

Bowshelle



NEWS RELEASE

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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CENSUS OF MICHIGAN'S
RARE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

LANSING---A recent census of Michigan's rare Kirtland's warbler (an endangered species), counting 216 singing males, shows that the bird is maintaining its current population levels.

Conducted by the Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the census found that the number of singing males in Michigan by county were: Crawford, 80; Oscoda, 80; Ogemaw, 22; Kalkaska, 21; Iosco, 7; Roscommon, 5; and Alcona, 1. Last year's study revealed 215 males.

According to the Wildlife Division's census of singing male birds and assuming the presence of corresponding females', the world's total breeding population of Kirtland's warblers is about 432. The birds nest only in northern Lower Michigan in young jack pine stands, which are created naturally as an aftermath of forest fires.

The Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team, a federally appointed team of private citizens, Federal and State officials, is vying to increase the population to 1,000 pairs of birds - the number biologists say is necessary before the birds can be considered out of immediate danger of extinction.

Census figures for the past 10 years average 211 singing males a year. Current numbers are well below the 432 males found in 1951 and the 502 reported in 1961. Population declines and a loss of habitat in the 1960s resulted in the development of a recovery program, the Kirtland's Warbler Habitat Management Plan.

The plan calls for the preservation of the endangered birds by directing the management of jack pine areas in northeastern Lower Michigan. This is the first year the Kirtland's warblers are nesting in habitat created under the management plan.

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