

8-1998

Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 74, no. 3)

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The Kentucky Warbler

(Published by the Kentucky Ornithological Society)

Vol. 74

AUGUST 1998

No. 3



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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

Organ of the Kentucky Ornithological Society, published quarterly in February, May, August and November. *The KENTUCKY WARBLER* is sent to all members not in arrears for dues. Membership dues are: Active or Regular \$8.00; Contributing, \$15.00; Student \$4.00; Life, \$100.00; Family, \$2.00 in addition to Regular, Contributing or Life Membership dues; Corporate. All articles and communications should be addressed to the editor. Subscriptions, memberships and request for back issues should be sent to the Treasurer.

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THE COVER

The K.O.S. thanks Ray Harm, staff artist, for this excellent painting of a White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*).

Fred M. Busroe

The spring season was unusual. Snow was recorded during March. Parts of Kentucky had record low temperatures for March 9 to 13, yet on March 29 Jackson had a record high for that date. Precipitation was about average, but due to the number of days with rain the season seemed wetter. This weather influenced the migration patterns across the state.

The transient lakes in Warren County had sufficient water levels near the end of the season to provide good habitat for shorebirds.

Some of the more unusual species reported included Eared Grebe, Glossy Ibis, Black-necked Stilt, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, nesting Bell's Vireo and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Abbreviations: Bark = Barkley Dam, Lyon County; BBC = Beckham Bird Club field trip; Bel = Bellevue, Campbell County; Bern = Bernheim Forest, Bullitt County; Big = Big Bone Lick State Park, Boone County; BSNR = Big South Fork National Recreation Area, McCreary County; BCNP = Boone County Cliffs Nature Preserve, Boone County; Bur = Burlington, Boone County; CEL = Camp Ernst Lake, Boone County; Can = Caneyville Reservoir, Grayson County; Cane = Canewood, Clark County; CRL = Cave Run Lake, Rowan County; Cha = Chaney Lake, Warren County; Cra = Craig's Creek, Gallatin County; Falls = Falls of the Ohio, Jefferson County; Fre = Freeman Lake, Hardin County; Ful = Fulton County; Ghe = Ghent Power Plant, Carroll County; Gra = Grayson County; Glake = Grayson Lake, Carter County; Hic = Hickman Bottoms, Fulton County; JMF = Jefferson Memorial Forest, Jefferson County; Jon = Jonathan Creek, Marshall County; KBRC = Kentucky Bird Record Committee; Kbn = Kentucky Bend, Fulton County; KD = Kentucky Dam, Marshall County; LPew = Lake Pewee, Hopkins County; L#9 = Lake # 9, Fulton County; Lau = Laurel River Lake, Laurel County; LBark = Lake Barkley, Lyon County; Lou = Louisville, Jefferson County; Mad = Madisonville, Hopkins County; MCNP = Mammoth Cave National Park, Edmonson County; Mark = Markland Dam, Gallatin County; McEl = McElroy Lake, Warren County; Mel = Meldahl Dam, Bracken County; MCFH = Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan County; Mdl = Middleton, Simpson County; Mid = Middle Creek Park, Boone County; Mos = Mosley's Pond, Logan County; Nat = Wendell Ford Regional Training Center, Kentucky National Guard site, Muhlenberg County; OWMA = Obion Creek Wildlife Management Area, Fulton County; Open = Open Pond, Fulton County; Owen = Owensboro, Daviess County; Pet = Petersburg, Boone County; Pro = Protemus, Calloway County; RNWR = Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge, Fulton County; RRG = Red River Gorge, Wolfe County; SC = Short Creek, Grayson County; Silo = Silo overlook, Marshall County; SMWA = Sloughs Wildlife Management Area, Henderson County; Sled = Sledd Creek embayment, Kentucky Lake, Marshall County; TEL = Twin Eagles Lake, Owen County; Uni = Union, Boone County; Wal = Walton Pond, Warren County; War = Warren County; Wars = Warsaw, Gallatin County; Wod = Woodburn, Warren County; Wol = Wolper's Creek, Boone County.

Common Loon - 1 on March 21- 22 at CEL and 1 near Uni on March 21

(LMc); 2 on May 14 at CRL (TB, BS, SS); 2 on May 23 at Lau (CB); 3 on May 23 at KD (BBC).

