



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

April, 2013

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Citizen Science is a term we often hear, but too few of us take the time to learn much about. The opportunities to make meaningful contributions in monitoring bird population trends are many. Most of us have taken part in at least one Christmas Bird Count, while fewer have run a Breeding Bird Survey. One of the easiest to participate in occurs every year during President's Day Weekend: The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). This year marked the first time the count was truly worldwide in scope. More than 135,000 checklists were received, from 107 countries, reporting 3,610 species (633 in the U.S.). This year 40 of the 50 states submitted a record number of checklists. Unfortunately, Tennessee wasn't one of them. However, we did turn in over 2,500 lists and ranked a respectable 17th among the states. But surely we can do better. Also new this year, all checklists submitted were added directly to the eBird data base. Leaders should enter the results of every chapter field trip into eBird. Individuals are strongly encouraged to enter their personal sightings, even of "common" birds. Early detection of declines may help ensure they remain "common." eBird is user friendly and provides an excellent way to monitor your own "life lists." Everything you need to know is found at: www.ebird.org. Thanks to Dean Edwards for again serving as a volunteer reviewer for Tennessee during the GBBC. It's a hectic two weeks, but a lot of fun, too. Bill Pulliam, Susan Hubley and Stephen Stedman volunteer their services for eBird. They spend countless hours during the year reviewing records submitted from Tennessee locales. You can thank them by submitting your sightings. Additional opportunities to participate in Citizen Science include Project Feederwatch and Nestwatch. Information regarding these projects, as well as the GBBC, can be found on Cornell University's website: www.birdsource.

Billie Cantwell and the Knoxville Chapter will host our Annual Meeting April 26 – 28. They are busy attending to the many details required to ensure an enjoyable weekend. Please assist them by sending in your registration as soon as possible. Our Board of Directors (BOD) will meet on Saturday afternoon and the Annual Business Meeting will be held Saturday evening. Anyone who desires to bring an issue before the BOD please send me an email (dickpreston@bigriver.net) with the subject and approximate time required. Officers for 2013-15 will be elected by the membership at the Annual Business Meeting Saturday night. Please see page 2 for further details.

My term as President of TOS will end at the Annual Meeting on April 27th when I will be succeeded by Ron Hoff. I have enjoyed the last four years and am grateful to all of you for the support I have received. However, there are a few folks to whom I (and our Society) owe an especially large debt for their wise counsel and the aid and comfort they provided me: Our Treasurer, Mac McWhirter, Secretary Cyndi Routledge, Warbler Editor Theresa Graham and Conservation Policy Committee Co-Chair Melinda Welton.

Thank you.
Dick Preston

2013 TOS Spring State Meeting
Knoxville, April 26 – 28, 2013

The Knoxville chapter invites all state TOS members to the 2013 spring meeting, to be held April 26–28. Friday night registration will be held at the conference hotel from 6–9 p.m., while Saturday afternoon meetings and the Saturday banquet will be hosted at the Knoxville Zoo, 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 Clarion Inn, 5634 Merchant Center Boulevard (I-75, exit 108). A block of rooms is reserved at a discounted rate of \$62.00 plus taxes per night for a choice of a room with either two double beds or one king size bed. A free continental breakfast is included. Make your reservations for the hotel by April 10 by calling (865) 687-8989 and mentioning “TOS” for the discounted rate. All field trips will leave from the Clarion Inn.

We are pleased to announce that the speaker for the Saturday banquet will be Dr. Jim Tucker. Currently Professor of Educational Psychology at UTC, Jim is the founder of the ABA, which he founded in 1968 to bridge the gap between recreational birders and scientists. He has a wealth of birding experience to share, including Big Days with Roger Tory Peterson. The menu for the banquet includes Caesar salad, spinach lasagna, chicken Alfredo, herb roasted potatoes, garlic bread, and dessert. Before the 6 p.m. banquet, everyone is invited to a bird encounter with some special zoo residents at 5:30 p.m.

Field trips are still being finalized but usually include Seven Islands, Kyker Bottoms, Sharp’s Ridge, Norris Dam, Cove Lake, Cross Mountain and the upper Smokies.

Send your registration to KTOS by April 10.
For additional information, contact Billie Cantwell, bfcantwell@gmail.com.

TOS SPRING MEETING 2013 REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) _____

Address _____

TOS Chapter: _____

Are you an officer? Please indicate _____

\$ _____ for _____ Registrations @ \$10 each

\$ _____ for _____ Dinner Reservations @ \$22 each

\$ _____ for _____ Child’s Dinner Reservations (age 12 & under) @ \$10 each

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

\$ _____ for _____ Saturday afternoon Zoo tickets, child @ \$7 each

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

Mail registration form and check to: Carole Gobert
1304 Barcelona Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37923

FALL TOS MEETING

Clarksville TOS members and the local Warioto Audubon chapter will be hosting the TOS fall meeting the weekend of September 27-29. There are several good venues for accommodations as well as restaurants. We hope to fully experience fall migration in Montgomery County as well as nearby Robertson and north Cheatham counties. Presently, we are looking at using the Country Inns and Suites off Exit 4 off I-24 as our base hotel and program venue. However, there are several lodging options available, so we will check these out also. Stay tuned!!

