table 3. Selection of perch sites by hawks wintering in Clark County, Kentucky, 1985-1986.

Species	Percent observations in or on:				
	woodlot edges	fence-rows	single trees	telephone wires/poles	other types
Red-tailed Hawk ($\bar{n} = 114$)	7.9	42.1	43.0	2.6	4.4
American Kestrel ($\bar{n} = 81$)	0.0	11.1	12.3	72.8	3.7
Rough-legged Hawk ($\bar{n} = 47$)	0.0	14.9	80.9	2.1	2.1

Figure 2. Abundance of Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks (A) and American Kestrels and all species combined (B) by 2-week periods in Clark County, Kentucky, 1985-1986.



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NEWS AND VIEWS

Reminder of the Kentucky Rare Bird Alert Hotline

Remember, the Kentucky Rare Bird Alert hotline is in service at (502) 894-9538. Mike Stinson regularly updates the tapes with your reports of unusual bird sightings from around the state. Help support this service with your reports.

K.O.S. Avian Research Grant Fund

The Kentucky Ornithological Society has initiated an Avian Research Grant Fund. Persons that need money (i.e., up to \$500.00) to assist them in conducting research on birds in Kentucky should contact the Kentucky Ornithological Society Avian Research Grant Fund Committee, c/o Blaine Ferrell, Department of Biology, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101, for a set of guidelines and an application form.

The Fall K.O.S. Meeting

The fall Kentucky Ornithological Society Meeting will be held October 7, 8 and 9 at Pennyriple State Park. Please mark your calendars and make your room reservations early. If you plan to make a presentation at the Friday evening session, contact Wayne Mason, Department of Biology, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101.

Nominations for Society Officers

The nominating committee recommends the following slate of officers to be voted on at the fall K.O.S. meeting. Herbert Clay, Jr., President; Wayne Mason, Vice President; Kay Parker, Corresponding Secretary-Treasurer, Herbert E. Shadowen, Recording Secretary; Kathy Caminiti and Joyce Parker, Councillors.