

Michigan Rare-Warbler Count Finds 18 More Pairs This Year

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — The rare blue-backed, yellow-bellied Kirtland's Warblers are increasing their numbers and may be expanding their range into Canada this summer.

Officials of Michigan's department of natural resources said Tuesday that the annual summer census found 218 pairs of the tiny birds of their nesting grounds in Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula.

That's an increase of 18 pairs from last summer.

The department also reported that a male warbler's songs have been heard near Penbrook, Ont.

If confirmed it would be only the third time and first since 1939 that the warblers were spotted in that area, 400 miles east of Sault Ste. Marie.

Until now, the birds, which winter in the tropics, were believed extinct everywhere in North America except Northern Michigan's jack-pine forests.

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RARE BIRD IS HELPED BY MICHIGAN PROJECT

Population of Kirtland's Warbler Reported Up in Team Effort to Control Its Habitat

Special to The New York Times

LOVELLS, Mich., July 8—The Kirtland's warbler, whose world population totaled only 400 last year, may be pulling back from the brink of extinction.

This year's total was set at 438 by John Byelich, a wildlife biologist with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. He is chairman of the Kirtland's warbler recovery team, appointed by the Secretary of Interior in 1975 when the songbird was placed on the endangered species list and put under Federal protection.

"Moreover we have just learned that a singing male has been located far away from this warbler's only known breeding ground, which is here in Michigan," Mr. Byelich added. "This could mean a new colony is starting."

The bird was trapped and banded in the vicinity of Pembroke, Ont., east of Algonquin Provincial Park, 470 miles northeast of Windsor and 400 miles east of Sault Ste. Marie, Mr. Byelich said.

Paul Arid, a forester on the faculty of the University of Toronto, observed the bird June 9, 10 and 20, Mr. Byelich said. "He made a tape recording of his song, but he does not know whether the bird is mated," he added.

The increase in population over last year is attributed to a nesting habitat program involving controlled forest fires and the trapping of the parasitic brown-headed cowbird, Mr. Byelich and Dr. Law-

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