Steve Routledge

CHRISTMAS COUNT DATA DUE

Data for the recent 2012 Christmas Bird Count season are now due. If you have not already sent your data to me, please do so as soon as possible so I may finish up my report to the editor of the MIGRANT. Please remember that I need the effort data, as I cannot access the Audubon site for that information. Please make sure you include the following:

- 1 - Hours and miles by car, foot, and any night-birding
- 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
- 7 - Anything else about the count, i.e. record high or low numbers, extraordinary weather, all-time species total for your particular count, etc.

The Tennessee Ornithological Society appreciates your time and effort in helping monitor our avian populations.

Ron Hoff
TOS state bird count compiler
282 Hackworth Ln.
Clinton, TN 37716
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aves7000@bellsouth.net

Conservation Policy Committee

Submitted by Melinda Welton

Surface mine application in Cerulean Warbler habitat

The Southern Environmental Law Center, on behalf of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, Defenders of Wildlife, National Parks Conservation Association, Tennessee Environmental Council, Sierra Club and the Warioto Chapter of the National Audubon Society, has submitted comments on a proposal to conduct surface coal mining on lands within the North Cumberland WMA and lands that are part of the Lands Unsuitable for Mining petition.

These comments highlight the fact that not only would this operation impact habitat for the Cerulean Warbler, but also a number of Endangered aquatic species.

The permit applicant is Clear Energy Corporation (Application No. 3261), the mine name is the Roach Creek Mountain, Surface Mine No. 1, in Campbell and Scott Counties.

New research on the impact of cats on wild birds

The results of recent research conducted by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the Fish and Wildlife Service reports that pet cats and feral cats are having a much greater impact on birds and other wildlife than previously thought. Outdoor cats are killing as many as 2.4 billion birds annually (that's billion with a "b") and 12.3 billion mammals. Pet cats account for 7.2 million bird kills, with feral cats taking the remainder. The number of kills is two to four times higher than previously estimated.

Take away message? Keep your cat in the house! If your cat MUST go outside, consider investing in a "cat bib", available at < <http://www.catgoods.com/>>. This low-tech devise shows promise for reducing the kill rate of outdoor cats. However, if you want your cat to live a longer, healthier life, KEEP IT INDOORS.

A longer summary of this research is available at:

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/30/science/that-cuddly-kitty-of-yours-is-a-killer.html?_r=0

Incidental take permit of Whooping Cranes proposed

The Tennessee Ornithological Society has signed onto an American Bird Conservancy letter protesting an Incidental Take Permit for Whooping Cranes for a wind turbine project. This project is for 100 turbines within a 22,400 acre site that includes wetland stopover habitat for these birds. With only 400 Whooping Cranes remaining in the wild a full Environmental Impact Statement should be required, giving the wind industry a standard to which all companies adhere.

"HAST THOU NAMED ALL THE BIRDS WITHOUT A GUN: LOVED THE WOOD-ROSE, AND LEFT IT ON ITS STALK?" Ralph Waldo Emerson

November 20, 2012

THE LAND TRUST FOR TENNESSEE PARTNERS WITH TWRA TO SUCCESSFULLY ADD CRITICAL ACREAGE TO HIWASSEE WILDLIFE REFUGE, SITE OF SANDHILL CRANE MIGRATION & HISTORIC TRAIL OF TEARS.

CHATTANOOGA, TN. – The Land Trust for Tennessee and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) successfully partnered to purchase 68 acres of critical wildlife habitat located along Blythe Ferry Road near the confluence of the Hiwassee and Tennessee Rivers. This essential acreage is now part of the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Meigs County thanks to the tremendous support of individuals, foundations and the community. This peaceful stretch of tall grasses was slated for a high density residential development with a waste water treatment facility. That project fell through, and The Land Trust for Tennessee spent the last two years in negotiations to protect this property from other incompatible development proposals. This vital acreage increases the physical size of the Refuge, enhances public enjoyment of historical and scenic land that is rich in wildlife population and adds value for our state's tourism and recreation.

This piece of land and other properties along the Hiwassee River corridor, one of The Land Trust's high priority conservation areas, are an essential part of the Sandhill Crane's natural migration pattern. Over 14,000 of the birds descend on the Refuge for two to three months each winter. In addition to the annual Sandhill Crane Festival held every year at the Refuge, Blythe Ferry itself was a site for Cherokee camps and a major departure point for the Trail of Tears. Proposed development would have threatened the home of spectacular wildlife special to this region and would have ruined the historic context for visitors to experience the Old Wagon Road leading to the ferry and to the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park that adjoins these 68 acres.

Through a federal wildlife habitat grant TWRA committed \$250,000 toward the project, and The Land Trust for Tennessee raised the remaining private funds necessary to purchase this land for public use. Generous support poured in from foundations and wildlife enthusiasts across Tennessee and beyond, including a large gift made by an anonymous donor through the International Crane Foundation. "Thanks to this anonymous donor's dedication to Sandhill Cranes and their habitats, we are thrilled to be able to help secure land that provides critical buffers for Sandhills and many other species along the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Tennessee," International Crane Foundation's President and CEO Rich Beilfuss said.

After reading an article about the Blythe Ferry Project in Tennessee Wildlife magazine earlier this fall, Bill and Judy Tindall led the pack with a generous leadership gift.

