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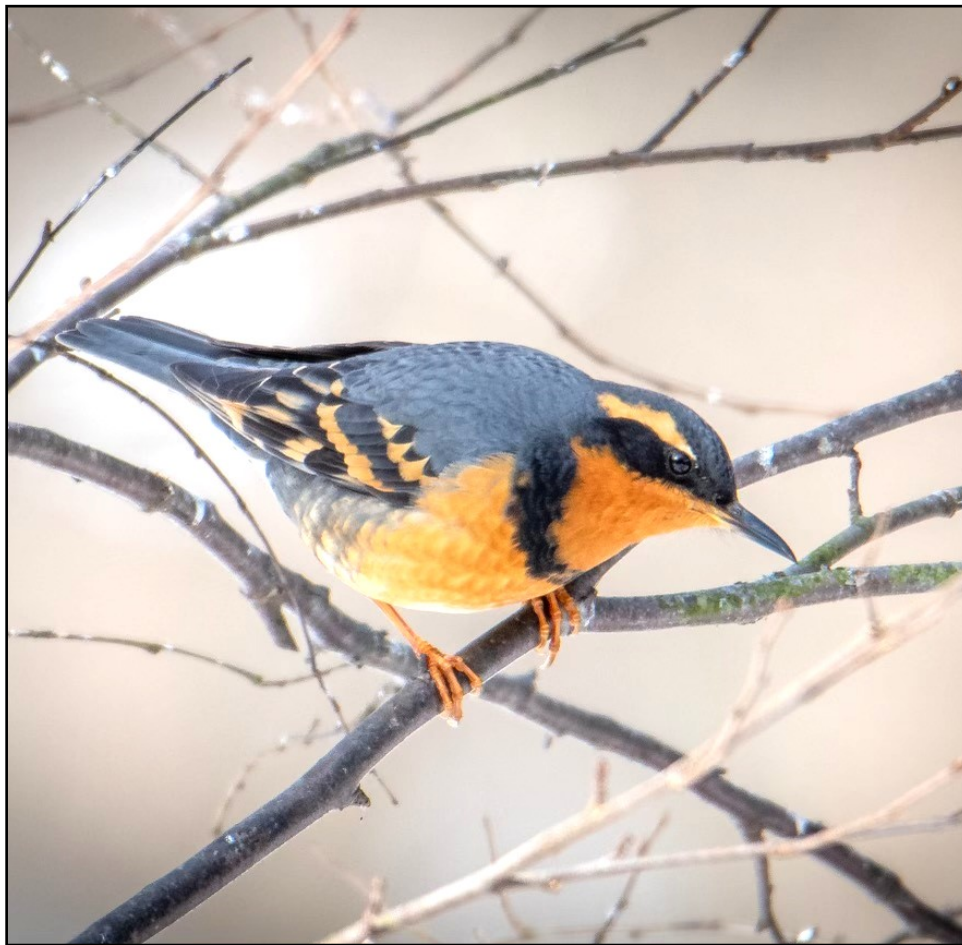
The Kentucky Warbler

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The Kentucky Warbler

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Send articles, field notes and other communications relevant to *The Kentucky Warbler* to the Editor. Send membership dues to the Treasurer. Requests for back issues should be sent to the Corresponding Secretary.

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THE COVER

We thank Joey Caminiti for his photograph of the Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) taken 16 February 2021 in Boone County.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Birders,

A recent article in the American Birding Association's Birding magazine had the author birding in the US county with the least number of eBird checklists. That county was Martin County, Kentucky. In fact, Kentucky is home to three of the lowest six counties and seventeen of the lowest fifty. Not everyone uses eBird but it gives an indication of the areas of Kentucky that are under-birded. As one would expect most of the counties are in eastern Kentucky. It may be that these areas will need outreach (birding kits at libraries or schools) to try and introduce people to the joys of birding or simply try to get birders in the areas to start using eBird. There are a number of counties on the list of fifty least ebirded counties that were surprising, namely Green, Hancock and Webster. These counties are next to counties that are highly birded so if you are traveling to bird in Hart, Daviess, Henderson or Hopkins why not take a slight detour through neighboring counties and add a checklist or two.

Social media, in recent years, has had a massive influence on how we communicate with each other and in birding it is no different. Many birding groups have been set up on the different platforms and during the pandemic these have been a boon for those new to birding. Some of the photography is amazing and people enjoy posting and seeing these great photos. These platforms go through cycles of popularity and it is difficult to keep track of which platform that best engages the younger audience to get them to try birding. If there is a platform on which the Kentucky Ornithological Society should have a presence, let us know. These platforms can miss out on a lot of birding as I don't think people are willing to put up imperfect shots (not everyone has a high magnification lens) or simple notes on what they are seeing. For these reasons, I would like to remind people that the KOS Birdky LISTSERV is still active (Find out how to sign up for the KOS LISTSERV by going to the Birding Resources page at Birdky.org). If you notice interesting bird sightings on any of the different platforms please relay them to the Birdky LISTSERV. This is the best way to have a record of these sightings as many users on these platforms don't record their sightings on eBird.

Happy Birding

Ronan O'Carra

Note: This issue was published later than normal, and after the annual KOS Board member elections occurred. The listing at left shows the board composition at the time of normal publication. Below are the new board members elected in September of 2021:

- Vice-President, Jeremy Teague, Calvert City
- Councillor, 2019–2022, Nancy Braun, Lexington (finishing Jeremy Teague's term)
- Councillor, 2021–2024, Carol Besse, Louisville
- Councillor, 2021–2024, Donna Stricklin, Madisonville

THE WINTER SEASON, DECEMBER 2020–FEBRUARY 2021

Ronan O'Carra

Climatic conditions during Winter 20/21 were variable. Temperatures for December and January were up to 2 degrees above normal but a cold blast came through in February resulting in a statewide average temperature 6 degrees below normal [-8.1°F (West), -6.0°F (Central), -5.8°F (Bluegrass), -4.5°F (East)]. The February low temperatures included 3 major winter storms (ice and snow) with some locations dipping into the single digits. These had a major negative effect on resident bird species. Rainfall in Kentucky was highly variable, both as a whole and across the regions, through the season. December precipitation had a statewide average loss of 0.7in [-1.3in (West), -0.8in (Central), -1.0in (Bluegrass), +0.2in (East)]; January was close to average with a statewide average increase of 0.4in (+.9in, +0.8in, +0.6in, -0.4in) but was the result of heavy rain at the start and end of the month with little in between; February had a statewide average increase of 0.7in (-0.6in, +0.7in, +0.7in, +1.6in) but, similar to January, was the result of major rain (2.8in) in the last few days of the month as well as frozen precipitation from the storms.

Sightings are extracted mainly from eBird with supplementary records from the BirdKy listserv. Comments about previous Kentucky bird records rely on the *Annotated Checklist* (Palmer-Ball, Jr., 2019). The species order is based on the Kentucky State List of Birds (Yandell, 2019), with review species being capitalized and state firsts underlined. The list of rarities for the winter season included Western Grebe, California Gull, Pacific Loon, Snowy Owl, continuing Prairie Falcon, Northern Shrike, Varied Thrush, and Harris's Sparrow. The major winter finch irruption continued with increasing numbers of those previously reported with the additional reports of Common Redpoll and Red Crossbill.

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”; “ba.” next to an observer's initials indicates that the bird was banded; “ph.” next to an observer's initials indicates that the observation was documented with photograph(s); “au.” next to an observer's initials indicates that the observation was documented with a voice recording; “†” next to an observer's initials indicates that written details about identification or number were submitted with the report; “m.ob.” within observer initials indicates that the observation was seen by multiple observers. “per. comm.” after an observer's initials indicates that the report was personally communicated to the subsequent reporter. Location information and observer codes are listed after the report.

Snow Goose – 4,000 at Sauerheber, *Henderson*, 4/17 January (SRe/KMi) was the highest number reported.

Ross's Goose – 8 at Sauerheber, *Henderson*, 4 January (ph. †SRe) was the highest number reported; other reports of interest included 1 flying over Milton, *Trimble*, 2 December (†BWu), 1 at Duckers Lake, *Franklin*, 9 December (ph. †RCh), 2 northwest of Alton,

Anderson, 30 January (ph. †JSO), 2 in north *Fayette* 4 February (ph. †JHe) and 1 at Campbellsville Reservoir, *Taylor*, 14 February (ph. †JSO).

Greater White-fronted Goose – An estimated 2,000 at Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December (JTe) and 1,500 at Sauerheber, *Henderson*, 1 December (KMi) were the highest numbers reported.

