

The

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Newsletter



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## U.S.A. — 200 Years



new nesting habitat. The team's goal is 1000 pairs of breeding birds.

Nearly all nests of the warbler have been found in eight to 20-year-old stands of jack pine, with low ground cover, and with many small openings. Jack pine reaches merchantable size in about 45 years. Thus the plan envisions harvesting mature trees in an amount each year sufficient to replace the plots that have grown so as to be no longer suitable as nesting sites.

The plan's first stage covers the next seven years, and is to expand the areas that provide a potential for nesting, so as to have 30,000 to 36,000 acres of suitable habitat by 1990.

For the long range goals, the state and federal forest officials will set aside 135,000 acres to be managed on a 45 to 50-year rotation. About 2,800 acres would be harvested each year, then prepared for regrowth as warbler areas. This would give both a sustained yield of forest products and a continuing supply of nesting areas.

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## J.P.W. Shares in Celebration

Michigan's portion of the Nation's birthday party finds JPW sitting at one of the head tables. By legislative action, the Kirtland's Warbler has been designated as "Michigan's Bicentennial Bird." But this honor may have cancelled its chances to become Michigan's permanent "state bird."

Meanwhile, the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Plan, as mandated by Congress, is being put into its final form. The preliminary draft reviewed the history and present status of the bird, the factors limiting its recovery, and efforts currently being made to preserve and restore a viable population. It set forth plans for immediate action and for a long range pattern of forest management. The plan was prepared by the Recovery Team, headed by DNR's John Byelich, who said that the best assurance of survival is a larger and growing population of warblers, which will be had only by creating sufficient

## '76 Census Shows Gain

The 1976 census of the Kirtland's Warbler counted 199 singing males, according to John Byelich, DNR biologist and head of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team. "We are still looking for that Bicentennial bird — the 200th singing male," he said.

Each singing male represents a nesting pair, hence the breeding population is considered to be 398. Additional non-nesting adults may be present. This year six new areas had birds, including two recent burned over areas producing for the first time. One pair still nests in Wexford County, although aging habitat may make this the last year. There were 85 pair in Crawford County, 48 of them on the National Guard reservation.

The 199 figure represents an eleven percent gain over last year's count of 179. The lowest tally was in 1974, when only 167 were seen. It is about the same as the 1971 count that revealed the bird's precarious status. (A more detailed report will be issued at a later date.)

The recovery program is a joint effort of the Michigan DNR, the U. S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Michigan Audubon Society. (Contributions may be made through the MAS office.)