The Land Trust is so appreciative of them and the many other donors who made this addition to the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge possible, including the visionary support of the Farrow Family Foundation, Lyndhurst Foundation, Riverview Foundation, SunTrust Foundation, Carlene and Greg Vital, and Libby and Frank Duff. The Tennessee Ornithological Society also contributed to the purchase.

The Land Trust for Tennessee and TWRA dedicated the 68-acre addition during the Sandhill Crane Festival on Saturday, January 19th at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge.

The Land Trust is a private, nonprofit organization that has worked with willing landowners, the State of Tennessee, communities and various like-minded partners to protect more than 84,000 acres in 53 counties across the state since its founding 12 years ago. To learn more about this project or the benefits of voluntary conservation, contact one of these local offices at 615-244-5263 (Nashville) or 423-305-1783 (Chattanooga) or visit the website at www.landtrusttn.org

2013 Sandhill Crane Festival

The 2013 Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival was held on January 19 & 20 at Birchwood Elementary School, Hiwassee Refuge and the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park. Major partners for this year's weekend event were Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, Tennessee Ornithological Society and the Barbara J. Mapp Foundation. Also helping to take this year's festival to "a new level" were 28 additional sponsors and supporters.

It was a beautiful weekend with blue skies and warm sunshine. Due to bountiful rainfall earlier in the week, both the Tennessee and Hiwassee Rivers were 7 feet higher than normal so the Sandhill Cranes were not as abundant on the refuge, but festival goers were treated to other watchable wildlife and had great looks at Bald Eagles, wintering waterfowl, Great Egrets and, on Saturday, a Golden Eagle.

Birchwood Elementary once again served as the hub of the weekend event with various programs all weekend including special visits by Joan Garland from the International Crane Foundation, Brian "Fox" Ellis of Foxtales International, The American Eagle Foundation Raptor Show, our own Bob Hatcher and Joel Blevins from the C.E. Blevins Avian Learning Center. Blue Moon Cruises provided the free shuttle buses that ran all weekend carrying visitors to and from the Refuge and the Cherokee site. "Sandy" the Crane also made an appearance once again this year. Sandy was even seen riding the shuttle bus out to the refuge to visit with the crowds enjoying the beautiful weekend. Another highlight of the weekend was the dedication of the additional 68-acres of land that was purchased and added to Hiwassee Refuge this fall. This beautiful piece of property now brings the refuge total over 6000 acres!

From vendors to children's activities, from good eats to great conservation education and amazing watchable wildlife, a grand time was had by everyone!

We'll see YOU next January!

Cyndi Routledge and Melinda Welton
Co-chairs

Have you gotten your "TN Sandhill Crane....Worth Watching" bracelet yet??

This project, conceived and proposed by 13 year old Chloe Walker (NTOS) and funded by the Nashville Chapter, was a great addition to the 2013 Sandhill Crane Festival held this past January. Chloe has sold 530+ bracelets with proceeds benefiting the TN Crane Fund. If you'd like your own bracelet you can still get one by contacting Cyndi Routledge at routledges@bellsouth.net. They sell for \$1.00 each. Supplies are limited so get yours today!!



2013 SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS



Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge Sandhill Crane Review for the 2012 – 2013 Season

On October 11, 2012, I saw two Greater Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis tabida*) at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge (HWR) in Meigs County at Birchwood. These were my first sandhill crane sightings of the 2012 – 2013 season. In the late evening of October 27, thirty roosting sandhill cranes were observed near Hiwassee Island from the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park (CRMP) overlook, which is bordered by the HWR on three sides. The next two days were very cold and windy. Amid strong north-northwest winds some sandhill cranes were kettling and flying south. The number of sandhill cranes (SACR) at the refuge increased to around 100 on October 28 and to about 500 on October 29.

The pattern of large changes in the number of SACR present at HWR was repeated several times during the fall and early winter of the 2012 – 2013 season when cold fronts were accompanied by strong north or northwest winds. Following the passage of a strong cold front on November 13, the number of SACR increased from a few hundred to many hundreds, and a few flocks were seen flying south. After another major frontal passage on November 23 - 24, the first Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*) of the season appeared at HWR, and the number of SACR increased to an estimated “several thousand.” The largest number of SACR noted this season from the viewing areas at HWR and CRMP was on January 4, 2013, when “many thousands” were observed. Other migratory avian species were also affected by the passage of strong cold fronts. After northwest winds greater than 30 mph on December 20, twenty-four immature Bald Eagles were seen together on one mud bar in the Hiwassee River near Hiwassee Island. My first observations of the season of SACR migrating north behind a south wind occurred on February 6 - 7, 2013.

The behavior of SACR at HWR is also greatly affected by large amounts of rainfall. The Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival, January 18 - 20, 2013, was heavily impacted by rainfall that totaled 7 inches in some local areas over of period of several days before the festival. Since SACR and Whooping Cranes both normally roost while standing in shallow water, their behavior changed radically at roosting time because all their normal roosting areas were covered by deep water. The SACR were flying around in all directions at roosting time. I assume that they finally had to roost in fields rather than on mudflats and mud bars. Several hundred SACR were in the HWR and CRMP viewing areas on January 18, and thousands were present on January 23 after the water had receded somewhat, but relatively few were seen by Festival visitors.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency makes periodic waterfowl counts during the fall and winter seasons. Sandhill Crane counts are made at the same time in some TWRA regions. See Table 1 below. These counts can be accessed at: <http://www.tn.gov/twra/pdfs/wfbimonthly.pdf> .

