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## Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 86, no. 2)

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# *The Kentucky Warbler*

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THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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THE COVER

We thank Jackie Elmore for the image of the Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) taken 17 December 2009 at Elizabethtown, Hardin County (see Winter 2009–2010 Season, p. 45). Financial support for color reproduction in this issue provided by the Daniel Boone National Forest and the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.



## IN MEMORIAM: KENNETH C. LEGGETT

Long-time K.O.S. member, Kenneth C. Leggett, passed away 28 March 2010 at Eddyville, Kentucky. Ken was a native of McLemoresville, Tennessee. His family lived in several west Tennessee and Kentucky towns as he was growing up, and he graduated from UT-Martin in 1964. His careers as an accountant, professional photographer, and pilot resulted in periods of residence in Louisville, Memphis and Dyersburg, Tennessee, and Piconning, Michigan. Most recently he and his wife since 1975, Betty, had moved to Eddyville in 2007. Ken became an avid birder during the 1960s, and wherever work took him he studied the local birds with great interest. He participated in many local bird surveys and counts, and he published two articles on the birds of Murphy's Pond in Hickman County in *The Kentucky Warbler* in 1968. The membership of the Kentucky Ornithological Society extends its deepest sympathies to Ken's family. He will be greatly missed by his friends in the birding community.

## WINTER 2009–2010 SEASON

## Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., and Lee McNeely

The winter of 2009–2010 was characterized by slightly below normal temperature and below normal precipitation. Temperature was near normal to slightly below normal statewide during December and January, but colder than normal during February. Despite the low overall average, no major recording stations went below 0°F with the following low temperatures during the period recorded: Louisville, 7°F on 3 January; Jackson, 6°F on 3 & 8 January; Paducah, 1°F on 10 January; and Bowling Green and Lexington, 4°F and 2°F, respectively, on 31 January. Precipitation was variable during December with the driest conditions across central Kentucky but normal precipitation in the west and above normal precipitation in the east. During January and February western and southern Kentucky experienced well below normal precipitation with northern and eastern portions only slightly below normal. Little snowfall occurred during the period, although eastern Kentucky received up to 12 inches [30.5 cm] 18–19 December, much of the southern half of state received up to 8 inches [20.3 cm] 29–30 January, and most of the state received significant snowfall 9–10 February with up to 6 inches [15.2 cm] across northern Kentucky.

Rarity highlights included a possible Barrow's Goldeneye, Pacific Loon, Little Gull, California Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, two Rufous Hummingbirds, and Harris's Sparrow. Also reported were lingering White-eyed Vireo, Dickcissel, and Summer Tanager. Most natural and ornamental food crops were scarce, resulting in low numbers of berry, cone seed, and mast eaters. Numbers of irruptive boreal species were notably low, Purple Finches being present in only modest numbers and Pine Siskins nearly absent.

Publication of any unusual sightings in the seasonal report does not imply that these reports have been accepted for inclusion in the official checklist of Kentucky birds. Reports of out-of-season birds and rarities should be accompanied by written and/or photographic documentation. This documentation is reviewed by 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; ad. = adult; imm. = immature; juv. = juvenile; CBC = Christmas Bird Count. **Place names:** Ballard WMA,

*Ballard*; Barkley Dam, *Lyon/Livingston*; Barren = Barren River Lake, *Allen/Barren*; Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt/Nelson*; Blood River = Blood River embayment, *Ky Lake*, *Calloway*; Cave Run = Cave Run Lake, *Bath/Rowan*; Gibraltar = former Gibraltar Mine, *Muhlenberg*; Griffin Park, *Warren*; Honker Bay, *Lake Barkley, Lyon*; Honker Lake, *LBL, Lyon/Trigg*; Horseshoe Road = slough along Horseshoe Road, w. *Henderson*; Jonathan Creek = Jonathan Creek embayment, *Ky Lake, Marshall*; Ken Unit = Ken Unit Peabody WMA, *Ohio*; Ky Dam = Kentucky Dam, *Livingston/Marshall*; Ky Lake = Kentucky Lake, *Marshall* (unless otherwise noted); Lake Barkley, *Livingston/Lyon/Trigg*; Lake No. 9, w. *Fulton*; LBL = Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, *Trigg* (unless otherwise noted); Long Point = Long Point Unit, *Reelfoot NWR, Fulton*; Lower Hickman Bottoms, w. *Fulton*; Meldahl Dam, on the Ohio River, *Bracken*; Mt. Zion, *Pulaski*; NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; Reformatory Lake, near Buckner, *Oldham*; Riverqueen = Riverqueen Unit Peabody WMA, *Muhlenberg*; Sauerheber = Sauerheber Unit Sloughs WMA, *Henderson*; Sinclair = Sinclair Unit Peabody WMA, *Muhlenberg*; Smithland Dam, on the Ohio River, *Livingston*; Spindletop = University of Kentucky Spindletop Agricultural Research Farm, *Fayette*; SRP = State Resort Park; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

**Greater White-fronted Goose** – the species was not as numerous as during recent winters; peak counts at traditional wintering areas included a few thousand at Long Point 10 December (DR) with ca. 1500 there 18 January (HC, ME); ca. 1000 at Ballard WMA 21/22 December (BP, et al./PH); and ca. 2000 at Sauerheber several times during the season (CC). Other reports of interest included 5 at the Reformatory Lake 2/4 January (MY/EH) and 15 January (JBe, PB); 4 on Barren 8 January (DR); 1 at Lake Reba, *Madison*, 15 January (AN); 2 at Griffin Park 19 January (DR); 1 at the Paradise Power Plant, *Muhlenberg*, 23 January (BP, KH); 2 at Petros Pond, *Warren*, 2 February (DR); 1 s. of Fisherville, *Jefferson*, 31 January–14 February (EH et al.); and 500 at Lake No. 9 on 25 February (SSo).

