



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

December, 2016

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again I would like to thank the Buffalo River Chapter for hosting the Fall TOS meeting. David Crockett State Park and the surrounding area near Lawrenceburg offer many very good birding opportunities and is well worth the trip. While the numbers were a little bit down this particular weekend, it consistently remains one of the best places in the state to get Loggerhead Shrikes!

Our TOS winter meeting is scheduled to be at Paris Landing State Park and the hotspots near the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge during President's Day weekend Feb 17-19. This coincides with the Great Backyard Bird Count also that weekend. While we have 20 rooms blocked for the lodge, they are only holding them until January 3. The group number for these rooms is 6904. You may still be able to get a room afterwards, so don't let the deadline keep you from joining us. If necessary, there are some motels in nearby Paris, also.

In the spring we will have our Annual Meeting in Knoxville the first weekend in May. Details will follow, but we all know how splendid east Tennessee can be that time of year, so plan to join us then.

Many thanks to all of you who commented during the Sandhill Crane Hunt open comment period. I realize it may not change any minds immediately, but it is important for TOS and our members to stay engaged in the topics of the day that concern birds and their habitats. If we don't at least voice our opinions, one day they may quit asking!

While we may not agree on the parameters of the Sandhill Crane Hunt, TOS and TWRA remain partners on many other levels. Indeed, thanks to a generous grant from TWRA we will be able to print and distribute another 10,000 Discover Birds Activity Books to teachers and their students. We plan to continue working together with TWRA and other agencies in several conservation efforts throughout the state.

So, as we are winding down yet another year, I hope all continues to be well with you and yours. Whether you participated in your own personal Big Year, travelled to exciting birding hotspots, shared the joys of birding with others on a field trip or during a festival, or simply enjoyed your own avian treasures in your own backyard, my wish is that each of you were nurtured by this wonderful sport we call birding. Here's to another wonderful year ahead!

Good Birding to All!

Steve Routledge, President

2017 TOS SPRING STATE MEETING KNOXVILLE, MAY 5-7, 2017

The Knoxville Chapter invites you to the 2017 Spring meeting, to be held May 5-7. Friday night registration will be held at the conference hotel from 6–9 p.m., while the Saturday afternoon 1 pm meeting and the Saturday 6 pm banquet will be hosted at the Knoxville Zoo, Lee Congleton Conference Center (enter through ranger's station), located off I-40 at Exit 392. Half-price tickets to the zoo for Saturday afternoon are available by mail-in, advance purchase only.

The conference hotel is the Mainstay Suites, 144 Merchant Dr, Knoxville, TN 37912 (I-75, exit 108). A block of rooms is reserved at a discounted rate of \$84.00 plus taxes per night for a choice of a room with either two double beds or one king size. A free continental breakfast 6-9am (or earlier upon request), WIFI is included. Make your reservations for the hotel by April 5 by calling (865) 247-0222 and mentioning "TOS" for the discounted rate. All field trips will leave from the Mainstay Suites.

We are pleased to announce that the speaker for the Saturday banquet will be Dr. David Buehler, professor of Wildlife Science in the Department of Forestry, UT, Knoxville who will talk about his latest research on Golden-winged Warblers. The menu for the banquet includes roast beef, chicken breast, vegetarian lasagna, salad, vegetables and dessert.

Field trips are still being finalized, but possibilities include Seven Islands, Kyker Bottoms, Sharp's Ridge, Norris Dam, Cove Lake, Cross Mountain, the upper Smokies and Cherohala Skyway. What do you desire? Target species?

Send your registration to KTOS by April 1.

For additional information, contact Tom Howe, blountbirder@gmail.com.

