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## Kentucky Warbler (Vol. 91, no. 4)

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# *The Kentucky Warbler*

(Published by the Kentucky Ornithological Society)

**VOL. 91**

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### THE KENTUCKY WARBLER

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#### THE COVER

We thank Eddie Huber for the image of the Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) taken at Prospect, northeastern Jefferson County (see p. 84). Financial support for color reproduction in this issue provided by the Daniel Boone National Forest.



## SUMMER 2015 SEASON

Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., and Lee McNeely

Weather conditions during June and July 2015 were somewhat variable across the state. The average monthly temperature at most stations was close to normal to slightly above-normal during both June and July. The amount of rainfall was variable during June; much of the state, particularly across the north and east, received about one and a half to two times normal rainfall, but the southern and western portions were below normal. Paducah, for example, received about one-half normal precipitation. July was particularly wet across the entire state, with more than two times normal rainfall being recorded at Louisville, Lexington, Paducah, and Jackson. Paducah received nearly 10.5 inches of rainfall during the month. Rarity highlights included Anhinga and Glossy Ibis. Least Terns had a very dismal nesting season due to high water on the Mississippi and lower Ohio Rivers.

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); “ba.” next to an observer’s initials indicates that the individual bird was banded; “†” next to an observer’s initials indicates that written details were submitted with the report; ad(s) = adult(s); juv(s) = juvenile(s); yg. = young. **Place names:** Adkins Swamp, Sinclair Unit Peabody WMA, Muhlenberg; Barkley Dam, Livingston/Lyon; Falls of the Ohio, Jefferson; Horseshoe Road = sloughs along Horseshoe Road, w. Henderson; Kuttawa = Lake Barkley near Old Kuttawa Recreation Area, Lyon; Ky Dam (Livingston/Marshall); Ky Dam Village = Kentucky Dam Village SRP, Marshall; Melco = Melco flood retention basin, Jefferson; Minor Clark = Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan; Morgan Pond, s. of KY 117 w. of US 41, Christian; Sauerheber = Sauerheber Unit Sloughs WMA, Henderson; SRP = State Resort Park; Upper Hickman Bottoms, n. of Hickman, Fulton; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

- Blue-winged Teal** – small numbers lingered at Morgan Pond and along KY 115 n. of Oak Grove, *Christian*, into early June, with 10 last seen at the latter location 18 June (JH); also reported was a male at Stone Place Stables, ne. *Jefferson*, 28 June (BP).
- Gadwall** – a pair, presumably the same pair that lingered well into May, was observed at Spindletop Farm, *Fayette*, 10 June (AX).
- Northern Shoveler** – 2 males were still at Morgan Pond 9 June (HC) with 1 last seen there 12 June (JH); a male was at Stone Place Stables, ne. *Jefferson*, 20 July (BP).
- Ring-necked Duck** – a male was observed on Lexington Reservoir #1 on 3 June (SC).
- Lesser Scaup** – at least 43 (most or all likely injured) were on Lake Barkley above the dam 17 June (BP, JSo); also reported were 2 at Ky Dam Village 13 June (S&SW) and 1 at Ky Dam 15 July (ph. TQ).
- Bufflehead** – a female was observed at Ky Dam Village 13 June (ph. S&SW).
- Common Goldeneye** – there were three reports of injured or summering females: 1 near Kuttawa 6 July (RFi); 1 on Ky Lake above Ky Dam 9 July (HC); and 1 near KenLake SRP, *Calloway*, 14-16 July (ph. TQ).



Glossy Ibis, *Jefferson*  
27 June 2015  
Karen Bonsell

**Hooded Merganser** – a female with yg. was observed at Horseshoe Road 6/13 June (CC); 5 juvs. at Big Rivers WMA, *Crittenden*, 16 June (BP) were likely hatched locally.

**Ruddy Duck** – a presumed tardy spring migrant was observed on a lake ese. of Mud Lick, *Monroe*, 3 June (ph. RD).

**Ruffed Grouse** – two reports from Raven Run Sanctuary, *Fayette*, during the season (SM, TLu) indicated that a small breeding population persists at that locale.

**Common Loon** – presumably the same bird was seen on Ky Lake above the dam 25 June (SP) and 2 July (BP).

**Pied-billed Grebe** – 2 were last seen on Morgan Pond 7 June (JH); 1 on a lake w. of Georgetown, *Scott*, 19 July (SJ) may have been an early migrant.

**Double-crested Cormorant** – as has become the norm in recent years, singles and small groups were reported from scattered locales away from known breeding areas during summer (eBird data). These reports included single individuals as far east as Minor Clark 5/8 July (JSo/MH); Dewey Lake, *Floyd*, 20 July (TLu); and Wood Creek Lake, *Laurel*, 22 July (AK).

**Anhinga** – 1 was seen soaring over the head of the Boyds Branch embayment of Ky

Lake near Hamlin, *Calloway*, 12 July (†HC). KBRC review required.

**American White Pelican** – 1 above Barkley Dam 17 June/2 July (BP, JSo/BP) and possibly 2 on the McNabb Creek embayment of Lake Barkley, *Lyon*, 10 June (TLu, WL) were likely injured; however, 12 at Lake Barkley SRP, *Trigg*, 20 June (JK), 7 at Kuttawa 2 July (BP, CP), and 9 over Lake Barkley near Devils Elbow, *Trigg*, 3 July (JH), and were all capable of flight, suggesting that small numbers of likely sub-ad. birds are now summering regularly.