Cackling Goose – There were reports from 14 counties. 10 at KY Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Headquarters, *Franklin*, 8 January (ph. †RCh) were the first reported. 14 at Louisville Water Company Ponds, *Jefferson*, 19 February (ph. †JBa) was the highest number reported.

Tundra Swan – Birds continued at Sauerheber, *Henderson*, with 116 there on 28 October (†SRe) being the highest number reported. Reports outside of *Henderson* include 17 at Former Camp #11 Mine, *Union*, 16 December (BPa) with 5 there on 26 February (BPa) and 2 east of Hanson, *Hopkins*, 16 January through the end of the season (ph. †BCa, m.ob.).

Blue-winged Teal – 2 near Hundred Acre Pond, *Hart*, 18 December (SKi, JKi, JSo) were probably late migrants whereas 1 at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, *Mercer*, 31 January (†DPa) was probably an early migrant. 2 at Former Camp #11 Mine, *Union*, 26 February (BPa) were the next birds to be reported.

Northern Shoveler – 70 at Sauerheber, *Henderson*, 19 January (JSo) was a modest high number for the season.

Gadwall – 200 at Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December/6 January (JTe/SRe) and 150 at Kuttawa, *Lyon*, 18 February (CBI) represented modest peak counts for the season.

American Wigeon – 150 near Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December (SRe) was the highest number reported.

American Black Duck – 56 at Louisville Water Company Ponds, *Jefferson*, 3 January (†JWh) was the highest number reported.

Northern Pintail – 300 at Sauerheber, *Henderson*, 19 January (JSo) was the highest number reported.

Green-winged Teal – 200 at Honker Bay, LBL, *Lyon*, 24 January (CBI) was the highest number reported.

Canvasback – 300 on the river at Uniontown, *Union*, 22 February (ph. CCr) was the highest number reported.

Redhead – 175 on ponds east of Paris, *Bourbon*, 27 February (ph. †RDe) was the highest number reported.

Ring-necked Duck – 500 at Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 6/28 January (SRe) was the highest number reported.

Greater Scaup – 80 at Barkley Bridge, LBL, *Trigg*, 19 February (CBI) was a modest high number for the season.

Lesser Scaup – 300 at Honker Lake, LBL, *Lyon*, 2 December (HCh), Green Turtle Bay, *Livingston*, 28 December (JWh) and Long Run Park, *Jefferson*, 28 February (ph. JEl) were the highest number reported.

Greater/Lesser Scaup – An estimated 1200+ reported at Little Bear Creek, *Marshall*, 4 Jan (CBI, CSO) was the highest number reported.

Scoter Sp. – There was a flock of Scoters at Smithland Dam, *Livingston*, 5 December (ph. †BPa) that contained the 3 species regularly seen in Kentucky namely Surf, White-winged, and Black.

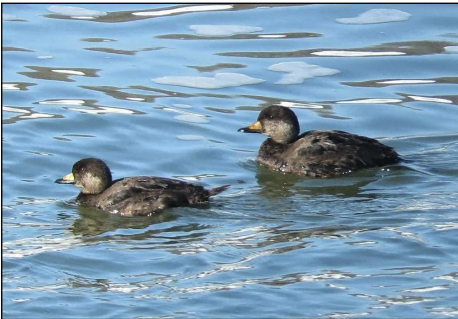


Northern Pintail – Fayette Co.
6 February 2021, Colin Fisher

Surf Scoter – There were three reports: 6 at Smithland Dam, *Livingston*, 5 December (ph. †BPa, CBI); 10 at Equestrian Lakes, *Shelby*, 11 December (ph. †MEL); 1 at Cooley’s Pond, *Wayne*, 13 February (†LBo).

White-winged Scoter – There were 8 reports. 1 continuing on the Ohio River at Louisville, *Jefferson*, until 5 December (RCh, DCh); 1 at Smithland Dam, *Livingston*, 5 December (ph. †BPa, CBI); 3 at Little Bear Creek, *Marshall*, 4/6 January (†CBI/†LBo, BPa); 1 at Lake Linville, *Rockcastle*, 14 February (ph. MFa); 2–4 on the Ohio River at Louisville, *Jefferson*, 17–26 February (ph. CBI, m.ob.); 1–4 on the Ohio near Covington, *Kenton/Campbell*, 19–21 February (ph. †RCr, m.ob.); 3 at Lake Barkley Dam, *Lyon*, 26 February (ph. †BPa); 3 on the Ohio River in *Crittenden* 28 February (ph. †WAh).

Black Scoter – There were 3 reports: 1 at Smithland Dam, *Livingston*, 5 December (ph. †BPa, CBI); 2 at Lake Barkley Dam, *Lyon*, 20–26 February (CBI, ph. TNo, NBr, m.ob.); 1 on the Ohio River at Louisville, *Jefferson*, 22 February (†MBr, SBr).



Black Scoter – Lyon Co.
20 February 2021, Teresa Noel

Long-tailed Duck – There were five reports. 1 on the Ohio River at Carrollton, *Carroll*, 2 December (†BWu); 2 at KY Lake Dam, *Marshall*, 17 December (†NSt); 1 on a small pond prior to the arrival of a winter storm in Georgetown, *Scott*, 15 February (ph. †HVv); 1 on the Ohio River in Louisville, *Jefferson*, 17–26 February (BPa, †JAR, ph. SBr, m.ob.); 1 at KY Dam Village SRP, *Marshall*, 27

February into the next season (ph. †JTe, m.ob.).

Common Goldeneye – 400 on Kentucky Lake off Sherwood Shores, *Marshall*, 6 January (†BPa) represented the peak count for the season.

Hooded Merganser – As is the norm the seasonal peak count was at Lexington Reservoirs #2 & #3, *Fayette*, with 300 there on 13 February (RCh, m.ob.).

Common Merganser – 17 at Minor Clark, *Rowan*, 14 February (ph. †TNo, NBr) was a low peak count for the season.

Red-breasted Merganser – 15 at Wolf Creek Dam, *Russell*, 16 December (LBo) was a low peak count for the season.

Ruddy Duck – 300 at Lake Barkley SRP, *Trigg*, 13 February (†KCl), which were noted to have been at the location for 2 months, was the highest number reported.

Ruffed Grouse – There was one report on eBird of a single bird at Hensley Pine Mountain WMA, *Letcher*, 23 December (†BPa).

Pied-billed Grebe – 72 on Green River Lake, *Taylor*, 28 December (†BPa) was the highest number reported.

Horned Grebe – 86 at Lake Cumberland SRP, *Russell*, 16 December (†LBo) was the highest number reported.

Red-necked Grebe – There were no reports.

Eared Grebe – There were three reports. 2 at Wolf Creek Dam, *Russell*, first reported 5 December (ph. †LBo, m.ob) overwintered through the season; 1 at Lake Peewee, *Hopkins*, 8 December (†ZPo); 1 at Sled Creek Boat Ramp, *Marshall*, 6–9 February (ph. TSm, m.ob.).

WESTERN GREBE – KBRC review required. 1 on the Ohio River in Louisville, *Jefferson*, 1–13 December (ph. †MKo, m.ob.)

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – KBRC review required. 1 was reported at a residence in Horse Cave, *Hart*, 14 January (†JR).

Rufous Hummingbird – There were four reports: an immature male at Paducah, *McCracken*, continuing from late October was last reported 10 December (†SRE); an immature male continued on the northwest side of Danville, *Boyle*, and was joined by a female 1/9 December (ph. BPa/ ba. BPa) and were last reported 21 January and 16 January, respectively (KWa per. comm. BPa); an adult female continuing east of Winchester, *Clark*, was last reported 4 February (LFI Per. Comm. BPa); 1 immature female at Calvert City, *Marshall*, 9 January (ph. LBo, ba. BPa), present since the fall, was last reported 14 February (PWe per. comm. BPa).

Virginia Rail – There were 5 reports: 3 at Long Point, *Fulton*, 19 December (BPa) was the highest number reported; singles were reported at Former Camp #11 Mine, *Union*, 16 December (BPa), on the Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, 2 January (†TGr) and off Rockport Paradise Road, *Muhlenberg*, 2 January (†BPa).

Sora – There was one report of a calling bird off Rockport Paradise Road, *Muhlenberg*, 2 January (†BPa).

American Coot – 94 at KY Dam Village SRP, *Marshall*, 25 February (JPo) was the highest number reported.