TOS SPRING MEETING 2017 REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) _____

Address _____

E-mail _____ Cell phone _____

TOS Chapter: _____ Office held? _____

\$ _____ for _____ Registrations @ \$10 each

\$ _____ for _____ Dinner Reservations @ \$25 each

\$ _____ for _____ Child's Dinner Reservations (age 12 & under) @ \$13 each

\$ _____ for _____ Saturday afternoon Zoo tickets, adult @ \$10 each

\$ _____ for _____ Saturday afternoon Zoo tickets, child @ \$8 each

\$ _____ Total amount enclosed. Make Check payable to KTOS

Mail registration form and check to:

Morton Massey, 6932 Westland Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919

FALL BIRD COUNT DATA DUE NOW

Fall count data are due as soon as possible to allow me to get my report in to the editor of *The Migrant* in a timely fashion. Besides the actual count data, please be sure to include the following effort data:

- 1 - Hours and miles by car, foot, and any nightbirding
- 2 - Number of observers and parties
- 3 - Any feeder watching hours & names
- 4 - Start and end times for the count
- 5 - Weather data for the count
- 6 - Names of all the participants

If you do not have a local compiler, you can send the data directly to me at the address/email below.

TOS appreciates your efforts to record and track our bird populations and abundance. Thanks for helping us to archive this data for future generations and researchers.

Ron Hoff • TOS State Count Compiler
282 Hackworth Ln. • Clinton, TN 37716 • 865-435-4547
aves7000@bellsouth.net

TOS POSITION OPENING: ASSOCIATE CURATOR

This position basically involves keeping all the back issues of *The Migrant*. Right now that includes about 22 boxes of past *Migrants*. All that is involved then is mailing out copies when someone requests them. Most years this amounts to only a few requests for back issues, which I have been charging \$3 each. Keep track of your expenses for postage and occasionally extra boxes as the collection grows and every so often send your list of expenses to the state TOS treasurer to get reimbursed.

This position does NOT require a large time commitment.

Contact Ron Hoff (aves7000@bellsouth.net) for any further information about the position.

Guidelines for Tennessee Ornithological Society 2017 Conservation and Research Grants

The Tennessee Ornithological Society invites applications for Conservation and Research Grants to support projects that will directly or indirectly help to protect the birds of Tennessee, increase scientific knowledge or educate others about the importance of Tennessee's birds. A total of \$3,000 is available to be awarded for the grants, which may be divided among multiple recipients.

Anyone with a bird-related project, including students, professionals and individual workers, may compete for a grant. The project may already be in progress at the time of application. Applicants should submit a project proposal using the form that is available on the TOS Website (www.TNBIRDS.org). Needed information includes: name, address, telephone, E-mail address, topic, problem to be addressed, objectives, expected results and significance, project location, beginning and ending dates, estimated field time, estimated total cost of project, itemized budget, funds available from other sources, how grant is to be used, experience of applicant in the project area, willingness of applicant to share results at a statewide TOS meeting and whether the work is under the guidance of a mentor or is independent.

A letter of recommendation from a mentor or a knowledgeable associate is strongly encouraged. Up to \$50 of a grant may be applied toward the costs of attending an appropriate scientific meeting to present results of the project.

Criteria for judging applications include:

- Significance of problem addressed
- Clarity of proposal
- Adequacy of project design
- Adequacy of experience/training
- Adequacy of professional guidance
- Financial need
- Chance for achieving objectives
- Potential benefit to the species/resource
- Potential for advancing career/studies
- Potential for sharing results at a future statewide TOS meeting

The application and letter of recommendation should be emailed (preferably) or mailed to Michael Collins, Department of Biology, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN 38112; collinsm@rhodes.edu; (901) 843-3557. The deadline for receipt of applications is February 1. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decisions in early March. A check for 60 percent (60%) of the amount awarded will be mailed to the grantee(s) upon approval of award(s). The balance of each award will be paid after the project leader submits a satisfactory progress report with itemized costs and receipts to the Committee Chair, Michael Collins. All grant awards will be announced in *The Tennessee Warbler*.

