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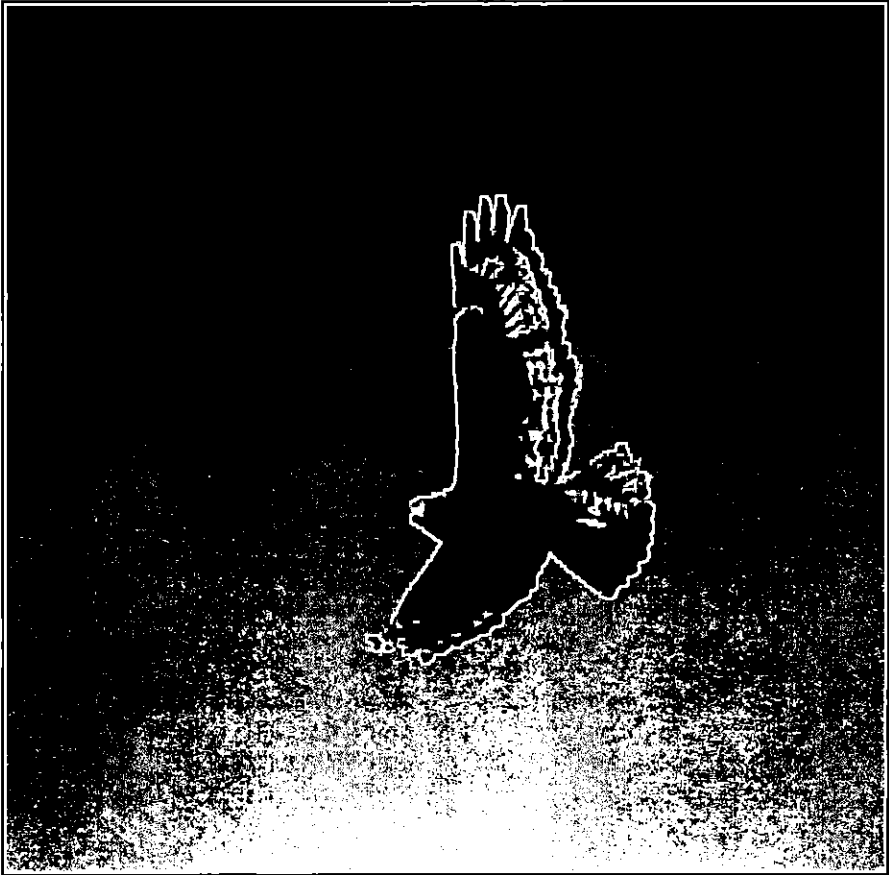
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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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THE COVER

We thank David Roemer for the cover photograph of an adult dark-intermediate morph Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis calurus*), photographed 18 February 2002 in Ohio County. Financial support for color cover provided by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.



WESTERN FORMS OF RED-TAILED HAWK IN KENTUCKY

Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., and David Roemer

Most Kentucky birders are quite familiar with the seemingly ubiquitous Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) that occurs statewide throughout the year. The resident and fairly consistent looking local birds are joined by a large number of migrants and winter residents during the non-breeding season. While many of these birds are also individuals of the widespread eastern North American race (*B. j. borealis*), some belong to races and forms from the western part of the continent that breed as far away as Alaska and that may differ considerably in appearance from eastern Red-tails.

Eastern *B. j. borealis* (including all birds that breed and most that pass through and overwinter in the state) is a race that exhibits some degree of variability in plumage. All attentive Kentucky birders have noted adult "white-bellied" birds and adults with heavy belly bands, but there are also several other characters that show less obvious variation including the extent of light mottling in the scapulars, the extent of dark feathering in the throat and underwing, and the amount of dark banding in the otherwise predominantly reddish-orange tail feathers.

However, the variation in eastern birds is minimal when compared to the remarkable polymorphism exhibited by some of the races and forms that inhabit western North America. The most widespread race, *B. j. calurus*, breeds across much of western Canada and the western United States and is highly migratory (Wheeler 2003); a significant number of individuals winter in the south-central United States including areas east of the Mississippi River. *B. j. calurus* exhibits a wide spectrum of plumages from light birds that are not much more heavily marked than dark eastern birds to dark chocolate-brown birds.

Also exhibiting a striking degree of polymorphism is *B. j. harlani*, a more-often-than-not dark-plumaged race that breeds primarily in Alaska and northwestern Canada, and migrates as far as the south-central United States to overwinter (Wheeler 2003). Although a majority of *B. j. harlani* are actually intermediate morphs, both light and dark morph birds also occur in the southeastern United States (Wheeler 2003). Accumulated data suggest that *B. j. harlani* is quite a bit less numerous than *B. j. calurus* east of the Mississippi including Kentucky.

Another "western" Red-tail that occurs in Kentucky is the "Krider's Hawk," actually a pale morph of the eastern *B. j. borealis* that breeds in the northern Great Plains and winters primarily in the south-central United States (Wheeler 2003). This form does not really "behave" like a true race in that it breeds in a relatively distinct geographic area, but most birds within that breeding range do not exhibit traits that distinguish the form (i.e., they look more like typical *B. j. borealis*). Primarily for this reason, raptor authorities have not treated Krider's Hawk uniformly. Regardless of its taxonomic treatment, however, it is in effect just another form of Red-tailed Hawk exhibiting geographically centralized genetic influence of a group of characteristics (in this case a morph that exhibits dilute or pale coloration, especially on the tail, head, and underparts). Krider's Hawks occur regularly during winter in Kentucky, especially the western portion, although they may be somewhat less numerous than *B. j. calurus*.

In addition to those listed above, several other races of Red-tailed Hawk occur in North America. However, most are more sedentary and have not been documented to occur regularly outside of their normal ranges, so they will not be discussed here. The intent of this article is two-fold: 1) to summarize published and unpublished sightings of western Red-tailed Hawk forms in Kentucky; and 2) to comment briefly on the occurrence of each form in the state.

Over the years, individuals of these two races and one morph have been infrequently reported in Kentucky's ornithological literature. In more recent years, they have been reported with greater regularity, probably due more to an interest in detecting and reporting

them than to an increase in their occurrence. Evolving hand in hand with an interest in these forms (and perhaps being the primary cause for it) has been coverage of them in recent identification guides. Taking this coverage into an entirely new realm has been Brian K. Wheeler's most recent raptor identification guide (Wheeler 2003). In fact, this guide has taken the taxonomy of Red-tailed Hawks to such an ambitious level that great care must be used in the field to assign the correct label to many individuals. Especially in the absence of another descriptive system, Wheeler's terminology will undoubtedly become the standard for reporting Red-tailed Hawk plumages.

Table 1 summarizes the known sightings of apparent individuals of western forms reported in Kentucky prior to the summer of 2005. In addition to published records, Table 1 contains reports received through a general appeal on the BIRDKY listserve and correspondence with active birders. Doubtless some valid observations were missed in the data collection process, but one effect of this article will be to elicit submission of missing sightings.

It is worth noting at the onset of this summary that the paucity of information on the various plumages of western Red-tailed Hawks in most popular resources prior to the late 1980s complicates current interpretation of many earlier reports of these birds. One example is the lack of a clear description of an intermediate (rufous) morph of *B. j. calurus* in earlier field guides. In many field situations intermediate (rufous), dark-intermediate (dark rufous) and dark morph *B. j. calurus* cannot be distinguished from one another, and until recently most dark individuals were not critically examined for the subtle differences that distinguish them from one another. For this reason, most earlier reports of dark *B. j. calurus* listed in Table 1 have been interpreted as being collectively intermediate/dark-intermediate/dark morphs. Another note of caution concerns the fact that there is apparently a gradual continuum of plumages of *B. j. calurus* and *B. j. harlani* from "light" to "dark" that is represented fairly evenly along a spectrum. This being the case, correctly assigning individual birds observed in the field to one of up to nine morph classes can be extremely challenging.

In recent years, about 5-10 individuals of western Red-tailed Hawk forms have been accounted for each winter, with winter site fidelity being exhibited by several individuals wearing distinct plumages (Table 1). Most reports have come from open agricultural and reclaimed mine land in the western portion of the state (Figure 1). The extent to which true "migrants" are included in this body of records is unclear, but individuals occurring at the early and late extremes may well be birds simply passing through. The earliest well-documented reports of western Red-tails have been made in early October, while the latest, well-documented report falls in mid-May (Table 1). Interestingly, within the body of records, few reports of juvenile *B. j. calurus* and none of *B. j. harlani* are present. Exactly why juveniles of these forms are poorly represented in the Kentucky data set is unknown, but, in contrast, relatively more reports of juvenile Krider's Hawk exist.

The following paragraphs summarize the various plumages for each race or form and provide cautionary notes and proposed guidelines for reporting:

***B. j. calurus*:** Wheeler uses the following terminology for classes of morphs – light, light-intermediate (light rufous), intermediate (rufous), dark-intermediate (dark rufous), and dark. Under sub-optimal field conditions, many individuals probably cannot be reliably assigned to one of these five categories, and, as noted above, some individuals lie between the "norms" for each. While not trying to discourage field observers from attempting to assign individuals to one of Wheeler's morph types, it is recommended that sightings be qualified to reflect the degree of certainty with which the identity has been assessed. For example, in many field situations it is impossible to distinguish among intermediate, dark-intermediate, and dark morph birds, so some dark birds may be reported simply as "darkish" morphs. Another pitfall is the presence of a small percentage of eastern *B. j. borealis* that breed in Canadian boreal forests and that closely resemble light morph *B. j. calurus*. Some

Table 1. Summary of Western Red-tailed Hawks Reported in Kentucky

Location	Date	age / morph (if given)	Source
Fulton Co.	7 Nov 1948	adult	R. Mengel (1965)
Bowling Green, Warren Co.	wintered 1 year in late 1960s	juv / intermediate	D. Roemer (pers comm.)
Lincoln Co.	1970s or 1980s	probably an adult	W. Kemper (pers comm.)
Jct. KY 1694/KY 329, Oldham Co.	1980s	adult	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
Mayo Lane, Oldham Co.	30 Jan 1983	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Sloughs WMA, Henderson Co.	16 Mar 1986	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Steele's Bottom, Gallatin Co.	19 Dec 1987	adult	L. McNeely (KW 64:29, 1988)
"	15 Dec 1990	presumed same indiv	L. McNeely (KW 67:30, 1991)
"	21 Dec 1991	"	L. McNeely (KW 68:26, 1992)
Paradise CBC, Ohio Co.	26 Dec 1988	adult	L. McNeely, et al. (KW 65:14, 1989)
Homestead Unit Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	10 Feb 1990	juv / probably intermediate	B. Palmer-Ball (KW 66:38, 1990)
Paradise CBC, Ohio Co.	1 Jan 1991	adult	L. McNeely (KW 67:13, 1991)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	23 Feb 1991	adult. (same indiv?)	B. Palmer-Ball, et al. (KW 67:30, 1991)
Mercer Co./Boyle Co. area	winter 1991-92 or 1992-93	probably an adult	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
Nr William Whitley St Hist Site, Lincoln Co.	1990s	probably an adult	W. Kemper (pers comm)
SW of Harrodsburg, Mercer Co.	mid-1990s	adult	W. Kemper (pers comm)
Nr Calvert City, Marshall Co.	11 Feb 1996	adult	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Bowling Green, Warren Co.	15 Oct 1996	adult / dark-intermediate	D. Roemer (notes)
Livingston Co.	14 Dec 1997	adult / dark	D. Roemer (notes)
Ca. 3 mi SE of Hickman, Fulton Co.	16 Dec 1997	adult / intermediate	B. Palmer-Ball/D. Roemer (notes)
"	27 Dec 1997	same individual	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
"	13 Dec 1998	"	B. Palmer-Ball/J. Dunn (notes)
"	14 Jan 2001	"	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Logan Co.	18 Oct 1998	age?	D. Roemer (notes)
Lyon Co.	18 Nov 1998	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Aurora Ferry Rd, Boone Co.	11 Nov 1999	juv	L. McNeely (pers comm.)
East Bend Power Plant, Boone Co.	30 Dec 2000	adult (presumed same indiv)	L. McNeely (KW 77:28, 2001)
"	29 Dec 2001 & 12 Jan 2002	presumed same indiv	L. McNeely (notes); K. Caminiti (photos)
"	2 Nov 2002	"	L. McNeely (KW 79:7, 2003)
Nr. Bellevue, Boone Co.	20 Jan 2003	"	L. McNeely (KW 79:46, 2003)
East Bend Power Plant, Boone Co.	15 Nov 2003	"	L. McNeely (KW 80:7, 2004)

Table 1 continued.

