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The Kentucky Warbler

(Published by Kentucky Ornithological Society)

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IN THIS ISSUE

WINTER SEASON 2005-2006, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. and Lee McNeely	43
ELEVENTH REPORT OF THE KENTUCKY BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE Lee McNeely, KBRC Secretary	51
KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPRING 2006 MEETING, Laura Patton, Recording Secretary	53
FIELD NOTE An Eastern Bluebird Nest in a Mature Woodland	55
NEWS AND VIEWS	56

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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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THE COVER

We thank David and Clara Ann Pallares for the photograph of the female Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) observed in their Louisville yard from early February into April 2006 (see winter season report). Financial support for color cover provided by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

WINTER SEASON 2005-2006

Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. and Lee McNeely

Like the autumn leading into it, the winter 2005-2006 season was overall warmer and drier than normal. Slightly colder-than-normal temperatures during the months of December and February were more than offset by extremely warm temperatures in January. In fact, there were only two relatively short bouts of cold weather, the first immediately prior to Christmas when the temperature dipped to 10°F at Louisville on the morning of 20 December, and a second in mid-February, when temperatures dipped to a season low of 7°F at Louisville on the morning of the 19th. Precipitation was average to below average with hardly any periods of snow cover and no significant snow events. In fact, at no time during the season did Louisville have more than three inches (7.6 cm) of snow cover.

Rarity highlights during the season included Red-necked Grebe, Varied Thrush, Harris's Sparrow, and two Spotted Towhees. With natural and ornamental food crops in good supply, it was a good winter for berry, cone, and mast eaters with American Robins present in above-average numbers and Blue Jays and Red-headed Woodpeckers back to more normal numbers.

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 good 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; Place names: Ballard = Ballard WMA, Ballard; Barkley Dam = Barkley Dam, Lyon/Livingston; Barren = Barren River Lake, Allen/Barren; Bernheim Forest = Bernheim Forest, Bullitt (unless otherwise noted); Blood River = Blood River embayment, Ky Lake, Calloway; Boyd's Landing = Lake Barkley at Boyd's Landing, Lyon; Caperton = Caperton Swamp Nature Preserve, Jefferson; Cave Run Lake = Cave Run Lake, Rowan; Cooley's Pond = Cooley's Pond, Wayne; Fishing Creek = Fishing Creek embayment, Lake Cumberland, Pulaski; Flaherty = Flaherty, *Meade*; <u>Gibraltar</u> = Peabody Gibraltar Mine, *Muhlenberg*; <u>Griffin Park</u> = Griffin Park, Warren; Homestead = Homestead Unit Peabody WMA, Ohio; Jonathan Creek = Jonathan Creek embayment, Kentucky Lake, Marshall; Ken Hopewell = Ken Hopewell Unit Peabody WMA, Ohio; Ky Dam = Kentucky Dam, Livingston/Marshall; Ky Lake = Kentucky Lake, Marshall (unless otherwise noted); Kuttawa = Lake Barkley at Kuttawa, Lyon; <u>Lake Barkley</u> = Lake Barkley, *Livingston/Lyon/Trigg*; <u>Mt. Zion</u> = Mt. Zion, *Pulaski*; Long Point = Long Point Unit Reelfoot NWR, Fulton; Meldahl Dam = Meldahl Dam on the Ohio River, Bracken; Reformatory Lake = Reformatory Lake, Oldham; Riverqueen = Riverqueen Unit Peabody WMA, Muhlenberg; Sauerheber = Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs WMA, Henderson; Sinclair = Sinclair Unit Peabody WMA, Muhlenberg; Twin Lakes = Twin Lakes Subdivision, Pulaski; Waitsboro = Waitsboro Recreation Area on Lake Cumberland, *Pulaski*; Wolf Creek Dam = Wolf Creek Dam, Lake Cumberland, *Russell*; SNP = State Nature Preserve; SRP = State Resort Park; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

Greater White-fronted Goose – most were seen at their normal congregation points with ca. 500 at Long Point 2 December (BP, JD, NM), a few thousand there 16 December (BP), ca. 2000 there 17 December (BP, NM, KL) and 14 January (KH

fide CD), and 130 still there 26 February (HC, RDn); perhaps as many as 500 at Sauerheber 15 December (BP, DA) with a peak count of 2300 there 4 January (MMr); and 1200 at Ballard 27 December (BP, SR) with 500+ still there 26 January (BP). Other reports of interest were for 6 at Homestead 10 December (BP, KOS) with 5 there 1 January (MSti) and 6 there 15 January (BY, MY); 1 s. of Russellville, Logan, 24 December (MBe); 4 at Boone Lake, Boone, 25 December (DM); 2 in Logan 27 December (DR); and 3 at Griffin Park 1 January (DR).

Greater White-fronted Goose x Snow (Blue) Goose – a goose that possessed all the characters of such a hybrid was present at Long Point 2 December (BP, JD, NM).

Snow Goose – peak counts included 12,000 at Sauerheber in late February (MMr); 7500 at Long Point 14 January (KH fide CD); and a new state-high count of ca. 150,000 at Ballard 6 February (CW). Another report of interest was for 17 over Caperton 18 December (BY, MY).

Ross's Goose – all reports are included: 2 ads. at Long Point 2 December (BP, JD, NM); a juv. at Twin Lakes 4-11 December (ph.RDn); an ad. at Sauerheber 15 December (BP, DA); an ad. and a juv. at Long Point 16 December (BP) with at least 7 there 17 December (BP, KL, NM); 2 ads. at A.J. Jolly Park, Campbell, 19 December (FR); an ad. n. of Boston, Nelson, 23 December (ph.BP, AC, SV); 2 ads. at Mitchell Lake, Ballard 27 December.



Ross's Goose, juv. 4 December 2005, *Pulaski* Roseanna Denton

ber (BP, SR) with 3+ there 26 January (BP); an ad. at Homestead 1 January (MW); ca. 5 at Long Point 14 January (BY, MY); and a peak count of 26 at Sauerheber 28 January (vt. BY, MY).