**Least Bittern** – the only reports originated from Adkins Swamp where 1-2 were reported 16 June–16 July with an impressive peak count of 11 tallied there 30 June (ph. SG, TG, et al.).

**Great Egret** – local peak counts included 36/35 at the Falls of the Ohio 10/13 June (TBe, CB/JW, SW); 27 at Melco 20 July (JBa, BP); 28 at Sauerheber 28 June (CC); and 320 along Mud Creek e. of Hickman, *Fulton*, 31 July (BP, MM).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron** – perhaps as many as 75 nests were active on Shippingport Island, Louisville, 28 May (BP, EM).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – there were reports from three locales: an ad. at Sauerheber 9 June (CC); 2 at the Canal Public

Use Area just n. of LBL, *Lyon*, 13 June (S&SW); and 1-2 along Cypress Creek, *Marshall*, during late June (JSo, JP).

**Glossy Ibis** – 1 a Stone Place Stables, ne. *Jefferson*, 27 June (ph. AL, et al.) represented a first confirmed report for the species for the county. KBRC review required.

**Osprey** – reports of birds away from known nesting territories continue to increase; such reports of interest included 2 at Melco 20 June (BP); 1 at Persimmon Ridge Golf Club, *Shelby*, 1 July (JM); 1 at Wood Creek Lake, *Laurel*, 13-22 July (AK); 1 at Winchester, *Clark*, 15 July (AX); 2 at the Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery, *Franklin*, 21 July (BD); and 1 along the Dix River, *Mercer*, 26 July (TN). Some of these reports, especially during mid- and late July, may represent early dispersing birds. The nest near Jacobson Park, Lexington, *Fayette*, was successful this year (TN).

**Mississippi Kite** – the species expanded remarkably in Louisville this summer or birders simply caught up to how many nesting pairs are actually in the area with likely at least *five* pairs documented as follows: 2 pairs including observations of juvs. at St. Matthews (MC, BWo, et al.); an active nest at Cherokee Park with a second pair frequenting another portion of the Park during the season (JBa, MW, et al.); and a juv. rescued from a nest at Seneca Gardens 19 July (EWi). Also reported were 1 at McNeely Lake Park, s. *Jefferson*, 4 June (ph. RFa); 1 at Douglass Hills, *Jefferson*, 8 June (MM); and 2 at Beckley Creek Park, *Jefferson*, 15 July (EWt).

**Northern Harrier** – 1 at Minor Clark 5 July (JSo) must have been an early migrant.

**Bald Eagle** – only four new territories (where eagles have not been documented in any previous years) were established or located during 2015, the most notable of which was in s. *Bullitt*. In large part probably the result of severe late winter and early spring weather, nesting success was lower this year than last. The total number of nesting territories documented

during 2015 was 131, the same total as 2014 (Slankard 2015).

**Common Gallinule** – the only report was for 1 at Adkins Swamp 30 June/3 July (SG, TG, et al.).

**American Coot** – 6 were last seen at Morgan Pond 7 June (JH); also reported were 1 at Minor Clark 13 June (DP); 2 at Adkins Swamp 9/16 July (RD, HC/SG, TG); and 1 on Ky Lake, *Calloway*, 12 July (HC).

**Black-necked Stilt** – 2 (a pair) were first seen at a transient pond on the w. side of KY 115 n. of Oak Grove, *Christian*, 4 June (ph. SA, JH) with up to 6 (3 pairs) present there 9-10 June (JH) and at least 2 on nests there to 16 June (JH). Water disappeared, however, and nesting was likely unsuccessful.

**American Avocet** – 9 were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM).

**Black-bellied Plover** – 1 was in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM).

**Semipalmated Plover** – 2 were still along John U. Young Road, *Logan*, 2 June (FL); 4 lingered at Horseshoe Road to 13 June (CC); 10 were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30-31 July (BP, MM).

**Killdeer** – 250-300 in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM) represented the peak count for the season.

**Spotted Sandpiper** – presumed tardy migrants included 1 at the mouth of Indian Creek at Anderson City, *Anderson* 9 June (PG) and 1 at the J.C. Jones sinkhole ponds, *Hart*, 13 June (JSo). Presumed earliest fall migrants included 1 at Melco 1 July (RFa) 1 at the Boone Conservancy Park, *Boone*, 11 July (LM), and 1 at Ky Dam 15 July (TQ).

**Solitary Sandpiper** – 1 at Honker Bay, LBL, *Lyon*, 17 July (HC) and 2 at Melco 20 July (JBa) were the earliest to be reported.

**Greater Yellowlegs** – 1 at Melco 24 July (JBa) was the earliest to be reported.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** – singles at Sauerheber 21 July (CC) and Melco 24 July (JBa) were the earliest to be reported.