Location	Date	age / morph (if given)	Source
Fulton Co.	16 Dec 1999	adult	D. Roemer (video)
Christian Co.	14 Jan 2000	age?	D. Roemer (notes)
SW Boyd Co.	16 Jan 2000	adult / intermediate	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Warren Co.	25 Dec 2000	age? / probably intermediate	D. Roemer (notes)
Ca. 5 mi E of Hickman, Fulton Co.	14 Jan 2001	adult / dark or dark-intermediate	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Near Green River Lake, Adair Co.	7 Mar 2001	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Henderson Co.	3 Nov 2001	juv / dark	D. Roemer (notes)
Union Co.	18 Dec 2001	adult	D. Roemer/B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Nr Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	Feb 2002	adult / intermediate	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
Ca. 4 mi N of Shelbyville, Shelby Co.	mid-Feb 2002 (2 dates)	adult	W.T. Brown (pers comm)
Ohio Co.	18 Feb 2002	adult / dark-intermediate	D. Roemer (video)
Union Co.	27 Feb 2002	adult / intermediate	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Fulton Co.	13 Nov 2002	age? (2)	D. Roemer (notes)
Homestead WMA, Ohio Co.	26 Mar 2003	adult	M. Vukovich (KW 79:67, 2003)
Nr. Morganfield, Union Co.	5 Oct 2003	adult	J. Dunn, B. Palmer-Ball (KW 80:7, 2004)
Ohio Co.	8 Nov 2003	juv	D. Roemer (notes)
Sinclair WMA, Muhlenberg Co.	20 Nov 2003	juv (same indiv as prev?)	B. Palmer-Ball (photos)
Gibraltar Mine, Muhlenberg Co.	3 Jan 2004	adult / intern or dark-intern	B. Palmer-Ball/A. Covert (KW 80:42, 2004)
"	2 & 17 Jan 2005	same individual	B. Palmer-Ball (notes) (KW 81:58, 2005)
Nr. Waverly, Union Co.	19 Jan 2004	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (KW 80:42, 2004)
Allen Co.	21 Jan 2004	adult / dark	D. Roemer (KW 80:42, 2004)
"	19 Nov 2004	same individual	D. Roemer (KW 81:7, 2005)
Logan Co.	29 Dec 2004	juv / dark-intermediate	D. Roemer (photos) (KW 81:58, 2005)
McElroy Lake, Warren Co.	1 Jan 2005	adult / intermediate	D. Roemer (video)
Near Monkey's Eyebrow, Ballard Co.	7 Jan 2005	adult / intern or dark-intern	S. Record (notes) (KW 81:58, 2005)
Harlan Co.	15 May 2005	adult	B. Yandell/M. Walter (notes)
Light morph <i>B. j. calurus</i>¹			
Lynn Grove, Calloway Co.	25 Dec 1950	adult female (DOR)	R. Mengel (1965)
Warren Co.	25 Dec 1996	probably an adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Trigg Co.	18 Jan 1998	probably an adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Fulton Co.	15 Oct 1998	probably an adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Warren Co.	1 Nov 1999	adult	D. Roemer (KW 76:5, 2000)

Fulton Co.	16 Dec 1999	adults (2)	D. Roemer (notes)
Ca. 5 mi ESE of Hickman, Fulton Co.	14 Jan 2001	adult	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Union Co.	3 Nov 2001	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Union Co.	18 Dec 2001	adult	D. Roemer/B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Warren Co.	7 Feb 2002	adult	D. Roemer (video)
Ohio Co.	9 Feb 2002	juv	D. Roemer (notes)
Ohio Co.	18 Feb 2002	adults (4); juvs (3)	D. Roemer (notes)
Union Co.	15 Mar 2002	adults (2)	D. Roemer (notes)
Fulton Co.	24 Nov 2002	adults (2)	D. Roemer (notes)
Fulton Co.	1 Dec 2002	adults (3)	D. Roemer (notes)
Warren Co.	28 Feb 2003	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
"	20 Dec 2003	same individual	D. Roemer (notes)
"	6 Jan 2004	"	D. Roemer (notes)
"	11-12 Feb 2004	"	D. Roemer (notes)
"	19 Dec 2004	"	D. Roemer (notes)
Sinclair WMA, Muhlenberg Co.	29 Oct 2003	adult	D. Roemer (KY 80:7, 2004)
Camp Mines, Union Co.	29 Oct 2003	adult	M. Monroe, B. Palmer-Ball (KY 80:7, 2004)
Warren Co.	29 Nov 2003	adult? / light-intermediate	D. Roemer (notes)
Muhlenberg Co.	7 Jan 2004	adult	D. Roemer (KY 80:42, 2004)
Henderson Co.	9 Oct 2004	adult	D. Roemer (KY 81:7, 2005)
Logan Co.	29 Dec 2004	adult	D. Roemer (KY 81:58, 2005)
Union Co.	17 Mar 2005	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
"Darkish" morph <i>B. j. harrani</i> (including intermediate, dark-intermediate, and dark morphs) ²			
Carlisle Co.	1920s	adult	R. Mengel (1965)
Nr Moscow, Hickman Co.	13 Nov 1948	adult	R. Mengel (1965)
Nr Cayce, Fulton Co.	27 Dec 1950	adult	R. Mengel (1965)
Nr Harmony Village, Oldham Co.	29 Dec 1956	adult	B. Monroe Sr./B. Monroe, Jr. (KY 52:46, 1976)
Nr Shepherdsville, Bullitt Co.	4 Dec 1981	age?	A. Barron (KY 58:28, 1982)
Paradise CBC, Ohio Co.	26 Dec 1988	probably an adult	(KY 65:14, 1989)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	3 Jan 1991	probably an adult	K. Clay/A. Wilson (KY 67:30, 1991)
"	3 Feb 1991	presumed same indiv	B. Monroe/M. Monroe (KY 67:30, 1991)
Ca. 1 mi NE of Boston, Nelson Co.	23 Dec 1995	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (KY 72:14, 1996)
"	28 Dec 1996	presumed same indiv	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (KY 73:20, 1997)
"	"	"	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (KY 77:19, 2001)
"	23 Dec 2000	"	"

Table 1 continued.

Location	Date	age / morph (if given)	Source
Lower Hickman Bottoms, Fulton Co.	15 Mar 1998	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Livingston Co.	15 Dec 1999	adult / dark	D. Roemer (notes)
N of Woodburn, Warren Co.	8 Jan 2000	adult / dark-intermediate	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
"	12 Jan 2000	same individual	D. Roemer (video)
"	30 Nov 2000	" "	D. Roemer (notes)
"	23-24 Feb 2001	" "	D. Roemer/L. Doyle (notes)
Ca. 3 mi SE of Hickman, Fulton Co.	14 Jan 2001	adult	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Trigg Co.	1 Jan 2002	adult	B. & P. Lisowsky (pers comm.)
"	25 Dec 2004	probably same indiv	B. & P. Lisowsky (KW 81:58, 2005)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	Jan 2002	adult	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
Bluegrass Pkwy, NE Nelson Co.	17 Feb 2002	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Fulton Co.	1 Dec 2002	adult / dark	D. Roemer (notes)
Nr. Rockfield, Warren Co.	3 Mar 2003	adult / dark	D. Roemer (video) (KW 79:67, 2003)
Western Fulton Co.	27 Oct 2003	adult	R. & S. Denton (KW 80:7, 2004)
Ohio Co.	26 Nov 2004	adult / dark	D. Roemer (KW 81:7, 2005)
Near Monkey's Eyebrow, Ballard Co.	18 Jan - 24 Feb 2005	adult / dark-intermediate	S. Record (photos) (KW 81:58, 2005)
Light morph <i>B. j. harland</i>			
Warren Co.	3-27 Dec 1996	adult	D. Roemer (video) (KW 73:37, 1997)
"	19 Dec 1997	same individual	D. Roemer (notes)
"	winter 2001-02 - 23 Mar 2005	" " (wintered each yr)	D. Roemer (photos) (KW 80:42, 2004; KW 81:7, 2005)
Muhlenberg Co.	28 Nov 1999	adult	D. Roemer (video) (KW 76:5, 2000)
Nr. Bardana, Ballard Co.	19 Dec 2000	adult	D. Roemer/B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Reelfoot NWR, Fulton Co.	15 Jan 2002	adult	M. Todd (pers comm.)
Near Reelfoot NWR, Fulton Co.	2 Feb 2002	adult (same indiv?)	B. Palmer-Ball (photos)
Western Fulton Co.	6 Mar 2002	adults (2) (1 likely prev indiv)	D. Roemer (video)
"	13 & 24 Nov 2002	adult (was 1 of 2 prev indivs)	D. Roemer (notes)
"	30 & 31 Dec 2002	adults (2) (same as 6 Mar 2002)	D. Roemer (notes)
Krider's Hawk ³			
Nr Brandenburg, Meade Co.	16 Oct 1940	imm female (specimen)	B. Monroe, Jr. (Mengel 1965)
Nr. Cayce, Fulton Co.	10 Nov 1948	adult	R. Mengel (1965)

Just W of Fulton, Fulton Co.	26 Dec 1950	imm (specimen)	R. Mengel (1965)
Lard Between the Lakes	11 Feb 1984	age?	D. Noonan (KW 60:24, 1984)
Peabody WMA, Muhlentberg Co.	15 Oct 1989	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (KW 66:8, 1990)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	29 Oct 1989	adults (2) (1 same as prev?)	B. Palmer-Ball (KW 66:8, 1990)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	11 Nov 1989	probably an adult	K. Clay (KW 66:8, 1990)
Mercer Co.	Nov 1989	2 (probably adults)	F. Loetscher (KW 66:8, 1990) (loc <i>vide</i> W. Kemper)
Paradise CBC (Ohio/Muhlentberg cos)	1 Jan 1990	age? (2)	(KW 66:18, 1990)
Peabody WMA, Ohio/Muhlentberg cos.	10 Feb 1990	juvs (2) (wintered?)	B. Palmer-Ball (KW 66:38, 1990)
Woodburn, Warren Co.	19 Feb 1990	adult	B. Palmer-Ball, R. Healy (KW 66:38, 1990)
I-24 and KY 453, Livingston Co.	winter early 1990s	adult	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
East Bend Power Plant, Boone Co.	19 Jan 1991	adult	L. McNeely (KW 67:30, 1991); K. Caminiti (photos)
Peabody WMA, Ohio/Muhlentberg cos.	late Feb 1991	adult & juv (wintered?)	B. Palmer-Ball (KW 67:30, 1991)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	3 Mar 1991	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Nr Burgin, Mercer Co.	15 Mar 1991	adult	F. Loetscher (KW 67:54, 1991)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	15 Nov 1993	probably an adult	K. Clay (KW 70:8, 1994)
Paradise CBC (Ohio/Muhlentberg cos.)	30 Dec 1995	probably an adult	(KW 72:12, 1996)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	28 Jan 1996	imms (2)	K. Clay et al. (KW 72:42, 1996)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	winter 1995-96	juv	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Sloughs WMA, Henderson Co.	3 Mar 1996	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Paradise CBC, Ohio/Muhlentberg cos.	1 Jan 1997	age?	(KW 73:14, 1997)
Fulton Co.	17 Dec 1997	age?	D. Roemer (notes)
Gibraltar Mine, Muhlentberg Co.	29 Dec 1997	adult	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
Sloughs WMA, Henderson Co.	10 Oct 1998	adult	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Baillard Co.	19 Dec 2000	age?	D. Roemer (notes)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	29 Dec 2000	juv	B. Palmer-Ball/D. Parker (notes)
Lower Hickman Bottoms, Fulton Co.	31 Dec 2000	adult	H. Chambers/D. O'Brien (notes)
Ca. 3.5 mi E and SE of Hickman, Fulton Co.	14 Jan 2001	adults (3; 1 banded); juv (1)	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes; photos of 1 adult)
Purchase Pkwy SW of Mayfield, Graves Co.	14 Jan 2001	adult	B. Palmer-Ball/M. Monroe (notes)
Warren Co.	23 Feb 2001	[adult?]	L. Doyle (notes)
Grant Co.	13 Nov 2001	juv	D. Roemer (notes)
Warren Co.	2 Dec 2001	adult	D. Roemer (video)
Warren Co.	29 Dec 2001	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Lyon Co.	1 Feb 2002	juv	D. Roemer (notes)
Peabody WMA, Ohio Co.	Feb 2002	adult	M. Monroe (pers comm.)
I-24 near Cadiz, Trigg Co.	6-16 Feb 2002	adult	K. Broadbent (photos)

Table 1 continued.

