

K. Warbler

# NEWS

MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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DECLINE OF ABOUT 10 PER CENT  
FOUND IN KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

Editor: Bill Loewenstein  
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LANSING--The Department of Natural Resources reports that the 1978 census of the Kirtland's Warbler shows a decline of about 10 per cent in world's population of this rare songbird.

The census, conducted under the general direction of Dr. Lawrence Ryel, Chief of the DNR's Surveys and Statistical Services Office, included personnel from the DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and interested members of the public.

John Byelich, retired DNR wildlife biologist and leader of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team, says a total of 197 males was tallied this year compared to 219 in 1977. Assuming an equal number of females, the total breeding population would be just under 400, he says.

The Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service appointed team assembled for the purpose of preparing a plan for the recovery of the endangered Kirtland's Warbler.

In the northern Lower Peninsula, the traditional breeding range of the rare bird, census takers found 193 males, down from 218 in 1977.

"Birds were found in six counties in the northern Lower Peninsula," says Ryel. "Most of the decline was in Ogemaw County, which had 22 less males this year."

(more)

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## DECLINE OF ABOUT 10 PER CENT

The 1978 counts by county were: Crawford 71, Oscoda 62, Ogemaw 40, Kalkaska 16, Iosco 2, and Roscommon 2.

A total of four Kirtland's Warblers were found outside of Michigan during the survey.

"One male that was discovered by Canadian workers near Petawawa, Ontario, in 1977, returned again this year," Ryel says. "In addition, another male was discovered some 60 miles to the east in Quebec. Spot checks of likely looking habitat in Wisconsin turned up two males near Black River falls."

This year marks the tenth census of the species. Previous counts were made in 1951, 1961, and from 1971 to 1977. The 1978 total of 197 males matches the average of the counts for the previous seven springs.

"We are gratified that the bird seems to be holding its own," Ryel says, "but naturally, we would breathe easier if the population were increasing."

The Kirtland's Warbler is officially listed as an endangered species by both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the DNR. Michigan, the federal government, and Michigan Audubon groups are cooperating to provide new habitat and protection for the species during its breeding season in Michigan.

Kirtland's Warblers spend the winter in the Bahama Islands.

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## CAMPERS CAN CALL DNR TO CHECK PARK VACANCIES

LANSING--The Department of Natural Resources reminds campers that reports on state park vacancies are available by phone.

Campers can call from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday these DNR phone numbers: 517/373-1220 in Lansing, 313/256-2760 in Detroit, or 517/275-5151 in Roscommon. These are not toll-free numbers and collect calls cannot be taken.

If your first choice of a state park campground is filled, the DNR will provide you with alternate choices.

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