Horned Grebe - 17 on March 17 on Ohio River, Kenton County (FR); 6 on March

- 18 at Mel (FR); one on March 21 at Pet (LMc).
- EARED GREBE** - 2 on May 6 at McEl (DR).
- American White Pelican** - 18 on March 8 at Bark (MB); as many as 135 at Bark from March 10 to 29 (DR); approx. 157 on March 30 at Bark (MB); 64 on March 28 and 17 on April 2 on LBark above dam (Hap, CP); 3 on April 3 at Sled (MM); 3 on April 3 and 1 on May 25 Hic (CP).
- Double-crested Cormorant** - Approx. 100 on March 28 at Bark above dam (CP); 26 on April 24 at Fre (SK); 80 on May 3 at Mark (LMc); 30 on May 9 at Bel (LMc).
- Least Bittern** - 1 on April 19 at SWMA (DR).
- Great Blue Heron** - 1 on March 19 at LPew (JWH); 33 on April 5 near Rough River, Gra (JP); 76 on April 21, 62 on April 22 and 68 on April 29 at KD (JE, MM, CP).
- Great Egret** - 1 on May 9 at Pet (LMc).
- Snowy Egret** - 1 on May 23 at Kbn and Hic (BBC); 3 on May 28 in Hic (CP).
- Little Blue Heron** - 21 adults on May 21 at Hic (CP); several birds flying to and from heronry on LBark near Old Kattawa Rec. area on May 24 (BBC).
- Cattle Egret** - 4 on April 18 at Sled (MM); 1 in War from April 26 to May 22 (DR); 5 on April 29 Bark (JTE, MM, CP); 1 on May 16 at Cha (DO).
- Green Heron** - 1 on April 29 below Bark (JTE, MM, CP); 1 on May 16 and 30 at SC (JP).
- Black-crowned Night-Heron** - 5 on April 29 below Bark (JTE, MM, CP).
- GLOSSY IBIS** - 1 on May 17 at McEl (MB, LK, SK). Documentation submitted to KBRC.
- Snow Goose** - 1 on May 22 at McEl (DR).
- Wood Duck** - 2 to 9 birds in Grayson County during the season with a high of 33 on May 24 (JP).
- Green-winged Teal** - 20 on March 8 at Jon (MB); 6 on March 22 at EBP (LMc).
- Blue-winged Teal** - 25 on March 21 at Pet and 6 on March 22 at EBP (LMc); 4 on April 4 at Can (JP); 5 on April 4 at Pro (CM, KM).
- Northern Shoveler** - 30 on March 8 at Jon (MB).
- Gadwall** - 80 on March 8 at Jon (MB); a pair at Open on May 23 (BBC).
- American Wigeon** - 2 on March 8 at Jon (MB).
- Redhead** - 4 on March 14 at CEL (LMc).
- Greater Scaup** - 1 on April 27 at McEl (DR).
- Lesser Scaup** - 10 on March 11 and 58 on March 17 at CEL (LMc); 73 on March 26 at Bel (FR); 1 on April 12 at Bern (DO).
- Surf Scoter** - 1 on March 6 at Falls (MB); 1 on March 29 at Bark (DR).
- Bufflehead** - 2 on March 19 at LPew (JWH); 2 males in Calloway County on April 4 (CM, KM).
- Red-breasted Merganser** - Approx. 200 on March 8 and 50 on March 30 on LBark above dam(MB); 27 on March 18 at Mel (FR); 6 on April 11 at CEL (LMC); 2 on April 26 and 29 at KD (JTE, MM, CP); 1 on May 9 at Cra (LMc); 4 on May 14 at MCFH (BS, SS); one at KD on May 24 (BBC).

- Ruddy Duck** - 1 on March 18 at Mel (FR); 1 on March 19 at LPew (JWH); 2 on April 10 with 10 on April 19 at CEL (LMc).
- Black Vulture** - 1 on May 4 in Hart County (MS).
- Osprey** - 1 on April 4 and 5 at Can (JP); single birds were seen at Pet on April 11, Burl on April 19, and at Cra on May 8 (LMc); 2 on April 13 at Lau (CB); 2 nesting on April 23 on LBark at Silo (CP).
- Mississippi Kite** - 1 to 2 on May 24 at Hic, Open and Reel (BBC).
- Bald Eagle** - 2 throughout the season at MCFH (FB, LK); an adult near nest on May 24 at L#9 (BBC).
- Northern Harrier** - Several during the season in Hic (CP); one on March 18 in Barren County (MS).
- Sharp-shinned Hawk** - 1 on March 22 in Barren County and 1 on May 9 in Hart County (MS); 1 on March 26 at Bel (FR).
- Cooper's Hawk** - 1 immature at Bel on March 22 (FR); 2 on April 20 at Sled (MM).
- Broad-winged Hawk** - 1 on April 12 at Bel (FR); 7 on April 28 at TEL, 1 on May 8 at Mark and 1 at Mid on May 9 (LMc); 1 on May 6 in RRG (FR).
- American Kestrel** - A pair present at Porter Farm, Gra since February 2 and were observed feeding 3 young on May 23 (JP).
- Merlin** - 1 on April 15 in Barren County, a female on April 26 and a male on May 9 at McEl (DR); 1 on April 22 at Sled (MM).
- Peregrine Falcon** - 1 on April 19 at SWMA along with single observations at McEl on April 30, May 3 and 7 (DR); 1 on May 8 at Mark (LMc).
- Sora** - 1 on May 9 at Pet (LMc).
- American Coot** - 90 on March 19 and 215 on March 25 at LPew (JWH).
- Sandhill Crane** - 30 on March 13 over Gra (JP).
- Ruffed Grouse** - 2 on April 13 at Lau (CB).
- Wild Turkey** - 1 on April 16 and 2 on April 28 in Hart County (MS); 4 on April 19 at MCNP (MB).
- Black-bellied Plover** - 24 on May 16 at McEl (DO); 16 on May 17 at McEl (MB); 8 on May 23 at Open (BBC).
- Semipalmated Plover** - Approx. 150 on May 16 at McEl (DO); approx. 150 on May 17 at McEl (MB).
- BLACK-NECKED STILT** - 5 on April 25 in Hic and 5 on May 28 at Open (CP); 4 on May 5 in Hic (DR); 6 on May 23 at Open (BBC).
- Greater Yellowlegs** - 5 on April 5 at RNWR (MB); approx. 100 on April 11 at Hic (CP); 4 in Gallatin County (DO), 2 in Kenton County (FR) and 2 on April 25; 2 in flooded field on May 9 in Boone County (LMc).
- Lesser Yellowlegs** - Approx. 100 on April 5 at RNWR and 50 on April 5 at OWMA (MB); approx. 77 on April 11 at Hic (CP); 14 on April 21 at Mdl (MB); 2 on May 9 at Chamberlain Lane, Lou (DO); one in a flooded field on May 9 in

Boone County (LMc).