Location	Date	age / morph (if given)	Source
Ohio Co.	18 Feb 2002	juv	D. Roemer (video)
Fulton Co.	6 Mar 2002	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Warren Co.	22 Apr 2002	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Pike Co.	28 Dec 2003	age?	J. Carr/L. Estep (KY 80:42, 2004)
Nr. Bandana, Ballard Co.	29 Dec 2003	adult	B. Palmer-Ball (KY 80:42, 2004)
Logan Co.	29 Dec 2003	age?	D. Roemer (KY 80:42, 2004)
Warren Co.	18 Feb 2004	adult	D. Roemer (notes)
Butler Co.	17 Nov 2004	adult	D. Roemer (KY 81:7, 2005)
Muhlenberg Co.	2 Dec 2004	adult	D. Roemer (KY 81:58, 2005)
Ohio Co.	25 April 2005	juv	D. Roemer (photos)
Various Intergrades ⁴			
Union Co.	18 Dec 2001	adult <i>calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (video)
Butler Co.	1 Jan 2002	adult <i>borealis/calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (video)
Ohio Co.	18 Feb 2002	adult <i>calurus</i> x <i>harlani</i>	D. Roemer (notes)
Fulton Co.	1 Dec 2002	age? <i>calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (notes)
Union Co.	21 Dec 2002	adult <i>calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (notes)
Ballard WMA, Ballard Co.	29 Dec 2003	adult <i>borealis</i> x Krider's	B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Warren Co.	3 Jan 2004	juv <i>borealis/calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (photos)
Warren Co.	18 Feb 2004	adult light <i>calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (KY 80:42, 2004)
Livingston Co.	21 Nov 2004	adult <i>borealis</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (notes)
Warren Co.	29 Nov 2004	adult <i>calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (photos) (KY 81:7, 2005)
Warren Co.	2 Mar 2005	adult <i>calurus</i> x Krider's	D. Roemer (notes)
Unknown			
Warren Co.	Unknown	"melanistic immature"	O. Willoughby (Mengel 1965)
Logan Co.	30 Dec 1998	"darkish" <i>calurus</i> or <i>harlani</i>	D. Roemer (notes)
Ohio Co.	21 Dec 2001	adult (poss <i>calurus</i> x Krider's)	D. Roemer (video)
Peabody WMA, Muhlenberg Co.	26 Nov 2004	age? (prob "darkish" <i>calurus</i>)	D. Roemer/B. Palmer-Ball (notes)
Henderson Co.	17 Mar 2005	age? (prob dark <i>calurus</i>)	D. Roemer (notes)

1 -- it is unclear to what extent some of these birds could be dark, boreal-forest breeding *B. j. borealis*; more research is needed to clarify this potential problem.

2 -- all earlier reports of *B. j. harlani* are presumed to have involved "darkish" morphs.

3 -- included in Krider's Hawk may be some *B. j. borealis* x Krider's Hawk individuals

4 -- percentage of these individuals is somewhat speculative, but is theorized based on observed characters

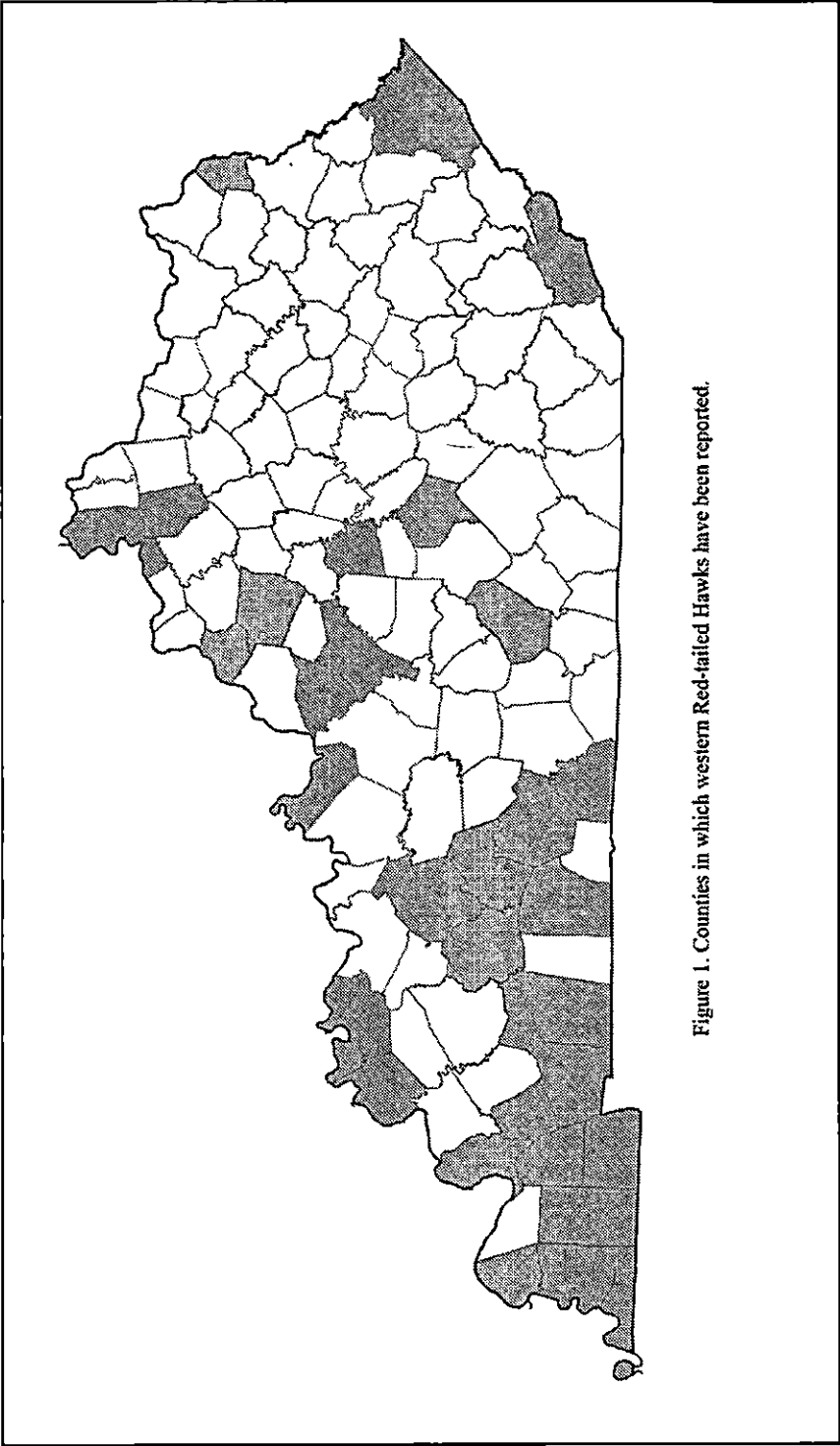


Figure 1. Counties in which western Red-tailed Hawks have been reported.

of these individuals may be similar enough that their true identity cannot be determined in the field. As a result of such subtleties, individual birds often can be expected to be identified with certainty only when they are observed at relatively close range and under ideal lighting conditions. Otherwise, qualifiers such as "probable" or "likely" may be appropriate.

***B. j. harlani*:** Wheeler uses the following terminology for classes of morphs – light, light-intermediate, intermediate (normal, streak breasted type, streaked type), dark-intermediate (normal, streak-breasted type, spot-bellied type), and dark. Recommendations for reporting these morphs follow the logic and cautionary notes expressed above for *B. j. calurus*. However, of greater concern is that individuals of *B. j. calurus* be clearly distinguished from individuals of *B. j. harlani* (a seemingly less numerous race in Kentucky). The corresponding morph classes of the two races are somewhat similar, and good study under ideal conditions may be required to differentiate some individuals. Also, Wheeler describes individuals that exhibit characters typical of intergrades between *B. j. calurus* and *B. j. harlani*, indicating that extreme caution should be exercised when identifying these forms.

Krider's Hawk: typically, field identification of individuals of this pale morph of *B. j. borealis* should be more straightforward; however, the possibility of partial albinism of otherwise typical *B. j. borealis*, as well as intergrades between the two, should never be discounted as individuals showing these characteristics occur regularly. It should also be noted that some eastern *B. j. borealis* individuals in worn plumage (especially late spring through early fall) may be quite "washed out" in appearance, causing superficial resemblance to Krider's Hawk.

Intergrades: As indicated above, it should be noted that, in addition to the many plumage types of these two races and one color morph, there may be individuals that exhibit intergradation between *B. j. calurus* and *B. j. harlani* or Krider's Hawk, as well as intergradation of both *B. j. calurus* and Krider's Hawk with eastern *B. j. borealis*! Even Wheeler (2003) has not been able to clearly describe the appearance of some of the myriad possibilities, seemingly relying on intuition for a description of some intergrade forms. Also, it is impossible to ascertain to what degree intergrade individuals are influenced by genetic input from one race or the other (i.e., 25%, 50%, or more of their genetic makeup). Currently the frequency with which Red-tailed Hawk intergrades occur in Kentucky is unclear, but accumulated data suggest they are present less frequently than birds of seemingly clear-cut lineage.

The study and classification of western Red-tailed Hawks in Kentucky is an enormously complex yet immensely interesting puzzle. As more study is undertaken and descriptions put forth, patterns of occurrence of these forms may become apparent. As with all field endeavors, careful observation and description of multiple characters and photographic documentation are highly desirable.

This summary would not have been possible without the years of Red-tailed Hawk study undertaken by Brian Wheeler; all birders should be grateful for his dedication to raptor study. We extend thanks to Stephen Stedman for a review of the manuscript which resulted in numerous improvements.

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- Wheeler, Brian K. 2003. *Raptors of Eastern North America*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, 801 Schenkel Lane, Frankfort, KY, 40601 (Palmer-Ball), and 294 Drakes Creek Drive, Bowling Green, KY, 42103 (Roemer).