Table 1. Tennessee 2012 – 2013 Winter Sandhill Crane Survey Results for the TWRA Region III Hiwassee/ Chickamauga Area Refuges					
Nov 1	Nov 15	Dec 1	Dec 15	Jan 1	Jan 7 - 11
-	1,346	18,405	4,915	8,125	13,465

My observations and those of many other visitors to the HWR are that the SACR were much more scattered out over surrounding counties this year than in previous years. Therefore, the numbers seen from the gazebo at HWR never equaled the largest counts in some other years. The largest numbers of SACR that I saw during the season were always at dusk or dawn when the birds were roosting on the mud bars around Hiwassee Island. One could often observe thousands of the SACR flying into the mud bars at dusk from various directions or out from the mud bars at dawn going many different routes.

A Tennessee Ornithological Society (TOS) list of visitors to the gazebo at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge is maintained year-around. Visitors are asked to supply their name, city and state, and the number of people in their group. The visitors are encouraged to sign the visitors list each day that they come. Therefore, the following table contains lists of total visits, not the total numbers of different visitors. Since no one is present at all times to ask visitors to sign the list, the number of visits reported in the table below is likely significantly lower than actual visits. Many visitors don't see the visitors list or choose not to sign it.

The table below contains data from the TOS visitors lists plus an estimate of the number of visitors during the Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival. The estimate of 4,000 visitors was supplied by the Festival Chairman, Dan Hicks, III, Information and Education Coordinator, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Region III, Crossville, TN. If the estimates that include the Festival numbers don't seem to "add-up," it is because the visitors list that I maintained included 93 visits for the dates of the Festival.

Table 2. Visits to the Gazebo at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge, 24 Mar 2012 – 23 Feb 2013 (Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival Data Estimates Are Included)			
Dates Included	Visits Recorded at the Gazebo	Number of Visits by Tennesseans	Number of States Represented
24 Mar 12 – 30 Sep 13	587	490	20
October 2012	129	92	10
November 2012	278	216	10
December 2012	422	307	18
Jan. 2013 (w/ Festival*)	4,828	unknown	unknown
1 Feb – 23 Feb 2013	389	287	13
TOTALS (*4,000 Festival estimate added to Jan. total)	6,633	Unknown - No Festival data by city and state is available to me.	36 different states w/o the Crane Festival (Also, visitors from 6 foreign countries were noted.)

Charles Murray
 Birchwood, TN
 (423) 961-2969
dro_1945@yahoo.com

The 2013 Sandhill Crane Festival is one for the history books!! And what a chapter it will be!

It was a gorgeous weekend...two sun-filled 50 degree days, amazing volunteers, lots of smiling faces, great speakers, Sandhill Cranes, Whooping Cranes, Bald Eagles, the additional 68-acre Hiwassee land dedication, new and old friends and Charles Darwin...we couldn't have asked for more!

And although the "stars" of the show might be billed as the Cranes...the true "stars" are You The Volunteers!! For without each of you, this Festival would not be possible!

My most heartfelt "Thank You" to each and every one of you who helped to make this weekend a success. Whether you worked pre-festival running around hanging posters, spreading the word in your communities, gathering or giving auction items, or at the Festival itself by sharing your scopes, at the welcome tables, loading the buses, selling pizza, manning the TOS table, coordinating our speakers, taking pictures and videos to share later, setting up tables or tearing down tents, worked a shift or worked all weekend, each and everyone one of you had an integral role in making this weekend a success.

I hope that each of you enjoyed yourself. Perhaps you had an experience or interaction with an adult or child you'll fondly remember. Perhaps you saw something you've never seen before or shared a life bird with someone. Maybe you made a new friend or got reacquainted with an old one, or just had plain good old fun. You made it all possible.

Here's a favorite quote that sums up the weekend for me.

*"If you want to touch the past, touch a rock.
If you want to touch the present, touch a flower.
If you want to touch the future, touch a life."
~Author Unknown*

Thank you for all your help in touching the future!!!
Cyndi Routledge



The once-missing "Ken and Lil Dubke Viewing Gazebo" dedication plaque has found its way "home" and was placed in the gazebo at Hiwassee Refuge in time for the 2013 Festival. A very fitting expression of appreciation for all that that Ken and Lil Dubke have done through the years for the concept of "learning while viewing", Sandhill Cranes, and wildlife conservation and preservation in Tennessee.

Tennessee Students Discover Birds! by Billie Cantwell and Vickie Henderson

On November 16th, 2012, six Knoxville Chapter (KTOS) members met at Rocky Hill Elementary School to present the Discover Birds Program to six (all) first grade classes at the school. Volunteers Tom Howe, Chris Welsh, Mark Campen and Tony King set up spotting scopes and binoculars outside for one-third of the students, while the rest of the students enjoyed Billie Cantwell's bird slide show or Paula Schneeberger's bird treasure chest. Each class enjoyed the three separate activities as they rotated from one activity to another at the appointed time.

The four outside volunteers had small bird walk groups of six to eight children each as they helped the children discover birds around the school yard. Some of the children were even able to recognize bird songs. Inside, Billie's slideshow showed the students how different birds can be with a variety of colors, beak sizes, leg lengths and feet, as well as nests and baby birds. Paula, a naturalist educator, offered a treasure chest of bird items that the children could see up close and explore including bird talons, eggs, feathers and stuffed specimens.