Sandhill Crane – 13,700 were estimated to have flown over Douglass Hills, *Jefferson*, over a three hour period on 25 December (†MYa, BYa) and was the highest number reported. 5,500 northwest of Cecelia, *Hardin*, 15 February (†KTh) was the second most reported.

Killdeer – 575 at Barren River Lake, *Barren*, 23 December (RSt) was the highest number reported.

Dunlin – There were reports from 4 locations. 2 at Jonathan Creek, *Marshall*, 4 December (HCh) with 9 there on 8 December (MEa, HCh) being the highest number reported for

the season. 2 were reported from this location on 18 January (ph. †JPo, HCh); 3 at Barren River Lake, *Barren*, 23 December (†RSt); 2 off Whickerville Road, *Hart*, 31 December (ph. JSo); 2 at Wilson Creek Recreation Area, *Taylor*, 16 January (ph. RDe).



Rufous Hummingbird – Clark Co.
7 January 2021, Jeff Sole

Least Sandpiper – Small numbers were reported through the season in *Todd*, *Marshall*, *Daviess*, *Barren*, and *Warren*. 28 at Big Pond Rd, *Todd*, 1 February (ph. IKi) was the highest number reported with birds being present at this location until 4 February (ph. SHa).

American Woodcock – Reports of birds lingering at Peabody WMA, *Muhlenberg*, until 2 January (BPa) with the next report being 2 at Figett Bend Road, *Hart*, 22 January (JSo).

Wilson's Snipe – Reported throughout the season. 53 at Whickerville Area, *Hart*, 22 January (ph. JSo) represent a modest peak count.

Lesser Yellowlegs – 1 west of Cecelia, *Hardin*, 23 February (†BPa) was the only report.

Greater Yellowlegs – 1 at Guthrie Swamp, *Todd*, 15 December (ph. SAR) was the only report.

Bonaparte's Gull – 1,155 at Barkley Canal Overlook, *Lyon*, 30 January (ph. †CRu) was the highest number reported.

Ring-billed Gull – 10,000 at Calvert City Landfill, *Marshall*, 28 December (†JWh) was the highest number reported.

CALIFORNIA GULL – KBRC review required. There was a report of a single bird at Calvert City Landfill, *Marshall*, 2 February (ph. †BPa) with an in-depth discussion on the ID which was further corroborated by other photos on 8/9 February (ph. †ALy/†JPo, ph.HCh).

Herring Gull – 600 at Calvert City Landfill, *Marshall*, 9 February (CBI) was the highest number reported.

Iceland Gull – An adult and up-to 2 first-year birds continued in the vicinity of Calvert/KY Dam/Lake Barkley area, *Marshall/Livingston/Lyon*, with a single bird at KY Lake Dam 6 Jan (†BPa) being the last reported.



Red-throated Loon – Trimble Co.
23 February 2021, Ron Hirsch

Lesser Black-backed Gull – 23 at Calvert City Landfill, *Marshall*, 20 February (HCh) was the highest number reported with birds being reported in the area throughout the season. 1 at Lake Pewee, *Hopkins*, 8 February (†CBI, RRo) was the only report away from the LBL area.

Glaucous Gull – A continuing first-year bird was present at the KY Lake Dam area until 6 December (ph. †GHi). A second bird, an adult, was first reported at the KY Lake Dam, *Marshall*, 3 February (ph. †BPa) and was present at the Calvert City Landfill until 20 February (ph. †TNo, ph. NBr).



California Gull – Marshall Co.
8 February 2021, Andrew Lydeard

Great Black-backed Gull – A first-cycle bird was first reported at the Calvert City Landfill, 4 December (ph. †BPa) and continued in the area through the season.

Forster's Tern – A number of birds overwintered on KY Lake through the season with 28 at Jonathan Creek, *Marshall*, 8 December (HCh) the highest number reported.

Red-throated Loon – There were four reports. 1 on KY Lake east of New Concord, *Callo-way*, 30 December (†JPo, HCh); 2 at Wolf Creek Dam, *Russell*, 27 January (†LBo); 1 on the Ohio River at Louisville, *Jefferson*, 17 February (ph. CBI); 1 at Milton Boat Ramp, *Trimble*, 23 February (ph. WAh, m.ob.).

PACIFIC LOON – KBRC review required. The only report was of 1 at Sledd Creek Boat Ramp, *Marshall*, 14–20 December (†JSo, CBI, m.ob.)

Common Loon – 15 at Sledd Creek Boat Ramp, *Marshall*, 17 December (NSt) was the highest number reported.

Double-crested Cormorant – 300 at Honker Lake, LBL, *Lyon*, 2 February (CBI) was the highest number reported.

American White Pelican – 184 at Jonathan Creek, *Marshall*, 27 December (HCh) was the highest number reported.

Great Egret – As noted in the previous report 1 was at Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery, *Franklin*, until 1 December (RCh) with other singles being reported; west of Paducah, *McCracken*, 5 December (†SRe); at the industrial

ponds in Calvert City, *Marshall*, 12/17 December (ph. BPa, m.ob./TSM); a flyover southeast of Carrollton, *Carroll*, 26 December (†DWT); at Melco, *Jefferson*, 28 December (†MAU); and north of Hickman, *Fulton*, 6 January (†CBI). 2 continued from the previous season at Sledd Creek, *Marshall*, until 24 January (CBI) and were the last reported.

Black-crowned Night-Heron – There were reports from four locations; 5 at South Beargrass Creek Retention Basin, *Jefferson*, 20 December (MAU); 2 at Melco, *Jefferson*, 1 January (MAU); up to 3 in the vicinity of Louisville Zoo, *Jefferson*, 4/26 January (†SWA) and 21 February (MKa, SWA); and 1 at Reservoir #2, *Fayette*, 8 February (ph. †DSe).

Golden Eagle – At Bernheim Forest, *Bullitt/Nelson*, a peak count of 6 (4 adults and 2 juveniles; all thought to be unique individuals based on location of observation) was tallied 17 January (KVo pers. comm. BPa). 1 at Bernheim Forest, *Nelson*, 23 January (†BPa, LMc) was the last to be reported.

Northern Harrier – 12 at Guthrie Swamp, *Todd*, 15 December (SAr) was the highest number reported.

Bald Eagle – A summary of winter counts is included in the issue. 17 at Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December (ph. JTe) was the highest number reported.

Red-tailed Hawk – A number of reports of the Harlan's subspecies (*B. j. harlani*) were noted in *Fulton*, *Hopkins*, *Ballard*, *Muhlenberg*, *Butler*, and *Logan*.

Rough-legged Hawk – 2 birds, a light and a dark morph, were reported north of Bedford, *Trimble*, 21/22 February (ph. †WAH/ph. †BPa).

Barn Owl – 1–2 birds were reported from 6 locales in *Allen*, *Ballard*, *Hardin*, *Shelby*, *Todd* and *Lincoln*.

SNOWY OWL – KBRC review required. There were 2 reports. 1 at Owensboro

Airport, *Daviess*, was present and gave good views from 7–26 December (BNo, ph. m.ob.); 1 at Somerset, *Pulaski*, first reported on 16 December was confirmed 17 December (ph. †BWe, EWe).

Long-eared Owl – There were reports of roosts in *Marshall* and *Bourbon*. The roost group of 5, first noted February 14 in *Bourbon*, remained through the end of the season.

Short-eared Owl – There were reports from 19 counties through the whole season. 9 at Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, 18 January (ph. BWu) was the highest number reported.

Northern Saw-whet Owl – There was one report of a single bird at Little Lick Recreation Area DBNF, *Pulaski*, 13 January (†RDe).

Merlin – 3 at Carrie Gaulbert Cox Park, *Jefferson*, 30 December (ph. RHi) was the highest number reported. Reported at 42 different locations in 18 counties.

Peregrine Falcon – Reported in 17 different counties.

PRAIRIE FALCON – KBRC review required. Individual bird continuing north of Anton, *Hopkins*, was last reported 11 December (†JBa).

Loggerhead Shrike – The eBird database contains reports from 17 counties during the season.



Snowy Owl – Pulaski Co.
17 December 2020, Ethan Wells



Brown-headed Nuthatch – Laurel Co.
2 January 2021, Tommy Quarles

NORTHERN SHRIKE – KBRC review required. 1 continuing at Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, was last reported 5 December (†JHa, SAR).

American Crow – 2,000 at a roosting spot around Shillito Park, Lexington, *Fayette*, 28 January (LCo) was the highest number reported.

Fish Crow – 40 north of Mayfield, *Graves*, 18 January (au. TMc) was the highest number reported. Birds were reported at 10 different locations in 6 counties in the western end of the state.