Solitary Sandpiper - 3 on April 19 at Mdl (MB); 2 on April 25 in Gallatin County (DO).

Willet - 1 on April 27 and May 9 at McEl (DR); 11 at MCFH on April 22 (FB, LK, BPB).

Spotted Sandpiper - 6 on April 25 in Kenton County (FR); 1 on April 25 at Ghe (DO); 4 on May 8 at Ghe and 3 on May 8 at War (LMc); 1 on May 24 in Gra (JP)

WHIMBREL - 17 on May 19 at McEl (DR). Videotape and documentation submitted to KBRC.

MARBLED GODWIT - 5 on April 22 at MCFH (FB, LK, BPB). Photographs and documentation submitted to KBRC.

Ruddy Turnstone - Present at McEl from May 4 to May 27 with a high of 22 on May 22 (LD, JE, DR); 4 on May 16 at McEl (DO); 3 on May 17 at McEl (MB).

Sanderling - Best flight ever documented in Kentucky; 3 on May 16 at McEl (DO); present at McEl from May 16 to May 27 with a high of 21 on May 27 (DR); 3 on May 24 at McEl (MB).

Semipalmated Sandpiper - 30 on May 16 at McEl (DO); approx. 100 on May 17 at McEl (MB).

Western Sandpiper - Present at McEl from April 23 to May 4 with a high of 6 on May 23 (DR).

Least Sandpiper - 20 on May 16 at McEl (DO).

White-rumped Sandpiper - 5 on May 16 at McEl (DO); 10 on May 17 at McEl (MB).

Baird's Sandpiper - 1 on May 1 at McEl (DR).

Pectoral Sandpiper - Approx. 50 on April 5 at RNWR (MB); 3 on May 16 at McEl (DO).

Dunlin - 20 on May 16 at McEl (DO); 25 on May 17 at McEl (MB).

Stilt Sandpiper - 1 on May 17 at McEl (MB); 3 on May 23 at Open (BBC).

Short-billed Dowitcher - 39 on May 16 at McEl (DO).

Long-billed Dowitcher - 1 present from April 27 to May 7 at McEl (DR).

American Woodcock - 3 on April 14 at Mid and on May 8 at Big (LMc); 1 in courtship flight at Glake on May 11 to 14 (BS, SS).

Wilson's Phalarope - 1 from April 23 to May 13 in Wood area (DR); 1 on May 24 at Open (BBC).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE - 1 female on May 6 at McEl (DR). Documentation submitted to KBRC.

Laughing Gull - 1 adult on March 11 at KD (DR); 1 on April 25 at KD (MM); 5 at KD on May 23 and 24 (BBC).

Franklin's Gull - 1 on May 23 and 24 at KD (BBC).

Bonaparte's Gull - 29 on April 11 at Mark (LMc).

- Ring-billed Gull** - 100+ on April 29 at KD (JTE, CP); 15 still present on May 8 at Cra (LMc); small numbers were present during the period along the Ohio River in northern Kentucky (FR).
- Herring Gull** - 2 on April 29 at KD (JTE, MM, CP); 1 at KD on May 23 and 24 (BBC).
- Thayer's Gull** - 1 first year bird and 1 second year bird were present on March 8 (MB) and on March 11 at Bark (DR).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull** - 1 adult on March 11 (DR) at Bark .
- Caspian Tern** - 1 on April 21, 10 on April 22 at KD and 3 each day from April 24 to April 26 at Sled (MM); approx. 125 on April 29 below KD (JTE, CP); 1 on May 23 at Lau (CB); 2 on May 23 and 24 at KD (BBC).
- Forster's Tern** - 3 on March 27 at Sled (MM); 12 on March 29 at Jon (DR); 1 on April 20 at Sled (MM); 4 to 8 present from April 21 to May 19 on Ohio River, Kenton County (FR); 1 on April 25 at Cra (DO); 7 on April 29 at Bark (JTE, MM, CP); 12 on May 8 at Cra (LMc).
- Least Tern** - 5 on May 21 at Open, Hic (CP); small numbers at Open and elsewhere in Hic on May 23 (BBC).
- Black Tern** - 10 on May 16 at McEl (DO); 3 on May 17 at Wal (*vide* MB); 1 on May 14 at MCFH (SL, LP, BS, SS.); 17 on May 23 at Open (BBC).
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo** - 8 on May 21 at Hic (CP); 1 on May 28 in western Gra (JP).
- Barn Owl** - 1 found (road kill) along the Marshall/Calloway County line on April 8 (CM).
- Chuck-will's-widow** - First heard on April 20 at LPew (JWH); 1 on May 9 and 3 on May 10 at SC (JP).
- Whip-poor-will** - 3 on May 5 in RRG (FR); 2 on May 7, 1 on May 8 and 1 on May 12 in Hart County (MS); 1 at SC on May 10, with 1 on May 22 and 25 in Gra (JP).
- Chimney Swift** - First of the season on April 11 in Lou (DO).
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird** - First observed at Gra feeder on April 18 (MH).
- Red-bellied Woodpecker** - Nest with young on May 20 at BCNP (LMc).
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** - 4 on April 11 at Cherokee Park, Lou (DO).
- Hairy Woodpecker** - Nest with young on May 25 at Mid (LMc); 1 feeding nest lings on May 26 in RRG (FR).
- Eastern Wood-Pewee** - First heard in Mad on April 30 (JWH); one in Gra on May 24 (JP).
- Acadian Flycatcher** - 3 on May 9 at JMF (DO); 25 on May 19 at Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS); 6 on May 24 in Gra (JP); 8 on May 25 at Mid and 7 on May 30 at BCWP (LMc).
- Willow Flycatcher** - 1 on May 9 at Lou Water Company (DO); 1 on May 9 at Pet (LMc); 3 singing at MCFH on May 15 (FB); 1 on May 21 at Wol (FR).
- Least Flycatcher** - 1 on May 9 at JMF (DO).