Respectfully,

Michael Collins

TOS Conservation and Research Funding Committee Chair

APPLICATION FOR CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH FUND GRANT

Tennessee Ornithological Society

Instructions: Complete and submit to Michael Collins by email (preferably) to collinsm@rhodes.edu or by mail to Department of Biology, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN 38112 (901) 843-3557. Attach any additional information.

Name: Address:	Email: Telephone: FAX:
Topic:	
Problem to be Addressed and Why Important:	
Objectives:	
Project Location:	
Beginning and Ending Dates (including prior work) Estimated Project Time (Hours):	
Estimated Total Cost: \$_____ (Attach budget) Anticipated Additional Funding Sources and Amounts:	
How is the grant to fully or partially fund the project?	
How will this grant help with research or conservation of birds in Tennessee?	
Are you willing to present the findings at a statewide TOS meeting:	

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CONSERVATION NOTES

By unanimous vote, the California Fish and Game Commission listed the Northern Spotted Owl under the California Endangered Species Act. The Commission's decision ended the four-year review process, first initiated in 2012. Northern Spotted Owls are threatened with extinction by past and ongoing habitat loss, primarily to timber harvest and competition from the aggressive and invasive Barred Owl. The increasingly rare and old-growth-forest-adapted Northern Spotted Owls are now understood to be at risk from the use of rodenticides and other poisons used in large-scale trespass marijuana operations, and there is increasing concern about what the impact of climate change will be on the forest ecosystems that the owls call home.

More than two thirds of Hawaii's native birds have gone extinct. Development, habitat loss and degradation, increased exposure to non-native avian malaria and predation by introduced threats such as feral hogs and cats, have taken a heavy toll on the remaining species. In a bit of good news, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed listing the 'I'iwi under the Endangered Species Act. In addition to the threats listed above, the "I'iwi suffers from the rapid and unexplained death of ohia trees in the birds primary habitat on the Big Island.

Sources: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the American Bird Conservancy

MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETS

On September 7, 2016, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) met and approved expenditure of 11.7 million dollars from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF) to preserve more than 13,000 added acres at four National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) – McFaddin in Texas, Felsenthal in Arkansas, Lower Hatchie in Tennessee and Turnbull in Washington. The McFaddin NWR acquisition is for 12,376 acres, costing 10 million dollars. The three other acquisitions are smaller – under 300 acres each – but nonetheless significant. The funds for these four acquisitions were largely raised through the sale of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (Duck Stamp), which go to provide habitat for wildlife and increased opportunity for refuge visitors who bird-watch, photograph and view wildlife.

If you bought a \$25 stamp last year or this, you now know where some of your conservation dollars went! Actually, you should be able to visit these four locations for birding, since plans are in the works for access expansion at each of these NWR's. This is how buying a "Duck Stamp" can actually contribute towards increasing access for birders.

Source: The Birding Community E-Bulletin (October 2016)

An archive of past bulletins can be accessed at: <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>

Editor's note: The current (2016/17) Stamp depicts a pair of Trumpeter Swans in flight, while the 2017/18 Stamp will feature three Canada Geese in flight.

ROBERT M. HATCHER SCHOLARSHIP

The first annual Robert M. Hatcher Scholarship was awarded to Megan Hart, graduate student attending Austin Peay State University and Clarksville, TN resident. Megan is studying nesting success of Seaside Sparrows in the wake of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in Louisiana.

The initial presentation of the \$1000 scholarship money took place on August 15th at APSU with the Hatcher Family in attendance as well as the scholarship committee, TWRA personnel, Megan's professors, and family. The formal presentation will take place at The Tennessee Wildlife Commission meeting on December 9th at the TWRA Region 2 Office within the Ellington Ag. Center, Nashville. Everyone is welcome to attend and celebrate this wonderful occasion.