Each classroom teacher was given a welcome packet, developed by Billie Cantwell, including Discover Birds Project information, a sample lesson plan, a 2013 Wild Birds Unlimited (WBU) calendar, a WBU "Bird Tracks" newsletter, a Cornell poster of common feeder birds, a Watchable Wildlife pen, check list and patch, and a KTOS brochure. After the program each student received a Discover Birds Activity book from their teacher. The activity books were sponsored with KTOS club member donations, with half the cost of the book being contributed by individual donations and half by KTOS.



The new 2013 edition of the activity book was published in January and includes thirty-six pages, 74 illustrations and is packed with information and activities to challenge the young reader's mind and introduce them to birds.

To order the Discover Birds Activity Books contact Cyndi Routledge at 931-648-0911 or email: routledges@bellsouth.net

To learn more about how to sponsor classrooms and set up school bird walks in your area contact: Billie Cantwell at 865-567-4273 or email: bfcantwell@gmail.com

Federal Wildlife Conservation Stamp

by Vickie Henderson

There is an effort underway to establish a Federal Wildlife Conservation Stamp parallel to the Federal Duck Stamp giving non-consumptive users of our National Wildlife Refuge System a funding tool and a stronger voice in habitat and wildlife decisions on public lands.

The 2011 survey by the US Fish and Wildlife Service counted 71.1 million wildlife watchers in the U.S. and 13.7 million hunters. Wildlife watchers spend \$55 billion dollars each year in the pursuit of wildlife activities; however, many will not buy Duck Stamps because they believe the source of funds is not accurately accounted for and their voice is not heard when decisions are made.

A February 7th report in Science Daily stated that annual sales of duck stamps, which are required for duck hunting, are declining steadily with the fall in numbers of hunters. "While over 2,100,000 stamps were sold annually in the 1970's, between 2004 and 2008 this declined to 1,300,000. This fall is continuing with an annual decline of 36% in duck stamp sales." This, of course, means the funding dollars needed to preserve and manage public lands is also declining.

The organizers of the Federal Wildlife Conservation Stamp program hope to build a coalition of supporters, create a draft legislative proposal and elicit the help of legislators, wildlife conservation groups, USFWS and the Duck Stamp office to create a new funding stream for our National Wildlife Refuge System. You can find out more information about this effort and sign up to receive email updates by visiting the website: <http://wildlifeconservationstamp.org/>

J.B. OWEN MEMORIAL AWARD

The purpose of the J.B. Owen Memorial Fund is to honor the memory of J.B. Owen, longtime TOS member known to thousands in east Tennessee through his columns in Knoxville newspapers. J.B. Owen was an active member of the Knoxville Chapter from 1947 until his death in 2001. He received the TOS Distinguished Service Award in 1990. An annual award is made by the Fund in the expected amount of \$250 to \$500 to promote the study of birds in Tennessee through research, conservation, and environmental education.

The J.B. Owen Award is open to anyone with a project that promotes the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee. Applicants are encouraged to submit:

- Cover letter with short project description and applicant contact information.
- Resume
- Brief project proposal, of one to three pages, showing topic of the project, problem to be addressed, objectives, expected results and significance, deliverables (for example, written report, journal article, presentation), project location and project schedule.

Each year applications are due by May 1 and should be sent, preferably by e-mail, to cpgobert@hotmail.com or mailed to Carole Gobert, 1304 Barcelona Drive, Knoxville, TN 37923. The J.B. Owen Committee of KTOS will evaluate applications and will typically announce the Award winner or winners the following September.

OPERATION MIGRATION 2012-2013

The remainder of the migration went without incident. Better flying weather helped move the migration across 3 states in 23 days. Five Whooping Cranes were safely delivered to the prepared pens at St. Marks Wildlife Refuge in the Florida panhandle on November 23, 2012, after 57 days on migration from White River Marsh, WI.

Once there it was a matter of Brooke Pennypacker and volunteers taking turns to check on the Whooping Cranes. This is virtually a 24/7 job. All went well until a pen check on Feb 3, 2013. There were only 4 chicks visible. Whooping Crane #6-12 was found in the pen with a broken neck. Bobcat was the suspected cause of predation and traps were set up. Now there are only four chicks.

The next event occurred when the chicks went AWOL. Only two chicks returned, while one dragged himself in the following day. The fourth chick is still out there somewhere. Now there are only three chicks left.

Tracking Field Manager, Eva Szyszkoski, who tracks the Eastern Population Whooping Cranes, has 111 accounted for with several unaccounted for. On January 12th, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama held a Festival of Cranes. Many hundreds of onlookers saw several of Operation Migration's led Whooping Cranes before and after the festival. Also, at Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Tennessee, Whooping Cranes have been seen all winter long with Sandhill Cranes; a testament to the wonderful work being done by Operation Migration.

Over time ultralight aircraft became common, were unregulated and were practically maintained using an adjustable wrench and a pair of pliers!. FAA saw trouble brewing. FAA has divided ultralights into two classes; Experimental Light Sport Aircraft (E-LSA) for hobby flyers and Special Light Sport Aircraft (SLSA). The FAA has required Operation Migration to upgrade to SLSA by next year, because they are a business. SLSA must be maintained by FAA approved mechanics.