**Ross's Goose** – there were relatively few reports during the season, all being included: at least 2 at Long Point on several occasions early December–mid-January (m.ob.) with peak counts of ca. 20 there 11 December (DR) and 6 there 18 January (HC, ME); 1 at the Reformatory Lake 24 December (EH); at least 1 at Sauerheber 18 January (BP, EH, CC) & 25 February (BP, EH); 1 at Lake Peewee, *Hopkins*, 18 January (EH, BP); and 1 at Griffin Park 28 January (TD).

**Snow Goose** – unusually low numbers in far w. Kentucky this winter, with the following very modest peak counts: ca. 5000 in

the Lower Hickman Bottoms 11 December (DR); ca. 5000 at Sauerheber 18 January (BP, EH, CC); and ca. 10,000 at Sauerheber 7 February (EH, BY, MY).

**Cackling Goose** – there were several reports, all being included: 23 at Long Point 10 December (DR); 3 in *Larue* 2 January (DR); 1 on Barren 10 January (DR); 2 at the State Game Farm, *Franklin*, 11 January (BLi); small numbers at the Reformatory Lake 3 January (MSt)–mid-February with a peak count of at least 10 there during the first week of February (BP); 5 at Lake Reba, *Madison*, 15 January (AN); 2 at Griffin Park 19 January (DR); and 3 at Spindletop 14 February (DS).



Cackling Geese (5), *Madison*  
15 January 2010  
Andy Newman

**Mute Swan** – there was an average number of reports, all being included: 2 on the Reformatory Lake through the season (m.

ob.); up to 6 at Lake Nevin, Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt*, mid-December–mid-February (KV et al.); 5 on the Shelbyville, *Shelby*, CBC 19 December (*vide* HB); 2 near Crestwood, *Oldham*, 20 December (WA, FM); 1 at Cedar Creek Lake, *Lincoldn*, 1 January (AN); 6 at Goose Lake, *Sinclair*, 14 January (EWs); and 3 at Long Run Park, e. *Jefferson*, 14 February (BW).

**Tundra Swan** – tallies of 62 at Sauerheber 2 January (TY); 37 at Sauerheber and 43 at Horseshoe Road 23 February (TY); and 54 at Horseshoe Road 27 February (CC) represented the season's peak counts; 25 were still at Horseshoe Road 15 February (BP, EH); the only other reports were of 1 on a lake at Twin Lakes subdivision, Somerset, *Pulaski*, 1 January (ph. JKr, GC, L&TM); 1 on a gravel pit lake at Petersburg, *Boone*, 16 January (LM); and 2 at Lake Reba, *Madison*, 31 January (AN).

**Northern Pintail x Mallard** – a male was seen at Sauerheber 18 January (BP, EH, CC).

**Blue-winged Teal** – a female plumaged bird on Barren 4 January (DR, LC) represented an unusual report for early winter; 4 in the Lower Hickman Bottoms 27 February (HC) were the earliest returning birds to be reported.

**Green-winged Teal** – at least 200 at Honker Lake 1 February (DR) with at least 150 still there 26 February (BP, EH), and ca. 175 in the Lower Hickman Bottoms 27 February (HC, ME) represented the season's peak counts.

**Northern Shoveler** – up to ca. 50 were on the Reformatory Lake during mid-January (MA et al.).

**Northern Pintail** – peak counts of interest included 50–75 at Horseshoe Road and 85 at Sauerheber 25 February (BP, EH); and an extraordinary tally of ca. 13,000 at Lake No. 9 on 25 February (SSo) with ca. 1700 still there 27 February (HC).

**American Wigeon** – peak counts for the season included ca. 300 at Sauerheber 14 January (CC) with at least 590 counted there 18 January (BP, EH, CC) and ca.

500 there 23 February (TY); and ca. 300 at Lake No. 9 on 25 February (SSo).

**Gadwall** – 400 on Cave Run 1 December (JBr); 150–200 on the Reformatory Lake 3 January (BP); at least 200 on Honker Lake 27 January (BP, EH); and ca. 500 at Sauerheber 23 February (TY) represented the season's peak counts.

**Canvasback** – peak counts of interest included ca. 550 above Smithland Dam 5 January (DR); at least 500 on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 19 January (BP, EH) with at least 1000 there 23 January (BY, MY, EH); and 61 on the Ohio River above Uniontown Dam, *Union*, 26 February (CC).

**Ring-necked Duck** – peak counts of interest included ca. 4435 at Ballard WMA and ca. 3200 at Swan Lake WMA, both 22 December (PH), and ca. 800 at Gibraltar 2 January (BP).

**Greater Scaup** – reports of interest included ca. 30 on Barren 8 December (DR); ca. 50 at Jonathan Creek 20 December (BP, EH); and 38 on the Ohio River at Louisville 23 February (BP).

**Lesser Scaup** – ca. half of several thousand divers on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 19 January (BP, EH) represented a modest peak count for the season.

**Bufflehead** – peak counts of interest included ca. 50 on the Ohio River at Louisville 10 December (EH); at least a few hundred on Ky Lake 13 December (BP, EH, MM); and a flock of more than 250 on the Ohio River just upstream from Concord, *Lewis*, 27 January (JBr) that matched the state high count for a single flock.

