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*Normal survival of adult birds . . . more than  
enough suitable habitat. Why then has the  
Kirtland's Warbler suffered such a drastic decline?*

On May 30-31, 1931 Richard E. Olsen, A. D. Tinker and I visited, for the first time, the breeding ground of Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*). It was in an extensive Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*) area, about four miles southeast of Lovells, Crawford County, Michigan. The Jack Pines, six to 15 feet tall, were densely spaced in many areas, widely scattered in others, and almost lacking in many clearings. A dirt road through the center of the tract indicated that a fire, some eight to ten years earlier, had jumped the road. We camped in one of the clearings, and during two days became well acquainted with the 25-30 singing male Kirtland's Warblers present. I found one female building a nest, well hidden by blueberries four to six inches tall, at the base of a small Jack Pine. On June 15-19 Richard and Humphrey Olsen and I again visited the region. The May 31 nest contained only one Kirtland's egg, deserted. But we did find a second nest, with five 3-4 day old nestlings.

During late May 1932 my wife and I visited this region again and explored farther, finding two large tracts near Red Oak, Oscoda County, where there were even more Kirtland's Warblers present. We returned to these latter regions in mid-June and soon I found another Kirtland's nest which held one Kirtland's egg and two Brown-headed Cowbird eggs. I removed the latter and the bird continued to incubate her lone egg. It hatched June 24. Since she was very tame, I sometimes sat on the ground beside the nest. At times she landed on my feet, hat, arms, even my hands. If I parted the low blueberry bushes above the nest, she flew to a little branch above and looked apprehensively down at the nest, then hopped onto my hand. I took several photographs of her, then caught and banded her with

number F64468. She was the first Kirtland's Warbler to wear a band.

During 1933 Al Dowding and I stopped to examine a nest found earlier by others. After locating the nest, they had removed two cowbird eggs, but the Kirtland's Warbler had deserted her two eggs. Since then I have found that they seldom, if ever, desert three eggs (of any combination) and that if one or two are cowbird eggs, they can be destroyed without removal by piercing them with a fine wire. But there is another danger; there are times when the smaller warbler's eggs will not hatch because (Mayfield, 1960) the larger cowbird's eggs may prevent the setting female from providing her own eggs enough heat.

At the Red Oak colony we found another Kirtland's nest, with only one fledgling — a cowbird. Although we searched through favorable Jack Pines in both the northern Michigan peninsula and across northern Wisconsin we found no more Kirtland's Warblers.

On May 13, 1937 I found a few singing males directly west of Grayling, Crawford County, about two miles west of Lake Margrethe. On May 29-30, 1938 I located a female building a nest there. Four eggs were laid, one daily, June 5-8 and one cowbird egg on June 5. The cowbird egg was removed but only one (#1) egg hatched, June 22, 15 days after incubation began. This female was also very tame. She ate flies, moths and other insects from my hand, landed on my arm and shoulder and soon, she too, was wearing a band. After she was banded, she came right back and pecked my fingers when I touched the nest. I found two other nests. Neither was parasitized. One held five eggs, four of which hatched; the other, five half-grown nestlings. All of these nests were still intact when we left in late June except five young had already fledged. Jack Pines here were 20 feet or more in height. The ground cover over two nests was blueberry

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