Common Raven – There were reports of birds from *Letcher*, *Lawrence*, *Martin*, *Floyd*, *Magoffin*, and *Clay*.

Horned Lark – 200 north of Bedford, *Trimble*, 22 February (ph. †BPa) was the highest number reported.

Tree Swallow – 1 at KY Lake Dam, *Marshall*, 22 February (JSo) was the first seen.

Purple Martin – 2 at Lake Barkley SRP, *Trigg*, 28 February (†SWI) were the first reported.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE – KBRC review required. 1 continued at Cherokee Unit, Yatesville Lake WMA, *Lawrence*, (ph. JWh, JBa, NBr, TN0).

Red-breasted Nuthatch – The major irruption continued with 26 at Bernheim Arboretum & Research Forest, *Bullitt*, 13 December (†PBI) being the highest number reported.

Brown-headed Nuthatch – Birds were reported only at the now traditional locale in London, *Laurel* (m. ob.).

House Wren – A number of birds were reported in the state, mainly to the south and west. A group of 6, associated with flocks of passerines, was a significant number at Peabody WMA, Ken Unit, *Ohio*, 2 January (ph. †BPa).

Sedge Wren – There were three reports. 2 at Reelfoot NWR, Long Point Unit, *Fulton*, 19 December (BPa); 2 at West KY WMA, *McCracken*, 21 December (BPa); 1 at Bogle Road, *Warren*, 29 December (au. †AHu).

Marsh Wren – There were 4 reports. 1 west of Mayfield, *Graves*, 17 December (†CBI). 1 east of Wickliffe, *Carlisle*, 17 December (†CBI); 2 at Reelfoot NWR, Long Point Unit, *Fulton*, 19 December (†BPa).

Golden-crowned Kinglet – 16 at Bernheim, *Bullitt*, 13 December (PBI) was the highest number reported.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 16 at Yatesville Lake WMA, *Lawrence*, 6 December (†JWh, m.ob.) was the highest number reported.

Eastern Bluebird – 50 at Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, 2 December (RHi) was the highest number reported. The heavy winter storms and freezing temperatures had a severe effect on Eastern Bluebird populations with many perishing in boxes huddled from the cold. This resulted in a subsequent 71% decrease in nesting attempts in the LBL area later in the year.

VARIED THRUSH – KBRC review required. 1 southwest of Burlington, *Boone*, 16–21 February (ph. JCi, m.ob.) provided great looks for those who made the trip.

Gray Catbird – There were 6 reports. 1 at Boone Conservancy Park, *Boone*, 19 December (†CFi, m.ob.); 1 at Anchorage Trail, *Jefferson*, 22 December (†PBI); 1 at Western Kentucky State WMA, *McCracken*, 30 December (†KMyl per. comm. ROc); 1 at Paris Cemetery, *Bourbon*, 11 January (†WAh); 1 at Wilmore, *Jessamine*, 18

January/17-19 February (†SPe); 1 at Clarks River NWR, *Marshall*, 3 February (†HCh, JPo).

Cedar Waxwing – 75 at Fenton Bridge Area, LBL, *Trigg*, 25 January (ph. †CBI) was the highest number reported.

American Pipit – 120 at Schochoh, *Logan*, 21 February (†STy) was the highest number reported.

EVENING GROSBEAK – KBRC review required. The exceptional irruption continued through the season with reports from 12 counties. 38 southwest of Cadiz, *Trigg*, 8 January (ph. HCh) was the highest number reported.

Purple Finch – The major irruption continued through the season with 60 northwest of Paducah, *McCracken*, 24 December (SRe) being the highest number reported.

COMMON REDPOLL – KBRC review required. There were reports from at least 6 locations. 1 in *Warren* 4 December (JEd per. comm. ROc); 3 at Horse Cave, *Hart*, 22 December (†JR); 1 in north Lexington, *Fayette*, 9–16 January (†ph.RBr, m.ob.); 1 in southeast Owensboro, *Daviess*, 10 January (ph. RRo); 1 in *Lincoln* 6/7 February (ph. DTr); 1 north of Richmond, *Madison*, 16 February (ph. †LCA).

RED CROSSBILL – KBRC review required. There were reports from two locations. Birds were first reported at KY Dam Village SRP, *Marshall*, 11 December (ph. †DRe, ph. ALy, m.ob) and were identified as being of Type 4 and Type 10 (au. †JBa, MYo per. comm. JBa). Birds had a continuing presence until 11 January (†SRe). 28 on 12 December (ph. †ALy) was the highest number reported. A second group of 8 was reported south of Barren River Lake SP, *Barren*, 23 (†LBo).

White-winged Crossbill – There was a single report of 1 in north *Fayette* 3 December (ph. †KW).i).

Pine Siskin – Present across Kentucky (eBird has records from the center to the west but posts on social media also put it in the east)

through the season as part of the winter finch irruption. 125 or more west of Bowling Green, *Warren*, 25 December (†KBT) was the highest number reported.

Lapland Longspur – 100 north of Bedford, *Trimble*, 22 February (ph. †BPa) was the highest number reported.

Chipping Sparrow – 40 at Slate Branch Boat Ramp Environs, *Pulaski*, 17 January (ph. †EWe) was the highest number reported.

Fox Sparrow – 36 at Peabody WMA, Ken Unit, *Ohio*, 2 January (†BPa) was the highest number reported.

American Tree Sparrow – Seen throughout the state through the season. 35 at East Bend Power Plant, *Boone*, 3 January (†JCI, KCi) was the highest number reported.

Dark-eyed Junco – 100 at Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, 2 January (TGr) was the highest number reported. There were two reports of the Oregon subspecies (*J. hyemalis oregonus*). 1 at Murray, *Calloway*, early February (ph. †ALy) and 1 north of Taylorsville, *Spencer*, 21 February (ph. †JWh). A first-for-the-state Gray-headed subspecies (*J. hyemalis caniceps*) was reported north of Whitley City, *McCreary*, 19 February (ph. JKs).



Red Crossbill – Marshall Co.
14 December 2020, Eric Nally

White-crowned Sparrow – 90 at Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, 5 December (JHa) was the highest number reported.

HARRIS'S SPARROW – KBRC review required. There was one report of a single bird south of Shelbyville, *Shelby*, first week of December–24 January (TBn, ph. RHi, m.ob.).

White-throated Sparrow – 112 at Peabody WMA, Ken Unit, *Ohio*, 2 January (BPa) was the highest number reported.

Vesper Sparrow – There was one report of 8 north of Mayfield, *Graves*, 21 January (ph. TMc).

LeConte's Sparrow – There were reports from 2 locations. Up to 3 were reported in the vicinity of Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December (†ALy, ph. JTe, CBl, CSo) and 1 at Peabody WMA, *Ohio*, 2/11 January (ph. BPa, ph. †RRo).

Lincoln's Sparrow – There were reports from 3 locations. 1 at Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December (†CBl, CSo); 1 at Western Kentucky State WMA, *McCracken*, 30 December (†KMy, MVu, per. comm. ROc); 1 at Peabody WMA, *Ohio*, 28 January (†RRo).

Swamp Sparrow – 70 at Sinclair, *Muhlenberg*, 18 January (BPa) was the highest number reported.

Western Meadowlark – There was 1 report of a single bird west of Paducah, *Ballard*, 20 December (ph. †BPa).

Baltimore Oriole – There was a report of a single bird in north Richmond, *Madison*, 16–20 January (ph. †BKl) and a single bird in Owensboro, 27 January (ph. JAd, m.ob.). An unknown Oriole was also reported east of Hawesville, *Hancock*, 4 December (†BNo).

Brown-headed Cowbird – 10,000 west of Fountain Run, *Allen*, 23 December (†JBe) was the highest number reported.

Rusty Blackbird – 420 in the vicinity of Ballard WMA, *Ballard*, 21 December (†ALy) was the highest number reported.

Brewer's Blackbird – 150 at Frostburg Road, *Hopkins*, 6 December (†CSo, CBl) was the highest number reported.

Tennessee Warbler – There were 3 reports. 1 in Bowling Green, *Warren*, 15 December (†VBr, BFe); 1 at South Beargrass Creek Retention Basin, *Jefferson*, 20 December (ph. †MAu); 1 in south Lexington, *Fayette*, from late January to mid February (†LBt per. comm. ROc).

Orange-crowned Warbler – There were reports from 15 counties throughout the season.