Cyndi Routledge



CHAPTER NEWS

Birding Kingsport, the **FRED J. ALSOP, III CHAPTER** of the TOS has been active in the past few months. In addition to bird walks on the Kingsport Birding Trail at Bays Mountain Park, Ft. Patrick Henry Dam, the South Fork of the Holston River, and Domtar Park, members of Birding Kingsport have been on field trips to Rocky Fork State Park (Unicoi County), Laurel Run County Park and Phipps Bend (Hawkins County), Winged Deer Park (Washington County), Roan Mountain State Park and Carvers Gap (Carter County) and several locations in Shady Valley (Johnson County).

We have also participated in the 5-county fall count in the counties in northeast Tennessee coordinated by the Herndon Chapter. Several members also participated in the Mendota Hawk Watch during the last half of September at the fire tower on the Clinch Ridge near Mendota, Virginia. Several members attended the TOS Fall Meeting in Lawrenceburg, TN.

We had a mid-October club picnic with pleasant and colorful weather at the foot of Bays Mountain. More than a dozen attended on a busy weekend. Best attendee was a Wood Thrush in the brook about 20 feet from the picnic shelter.

We have had interesting informative programs at the monthly meetings including the survey of albatrosses on Midway by Lewis and Doris Carson, spring migration trip to Magee Marsh and Black Swamp Bird Observatory by Gary and Betty Bailey, and an overview of the TWRA water bird colony survey by David Hanni.

With the start of the 2016-2017 school year, we have restarted the youth birding program at the Greater Kingsport Boys and Girls Club.

Officers: President - Bill Grigsby, 1st Vice President (Programs) – Rack Cross, 2nd Vice President (Activities) – Gary Bailey, Corresponding Secretary - Kim Pruden, Recording Secretary – Priscilla Little, and Treasurer - Betty Bailey.

Meetings are held at the Downtown Kingsport Association, 229 Broad Street, Kingsport on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM.

Bill Grigsby, President

The **HERNDON CHAPTER** of the Tennessee Ornithological Society has had a busy summer and fall.

The chapter's five-county Fall Bird Count, the 47th consecutive survey conducted by the chapter, was held September 24. A total of 39 observers (and two yard watchers) found a total of 125 species. Oppressive heat on the day of the count probably negatively affected bird numbers.

Officers for the chapter are: Kim Stroud, president; Vern Maddux, treasurer; Debi Campbell, secretary; and Rick Knight, vice president for field trips; and Bryan Stevens, vice president for public relations.

The chapter is at work on several publications, including an update of *Birds of Roan Mountain*, originally published by chapter members Glen Eller and Gary Wallace. The club's members have once again compiled photos for a calendar. The 2017 calendar, which will feature full-color photos of dozens of Tennessee bird species, will be sold to raise funds.

The chapter conducted its annual bird walks every Saturday in October at Sycamore Shoals State Historic State Park. The walks are scheduled to coincide with fall migration. A single walk is also held every spring in May to coincide with International Migratory Bird Day.

Long-time member Wallace Coffey, who was also a founding member of the Bristol Bird Club, passed away September 27, 2016. The Herndon chapter plans to make a contribution in Coffey's memory to the Steele Creek Park Nature Center in Bristol.

The chapter has a new location for its monthly meetings, which are now being held on the campus of Northeast State Community College in Elizabethton. Meetings were previously held on the campus of Milligan College.

Bryan Stevens, Newsletter Editor

CHAPTER NEWS

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER'S new officers: Tom Howe, President; Merikay Waldvogel, Vice President; Morton Massey, Treasurer; Talissa Ralph, Secretary.

State Directors: Ron Hoff, Dollyann Meyers, and Michael Plaster.

During the spring and summer KTOS continued its community outreach through the Discover Birds program at Clayton Bradley School and Sevier Elementary School. Volunteers from KTOS lead bird walks and gave presentations at the schools.

Members of KTOS worked in concert with Ijams Nature Center to continue, as an annual event, the "Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival" on August 20th. Attendance at the festival and the number of hummingbirds were both down this year perhaps due to competing events for both people and birds.

In March David Hill took us on a visual tour of his favorite birding spots on the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula, in Percé, Quebec where he and his wife Elisabeth have spent the past two summers.