**Barrow's Goldeneye** – a female was reported on Ky Lake above Kentucky Dam 11 December (†DR). KBRC review required.

**Common Goldeneye** – at least 1000 on Ky Lake 13 December (BP, EH, MM); “thousands” on Ky Lake 15 January (DR); and ca. half of several thousand divers on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 19 January (BP, EH) represented the season's peak counts.

**Black Scoter** – there were only three reports: 2 on Lake Cumberland at the SRP, *Russell*, 11 December (RD); 1 above Smithland Dam 17 December/5 January (DR); and 2 on Ky Lake 17 December (DR).

**White-winged Scoter** – 1 on the Ohio River at Louisville 27 February (TB, BBC) into early March (m. ob.) was the only one reported.

**Surf Scoter** – there were only two reports: a pair above Smithland Dam 17 December (DR); and 2 above Meldahl Dam 14 February (JF, ph. SSA).

**Long-tailed Duck** – there were several reports, all being included: an ad. male on Ky Lake above the dam, 11–18 December (DR, EH, MM, BP); 2 on the Ohio River at the mouth of Big Sugar Creek, *Gallatin*, 4 January (ph. EH); 1 on Lake Barkley above the dam 16 January (DR) and 26 February (EH, BP); a female on Freeman Lake, *Hardin*, 21 January (RH et al.); and a female on Willow Bay, Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 26 January (BP, EH).

**Hooded Merganser** – at least 75 at the Louisville Water Company's Payne Plant near Prospect, *Jefferson*, 5 December (BJ, BBC); ca. 400 on Barren 8 January (DR) and ca. 150 at Lexington 9/31 January (JP) represented the season's peak counts.

**Common Merganser** – as is the norm, a flock was present on Honker Bay/Honker Lake during the season with up to 38 counted there 17 January (BY, MY); other reports of interest included 2 on Barren 20 January (DR) and 1 at the Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, *Rowan*, 28 February (MW).

**Red-breasted Merganser** – peak counts included at least 150 on Lake Barkley, *Lyon/Trigg*, 27 January (BP, EH); 87 on Demumbers Bay, Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 7 February (EH, BY, MY); 125–150 on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, with another 75+ on and near Honker Bay, both 26 February (BP, EH); and at least 300 on Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 27 February (BY, MY).

**Ruddy Duck** – ca. 250 on Lake Barkley near the Silo Overlook, *Lyon/Trigg*, 27

January (BP, EH) represented the season's peak count.

**Pacific Loon** – 1 was on Ky Lake at the mouth of Little Bear Creek, *Marshall*, 16–19 December (vt. DR, HC, ph. EH, et al.). KBRC review required.



Pacific Loon, Kentucky Lake, *Marshall*  
18 December 2009  
Eddie Huber

**Common Loon** – 40–45 on Ky Lake 13 December (BP, EH, MM) represented a very modest peak count for the season.

**Horned Grebe** – at least 750 birds on Ky Lake 13 December (BP, EH, MM) represented the season's peak count.

**American White Pelican** – 223 were tallied on the LBL CBC 19 December (*fide* AY); 10 flying n. over Smithland, *Livingston*, 19 January (EH, HC, BP) were relatively unusual for mid-winter.

**Great Egret** – 1 at Honker Lake 10 December (DR) was quite tardy.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** – as is normal, a few birds were observed in the Louisville area during the season including up to 5 off Champion's Trace, *Buechel*, during mid-December (MA) and up to 5 at St. Matthews (BW).

**Bald Eagle** – 38 were counted at the roost at Ballard WMA 21 December (BP, EH).

**Red-tailed Hawk** – both an intermediate morph and a dark morph *B. j. harlani* were present along Clear Creek, *Hopkins*, 11 January (BP) where they were initially seen during the winter 2005–2006.

**Rough-legged Hawk** – there were very few reports during the season, all being included: 1 in w. *Fulton* 5 December (HC,

ME); 1 at Shaker Village, *Mercer*, 15 December (BP, BLe); 1 s. of Shultztown, s. *Ohio*, 16 December (KH, BP); 1 in *Shelby* during mid-December (*fide* HB); 1 at Sinclair 3 January (MB); and 1 at the Louisville landfill 17–19 February (RA et al.).

**Golden Eagle** – there were several reports, all being included: up to 3 were at the traditional wintering area at Bernheim Forest during the season (KV et al.); 1 on a surface mine along Ivy Creek *Floyd/Pike* during December (CL, ph. NH, *fide* SF); a juv. at Lake Cumberland WMA, *Pulaski*, 1 January (RD, SD); 1 along KY 137, *Livingston*, 5 January (DR); 1 at Smithland Dam 9 January (DR); a juv. over LBL, *Lyon*, 23 January (BY, MY, EH); a juv. near Pumpkin Knob, Begley WMA, *Bell*, 12 February (CL); and a juv. at Lake Cumberland WMA, *Pulaski*, 24 February (RD).

**American Kestrel** – a bird that was found trapped inside a barn ca. 2 mi. ssw. of Bloomfield, *Nelson*, 11 January (PA *fide* KH) had been banded in Michigan 1 April 2007 (NI *fide* KH); it was released unharmed.

**Peregrine Falcon** – birds again wintered this season in the vicinities of the US 68/ KY 80 bridges over Lake Barkley, *Trigg* (m. ob.) and Ky Lake (BLi); 2 were seen at the former location 26 January (DR); another was seen off and on at Ky Dam 19 January–4 February (HC, EH, BP); and 1 was at Meldahl Dam 1 January (LM).