These upgrades will cost. As part of the upgrade Operation Migration may use the current 2 stroke power plants in favor of the 4 stroke motors which pollute less and are heavier. The existing wings may also be used. However, the future craft are going to suffer through many modifications and additions in order to be used for Whooping Cranes Migration. Current SLSA's are too heavy and fly too fast for migration. Stay tuned while those in-the-know perform miracles in spite of FAA! The migration must continue!!

Operation Migration's Mile Maker Campaign is still short of expectations for this fiscal year ending in April. How about donating part of your IRS tax refund to their cause? Every dollar contributed is hugely appreciated. Operation Migration also seeks monthly contributors, as a way to spread the load. <http://operationmigration.org/>

Bird On!!

Tony King, Certified Craniac. 865-988-6172.

OSPREY WATCH

By the time you read this, Osprey will have returned from their winter haunts. There is a group based in Williamsburg, VA, who wants those who are interested to become citizen scientist by logging on to <http://www.osprey-watch.org> and report on Ospreys. The site is self explanatory.

Last year Denise & I monitored 19 osprey nests and learned a lot. My brother in Perth, Western Australia joined, so it's a global research effort.

Tony King

CHAPTER NEWS

STEPHEN M. RUSSELL CHAPTER (Bristol) - The Bristol Bird Club has enjoyed several interesting programs in recent months. In November, member John Hay gave a slide presentation on Bahamas' birds of New Providence Island and Paradise Island. Our January program was a show and tell by our members on the use of technology in birding. In February, Naturalist Bob Culler of Bays Mountain Park in Kingsport and Frank Read, a volunteer in their raptor program, presented a very interesting program complete with three live birds which are not releasable because of injuries. They brought a Great Horned Owl, a Red-tailed Hawk, and a Black Vulture. The members had an opportunity to ask questions after each of these birds was shown. In December, John and Polly Moyle hosted our annual Christmas Party at their home in Kingsport. This was a very enjoyable time of food, fellowship, and fun.

Our annual winter trip to Burke's Garden, Virginia, was led by Rick Knight on February 9. Highlights of this trip included two adult Bald Eagles; five Golden Eagles, mostly immature; a Rough-legged Hawk; at least six Red-headed Woodpeckers; ten or more Common Ravens; and a Barred Owl which Rick spotted as we left the valley. A groundhog and a Fox Squirrel were also observed.

Many of our members have enjoyed seeing the Harlequin Duck that has spent several weeks on the South Fork of the Holston River, behind Riverfront Seafood Restaurant, in Kingsport, Tennessee. Visitors from at least three states have traveled to Northeast Tennessee to add this bird to their life list. Other birds of interest nearby have been a Cackling Goose at Steele's Creek Park in Bristol, Tennessee, a couple of Snow Geese in the area, and a Brant which has stayed around a golf course in Bristol, Virginia.

The Bristol TN-VA Christmas Count was held on December 30th. The count was conducted by 23 participants in 6 parties. There were 81 species observed with a total of 8721 individual birds. Some of the interesting count-week species were Greater Scaup, Red-throated Loon, Red-necked Grebe and Sandhill Crane. A Brant was a new species to the Bristol count. One of these spent the winter on Clear Creek Lake in Bristol, VA. There were 3 Bald Eagles and one Merlin seen. Species with new high count totals were Ruddy

Duck (8), American Woodcock (2), and Red-bellied Woodpecker (46). The Eastern Phoebe tied its all time high with 19. Thanks to Richard Lewis who is the compiler for the count.

Lois Cox
lcox@btes.tv



Frank Read, a volunteer with Bays Mountain Park shows the Great Horned Owl

The 70th annual Elizabethton Christmas Bird Count was conducted Saturday, Dec. 15, by members of the **LEE AND LOIS HERNDON CHAPTER** of TOS. This year's count set a new record, with a total of 80 species found. The average number found on an Elizabethton CBC is 71 species.

Twenty-three participants in six parties counted in this CBC. Some of the good birds found on this count included White Ibis, Northern Shoveler, Green Heron, Peregrine Falcon and Horned Lark.

The annual Roan Mountain CBC was held Sunday, Dec. 16. This count was first held in 1950, and has been held yearly except for a few years when weather conditions precluded the event. A total of 13 participants in four parties counted for the Roan Mountain CBC.

The average for this count has been 44 species, which was matched again this year. The highest number of species recorded for this count was 55 in 1987. Some of the best birds on this count included American Black Duck, Hooded Merganser, Ruffed Grouse and Red Crossbill.

CHAPTER NEWS

Herndon Chapter - Continued from page 14

The chapter also held another successful calendar fundraiser. The 2013 calendar, like the ones in 2012 and 2011, featured bird and nature photos by members of the chapter.

Bryan Stevens
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Page from the chapter's 2013 calendar. Sales of the calendar served as a fund-raising project for the chapter.

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER - The KTOS Discover Birds Committee has sponsored 6 first grade classes, distributing Discover Birds Activity Books and providing field trips for the educators and students participating in the "Discover Birds" program.

KTOS will be hosting the TOS Spring Meeting, April 26-28, 2013.