Nashville Warbler – There were 3 reports. 1 at Reformatory Lake, *Oldham*, 6 December (MBr, ph. SBr); 1 at Shillito Park, *Fayette*, 8 December (†DPa); 1 southeast of Scottsville, *Allen*, 19 December (†JBe).

Common Yellowthroat – There were reports from 5 different counties. 2 at Hobson Grove Park, Bowling Green, Warren, 15 December (†VBr, BFe); 1 in the Bayou de Chien Area, Hickman, 18 December/6 January (†CBl); 1 at Reelfoot NWR, Fulton, 19 December (ph. †BPa); 1 Lake Number 9, Fulton, 19 December (ph. †BPa); 1 or 2 in the vicinity of Ballard WMA, Ballard, 21 December (JTe, CSo, ph. CBl, ALy); 1 at Beckley Creek Park, Jefferson, 29 December/14/18 January (†SWa, MKa/†JBa, †AMe, ph. PBl/ph. †RHi).

Palm Warbler – The species was reported through the season with 12 southeast of Hodgenville, *Larue*, 5 February (RMe) being the highest number reported. 1 Single Eastern/Yellow subspecies overwintered southeast of Trenton, *Todd*, 1 December through 2 February (ph. †IKi).

Pine Warbler – Reported across the state through the season. 6 at KY Dam SP, *Marshall*, 12 December (†DSv) was the highest number reported.

Yellow-rumped Warbler – 75 at Green River Lake, Corbin Bend, *Adair*, 23 December (TNo) was the highest number reported.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak – There was one report of a single bird northwest of Webster, *Breckinridge*, 18–20 February (ph. †JWe, m.ob., per. comm. ROc).

Indigo Bunting – There were 5 reports. 1 at Milton Boat Ramp, *Trimble*, 2 December (ph. †BWu); 1 at Lake Number 9, *Fulton*, 19 December (†BPa); 1 east of Kevil, *McCracken*, 22 December (†SRe); 1 at Barren River Lake WMA, *Barren*, 23 December (†LBo); 1 west of Bowling Green, *Warren*, 14 February (ph. KBt).

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LOCATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS (*Italics* indicate a county name)

Most locations are based on their eBird Hotspot Name

Barren River Lake, *Allen/Barren* (unless otherwise noted)

CBC = Christmas Bird Count

Green Turtle Bay = Lake Barkley off Green Turtle Bay Resort, *Livingston/Lyon*

Jonathan Creek = Jonathan Creek embayment, Kentucky Lake, *Marshall*

KY Dam = Kentucky Dam, *Livingston/Marshall*

KY Lake = Kentucky Lake, *Calloway/Marshall/Trigg*

LBL = Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, *Lyon/Trigg*

Melco = Melco Flood Retention Basin, *Jefferson*

Minor Clark = Minor Clark Fish Hatchery, *Rowan*

NP = National Park

Sauerheber = Sloughs WMA, Sauerheber Unit, *Henderson*

Sinclair = Peabody WMA, Sinclair Unit, *Muhlenberg*

SP = State Park

SRP = State Resort Park

WMA = Wildlife Management Area

KEY TO OBSERVER CODES

AHu – Aaron Hulsey

ALy – Andrew Lydeard

AMe – Andrew Melnykovych

BCa – Beverly Carrico

BFe – Blaine Ferrell

BKl – Ben Kleppinger

BNo – Brandon Nooner

BPa – Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

BWe – Benjamin Wells

BWu – Brian Wulker

BYa – Ben Yandell

CBl – Clay Bliznick

CCr – Charlie Crawford

CFi – Colin Fisher

CRu – Cameron Rutt

CSo – Christy Soldo

DCh – Debbie Chadwick

DPa – Daniel Patrick

KEY TO OBSERVER CODES

DRe – Daniel Redwine	KBt – Kevin Burt	RCh – Robert Chadwick
DSe – Dan Stone	KMi – Keith Michalski	RCr – Rodney Crice
DTr – Diane Traylor	KMy – Kelly J. McKay	RDe – Roseanna Denton
DWt – Dorinda Whitsett	KVo – Kelly Vowels	RHi – Ron Hirsch
EWe – Ethan Wells	KTh – Katie Thomas	RMe – Rosemary Meredith
GHi – Geoff Hill	KWa – Kathleen Wachter	ROc – Ronan O’Carra
HCh – Hap Chambers	KWi – Karol Wilson	RRo – Robert Rold
HVo – Hannah Vortex	LBo – Lyle Bontrager	RSt – Ruben Stoll
IKi – Iris Kilpatrick	LBt – Liz Bennett	SAr – Sharon Arnold
JAd – Juddy Adams	LCa – Lesia Carrington	SBr – Steve Brown
JAr – Jim Arnett	LCo – Lisa Combs	SHa – Susan Hamrick
JBa – Jamie Baker	LFi – LaShawna Finney	SKi – Steve Kistler
JBe – Jamin Beachy	MAu – Michael Autin	SPe – Sydney Penner
JCi – Joey Caminiti	MBr – Meg Brown	SRe – Scott Record
JEd – JW Eade	MEa – Melissa Easley	STy – Steve Tyson
JEl – Jackie Elmore	MEl – Mark Elkins	SWa – Sean Ward
JHa – Joseph Hall	MFa – Melissa Fain	SWl – Sheree Wilson
JKi – Janet Kistler	MKa – Meghan Kahn	TBn – Todd Brown
JKs – James Kiser	MKo – Maria Koukoulas	TGr – Teresa Graham
JPo – Josh Powell	MVu – Mark Vukovich	TMc – TJ McGary
JRs – Jeffrey Rose	MYa – Mary Yandell	TNo – Teresa Noel
JSo – Jeff Sole	MYo – Matthew Young	TSm – Tammy Vied Smith
JTe – Jeremy Teague	NBr – Nancy Braun	VBr – Valerie Brown
JWe – Joshua Whetstone	NSt – Noah Stryker	WAh – Win Ahrens
JWh – James Wheat	PBl – Pat Bell	ZPo – Zak Pohlen
KCi – Kathy Caminiti	PWe – Patricia West	
KCl – Karen Clement	RBr – Rebecca Bruin	



Tundra Swans – Henderson Co.
22 February 2021, Charlie Crawford

Kentucky's Midwinter Eagle Survey: 1961–2021

Michael D. Patton, Kate G. Slankard, and Kasia R. Bradley

Background

Kentucky's Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) population peaks during the winter months, as eagles from Canada and the northern United States migrate south when food availability decreases (Buehler 2020). To monitor wintering eagle populations, annual surveys for Bald Eagles were initiated at several locations across the US during the 1960s. Members of the Kentucky Ornithological Society assisted in conducting the first organized survey of the wintering population of Bald Eagles in Kentucky in 1961 (Wilson and Stamm 1961, Stamm 1962). This initial survey was known as the *Cooperative Bald Eagle Investigation for the Mississippi River Winter Study* and was organized by the National Audubon Society and the Continental Bald Eagle Project (Heyden and Palmer-Ball 2011). Winter eagle surveys were later expanded to include all of the lower 48 states by the National Wildlife Federation in 1979.

Since 1986, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) has managed the survey as the state's coordinating agency for what has become known as the Midwinter Eagle Survey (MES), coordinated at the national level by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The objective of the MES was to establish an index of the total wintering Bald Eagle population in the lower 48 states and to identify previously unrecognized areas of important winter habitat (Eakle *et al.* 2015).

Since 1980, the MES has occurred nationwide during the first two weeks of January each year (prior to 1980, the survey took place during the second or third weekend of February). During the survey, participants counted both Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) along standard survey routes by airplane, boat, or ground. The survey method and area covered was generally kept consistent from year-to-year. Participants also recorded weather conditions, survey effort data and the age of observed individuals (adult or immature). Some of the larger survey routes were split between multiple cooperators each of whom covered a portion of the target area. Throughout the 60 years of the survey, the number of sites surveyed per year in Kentucky ranged from two in 1961 to 44 in 1993. Since 2000, there have been 18–22 standardized survey routes covered each year.

Further details about the history of Kentucky's Midwinter Eagle survey (MES) can be found in the article "Kentucky's Midwinter Eagle Survey, 50 Years Later" (Heyden and Palmer-Ball 2011).