**Merlin** – there were nine reports: 1 in s. *Warren* 21 December (DR, DB); 1 ne. of Concord, *Pendleton*, 1 January (LM); 1 at Buck Creek Nature Preserve, *Pulaski*, 3 January (RD, SD); 1 at the WKU Farm, *Warren*, 21 January (DR); 1 at the Ken Unit 23 January (KH, BP); 1 along Chamberlain Lane, *Jefferson*, 6 February (MA); 1 n. of Fragrant, e. *Grayson* 21 February (BP, EH); 1 at Cox's Park, Louisville, 28 February (EH); and 1 near Alton, *Anderson*, 28 February (KH).

**Virginia Rail** – 1 was heard near Drakesboro, *Muhlenberg*, 2 January (BP) & 23 January (BP, KH).

**Sandhill Crane** – southbound flocks continued through late December and included the following reports of interest: 98 over Suwanee, *Lyon*, 13 December (MM, EH, BP); ca. 1000 over Bridgeport, *Franklin*, 10 December (JBr) with 600 nearby n. of Alton, *Anderson*, 11 December (TSl, GS, ph. JBr); ca. 500 over the *Woodford/Franklin* line 11 December (IH); several flocks over Walton, *Boone*, 17 December (LH); 2000+ in a number of flocks over w. *Meade* 29 December (BP, BW, et al.); and 3 still going south e. of Shelbyville, *Shelby*, 9 January (KH). In addition, new record high counts for the state were tallied at Barren and in w. *Hardin* as highlighted in the following summaries. In areas surrounding Barren the following tallies were reported: ca. 500 on 3 December (DR, WT); at least 5000 on 29 December (DR); ca. 12,000 on 21 January (WT); at least 15,000 on 14 February (DR, TD); peak of 18,000–20,000 on 15 February (DR), back to 5000 on 19 February (WT et al.) and only 500 on 20 February (WT et al.). Near Cecilia, w. *Hardin*, only 16 birds were present 18 December (BP, EH), but at least 105 were counted there 21 January (BP) and numbers quickly rose to ca. 3500 by 26 January (BP, KH) with peak counts of 6000 there 29 January (EHa), 6725 there 9 February (EHa), and 7100 there 1 March (EHa).

**Greater Yellowlegs** – 2 at Sauerheber 1 December (CC); 4 near Open Pond, *Fulton*, 5 December (HC, ME); and 5 near Sassafras Ridge, *Fulton*, 10 December (DR) were tardy. One near Open Pond, *Fulton*, 18 January (HC, ME) was quite unusual for mid-winter.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** – 1 along Mt. Vernon-Uniontown Road, *Union*, 26 February (CC) was the earliest to be reported. One to a few yellowlegs sp. were at Sauerheber 4 January (CC) with 1 lingering to 14 January (CC).

**Spotted Sandpiper** – 1 was seen on the beach at Green Turtle Bay, Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 19 December (ph. BLi, PL); perhaps the same bird was seen on a gravel



bar on Lake Barkley near Boyd's Landing, *Lyon*, 25 January (BP, EH).

**Least Sandpiper** – 11 spent most of the winter at Blood River (HC et al.); also reported were 1 at Sauerheber 18 January (BP, EH, CC) and 2 on Cravens Bay, Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 4 February (DR).

**Dunlin** – 5 were still at Barren 3 December (DR); 18 were still at Sauerheber 1 December (CC) with 14 birds there 21 December (CC), and a few lingered there into January with 2 still there 18 January (BP, EH, CC).

**American Woodcock** – 1 at Grayson Lake WMA, *Elliott*, 1 January (SF) was unusual for mid-winter in e. Kentucky; the initial push of returning birds occurred in *Madison* 22 February (AN) and *Pulaski* 23 February (CN).

**Bonaparte's Gull** – peak counts of interest included 1000–1500 (1 in alternate plumage) at Jonathan Creek 20 December (BP, EH) and at least 1000 at Barren 27 December/1 January (DR).

**Little Gull** – an ad. was present on Honker Bay 23–24 January (ph. BY, MY, EH, AH, et al.). KBRC review required.

**Ring-billed Gull** – ca. 30,000 on Ky Lake 15 January (DR); ca. 3000 at Barren 30 January (DR); and “thousands” at Cave Run 14 February (DPK) represented the season's peak counts.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** – at least 3 birds (ad., second-year, third-year) were present off and on during the period in the vicinities of both Barkley Dam and Ky Dam (m. ob.).

**Herring Gull** – peak counts included several hundred birds in the vicinity of Ky Dam 11 January (BP) with at least 250 there 19 January (BP, EH, HC); and ca. 200 on Lake Barkley from the dam to Boyd's Landing, *Lyon*, 26 February (BP, EH).

**Thayer's Gull** – at least 2 ads., a second-year bird, and a first-year bird were present during the period in the vicinities of both Barkley Dam and Ky Dam (m. ob.).

**California Gull** – an ad. was present at Ky Dam 19/23 January (ph. BP, ph. EH, HC/EH, BY, MY) with presumably the same bird on Lake Barkley at Green Turtle Bay, *Lyon*, 26 January (BP, EH) and again below Ky Dam 26 February (ph. EH, BP). KBRC review required.