Plans are underway for our third annual Hummingbird Festival scheduled for Saturday, August 24th, 2013, at Ijams Nature Center in Knoxville. The festival will have educational speakers, banding demonstrations with Mark Armstrong and exhibits that feature nature items and plants for hummingbird gardens.

We have had several speakers from The Great Smoky Mountains National Park. In November, Todd Witcher, the executive director of Discover Life in America, talked about the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory which began in

1998. In December, Paul Super, Research Coordinator for the Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center at GSMNP, gave a brief overview of research and protection activities occurring in the park. In February, Tiffany Beachy, Citizen Science Coordinator at GSMNP, talked about organizing groups of non-professional scientists to help with the collection of real, relevant scientific data within the park.

There were field trips to Sharp's Ridge, Melton Hill Park, Hickory Creek Park, Victor Ashe Park, Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Tommy Schumpert Park, GSMNP, and Kyker Bottoms Refuge.

Melinda Fawver
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MEMPHIS CHAPTER – Some of our bird numbers have been down this winter in west Tennessee, but we've had the chance to see at least two species that the guidebooks say shouldn't be here. Both a Rufous Hummingbird and an Ash-throated Flycatcher have been observed in Shelby County. Local and out-of-town birders got the chance to see these vagrants. Also, on a mid-November hike, a Common Yellowthroat in summer plumage was seen.

Some of our members went to the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center in north Mississippi in January to help with its winter bird count. Our club members have been assisting with this count for the past several years. Also, members presented a birding program and led hikes at the Memphis Botanic Gardens for the Great Backyard Bird Count, and members have presented programs on birding at one of our local libraries. Some of our local schools are using the birding materials provided by TOS.

David Haggard, Regional Naturalist for Tennessee State Parks, brought 5 raptors to our January meeting for display. He also discussed plans to redevelop the golf course at T.O. Fuller State Park in Memphis by converting the property to provide wildlife habitat. The Wolf River rises in north Mississippi and flows through Memphis to the Mississippi. Cathy Justis, Director of Education for the Wolf River Conservancy, spoke to our club about efforts to preserve the remaining natural areas along and near the Wolf River which has swampy areas that are good for canoeing and birding.

CHAPTER NEWS

Memphis Chapter - Continued from page 15

Again this year, MTOS contributed to the Mid-South Raptor Center which takes in injured raptors and attempts to rehabilitate them for release. Unfortunately, some of our freedom-loving Tennesseans see nothing wrong with shooting an eagle, and the Raptor Center tries to get injured eagles and other raptors back in the air.

David Blaylock
dvdblaylock@gmail.com

The **NASHVILLE TOS CHAPTER** was treated to four excellent programs during the past few months. Dave Hawkins shared his wonderful photography with a tour of Costa Rica and the tropical avifauna it offers. Ron Hoff introduced us to birding in the sub-Antarctic region among small islands in and around New Zealand. The walk among the penguins was certainly a highlight. In January, Jan Shaw took us to the Yukon on a northwestern adventure and in February, Durwood Edwards treated all of us to a marvelous presentation on birding in Thailand. Thanks so very much to all of the presenters. Their efforts are very much enjoyed and appreciated by us all.

Our NTOS chapter is busy making plans for the TOS 100 Year Anniversary which is merely a scant two years away. We hope to present some more ideas with the rest of the chapters at the spring meeting in Knoxville. I would also like to request that each chapter designate a liaison by the time of the spring meeting for future communications regarding the 100 Year Anniversary. We are hoping to encourage a free flow of ideas as we celebrate this special occasion, and I believe the formation of a state-wide communication network would help this effort considerably.

Last, but not least, the Conrad Jamison Award was awarded to Chloe Walker for the second consecutive year. Chloe has been active in the ABA Young Birder's program and also developed and spearheaded a fund-raising effort to benefit the Sandhill Crane fund. Her youthful exuberance helps to keep us all young at heart!

Steve Routledge
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BIRDS IN ART EXHIBITION

The Frank H. McClung Museum at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville will host the 2013 **BIRDS IN ART** exhibition from May 24 to August 18, 2013. Artists from around the world submitted 527 works, and 125 were selected for the show. All the art works are devoted to nothing but birds. Sculpture as well as all forms of paintings are represented. This is 37th year for the Birds in Art exhibition and the first time it has been shown in Tennessee.

It is truly remarkable to find an entire exhibit devoted to nothing but birds, and all birders should make an attempt to see it. We saw it at its premier in Wausau, Wisconsin, where it opens every year at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum. Really interesting. Hope you will get to enjoy it too.

For additional information (map, directions, hours of operation, etc.,) visit their website or call.

Frank H. McClung Museum
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
<http://mcclungmuseum.utk.edu/>
865-974-2144

Sue & Jim Ferguson

BIRD COLLISION WEBSITE

The problem of bird deaths caused by collisions with glass is receiving more attention as a major source of bird mortality: new research and greater media coverage are two of the reasons for this increased awareness.

To further spread awareness, the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has created a new bird collision website, located at <http://collisions.abcbirds.org>. ABC's Bird-friendly Building Design publication and home window flyer can be downloaded or ordered in hard copy at the site.

The website also features a slideshow of bird-friendly buildings, case studies, links to bird-friendly legislation in North America and information about research on bird-friendly glass.

