

COOPERATIVE STUDY OF
THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER
JUNE, 1951

AIM

1. To determine the number of Kirtland's Warblers in existence by a count of singing males.
2. To extend our knowledge of the Kirtland Warblers' nesting requirements (minimum size of suitable tract, percentage of apparently suitable territory now occupied, and any other special requirements or conditions discovered).

PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

Habitat

So far as we know, the Kirtland's Warbler is found in nesting season only among the jack pines in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. They require a considerable area - we do not know how much - in which the pines are at least six feet tall (trunk, 1-3 inches in diameter at the ground; age, about 7 years) and must be not more than 20 feet tall (trunk, 5-7 inches in diameter at the ground; age, about 20 years). The bird seems to have a decided preference for stands of pine interspersed with open grassy areas. The presence of oak, cherry, red pine, and other trees does not have an unfavorable effect upon an area as long as the jack pine is the predominant species. The presence of a few large trees does not have an unfavorable effect as long as there is a substantial area covered by smaller growth of the right size.

Areas To Be Examined

In an attempt to discover where in the known range of the bird jack pines of suitable size might be found, we have examined the records of the Michigan State Forest and of the Huron National Forest. Within the forest boundaries we have complete records of plantings between 1925 and 1945, and we have partial records of forest fires within this same period. (In the sand country jack pines often are the first trees to appear after forest fire.) For the Huron National Forest there are some extremely promising records based on aerial photographs in 1943, showing the predominant species and the approximate size of the trees in every locality, including lands privately held within the general boundaries of the forest.

Our assignments of areas to be examined are based on the foregoing information plus our knowledge of localities where Kirtland's Warblers have been seen in recent years.

Please note that our present information is not complete. If you know of the location of any colony of Kirtland's Warblers that you have not mentioned to Dr. Van Tyne or me, please drop me a postcard so that we can make