**Great Black-backed Gull** – there were at least two reports: a first-year bird at Smithland Dam 14 January (†TD) with another or the same on Ky Lake above the dam 26 February (†BP, EH, HC); and a third-year bird at Ky Dam 1–4 February (vt. DR). KBRC review required



Great Black-backed Gull, *Livingston*  
1 February 2010  
David Roemer

**Forster's Tern** – 1 on Ky Lake above the dam 13 December (BP, EH, MM) was the only one reported away from Blood River, where up to 26 were seen during December (HC).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** – 2 w. of Pleasureville, ne. *Shelby* 12 January (BP) were a local first.

**Mourning Dove** – 1200–1500 in several fields w. of Pleasureville, ne. *Shelby*, 12 January (BP) represented an impressive congregation.

**Barn Owl** – there were three reports: 1 in e. *Calloway* 4 January (HC); 1 outside of New Castle, *Henry*, 12 January (BP); and a four-week old chick (one of 2; the other found dead) that was rescued after falling from a nest along Carrick Pike e. of Georgetown, *Scott*, on the remarkable date of 4 January (MFi, L&EH *fide* EWf).

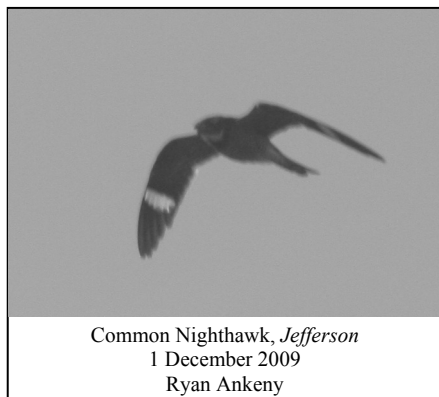
**Short-eared Owl** – the species was relatively scarce this winter with up to 3 at Sinclair during the season (m. ob.); 1 at the Ken Unit 2 January (MSt, EH); 2 at Gibraltar 2 January (BP); and 3 along Clear Creek, *Hopkins*, 25 February (BP, EH) with at least 1 there 26 February (AM) representing the only reports.

**Long-eared Owl** – 2 at Riverqueen late December–mid-February (m. ob.) were the only ones reported.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl** – 1 at Central Ky WMA, *Madison*, 22 February (AN) was the only one reported.

**Rufous Hummingbird** – there were two reports: an ad. male at Elizabethtown, *Hardin*, early December–4 January (CG, BP) that had previously been banded in Louisiana in February 2008 (DPn); and an imm. female (banded) ene. of Dycusburg, *Crittenden*, 13 December (D&RT, MM, BP, EH) that likely had been present since late October and that lingered to 5 January (D&RT).

**Common Nighthawk** – 1 over the Louisville landfill 1 December (ph. RA) represented a new late departure date for the state.



**Red-headed Woodpecker** – the species was very scarce during the winter with only 1–23 reported on seven CBCs; it was missed on the *Ballard* count where it is typically quite plentiful, and the only above average CBC total was 23 on the *Hart* count 21 December (SK et al.).

**White-eyed Vireo** – 1 at the Kendell Recreation Area below Wolf Ceek Dam, *Russell*, 11 December (RD) represented only a fourth December record for the state.

**Common Raven** – 1 on the Czar Coal property, *Martin*, 23 December (SF), was the only one reported.

**Tree Swallow** – 2 at a nesting box near Mark, *Pulaski*, 21 February (CN) were quite early.

**Horned Lark** – ca. 1000 along Uniontown-Mt. Vernon Road, n. *Union*, 2 January (DC); 500–750 w. of Pleasureville, n. *Shelby*, 12 January (BP); and at least 1000 in *Barren* 14 February (DR) represented the season's peak counts.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** – the species was relatively scarce during the winter season with only 1–12 found on 12 CBCs. Peak count was at least 12 in one pine thicket in se. *Muhlenberg* 2 January (BP).

**House Wren** – there were five reports: 1 heard at the Vogue Unit Peabody WMA, *Muhlenberg*, 16 December (BP); 1 near the mouth of Craig's Creek, *Gallatin*, 19 December (TSt); 1 n. of Woodville, w. *McCracken*, 21 December (BP, EH); 2 birds were found about a mile apart at the Green River WMA, *Adair*, 23 December (BP, EH, SV, DPe); and 1 below Barkley Dam, *Lyon*, 16 January (BLi).

**Sedge Wren** – the only report was of 1 heard calling at the Ken Unit 16 December (BP).

**Marsh Wren** – the only reports were of birds heard calling at Gibraltar 2 January (BP) and near Drakesboro 23 January/12 February (BP et al.).

**Eastern Bluebird** – the cold snap of late January and February may have combined with scarce food supplies to result in quite a bit of mortality of wintering birds, especially in the northern portion of the state. Analysis of breeding bird surveys will be required to determine how extensive the losses may have been.

**Gray Catbird** – 1 was seen at the WKU Farm, *Warren*, 21 December (DR, DB); a

bird frequenting a suet feeder along Figg Lane, *Jessamine*, 6 February–late March (DW, ph. AW) represented one of only a few mid-winter reports ever to be well-documented.

**American Pipit** – not especially widespread this winter with only 1–91 reported on 11 CBCs other than the tally of 380 in several flocks on the Olmstead count in *Logan/Todd* 30 December (*fide* MB).

**Cedar Waxwing** – relatively scarce natural and ornamental food supplies limited the number of wintering waxwings this year, with 2–107 on only 15 CBCs representing a well below average showing. A few flocks appeared during late winter including ca. 1000 at Glasgow, *Barren*, 26 February (LC).

**Orange-crowned Warbler** – there were two reports: 1 in s. *Logan*, 30 December (†MB); and 1 coming to a suet feeder in a yard off Cane Run Road, *Jefferson*, 31 January (†MA).