THE SPRING SEASON 2005

Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., and Lee McNeely

The spring 2005 season was relatively mild overall, primarily the result of several extended periods of cooler-than-normal temperatures. The most significant of these cool spells occurred during the last week of April and first week of May. Precipitation was slightly below average throughout the period, making shorebird habitat relatively scarce. The season was devoid of significant snow and severe storm events.

Highlight rarities of the season included a potential state-first Mottled Duck, second-state Brant, and continuing Common Ground-Dove and Bullock's Oriole. Waterbird migration was relatively unremarkable, although shorebirds put in a decent showing thanks to the presence of suitable habitat in a few localized areas, especially western Henderson County. Songbird migration was a bit late primarily due to cool late-April weather, with a peak in diversity occurring nearly a week later than normal, during the latter portion of the second week of May.

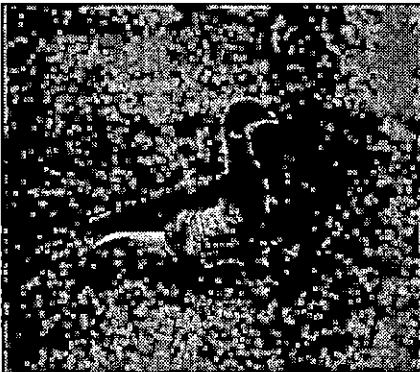
Publication of any unusual sightings in the seasonal report does not imply that these reports have been accepted as records for the official checklist of Kentucky birds. Observers are cautioned that records of out-of-season birds and all rarities must be accompanied with sufficient details or documentation for acceptance. Documentation must be submitted to the Kentucky Bird Records Committee (KBRC). Decisions regarding the official Kentucky list are made by the KBRC and are reported periodically in *The Kentucky Warbler*.

Abbreviations – County names appear in *italics*; when used to separate dates, the “/” symbol is used in place of “and”; “ph.” next to an observer’s initials indicates that the observation was documented with photograph(s); “vt.” next to an observer’s initials indicates that the observation was documented on videotape; “*” next to an observer’s initials indicates that written details were submitted with the report; Ballard = Ballard WMA, Ballard; Barkley Dam = Barkley Dam, Lyon/Livingston; Barren = Barren River Lake, Allen/Barren; Berea College Forest = Berea College Forest, Madison; Big South Fork = Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, McCreary; Black Mountain = Black Mountain, Harlan; Blood River = Blood River embayment of Kentucky Lake, Calloway; Camp #9 = Peabody Camp #9 Coal Preparation Plant, Union; Camp #11 = Camp #11 impoundments, Union; Chaney Lake = Chaney Lake, Warren; DBNF = Daniel Boone National Forest; Falls of the Ohio = Falls of the Ohio, Jefferson; Fishing Creek = Fishing Creek embayment, Lake Cumberland, Pulaski; Garvin Brown = Garvin Brown Preserve, Jefferson; Gibraltar = Gibraltar Mine, Muhlenberg; Horseshoe Road = slough next to Horseshoe Road, w. Henderson; Jenny Hole = Jenny Hole-Highland Creek Unit Sloughs WMA, Union; Jonathan Creek = Jonathan Creek embayment of Kentucky Lake, Marshall; Ken-Hopewell = Ken-Hopewell Unit Peabody WMA, Ohio; Ky Dam = Kentucky Dam, Livingston/Marshall; Ky Lake = Kentucky Lake, Marshall/Calloway/Livingston/Lyon/Trigg; Kuttawa = Lake Barkley at Kuttawa, Lyon; Lake Barkley = Lake Barkley, Livingston/Lyon/Trigg; Lake No. 9 = Lake No. 9, Fulton; LBL = Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, Lyon/Trigg; Long Point = Long Point Unit Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge, Fulton; Mammoth Cave = Mammoth Cave National Park, Edmonson (unless otherwise noted); McElroy = McElroy Lake, Warren; Meldahl Dam = Meldahl Dam on the Ohio River, Bracken; Mitchell Lake = Mitchell Lake, Ballard WMA, Ballard; Murray = Murray, Calloway; Obion = Obion WMA, Fulton (unless otherwise noted); Panorama Shores = Panorama Shores on Ky Lake, Calloway; Paradise = Paradise Power Plant impoundments, Muhlenberg; Peabody = Peabody WMA, Ohio/Muhlenberg (unless otherwise noted); Petersburg = gravel pit at Petersburg, Boone; Petros Pond = Petros Pond, Warren; Pleasant Hill Church Road = Pleasant Hill Church Road near Cadiz, Trigg; Riverqueen = Riverqueen Unit Peabody WMA, Muhlenberg; Rock Bridge = Rock Bridge,

DBNF, Wolfe; St. Matthews = St. Matthews, Jefferson; Sauerheber = Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs WMA, Henderson; Shaker Mill = Shaker Mill, Warren; Surrey Hills Farm = Surrey Hills Farm, ne. Jefferson; Waitsboro = Waitsboro Recreation Area on Lake Cumberland, Pulaski; Walton's Pond = Walton's Pond, s. Warren; West Ky = West Ky WMA, McCracken; SNP = State Nature Preserve; SRP = State Resort Park; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

Greater White-fronted Goose – a flock of 5 on Boilermaker Lake, Carter, 6 March (RM, JB, fide SF) represents the farthest e. the species has ever been reported; an injured bird lingered at Ballard through the period (SR).

Brant – 1 was present at various locales in and near Somerset, Pulaski, 14-28 May (ph.LK, ph.RDn, et al.). KBRC review required.



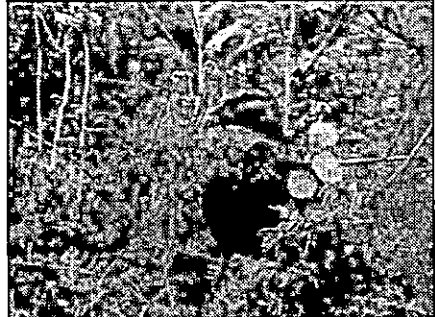
Brant, Pulaski
14 May 2005
Laura Kamperman

Mute Swan – the remaining resident bird – its mate having been killed in January 2004 – along Cypress Creek, nw. of Central City, Muhlenberg, was seen in mid-March (WR); also reported were 2 along Bethel Road, Fayette, 26 March (BM).

Gadwall: peak counts included 250+ at Lake No. 9 (BP) and 60+ at Chaney Lake (DR), both 16 March; latest reports included 4-5 at Camp #11 on 4 May (BP) with a male still there 20 May (BP).

American Wigeon: peak counts included 300+ at Lake No. 9 on 16 March (BP); latest reports included at least 2 nw. of Miller, Fulton, 1 May (BP et al.) and 2 at Sauerheber 10 May (DR, TD).

Mottled Duck – an individual that appeared to be a male was present at Horseshoe Road 20 May (ph.BP). KBRC review required.



Mottled Duck, Henderson
20 May 2005
B. Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Blue-winged Teal – peak counts were unspectacular and included 70 at Chaney Lake 6/25 April (DR); latest reports included 2 at Mitchell Lake 20 May (MEa); at least 1 male at Camp #11 to 20 May (BP); 1 male at Horseshoe Road 28 May (CCR); and a male at Petersburg 29-30 May (LM).

Cinnamon x Blue-winged Teal – a male was present at Chaney Lake 9-27 April (DR).

Northern Shoveler: peak count was for ca. 250 at Long Point 16 March (BP); latest reports included 5 at Chaney Lake 1 May (DR) and ca. 6 at Camp #11 on 4 May (BP).

Northern Pintail: peak counts included 30 ne. of Sauerheber 13 March (CCR) and 100-120 at Obion 16 March (BP).

Green-winged Teal: peak counts included a remarkable 900+ at Long Point and 30-500 at Obion, both 16 March (BP); latest reports included 2 at Sauerheber 6 May

(MMn, BP) with 1 still there 11 May (BY).

Redhead – peak counts included 25 at Meldahl Dam 5 March (FR) and 97 at Cooley's Pond, *Wayne*, 10 March (RDn).

Ring-necked Duck – peak count was for 383 at Long Creek Refuge, LBL, *Trigg*, 11 March (BL); latest reports included 2 on Lake Barkley above the dam 2 May (SR); 1 on Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 7 May (MEa et al.); a male at Sauerheber 10 May (DR, TD); 1 at Ballard 12 May (SR); and 1 at Petersburg 29 May (LM).

Greater Scaup – peak counts for the spring included 15 on Lake Barkley above the dam 5 March (DR) and 24 at Lake Pee-wee, *Hopkins*, 20 March (BP, AC); latest report was for a female on the Ohio River at Louisville 30 April (DR, JRo). Other reports of interest included 1 at Camp Ernst Lake, *Boone*, 5 March (LM); 9 at Riverqueen 13 March (BY, MW) and 2 at Waitsboro 31 March (RDn).

Lesser Scaup – peak count was for 260 at Meldahl Dam 5 March (FR); latest reports included 3 at Camp #11 on 4 May (BP); a female at Horseshoe Road 20-28 May (BP, CCr); and 8 on Ky Lake above the dam and 18 on Lake Barkley above the dam, both 29 May (BP, AC).

Surf Scoter – there were several reports of spring migrants including a female on the Ohio River at Taylor Park, *Campbell*, 27 March (ph.FR); 13 on the Ohio River at Louisville 29 April–1 May (ph.DR, KOS); 5 on Ky Lake above the dam 1 May (BP et al.); and an extremely late female at Horseshoe Road 23-28 May (ph.BP, ph.DR, CCr).

Long-tailed Duck – only report was for a male on Lake Barkley at Boyd's Landing, *Lyon*, 5 March (HC, KOS).

Bufflehead – latest report was for a pair on Lake Barkley at Eddyville Ferry, *Lyon*, 2 May (SR).

Common Goldeneye – latest reports were for a male on Lake Barkley above the dam 7 May (BP, MMn) and a female there 29 May (BP, AC).

Hooded Merganser: a displaying male at Three Ponds SNP, *Hickman*, 16 March, suggested nesting (BP); broods of young were reported from several locales as follows: a female w/ 9 young at Sauerheber 22 April (MS); a female w/ 10 downy young at Caperton 5 May (BY, MW); a female w/ 6 young at Ballard 2 May (SR); 2 broods of young at Ballard 4 May (ph.SR); a family group at Jenny Hole 28 May (CCr); and a female w/ 5 young at Horseshoe Road 29 May (BP, AC).



Hooded Merganser family, *Ballard*
4 May 2005
Scott Record

Red-breasted Merganser – peak count was an unimpressive 25 on Lake Barkley, *Trigg*, 14 March (BL); latest report was for 1 at Horseshoe Rd 6 May (BP, MMn).

Ruddy Duck – latest reports included 1 at Lexington 10 May (LR et al.) and a pair plus another male at Camp #11 to 20 May (BP).

Wild Turkey – a flock of 90 at Long Creek Refuge, LBL, *Trigg*, 15 March (BL) was noteworthy.

