



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

August, 2015

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a thrill! As our TOS 100-Year Anniversary was winding down, I began to reflect on the events of the weekend. Not only did NTOS come through as the host chapter, so did members from all the chapters across the state. It was truly a team effort culminating in the banquet Saturday night. To hear Stanley Merritt, one of the sons of Dixon Merritt, describe his remembrances of some of the founding fathers; to meet the family of Albert Ganier's grandson; to make friends with Cleo Mayfield and her children and to do a little Saturday morning birding with two of Dr. Lee and Lois Herndon's sons: these are all treasured moments that I won't soon forget.

Then, after all the other events of the weekend, to be able to sit back and soak in the newest TOS treasure, Danny Shelton's illuminating documentary *A Century of Birds – The Tennessee Ornithological Society*, I truly began to understand and more fully appreciate the heritage of TOS. I heartily recommend this documentary to all of our members as it absolutely captures the essence of TOS and all the accomplishments of members who preceded us. I think it is safe to say I am as proud of our organization as ever, and I am truly looking forward to what we, as a group, can achieve in the years ahead.

So with that in mind, allow me to make a few announcements regarding some important upcoming events:

1. NTOS will host the fall TOS meeting October 2-4. An early bird deadline will be available for those wishing to purchase a TOS Centennial T-shirt. Look for registration information in this issue of *The Warbler*.
2. The TOS Windfall Committee (Dick Preston, Cyndi Routledge and I) is soliciting ideas on how to effectively distribute the \$200,000 gift that TVA is offering through TWRA to TOS. While we may not be able to satisfy everyone, the more ideas we have, the better. It is our understanding that TVA would like to have our "wish list" by the end of September 2015. So if you any ideas, large or small, don't be shy! Let us know. We want to utilize this generous gift to our fullest potential.
3. We are attempting to gather a list of volunteers who may be willing to participate in a coordinated effort to conduct a state-wide breeding bird survey via locally run forays. The forays would target counties close to the various chapters and would likely take place during one weekend each June. Since we are not likely to be able to duplicate the efforts of our membership during Chuck Nicholson's survey 20 years ago, we are hoping to replace that effort with forays which will be conducted over the next 15-20 years. If you are interested, please contact me, or one of your chapter's officers/directors. Remember, we are just gathering information regarding those birders potentially interested in participating. You are not committing to any specific weekend at this time.

It may be already be obvious, but in case you haven't noticed, I'm really excited about the future of TOS and the future of birding. I hope that you are too!

Cheers,
Steve Routledge

**FALL TOS MEETING
THE CELEBRATION CONTINUES!!
NASHVILLE
October 2-4, 2015**

The TOS Fall Meeting will be held in Nashville October 2-4, 2015. We will continue the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Society. The meeting will be headquartered at The Baymont Inn and Suites in Brentwood. The hotel is located at 111 Penn Warren Drive, Brentwood, TN 37027. Reservations can be made by 615-376-4666. Call before September 11, 2015 and mention TOS for the special rate of \$89.99 + tax. Complimentary breakfast is included with your room.

Our Field Trips will take us to some of the greater Nashville areas birded by the TOS Founding Fathers. We will have a "Bird(th)day" Celebration Saturday afternoon at the Warner Parks Visitor Center. Posters illustrating 100 years of TOS history and projects will be on display.

A registration reception will be held Friday, October 2, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Baymont Inn and Suites Meeting Room. Field trips will depart from the Baymont parking lot on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 7:15 am.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) _____

TOS Chapter _____

Email address _____

\$ _____ for _____ Registration - \$15.00 each

\$ _____ for _____ 100th Anniversary T-shirt - \$15.00 each

Please circle size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL

\$ _____ for _____ 100th Anniversary Coffee Mug - \$12.00 each

PLEASE NOTE – Orders for t-shirts and mugs MUST BE PLACED by September 8th in order to have them ready and available for the gathering.

Shipping is available for both items but please add \$5.00 per items to cover the cost of postage.

\$ _____ for _____ Shipping \$5.00 per item

Mail registration form and check to: Susan Hollyday, 211 Wauford Dr., Nashville 37211

..... **Spring Count Data Now Due**

If you have any spring count data and have not sent them to me, please do so at your earliest convenience! 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.

As always, TOS thanks the participants and compilers for their efforts in these surveys to help monitor our birdlife. These data are important and your efforts are much appreciated.

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

Federal Bird-Safe Building Legislation Proposed

In May, Congressmen Mike Quigley (D-IL) and Morgan Griffith (R-VA) introduced H.R. 2280, the Federal Bird-Safe Building Act. The bill is designed to prevent the deaths of millions of birds by calling for each public building constructed, acquired, or significantly altered by the federal government's General Services Administration (GSA) to incorporate – to the maximum extent possible – bird-safe building materials and design features. Many buildings constructed by GSA are already, in fact, bird friendly. The legislation, however, would require GSA to take similar actions on existing buildings, at least where practicable.

“This bill is a balanced approach, applying strictly to federal government buildings. It is simple, cost-neutral legislation that will protect millions of birds,” said Congressman Griffith. “The U.S. Federal Bird-Safe Building Act, a cost neutral bill, would help prevent these deaths by including bird-safe building materials and design features across federal buildings,” added Congressman Quigley.