- Dunlin** – 1 at Horseshoe Road 6 June (CC) and 4 at Morgan Pond 9 June (HC) were the latest to be reported.
- Stilt Sandpiper** – 8 were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM).
- Baird's Sandpiper** – 2 in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 31 July (HC) were quite early.
- Least Sandpiper** – 4 were last seen at Horseshoe Road 13 June (CC); 35-40 were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30-31 July (BP, MM).
- Pectoral Sandpiper** – 1 at Melco 20+ July (BP, JBa) was the earliest to be reported; probably 1000+ were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM) with 1200+ there 31 July (BP, MM).
- Semipalmated Sandpiper** – 6 along John U. Young Road, *Logan*, 2 June (FL); 3 at Horseshoe Road 6 June (CC), 3 at Melco 8 June (BP); 12 at a transient pond on the w. side of KY 115 n. of Oak Grove, *Christian*, 9 June (JH); and 15 at Morgan Pond 12 June (JH) were the latest to be reported; 20-25 fall migrants were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30-31 July (BP, MM).
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper** – 1 was in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM).
- Laughing Gull** – an ad. was at Ky Dam 15 June (ph. JJ).
- Ring-billed Gull** – at least 100 were at Ky Dam Village by 2 July (BP).
- Herring Gull** – a sub-ad. at Ky Dam 17 June (BP, JSo) may have been summering.
- Least Tern** – nesting was almost totally unsuccessful on the Mississippi and lower Ohio Rivers due to high water levels during the season (CP, JBr); an estimated 400-500 nests were initiated between two sites (sandbars adjacent to Middle Bar, *Hickman*, and along the western margin of Kentucky Bend, *Fulton*) during early June; however, water rose, inundated all nests, and stayed up through July (CP, JBr). Reports of interest included up to 9 at Horseshoe Road to 13 June (CC) with 1 on the Ohio River nearby 30 July (CC); 1 at Ky Dam and 6 at Calvert City, *Marshall* (BP, JSo), all 17 June, that were likely from a nearby nesting colony at the latter; 5 on Lake Barkley at and near Devil's Elbow, *Trigg*, 3 July (JH); and probably 100-125 (including at least 2 juvs.) in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM). Juvs. at the last site suggested that some success probably occurred in agricultural land next to the river.
- Caspian Tern** – 2 at the Falls of the Ohio 10 June (TBa et al.); 3 there 13 June (JBa et al.); and 1 at Ky Dam 17 June (BP, JSo) all occurred between the normal spring and fall migratory periods; local peak counts during the season included 7 at Ky Dam 2 July (BP) and 10 at Ky Dam Village 15 July (TQ).
- Black Tern** – 7 in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM) were the only ones reported.
- Forster's Tern** – 3 were in the Upper Hickman Bottoms 30 July (BP, MM).
- Common Tern** – a first-year bird was at the Falls of the Ohio 13 June (TBe, CB, et al.).
- Black-billed Cuckoo** – there were reports from three locales: 1 at the Bluegrass Army Depot, *Madison*, 5 June/6 July (AC); 1 at Hisle Farm Park, *Fayette*, 25 June (MT, AX); and 1 off Briar East Road, se. Lexington, *Fayette*, 5 July (BJ, DSv, LC).
- Barn Owl** – 2 at the Ken Unit Peabody WMA, *Ohio*, 12 June (RD) were the only ones reported.
- Peregrine Falcon** – there were two reports away from known nesting territories: 1 on the Ohio River bridge wnw. of Brandenburg, *Meade*, 10 June (DSt et al.) and 2 (a presumed pair) on a cliffline along the Kentucky River, *Mercer*, 26 July (ph. TN).
- Willow Flycatcher** – 1 at the head of the Boyds Branch embayment of Ky Lake near Hamlin, *Calloway*, 12 July (HC) was a local first.

**Bell's Vireo** – 1 was along KY 763 w. of Burna, *Livingston*, 16 June (BP); territorial birds continue to increase in *Henderson* with multiple birds at Sandy Watkins Park and Sauerheber (CC et al.).

**Purple Martin** – roost counts included ca. 10,000 s. of Madisonville, *Hopkins*, 19/23 July (SG, TG); and 2000 at Mt. Vernon, *Rockcastle*, 26 July (SF). Other late July roosts were detected on radar as follows: n. of Hickman astride the *Fulton/Hickman* line; Bowling Green, *Warren*, which then likely then moved to the more traditional area at Glasgow, *Barren*; Westpoint, *Hardin*; Lexington, *Fayette*; nw. *Boone*; London, *Laurel*; Williamsburg, *Whitley*; s. of Ashland, *Boyd*; and near Williamson, *Pike* (BP, SF).

**Bank Swallow** – 8 along the Cumberland River near Helm Road, *Russell*, 5 July (RD) were not near any known nesting colony.

**Eastern Bluebird** – the number of nests was significantly lower at LBL, *Lyon/Trigg*, and at Lake Barkley SRP, *Trigg*, this season, most likely due to severe late winter weather (B&JP).

**Northern Waterthrush** – 1 banded at Shaker Village, *Mercer*, 22 July (ba./ph. KS et al.) represented a new early arrival date for a fall migrant by two weeks.

**Swainson's Warbler** – a tally of 8 at and near the Little Lick Recreation Area, *Pulaski*, 17 June (RD) was impressive; the territorial bird at Clarks River NWR, *Marshall*, continued into early June (JP).