Results of the Midwinter Eagle Survey

During the sixty years of the MES in Kentucky, the Bald Eagle population experienced tremendous growth (Figure 1). Very few Bald Eagles were observed during the beginning of the MES, with only five recorded during the first survey. The population began increasing during the late 1970s at a rate of 12.70 ± 1.30 (\pm standard error) eagles per year (1978–1989) and started to stabilize during the 1990s with a linear population trend of 2.94 ± 0.81 eagles per year (1990–1999). This stability has continued through recent years. Since 2000, the survey effort and methods have been very consistent and the trend for this period was 0.89 ± 1.07 . During the timeframe of the surveys (1961–2021), the total number of Bald Eagles surveyed, including adults and immature eagles, had a linear population trend of 5.1 ± 1.09 . The number of adults counted increased by

3.61±0.96 eagles per year and the population of immature Bald Eagles increased by 1.5±0.60 eagles per year.

The three routes with the highest abundance of Bald Eagles were Land Between the Lakes (LBL), Ballard Wildlife Management Area (WMA), and Mississippi River (Table 1). LBL consistently had the most Bald Eagles observed during surveys, with an average of 95.9 Bald Eagles per year between 1990 and 2021. During this timeframe, the highest number of eagles observed at LBL was 215 Bald Eagles (156 adults and 59 immatures) in 2010. Ballard WMA had the second largest abundance, averaging 30.2 eagles per survey between 1990 and 2021 and had a peak of 58 Bald Eagles (11 adults, 45 immatures, and 2 of unknown age) in 2013. The Mississippi River route had the third most eagles and covered the Kentucky shoreline of the river in Fulton, Hickman, Carlisle, and Ballard counties. It averaged 25 Bald Eagles per year between 1990 and 2021 and had a peak of 85 Bald Eagles (44 adults and 41 immatures) in 2001.

In contrast to substantial increase in the numbers of Kentucky's Bald Eagles, the number of Golden Eagles counted has remained relatively low, but stable in Kentucky (-0.06±0.21, 1961-2021 trend). Golden Eagles were not counted during the MES until 1966 and then in numbers less than six until the late-1970s. In 1978, the MES's highest number of Golden Eagles was observed during the survey, when 12 individuals were reported (1 adult, 1 immature, and 10 of unknown age). Since 2000, the number of Golden Eagles observed has remained relatively constant (Figure 2).

Discussion and Looking Ahead

The national survey has been the primary means for assessing winter populations of Bald Eagles in the United States and another method to document the comeback of the species. Even after the species was delisted in 2007, the nationwide MES continued to be a measure for monitoring the population. However, the nationally coordinated MES concluded with the 2021 survey. KDFWR will continue the survey in 2022 at LBL, Ballard WMA, Lake Cumberland, and Green River Lake. These four areas were chosen for continued surveys due to large eagle populations, geographic location, or consistency of survey effort. The maintained routes will allow for KDFWR to monitor for long-term effects of remaining threats to eagles such as contaminants and climate change.

The number of Bald Eagles counted during the MES steadily increased from the initial surveys. This increase in the number of eagles surveyed no doubt reflects the recovery of the species resulting from the ban of the insecticide DDT in 1972 (Grier 1982) and subsequent natural reproduction, as well as reintroduction efforts. Another consideration for the interpretation of survey results is the variation in the number of surveys conducted each year. During the first decade of surveys there were seven survey routes per year on average. In the 1970s, the average number of surveys more than doubled to 17, and the number of surveys conducted peaked in 1993 with 44 routes. However, despite an expanded survey effort during the 1990s, many of the newer routes didn't yield many eagle observations and were discontinued by 2000 (Heyden and Palmer-Ball 2011). Since 2000, 18–22 routes were conducted each year and the effort and survey methods have been very consistent. The trend for 2000–2021 was 0.89±1.07; thus, we assume the population has continued to increase in recent decades, despite variation in survey effort over the course of the entire MES. Further, this positive trend is supported by previous reports on the trends of MES counts in Kentucky and the southeastern U.S. region (Eakle *et al.* 2015).

Although a sustained increase was documented through the MES, the number of Bald Eagles counted began to plateau in the early 1990s. Trends for the entire U.S. and the southeast region were also found to have a lower estimated rate of increase in the latter years of a nationwide analysis of 1986–2010 MES data (Eakle *et al.* 2015). Kentucky's midwinter Bald Eagle counts are no

doubt a mix of local nesting birds, wandering immature birds and migratory birds from northern latitudes. Research has demonstrated a migratory link between Kentucky and the Great Lakes region (Mandernack *et al.* 2012, Slankard *et al.* *In Press*). Kentucky's nesting Bald Eagles do not migrate and are already territorial during the MES (Slankard *et al.* 2021). Most pairs are in the courtship and nest building phase during the survey window, but a few may have laid eggs by then. Kentucky's nesting Bald Eagle population increased 800% between 2000 and 2019 (Slankard 2019). Thus, despite high proportions of adults recorded, we assume a substantial portion of the Bald Eagles counted through the MES were not local nesting birds, since a great increase was not reflected in MES counts during the same timeframe. The survey areas may have neared the limit of individuals they could support in recent decades. MES routes were located on large rivers and lakes, whereas many new Bald Eagle nests were found on smaller creeks and lakes between 2000–2019. The distribution of wintering Bald Eagles may have followed a similar, scattered pattern such that the increase in nesting Bald Eagles seen across the region (USFWS 2020) may not have been fully recorded on MES routes.

Our calculated trends show a greater rate of increase for adult Bald Eagles in comparison to immatures. This is expected to some extent for a species that reaches mature plumage at 5 years but may live up to 25 years in the wild. A greater rate of increase in adults may also reflect the rate of survival in the population at large, or age-based migratory patterns (Buehler 2020).

The majority of the Bald Eagles observed during the MES were counted at LBL, Ballard WMA and the Mississippi River (Table 1). Lake Cumberland produced the highest MES counts of any route outside of western Kentucky. The eagle counts at LBL were consistently higher than any other route each year since 2000 (Table 1). The large amount of available habitat in these areas, including the availability of food and communal roosting sites, allows for the wintering population of Bald Eagles to congregate in large numbers. Waterfowl, fish, and carrion abundance are important winter food sources for Bald Eagles and their availability is likely to affect patterns of use (Grubb 2003). The three MES routes with the highest counts were in close proximity to the Mississippi flyway (waterfowl migration corridor), which is likely not coincidental since waterfowl are a staple of the Bald Eagle's diet (Buehler 2020). Lack of human disturbance and development are likely also important in areas with high counts.

Bald Eagle migration patterns are complex, but it is well documented that severe winter weather can impact the movements of Bald Eagles (Lingle and Krapu 1986, Watts *et al.* 2007). Low temperatures and frozen bodies of water in northern latitudes drive Bald Eagles southward in search of better foraging opportunities (Buehler 2020). Kentucky's resident Bald Eagles do not migrate, but during periods of sustained cold weather, resident birds as well as migrants are likely to move to larger bodies of water when smaller ponds and lakes have frozen. This effect most likely accounts for the disparity in the number of observed Bald Eagles that occurs in consecutive years, rather than actual, large fluctuations in population levels. Years with high counts were often those when it was not only exceptionally cold in Kentucky, but in the Great Lakes region as well. For example, harsh winter weather in 2010 and 2014 in Kentucky and further north likely led to the highest counts of wintering eagles in the history of the Kentucky survey (415; 383). Extreme weather conditions during the survey period caused many of Kentucky's smaller creeks, rivers, and reservoirs to freeze over. Lack of food resources at smaller water bodies probably caused a push of wintering eagles to some of our larger water bodies in the state where open surface water remained, and where we have established survey routes. Because eagle movements are linked to weather, climate change has the potential to affect future eagle migration patterns and may already be having some effects (Eakle *et al.* 2015).

The MES routes in Kentucky were predominately set up in areas where there was plentiful habitat for Bald Eagles (e.g., lakes and rivers). As a result, the number of Golden Eagles counted during

the MES has been low. Bernheim Forest is the only route that was established with Golden Eagles as the focus and many of the counts for this species came from that route. Unlike Kentucky's winter Bald Eagle population, the population of Golden Eagles is made up entirely of migrants. Breeding Golden Eagles have been extirpated from the eastern United States since 1997. Prior to that, they were found in small numbers in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont (Morneau *et al.* 2015). Any Golden Eagles found during the non-breeding season in the eastern United States have migrated from Canada (Miller *et al.* 2017). Despite the fact that the Golden Eagle is a rarer species than the Bald Eagle in Kentucky (Palmer-Ball 2019), the counts for Golden Eagles may also be underestimated during MES. Due to their similarity in appearance to immature Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles may be misidentified, especially from a distance. A camera trapping survey for Golden Eagles was conducted in Kentucky from 2012–2017 and a better understanding of this species' abundance and distribution in Kentucky resulted from that project (Taylor and Slankard 2018).

