

Univ. Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

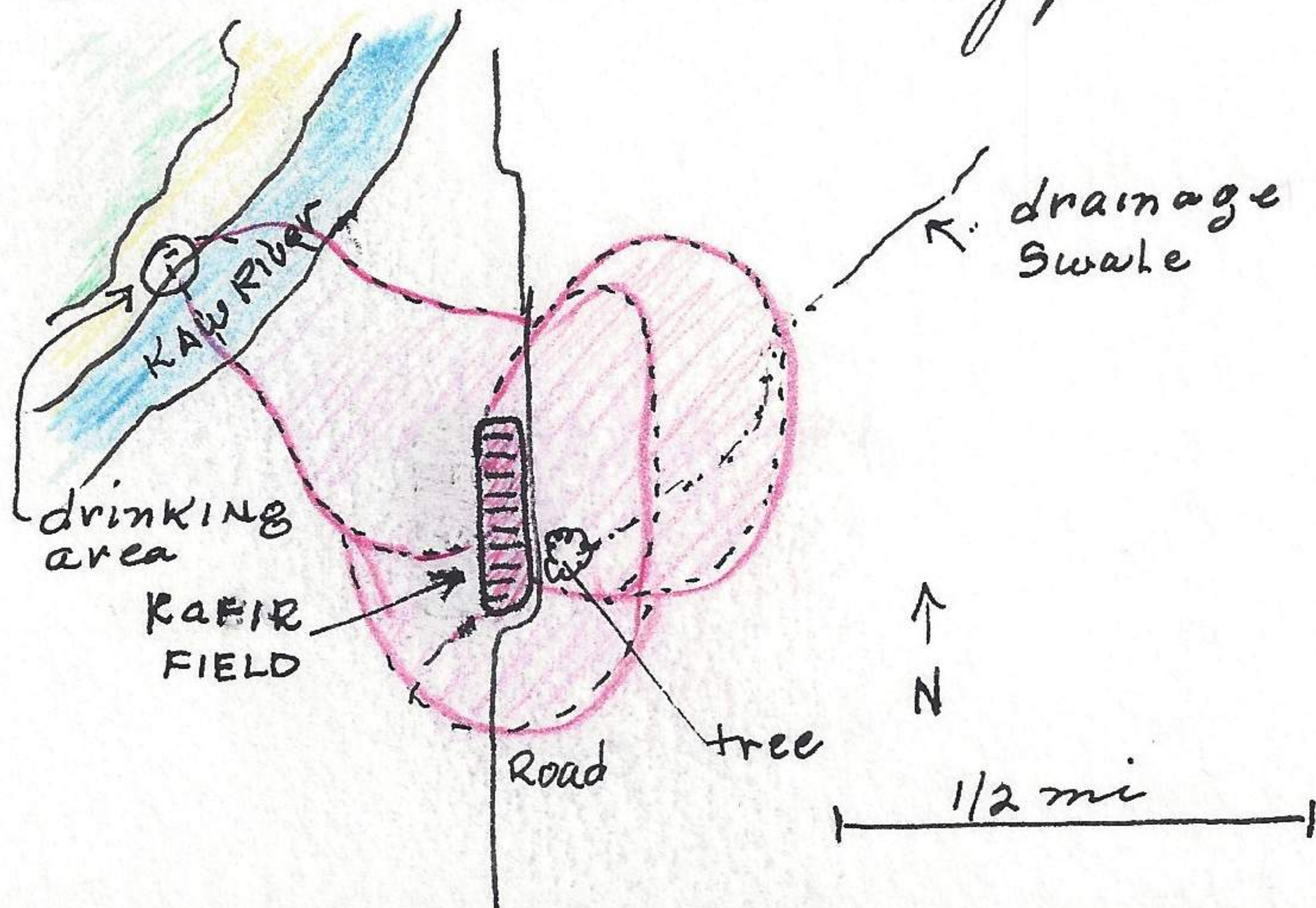
Jan 21, 1961

Potters Lake frozen this A.M. with change of seasonal weather, zero temperatures last night. Cardinals singing about 1 week ago.

4 3/20 mi. E and 4 1/10 mi. S Lawrence (P.O.), Douglas Co., Kansas

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Approx. 3,000 Calcarius lapponicus were noted in fields east of town. The dozen or so herds that I was able to check at close range were C. lapponicus; there may have been other kinds in the flock. This larger flock would break up into smaller ones of from 50 to 500 or so birds and then reform. At the time I was watching these birds (30 min before sundown) they were feeding in an old field of kaffir corn at the specific area above and after 3 to 5 minutes would leave in unison and fly over fields to north (plowed + stubble) and either alighting for a few minutes and then returning to corn field or, they would fly to the Kaw River some ^{1/2} mile away and alight upon a sandbar ^{sloped to W + open to E by east} bordering the river (now see on each side but open in middle in area of bend) and, I suppose, drink water and then return to fields. The 5 or 6 groups of birds were continuously in the air or on the ground and the area showed considerable activity. The feeling I got was that the birds were preparing to roost or feed in the corn field but did not want the area to be identified so were flying all around the feeding area but only occasionally alighting in the feeding area. The mechanical call is characteristic and suggestive of the call heard on the Arctic slope of northern Alaska. The horned larks have been in the same area all winter but only in limited numbers. They did not seem to participate in the longspur flights although the horned larks (about 40) and meadowlarks (30) constituted a community of bird activity. Three sparrow hawks were noted in country-side enroute to the longspur area. 1 mallard duck in river.



The sketch shows the corn field in relation to the river + fields, most of the flights were within the areas outlined in dotted circles. The longspurs did not go beyond the limits so outlined. Birds still in area 10 min before sundown.