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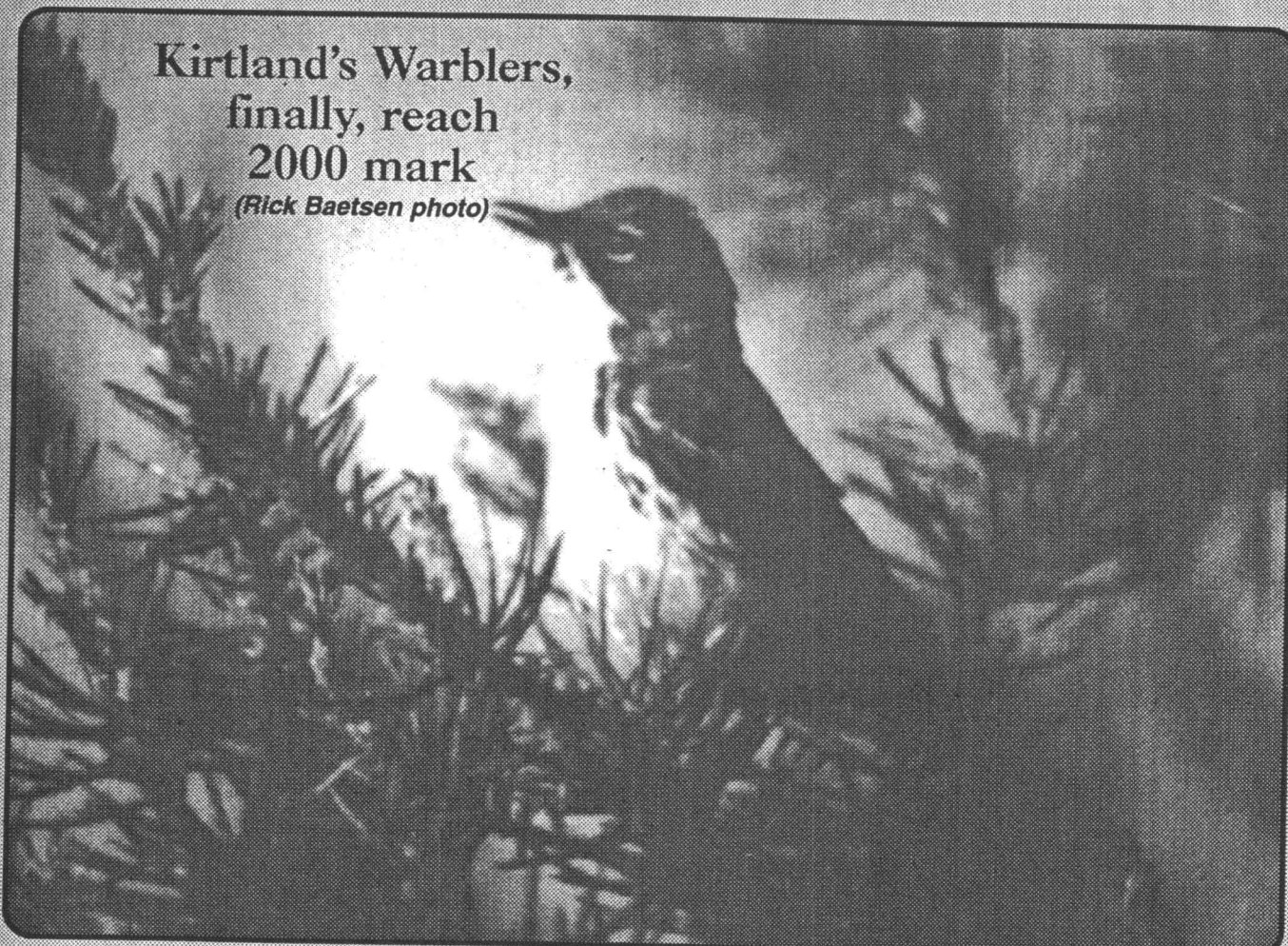
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EARLY JULY ISSUE

\$25 YEAR

Kirtland's Warblers,
finally, reach
2000 mark

(Rick Baetsen photo)



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KIRTLAND'S TOP 2,000 MARK

For the first time ever, more than 1,000 male Kirtland's warblers were counted singing love songs in north central lower Michigan's jackpines earlier this month. Biologist Jerry Weinrich puts the official tally at 1,085 males.

That assumes at least an equal number of females.

The endangered species plan targets 1,000 pairs, for a minimum of five years, as the recovery level. Hitting that mark this year may jeopardize the recovery effort, state wildlife officials point out.

If it triggers a cooldown in support from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service it may not be possible to maintain the 1,000 pairs level, they explain. &WS support has already been trimmed back to about \$58,000 a year, half what it used to be.

The key to reaching a thousand-pair level was planting vast areas of jackpines. Fully 81% of the birds and this year were in young jack-pine plantations on state and federal lands, Weinrich reports.

That the birds are desperate for nesting habitat is demonstrated by the first discovery of their using jackpines that were planted only 17 years ago and 52 in a 900-acre plantation in Ogemaw County planted only five years ago.

The four-year-old plantation covers 2,000 acres, near Leota in Ionia County.

Until recently, when the population started to climb, it was thought the birds wouldn't start nesting under the pines until they were at least seven years old.

That they abandon the pines when it reaches its mid to late stage is dramatically shown by use of pines generated by the 1980 Black Lake fire. By the late 1980s and early 1990s the bulk of the birds, or so, pairs were in those areas. Last year only one pair could be found. This year none.

Only 15% of the males heard during the annual survey this spring were in pines generated by wildfire. Of those, 86 were in the 1990 Stephan Bridge burn, up from 76 a year ago.

Weinrich notes that the majority of birds nesting in the Stephan Bridge burn area this spring are in stands of regenerated pines where the mature jackpines killed by the fire were not salvaged.

Weinrich had met resistance from some foresters when he push-

ed to leave some of the charred trees standing to see if it would result in better nesting habitat.

Only 4.5% of the birds were found in other habitat, most of it jackpines planted for commercial purposes.

Weinrich estimates there are about 30,000 acres of suitable nesting habitat. Much of it is young enough to support nesting for several more years.

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Bookshelf

Conservation history

RUIN & RECOVERY, Michigan's Rise as a Conservation Leader, by Dave Dempsey. University of Michigan Press, P.O. Box 1104, Ann Arbor 48106. 368 pages, b&w photos. \$42.50 hardcover. \$19.95 softcover.

It is only a short stretch to conclude that *Ruin & Recovery* makes Dave Dempsey to Michigan conservation history what Bruce Catton is to Civil War history.

This is the exhaustive, definitive history of Michigan conservation from pre-statehood to the present. It is an often tumultuous story, with highs and lows, all comprehensively documented.

Dempsey's prowl through the archives produced a staggering, yet intriguing and enticing, array of historical facts and quotes. He splices it all together so that at times it reads like an action novel.

Heroes emerge, William Mershon, Ralph MacMullan, former Gov. Milliken, Howard Tanner, Joan Wolfe, Genevieve Gillette, and Tom Washington, among them. The villains also get their due.

Dempsey makes *Ruin & Recovery* more a story of the people who championed nature's cause than a natural history. The roots of the "recovery" at every turn are citizens and dedicated, often fearless, bureaucrats.

He takes us from a verdant, rugged landscape to the wasteland left by

(Continued on Page 2)



Trail...
Chippewa Indians attorney Brian...