The MES provided a yearly snapshot of the high-use, wintering areas for Kentucky's Bald Eagles. Despite some irregularities and biases, we do think these data are a reasonable index on which to measure change in abundance at survey areas. These sixty years of survey data have informed wildlife managers on eagle habitat and abundance, allowing for the identification of some of the more important areas for wintering eagles, and in some cases, leading to habitat protection. The survey fulfilled its primary objective of monitoring the recovery of the Bald Eagle population, not only in Kentucky, but throughout their range. The legacy of the MES will continue through reduced survey efforts and winter eagle-watching events at Kentucky State Parks and Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area.

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Survey Route	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Ballard WMA	22	28	52	10	16	23	9	11	30	48	30
Barren River Lake	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	3	1	4	12	6	14
Bernheim Forest	6	5	4	4	12	14	2	2	6	16	6
Cave Run Lake	3	3	4	10	10	9	9	5	12	27	10
Dale Hollow Lake (KY)	15	33	10	NS	33	19	15	12	13	20	29
Grayson Lake	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	1	2	2	0	0
Green River Lake	1	5	2	7	7	7	3	4	5	2	3
Lake Cumberland	12	7	7	18	12	22	6	18	24	17	25
Land Between the Lakes	83	74	101	44	43	56	57	84	149	150	215
Laurel River Lake	6	1	9	0	3	2	2	2	3	2	2
Mississippi River	41	85	46	18	9	20	10	8	40	44	32
Ohio River: Brandenburg-Louisville	0	0	3	1	0	3	0	1	4	5	1
Ohio River: Carrsville-Henderson	10	10	11	6	8	5	11	4	5	9	7
Ohio: Covington-Ashland	0	0	0	0	0	0	NS	NS	2	11	12
Ohio River: Henderson-Brandenburg	2	3	6	2	3	5	3	6	5	6	9
Ohio River: Wickliffe-Carrsville	19	26	25	12	10	6	2	9	17	6	17
Reelfoot Lake NWR (KY)	4	11	38	21	24	13	0	17	27	7	1
Rough River Lake	NS	NS	NS	NS	1	3	3	2	2	3	2
Taylorville Lake	1	0	6	4	3	5	3	2	2	2	0
Total Eagles on Routes	225	291	324	157	194	215	137	193	360	381	415

Table 1. The total number of Bald and Golden Eagles, as well as eagles not identified to species, that were reported from 2000 to 2021 on the MES routes. Some routes dropped (due to low counts) prior to 2005 are not included. NS=not surveyed.

Survey Route	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Ballard WMA	33	37	58	47	58	NS	43	44	NS	20	23
Barren River Lake	5	23	10	12	13	19	19	9	10	15	12
Bernheim Forest	5	4	3	3	5	4	3	5	4	4	4
Cave Run Lake	3	7	0	4	1	1	3	4	3	0	1
Dale Hollow Lake (KY)	23	24	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Grayson Lake	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green River Lake	6	3	3	12	3	12	9	9	22	11	13
Lake Cumberland	13	31	34	28	20	25	48	33	19	16	21
Land Between the Lakes	37	76	105	178	88	74	115	95	60	83	58
Laurel River Lake	7	5	10	5	1	4	6	4	9	9	10
Mississippi River	22	33	21	29	9	18	8	21	0	13	22
Ohio River: Brandenburg-Louisville	0	2	1	0	2	1	2	2	5	2	0
Ohio River: Carrsville-Henderson	6	5	5	11	12	6	8	4	5	6	4
Ohio: Covington-Ashland	3	4	2	7	2	3	1	6	16	1	12
Ohio River: Henderson-Brandenburg	2	3	5	5	5	5	2	7	4	2	2
Ohio River: Wickliffe-Carrsville	14	26	8	30	18	20	22	32	14	23	22
Reelfoot Lake NWR (KY)	4	2	3	5	0	6	37	84	NS	1	NS
Rough River Lake	4	2	4	4	4	2	5	1	0	0	2
Taylorville Lake	8	7	7	3	7	0	12	3	15	4	7
Total Eagles on Routes	195	297	279	383	248	200	343	363	186	210	213

Table 1. (continued) The total number of Bald and Golden Eagles, as well as eagles not identified to species, that were reported from 2000 to 2021 on the MES routes. Some routes dropped (due to low counts) prior to 2005 are not included. NS=not surveyed.

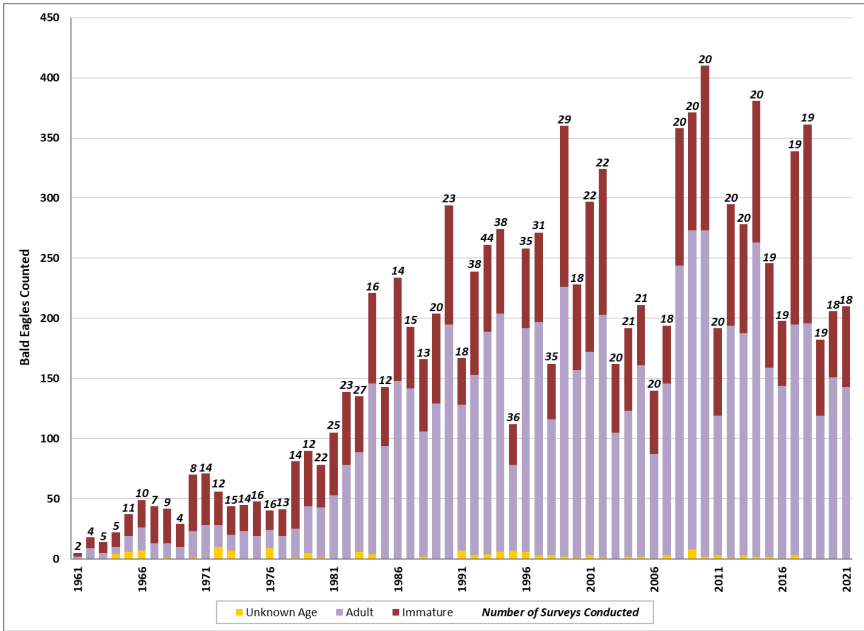


Figure 1. Total Bald Eagles recorded during Kentucky midwinter eagle surveys, 1961-2021. The number of survey routes completed is shown above each yearly column.

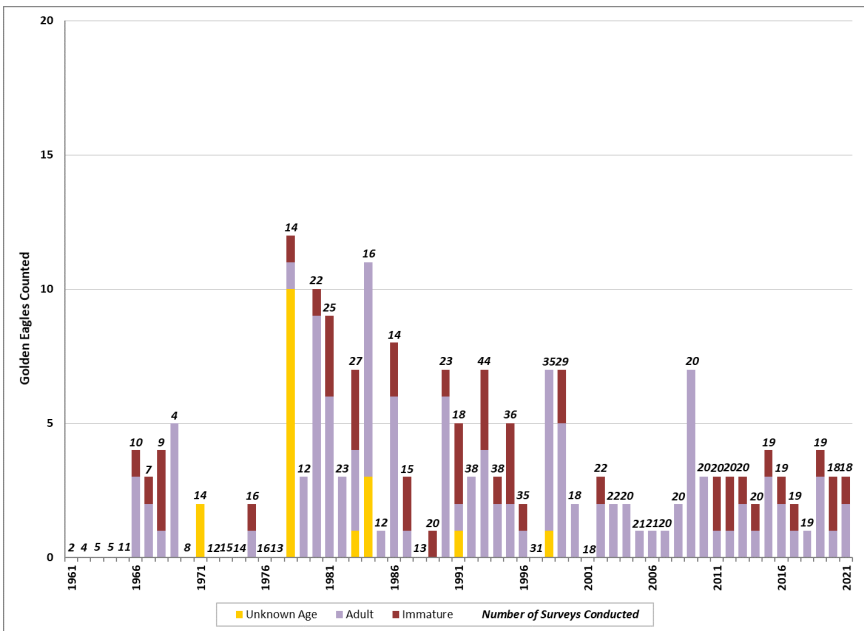


Figure 2. Total Golden Eagles recorded during Kentucky midwinter eagle surveys 1961–2021. The number of survey routes completed is shown above each yearly column.