**Prairie Warbler** – a late nest at Ft. Campbell, *Trigg*, still contained nestlings 29 July (DM).

**Bachman's Sparrow** – the only reports were of 1 at the traditional nesting area on the *Trigg* portion of Ft. Campbell 12 June (DM) with 3 there 29 July (DM).

**Henslow's Sparrow** – reports of interest included 1 just e. of Buena Vista, *Har-*

*ison*, 14 June (BWu); at least 3 on territory ca. 0.5 mi. e. of Hardyville, *Hart*, 15 June (JSO); 1 singing w. of Burna, *Livingston*, 16 June (BP); 6 on territory along Mays Road, *Anderson*, 18 June (PG, ST); 4 each on territory in both the *Christian* and *Trigg* portions of Ft. Campbell 26 June (DM) with 1 still at the latter 29 July (DM); and nesting birds that continued at McNeely Lake Park, s. *Jefferson*, into July (m. ob.) with a juv. seen there 4 July (BP, ph.TQ).

**Lark Sparrow** – there were reports from two locales: 1 along McDonald Landing Road, *Henderson*, 5 July (CC) with 3 there 19 July (CC); and 4 (including birds carrying nesting material) on the *Trigg* portion of Ft. Campbell 12 June (DM).

**Savannah Sparrow** – there were three reports away from known nesting areas: 1 singing as if on territory e. of Hodgenville, *Larue*, 14 June (BP); 1 heard ca. 0.5 mi. e. of Hardyville, *Hart*, 15 June (JSO); and 2 at Valley Oak Cemetery, *Casey*, 16 June (RD), where the species was also found during 2014.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak** – 4 at Boone Cliffs SNP, *Boone*, 5 June (TF) were likely on territory. Also reported was a female that lingered from late May at Elizabethtown, *Hardin*, to 21 June (†JSn).

**Bobolink** – nesting season reports of interest included 1-2 along Warren Road, se. of Salvisa, *Mercer*, 3-22 June (FM); up to 20 at Camp Nelson Civil War Park, *Jessamine*, during the season (DL, ASK, TQ, TS, et al.) with birds observed carrying food there 18 July (DL, ASK); up to 10 at Hisle Farm Park, *Fayette*, 19-25 July (AX, BWu); and a male along KY 1988, *Woodford*, 19 July (IH) near where one was present during 2014.

**Pine Siskin** – quite unusual was 1 at a feeding station at Morehead, *Rowan*, 6 July (ph. SF).

**Observers:** Sharon Arnold (SA), Audubon Society of Kentucky (ASK), Jamie Baker (JBa), Thom Barnell (TBa), Colleen Becker (CB), Tom Becker (TBe), John Brunjes (JBr), Hap Chambers (HC), Alexander Clark (AC), Lisa Combs (LC), Marge Constan (MC), Sam Corbo (SC), Charlie Crawford (CC), Brenda Dean (BD), Roseanna Denton (RD), Rand



Falls (RFa), Timothy Fennell (TF), Ray Fisher (RFi), Scott Freidhof (SF), Pamela Graber (PG), Steve Graham (SG), Teresa Graham (TG), Joe Hall (JH), Mabry Hopkins (MH), Ian Horn (IH), Brian Johnson (BJ), Jim Johnson (JJ), Stephen Johnson (SJ), Albert Kayser (AK), Jim Kittinger (JK), David Lang (DL), T. Lenzal (TLe), Will Lewis (WL), Amy Lint (AL), Terri Lusk (TLu), Frank Lyne (FL), John Mann (JM), Scott Marsh (SM), Evan McKinney (EM), Lee McNeely (LM), Frank Mitchell (FM), Mark Monroe (MM), Daniel Moss (DM), multiple observers (m. ob.), Tina Nauman (TN), Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. (BP), David Patick (DP), Bob & Judy Peak (B&JP); Sydney Penner (SP), Constance Powell (CP), Joshua Powell (JP), Tommy Quarles (TQ), Tanner Shepard (TS), Kate Slankard (KS), Jennifer Snyder (JSn), Jeff Sole (JSO), Del Striegel (DSt), Dave Svetich (DSv), Mark Tower (MT), Stephanie Turner (ST), Major Waltman (MW), Sean Ward (SW), James Wheat (JW), Steve & Sue Whitmer (S&SW), Eileen Wicker (EWi), Barbara Woerner (BWo), Ed Wransky (EWr), Brian Wulker (BWu), Antonio Xeira (AX).

**Additional Source:** Slankard, K. 2015. 2015 Bald Eagle Nesting Activity in Kentucky. Unpubl. rpt. Ky. Dept of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Frankfort, KY. October 15, 2015.

**KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
FALL 2015 MEETING**

**Barren River Lake State Resort Park, Glasgow, Kentucky  
18-20 September 2015**

Blaine Ferrell, Recording Secretary

The fall 2015 meeting of the Kentucky Ornithological Society at Barren River Lake State Resort Park began with a Friday afternoon field trip at the Park for early arrivals led by Rob Lane. Carol Besse, Past President, convened the evening meeting at 7:04 p.m. CST. She opened the meeting by explaining why the President and Vice President could not be in attendance. A new member from Louisville, James Wheat, introduced himself to the group. Carol indicated the bird quiz would be postponed until Saturday evening. The scheduled guest speakers, Dr. Richie Kessler, professor of biology at Campbellsville University and chair of the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund (KHLCF), and Zeb Weese, staff biologist with the KHLCF, were unable to attend the evening meeting. Sarah Bell, one of this year's recipients of the Virginia and Wendell Kingsolver Scholarship, gave a presentation about her experiences at the ABA Camp Avocet this past summer. Carol Besse introduced Sarah Bell and shared some of her background. Sarah had a really good time at the camp and garnered a large number of life birds. She described the accommodations, birding spots they visited, and shared pictures she had taken at the camp.

Carol Besse introduced Brainard Palmer-Ball who gave a talk about his 2013 Big Year: The Quest for 300. Brainard and Eddie Huber travelled far and wide across the state in 2013 trying to see as many of the roughly 305 species that are reported each year in Kentucky. Brainard gave an informative talk and showed photographs of some of the highlights he and Eddie saw during the year. They nearly reached their goal of 300, finding 299 species for the year. The Saturday field trip options were announced: Beginning at 8 a.m., Blaine Ferrell would lead a group to the dam spillway and Bailey's Point, Tom Durbin would lead a trip to the Narrows, Rob Lane would lead a trip to the Tunnel Nature Trail, and Brainard Palmer-Ball would lead a field trip to Bailey's Point. Afternoon trips would be a plant walk led by Jeff Sole, and birding trips by Carol Besse and Rebecca Bates beginning at 2:00 p.m. CST at the lodge entrance. Valerie Brown made an announcement about an event related to Aldo Leopold in Bowling Green Thursday evening. She offered to get an invitation for any KOS member who wanted to attend. Tom Durbin announced he had

Purple Martin houses to give away. The program concluded at 8:20 p.m. CDT. The Friday evening program was followed by a social hour.

The evening meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m. CST in the conference room. Carol Besse conducted the bird quiz on behalf of Steve Kistler. A short business meeting followed the bird quiz. Carol presented the slate of officers: Pat Bell for President, David Lang for Vice President, Lee McNeely for Treasurer, Brainard Palmer Ball for Corresponding Secretary, Blaine Ferrell for Recording Secretary, and Rebecca Bates and Carol Besse for Councillors. Carol asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, the slate of officers was accepted by acclamation. Blaine Ferrell tallied the species observed by members on Friday and Saturday. The total as of Saturday evening was 100 species. There were five species added to the list on Sunday for a total of 105 species for the weekend. Dr. Kimberly Bostwick, Senior Scientist for Public Engagement with BirdNote presented a talk entitled "Me, You, Birds, and Climate Change." She described what climate change is and its implications for the planet within the next 100 years. She explained the dangers of 2°C increase in temperature, and said that humanity is on a current trajectory to far exceed this number, possibly a 6°C increase. There will be dire consequences for all life on earth if we keep doing what we are doing. She outlined a series of steps each of us can take to contribute in our own way and explained how to participate in what she hopes will become a massive coordinated, intelligent, ambitious plan of action to address climate change. She explained how birds are like "the canary in the mineshaft" in demonstrating the effects of climate change. Kim gave examples of how several bird species have responded to climate change.

Sunday field trip options were presented at the conclusion of the talk. Trips would leave the lodge at 8:00 a.m. Linda Craiger would lead a trip to the Dry Creek Area, Jeff Sole would lead a trip to Brigadoon, and Lee McNeely would lead a walk around the lodge. Carol announced a Beckham Bird Club field trip to Cove Springs Park in Frankfort. James Wheat shared a humorous poem about birders by Ogden Nash. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. CST. Sunday morning field trips left the lodge at 8:00 a.m. and added several species to the weekend list.

#### Attendance at the Fall 2015 K.O.S. Meeting

Berea:	Rebecca Bates
Bowling Green:	Valerie Brown, Tom Durbin, Blaine Ferrell, Ken Kuehn, Marilyn Mattingly
Burlington:	Lee McNeely
Carlisle:	Wendell Kingsolver
Frankfort:	Tommy Quarles, Jeff Sole
Glasgow:	Linda Craiger, Sandra Moss, Grace Walker
Greenville:	Steve, Jessica & Teresa Graham
Henderson:	Julia Farmer
Herndon:	Andrew, Annette, Kathleen & Sarah Bell
Lexington:	Nancy Braun, Rhonda Bryant, David & Terri Lusk, Scott Marsh, Marie Sutton, Jim Williams
Louisville:	Bonnie Avery, Carol Besse, Carl Bochmann, Dick & Kathy Dennis, Rob Lane, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., James Wheat
Morehead:	Fred & Katie Busroe
Prospect:	Win Ahrens
Waddy:	Tanner Shepard
Wilmore:	Sydney Penner
Floyd Knobs, IN:	Tom Becker, Colleen Craven-Becker

**Birds Observed at the Fall 2015 K.O.S. Meeting  
Barren River Lake State Resort Park and vicinity**

The following species were observed by KOS members during the weekend of 18-20 September 2015 at Barren River State Resort Park: Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Forster's Tern, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Wood-Pewee, *Empidonax* sp., Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Blue-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, American Redstart, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, House Finch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow. The total number of species was 105.