Eastern Kingbird - First seen in Boone County on April 19 (*vide* LMc).

Great-crested Flycatcher - First heard at Mad on April 28 (JWH); 1 in Gra on May 25 (JP).

Purple Martin - 20 on April 13 near Bel (FR).

Tree Swallow - A high number of 75 on April 4 at Can (JP).

Cliff Swallow - At least 10 were seen on April 6 in a colony at Spring Fork Bridge, Gra (JP); 15+ active nests on May 11 at Glake (SS); numerous nests at Mark on May 8, also present at Cra and in small numbers at Wol (LMc) and on May 21 (FR); colony stable on May 23 at Lau (CB).

Fish Crow - 1 on April 3 and 26 at Sled (MM); 7 on May 21 along the levee at Hic (CP); 1 at KD Village on May 23 (BBC).

Carolina Chickadee - Nest with 4 young in a tree cavity (3 ft. above ground) on May 10 at Bur (LMc).

Red-breasted Nuthatch - 5 males and 3 females on May 5, 8 on May 6 and 6 on May 26 in RRG (FR).

Carolina Wren - Normal numbers in Gra during the period (JP).

Bewick's Wren - 1 on April 13 in Barren County and 1 on April 27 at McEl (DR).

Winter Wren - 1 on April 11 at Cherokee Park, Lou (DO); 1 at Mid on April 14 (LMc).

Golden-crowned Kinglet - 1 on March 27 at Porter Farm, Gra (JP).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Recorded from April 16 - 30 at Mad (JWH).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher - 5 on April 10 at Joe Creason Park, Lou (DO); returned to Gra by April 12 (JP); active nest on April 25 at General Butler State Park (LMc).

Eastern Bluebird - Normal numbers in Gra (JP).

Veery - 2 on May 9 at JMF (DO).

Gray-cheeked Thrush - In Mad on May 10 and 11 (JWH).

Swainson's Thrush - 1 on April 4 at Pro (CM, KM); present at Mad from May 4 to May 22 (JWH).

Wood Thrush - In song in Mad from May 9 to May 30 (JWH); 1 on May 24 in Gra (JP).

American Robin - A pair laid 3 eggs in a ground nest on April 20, 21, 23 in Owen, nest was disturbed and adults did not return (BE).

Brown Thrasher - 2 on March 19 at LPew and March 23 in Mad (JWH); 2 on April 4 at SC (JP).

American Pipit - 1 on March 21 at Central Park, Boone County (LMc); 25 on April 4 at Pro (CM, KM); 1 lingered to May 18 at McEl (DR).

Loggerhead Shrike - 4 in Fulton County on April 2 (CP).

White-eyed Vireo - 1 to 3 observed in Gra on May 24 (JP).

Bell's Vireo - Several birds were present at Nat with a nest containing four eggs observed on May 24 (BBC).

Solitary Vireo - 1 on April 10 at Joe Creason Park, Lou (DO); 3 on May 6 in RRG,

one on nest being fed by a male in RRG on May 28 (FR).

Yellow-throated Vireo - 1 on April 10 at Joe Creason Park, Lou (DO); 3 on April 19 at MCNP (MB); first heard in Mad on May 9 (JWH).

Warbling Vireo - 2 on April 13 at Mos (MB); 2 in song on May 11 at LPew (JWH); 3 on May 16 in Gra (JP).

Red-eyed Vireo - 102 on May 5 on Yahoo Falls trail and 117 on May 19 in Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS); 4 on May 25 in Gra (JP).

Blue-winged Warbler - 5+ from May 11 to 13 at Glake (SL, BS, SS).

Tennessee Warbler - In song in Mad from April 30 to May 13 (JWH).

Northern Parula - 1 on April 12 at SC and 1 in Gra on May 24 (JP); 1 in song near Mad on April 20 (JWH); 2 on May 6 in RRG (FR).

Black-throated Blue Warbler - 1 on May 9 at BCNP (*vide* LMc).

Yellow-rumped Warbler - Last observation in Gra was 4 birds on April 11 (JP); last recorded in Mad on May 2 (JWH).

Yellow-throated Warbler - 1 on April 13 at SC (JP); 3 on April 19 at MCNP (MB); 6 on May 6 in RRG (FR).

Black-throated Green Warbler - 12 on May 6 in RRG (FR); 58 on May 19 Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS).

Pine Warbler - 1 on March 11 at SC (JP); in song at Mad from March 25 through May 30 (JWH); 8 on May 6 in RRG (FR).

Prairie Warbler - 1 at Porter Farm at SC on May 23 (JP).

Palm Warbler - 3 on May 2 at Sawyer Park, Lou (DO); 1 on May 6 at SC (JP)

Bay-breasted Warbler - 1 being chased by a Red-breasted Nuthatch on May 6 in RRG (FR).

