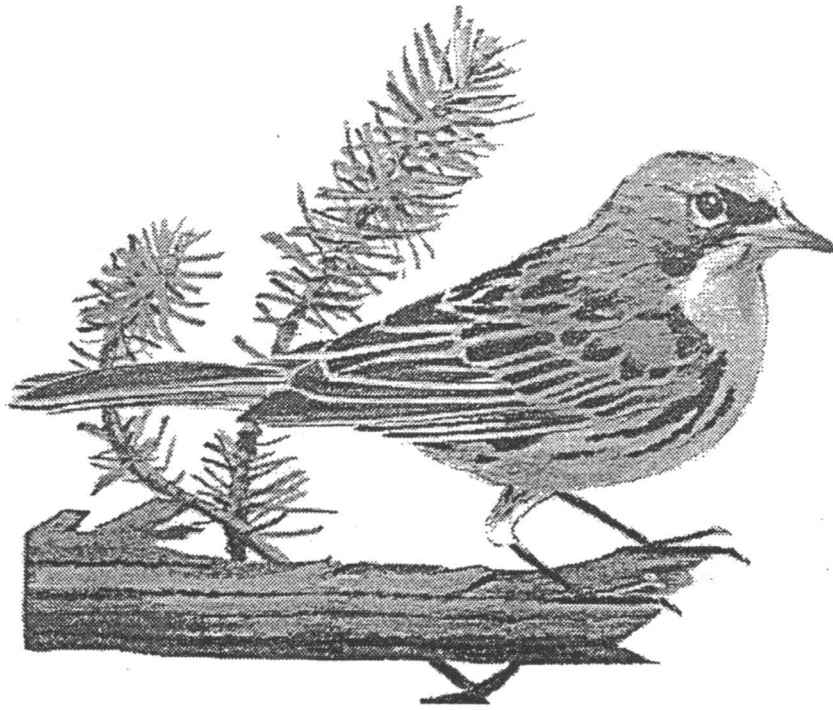


1994 KIRTLAND'S WARBLER SUMMARY



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KIRTLAND'S WARBLER 1994 EFFORTS

Since at least 1971, a cooperative effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Audubon Society has existed to ensure the future of the Kirtland's warbler. The primary objective of this relationship is to "Reestablish a self-sustaining wild Kirtland's warbler population throughout its known former range at a minimum level of 1,000 pairs." Recovery efforts have included extensive habitat management, cowbird control, research monitoring, and education. This report will briefly review past recovery efforts with an emphasis on 1994 efforts. The approximate cost of FY94 project efforts are given in parentheses when they could be obtained.

Habitat Management

Presently, there are approximately 134,000 acres of jack pine stands designated for Kirtland's warbler nesting habitat on 24 management areas within state and national lands. The management areas consist of 53,488 acres in the Huron-Manistee National Forest, and 74,143 acres within the AuSable, Mackinac, and Pere Marquette State Forests, with 6500 acres of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) land interspersed throughout these areas. These areas have been designated as essential habitat and are being managed to provide a sustained, even flow of suitable nesting habitat. Management of warbler habitat consists of logging, burning and planting designated tracts of land on a rotational basis to provide 36,000 - 40,000 acres of productive nesting habitat at all times.



In 1994, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) wildlife crews planted a total of 2,619,000 trees on 2,026 acres for which Section 6 funds were used. By the end of the year, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) will have planted 2,937,500 trees on 2350 acres in the Huron-Manistee National Forest. Seney National Wildlife Refuge, which is responsible for the management of Service lands, received \$15,000 from the East Lansing Field Office in FY94. This money was used to purchase a direct seeder, a "V" plow for a bulldozer, anchor chains, and jack pine cones as a seed source (\$5000). In addition, 70 acres were planted on Service lands with a timber sale scheduled to occur this year. The Service also provided a cost share grant of \$9,417

to Trout Unlimited for the purchase and planting of jack pine seedlings on Trout Unlimited property.

Cowbird Control

Fifty-three cowbird traps, including 9 new ones, were activated during the week beginning April 18 (\$1,736.19). Of these, one trap had to be completely, and another partially, rebuilt due to vandal attacks during the non-operational season. Another trap was completely destroyed during the trapping season and was not rebuilt. After the census, three more traps were activated in areas where warblers were not found in recent years, and one was deactivated due to the absence of warblers. A total of 432 start up decoys were collected and held during March and early April at Sandusky, Ohio by U.S. Department of Agriculture, APHIS and Animal Damage Control research biologists. The cowbirds were transported to Northern Michigan by Jean Richter of the Service. USDA-APHIS-ADC has provided this invaluable assistance annually since 1986. Traps were located in 24 Kirtland's warbler nesting areas in 7 counties: Oscoda - 29, Crawford - 9, Ogemaw - 7, Alcona - 3, Iosco - 2, Kalkaska - 1, and Roscommon - 1. Millet and sunflower seeds were placed in each trap to attract cowbirds and to feed the decoys throughout the trapping season (\$983).

Trap locations were recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) for the first time. This information will be used to assist in Kirtland's warbler management and Geographical Information System (GIS) efforts of the USFS. Jean Richter of the Service assisted Phil Huber of the USFS in plotting trap locations.

Six temporary employees, three trappers, one tour guide, one trapper/tour guide, and one supervisor were hired during the trapping season. Total funds used for salaries for the entire season was \$40,722. In addition, \$635 was used for miscellaneous items such as buckets, work gloves, tape, software (\$115), health care (\$785), and postage (\$26).

In 1994, six vehicles were used for the Kirtland's warbler project. Funds were used for gas (\$2,140), travel (\$5,080), and vehicle maintenance (\$1,119). Six cellular phones were also in operation throughout the season (\$1,931).

Three thousand one hundred and nine cowbirds (3,104 adults and 5 juveniles) were captured in traps in 1994, 1,505 (33%) less than in 1993. The average annual cowbird catch for 23 years is 4,025. Since 1972, 92,572 cowbirds have been removed (Fig. 1). This was the first year that the age of male cowbirds was recorded. The number of non target species caught in 1994 was 27, eight more than in 1993.