Canada Goose – numbers during this mild winter were quite unimpressive; peak counts included 5400 at Sauerheber 19 December (MMr) and 4100 at Ballard 27 December (BP, SR).

Cackling Goose – again this season, all reports are included: 15+ at Sauerheber 15 December (*BP, DA); 1+ at Long Point 16 December (BP) with at least 10 there 17 December (BP, KL, NM); 4 at the Reformatory Lake (ph.BP) and 7 at Griffin Park (ph.DR), both 18 December; at least 1 at Ballard 27 December (BP, SR); 2 at the Campbellsville City Lake, *Taylor*, 28 December (ph.RDn, BP); 1+ at the Reformatory Lake (BP, AC, BW) and 1 at Blood River (HC, KC), both 31 December; with an impressive count of at least 46 at the Reformatory Lake 19 February (BP, TP).



Cackling Geese (3 of 4) 18 December 2005, *Oldham* Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Mute Swan – there continue to be numerous reports with some birds now appearing to exhibit winter site fidelity: up to 6 in s. *Ohio* on and adjacent to Homestead 19 December (MMr) to 14 February (DR); 7 at Cooley's Pond 20 December/7 January (RDn); 1 at Twin Lakes 24 December—6 February (RDn); up to 3 at Griffin Park 30 December—27 February (DR, MBe, et al.); up to 25-30 at Bernheim Forest from mid-December

through February (m.ob.); 5 at Sinclair 19 December (MMr); 5 at Clear Creek Lake, *Rowan*, and 3 at Cave Run Lake, both 13 January (EM, SB); 1 at the Louisville Water Company basins, ne. *Jefferson*, 21 January (BJ, BBC); 1 at L Springs Pay Lake, *Pulaski*, 16 February (RDn); and 1 at Fishing Creek 18 February (RDn, GH, AM).

Tundra Swan – the wintering flock at Sauerheber numbered 38 as of 15 December (BP, DA) and peaked at 56—a new state high count—1 February (MMr); 5 were still present there 27 February (MMr). Also reported were 1 at Frankfort 17 December (*JF), 2 ads. over Caperton (BY, MY), and 2 ads. (perhaps the same birds?) at the Reformatory Lake 18 December (MSti, ph. BP).

Gadwall – peak count was for 125+ at Sauerheber 15 December (BP, DA).

Gadwall x Mallard – a m. duck at Sauerheber 15 December showed field marks consistent with a hybrid between these two species (*BP, DA).

American Wigeon – peak counts were for 265+ at Sauerheber 15 December (BP, DA) and 200+ at Long Point 16 December (BP).

Blue-winged Teal – there were two reports during the mid-winter period: a m. off Harrodsburg Road, Lexington, 17 December (*PD) and a male at Cooley's Pond 7 January (ph.RDn). Earliest reports of north-bound migrants were for 1 at Shallow Flats Viewing Area, Cave Run Lake, 20 February (SW et al.) and 1 at Barren 28 February (DR).

Northern Shoveler – peak counts were for 50-75 at Sauerheber 15 December (BP, DA) and 175 at Long Point 26 February (HC, RDn).

Northern Pintail – peak counts were for 100+ at Ballard 27 December (BP, SR); "hundreds" at Sauerheber 20 February (CC); and ca. 100 there 22 February (MBe).

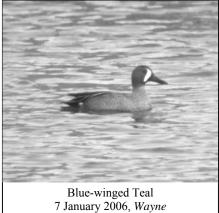
Green-winged Teal – peak count was for 100+ at Ballard 26 January (BP).

Canvasback – peak counts were for 340+ at Boyd's Landing 13 December (MR); 100+ at Lake Peewee, *Hopkins*, 6 January (MBe); and 110 on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 21 February (DR).

Redhead – peak counts included an exceptionally large flock of 350+ late migrants at Waitsboro 5 December (RDn), as well as more typical late-winter counts of 95 at Homestead 13 February (DR, RDv); 42 at Cooley's Pond and 18 above Wolf Creek Dam, both 15 February (RDn); and 30 at Shaker Village, *Mercer*, 20 February (DPe) with 92 there and 12 nearby 23 February (DPe).

Ring-necked Duck – peak count was for 200 at Anderson Pond, Sauerheber, 15 January (CC).

Greater Scaup – the species was mostly reported from normal locations; peak count was for 403 on Ky Lake from the dam to Birmingham Point 22 February (DR, HC). One on Lake Herndon, *Logan*, 27 December (DR) and 30 December (MBe) was a county first.



Lesser Scaup – peak counts included "many thousands" on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 13 December (MR) and ca. 2000 on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 21 February (DR).

Roseanna Denton

Surf Scoter – there were several reports of late migrants, and one in mid-winter: 2 f./imms. on the Ohio River at Louisville 3 December (MSti); 1 at Freeman Lake, *Hardin*, 4 December (RH); 9 at Fishing