Common Loon – peak counts included 30 at Barren 7 April (DR) and 26 at Waitsboro 23 April (RDn); latest reports included 1 at the Falls of the Ohio 19 May (BP, LP); 1 on Lake Cumberland, *Wayne*, 20 May (RDn); 1 on Ky Lake above the dam 29 May (BP, AC); and 1 at Petersburg 30 May (LM). Also of interest were 4 at Fishing Creek and 7 at Green River Lake, *Adair/Taylor*, 22

- April (RDn); 6 at Caneyville Reservoir, *Grayson*, 30 April (JP); 1 on the Ohio River below Louisville 1 May (J&PB, BBC); 1 at Clifty Pond, *Pulaski*, 1-5 May (RDn); 4 at Waitsboro 2 May (RDn); and 2 on Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 7 May (MEa et al.).
- Pied-billed Grebe** – at least 6 were still at Camp #11 on 20 May with much calling, suggesting that nesting was being attempted (BP); nesting was also likely attempted by lingering birds at Chaney Lake (DR); also late was a bird on Lake Barkley above the dam 29 May (BP, AC).
- Horned Grebe**: peak count was an impressive tally of 165 at Meldahl Dam 5 March (FR); also reported were ca. 50 on Ky Lake/Lake Barkley 5 March (DR) with 15 still on Ky Lake above the dam 15 March (BP) and 2 at Barren, *Barren* 7 April (DR).
- Western Grebe**: 1 was on Lake Barkley above the dam 1-8 May (ph.BP et al.). KBRC review required.
- American White Pelican** – peak counts for the season included "hundreds" at Blood River 13 March (MEa); an exceptionally large group of 1500 at Boyds Branch embayment, Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 29 March (JTE, fide HC); 400+ at Blood River (HC); 400-500 at Jonathan Creek (MEa); and 250 at Duck Island, Lake Barkley, *Trigg* (SV et al.), all 30 March; 200-250 at Jonathan Creek and 150+ on Lake Barkley, *Trigg*, both 1 April (BL) and 200 on Lake Barkley, *Trigg*, 10 April (ER); a few birds lingered into May with 3 at Kuttawa 1 May (BP et al.) and 17 on Ky Lake, *Calloway* 7 May (MEa et al.). Also reported outside of the normal w. Kentucky range were 8 over the Ohio River bottoms near Cloverport, *Breckinridge*, 23 March (EN, fide SV).
- Double-crested Cormorant** – peak counts were for 2000+ on Lake Barkley, *Trigg*, 30 March (SV et al.) and 1 April (BL); by mid-May it appeared that ca. 20 pairs were again nesting on Ky Lake, *Calloway* (KS); 50-100 were still at Kuttawa 20 May (EC).
- American Bittern** – only report was for 3 at Sauerheber 16 April (DR, KOS).
- Least Bittern** – only reports were for 2 heard at Sauerheber and 4 heard at Camp #11, both 4 May (BP); 5-6 seen/heard at Sauerheber 10 May (DR, TD); and 1 at Sauerheber, 13 May (BY, MW).
- Great Egret**: 3 were present at the Kuttawa heronry 30 March (BP).
- Snowy Egret** – a bird near Long Point 25 March (MT, DMa) represents a new early arrival date for the state; next earliest birds were 2 at Long Point 27 April (PLe).
- Cattle Egret** – transient or wandering birds away from known nesting sites included 1 at Cooley's Pond, *Wayne*, 22 April (RDn); 1 at Petros Pond 27 April (DR); and 1 along the Ohio River above Louisville 29 April (DR, JRo).
- Black-crowned Night-Heron** – nesting birds returned to Lake Barkley and Louisville in late March; up to 25-30 were present at Paradise 12 May (TE), but further evidence of nesting remains unrecorded at this locale. Three to 4 birds at Camp Ernst Lake, *Boone*, 26-28 April (LM) were also not near known breeding areas.
- Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – only reports were for returning nesting birds at Lexington 10 April (PD, fide JWm); and 1 over Long Point 27 April (BP, MMn).
- Osprey** – earliest reports were for 1 on Lake Barkley w. of Kuttawa 10 March (TF) and 2 on Lake Barkley, *Trigg*, 17 March (BL).
- Mississippi Kite** – earliest reports were for single birds near Hickman, *Fulton* (PLe) and at Three Ponds SNP, *Hickman* (MMn, BP), both 27 April, which represented new early arrival dates by one day.
- Bald Eagle** – there were a few reports of likely spring migrants including an ad. near Mt. Sterling, *Montgomery*, 6 May (GRo); new nests were reported along the Kentucky River, *Henry* (DD, fide KCa) and on Ky Lake, *Calloway* (AW).

Northern Harrier – several, including displaying males, were seen at Peabody 25 April (DR) and 12 May (TE).

Cooper's Hawk – nesting reports included adults gathering nesting material at Shaker Mill 8 March (DR) and an active nest along Indian Knob Road, *McCreary*, 16 April (SS et al.).

Red-tailed Hawk – there were several reports of lingering western birds, all being included: light morph *harlani* in *Warren* 2-23 March (DR); a *calurus* x "*krideri*" intergrade at *McElroy* 2 March (DR); a dark morph *calurus* and an adult light morph *calurus*, both near *Morganfield, Union*, 17 March (DR); a juv "*krideri*" at *Homestead* on the unusually late date of 25 April (ph.DR); and an ad. "dark" morph [i.e. intermediate, dark-intermediate, or dark morph] *calurus* over *Pine Mt.* just w. of *Cumberland, Harlan*, on the unprecedentedly late date of 15 May (BY, *MW).

Rough-legged Hawk – latest reports included 3 at *Homestead* 13 March (BY, MW); 1 near *Morganfield, Union*, 17 March (DR); and 1 at *Ken-Hopewell* 19 March (BP, AC).

Merlin – there were not as many reports this season, all being included: a male at *Petros Pond* 23 March (DR); 1 at *St. Matthews* 16/28 March (BW); and 1 near *Hickman, Fulton*, 27 April (PLe).

Peregrine Falcon – there were only a couple of reports of likely migrants: 1 at *Walton's Pond* 13 April (DR) and 1 over *Munfordville, Hart*, 28 April (SK). Locally nesting birds were documented at traditional sites in *Jefferson, Carroll, Trimble* (2), and *Greenup* (SV, ASm, et al.).

King Rail – only report was for a bird heard at *Pond Creek Marsh, Sauerheber*, 10 May (DR).

Virginia Rail – all reports are included: 1 or 2 heard at *Gibraltar* 25 March (BY, MW); 1 at *Hardy Slough, Sauerheber*, 16 April (DR, KOS); 2 heard at *Gibraltar* 1 May (BP et al.) and 7 May (BP, MMn);

and 1 at *Pond Creek Marsh, Sauerheber*, 10 May (DR, TD).

Sora – peak counts included 33+ at *Sauerheber* 16 April (DR, KOS) and 40-45+ at *Camp #11* on 4 May (BP); latest reports were for a bird heard at *Camp #11* on 20 May (BP); and 1 at *East Bend Power Plant, Boone*, 21 May (LM).

Common Moorhen – all reports are included: 1 nw. of *Miller, Fulton*, 1 May (BP et al.); 3-4 at *Pond Creek Marsh, Sauerheber*, 10/25 May (DR, TD); and 2 at *Camp #11* on 20 May (BP).

American Coot – 80+ were still at *Camp #11* on 4 May (BP), but only 1 could be found there 20 May (BP); also lingering were 6+ at *Pond Creek Marsh, Sauerheber*, 10 May (DR, TD); 1 at *Garvin Brown* 14 May (BW); and 2 on *Lake Barkley* above the dam 29 May (BP, AC).

Sandhill Crane: spring flight remained conspicuous only through about the first ten days of March; latest reports included 25 at *Chaney Lake* 22 March (DR); 2 at *Bowling Green* 26 March (TD); and a pair near *St. John, Hardin*, 11-15 May (CCu).

Black-bellied Plover – earliest report was for 1 nw. of *Miller, Fulton* 7 May (BP, MMn); peak counts included 17 at *Horseshoe Road* and 9 at *Camp #9*, both 23 May (BP, RDv) and 12 at *Horseshoe Road* 25 May (DR). Latest reports were for 1 along *KY 268* on 29 May (BP, AC) and 1 at *Horseshoe Road* 31 May (CCr).

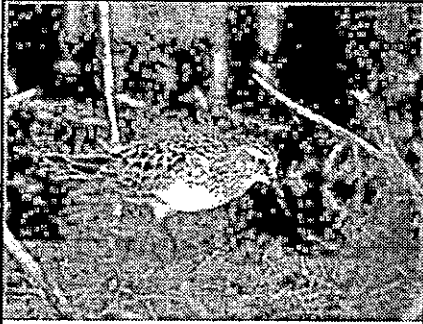
American Golden-Plover: earliest reports included 18 at *Open Pond, w. Fulton*, 1 at *Obion*, and 1 at *Long Point*, all 16 March (BP); 1 at *Sauerheber* 20 March (BP); and 2 along *KY 268* on 21 March (TE fide NR). Peak count was for 40 at *Chaney Lake* 31 March (DR). Also reported were 12 over *Walton's Pond* 28 March (DR); 18 adjacent to *Ballard* 30 March (BP); 4 at *Chaney Lake* 4 April (DR); and 1 at *McElroy* 27 April (DR).

Semipalmated Plover – earliest report was for 1 at *Petros Pond* 12 April (DR); peak counts included 300 along *KY 268* on 5

- May (TE fide NR); 150+ at Obion 7 May (BP, MMn); 200 in w. *Henderson* 10 May (DR, TD); 70 at Horseshoe Road and 50 along KY 268, both 20 May (BP); and 100+ at Horseshoe Road 23 May (BP, RDv) with 75+ still there 29 May (BP, AC).
- Piping Plover:** only report was for 1 at Paradise 6 May (MMn, ph.BP, et al.).
- Black-necked Stilt** – all reports are included: 1 at Long Point 23 April (MT, DMA); 2 there 27 April (PLE); and 2 at Sauerheber 13 May (BY, MW).
- Greater Yellowlegs** – peak counts included 40 at Ballard 18 April (SR) and 45+ at Obion 27 April (BP, MMn).
- Lesser Yellowlegs** – earliest reports included 1 at Blood River (HC), 4 at Sauerheber (CCr), and 2 in w. *Fulton* (JWn), all 6 March; peak counts included 125+ at Obion 1 May (BP et al.); 225+ along KY 268 (BP) and 105 at Chaney Lake (DR), both 4 May; and 100+ at Obion 7 May (BP, MMn); latest reports included 1 at Bronston, *Pulaski*, 20 May (RDn) and 2 at Horseshoe Road 29 May (BP, AC). Two at Begley WMA, *Harlan*, 12 May were unusual for se. Ky (SS, JK, et al.).
- Solitary Sandpiper** – earliest reports were for 1 at Petros Pond 28 March (DR) and 2 at Ballard 30 March (BP); peak counts were for 30 at Chaney Lake 27 April (DR) and 24 there 10 May (DR); latest report was for 1 at Hays Kennedy Park, *Jefferson*, 17 May (BW). Several at Begley WMA, *Harlan*, 12 May were unusual for se. Ky (SS, JK, et al.).
- Willet** – all reports are included: 1 at Sauerheber 22 April (MS); 5 e. of Long Point 23 April (ph.MT, DMA); 14 on Ky Lake nr. Kenlake SRP, *Marshall*, 26 April (AT); 41 e. of Cadiz, *Trigg*, 29 April (BL); and 8 at Ky Dam Village SRP beach, *Marshall*, 1 May (BP et al.).
- Spotted Sandpiper** – earliest report was for 1 at Petros Pond 9 April (TD); a few birds lingered at Horseshoe Road into late May with behavior suggestive of nesting (BP); also, 1-2 at Lake *Shelby*, lingered to the last week of May (HB). One at Begley WMA, *Harlan*, 12 May was unusual for se. Ky (SS, JK, et al.).
- Upland Sandpiper** – only reports were for single birds at Chaney Lake 12 April (DR) and over Hardy Slough, Sauerheber, 16 April (DR).
- Ruddy Turnstone** – all reports are included: 2 at Horseshoe Road 20 May (BP) with 8 at the same location 23 May (BP, RDv) and 1 still there 31 May (CCr); 1 at Ellis Park 23 May (BP) – 27 May (BP, EC); and 1 at Camp #9 on 29 May (BP, AC).
- Semipalmated Sandpiper** – earliest reports included 1 at Chaney Lake 1 May (DR) and 1 along KY 268, w. *Henderson*, 4 May (BP); relatively unimpressive peak counts included 150 at Paradise 19 May (DR); 120+ at Horseshoe Road 23 May (BP, RDv) with 125+ there 29 May (BP, AC); and 100 at Ellis Park 29 May (BP, AC).
- Least Sandpiper** – the earliest report for the period – 17 at Jonathan Creek 4 March (HC, RDn) – likely represented continuing winter birds; other early reports included 1 at Petros Pond 23 March (DR) and 1 at Clifty Pond, *Pulaski*, 30 March (RDn); peak counts included 300 at Sauerheber 10 May (DR, TD) and 100+ at Chaney Lake 12 May (DR); latest reports were for singles at Mt. Zion 28 May (RDn) and at Horseshoe Road 29 May (BP, AC). Several at Begley WMA, *Harlan*, 12 May were unusual for se. Ky (SS, JK, et al.).
- White-rumped Sandpiper** – earliest report was for 2 along Mud Creek at KY 94, *Fulton*, 1 May (BP et al.); also reported were 8+ in w. *Henderson* 4 May (BP); 6 along KY 268 on 6 May (BP, MMn); 5+ at Obion and 6+ nw. of Miller, *Fulton*, 7 May (BP, MMn); 5 at Paradise 9 May (DR, TD); 2 along KY 268 on 11 May (BY); 3-5 at Mitchell Lake 21 May with 2 still there 24 May (SR); 4 at Horseshoe Road and 2 at Ellis Park, both 23 May (BP, RDv); 5 at Ellis Park and 1 at Horseshoe Road 27 May (BP, EC); 4 at

Calvert City, 4 at Camp #9, 3 at Horseshoe Road, 15 along KY 268, and 10 at Ellis Park, all 29 May (BP, AC); and 5 at Horseshoe Road 31 May (CCr).

