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**Return of Kirtland's Warbler**

The Kirtland's warbler was first identified in 1851 from a specimen collected on Dr. Jared Kirtland's Ohio farm. The birds originally depended on fire-created young jack pine forests for summer nesting. Such forests in northern Michigan became their prime global summer breeding habitat. Kirtland's Warbler faced extinction due to the loss of habitat and the invasion of parasitic brown-headed cowbirds, which lay eggs in warbler nests and whose young survive at the expense of warbler nestlings. The warbler was placed on the federal endangered species list in 1967 and the state endangered species list in 1976. Guided by research to mimic natural fire processes, government agencies and private conservationists began harvesting older jack pine stands and replanting the trees to restore the warblers' habitat. In addition, cowbird populations were controlled. From an all-time modern low of 167 nesting pairs in 1974 and 1987, the summer population of the warbler rebounded to more than 1,700 pairs in 2007. The recovery of the species testifies to the effectiveness of habitat restoration efforts. During the winter the songbirds leave Michigan for the Bahamas.

**Significant Date:**

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

**Registry Year:** 2008    **Erected Date:** 2009

**Marker Location**

**Address:** North Bound I-75 Rest Area

**City:** Grayling

**State:** MI    **ZipCode:** 48909

**County:** Crawford

**Township:** Grayling

**Lat:** 44.61247901 / **Long:** -84.70542669

**Web URL:**

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