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## The Distribution of the Kirtland Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*)

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The Kirtland Warbler, a rare "Wood Warbler" (Family Parulidae) of eastern North America, was discovered 99 years ago. The type specimen was collected by Charles Pease on May 13, 1851, near Cleveland, Ohio. His father-in-law, Jared P. Kirtland, the leading naturalist of the Mississippi Valley, gave the specimen for description to his friend and mentor, Spencer F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution (Baird, 1852).

### Breeding ground

The breeding ground of the Kirtland Warbler was discovered by the Michigan naturalist N. A. Wood in 1903. The first nests were found in Crawford and Oscoda counties, central Michigan, but additional field work finally pushed the boundaries of the known breeding range east to Lake Huron, south to Ogemaw and Clare counties, west to Wexford and Kalamazoo counties, and north to the edge of Presque Isle County. The breeding range now measures about 100 miles (160 km) by 60 miles (96 km).

On Fig. 1 a heavy line has been drawn around all known breeding records of 1903 to 1949, and within this area is plotted the major distribution of cover types. The Kirtland Warbler is found nesting only in the area of well-drained sandy soils which support pine forests (shown on the map by dots). It uses, in fact, only a small fraction of that area, nesting (on the ground) exclusively in rather dense stands of young jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) that appear following the forest fires which so often sweep these pine plains and which actually favor the jack pine as a cover type. W. D. Sterrett (1920: 5) writes that "land composed of poor, medium-to-coarse sands or land which is impoverished by fire and on which Norway or white pine does not readily spring up and thrive is the kind on which pure or nearly pure stands of jack pine constitute one of the principal forest types