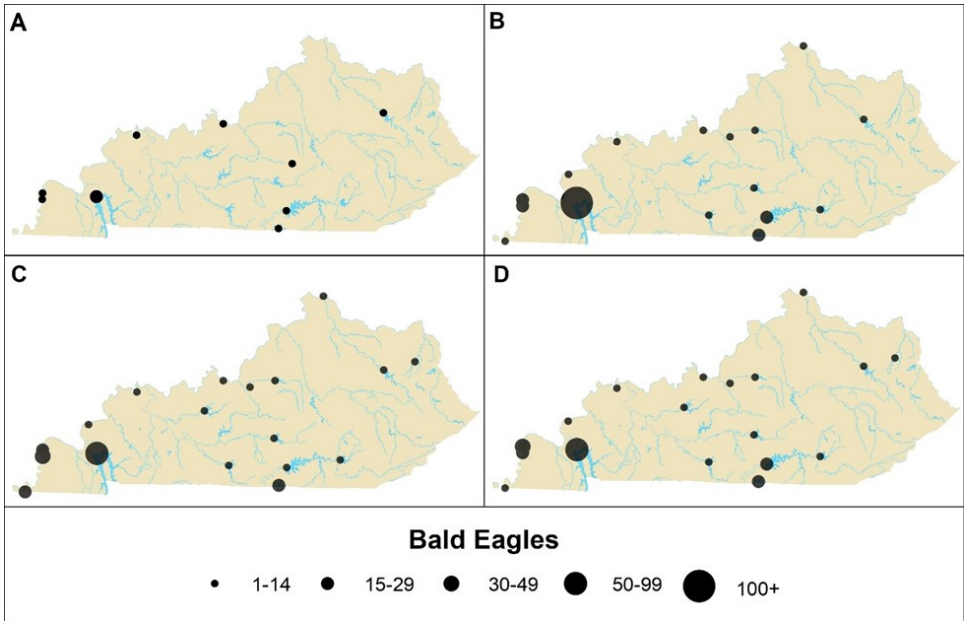


Figure 3. Average number of bald eagles observed at each survey location by year. A: 1980 B: 1990–1999, C: 2000–2009, D: 2010–2021.



NEWS AND VIEWS

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 KOS and to environmental education efforts across Kentucky. The scholarship is available to birders between the ages of 13 and 18 who live in Kentucky. The Fund will pay tuition to attend an American Birding Association (ABA) Summer Camp. Details about the ABA camps can be found on the ABA website. To apply for a Kingsolver Scholarship, applicants should fill out the form found on the KOS website (<https://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. Applications should be sent to Carol Besse (csbesse@bellsouth.net). Recipients will be asked to report on their camp experience either in person to their local bird club, to KOS at a meeting, or in writing. Scholarship applications are due by May 1 each year, however grants will be subject to ABA camp’s space availability.

At the time of publication the Virginia & Wendell Kingsolver Scholarship is well funded and donations are currently closed. Donations to the general funds, and to those funds below, are still welcome.

Anne L. Stamm Avian Education Fund Grants Available

The Anne L. Stamm Avian Education Fund supports the education of children in the deeper appreciation of birds and ornithology. For guidelines on how to apply for grants of up to \$5000, visit the KOS website (<http://birdky.org/anne-stamm-fund.html>) or contact Scott Marsh by mail at 4401 Athens-Boonesboro Road, Lexington, KY, 40509, or via email at (SMarsh@Claytngels.com).

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 \$5000. For guidelines on how to apply, visit the KOS website (<https://birdky.org/burt-monroe-jr-fund.html>) or contact Kate Slankard, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, #1 Sportsman’s Lane, Frankfort, KY, 40601 (kate.slankard@ky.gov).

Recipients of KOS grants are expected to submit research articles or summary reports, which will be published in future issues of *The Kentucky Warbler*.

Gordon Wilson Fund Grants Available

The Gordon Wilson Fund was established in honor of Dr. Gordon Wilson, respected Kentucky ornithologist and one of the three founders of KOS. Grants of up to \$5,000 may be requested to fund research, publication costs, and environmental education projects. Members of the Society will receive preference for funding, but others are encouraged to apply. For guidelines on how to apply, visit the KOS website (<http://birdky.org/kos-funds-scholarships-and-endowments.html>) or contact Jeremy Teague by mail at 379 Sir Charles Court, Calvert City, KY, 42029-7519, or via email at (jeremy.teague@birdky.org).

NEWS AND VIEWS

Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Kentucky (3rd ed.) now available.

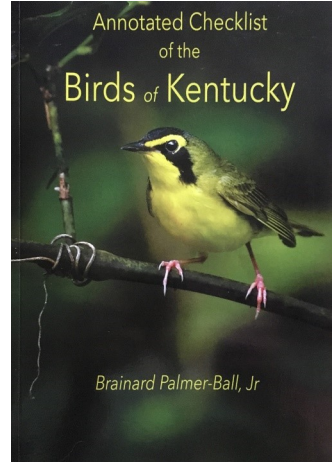
By Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Kentucky Ornithological Society

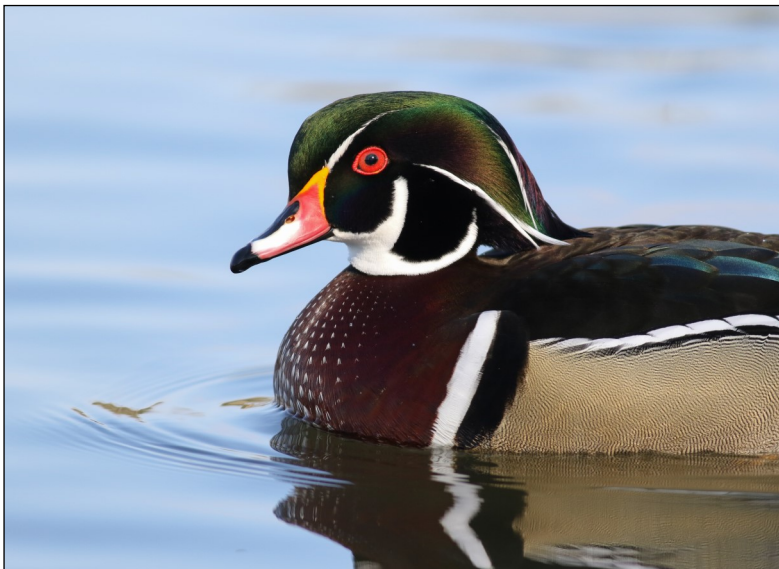
Paperback 276 pages. 1 August 2019.

“The 3rd edition of the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Kentucky* updates the status and abundance of 390 species that have been documented to have occurred in Kentucky. The 3rd edition has been expanded to include more detailed lists of county distribution of many less common species. Included in species descriptions are brief summaries of status, distribution, seasonal occurrence, and abundance.”

– Kentucky Ornithological Society website.



This important reference is available at meetings of the society, through Aerio Book Sales (<https://aerobook.com/maker/productcard-4886075-6955.html>) and wherever books are sold.



Wood Duck – Fayette Co.
10 January 2021, Tommy Quarles



Great Black-backed Gull – Lyon Co.
2 February 2021, Clay Bliznick



Common Redpoll – Fayette Co.
14 January 2021, David Lang



Evening Grosbeak – Morgan Co.
23 January 2021, Teresa Noel



Western Grebe – Jefferson Co.
1 December 2020, Maria Koukoulas



Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed)
McCreary Co., 19 February 2021
James Kiser



Golden Eagle – Nelson Co.
27 December 2020, Teresa Noel



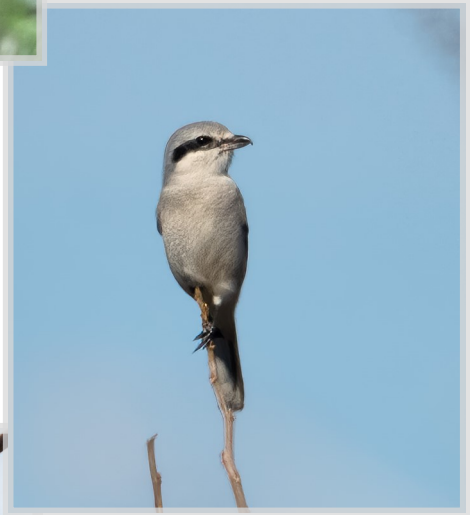
Eared Grebe – Marshall Co.
6 February 2021, Tommy Quarles



White-winged Crossbill – Fayette Co.
3 December 2020, Karol Wilson



Harris's Sparrow
Shelby Co., 15 December 2020
Jeff Sole



Northern Shrike
Muhlenberg Co., 2 December 2020
Greg Walker



Black-capped Chickadee
Lawrence Co., 6 December 2020
Pam Spaulding

Long-tailed Duck
Jefferson Co., 19 February 2021
Jamie Baker