Baird's Sandpiper: there were three reports for the season: 1 at Chaney Lake 31 March (ph.DR); a different individual there 4 April (ph.DR); and 1 nw. of Miller, *Fulton* 7 May (BP, MMn).



Baird's Sandpiper, Warren
31 March 2005
David Roemer

Pectoral Sandpiper: earliest reports included 16 at Chaney Lake and 2 at Petros Pond, both 16 March (DR); 17 at Blood River 17 March (HC); and 2 at Sauerheber 18 March (CCr); peak counts included 160 at Long Point 25 March (MT, DMa); an impressive assemblage of 2000 at Sauerheber 16 April (DR, KOS); 123 at Chaney Lake 1 May (DR, TD); and 150-200 nw. of Miller, *Fulton* 7 May (BP, MMn).

Dunlin – peak counts included 200 along KY 268 on 5 May (TE fide NR); 100 in w. *Henderson* 7 May (CCr); and 60 at Horseshoe Road 23 May (BP, RDv); latest reports were for 1 at Camp #9, 8 at Horseshoe Road, and 2 along KY 268, all 29 May (BP, AC).

Stilt Sandpiper earliest report was for 5 in w. *Henderson* 4 May (BP); peak count was for 12 at Paradise 19 May (DR, TD); also reported were 1 along KY 268 on 5 May (TE fide NR) with 4 there 6 May (BP, MMn, et al.); 1 at Paradise 6 May (BP, MMn) and 9 May (DR, TD); 1 at Ballard 12 May (SR); 4 at Horseshoe

Road and 2 at Camp #9, both 20 May (BP); and 2 at Horseshoe Road 23 May (BP, RDv).

Short-billed Dowitcher – earliest reports included 1 at Chaney Lake 21-23 April (DR) and 4 at Sauerheber 22 April (MS) and 24 April (BY, MW); peak counts included 50 along KY 268 on 13 May (BY, MW); 41 (including a *L. g. griseus*) at Horseshoe Road 20 May (ph.BP) with 10 (including the *L. g. griseus*) still there 23 May (BP, RDv); latest report was for 1 along KY 268 on 27 May (BP, EC). Also reported were 1 at Pulaski County Park 2 May (RDn); 2 at Ballard 4 May (SR); 10 along KY 268 on 5 May (TE fide NR); 1 at Obion 7 May (BP, MMn); 5 along KY 268 10 May (DR, TD); 8 at Chaney Lake 15 May with 2 still there 16 May (DR, RDv); 27 at Paradise 19 May (DR, TD); and 7 at Mitchell Lake 20 May (MEa).

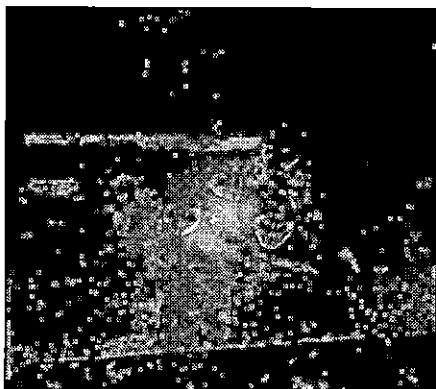
Long-billed Dowitcher – all reports are included: 1 at Lake No. 9 on 6 March represented a new early arrival date for the state (JWn); 1 at Chaney Lake 21-25 April (DR); 1 at Sauerheber 24 April (BY, MW); 4 at Long Point 27 April (PLe); 4 at Walton's Pond 1 May (DR); 23 in w. *Henderson* 4 May (BP); 4 along KY 268 on 6 May (BP, MMn); 4 nw. of Miller, *Fulton* 7 May (BP, MMn); and 4 along KY 268 on 11 May (BY).

Wilson's Snipe: peak counts included 80 s. of KY 268 on 13 March (CCr); at least 325 at Long Point 16 March (BP); 60+ along Clear Creek bottoms, w. *Hopkins*, 20 March (BP, AC); and 50 at Petros Pond 28 March (DR). Latest reports included 1 at Marydale Retreat Center Lake, *Boone*, 3 May (LH); 4 on the Northern Kentucky University campus, *Campbell*, 5 May (FR); and 1 in w. of Sassafras Ridge, *Fulton*, 7 May (BP, MMn).

American Woodcock – surprisingly early was the observation of a well-feathered, but still flightless young bird just e. of Future City, *McCracken*, 30 March (EHa).

- Wilson's Phalarope:** all reports are included: 2 along KY 136, w. *Henderson*, 30 April (TE fide NR); 3 at Sauerheber 3 May (MMr) with 3 still there and 2 along KY 268, both 4 May (BP); and 1 on the Olmstead Unit, *Ballard*, 10 May (TE fide NR).
- Laughing Gull:** only report was for an adult at Falls of the Ohio 19 May (LPe, BP).
- Franklin's Gull:** there were only two reports: an adult at Falls of the Ohio 19 May (LPe, BP) and a first-year bird on Lake Barkley above the dam 29 May (BP, AC).
- Bonaparte's Gull** – peak count was for 265 between two locations on Lake Cumberland, *Pulaski*, 30 March (RDn); latest reports were for 3 first-year birds at Kuttawa and several including an ad. on Lake Barkley above the dam, all 1 May (BP et al.).
- Ring-billed Gull** – 5 were still at Ky Dam 29 May (BP, AC).
- Herring Gull** – unusual numbers for the dates and locations were 32 at the Falls of the Ohio 29 April (DR, JRo) with 30 still there the following day (RDv, KOS), and 3 at the mouth of Craig's Creek, *Gallatin*, also 1 May (LM); single first-year birds were still at Ky Dam and on Lake Barkley above the dam 29 May (BP, AC).
- Thayer's Gull** – latest report was an adult at Barkley Dam 5 March (HC, KOS).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull** – latest report was for 2 ads. at Kuttawa 5 March (HC, KOS).
- Caspian Tern** – reports of interest included 4 at the mouth of Craig's Creek, *Gallatin*, 1 May (LM) and 3 at Lake Vega, Bluegrass Army Depot, *Madison*, 18 May (GRi).
- Common Tern** – all reports are included: 1 at the KY 80 bridge over Jonathan Creek, *Marshall*, 24 April (HC); 1 at the Falls of the Ohio 30 April (DR, KOS); 1 on the Ohio River at Dayton, *Campbell*, 30 April (FR); ca. 15 on Ky Lake above the dam 7 May (BP, MMn); and 18 at Waitsboro 20 May (RDn).
- Forster's Tern** – continuing from the winter season were 8 at Jonathan Creek 4 March (BL, HC, RDn) and 11 at Blood River 6 March (HC), with 28 at Blood River by 13 March (MEa); latest reports included 1 on the Ohio River, w. *Henderson*, 25 May (DR) and a first-year on Ky Lake above the dam 29 May (BP, AC).
- Least Tern** – a few birds were present at the Camp Mines complex, *Union*, 20/29 May and behavior suggested they would attempt to nest there (BP); also, a pair was present at Horseshoe Road 24-29 May (CCR et al.) with 3 there 31 May (CCR); also present were up to 10 on a sandbar on the Ohio River below Lewisport, *Hancock*, 29 May (DA) where nesting was suspected.
- Black Tern** – only two reports: 1 at Camp #11 on 20 May (BP); 6 below Smithland Dam 29 May (BP, AC).
- Eurasian Collared-Dove** – new locations for the species included Ragland, *McCracken*, 27 April (SR); Waverly, *Union* 23 May (BP, RDv); and Richmond, *Madison*, 30 May (D&MF).
- Common Ground-Dove** – the bird ne. of Union Mills, *Jessamine*, continued to 11 April (EB, fide GB).
- Black-billed Cuckoo** – only reports included 1 at Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt*, 21 April (EHu); 1 heard in LBL, *Lyon*, 7 May (BP, MMn); 1 at Long Run Park, *Jefferson*, 11/14 May (BW); and 1 near Garmeada, *Bell*, in mid-May (AJ).
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo** – earliest report was for 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 25 April (BL).
- Barn Owl** – again this season there was an increased number of reports, all of which are included: a pair nesting in a hollow tree nw. of Sugar Grove, s. *Butler*, in late March, which ended up unsuccessful (ASt); a pair with 5 young in an attic at New Haven, *Nelson*, during May (ph. C&CL); dead individuals were found along US 68 near the *Marion/Taylor* line 28 April (JY, CCa) and along US 60 just

w. of Winchester, *Clark*, 25 May (BG, CCa)