**Pine Warbler** – the species was relatively scarce this winter with only 1–2 found on three CBCs. Singles in *Barren* 10 February (DR, TD); at Mt. Zion 24/25 February (RD); at Burnside, *Pulaski*, 26 February (LO); and near Ky Dam Village SRP, *Marshall*, 27 February (BY, MY) were the earliest returning birds to be reported.

**Palm Warbler** – the species was not numerous this winter, with only 1–2 found on three CBCs, and only a few other reports including 1 at Smithland Dam 5 January (DR) and 1 at McElroy Lake, *Warren*, 8 January (DR).

**Common Yellowthroat** – there were two reports: 1 at Ballard WMA 21 December (†HC, BLi) and the distinctive chip note of 1 heard at Gibraltar 2 January (†BP).

**American Tree Sparrow** – the species peaked during mid-February, when snow brought birds to many areas for the first time during the season; peak counts included a flock of 32 at the East Bend Power Plant, *Boone*, 2 January (LM); 65 along Chamberlain Lane, *Jefferson*, 6 February (MA); at least 55 at a feeding station at Surrey Hills Farm, *Jefferson*,

14–15 February (BP); and 30–50 at a feeding station w. of Bridgeport, *Franklin*, 15 February (JBr).

**Chipping Sparrow** – as is now the norm, the species was well represented on CBCs with 1–45 reported on 13 counts. Later during the winter, 1–30 were reported at scattered locales, mostly in the w. half of the state (m. ob.).

**Savannah Sparrow** – “hundreds” were forced to roadsides by snow cover in *Livingston* 1 February (DR) and in *Barren* 10 February (DR, TD).

**Vesper Sparrow** – quite unusual for mid-winter was a group of 4 at Smithland Dam 9 January (ph. DR) with 1 still there 1 February (ph. DR).



Vesper Sparrow, *Livingston*  
1 February 2010  
David Roemer

**Le Conte's Sparrow** – there were three reports: 1 at Clarks River NWR, *Marshall*, 20 December (BP, EH); 2 at Ballard WMA 21 December (BP, EH, HC, BLi); and 1 at Sinclair 24 January (DR).

**Harris's Sparrow** – an imm. was present in a yard outside Crestwood, *Oldham*, 3–30 January (ph. JC, et al.). KBRC review required.

**Lincoln's Sparrow** – quite unusual for winter was 1 at a feeding station at St. Matthews, *Jefferson*, 9 January (ph. MFa).

**Lapland Longspur** – 2–151 were reported on six w. Kentucky CBCs; peak counts included ca. 300 in the vicinity of Open Pond, *Fulton*, 11 December (DR); and ca.

1000 along Uniontown-Mt. Vernon Road, n. *Union*, 2 January (DC) with at least 100 still there 4 January (CC). Small numbers arrived with snowy weather of early January, e.g. ca. 25 at Surrey Hills Farm, *Jefferson*, 10 January (BP); 50–75 along Chamberlain Lane, *Jefferson*, 10 January (JBe, PB, BY, MY); 50–60 w. of Pleasureville, ne. *Shelby*, 12 January (BP), and 25+ at Spindletop 13 January (BP). Another influx occurred during the snowy period of mid-February (m. ob.) with later peak counts of 40 at Spindletop 8 February (JS) and 80–100 in *Barren* 13 February (DR).

**Snow Bunting** – there were only three reports this winter: at least 8 with Horned Larks at the State Game Farm, *Franklin*, 26 January (JBr); 30–40 in a mixed-species flock in bottomland fields between Carrs and Rome Station, *Lewis*, 27 January (JBr); and a single female off Chamberlain Lane, *Jefferson*, 12–13 February (JBe, PB, et al.).

**Summer Tanager** – a female coming to a suet feeder in a yard at Frankfort, *Franklin*, 19 December–4 January (ph. MSc) represented a first winter record for the state.

**Indigo Bunting** – a probable male was present at Anchorage, *Jefferson*, 1 January–9 February (†JBe, PB, et al.); a probable female was present at a feeding station nw. of Cadiz, *Trigg*, 28 January–early March (WG, ph. JG).

**Dickcissel** – quite unusual for winter was 1 at the Kendell Recreation Area below Wolf Creek Dam, *Russell*, 14 December (†RD).

**Western Meadowlark** – there were only two reports: 2 in the Lower Hickman Bottoms (where the species is no longer relatively easily encountered) 10 December (DR); and 1 near Beckton, *Barren*, 22 January (vt. DR, WT) that was a county first.

**Rusty Blackbird** – reports of interest included at least 13 e. of Coburg, *Adair*, 23

December (BP, EH, SV, DPe); ca. 100 near Ekron, *Meade*, 29 December (JBe, PB); at least 120 n. of Fragrant, e. *Grayson*, 1 January (BP); up to ca. 50 at Cleaton, *Muhlenberg*, during late January (KH et al.); ca. 50 in e. *Trigg*, 10 January (BLi); ca. 70 at a mixed-species roost at Douglass Hills, *Jefferson*, 6 February (MM); and ca. 200 in *Barren* 13 February (DR).

**Brewer's Blackbird** – there were several reports, all being included: 2 in the Lower Hickman Bottoms 11 December (DR); 3 in LBL, *Trigg*, 4 January (BLi); and at least 4 s. of Anton, *Hopkins*, 25 February (BP, EH) with at least 7 there 28 February (EH, BY, MY). In addition, ca. 25 were found along Royal-Oak Grove Road e. of Fragrant, e. *Grayson* 28 December (SK et al.); a flock wintered at this locale with an impressive peak count of 80–100 birds there and another flock of 20 seen a few miles away, both 10 January (JK, SK); 5 were still at the main locale 21 February (BP, EH).

