

REPORT OF THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER PRESERVE COMMITTEE

November 27, 1962

This fall a Management Plan was adopted for the Kirtland's Warbler in the Huron National Forest. The management area embraces 4,010 acres in Oscoda County, just to the east of Mack Lake, and 8 to 12 miles southeast of Mio (Sections 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, T25N, R3E; and 7, 18, T25N, R4E). For management purposes, this tract will be divided into 12 blocks, each about 1/2 square mile in area (about 320 acres).

The forest on each of these tracts will be managed so that the trees in different tracts will occur in 5-year age groups. That is, ultimately, for example, the age of the trees by tracts will be 0-5-10-15-20 and so on, up to age 55, at which point the trees will be harvested. Thus, the 10-year and 15-year tracts ought to be ideal for Kirtland's Warblers, with perhaps an occasional bird in the 5-year tract, and perhaps a few still in the 20-year tract. So a minimum of one square mile of ideal habitat for the Kirtland's Warbler is to be maintained in this management area at all times.

The Management Plan envisions the use of controlled burning where needed, to maintain the proper conditions. The area will be marked with signs and people will be allowed to enter it, but they will be asked to register and get permission to do so.

A detailed account of the silviculture and other management aspects is to be prepared shortly by Robert Radtke of the National Forest Service, and John Byelich of the Michigan Conservation Department, for publication in the Wilson Bulletin, at the request of the Conservation Committee of the Wilson Ornithological Society. At the same time and place, I expect to publish an account of my attempt to put on record the steps in the establishment of these preserves in the State of Michigan. The story has particular interest because so far as I know this is the first time in the world that a public preserve has been created for the benefit of one species of song bird.

Token financial assistance is being given to the National Forest Service for this purpose by the Pontiac Audubon Club and the Detroit Audubon Society, in addition to the Michigan Audubon Society. All of these organizations will be named on a sign at the Management Area, and in due time, will receive copies of the detailed Management Plan.

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About two years ago a fire ran through a considerable part of the young planting in the preserve area, established by the Michigan Conservation Department in northern Crawford County. I do not have a detailed report on the consequences, but informally I have heard that the young trees rallied much better than expected from this burning, and perhaps little harm was done by the fire, which at the time we feared might have wiped out our start there.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER PRESERVE

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Harold Mayfield:eh