- Creek and 13 at Waitsboro, both 5 December (RDn); 2 f./imms. above Wolf Creek Dam 6 December (RDn); a f. on the Ohio River at Dayton, *Campbell*, 10 December (FR); and a f./imm. above Ky Dam 26 January (BP).
- Black Scoter there were two reports: 5 including an ad. m. above Wolf Creek Dam 6 December (RDn) and a f. on Ky Lake, *Marshall*, 22 February (DR, HC).
- **Bufflehead** peak counts were for 55+ at Waitsboro 5 December (RDn) and 100+ on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 23 January (DR).
- Common Goldeneye peak count was for 2350 on Ky Lake, *Marshall*, and 200+ on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, both 22 February (DR, HC).
- **Hooded Merganser** peak count was for 180 at Lexington 4 December (SM) with 225 on the CBC there 17 December (fide BM).
- Common Merganser small numbers were reported at normal locales, mostly during mid-winter. Peak counts were for 8 on the *Calloway* CBC 31 December (fide HC) and 8 above Meldahl Dam 20 February (LMcN et al.). Another report of interest was for 1 at Taylorsville Lake, *Spencer*, 20 February (BW).
- Red-breasted Merganser peak counts were for 100+ at Barren 5 December (MBe, DR) and 327 on Lake Barkley above the dam 22 February (DR, HC).
- **Ruddy Duck** peak counts included 150+ at Lake Peewee, *Hopkins*, 6 Jan (MBe) and 120+ on Lake Barkley above the dam 21 February (DR).
- Common Loon a few likely wintered as indicated by 8 at Green River Lake, *Adair/Taylor*, 28 December (BP, RDn); 1 on Ky Lake, *Marshall*, 23 January (DR); 1 on Lake Barkley above the dam 21 February (DR); and 3 on Ky Lake, *Marshall*, 22 February (DR, HC). Other reports of interest included 5 at Lexington 4 December (SM) and 1 on Dewey Lake, *Floyd*, 29 December (TE).
- **Horned Grebe** peak counts of late migrants were for 70 at Barren (DR) and 66

- at Waitsboro (RDn), both 5 December; a few lingered through mid-winter with 1-13 reported on five CBCs and 49 on Lake Cumberland, *Russell*, 7 January (RDn). Peak counts of possible or probable returning spring birds included 50+ on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, and 450 on Ky Lake, *Marshall*, both 22 February (DR, HC).
- **Red-necked Grebe** 1 was present at Lexington 10 December (ph.JP). KBRC review required.
- American White Pelican reports of interest included 10 over Ballard 27 December (BP); 254 on Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 31 December (HC et al.); 250 at Swan Lake, *Ballard*, 8 January (CW); and at least 280 at Kuttawa 26 January (BP) with 250+ there 25 February (DR, HC).
- **Double-crested Cormorant** small numbers wintered on Ky Lake/Lake Barkley (m. ob.).
- American Bittern 1 was observed 1 January at the same marsh on Sinclair where the species has been present on two previous occasions in winter (MBe, RDn, SD).
- **Great Egret** quite unusual for early winter were 3 at Energy Lake, Land Between the Lakes, *Trigg*, 17 December (AY et al.).
- Black-crowned Night-Heron as is now the norm, a few wintered at St. Matthews, *Jefferson*, with 6 present in early January (BW); a single bird was reported on the Lexington CBC 17 December (fide BM).
- **Black Vulture** a count of 400+ in a mixed-species vulture roost at Frankfort 18 January (BP) represented a new state high count.
- **Turkey Vulture** peak counts included 250+ at Frankfort in mid-January (BP) and perhaps as many as 500-1000 during the latter half of January in the vicinity of Radcliff, *Hardin* (DPa).
- Red-tailed Hawk reports of western forms included a *calurus* x "Krider's" intergrade at McElroy 21 December (DR); a different *calurus* intergrade on the WKU Farm 21 December (DR); and an ad. light morph *calurus* in e. *Muhlenberg* 1 January (BP). The light morph *harlani* and its

possible mate *calurus* continued on the WKU Farm through 8 January (DR).

Rough-legged Hawk – the species was not numerous this winter; only reports were of 1-2 indivs. on various units of Peabody WMA (m. ob.) and 2 in e. Wayne 17/20 December (RDn et al.).

Golden Eagle – 3 birds (2 ads. and a juv.) were observed at Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt/Nelson*, 1 December (BP, JD) with 2 (a sub-adult and a juv) there 23 December (BP, SV, AC) and a juv. there 8 January (BP, SK, et al.). Only other report was for 1 in *Butler* 19 January (DR).

Merlin – an impressive tally of 6—representing a new state high count—was made at Riverqueen 5 February (BP, AC); at least 1 f. was of the "prairie race", F. c. richardsoni (ph.BP). The species was present there throughout the season (m. ob.). Additional reports included a m. at Fishing Creek 5 December (ph.RDn); a f./juv. along Frazier Road, e. Wayne, 17 December (RDn); and 1 at Owsley Fork Lake, Madison, 24 February (TH).



Merlin, f. of "prairie" race, F. c. richardsoni 5 February 2006, Muhlenberg Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Peregrine Falcon – an imm. was present above Barkley Dam 18 December (BP), 15 January (BY, MY), and 21 February (DR); 1 was present off-and-on throughout the winter at the US 68/KY80 bridge over Lake Barkley, *Trigg* (BLi); the pair at Louisville put in occasional appearances throughout the period (m. ob.); additional birds were reported on Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 31 December (JTE, WW) and at Meldahl Dam 2 January (LMcN).

Virginia Rail – at least 3 replied to taped calls at a marsh at Gibraltar 1 January (BP, AC); another was observed along the edge of a marsh along Cypress Creek nw. of South Carrollton, *Muhlenberg*, 15 January (WR).

Sandhill Crane - as is the norm, southbound birds continued into January with northward flight commencing before the end of the month; reports of interest included 65 over Carlisle, Nicholas, 2 December (VK, WK) and 15 over Cave Run Lake 10 December (SF), both relatively far e., and 1 over Long Point 17 December (NM, BP, KL); the main northward flight commenced during the last week of February (m. ob.). Peak counts of northbound birds included 210 over Barren 26 January (DR); 400 over Munfordville, Hart, 4 February (SK); 600+ over Hart 15 February (MStu); 2500-3000 over Cumberland 21 February (C,D&VM); and "several thousand" over ne. Hart the last week of February (CF, BB).

Lesser Yellowlegs – earliest reports of returning spring birds were for singles in w. *Henderson* 19 February (JM) and 20 February (CC).

