

RELIVING THE DISCOVERY OF THE FIRST KIRTLAND'S WARBLER NEST

The discovery of the first Kirtland's Warbler nest in 1903 was recalled vividly on July 4, 1965, as the Pontiac, Michigan, Audubon Club placed a bronze marker to commemorate the event.

The Kirtland's Warbler had been regarded as "America's rarest song-bird" for more than fifty years before its nesting ground was discovered in the burned-over jack pine plains of northern Lower Michigan. The finding of the first nest at this particular time and place came about through a chain of special circumstances, beginning with the hearing of a strange song by two college boys on a trout-fishing and bird-watching expedition. Immediately after their return, Norman A. Wood, curator of birds at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, went to the area and after several days of effort found a nest. His pocket notebook and his journal are still available to remind us of his problems and his excitement.

With the aid of these original notes, plus the published accounts, old maps and photographs, and talks with old-timers in the area, Fenn Holden was able to locate sand roads now fallen into disuse <sup>and</sup> areas swept by fire 70 years ago now grown into forest again, and reconstruct the probable routes Wood followed in his quest 62 years ago. By this ornithological detective work he was able to locate the original site almost exactly.

--Harold F. Mayfield