Blackpoll Warbler - 1 on May 9 at Panther Creek Park, Daviess County (JP); 1 on May 17 at Bel (FR).

Black-and-White Warbler - 14 on May 6 in RRG (FR).

American Redstart - 1 in Gra on May 16 and 24 (JP).

Cerulean Warbler - 2 on April 19 at MCNP (MB); 1 on May 9 at JMF (DO); 8 singing on May 25 at Mid (LMc).

Prothonotary Warbler - 1 on April 17 at Mos (MB); 1 singing near Mad on April 20 (JWH); 4 on May 5 at Yahoo Arch, BSNR (SS); 1 on May 9 at Wol and 1 on May 9 at Ghe (LMc).

Worm-eating Warbler - 4 on May 9 at JMF (DO); 19 on May 19 Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS); 3 singing on May 30 at BCNP (LMc).

Swainson's Warbler - 1 on May 5 on Yahoo Arch Trail and 4 on May 19 at Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS); 1 on May 26 on Rock Bridge Trail, and 1 on May 28 RRG (FR); 1 on May 30 in RRG (DO).

Ovenbird - 1 on April 19 at MCNP (MB); in song from April 30 to May 18 at LPew (JWH); 18 on May 6 in RRG (FR); 5 on May 25 at Mid and 8 on May 30 at BCNP (LMc).

Northern Waterthrush - 1 on April 4 at Can (JP); 1 on May 9 at JMF (DO); 1 on

- May 11 at LPew and Mad on May 12-13 (JWH).
- Louisiana Waterthrush** - 3 bickering in Boone County on April 1 (FR); 1 in Gra on April 11 and May 24 (JP); 2 on April 19 at MCNP (MB); 1 on May 9 at JMF (DO); adult feeding young out of the nest on May 25 at Mid (LMc).
- Kentucky Warbler** - 3 on May 9 at JMF (DO).
- Hooded Warbler** - 18 on May 6 in RRG (FR); 5 on May 25 at Mid and 2 on May 30 at BCNP (LMc); 37 on May 19 in Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS).
- Yellow-breasted Chat** - 1 on May 9 at Lou Water Company (DO); 1 on May 4 and 25 near Mad (JWH); 1 in Gra on May 12 and 24 (JP).
- Summer Tanager** - 1 on May 21 at SC and 1 on May 26 in Gra (JP); recorded several times in May near Mad (JWH).
- Scarlet Tanager** - In song near Mad from May 2 to 15 (JWH); 28 on May 19 in Bear Creek area, BSNR (SS); 1 on May 23 in Gra (JP).
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak** - 5 to 10 birds from April 28 to May 12 at feeder in Murray, Calloway County (CP); at Mad from April 29 to May 21 (JWH); 2 on May 9 at SC feeder (JP).
- Blue Grosbeak** - 1 male and occasionally a female seen on 11 occasions between April 27 and May 29 in Hart County (MS); 1 on May 9 and May 25 at Pet gravel pit (LMc); a total of 3 birds were seen in different areas of Gra on May 16, 23 and 24 (JP); 1 on May 19 near Mad (JWH); several were observed along the AA Highway in northern Kentucky during the period.(FR).
- Dickcissel** - 1 on May 9 at Pet (LMc); 1 on May 16 at Wal (DO); abundant in His and present at Bark and KD on May 23 (BBC); 10 were seen in Bourbon County on May 28 (FR).
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** - 1 on May 11 at Tom Sawyer Park, Lou (DO). Documentation submitted to KBRC.
- Vesper Sparrow** - 5 on April 11 at Western Kentucky Univ. farm, War (MB).
- Lark Sparrow** - 1 on April 28 near Wood (DR); 2 on May 23 at Nat (BBC).
- Savannah Sparrow** - 1 in Kenton County on April 25 (FR); 2 on April 29 at Bark (JTE, MM, CP); 1 singing from May 2 to 16 at Greater Cincinnati Airport, Boone County (LMc).
- Grasshopper Sparrow** - 3 on May 3 on Chamberlain Lane near Lou (DO).
- Henslow's Sparrow** - 2 on May 24 at Nat (BBC).
- Fox Sparrow** - 1 on March 3 at Mad (JWH).
- Lincoln's Sparrow** - 1 on May 9 at JMF (DO); 1 on May 9 at EBP (LMc); 1 on May 11 at Glake (BS, SS).
- White-throated Sparrow** - Last observation in Gra on April 20 (JP); last seen in Mad on May 10 (JWH).
- White-crowned Sparrow** - 1 at SC feeder on March 7, 11, and April 20 (JP); 6 on April 4 at Pro (CM, KM); last observed in Hart County on April 27 (MS); 1 at Mad from May 2 to 5 (JWH).
- Dark-eyed Junco** - Scarce in Gra, last observation on March 7 (JP); last seen in

Mad on April 11 (JWH).

SMITH'S LONGSPUR - 1 at Open on March 11(DR). Videotape and documentation submitted to KBRC

Bobolink - 1 male on May 6 and May 26 at Cane and 10 males singing in Bourbon County on May 26 (FR); 4 on May 9 at Pet (LMc); 6 on May 11 at Tom Sawyer Park, Lou (DO).

Western Meadowlark - 10 on March 10 and 11 in Fulton County (DR).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD - 1 on May 18 at McEl (DR); one on May 24 at Wal (MB). Documentation submitted.

Purple Finch - 1 to 4 birds at SC feeder on March 6, April 4, 17 and 19 (JP); approx. 70 at feeder on April 17 at Munfordville, Hart County (SK); 3 on April 19 at MCNP (MB); 1 to 8 birds at Bur April 23 to May 9 (LMc).