Least Sandpiper – a few birds may have wintered as evidenced by the following reports: 15 at Jonathan Creek 7 December (MEa) with 2 there 17 December (CM, KM), 8 there 21 February (MEa), and 6 there 25 February (DR, HC); 19 at Blood River 31 December (HC); 16 outside of Hickman, *Fulton*, 14 January (BY, MY); and 9 at Wildcat Creek embayment, Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 21 January (MEa).

Dunlin – latest reports were for 1 at Jonathan Creek 3 December (MEa); 5 at Barren 5 December (DR); and 7 at Jonathan Creek 17 December (CM, KM).

Long-billed Dowitcher – establishing a new late departure date for the state was a juv.

that lingered at Fishing Creek to 15 December (ph.RDn).



Long-billed Dowitcher 6 December 2005, *Pulaski* Roseanna Denton

American Woodcock – 4 were seen/heard in w. *McCracken* 1 December (BP, JD) with 2+ there 26 January (BP); 1 was reported on the Lexington CBC 17 December (fide BM); the species was heard during the second week of January in *Hart* (SK) and back in numbers by early February (m. ob.).

Laughing Gull – an ad. was present at the dam at Barren 26-30 January (DR).

Bonaparte's Gull – probably in large part due to the mild weather, numbers lingered throughout the winter; peak counts included 75-100 at Barren 20 January (DR) and 1000+ on both Ky Lake and Lake Barkley 23 January (DR). Hundreds were present most of the period near the mouth of Jonathan Creek, *Marshall* (MEa, HC, et al.).

Ring-billed Gull – peak counts were unimpressive and included ca. 1000 around Ky Dam 23 January (DR); 800+ at Barren near the dam 26 January (DR); and 350+ at Meldahl Dam 20 February (LMcN).

Herring Gull – peak counts were unimpressive and included 85 below Ky Dam 18 December (BP) with 70+ there and 20 at Barkley Dam 23 January (DR).

Thayer's Gull – the only reports were for an ad. below Barkley Dam 16/18 December

(ph.BP) and 2 first-year birds below Ky Dam 17 December (*BLi).

Lesser Black-backed Gull – the only reports were for single ads. on the Ohio River opposite Joppa, IL, *McCracken*, 31 December (*FB) and at Boyd's Landing 22 February (DR, HC).

Forster's Tern – as is the norm, a few birds lingered on s. Ky Lake with 2 at Jonathan Creek 3 December (MEa) and 7 there 16 February (MEa).

Eurasian Collared-Dove – a flock of 25 just n. of Flaherty 20 December (BP, EH) was in a new location for the species. A late report of 90 in w. *Daviess* 12 November (JH) represents a new state high count.

Barn Owl – the only reports were for 1 in *Calloway* 31 December (HC) and remnants of 1 picked up at Ken Hopewell in mid-January (EW, AS).

Long-eared Owl – the only report was for 2 at Riverqueen 28 January (BY, MY).

Short-eared Owl – quite scarce this winter, all reports are included: 1 off Old Glasgow-Munfordville Road, *Barren*, 6 December (EW); 1 near Dot, *Logan*, 31 December (FL); only 2 on the Paradise CBC 1 January (MW, MBe); 2 at Ken Hopewell 15 January (BY, MY) and 12 February (BP, KOS); and 1 off Red Hill Road, *Hopkins*, 18 January (EW).

Rufous Hummingbird – 7 were captured/ banded during the fall/winter (MMn, BP) (see Table 1 on following page).

Red-headed Woodpecker – more numerous than last winter, but not present in excessive numbers, even in w. Kentucky; 1-30 on 18 CBCs represented a near-normal showing.

Loggerhead Shrike – 1-3 were reported on seven CBCs; singles near Canmer, *Hart*, 8 January (SK, BP, et al.) and 1 February (DR), and at Blaze Valley, *Pulaski* 31 December (LMcL, JB, KF), were somewhat unusual for the locations.

Blue-headed Vireo – 1 near Green River Lake dam, *Taylor*, 28 December (RDn, *BP) represented a second winter record for the state. Under KBRC review.

Tuote 1: Italian Italian In Italian It						
Age/sex	Location	First noticed	Last observed	Hosts		
HY ♂	nr. Ballardsville, Oldham	ca. 25 September	2 October	John & Arna Davidson		
AHY ♂	Corbin, Knox	20 October	29 March	June Ann & Michael Perkins		
HY ♂	ne. of Georgetown, Scott	7 October	mid-December	Dawn Gottron		
HY ♀	n. of Nicholasville, Jessamine	mid-November	27 December	Nell & John Newton		
HY ♂	w. of Peytona, Shelby	ca. 17 November	27 November	Heidi & Mark Gregg		
AHY ♂	Owensboro, Daviess	23 November*	25 November	Janet Howard		
HY ♂	Louisville, Jefferson	mid-October	26 January	Randall & Doris Hancock		

Table 1. Rufous Hummingbirds in Kentucky, fall-winter 2005-2006

- * Owensboro bird had been banded 2 weeks prior in Princeton, IN (ca. 45 mi. to nw.) (CH).
- **Purple Martin** earliest report was for 2 at Lewisport, *Hancock*, 27 February (MBr; fide Purple Martin Conservation Association web site).
- **Tree Swallow** uncorroborated report of a bird at Owensboro, 24 January (fide Purple Martin Conservation Association web site).
- Red-breasted Nuthatch small to moderate numbers were present during the winter. One to 19 were reported on 14 CBCs; peak count was for 19 on the Paradise CBC 1 January (m. ob.).
- House Wren singles were reported on four CBCs including 1 adjacent to Waitsboro 31 December (*SS); another was found near Clifty Pond, *Pulaski*, 22 December/20 February (RDn).
- Sedge Wren single birds were seen at two different locations on and adjacent to the West Ky WMA, *McCracken*, 27 December (BP, SR).
- Marsh Wren there were three reports: 1 heard at Homestead 10 December (BP, KOS); 1 at Twin Lakes 31 December (GC, L&TP)—3 January (RDn); 1 seen and a second heard at Gibraltar 1 January (BP).
- **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** 1 was reported off Simpson Lane, n. *Madison*, 17 December (*BM, KN). Under KBRC review.
- American Robin numbers were above average this winter; representative roost counts included 2500-3000 at Louisville throughout the period (BW) and several thousand in nc. *Meade* 20 December (BP, EH).
- **Varied Thrush** a f. was present in Indian Hills, Louisville, 4 February into March