**FIELD NOTES**

**A Cursory Survey of Waterbird Nesting Colonies on Lake Barkley  
and Kentucky Lake, 2015**

On 3 July 2015 the authors conducted a qualitative survey of wading bird nesting colonies on Lake Barkley, Trigg/Lyon Counties. We visited five islands/clusters of islands on the lake by boat and two additional islands from the shoreline. Thunderstorms cut short visits to a couple of the locations, but a relatively accurate count of birds was obtained for all sites. This late in the season, a "relatively accurate" count means that one is able to determine what species are present, but numbers have to be rough estimates because of the number of flighted juveniles that are already scattered about in the trees and on the water (in the case of cormorants).

This survey was conducted in part because of problems that nesting Double-crested Cormorants are creating on Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake. Less than twenty years ago, cormorants were not known to be nesting in Kentucky, having been extirpated as a breeding species during the DDT era of the mid-1900s. Since 2000, however, when cormorants were first found nesting in Kentucky again, numbers have swelled to probably more than 1000 pairs on several islands in Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake.

Wading birds (herons & egrets) typically can nest in deciduous trees for numerous years without severely impacting the vegetation. Cormorants, however, especially in such large numbers, can cause rapid and severe declines in deciduous trees. In Kentucky, particularly at Cunningham Island, Lyon County, there has been a remarkable negative impact. Not only are cormorants killing the larger trees, the death of the large trees is accelerating

erosion of the island itself. Cormorant impacts on the nesting wading birds and fishes of Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake are being studied by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources during 2015-2016 with recommendations for measures that might diminish impacts likely to follow.

### Survey Results

#### Islands/clusters of islands with no nesting activity detected

- 1) *Duck Island margin, Trigg Co.*
- 2) *Islands north of US 68/KY 80, Trigg Co.*
- 3) *Westernmost of two islands above Barkley Dam, Lyon Co.*

Islands/clusters of islands with nesting activity (Double-crested Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax auritus* [DCCO], Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias* [GBHE], Great Egret, *Ardea alba* [GREG], Little Blue Heron, *Egretta caerulea* [LBHE], Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula* [SNEG], Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis* [CAEG]).

- 4) *Easternmost of two islands above Barkley Dam, Lyon Co.* Birds at this nesting island were counted from several hundred yards to the east along the lake shoreline.

DCCO – ca. 150 (ads. + juvs) in trees; 200-250 more in vicinity on lake; at least ca. 30 nests observed

BCNH – 3 ads; no nests seen from Eureka Campground but could be tucked away behind foliage

CAEG – 15-20 ads; at least 2 on nests

- 5) *"Cunningham Island" just west of the Kuttawa Recreation Area, Lyon Co.* Visited by boat, circled the island twice.

DCCO – ca. 500 (ads + juvs) in trees and on water; ca. 125 nests visible, some still w/ large yg

BCNH – ca. 40 ads (1 incubating/brooding); 3 more nests w/ yg

CAEG – 2 ads (1 incubating/brooding)

GREG – 35-40 (ads + juvs) in trees and on ground; 3 ads at active nests

- 6) *"Powerline Crossing" islands off Taylor Bay, s. of mouth of Honker Bay, Trigg Co.* Visited by boat; circled the island once; cut short by threat of thunderstorms.

DCCO – 300-350 (ads + juvs); 200-225 nests, most empty but some still w/ yg (counted 183 nests but probably missed some in the vegetation, thus the higher estimate); nests concentrated in lines of larger trees near downstream ends of two different sections of trees

BCNH – 3 ads but no evidence of nesting

GREG – 1 ad but no evidence of nesting

- 7) *"Devils Elbow" islands, s of US 68/KY 80 bridge.* Visited by boat; circled island string twice. This is certainly the largest and most diverse nesting colony currently on Lake Barkley; as the cormorants have taken over Cunningham Island, especially the smaller waders seem to have retreated to this less heavily impacted (for now) island

DCCO – more than 500 but we think fewer than 1000 birds (ads + juvs) collectively in trees and on water; perhaps 45 trees have 10-20 nests/tree (perhaps an average about or slightly less than 15/tree) = 675 (600+ estimate?) active nests; perhaps 10-25% of these still had large yg (1-2) in them

BCNH – 25-30 ads; 6 active nests seen + some undetermined additional in foliage w/ calling/begging yg; at least 10 free-flying juvs

GBHE – 2 nests w/ yg (1 each) and 6+ free-flying juvs; surprised me to see GBHEs out there as they normally nest by themselves (or w/ GREGs) along the streams feeding the lakes.

GREG – 6+ ads; 2 free-flying juvs; 1 nest w/ yg

CAEG – 200-250 ads shuttling in and out; 40-50 active nest (both incubating/ brooding ads & w/ yg); 50+ free-flying juvs

LBHE – 12+ ads (2 incubating/brooding on nests); 20-25+ free-flying juvs

SNEG – 1 ad. observed displaying in trees in high breeding condition (orange feet/raspberry red facial skin); neither a nest nor another adult if present could not be seen in the foliage.