Credit: The American Bird Conservancy

Tennessee Ornithological Society BUMPER STICKERS

I have had some small bumper stickers made for TOS. They are approximately 3" x 4.5". I am offering them to our members for \$2.00. The \$2.00 includes shipping. If you order more than one sticker the cost is \$1.50 per sticker after the first one on the order. For example if you purchase two stickers, the cost would be \$3.50, which includes shipping.

I had the bumper stickers produced because I felt that we were not being recognized by the public. TOS is a great organization for birding and the conservation of our bird heritage. This is a break even venture; I am trying to get our name out there.

I plan to attend the state meeting in Knoxville and will bring the bumper stickers for anyone wishing to make a purchase.

Bill Colvard
w_colvard@comcast.net

STYLE 1

(Royal Blue
On White)



STYLE 2

(Royal Blue
Lettering with
Black oval on
White)



\$2 each including postage. Send two dollars to
Bill Colvard 6932 Sandy Cove Dr. Harrison, TN 37341

June 30th Deadline

The deadline date for the August issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is June 30th. 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)
(901) 748-9324 (fax)
e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net

WISDOM DOES IT AGAIN

“Wisdom,” the female Laysan Albatross on Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, a bird who is at least 62 years old, is a mother again. Early on Sunday morning, 3 February, Wisdom’s most recent chick was observed in the nest, pecking its way out of the egg.

Wisdom was first banded in 1956, when she was incubating an egg in the same area of the refuge. She was at least five years old at the time.

More on Wisdom: www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3504

And here’s a good interview from NPR’s “All Things Considered” for 6 February:
www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/02/06/171290097/oh-mama-worlds-oldest-bird-has-another-chick.

A NOTE ON BIRDNOTE

BirdNote is a daily two-minute radio show that combines bird-rich sounds with engaging stories to illustrate the amazing lives of birds and give listeners a real break from the news of the day. While BirdNote has an expansive radio reach, there are many cities and regions where it is not broadcast.

Birdnote’s RSS podcast feed allows you to subscribe to the latest shows and listen to them on your computer or mobile device, whenever and wherever you want. <http://birdnote.org/node/11444>

BirdNote shows can be heard on nearly 200 public radio stations across the country. Find a station in a flyway near you and tune in! <http://birdnote.org/birdnote-stations>

In March, some of the expected daily stories to be broadcast will include those on Lewis’s Woodpeckers (13 March), sage-grouse leks (16 March), eagles rebounding (19 March), Red-winged Blackbird harems (22 March) and heron nests (28 March).

You can also review the archive of close to 1,200 of their stories here:
<http://birdnote.org/archive>.

Credit: *The Birding Community E-Bulletin*

THE ARRIVAL OF SORA 2

The new and upgraded Searchable Ornithological Research Archive (SORA) is now launched. Through this site the University of New Mexico libraries have made available a treasure-trove of open-access ornithological literature. SORA has existed for years, but this latest version has improved the archives and the search process.

Through SORA anyone can search and download thousands of ornithological articles from 15 journals, most of them with a North American emphasis. There is a new user account feature on the archives site, but registration is totally optional. SORA continues to be a free and open-access scientific repository.

Visit SORA at: <http://sora.unm.org>

Credit: *The Birding Community E-Bulletin* (archives: <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>)

Tribute: Jeff R Wilson - February 11, 2013

Posted to TN Bird & reprinted with permission

Friends,

Jeff Wilson passed away over the weekend (February 11, 2013). Evidently he passed in his sleep and his family found him when they returned from out of town.

Many of us here were lucky enough to call Jeff a friend, and a better friend I could never ask for. The amount that Jeff has contributed to the knowledge, distribution, and identification of Tennessee avifauna is beyond words. Most of the top listers in the state owe a disproportionate number of their birds directly to Jeff (I know I do). It would be hard to add up the number of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd state records Jeff had found, not only in Tennessee, but the surrounding states as well. Jeff's attention to detail was incredible. Such as his near magical ability to differentiate Meadowlarks in flight. His passion for shorebirds has been seen by many on here (TNBirds), but to spend a hot, stinky day at the Pits in Memphis looking at shorebirds was a slice of heaven for many of us here.

Time spent with Jeff was always a lot of fun, whether it be birding or just swapping stories. I've known Jeff since I was about 12, which is 31 years now. A number of those years I was out of birding. Ironically, stumbling across TNBirds back in 2000 and reading some of Jeff's posts and great birds at the time is part of what got me back into this great hobby. I'm very proud to say I've spent more days than I can count running the back roads of Memphis, Reelfoot, Kentucky Lake and farther afield with Jeff. In the process I learned more from him than all the many books in my library combined!

With Jeff's passing, I've now lost the 2 people I considered mentors; Don Manning a few years ago for the first part of my birding career, and now Jeff for the 2nd part. But the memories I have will last a lifetime!

Jeff, Don, and others we've lost are probably ticking off Great Auks and Labrador Ducks as we speak, or comparing field marks of Ivory-billed and Imperial Woodpeckers!

As Jeff always said, "Bird to the Horizon!"

Mike Todd
McKenzie, TN
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Jeff Wilson at the Pits, 7-27-08. Photo by Clyde Blum



Shorebird Workshop at the Pits in 2005
Photo by Mike Todd



AOS Meeting, Dauphin Island. 4-93
Photo by Richard Connors



2008 TOS Spring Meeting-Pits
Photo by Jay Walko