- (ph.DPr, CP) and seen by many during its stay. KBRC review required.
- **Gray Catbird** 1 was observed near Big Gimlet, Grayson Lake, *Elliott*, 20 February (*EM).
- American Pipit not numerous this winter; only exceptional peak count was a total of 580 in various flocks in *Logan* 27 December (DR).
- Pine Warbler 1-6 were reported on four CBCs in the w. part of the state; 3 at Bernheim Forest 24 January (JB, PB, et al.) may have wintered; returning birds were reported at several locales by the last week of February (m. ob.).
- Palm Warbler there were not as many reports this winter (more back to normal); 1 on the Lexington CBC 17 December (fide BM); 4 in *Larue* 20 December (DR); 1 ne. of Flaherty 23 December (BP, EH); 1 along Mystic View Road, *Wayne*, 7 January (RDn); 1 at Sinclair 15 January (BY, MY); and 2 at Mt. Zion 17 February (RDn).
- Mourning Warbler quite unusual was a report of an ad. m. adjacent to Jonathan Creek 17 December (*CM). Under KBRC review.
- Spotted Towhee the male in w. *McCracken* was seen 1 December (BP, JD), 13 December (MR), 31 December (AD), 26 January (BP), and 27 January (DA, CM); another male was present ne. of Canmer, *Hart*, from the last week of December into March (CF, BB, *SK, *BP, et al.).
- Amer. Tree Sparrow 1-40 on 15 CBCs was representative of a somewhat below-average occurrence this winter, probably at least in part due to the lack of snow.

- Chipping Sparrow relatively widespread in small numbers again this winter. One to 40 were reported on ten CBCs. Additional reports included up to 11 at Shaker Mill, Warren (DR) and up to 8 at Mt. Zion (RDn) through the period; 1 at Indian Hills, Louisville, 4 February (BP); 1 at Pulaski County Park 15 January (RDn); 4 at Barren 19 February (DR); "a flock" at West Liberty, Morgan, 20 February (MEl); and up to 7 at Plano, Warren, in late February (FB).
- Vesper Sparrow quite rare for winter, 1 was reported on the *Calloway* CBC 31 December (JTE, WW).
- Savannah Sparrow peak counts were for 65 nr. Flaherty 20 December (BP, EH) and 84 in *Warren* 21 December (DR).
- Grasshopper Sparrow representing one of only a few winter records for the state was 1 studied with a mixed flock of sparrows at Gibraltar 1 January (*BP, AC). Under KBRC review.
- Le Conte's Sparrow there were several reports; all are included: 1 ca. 2.0 mi ne. of Flaherty 20 December (BP, EH); at least 2 at Ballard 27 December (BP, SR) with at least 6 in the same field 26 January (BP); 1 at Gibraltar (BP, AC) and at least 1, perhaps more, at Sinclair (MBe, RDn, SD), both 1 January; and 1 below Barkley Dam 25 January (BP) and 25 February (HC, KOS).
- Harris's Sparrow an ad. was present ca. 2.5 mi sse. of Red Hill, *Daviess*, from late December into March (ph.BLo, et al.) (see p. 56).
- **Lapland Longspur** not widespread or numerous this year, all reports are included: 10+ e. of Long Point and 100+ at

- Open Pond, both 2 December (BP, JD, NM); 2 heard at Sinclair (BP, KOS) and at least 2 near Dot, *Logan*, (FL), both 10 December; 4 in *Warren* 21 December (DR); and 12 on the Olmstead CBC 27 December (fide MBe).
- Indigo Bunting what was probably a male in basic plumage was observed at Mark, *Pulaski*, 31 December/12 January (ph.CN, WN). Under KBRC review.
- Western Meadowlark at least 4-6 and probably 10-12 were seen/heard at Open Pond 2 December (BP, JD, NM).
- Rusty Blackbird reports of interest included 100 on the Warsaw CBC 17 December (LMcN et al.); 110 on the Olmstead CBC 27 December (MBe, et al.); and 3 in *Russell* 1 December (RDn, GH).
- Purple Finch it was a slightly better year for the species with 2-61 reported on 17 CBCs; peak counts included at least 60 at Green River Lake State Park campground, Taylor, 28 December (BP, RDn); 47 at Fisherville, Jefferson, 3 February (EH); 20+ along Union Hill Road, Ohio, 13 February (DR); and up to 72 at Open Fork, Elliott (EM) and up to 60 near Avenstoke, Anderson (SL), both in mid- to late February.
- Pine Siskin there were relatively few reports including 1-4 on four CBCs. Additional reports included 1 at Panorama Shores, *Calloway*, 7 January (KC) with 2 there 19 February (KC); and 3 at West Liberty, *Morgan*, 20 February (MEI); the only sizable flock was 50+ at Laurel Gorge, *Elliott*, 11 February (EM, et al.).
- Evening Grosbeak the only report was for a f. at West Liberty, *Morgan*, 4-5 January (MEI).
- Observers: David Ayer (DA); Bruce Bardin (BB); Jane Bell (JB); Pat Bell (PB); Frank Bennett (FB); Mark Bennett (MBe); Steve Bonney (SB); Fred Bowman (FB); Judy Brant (JB); Mike Brown (MBr); Hap Chambers (HC); Kathy Cohen (KC); Amy Covert (AC); Granville Cox (GC); Charlie Crawford (CC); Phyllis Deal (PD); Roseanna Denton (RDn); Steve Denton (SD); Robert Dever (RDv); Christine Donald (CD); Andrea Douglas (AD); Jon Dunn (JD); Tom Durbin (TD); Melissa Easley (MEa); Mary Elam (MEl); Joe Tom Erwin (JTE); Troy Evans (TE); Kim Feltner (KF); Scott Freidhof (SF); Carol Friedman (CF); Jim Fries (JF); Richard Healy (RH); Gay Hodges (GH); Ken Hogg (KH); Tim Houghton (TH); Janet Howard (JH); Eddie Huber (EH); Cathie Hutcheson