Young Barn Owls, *Nelson*
mid-May 2005
Charles Lemons

- Long-eared Owl** – 1 was observed at Riverqueen 13 March (BY, MW).
- Short-eared Owl** – 2 were still at Ken-Hopewell 13 March (BY, MW); also 4 or 5 were observed in an extensive, marshy wetland mitigation area along Shady Lane, w. of Boston, *Nelson*, 15 March (DPe, MH, et al.).
- Chuck-will's-widow** – earliest report was for *Trigg* 18 April (ER).
- Whip-poor-will** – earliest report was for 1 heard in *Hart* 7 April (SK).
- Chimney Swift** – quite impressive was a foraging flock of ca. 500 at Cadiz, *Trigg*, 26 April (BL, PLi).
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird** – earliest reports were for 2 at Murray 9 April (fide MEa); 1 along Pleasant Hill Church Road 10 April (BL, PLi); and 1 at Panorama Shores 11 April (KCo).
- Red-headed Woodpecker** – following a nearly complete absence in w. Kentucky in winter, birds were seen in typical breeding haunts of w. *Fulton* 16 March (BP) and *Trigg* 9 April (BL).
- Olive-sided Flycatcher** – only reports were for 1 at Shawnee Park, *Jefferson*, 14 May (A&CT); 1 at Gunpowder Creek Nature Park, *Boone*, 15 May (LM); and 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 17 May (BL).
- Eastern Wood-Pewee** – earliest report came from Berea College Forest 22 April (TH).
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** – only three reports: 1 heard at Surrey Hills Farm 12 May (BP); 1 at Jenny Hole 23 May (CCr); and 1 heard at Taylorsville Lake State Park, *Spencer*, 25 May (BW).
- Acadian Flycatcher** – earliest report came from Berea College Forest 22 April (TH).
- Alder Flycatcher** – only two reports: 2 heard in LBL, *Trigg*, 17 May (BL); 4 seen/heard w. of Alzey, *Henderson*, 20 May (BP).
- Least Flycatcher** – relatively late was a bird in LBL, *Trigg*, 18 May (BL); a nest under construction, the first ever reported for the state, was observed at the summit of Black Mountain, *Harlan*, 11 May (MK, SS, ph.EM, ph.JK, et al.).
- Great Crested Flycatcher** – earliest report was for a bird at Potato Knoll, Lake Cumberland, *Pulaski*, 13 April (BP).
- Eastern Kingbird** – earliest reports were for 1 in *Pike* 4 April (LE, fide JC); and 1 at Garvin Brown 10 April (BW).
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** – the pair n. of Grand Rivers, *Livingston*, had returned and was already nest building 26 April (HC); 1 was seen ca. a mile or more nw. of there along I-24 on 13 May (BL); singles were also present at the Ft. Campbell airfield, *Christian*, 20 May (DMo) and along I-24 near Newstead, *Christian*, 28 May (HC, MEa); there have been at least a couple of reports in the Ft. Campbell area in recent years, suggesting that nesting is occurring in the vicinity.
- White-eyed Vireo** – earliest reports were for 1 outside of Murray 2 April (HC) and 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 5 April (BL).
- Bell's Vireo** – earliest report was for 1 near Grand Rivers, *Livingston*, 7 May (BP, MMn).
- Yellow-throated Vireo** – earliest reports included a new early arrival date for a bird at Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt*, 3 April

- (BY, MW) and 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 8 April (BL).
- Blue-headed Vireo** – earliest report was for 2 at South Williamson, *Pike*, 28 March (JC); latest report away from known breeding areas was 1 at West Ky WMA 7 May (SR).
- Warbling Vireo** – earliest report was for 2 at Panorama Shores 11 April (KCo).
- Philadelphia Vireo** – unusually early was a bird seen and heard at Panorama Shores 22 April (*KCo); overall the species was not well-represented during the peak of spring songbird migration.
- Red-eyed Vireo** – earliest reports were for 1 at Lake Cumberland SRP, *Russell*, 10 April (SS); 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 11 April (BL); and 2 in *McCreary* and 1 in *Pulaski* 12 April (RDn).
- Fish Crow** – earliest report was from Blood River 3 April (MEa); 2 were present at Ellis Park 27 May (BP, EC).
- Common Raven** – all reports are included: 1 at Black Mountain 11 May (SS, JK, et al.); 1 at Black Mountain and 2 along Pine Mountain, just w. of Cumberland, *Harlan*, all 15 May (BY, MW); and 3 birds at the Paintsville Lake, *Morgan*, nest site 17 May (SF).
- Purple Martin** – earliest report during the period was from LBL, *Trigg*, 4 March (BL).
- Tree Swallow** – earliest report during the period was for 3 at Paradise 8 March (BL).
- No. Rough-winged Swallow**: earliest report was for 1 at Hickman 16 March (BP).
- Bank Swallow** – earliest reports were for 2 at Chaney Lake 21 April (DR) and 1 at Fishing Creek 23 April (RDn).
- Cliff Swallow**: earliest report was for LBL, *Trigg*, 31 March (BL).
- Barn Swallow** – earliest reports were for 1 at Panorama Shores 20 March (KCo) and from Jonathan Creek 24 March (BL).
- Red-breasted Nuthatch** – a pair was observed at the traditional Rock Bridge nesting area 20 May (FR); latest reports in non-breeding areas included 1 heard at Mammoth Cave 17 April (J&PB); 1 at Berea College Forest 22 April (TH); 1 at Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt*, 30 April (BP, KOS); 6 at Lexington Cemetery 1 May (TH, ASK); and 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 2 May (SR).
- Winter Wren**: a count of 8 at Three Ponds SNP, *Hickman*, 16 March (BP) likely indicated the peak migratory period (BP); latest reports were for singles at Bouteloua Barrens SNP, *Lincoln*, 15 April (BP); and Devil's Jump, near Blue Heron, Big South Fork 16 April (SS).
- Marsh Wren** – only report was for 1 heard at Camp #11 on 4 May (BP).
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet** – latest report was for 1 at West Ky WMA 12 May (SR).
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** – earliest reports were for LBL, *Trigg*, 29 March (BL), and in *Pulaski* (RDn) and *Ballard* (BP, both 30 March).
- Gray-cheeked Thrush** – latest report was for 1 at St. Matthews 30-31 May (BW).
- Swainson's Thrush** – earliest report was for 2 nr. Murray 24 April (MEa); latest report was for 1 at St. Matthews 30 May (BW).
- Hermit Thrush** – latest report was for 1 at Boone County Cliffs SNP 6 May (*JRY).
- Wood Thrush** – earliest reports were for 1 at Berea College Forest 8 April (TH) and 1 at Lake Cumberland SRP, *Russell*, 10 April (SS).
- American Pipit** – peak counts were for 50 at Mt. Zion 3 March (RDn) and 50+ at Ballard on the unusually late date of 4 May (SR); other late reports included 20+ nw. of Miller, *Fulton*, 1 May (BP et al.); and 1 at Walton's Pond 6 May (DR).
- Blue-winged Warbler** – earliest report was for LBL, *Trigg*, 11 April (BL).
- Golden-winged Warbler** – earliest report was for a male near Williamsburg, *Whitley*, 22 April (LPa, AJ), with additional birds subsequently observed during the last week of April and first week of May at nine study sites in *Bell*, *Harlan*, and

- Whitley* (LPa et al.). Also reported were a male near Jamestown, *Russell*, 28-29 April (AM); males along Pleasant Hill Church Road 29 April/2 May (BL); a male in LBL, *Lyon*, 7 May (BP, MMn); a male heard in *Harrison* 7 May (SM); a male heard at Frankfort 8 May (BP, AC); and a female at Surrey Hills Farm 12 May (BP).
- Brewster's Warbler** – males were seen/heard at seven different study sites in *Bell*, *Harlan*, and *Whitley* as early as 26 April (LPa et al.). Also reported were 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 2 May (SR) and a male observed chasing a male Blue-winged Warbler in sw. *McCreary* 31 May (RDn).
- Tennessee Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 at Panorama Shores 21 April (KCo).
- Orange-crowned Warbler**: 1 bird at Three Ponds SNP, *Hickman*, 16 March may have wintered (BP); also reported were 1 at Big South Fork 16 April (BP, AC); 1 at Surrey Hills Farm 24 April (BP); 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 25/27 April (BL); 1 at Three Ponds SNP, *Hickman*, 27 April (BP, MMn); 1 in LBL, *Lyon*, 2 May (SR); and 1 extremely late individual in LBL, *Lyon*, 17 May (*BL).
- Nashville Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 at Panorama Shores 10 April (KCo).
- Northern Parula** – earliest report was from LBL, *Trigg*, 31 March (BL).
- Yellow Warbler** – earliest report was from Lake Cumberland SRP, *Russell*, 10 April (SS).
- Chestnut-sided Warbler** – again this year, a substantial tally of likely breeders (43) was reported along the crest of Pine Mountain, *Harlan*, 10 May (SS, JK, et al.); also impressive was a tally of 61 along the crest of Black Mountain 15 May (BY, MW). A singing male near the Sky Bridge Picnic Area, DBNF, *Wolfe*, 21 May (FR) also may have represented a territorial male.
- Magnolia Warbler** – the species appeared late this year, probably due to the cool weather, with earliest reports from along Pleasant Hill Church Road (BL) and Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, *Rowan* (DPa), both 8 May.
- Cape May Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 at Mt. Zion 22 April (RDn).
- Black-throated Blue Warbler** – there were a few reports of spring migrants as follows: 1 at Shaker Mill 6 May (DR); a male at Berea College Forest 6 May (TH); a male in LBL, *Lyon*, 12 May (BY, MW); 1 at Gunpowder Creek Nature Park, *Boone*, 15 May (LM); and a quite tardy male near Hargis, *Pulaski*, 31 May (LO).
- Yellow-rumped Warbler** – latest report was for 1 at Miles Park, *Jefferson*, 17 May (BW).
- Black-throated Green Warbler** – females were observed gathering nesting material at Big South Fork 16 April (BP, AC) and at Natural Arch, *McCreary*, 17 April (BP), while a female was observed feeding several fledglings at Rock Bridge 20 May (FR); 2 on Hog Mountain, sw. *Wayne*, 28 May (RDn) may have been breeders.
- Yellow-throated Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 in *Pulaski* 30 March (RDn).
- Pine Warbler** – 7 frequented a peanut butter feeder at West Liberty, *Morgan*, during the first week of March (MEI).
- Prairie Warbler** – earliest reports were for 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 5 April (BL); 7 at Berea College Forest 8 April (TH); and 1 along Indian Knob Road, *McCreary*, 9 April (RDn, SS, SBC).
- Palm Warbler** – latest reports included 1 at Taylor Park, *Campbell*, 12 May (FR) and 1 at Surrey Hills Farm 13 May (BP).
- Blackpoll Warbler** – earliest reports came from Panorama Shores (KCo) and Berea College Forest (TH), both 22 April; latest report was from South Williamson, *Pike*, 30 May (JC, LE).
- Cerulean Warbler** – earliest reports included birds s. of Cave Run Lake, *Rowan*, 15 April (PH); Big South Fork 16 April (BP); Jenny Wiley SRP, *Floyd*, 17 April (TE); and Mammoth Cave 17 April (J&PB). Likely territorial birds (3+) were