Pine Siskin - Last seen in Mad on April 27 (JWH); 2 at a Pet feeder from May 5 to 10 (LMc).

Evening Grosbeak - 3 on May 23 at a feeder in Laurel County (CB).

Contributors. Mark Bennett (MB), Tom Biebighauser (TB), Clay Black (CB), Fred Busroe (FB), Hap Chambers (Hap), Lester Doyle (LD), Brenda Eden (BE), Jackie Elmore (JE), Joe T. Erwin (JTE), James W. Hancock (JWH), Mary Harrel (MH), Logan Kistler (LK), Steve Kistler (SK), Lew Kornman (LK), Sunni Lawless (SL), Lee McNeely (LMc), Mike Miller (MM), Carl Mowery (CM), Kathy Mowery (KM), Darrin O'Brien (DO), Brainard Palmer-Ball (BPB), Lynda Perry (LP), Clell Peterson (CP), Joyce Porter (JP), Frank Renfrow (FR), David Roemer (DR), Barbara Stedman (BS), Stephen Stedman (SS), Mitchell Sturgeon (MS).

Birds currently under review by the Kentucky Bird Records Committee:

Red-necked Grebe - 1 at Dix Dam, Mercer County on 19 March 1998.

Glossy Ibis - 1 at McElroy Lake, Warren County on 17 May 1998.

Marbled Godwit - 5 at Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan County on 22 April 1998.

Whimbrel - 17 at McElroy Lake, Warren County on 19 May 1998.

Red-necked Phalarope - 1 at McElroy Lake, Warren County on 6 May 1998.

Smith's Longspur - 1 at Open Pond, Fulton County on 11 March 1998.

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FIELD NOTES

NORTHERN SHOVELERS NESTING IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY

The spring of 1997 was extraordinarily wet across most of western Kentucky, and the development of "transient" or "karst" lakes and ponds in the western Highland Rim was extensive. Probably the most significant cluster of transient lakes in this region is located north of the Fort Campbell Military Reservation in southern Christian County. Since first observing these ponds in 1991, I have referred to them collectively as "Morgan's Pond", a local name apparently applied to a body of water that used to be present along KY 117 west of US 41 (but which now apparently does not hold water permanently). In 1997, these ponds were very extensive and supported a diverse assemblage of migrant waterbirds similar to the lakes near Woodburn in Warren County.

During the spring waterfowl migration, Northern Shovelers (*Anas clypeata*) were common at transient lakes throughout the region, including Morgan's Pond. On 8 May 1997, Jackie Elmore and I observed two males sleeping on a small pond north of KY 117, about 0.2 mile west of US 41. As much as any other dabbling duck, Northern Shovelers seem to be observed in pairs in spring, and those males that are unpaired are frequently seen in pursuit of females, sometimes in groups with other males. For this reason, it seemed odd that two males would be loafing in such a manner, and I remarked that it seemed possible that the birds might be nesting. In nesting species like Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), the late spring/early summer observation of lone or groups of unpaired males resting contently during the day is often an indication that females are nearby on nests.

On 5 June 1997, I returned to Morgan's Pond in search of lingering waterfowl and shorebirds, and I found a female Northern Shoveler with a brood of nine relatively small young on a larger body of water just NE of where the two males had been observed in early May. The young were conspicuous due to their relatively large, orangish-and-dark bills, and mottled, orangish-brown and dark brown plumage. Nearby young Mallards and Blue-winged Teal were more yellowish-tan in overall ground color, and their bill pattern was more extensively dark. I returned to the area on 18 June and found six young still in the company of the female, as well as a second brood of 12 larger young on a nearby pond on the south side of KY 117. The brood of six young was again observed on 25 June, at which time they were approaching the size of the female. The two largest bodies of water at Morgan's Pond remained into mid-July, so one must assume that these young fledged

successfully.

This represents the first documented breeding record for Northern Shovelers in Kentucky, but the observation confirms in my mind that the species actually bred at or near McElroy Lake, Warren County, in 1989. That year small numbers lingered at the transient lakes in Warren County into late May, and two males were observed at McElroy Lake on 6 June (Palmer-Ball and Boggs 1991). Subsequently, a closely-associated group of four birds in female/immature plumage were observed at McElroy Lake on 17 July, at least a month before fall migrants should have arrived. In the absence of further evidence of nesting, this observation was not considered conclusive, but it certainly must have represented a successful breeding attempt.

Northern Shovelers typically nest to the north of Kentucky, but in the western Great Plains region they nest at a latitude similar to that of Kentucky (Dubowy 1996). In the midwestern states, nestings are essentially unknown south of the Great Lakes (Bohlen 1989; Dubowy 1996; Keller *et al.* 1986; Peterjohn and Rice 1991; K. Brock, *pers. comm.*). Likewise, there are a few summer records for Tennessee (Robinson 1990), but none for nesting. Blue-winged Teal seem to nest predictably in Kentucky only when wet spring weather causes transient lakes in the Highland Rim region of southcentral and southwestern Kentucky to persist into the nesting season. Like the teal, it appears that shovelers also nest opportunistically under those circumstances, albeit more rarely. If this is true, it would seem that careful future study will result in additional nesting records. It should be noted that these observations serve as yet another indication of the uniqueness of the region's remarkable transient lakes.

