

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, U. S. A. 48104

MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY

14 January 1975

Dr. Harold F. Mayfield
9235 River Road
Waterville, Ohio 43566

Dear Harold:

Thank you for your long and very helpful letter about the Kirtland's Warbler project. Walt Anderson came in this afternoon, and we went over your points separately and together, and he has gone off to design a form to be mimeographed. I will comment on your points more or less in order. All were very well taken.

1. Supplied by _____ will be added. It is important for many reasons - some in addition to those you mentioned.
2. I think we should try to get the fairly complete histories first, but eventually we should have even the one-visit records. We can and will do considerable sorting before putting the cards in the hopper. One advantage of the computer is that it will print out all the data so it can be corrected or sent to others.
3. We deleted the line on the origin of the stand and added one on disturbance of the soil by plowing, bulldozing, or other means.
4. and 10. The presense of tall trees or snags and their nearness to the nest could be highly significant for predators like Blue Jays finding nests. So although it may not be possible to get this information on earlier nests, I think it should be included for future studies.
5. We have specified ground cover and divided the question into two: one concerned with species of cover and the other with amount (thick, moderate or sparse).
6. We changed "cover" to "stand" and put the question with the others having to do with the stand.
7. We added year of planting.
8. We changed the question to "year birds first found in stand" and added another question "Was this the first year the birds used the stand (yes, no, don't know)".
9. We adopted your suggested categories.
10. Here again, we feel that this should be included for future workers, even though there is at present little or nothing on it.

Lu Ben burk

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
Huron-Manistee NF

REPLY TO: 2620 Planning

February 3, 1975

SUBJECT: Kirtland's Warbler Management

TO: District Rangers, All RD's

As you are aware, the Kirtland's Warbler population has declined drastically (over 60%) since 1961 and the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Michigan DNR launched a program in 1971 to reverse this decline. The main thrust of the program to date has been the control of cowbirds within the seven remaining nesting areas. Nest observations made prior to the cowbird control showed that fledgling success averaged about 1 young per nest. Since control work was started in 1972 the fledgling success has tripled, averaging some 3 young per nest. However, there has not been any increase in the nesting pairs. This indicates that more effort is needed in developing new nesting habitat and finding out what is happening on the winter range.

The above situation and the implementation of The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (PL 93-205) has prompted Regional Forester Cravens to exert strong direction and support to our efforts to accelerate the habitat and protection work on the Huron National Forest. Strong urging and financial support is being given to get something moving on the winter habitat situation.

The results have been:

1. A proposal for the accelerated management program has been financed for current fiscal year. This program calls for:
 - a. Treating (burning and/or planting) 535 acres on the Mio and Harrisville Districts.
 - b. Increasing protection activities (patrolling and VIS) on the Kirtland's Warbler Management Area.

- c. Care prescriptions and design on the Pine River Area on the Tawas and Harrisville Districts.
 - d. Addition of a Wildlife Biologist on the Huron whose primary activities will be surveying the jack pine - Grayling sand province to identify critical habitat and develop treatment plans.
2. The project program for 1976 - 1980 proposes to:
 - a. Continue the census and habitat surveys and planning.
 - b. Continue and increase protection activities.
 - c. Develop habitat on an additional 5000 acres (1000 acres/year).
 3. The appointment by the Secretary of Interior of Irvine and Radtke to the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team. This team is to develop a plan to comply with PL 93-205. A list of the significant provisions and analysis of this act as it affects the Forest Service is enclosed. Failure to take proper actions under this law can result in suits by individuals or organizations.

Progress on the winter habitat work has involved the sending of a biologist under a grant through the National Audubon to the Bahamas in 1972 and 1973 to attempt to define winter habitat. He was able to develop a method of locating birds through the use of recorded calls and described the habitats birds were occupying. No more has been done since, but the need for increased effort on this has been better realized with the apparent 23% decline in the 1974 nesting population.

The Wildlife Biologist position on the Huron will be filled by Phillip Schempf. In conjunction with the Districts and the Forest Biologist, he will be examining and identifying those jack pine stands that are to be managed to provide potential nesting habitat for Kirtland Warblers. He will also be making prescriptions and scheduling treatments in conjunction with the Districts. We want to do the best job possible in selecting and managing jack pine stands for this purpose. We know that every stand treated may not attract and provide nesting habitat for these birds. However, because of its nearness to extinction of this species, we are going to have to accept burning and planting or seeding jack pine in some cases where it would be better to manage a stand differently.

I want to impress upon you that the Regional Forest and I are giving our full support to the implementation of a sound program to increase the numbers and security of the Kirtland's Warbler on the Huron National Forest. A copy of Mr. Cravens' memo of 8/2 summarizes his feelings.

KENTON P. CLARK
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