**Baltimore Oriole** – an ad. male was reported in a yard at Lyndon, *Jefferson*, 19 December (†PM).

**Purple Finch** – the species was reported in below-average numbers this winter with only 1–36 reported on 17 CBCs; 34 at a feeding station w. of Bridgeport, *Franklin*, 8 February (JBr) represented the season's peak count.

**Pine Siskin** – the species was extremely scarce this winter with only 1–4 reported on four CBCs. Two near Bridgeport, *Franklin*, 11 December (JBr) and 1 at Mt. Zion 6 February (RD) represented the only other reports.

#### Addenda to Winter 2008–2009 Season:

**Snow Bunting** – at least 1 was seen along KY 80 near KY 464, e. *Calloway*, 29 January 2009 (HC).

**Red Crossbill** – 2 males were present just ne. of Hazel, *Calloway*, late January–24 February 2009 (SA, ph. TL; see p. 52).

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## THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPRING 2010 MEETING

**April 23–25, Jenny Wiley State Resort Park, Prestonsburg, KY**

**John Brunjes, Recording Secretary**

The spring 2010 meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society was held 23–25 April 2010 at the Jenny Wiley State Resort Park outside of Prestonsburg in Floyd County. The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. Friday evening by President Scott Marsh, who welcomed members and guests. Vice-President Carol Besse introduced the evening's three guest speakers.

The first speaker was Dan Wetzel, a graduate student at the University of Kentucky. Dan was the recipient of a Burt Monroe Fund award in 2009. He provided the group with a synopsis of a research project on parental care in House Sparrows being undertaken near Lexington. Previous studies had demonstrated wide variation in the amount of parental care given to young. Dan wanted to determine if this variation influenced growth and survival of young. He also attempted to explain any differences that were detected. He found that growth and survival were not affected by parental care nor could differences in parental care be explained genetically. Many other fascinating aspects of the reproduction of House Sparrows were discussed.

The second speaker was Dr. David Brown, a professor at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU). David provided a brief synopsis of three research projects he is undertaking at EKU. In the first project, he will study the woolly adelgid invasion of Kentucky's hemlock forests and its effects on songbirds. In his second project, he will study the wintering ecology of bluebirds through radio-telemetry. Finally, he described work he was doing to

understand changes in bird distribution. He demonstrated how a number of species had shifted their distributions northward and discussed some of the reasons why this might be so.

The final presentation of the evening was by Andy Newman, a graduate student at ECU. Andy presented some of the results of his research on the migratory stopover ecology of American Woodcocks in Kentucky. Andy compared sites used by woodcocks to unused sites to determine what factors might provide for better future management of this species.

At the conclusion of the evening's presentations, Carol Besse thanked all three speakers for their participation, and details of Saturday's field trips were announced. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. Attendees continued socializing over refreshments.

Three Saturday field trips were held on a cool, overcast morning. The field trips visited various birding hotspots around the area. Trinity Shepherd, park naturalist, led one trip to the Sutton Memorial Park in Knott County to view elk and see birds of an open reclaimed surface mine, and Father Dave Powers and Rick Mauro led trips to areas around Jenny Wiley State Resort Park. The K.O.S. board meeting convened at 2:00 p.m. With numerous issues before the board, the meeting lasted until 4:03 p.m.

The Saturday evening meeting was called to order by President Scott Marsh. Before the evening's main speaker, he offered several acknowledgments on behalf of the Society. He thanked the Beckham Bird Club for a donation of \$1000 to the Burt Monroe Fund, and he thanked Win Ahrens for a donation of \$5000 to help procure meeting speakers and to supplement the Anne Stamm Fund. Scott thanked Carol Besse for all her hard work to make the meeting such a success. He also thanked Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., for his work with the Tennessee Valley Authority to maintain vehicle access to viewing points on Kentucky Dam for birders, as well as Hap Chambers for her work to maintain the current drawdown schedules at Kentucky and Barkley lakes. Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., then went through the day's checklist with the members. After a short tally, he reported that 95 species had been encountered on the day. Carol Besse then announced details of the three Sunday field trips.

Scott Marsh then introduced the evening speaker, Mr. Jeff Gordon from Delaware. Mr. Gordon is a long-time birder, tour leader, and birding writer. He presented a talk titled *The Ten Greatest Birds of the Last 30 Years*. Initially, Mr. Gordon asked the members in attendance what they considered to be a "great bird." He gave a number of definitions and then gave the logic behind his choices for the ten greatest birds of the last three decades. They included rarities such as the 1975 Ross's Gull in Newburyport, Massachusetts (#10), the 1987 Crane Hawk in south Texas (#9), a 1978 Spoonbill Sandpiper in Vancouver, British Columbia (#8), a 1997 Brown-chested Martin at Cape May, New Jersey (#6) and a 1985 Swallow-tailed Gull in Monterey, California (#4). He also discussed how a common species like the Red-tailed Hawk could affect our thinking about birds, as when the story of *Red-tails in Love* was published about hawks nesting in Central Park in New York. He used his #5 (a misidentified Point Reyes, California, Smith's Longspur) and #3 (a questionable 1996 location of Pygmy Nuthatch in Minnesota) to illustrate shortcomings of birders. Finally, he concluded that the 2004 report of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas was the most important or "greatest" bird of the last 30 years for the interest and debate it created.