On 12 August 2015, Powell visited the only known waterbird nesting colony on Kentucky Lake, occupying the Patterson Island chain se. of the community of Hamlin, Calloway County. A total of 900-1050 Double-crested Cormorants were counted on and in the water surrounding three islands there with a crude estimate of 300-350 nests having been active earlier during the season. Only a few wading birds were observed.

### **Discussion of Changes in the Numbers of Nesting Wading Birds and Composition of Nesting Colonies**

The last relatively comprehensive wading bird nesting colony survey was conducted on Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake during 2004 (Palmer-Ball and Ciuzio 2004). At that time, nesting Double-crested Cormorants were still restricted to the Patterson Island chain in Kentucky Lake, Calloway County. The largest and most diverse nesting colony found during the 2004 survey was at Cunningham Island, Lake Barkley, Lyon County, and few if any birds were nesting on the islands in Lake Barkley near Devil's Elbow, Trigg County.

Soon after the 2004 survey was completed, Double-crested Cormorants moved into the Cunningham Island colony, and during succeeding years the number of wading birds has decreased. Whether the wading birds are most negatively impacted by direct competition for nest sites by the cormorants, or if the loss of foliage in nest trees is more significant, is unknown. Although not thoroughly documented, it appears that most of these nesting waders retreated south to their current colony location on Lake Barkley near Devil's Elbow, Trigg County (near where they had coincidentally nested for several years back in the 1980s). Concurrent with the arrival of the nesting wading birds was an increase in the number of nesting cormorants on the same Trigg County islands. The number of cormorants nesting on the easternmost of two islands in Lake Barkley above the dam also increased dramatically during the same time period.

It appears that negative impacts caused by Double-crested Cormorants have not yet reached a level that has caused an exodus of wading birds from these sites. However, it also appears to be apparent from the 2015 survey that wading birds have retreated to islands where there is less interaction (and perhaps competition) with Double-crested Cormorants for suitable nesting sites. Especially on the islands near Devil's Elbow, Trigg County, there remain enough trees with an abundance of foliage and no nesting cormorants that the wading birds apparently still find them suitable for nesting. In an effort to assure the presence of nesting wading birds in future years, their numbers will continue to be monitored.

**Literature Cited**

Palmer-Ball, B., and E. Ciuzio. 2004. 2004 Survey of Kentucky Heronries. *The Kentucky Warbler* 80:87-96.

– Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. 8207 Old Westport Road, Louisville, KY, 40222 and Constance Powell, #1 Sportsman’s Way, Frankfort, KY, 40601.

**Breeding Bird Survey Evidence of Eastern Bluebird Mortality  
During Winter 2013-2014**

The late winter season of 2013-2014 was characterized by several periods of very cold temperatures with accompanying periods of snow and freezing rain. The northern and western portions of the state experienced the most severe conditions. Nest box inspections during spring 2014 revealed that the winter season had resulted in quite a bit of Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) mortality.

Data from the U.S. Geological Survey Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) were summarized for 2014 and compared to similar data for 2005 through 2013. The data show fewer Eastern Bluebirds detected on Kentucky BBS routes than in any of the past ten years, and in many regions and for the state overall the number detected during summer 2014 was less than half the nine-year average since 2005 (Table 1). The U.S. Geological Survey uses a non-standard system for designating physiographic regions. Region names in the leftmost column of Table 1 are defined in more familiar terminology in the Key beneath the table.

Table 1. Number of Eastern Bluebirds Detected on Kentucky BBS Routes, 2005-2014.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2005-2013 avg.	2014
Upper Coastal Plain	50	60	56	48	60	68	38	88	61	58.8	19
Highland Rim	257	257	260	282	277	235	159	288	303	257.6	133
Lexington Plain	50	77	22	51	63	45	40	93	78	57.7	29
Cumberland Plateau	80	65	51	87	52	73	72	31	23	59.3	26
Statewide	437	459	389	468	452	421	309	500	465	433.3	207

Key: Upper Coastal Plain (that portion of Kentucky west of Kentucky Lake [Jackson Purchase]; Highland Rim (all of central Kentucky except the northern Bluegrass); Lexington Plain (northern Bluegrass); Cumberland Plateau (all of eastern Kentucky).

BBS data are the most reliable that are available to assess songbird trends in North America due to the stringent protocol that is utilized on the roadside surveys. The data presented in Table 1 reflect data collected on about 35 roadside routes conducted by volunteers across the state every year. Thanks to Mikey Lutmerding with the U.S. Geological Survey Breeding Bird Survey for providing the Eastern Bluebird data for Kentucky presented here.

– Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., 8207 Old Westport Road, Louisville, KY, 40222.

**NEWS AND VIEWS**

**Visit the NEW K.O.S. Web Site!**

You may now find information about the Society on our new web site at the following address: [www.birdky.org](http://www.birdky.org). Please bookmark this web site address, as the former web site will be removed when the migration of all information is completed.