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ROUGH RIVER GREAT BLUE HERONRY

Rough River was running high, but the almost inaudible trolling motor allowed Lowell Foreman, Rebecca Foreman, Mary Harrel and I to maneuver the flat bottom boat in the swift current on May 24, 1998. We were headed downstream to check out the heron rookery that Lowell Foreman and party discovered last summer. We proceeded further downstream to where the Rough River forms the boundary between Grayson and Ohio counties. Coming to a bend in the river we saw the first heron nest, a loosely packed platform of sticks laid out on a horizontal branch. It was a single nest high in a sycamore tree. As we rounded the bend the rest of the colony came into view. All nests were in sycamore trees arranged on or in the upper branches. The greatest number of nests in one tree was seven. Some trees had three, four, and one had five nests. Immediately, the adult birds flew up and started circling about. Three nests had young birds big enough to be standing. Our best estimate of the number of birds was 32. There were 35 nests located on both sides of the river. Buried back from the river bank in some brushy trees at a much lower level were three or four unidentified structures, leafier and brushier than the Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) nests. Perched at the rookery site in several dead trees were a Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*), which both flew off as we approached.

Rough River in this part of the country is scarcely travelled due to the up-rooted trees, snags, logs and gravel bars obstructing boat travel. Had the river been lower, we would have had to make several portages. This site, as far as we know, is the only Great Blue Heronry on Rough River. --- **JOYCE PORTER**, Falls of the Rough, Kentucky.

FIRST KENTUCKY RECORD OF SMITH'S LONGSPUR

On the morning of March 11, 1993, a Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*) was observed near Open Pond in Fulton County, Kentucky. The bird was flushed from the edge of the road, its white outer tail feathers giving the initial impression of being a Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*). As it flew across the road, white patches on its shoulders were visible which suggested a Smith's Longspur. The bird landed in a corn stubble field near the road, and with binoculars I was able to confirm its identity.

After retrieving my scope for a closer look, I was unable to find the bird again although I heard it give a rattling call from a distant location. After searching for the better part of an hour, I relocated it along the grassy edge of the road and obtained excellent looks from a distance of 40-50 feet. I was able to obtain some video of the bird for documentation purposes.

The Smith's Longspur appeared to be a male beginning its molt into breeding plumage. The outline around the cheek was darkening with some white visible around its edges. The underparts were buffy in color being richer on the breast. Fine streaks were apparent across the upper breast and flanks. The white shoulder patch was usually concealed by the breast feathers but was very evident when the bird was in flight. The upperparts were a darker buffish-brown and lacked the reddish tones of the Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*). The rattling call of the Smith's Longspur seemed to be somewhat harsher than that of the Lapland.

The Smith's Longspur winters to Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana and should be expected to occur at least casually in extreme western Kentucky during migration and winter, possibly with Lapland Longspurs.

The bird was seen by several observers through March 14 and documentation has been submitted to the KBRC. ---**DAVID ROEMER**, 294 Drakes Creek Drive, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42103.

NEST SITE SELECTION AND NESTING SUCCESS IN WHITE-EYED VIREOS

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Introduction

Among birds, predators are often the cause of nest failures. For example, Lack (1954) estimated that 75% of all eggs and nestlings lost from open cup nests are taken by predators. In response many birds build their nests in sites inaccessible to or camouflaged from predators. However, several factors must be considered by birds selecting nest sites. For example, higher nests may be less accessible to snakes and large mammalian predators, while lower nests may be less accessible to avian predators such as Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) and Common Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) (Best and Stauffer 1980).

The risk of brood parasitism is another factor that may influence nest site selection by birds. Brown-headed Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*), well-known brood parasites, have become more abundant over the past 30 years (Brittingham and Temple 1983) and, as a result, many songbirds may be at greater risk of parasitism. For example, recent studies suggest that cowbirds may parasitize three-fourths of the nests of neotropical migrants in small forest fragments in Illinois (Robinson 1992).

To avoid predation and brood parasitism, birds may build nests in locations where vegetation conceals nests. Well-concealed nests may be more successful than less concealed nests. For example, recent investigations suggest that well concealed Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) nests are more successful than less concealed nests (Martin and Roper 1988). In contrast, however, a study of nest site selection by Northern Cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) revealed no correlation between the degree of nest concealment and nest success (Filliater *et al.* 1994). Additional work is needed to determine those characteristics of nest sites that might influence nesting success. The objective of our study was to examine nest site selection by White-eyed Vireos (*Vireo griseus*), an open-cup, edge-nesting species. Nest site selection by vireos may be particularly important because predation rates may be higher in edge habitats and because cowbirds frequently parasitize their nests.

Methods

Our study was conducted from May - August 1996 at the Central Kentucky Wildlife Management Area in Madison County, Kentucky. During May and June, vireos were captured in mist nets and banded with unique combinations of colored, plas-

tic bands to permit individual identification. Pairs were observed 2-3 times per week to delineate territories and to determine nesting status. Nests were located by observing females during nest construction, searching sites where vireos were frequently seen, and following adults when they were feeding nestlings. Once located, nests were monitored to determine whether they were successful or not. Successful nests were those from which at least one young vireo fledged, while unsuccessful nests were those from which no young fledged due to either predation or cowbird parasitism.

For all nests, we determined the species of plant in which the nest was located and, after nests fledged young or were lost to predation, we also determined: the height of the nest above ground, distance to the nearest edge, and nest visibility.

Visibility was measured at 1, 2, and 3 meters from nests in the four cardinal directions, and at 1 and 2 meters above nests. At each point, we estimated how much of the nest was visible. A nest that was completely visible was 100% visible, while one that could not be seen was 0% visible. Other measurements taken for each nest included nest width and height, cup depth, distance from main trunk, and the diameter of supporting branches.