At the completion of the Saturday night meeting, Scott Marsh thanked Mr. Gordon on behalf of the Society. He then announced that the fall 2010 meeting would take place 24–26 September in Henderson. Scott closed the meeting so that everyone might socialize over drinks and cookies. Sunday morning field trips to the Red River Gorge Geologic Area led by Lee McNeely, to Yatesville Lake Wildlife Management Area led by Marilyn Freidhof and Evelyn Morgan, and in the vicinity of Jenny Wiley led by Scott Marsh and Jeff Gordon added several species to the weekend total.

**Attendance at the Spring 2010 K.O.S. Meeting**

Bowling Green	David & Joan Roemer
Burlington	Lee McNeely
Carlisle	Virginia & Wendell Kingsolver
Danville	Granville Cox, Michael Hamm
Fisherville	Eddie Huber
Frankfort	John Brunjes, Shawchy Vorisek
Georgetown	David Lang
Lawrenceburg	Terry Anderson
Lexington	Rhonda Bryant, Scott Marsh, Joe Swanson, Dan Wetzel
Louisville	Bonnie & Sam Avery, Mary Bill Bauer, Jane Bell, Pat Bell, Carol Besse, Steve Deetsch, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., Jim & Mitzie Wittliff, Ben & Mary Yandell
Morehead	Fred, Joanna, & Katie Busroe, Marilyn Freidhof, George & Rachel Jenkins
Morgantown	Carroll & Doris Tichenor
Murray	Hap Chambers, Melissa Easley
Olive Hill	Evelyn Morgan
Prospect	Win Ahrens, Carol & Paul McAllister,
Richmond	David Brown, Andy Newman, Brenda & Pete Thompson
Science Hill	Roseanna Denton
Somerset	Connie & Wendell Neeley
Cincinnati, OH	Jessica Brzyski

**Birds Observed at the Spring 2010 K.O.S. Meeting**

The following bird species were observed in the vicinity of Jenny Wiley State Resort Park and Yatesville Lake Wildlife Management Area; a few birds were also added by a field trip to the Sutton Memorial Park in Knott County. Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Blue-winged Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch and House Sparrow. The total species reported during weekend was 102.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

**A Note from the Outgoing Editor of *The Kentucky Warbler***

It was my pleasure and honor to serve as editor of *The Kentucky Warbler* for a little over 25 years. The first issue as assistant editor with Dr. Herbert Shadowen was the February issue in 1982. The first issue as editor was in August 1983 and the last was February 2009. I was fortunate to have known and worked with giants of the Kentucky Ornithological Society, Dr. Burt Monroe, Jr., and Ms. Anne L. Stamm. I learned a lot from both. Despite their stature in ornithology, they were never pretentious and both wanted to share the joy of birding with everyone, amateur and professional alike. They understood that birds offer an accessible and unique opportunity for everyone to plug into monitoring the health of the natural world. It is only by getting everyone to understand what is happening in the natural world that there is a chance that we will become better stewards of that world. I endeavored to include articles in *The Kentucky Warbler* that continued this tradition and that interested readers. I hope you enjoyed the issues during the time period of my editorship. I have enjoyed serving the Kentucky Ornithological Society in this capacity and hope that I can serve the Society in other capacities that bring the love of birding to more people. Thanks for all of your contributions and support.

— Blaine R. Ferrell

**Erratum to Mid-Winter Bird Count, 2009–2010**

The total of 73 Chipping Sparrows on the Paradise count presented on page 30 in the composite table for the Mid-winter Bird Count, 2009-2010 (Ferrell, B.R. 2010. *The Kentucky Warbler* 86:16-34) should be 73 Field Sparrows.

**K.O.S. Burt L. Monroe, Jr., Avian Research Grants Available**

The Burt L. Monroe, Jr., Avian Research Fund supports research on birds in Kentucky with monetary awards of up to \$1000. For guidelines on how to apply, please visit the K.O.S. web site (<http://www.biology.uku.edu/kos/monroe.htm>) or contact either Shawchyi Vorisek, Ky. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Resources, #1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, KY, 40601 ([shawchyi.vorisek@ky.gov](mailto:shawchyi.vorisek@ky.gov)) or Dr. Blaine Ferrell, Ogden College of Science and Engineering Dean's Office, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY, 42101 ([blaine.ferrell@wku.edu](mailto:blaine.ferrell@wku.edu)).

**K.O.S. Anne L. Stamm Avian Education Fund Grants Available**

The Anne L. Stamm Avian Education Fund supports education of children in the deeper appreciation of birds and ornithology. For guidelines on how to apply for grants of up to \$500, please contact Mark Bennett by mail at 113 Iroquois Circle, Russellville, KY, 42276, or via email at ([benn5609@bellsouth.net](mailto:benn5609@bellsouth.net)).

**Visit the K.O.S. Website**

To learn about the Kentucky Ornithological Society, visit the KOS website maintained by Dr. Gary Ritchison at <http://www.biology.uku.edu/kos/monroe.htm>.





Red Crossbill (1 of 2), *Calloway*  
24 February 2009  
Terrence Little



California Gull, Kentucky Dam  
26 February 2010  
Eddie Huber



Gray Catbird, *Jessamine*  
14 February 2010  
Albert Westerman



Summer Tanager, Frankfort  
19 December 2009  
Mike Schillhahn



Lincoln's Sparrow, *Jefferson*  
9 January 2010  
Millie Farmer



Harris's Sparrow, *Oldham*  
29 January 2010  
John Callahan