### Virginia and Wendell Kingsolver Scholarship Available

The Virginia & Wendell Kingsolver Scholarship Fund was established in 2013 to honor the memory of Virginia “Ginny” Kingsolver and the legacy and contributions of Ginny and her husband, Wendell, to K.O.S. and to environmental education efforts across Kentucky. The scholarship is available to a young birder between the ages of 13 and 18 who lives in Kentucky. The Fund will pay tuition for a young birder to attend an American Birding Association Summer Camp. Details about the A.B.A. camps can be found on the A.B.A. website. To apply for a Kingsolver Scholarship, applicants should fill out the form found on the K.O.S. web site (<http://birdky.org/wendell-and-ginny-kingsolver-fund.html>), write a short essay (500 words or less) on why he or she wants to attend, and include a brief recommendation from a parent, teacher, or mentor. Recipients will be asked to report on their camp experience either in person to their local bird club, to K.O.S. at a meeting, or in writing. The deadline to apply for a 2016 Kingsolver Scholarship is May 15, 2016.

### 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 Scott Marsh by mail at 4401 Athens-Boonesboro Road, Lexington, KY, 40509, or via email at ([scott.marsh@twc.com](mailto:scott.marsh@twc.com)).

### *The Kentucky Warbler* Available in PDF Format

Members of the Kentucky Ornithological Society who wish to receive quarterly issues of the Society’s journal, *The Kentucky Warbler*, in electronic format rather than hard copy through the mail may now receive them by email. If you wish to receive future issues of *The Kentucky Warbler* in digital PDF format, email the Society’s Corresponding Secretary, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., at ([brainard@mindspring.com](mailto:brainard@mindspring.com)).

### It’s Time to Renew Your Membership for 2016!

Enclosed with this issue of *The Kentucky Warbler* is a membership renewal sheet and addressed envelope. Life members will receive a sheet listing opportunities to donate to the Society’s various funds that are used for specific bird conservation activities.

## KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

### Statement of Financial Position

August 20, 2015

Depository	Account	Balance
PNC Bank, Louisville	General Fund (Checking)	\$15,732.12
Comm. Foundation of Louisville	Endowment Fund (Established 2015)	\$25,000.00
Heritage Bank, Burlington	Burt Monroe, Jr., Avian Research Fund (Checking)	\$2,154.24
Heritage Bank, Burlington	Gordon Wilson Fund (Savings)	\$101.37
Heritage Bank, Burlington	Anne L. Stamm Avian Education Fund (Savings)	\$6,761.19
Heritage Bank, Burlington	Endowment Fund (CD)	\$19,608.75
Total assets		\$69,357.67

Submitted by Lee McNeely, Treasurer, August 20, 2015 (unaudited)

<b>KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY</b>		
<b>Operating Statement</b>		
<b>July 22, 2014 – August 20, 2015</b>		
<b>Beginning Balance (July 22, 2014)</b>		\$15,524.04
<b>Receipts</b>		
Dues (Renewals and New Memberships)	\$3,558.00	
Meeting Registrations (Fall 2014)	\$523.00	
Meeting Registrations (Spring 2015)	\$620.00	
Donations for Speakers	\$1000.00	
Sales ( <i>Annotated Checklists</i> , Field Cards, etc.)	\$148.75	
Anne Stamm Fund Donations	\$735.00	
Burt Monroe Fund Donations	\$710.00	
Gordon Wilson Fund Donations	\$585.00	
Kingsolver Fund Donations	\$4,215.00	
Endowment Fund Donations	\$700.00	
Burt Monroe Fund Reimbursement	\$1,873.60	
Anne Stamm Fund Reimbursement	\$500.00	
Gordon Wilson Fund CD (Cashed for transfer to new Endowment Fund)	\$24,625.25	
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>\$39,793.60</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		
Printing – August 2014 issue <i>The Kentucky Warbler</i>	\$389.05	
Printing – November 2014 issue <i>The Kentucky Warbler</i>	\$440.57	
Printing – February 2015 issue <i>The Kentucky Warbler</i>	\$474.78	
Printing – May 2015 issue <i>The Kentucky Warbler</i>	\$413.84	
Meeting Speaker (Tim Gallagher)	\$1,573.00	
Meeting Speaker (Chris Wood)	\$1,360.20	
Meeting Speaker (Robert Peak)	\$100.00	
Meeting Expenses (Mammoth Cave NP, Spring 2014)	\$250.82	
Meeting Expenses (Lake Barkley SRP, Fall 2014)	\$354.04	
Meeting Expenses (Cumberland Falls SRP, Spring 2015)	\$271.27	
Meeting Expenses (Barren River Lake SRP, Fall 2015 deposit)	\$200.00	
Transfer to Anne Stamm Fund	\$605.00	
Transfer to Burt Monroe Fund	\$600.00	
Transfer to Gordon Wilson Fund	\$545.00	
Transfer to Endowment Fund	\$900.00	
Transfer to Comm. Foundation of Louisville (Establish New Endowment)	\$25,000.00	
Kingsolver Fund Award (American Birding Association)	\$2,390.00	
Burt Monroe Avian Research Fund Award (Joshua Suich)	\$873.60	
Burt Monroe Avian Research Fund Award (Dustin Brewer)	\$1,000.00	
Anne Stamm Education Fund Award (Pack 984)	\$500.00	
Corresponding Secretary Expenses (Postage, misc. printing, etc.)	\$1,326.35	
Bank Fees	\$18.00	
<b>Total Disbursements</b>		<b>\$39,585.52</b>
<b>Net Receipts</b>		<b>\$208.08</b>
<b>Ending Balance (August 20, 2015)</b>		<b>\$15,732.12</b>