(CH); Bob Johnson (BJ); Virginia & Wendell Kingsolver (V&WK); Steve Kistler (SK); Susan Lambert (SL); Ken Leggett (KL); Bill Lisowsky (BLi); Bobby Lloyd (BLo); Frank Lyne (FL); Scott Marsh (SM); Betty Maxson (BM); Linda McClendon (LMcL); Lee McNeely (LMcN); Daniel McNulty (DM); John Meredig (JM); Carol, Don & Virginia Merrill (C,D&VM); Chuck Mills (CM); Mark Monroe (MMn); Nancy Moore (NM); Eveyln Morgan (EM); Arlene Morton (AM); Mike Morton (MMr); Carl Mowery (CM); Kathy Mowery (KM); Connie Neeley (CN); Wendell Neeley (WN); Kay Neikirk (KN); Dale Painter (DPa); Clara Ann Pallares (CP); David Pallares (DPr); Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. (BP); Thames Palmer-Ball (TP); Don Pelly (DPe); Lynda & Tom Perry (L&TP); Joe Pulliam (JP); Scott Record (SR); Frank Renfrow (FR); Mike Resch (MR); David Roemer (DR); Wayne Rosso (WR); Adam Smith (AS); Stephen Stedman (SS); Matt Stickel (MSti); Mitchell Sturgeon (MStu); Shawchyi Vorisek (SV); Major Waltman (MW); Wendell Webb (WW); Stephanie Welter (SW); Charlie Wilkins (CW); Eric Williams (EW); Barbara Woerner (BW); Ben Yandell (BY); Mary Yandell (MY); Aviva Yasgur (AV); Beckham Bird Club (BBC); Kentucky Ornithological Society (KOS).

ELEVENTH REPORT OF THE KENTUCKY BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Lee McNeely, KBRC Secretary

This report is the eleventh from the Kentucky Bird Records Committee (hereinafter KBRC) and covers actions completed from January 2004 through April 2006. Members serving on the committee during this period were Mark Bennett, Jackie Elmore, Lee McNeely, Darrin O'Brien, and David Roemer. The stated purpose of the KBRC is to determine the validity of records of rare birds within Kentucky, maintain documentation of these records, and publish a summary of the committee's deliberations.

During this period there were five rounds of circulation through the KBRC consisting of 35 individual records. Twenty-eight of these were finalized, while seven remain unresolved at this point. The current official Kentucky list now stands at 366 species (11 of which are by sight only), with Cackling Goose, Neotropic Cormorant, and Painted Bunting added since the last report.

The KBRC met at the spring 2006 meeting and took the following actions: 1) Black-necked Stilt was removed from the review list; 2) Red Knot was added to the review list; 3) as a result of the introduction and establishment of Trumpeter Swans in a few Great Lakes states and the subsequent appearance of these birds in Kentucky, the species was moved from Extirpated status to Introduced status, and it was added to the review list.

Accepted records:

- Branta hutchinsii. Cackling Goose [#1999E01] 17 January 1999, Warren County (LD) [videotaped]
- Branta hutchinsii. Cackling Goose [#2002E01] 31 January 2002, Warren County (DR) [videotaped]
- Gavia pacifica. Pacific Loon [#03winE04] 17 December 2002, Hopkins County (DR) [videotaped]
- Phalacrocorax brasilianus. Neotropic Cormorant [#1998E01] 27 September 1998, Trigg County (DR) [videotaped; first official Kentucky record]
- Plegadis falcinellus. Glossy Ibis [#03falE08] 13 October 2003, Warren County (DR, CH) [videotaped]
- Elanoides forficatus. Swallow-tailed Kite [#03falE04] 12-31 August 2003, Muhlenberg County (SA, DR) [photographed, videotaped]