- seen/heard at Three Ponds SNP, *Hickman* 27 April (BP, MMn).
- Black-and-white Warbler** – a bird performing a distraction display (with presumed young nearby) at Natural Bridge SRP, *Powell*, was rather early in the season when observed 3 May (DS).
- Prothonotary Warbler** – earliest reports were for birds in s. *Trigg* 6 April (BL) and at Lake Cumberland WMA, *Pulaski*, 7 April (RDn).
- Worm-eating Warbler** – earliest report was for 2 at Natural Arch, DBNF, *McCreary*, 9 April (SS, RDn, SBC).
- Swainson's Warbler** – birds observed or heard at traditional breeding locales included several along the Rockcastle River, DBNF, *Pulaski*, 7 May (TH, ASK); a pair at Bad Branch SNP, *Letcher*, 11 May (WH); singles on the Wildcat Trail, DBNF, *Wolfe*, and near the Sky Bridge Picnic Area, DBNF, *Wolfe*, both 21 May (FR); and 1 along Swift Camp Creek Trail, DBNF, *Wolfe*, 22 May (FR). Also reported were singles on the s. slope of Pine Mt., ne. of *Harlan*, 10/12 May (SS, JK, et al.); near Pine Mt. Settlement School, *Harlan*, 12 May (SS, JK, et al.); and ca. 10 mi. e. of Pine Mt. Settlement School, 12 May (SS, JK, et al.).
- Ovenbird** – earliest reports were for 1 in *McCreary* 9 April (RDn, SS, SBC) and 1 in *Russell* 10 April (RDn).
- Northern Waterthrush** – earliest report was for 1 at Raven Run Nature Preserve, *Fayette*, 14 April (TH).
- Kentucky Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 at Mammoth Cave 19 April (DR).
- Connecticut Warbler**: all reports are included: 1 at WKU Woods, *Warren*, and 1 at Lost River Cave Natural Area, *Warren*, both 16 May (DR, RDv); 1 heard at Surrey Hills Farm 19 May (BP, LPe); 1 in LBL, *Trigg*, 20 May (BL); and 1 at Jenny Hole 23 May (CCr).
- Mourning Warbler** – only reports were for 1 at Surrey Hills Farm 12 May (BP) and 1 at Mark, *Pulaski*, 22 May (WN).
- Common Yellowthroat** – earliest reports were from LBL, *Trigg*, (BL) and Panorama Shores (KCo), both 11 April.
- Hooded Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 at Natural Arch, DBNF, *McCreary*, 9 April (RDn, SS, SBC).
- Canada Warbler** – earliest report was for 1 at Shaker Mill 6 May (DR).
- Yellow-breasted Chat** – earliest report was for 1 in *Adair* 22 April (RDn).
- Summer Tanager** – earliest report was for LBL, *Trigg*, 14 April (BL).
- Scarlet Tanager** – earliest reports were for singles in *Russell* 10 April (SS, AM); in LBL, *Trigg*, 11 April (BL); and in *McCreary* 12 April (RDn).
- Bachman's Sparrow** – again this year, the species was reported in small numbers at Ft. Campbell, *Trigg*, during the season (DMo et al.).
- American Tree Sparrow** – latest reports were for a flock that remained at Garvin Brown through 16 March (BW); and 1 at Sauerheber 17 March (DR).
- Vesper Sparrow** – peak counts included a relatively impressive total of 30+ in scattered flocks in *Warren* 23 March (DR, RDv); 6 in *Warren* 28 March (DR); and 6 nr. Stephensburg, *Hardin*, 29 March (BP); latest report was for a singing bird seen in w. *Henderson* 6 May (BP, MMn).
- Lark Sparrow** -- again this year, the species was reported in small numbers at Ft. Campbell, *Trigg*, during the season (DMo et al.); also reported were 1 near Ragland, *McCracken*, 28 April (SR); and 2 near Murray 7 May (MEa).
- Savannah Sparrow**: 12 birds on the Northern Kentucky University campus, *Campbell*, 6 May (FR) may have attempted to nest if the habitat had not been plowed up in mid-May (FR); at least 3-4 were still at Horseshoe Road 25 May (DR).
- Henslow's Sparrow** – earliest reports were for 2 e. of Pottertown, *Calloway*, 31 March (BH, fide HC) and 1 at Central Ky WMA, *Madison*, 15 April (TH); birds were reported at a few new locations

including *Bouteloua Barrens* SNP, *Lincaln*, in mid-April (DS, BP); and just s. of Cadiz, *Trigg*, 14 May (BL).

Le Conte's Sparrow – a bird along Bethel Church Rd., w. *McCracken*, 30 March likely overwintered (BP).

Fox Sparrow – latest report was for 3 at St. Matthews 20 March (BW).

White-throated Sparrow – 3 were still in *Jefferson* 14 May (BBC); again this year, a singing male lingered at St. Matthews to at least 30 May (BW).

Dark-eyed Junco – latest report was for 2 near Hargis, se. *Pulaski*, 15 April (LO).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak – earliest report was for 2 at Panorama Shores 17 April (KCo) with a peak count of 10 at feeders there 30 April (KCo). A singing bird along the crest of Pine Mt., *Harlan*, 10 May (SS, JK, et al.) may have been on territory.

Indigo Bunting – earliest report was for 1 at South Williamson, *Pike*, 24 April (JC).

Dickcissel – somewhat unusual for n. Kentucky were 3 singing at Petersburg, *Boone*, 17-21 May (LM).

Bobolink: the species was not numerous this spring; earliest reports were for several near Vernon, *Monroe*, 22-23 April (TC); and ca. 15 at WKU Farm (DR) and 2+ at Ballard (SR), both 27 April; peak counts were for 40+ in s. *Trigg* 30 April (BL) and 50+ at Ballard 16 May (SR). Other reports of interest included 2 at

Petersburg, *Boone*, 1 May (LM); 10-15 in w. *Green* 2 May (RK); 15-25 in *Boyd* 5 May (MH); a few in *Hart* 7 May (SK); at Lexington 11 May (LR et al.); in w. *Fulton* 12 May (BY, MW); and 6 at Ballard 18 May (SR).

Rusty Blackbird – peak count was for scattered flocks totaling 1000-1500+ across w. *Henderson* 20 March (BP, AC).

Brewer's Blackbird – all reports are included: 6 at the WKU Farm 22 March (DR); 1 at Walton's Pond and 3 along Bogle Road, s. *Warren*, 23 March (DR, RDv); 2 at Walton's Pond 26/28 March (DR, JRo); 1 at WKU Farm 28 March (DR); at least 30 along Smokey Road, *Ballard*, 30 March (BP); and 1 at Chaney Lake 27 April (DR).

Bullock's Oriole – the male that had been frequenting a yard outside of Lawrenceburg, *Anderson*, since mid-January continued regularly through March and was last seen 8 April (AR).

Purple Finch – peak count for the period was at least 30 in w. *Anderson* 10 March (CL); latest report was from Fisherville, *Jefferson*, 3 May (EHU, JH).

Pine Siskin: a few birds lingered into spring with latest reports being 2 at Big South Fork 16 April (BP, AC); 9 at Panorama Shores to 30 April (KCo) with 1 still there 7 May (KCo); and 1 at Shaker Mill 8 May (DR).

Observers: David Ayer (DA); Jane & Pat Bell (J&PB); Earl Boggs (EB); Gary Boggs (GB); Horace Brown (HB); Josh Burton (JB); Kathy Caminiti (KC); Terry Campbell (TC); Chris Carpenter (CCa); Joan Carr (JC); Hap Chambers (HC); Elizabeth Cuzio (EC); Kathy Cohen (KCo); Amy Covert (AC); Charlie Crawford (CCr); Cathy Cunningham (CCu); Dennis Davis (DD); Phyllis Deal (PD); Roseanna Denton (RDn); Robert Dever (RDv); Tom Durbin (TD); Melissa Easley (MEa); Mary Elam (MEI); Joe Tom Erwin (JTE); Les Estep (LE); Troy Evans (TE); Doug & Margaret Foote (D&MF); Scott Freidhof (SF); Tom Fusco (TF); Brian Gasdorf (BG); Wendell Haag (WH); Mike Hardin (MH); Patricia Hartman (PH); Ed Hartowicz (EHa); Lana Hays (LH); Bob Head (BH); Tim Houghton (TH); Mason Howell (MH); Eddie Huber (EHu); Jennifer Huber (JH); Anne Johnson (AJ); Laura Kamperman (LK); Richie Kessler (RK); James Kiser (JK); Steve Kistler (SK); Michael Kuntz (MK); Celia Lawrence (CL); Paul Lehman (PLe); Cindy & Charles Lemons (C&CL); Bill Lisowsky (BL); Paula Lisowsky (PLi); Don Manning (DMa); Scott Marsh (SM); Rick Mauro (RM); Lee McNeely (LM); Mark Monroe (MMn); Bob Morris (BM); Evelyn Morgan (EM); Mike Morton (MMr); Arlene

Morton (AM); Daniel Moss (DMo); Wendell Neely (WN); Earl Newby (EN); Laura Obiso (LO); Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. (BP); David Patrick (DPa); Danny Peake (DPe); Larry Peavler (LP); Joyce Porter (JP); Nicole Ranalli (NR); Ed Ray (ER); Scott Record (SR); Frank Renfrow (FR); Gary Ritchison (GRi); Annette Riddle (AR); Gerald Robe (GRo); David Roemer (DR); Joan Roemer (JRo); Wayne Rosso (WR); Leisa Royse (LR); Jennifer Rycenga (JRy); David Skinner (DS); Adam Smith (ASm); Andy Stahl (ASt); Stephen Stedman (SS); Matt Stickel (MS); Keith Stucker (KS); Mike Todd (MT); Allan Trently (AT); Andre and Carol Trevathan (A&CT); Shawchyi Vorisek (SV); Mary Walter (MW); Alan Whited (AW); Jim Williams (JWm); Jeff Wilson (JWn); Barbara Woerner (BW); Ben Yandell (BY); Josh Young (JY); Audubon Society of Kentucky (ASK); Beckham Bird Club (BBC); Ky. Ornithological Society (KOS).

FIELD NOTE

First Nests of Least Flycatcher in Kentucky

A nest of Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*) was discovered within 100 m of the highest point on Black Mountain, Harlan County, Kentucky, at an elevation of 1260 m [4130 ft] on 11 May 2005 at 1530 EDT by Michael Kuntz. He pointed out the nest, in the process of being built in the crotch of an oak (*Quercus* sp.) at a height of approximately 12 m, to Stephen J. Stedman, who realized that the nest was undoubtedly the first to be discovered in the Commonwealth. An adult bird was noted at or near the nest several times in the course of observations spanning a period of about an hour. This adult was not noted singing, but another Least Flycatcher sang in the immediate vicinity of the nest site during much of the observation period. Documentary photographs of the nest were obtained by James Kiser and Evelyn Morgan (Figure 1a, p. 96), both present at the site during the time of discovery.

The nest appeared to be about 5-6 cm in diameter and about 3 cm deep. Loose strands of nesting material about 2-6 cm long hung from the bottom of the nest. On several occasions during the observation period an adult Least Flycatcher sat in the cup of the nest, moving about slightly as if to shape the cup to the proper contours.

In an attempt to make some follow-up observations of this nest, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., and Mark Monroe visited the site 13 June 2005. Although a nest could not be relocated in the previously described oak, at least two birds calling from the canopy of a nearby tree suggested that the nest may have produced young. Moreover, approximately 30 m southeast from the first nest site, a second nest was located. This one was placed in an upright, central fork about 3 m high in a 5-m black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). At the time of observation it contained 3 down-covered young that were being fed (Figure 1b, p. 96). This nest was composed of grayish plant material that blended perfectly with the locust bark.

Least Flycatcher was first reported at this location 5 July 1944 (Breiding 1947) but was then apparently quite rare as Mengel (1965) was later unable to add further records of its presence despite 40 days of observations on Black Mountain. The species began to be reported on Black Mountain again during the early 1980s (Palmer-Ball 1996) and became considerably more conspicuous by the late 1990s and early 2000s, with a high count of 17 being noted 9 May 2004 by B. Yandell (Palmer-Ball and McNeely 2004). Prior to 2005 the best breeding evidence derived from D. Noonan's sighting of an adult carrying food 27 May 1985 (Stamm 1985); D. Roemer's additional sighting of an adult carrying food 29 May 2002 (Busroe 2002); and the observation by B. Palmer-Ball, Jr., of a family group including at least 3 fledglings 1 July 2003 not more than 150 m north of the 2005 nest sites (Palmer-Ball and McNeely 2003).

We thank B. Palmer-Ball, Jr., and M. Monroe for generously sharing information about and photographs of the Least Flycatcher nest they found on Black Mountain during June 2005.

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Kentucky Bird Records Committee

Rare bird sightings and birds observed out of season should be well documented, and the documentations should be sent to Lee McNeely, Secretary of the KBRC, P.O. Box 463, Burlington, KY, 41005, for consideration by the committee for official state record status.

Reports of Cackling Geese Sought

Last year the American Ornithologists' Union determined that small races of the Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) composed a separate species, the Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*). In preparation for an article summarizing historical reports of Cackling Geese in Kentucky, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., would like to solicit any unpublished sightings from observers. Information can be mailed to him at 8207 Old Westport Road, Louisville, KY, 40222 or brainard.palmer-ball@ky.gov. Sightings with specific dates and locations would be most useful, but any recollected observations are welcomed. Any photographs of Cackling Geese taken in Kentucky are also desired.



Figure 1a. Least Flycatcher nest, Black Mountain; 11 May 2005; Evelyn Morgan.

(See Field Note, p. 94)

Figure 1b. Least Flycatcher nest, Black Mountain; 13 June 2005; B. Palmer-Ball, Jr.

