



June 27, 1956

Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne  
Museum of Zoology  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Van:

In casual conversation with Penn Holden, I mentioned my earlier proposal that the State of Michigan ought to set aside and manage an area for the benefit of the Kirtland's Warbler. Later, he mentioned this to Mr. George Griffith of Grayling, a member of the Conservation Commission, who expressed considerable interest in the idea and said he would like to broach it at the meeting of the Commission on July 12 at Higgins Lake. In fact, he suggested that I would be welcome to present the idea in person if I wished. If not, I could present the idea by letter.

I am inclined to write them a letter on this subject, but before I do so I wanted to make sure that I had your views fairly completely. I am sure you will recall writing me once before about this matter, and I am now inviting you to add any further thoughts if you wish to offer any.

As you know, Verne Dockham is very much in favor of the idea.

I am looking forward to hearing from Andy about the results of his work this past week and, of course, I am awaiting eagerly more information about your own plans when these become clear.

By the way, I am also curious to know how your total count of bird songs for a day compares with mine.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Mayfield:et

In recent years, however, we have found that the birds are still willing to accept extensive plantings of jack pines or red pines, provided the stands are large (over 50 acres), the plants are small and dense, and openings exist among them.

River Rd., RFD  
Waterville, Ohio

July 3, 1956

A couple of years ago about 1000 birds were seen in Michigan's Kirtland's Warblers in winter. They are scattered over the entire region, mostly in the vicinity of the Anacostia River. Mr. George Griffith, after occurring in Crawford and Cassin Counties, Grayling is certainly common, as many as 100 birds may be seen in Michigan.

Dear Mr. Griffith:

I am writing this letter at the suggestion of Mr. F. M. Holden, who talked with you recently about this matter. I would like to lay before you a proposal that the State of Michigan set aside an area for the preservation of the Kirtland's Warbler.

What is The Kirtland's Warbler?

The Kirtland's Warbler, sometimes called America's rarest songbird, is uniquely a bird of the State of Michigan. It is to be found as a nesting bird nowhere else in the world outside of the jack pine country of the Lower Peninsula.

Like most of our insect-eating birds, it goes south in winter - in this case, to the Bahama Islands. But the bird is so rare that it is rarely seen in migration or in winter quarters.

The bird is about the size of a sparrow, mostly gray on the back and with bright yellow underparts. It has a lively song, and in general is a most attractive and interesting bird.

One of the most interesting things about it is the fact that it will accept as nesting grounds only extensive stands of pines, Christmas-tree-size and occurring as thickets interspersed with openings. Under natural conditions, growths of this kind occur only among the jack pines that come into an area after a forest fire. Such an area becomes suitable when the young pines are about seven years old and remains suitable until the pines are about twenty years old.

Over the years there has been speculation that better control of forest fires in Michigan would eventually reduce the suitable habitat to the point where the bird would no longer have sufficient territory for survival.