- Conturnicops noveboracensis. Yellow Rail [#03spr05] 1-2 April 2003, Jefferson County (BP)
- Charadrius melodus. Piping Plover [#2002E05] 7 May 2002, Christian County (DR) [videotaped]
- Numenius phaeopus. Whimbrel [#2002E03] 8 May 2002, Warren County (DR) [videotaped]
- Limosa fedoa. Marbled Godwit [#03spr02] 26 April 2003, Rowan County (LK) [photographed]
- Limosa fedoa. Marbled Godwit [#03spr01] 28 April 2003, Lyon County (BP, MM) [two birds]
- Limosa fedoa. Marbled Godwit [#03falE01] 1 August 2003, Union County (BP) [photographed]
- Limosa haemastica. **Hudsonian Godwit** [#03falE03] 19 September 2003, Calloway County (HC)
- *Phalaropus lobatus.* **Red-necked Phalarope** [#2002E04a] 17 May 2002, Christian County (DR) [five birds; videotaped]
- Phalaropus lobatus. Red-necked Phalarope [#2002E04b] 19 May 2002, Warren County (DR) [photographed]
- Phalaropus lobatus. Red-necked Phalarope [#2002E04c] 14 October 2002, Warren County (DR) [videotaped]
- Phalaropus fulicarius. Red Phalarope [#03falE07] 13-17 September 2003, Marshall County (HC, DR). [photographed]
- Larus californicus. California Gull [#03spr03] 7 May 2003, Marshall County (BP, JD)
- Xema sabini. Sabine's Gull [#2002E08a] 11 September 2002, Lyon County (DR) [photographed]
- Xema sabini. Sabine's Gull [#2002E08c] 4 October 2002, Marshall County (DR) [videotaped]
- Zenaida asiatica. White-winged Dove [#03spr04] 6-7 May, 2003, Fulton County (BP, JD) [photographed]
- Zenaida asiatica. White-winged Dove [#03sum01] June 1, 2003, Madison County (AR) [photographed]
- Selasphorus rufus. **Rufous Hummingbird** [#03falE02] November 29—December 1, 2003, Logan County (GM, MB, JE, DR, CS) [photographed]
- Hirundo rustica. Barn Swallow [#2002winE01] 4-9 January 2003, Muhlenberg County (MB, HC, RD) [videotaped by DR]
- Spizella pallida. Clay-colored Sparrow [#2002E13] 17 October 2002, Muhlenberg County (DR)
- Spizella pallida. Clay-colored Sparrow [#03falE09] 10 November 2003, Pulaski County (RD)
- Passerina ciris. Painted Bunting [#03spr11] 30 April—23 July 2003, Fulton County (BP, MM) [photographed; first official Kentucky record]
- Observers: Steve Anderson (SA), Mark Bennett (MB), Hap Chambers (HC), Roseanna Denton (RD), Lester Doyle (LD), Jon Dunn (JD), Jackie Elmore (JE), Carter Hooks (CH), Lew Kornman (LK), Mr. & Mrs. Gene McDonald (GM), Mark Monroe (MM), Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. (BP), Art Ricketts (AR), David Roemer (DR), and Chris Sloan (CS).—P.O. Box 463, Burlington, KY, 41005.

KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPRING 2006 MEETING April 28-30, 2006

Pennyrile Forest State Resort Park

Laura Patton, Recording Secretary

The Spring 2006 meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society was held at Pennyrile Forest State Resort Park near Dawson Springs, Kentucky. Registration was held from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. CDT on Friday, April 28. A silent auction began at 6:45 p.m. President Mark Bennett called the general meeting to order and welcomed members and guests at 7:00 p.m. Win Ahrens introduced the guest speakers and made announcements.

The first speaker on Friday evening was Daniel Moss, biologist at Fort Campbell Military Reservation. Fort Campbell contains a rare native prairie ecosystem that was part of the historical "Big Barrens" dominated by grasslands maintained by fire (natural and set by native Americans) and grazing elk and bison. The areas are currently maintained in grassland habitat through burning in 1-3 year cycles and mechanical manipulations. A research study on Henslow's Sparrows documented 114 nests, the majority of which were found in larger fields. Nest parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds was low. Perhaps more surprising was the discovery of nesting Bachman's Sparrows. At Fort Campbell, about 20 individuals are found each year. The Bachman's Sparrows are not using their typical pine habitat, but rather are found close to burned fields with scattered large trees and a native grass understory. Other species present on the grasslands include Grasshopper Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Dickcissel, Eastern Meadowlark, and Sedge Wren in late summer. The military training appears to have minimal impact on the avian community, and maintaining the grasslands is consistent with military needs. Some areas are restricted only to biologists, and signs that warn of unexploded ordnance are ones to obey!

Past-president Hap Chambers was the second speaker on the Friday program. Wearing an "Ivory-billed - Found" t-shirt, Hap told tales of her 12-day volunteer search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in the White River NWR in Arkansas. These were long days starting as early as 4:00 a.m., and going till 6:00 p.m., and then data entry back at the trailer. A signed confidentiality agreement with Cornell University prevented full disclosure, but Hap remained skeptical. Hap then shared slides from her first birding instructor, Dr. Clell Peterson. Clell was a professor of English at Murray State University and president of KOS in 1963. The pictures from Reelfoot and from the "Land Between the Lakes" before the dams were most interesting. Hap asked members for ideas of how to archive these photographs. After discussing Saturday morning field trips, the meeting was adjourned and popcorn and cookies were available.

Birding began bright and early Saturday morning with Lee McNeely and Hap Chambers leading trips on the Pennyrile Forest trails and Land Between the Lakes, respectively. The KOS board meeting was called to order Saturday afternoon at 2:45 p.m. The Kentucky Bird Records Committee meeting followed the board meeting, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

The Saturday evening program began at 7:00 p.m. President Mark Bennett welcomed back all birders and guests and highlighted the evening activities. The guest speaker on Saturday night was Dr. Doug Stotz from Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Stotz gave an informative presentation entitled The Chicago Migration Corridor, Spectacular and How to Preserve It. Dr. Stotz described Chicago's stopover areas for migrant birds, which largely include the lakefront and isolated forest patches. He explained how doppler radar was used to map areas of concentrated use by using the radar to detect bird activity as they dropped from the sky onto roosts. These areas overlapped with riparian corridors and forest patches. Dr. Stotz also talked about the inevitable collision of birds into Chicago buildings. Chicago building owners were urged to turn off their lights at night, because migrating birds are

drawn to light and consequently crash into the buildings. Several buildings have committed to turning out their lights at night.

Dr. Blaine Ferrell presented the count of species observed during the KOS field trips. A total of 139 bird species were observed on Friday and Saturday with the addition of five species on Sunday trips. The Saturday evening program ended with a review of field trips for Sunday morning by Win Ahrens, and closing announcements by President Mark Bennett. All would agree it was yet another exceptional meeting.