In April Anna Walker spoke to the chapter about "Osprey Reintroduction and Tracking in Southeast Michigan". This endeavor has had some success. It was interesting for KTOS member to see how some of the Osprey migrate through east Tennessee and on all the way to Columbia.

In May Margaret Barker recounted the fascinating history of feeding wild birds. Margaret Barker was the first coordinator of Project Feeder Watch at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in the 1990's. She has recently co-authored the book *Feeding Wild Birds in America: Culture, Commerce, and Conservation* (Texas A&M Press, 2015) with Paul Baicich and Carrol L. Henderson.

At the June and September picnics, held at Ijams Nature Center, there was a silent auction of J.B. Owens' collection of bird books.

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 6:45 p.m. in room 118 of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine.

Talissa Ralph, Secretary

At our September meeting the **MEMPHIS CHAPTER'S** first program of the season was our traditional "Member Travels and Photos from Recent Trips." We had 6 presenters including Thomas Blevins, Allen Sparks, David Hill (by Dick Preston), Sheila Bentley, Judy Dorsey, and Georges McNeil. In October we were treated to a presentation by J. R. Rigby with Delta Wind Birds. J. R. gave a very interesting program on "Shorebirds: the limits of endurance and value of conservation." He described the characteristics of shorebirds, their amazing long-distance migration routes, and the challenges of conserving birds that are seasonal migrants in the U.S. and not year round residents.

Several field trips in search of fall migrants have traveled to destinations such as The Pits Earth Complex, Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, the Shelby Farms Greenline, W.C. Johnson Park in Collierville, and Wapanocca Wildlife Refuge. The Johnson Park hike was preceded by an evening birding talk for the Collierville Environmental Commission by MTOS member Jay Walko.

Our Conservation Committee Chairperson, Dick Preston encouraged members to participate in TWRA's comment period regarding hunting regulations for waterfowl and migratory birds. Dick and several MTOS members also recently met with leaders at Shelby Farms Park to discuss preserving more habitat for grassland birds. While there are challenges to preserving grassland habitat in an area where controlled burns are not possible, Dick reported that the Park staff was at least more cooperative, listened to their concerns, and are willing to reduce mowing outside the heart of the park. MTOS also participated in the Reelfoot Lake Wildlife Management Area's 75th Anniversary Celebration on October 22nd. Thanks to Dick and the other MTOS members who helped with the event.

Congratulations to MTOS member Angela Blevins, photographer and artist, who recently held an exhibit of her work at Wild Birds Unlimited. Thanks to Debbie Bruce and all the staff at Wild Birds for hosting the event.

Kate Friedman, MTOS President

CHAPTER NEWS

It's been a busy few months for the **NASHVILLE CHAPTER** of TOS. Our split meeting location seems to have worked out very well (January-August at Radnor Lake and September-December at Warner Park Nature Center) accommodating our members and bringing in new ones. We took a huge leap this summer and updated the NTOS Nashville Warbler logo with the help of graphic artist and Kentucky birder, Mary Yandell. The logo was revealed at the September Pot luck supper to many accolades. Watch for it on our new updated membership brochures and other printed items.

Our fall Wednesday morning walks began its 40th continuous year on September 21st. These walks continue to be very popular and provide a wonderful source of outreach for all birders. Many thanks to Kevin Bowden, Chris Sloan, Ashley Heeney and Steve Routledge for volunteering to lead one of each of the four walks this fall.

Our fall migration bird count took place on September 24th on an unseasonably warm, sunny day. Thirty-eight birders took to 10 different routes and compiled a total of 113 species. Many thanks to all who turned out and counted and to our compiler Scott Block for always doing an outstanding job with the reporting.

Also in September our Chapter adopted and will endorse a conservation project for 2017 – The American Bird Conservancy's "Keeping Cats Indoors". <https://abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/> Watch for updates and announcements about this important conservation issue as we welcome the new year.