Analyses were conducted using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS Institute 1989). All values are presented as mean + standard error.

Results and Discussion

We located 31 vireo nests. Fourteen nests, or 45%, were successful. Three unsuccessful nests were lost due to cowbird parasitism, while 14 were lost to predation. Even this success rate may be higher than typical for White-eyed Vireos. For example, investigators in Virginia monitored 47 nests over a 7-year period and found that only 30% successfully fledged young (Hopp *et al.* 1995).

The 31 vireo nests in our study were located in 11 different species of trees and vines, with most in Rough-leaved Dogwoods (*Cornus drummondii*; N = 11) and Eastern Redcedars (*Juniperus virginiana*; N = 6). The mean height of nests above ground was $0.80 + 0.05$ (SE) meters, while the mean distance of nests from the nearest edge was $3.4 + 0.6$ meters. Vireo nests averaged $5.57 + 0.18$ cm in diameter, $6.8 + 0.3$ cm long, and $4.3 + 0.1$ cm deep. Also, nests were an average of $63.5 + 7.7$ cm from the main trunk and attached to branches with mean diameters of $2.5 + 0.2$ mm.

Mean estimated visibility of vireo nests in the four cardinal directions was $31.8 + 4.2\%$. Above nests, mean visibility was $45.6 + 7.4\%$ at 1 meter and $39.2 + 7.4\%$ at 2 meters. A comparison of successful and unsuccessful vireo nests revealed no significant differences in visibility, height, or any other measured characteristic (Mann-Whitney U tests, $P > 0.1$). Similarly, a recent study in Virginia

found no apparent patterns among vireo nest sites in the density of vegetation above, below, and adjacent to nests (Hopp *et al.* 1995).

Although we found no differences between the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful nests, vireos do appear to follow certain behavioral rules when selecting nest sites. These include: (1) build the nest within a meter or so of the ground, (2) build the nest at the end of a relatively long Y-shaped branch, and (3) provide some concealment for the nest. Other birds also appear to follow certain rules when choosing nest sites. For example, simple rules for selecting nest sites appear to be followed by Northern Cardinals (Filliater *et al.* 1994), Field Sparrows (*Spizella pusilla*; Best 1978), and White-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*, Morton *et al.* 1993). In none of these species, however, are specific behavioral rules associated with an increased probability of nest success.

Many songbirds, particularly those like White-eyed Vireos that nest in edge habitats, suffer relatively high rates of nest predation and parasitism. This is not surprising because such habitats support a diversity of potential predators with a variety of searching strategies and, often, large populations of Brown-headed Cowbirds (Gates and Gysel 1978, Brittingham and Temple 1983). Some authors have suggested that this diversity of predators and parasites may essentially eliminate predictably safe nest-sites. However, the apparent absence of such sites does not mean that the behavioral rules just described do not represent "an evolutionary response to selection for safe sites" (Filliater *et al.* 1994:766). Rather, these rules will probably be of limited benefit in predator-rich communities because different predators search in different ways and a site safe from one predator may be more vulnerable to a different predator.

Although not quantified, our study site does contain a diversity of potential nest predators, including but not limited to black rat snakes (*Elaphe obsoleta*), eastern chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*), long-tailed weasels (*Mustela frenata*), Blue Jays, and Common Crows. Given this diversity of predators and the apparent absence of safe nest sites, the appropriate strategy for species that suffer high rates of nest predation may be to limit defense of nests with eggs or young because defense carries the risk of injury or even death (Filliater *et al.* 1994). Thus, once a nest is lost to predation, vireos should attempt to re-nest as quickly as possible and, if needed, attempt to re-nest as many times as possible during the breeding season.

White-eyed Vireos in our study population do appear to follow this strategy. Adults are weak defenders of nests, typically uttering a few vocalizations but not closely approaching potential nest predators (Ritchison, *pers. observ.*). Once a nest is lost, female vireos can construct a new nest in 3 - 5 days and begin a new clutch shortly thereafter (Ritchison, *pers. observ.*). With a nesting season that extends from mid-April through late July, vireos can make at least three or four nesting attempts per breeding season.

In summary, only 14 of 31 vireo nests in our study successfully fledged young and we found no differences between the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful nests. Our results, and those from studies of other edge-nesting species, suggest that many nesting birds, in an attempt to improve their nesting success, follow a few simple behavioral rules for placement of nests, exhibit weak defense of eggs and nestlings, and re-nest quickly after losing a nest to predation. Such a strategy may be best in areas with a wide array of predators and no predictably safe nest sites.

Acknowledgments

We thank Jeff Hawkins, Pari Beigi, and Eric Williams for assistance in locating nests. Our work was supported by a Kentucky NSF EPSCoR grant (to Gary Ritchison).

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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. Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. 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. Burt L. Monroe, Jr. Avian Research Grant Fund

Persons that need money (*i.e.*, up to \$500) to assist them in conducting research on birds in Kentucky should contact the K.O.S. Burt L. Monroe, Jr. Avian Research Fund Committee *c/o* Blaine Ferrell, Department of Biology, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101 (email: blaine.ferrell@wku.edu) for a set of guidelines and an application form.

K.O.S. Fall Meeting

The fall meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society will be held at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park 25-27 September. Please mark your calendars and join the fun and fellowship with like-minded birders. If you would like to make a presentation as part of the Friday evening program, contact Marilee Thompson, Vice President and program chairperson.