Attendance at the Spring 2006 KOS meeting

Alexandria: Ron & Mary Beth Lusby

Bowling Green: Blaine Ferrell, David & Joanie Roemer

Burlington: Lee McNeely Carmel, IN: Lou Anne Barriger

Carlisle: Wendell & Ginny Kingsolver

Chicago, IL: Doug Stotz Clarksville, TN: Daniel Moss Cox's Creek: Dona Coates

Dawson Springs: Ed Ray, Marvin Russell

Dearborn, MI: Darrin O'Brien

Eddyville: John & Phyllis B. Niemi Frankfort: Amy Covert, Laura Patton

Indianapolis, IN: Larry Peavler

Lexington: Rhonda Bryant, Wayne & Shirley Davis, Scott Marsh, Ryan &

Brooke Slack, Jim Williams

Louisville: Jane & Pat Bell, Carol Besse, Anne Caudill, Marge Constan,

Robert Dever, Katharine Fulkerson, Katharine Griswold, Gerald Heath, Eddie & Jennifer Huber, Celia Lawrence, Brainard Palmer-

Ball, Jr., Gary Sprandel, Mary W. Yandell

Madisonville: Ann & Marian Morgan
Morehead: Fred & Katie Busroe
Morgantown: Doris & Carroll Tichenor

Murray: Hap Chambers, Kathy & Mike Cohen, Bonnie & Sam McNeely

Owensboro: Marilee & Wendell Thompson

Prospect: Win Ahrens

Richmond: Gary Ritchison, Brenda & Pete Thompson

Russellville: Mark Bennett

Somerset: Gay Hodges, Connie Neeley

Bird Species Observed at the KOS Spring 2006 Meeting Pennyrile Forest State Resort Park, Vicinity (Christian/Caldwell/Hopkins cos)

(additional birds from Land Between the Lakes area only are followed by an asterisk *)

The following bird species were observed during the weekend of April 28-30: Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Northern Shoveler*, Northern Pintail*, Redhead*, Lesser Scaup*, Red-breasted Merganser*, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Common Loon*, Pied-billed Grebe*, Horned Grebe*, Red-necked Grebe*, Double-crested Cormorant*, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret*, Little Blue Heron*, Cattle Egret*, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron*, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Osprey*, Bald Eagle*, Sharpshinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, American Coot*, Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Willet*, Spotted Sandpiper, Laughing Gull*, Bonaparte's Gull*, Ring-billed Gull*, Herring Gull*, Caspian

Tern*, Forster's Tern*, Common Tern*, Least Tern*, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove*, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Whippoor-will, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher*, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Fish Crow, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Whitebreasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Bluewinged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Cape-May Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Whitecrowned Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch and House Sparrow. The species total was 144.

FIELD NOTE

An Eastern Bluebird Nest in a Mature Woodland

The Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) is a widespread, medium-sized passerine of temperate eastern North America. A characteristic inhabitant of open to semi-open habitats including farmland, residential areas, and woodland edges in Kentucky, this beautiful songbird occurs throughout the year, breeding commonly across the central and western portions, although more locally in the heavily forested eastern mountains.

On 15 April 2003, I was conducting a faunal survey of "Big Woods" in Mammoth Cave National Park, Hart County, when I came across a pair of Eastern Bluebirds in the forest. I stepped back and watched the pair until one bird and then the other flew up to a small snag in the understory and entered a small cavity. The hole, likely a former nest cavity of Downy Woodpeckers (*Picoides pubescens*), was situated about 7-8 ft (2.00-2.25 m) above the ground and near the end of the snag. The unique feature about this nesting cavity was that the location was at least 0.3 mi (0.5 km) from the nearest edge within continuous mature forest.

Big Woods is an old-growth tract of nearly 300 ac (121.5 hectares) that occupies broad upland ridges and slopes that descend into a moister ravine. The forest is composed of a diverse mixture of upland oaks (*Quercus* spp.) with hickories (*Carya* spp.) and tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) transitioning to American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharinum*), and American basswood (*Tilia america*) in moister portions. During the early part of the 20th Century, the American chestnuts (*Castanea dentata*) in the forest died off, creating a generation of younger growth, but many remaining trees are exceptionally large. The forest structure in Big Woods differs substantially from the structure throughout most of the park because of the age of the trees, a result of no known logging. The canopy has numerous small gaps, the mid-story is typically quite open, and the shrub layer is sparse to heterogeneous with mixed species of saplings and spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) in moister areas. There is also an abundance of dead snags and fallen trees, making

for an excellent variety of nesting substrate for many species of birds.

Because of the scarcity of old-growth tracts like Big Woods, occupancy of such naturally open woodlands by birds typically considered to prefer open lands is seldom observed today. At the time of European settlement, when Kentucky was covered primarily in mature forest, species like the Eastern Bluebird were likely much less numerous and widespread than they are today, and they certainly occurred most widely in open woodlands, especially along the margins of the native prairies. The occurrence of nesting bluebirds in what would be considered "forest interior" provides insight into the role forests might continue to play, if allowed to mature, in providing habitat for a rich diversity of wildlife.—Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, 801 Schenkel Lane, Frankfort, KY, 40601.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Visit the K.O.S. Website

To learn about the Kentucky Ornithological Society and interesting happenings, visit the K.O.S. website maintained by Dr. Gary Ritchison at www.biology.eku.edu/kos.htm.

K.O.S. Burt L. Monroe, Jr., Avian Research Grant Fund

The K.O.S. Burt L. Monroe, Jr., Avian Research Grant Fund supports research on birds in Kentucky up to \$500. For guidelines on how to apply, please contact Dr. Blaine Ferrell, Ogden College of Science and Engineering Dean's Office, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky, 42101 (blaine.ferrell@wku.edu).

Kentucky Bird Records Committee

Documented records of rare bird sightings and birds observed out of season are sought by the Kentucky Bird Records Committee (KBRC). Electronic records in DOC, PDF or JPEG format are preferred to hard copy, but both formats are accepted. Electronic documentations should be emailed to Mark Bennett at benn5609@bellsouth.net; hard copy documentations should be mailed to Mark at 113 Iroquois Circle, Russellville, KY 42276-8777. Lee McNeely, KBRC Secretary, supervises record circulation and maintains appropriate documentation for the Committee.



Harris's Sparrow, January-March 2006, se. Daviess County (p.50). Photo by Bobby Lloyd.