Our Christmas Bird Counts will take place on Saturday, December 17th and Sunday, January 1st. Many thanks to Ann Inouye and Dave Luth for volunteering to head up that effort. If you're interested in helping with either count or perhaps both, please contact Ann at cis_135@yahoo.com.

Danny Shelton continues to provide us with wonderfully diverse programs at our monthly meetings, and Tarcila Fox has planned and executed many wonderful field trips this quarter. Kudos to both of them for their hard work, and as always please feel free to join us if you're in and around the greater Nashville area. Both meetings and field trips are announced on Tn-birds and the NTOS Facebook page.

Finally, many thanks to the Buffalo River Chapter, Damien and Don Simbeck for a wonderful TOS Fall meeting weekend.

Till next time,
Cyndi Routledge, NTOS President

In Memory: Wallace Coffey

Wallace Coffey, 76, of Bristol, TN, passed away on 27 September 2016 following an extended illness. A member of TOS for more than 50 years, he served the Bristol Bird Club in many capacities. He is probably best known to most in TOS as the founder and moderator of the TN-Bird listserver and its predecessor Valley Birds – one of the first birding listservers in the country. He was also Editor of the TOS journal, *The Migrant*, for five years. A full memorial will appear in *The Migrant*.

His daughter, Janet, suggested that any memorial donations be made to "Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center" with a notation, "Wallace Coffey Fund." The Friends' mailing address is: P.O. Box 1763, Bristol, TN 37620. Donations will help fund the current expansion of the Nature Center's Bird Exhibits to honor Wallace and his many contributions to ornithology. Wallace was instrumental in getting Steele Creek Park and its present Nature Center built in the 1960's and was very pleased to know that he would in part be honored with the new expansion and pursuit of educational quality for the entire community.

He will be greatly missed, but has left a strong legacy.

Rick Knight

OPERATION MIGRATION

As of October 6, 2016, the current maximum population of Whooping Cranes in the Eastern Migratory Population (EMP) is 109. Operation Migration (OM) was allotted 12 parent-reared chicks that included 9 from Patuxant, Maryland and three from the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

In September the 12 chicks were fitted with tracking devices and released in locations where adult cranes in the EMP were. Then OM staff and volunteers began the daily task of observing the birds' movement and activity. None of these chicks had ever flown before, so having one follow and adult bird to a roost site was an exciting event. The goal was to have the chicks follow the adult birds when they migrated south. Sadly, two chicks were predated before they could migrate.

Should you be lucky enough to see any of the cranes, please report your sighting to <http://www.bringbackthecranes.org/what2do.html>. It is not unusual for one or more of the chicks to winter at Hiwassee WMA near Chattanooga. Also, a trip to Alabama's Wheeler Wildlife Refuge in January is well worth the effort.

Tony King
Certified Craniac

COLLISIONS KILL A BILLION BIRDS A YEAR IN NORTH AMERICA

Most of us have had the unpleasant experience of hearing that "thud," knowing yet another bird has been killed by a collision with a window. Conservative estimates place the number of birds killed by collisions with TV and radio towers, motor vehicles and power lines at more than one billion. However, the leading cause of collision deaths comes from birds flying into windows. A commonly held belief is that most deaths occur at commercial buildings and high rise apartments. Yet the real damage is done at the level of the individual home. So what can you do?

FLAP Canada (Fatal Light Awareness Program) maintains a superior website (www.flap.org) devoted to reducing bird mortality in urban settings. The website contains a wealth of information on the latest technologies and products available for both commercial and residential buildings, to reduce, if not completely eliminate window kills.

Check it out. Your birds will appreciate it.

FEBRUARY 28TH DEADLINE

The deadline date for the April issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is February 28th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

Submit Material To:

Theresa Graham, Editor
PO Box 366, Oakland TN 38060
(901) 465-4263 (home)
e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net

~ PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS ~
THE TOS FALL MEETING
LAWRENCEBURG, SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 2, 2016





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npmcwhirter@gmail.com

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