The bill has been referred to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. You can find more specifics on the bill here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2280>

And get details from the American Bird Conservancy here: <http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/150513.html>

Collisions kill hundreds of millions of birds in the United States every year. Birds strike glass because they cannot see it as an obstacle. They fly into reflections of trees and sky, or attempt to fly through transparent glass walls.

In an encouraging side note, San Jose, California recently became the fourth California city (San Francisco, Oakland and Sunnyvale) to adopt bird-friendly building guidelines, similar to those in the proposed federal legislation.

The Birding Community E-bulletin (archives: <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin>)
The American Bird Conservancy (www.ABCbirds.org)

CONSERVATION POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing several new rules to improve protection of birds under the Migratory Bird Protection Act (MBTA). These rules will provide for additional safeguards and stiffer penalties for “incidental” take of birds at open waste oil pits, gas flares, power lines and communication towers. Estimates of the scope of bird deaths: wind turbines (573,000); communication towers (6.8 million); power lines (175 million); and glass (windows) (300 million to one billion). TOS has signed on to an American Bird Conservancy (ABC) letter to Interior Secretary Sally Jewell in support of the proposed rulemaking. More information is available on the American Bird Conservancy website.

The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management are proposing new regulations to reduce the deaths of birds and other wildlife due to open and often abandoned PVC pipes on public lands. The pipes are commonly used as claim markers and fencing. Cavity nesting birds, especially Western Bluebirds, see the open pipes as suitable nesting sites. Unfortunately, the pipes smooth interiors make it nearly impossible for the birds to back out. Estimates of bird deaths run into the tens of thousands. TOS has signed on to an ABC letter urging support for the new regulations. Public comments are due by July 27, 2015 and can be made through the Federal Register:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-05-26/pdf/2015-12666.pdf>

Feral and domestic cats kill an estimated 800 million to one billion birds annually. Deaths of small mammals, reptiles, amphibians and even insects, exceed even this staggering number. TOS has signed on to ABC letters urging support for their Cats Indoors programs.

A “Federal Safe-Bird Building Act” has been introduced in the U. S. House (H.R. 2280). The bill would require consideration of bird safety in the design of new federal buildings and consideration in any retro-fitting of existing buildings. This would include things like windows, lights and signs. Information is available at: <http://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2280>.

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission has approved spending \$8.825 million to purchase land or conservation easements at nine National Wildlife Refuges in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, North Carolina, Montana and Mississippi. A significant portion of this money comes from the sale of federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (duck stamp). Buy yours today.

Conservation Policy Committee Members:

Co-Chairs: Melinda Welton (Nashville) and Dick Preston (Memphis)

Chris Sloan (Nashville)

Cyndi Routledge (Nashville)

Chuck Nicholson (Knoxville)

Vickie Henderson (Knoxville)

ACTION ALERT

Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2015

Senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander have introduced the Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2015 (Act) in the U.S. Senate. This is the fourth time the Act has been proposed by Corker and Alexander. The Act would designate approximately 20,000 acres of the Cherokee National Forest in six east Tennessee counties (Carter, Polk, Monroe, Washington, Unicoi and Johnson) as wilderness areas. Approximately 11,000 acres would be added to existing wilderness areas: Joyce Kilmer Slickrock; Big Frog; Little Frog; Big Laurel Branch and Sampson Mountain Wilderness Areas. A little over 9,000 acres would establish the Upper Bald River Wilderness Area.

Designation as wilderness provides additional protection for critical watersheds and wildlife habitat, while still allowing for recreational opportunities. Best of all, it comes with no costs/expense for taxpayers. The Act enjoys strong support from a wide variety of groups and organizations, including sportsmen and conservationists.

So what can you do? Contact Senators Corker and Alexander and thank them for their efforts. Since there is currently no one leading an effort to introduce a similar bill in the U. S. House, consider contacting Tennessee 3rd District Representative Chuck Fleischmann and encourage him to do so.

Senator Alexander: <http://www.alexander.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email>

Senator Corker: <http://www.corker.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/emailme>

Representative Fleischmann: <https://www.fleischmann.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>

Submitted by Dick Preston

Migratory Bird Conservation Commission

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) was established by the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929. The commission is comprised of:

Chair – The Secretary of the Interior

Two U. S. Senators, one from each party

Two U. S. Representatives, one from each party

The Secretary of Agriculture

The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Secretary – The Chief of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Realty

The commission was created and authorized to consider and approve any area of land and/or water recommended by the Secretary of the Interior for purchase or rental by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and to fix the price or prices at which such areas may be purchased or rented. Funding comes from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. A major source of these funds comes from the sale of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (Duck Stamp). To date, over 5.6 million acres have been acquired for fee purchase, easement or lease and added to the National Wildlife Refuge System. The commission also considers the establishment of new National Wildlife refuges.

In 1989, the commission acquired the responsibility to approve funding under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. The Act provides for Federal funding to encourage partnerships to protect, enhance, restore and manage wetlands for migratory birds and other wildlife. To date, the commission has approved over 1,900 projects totaling one billion dollars.

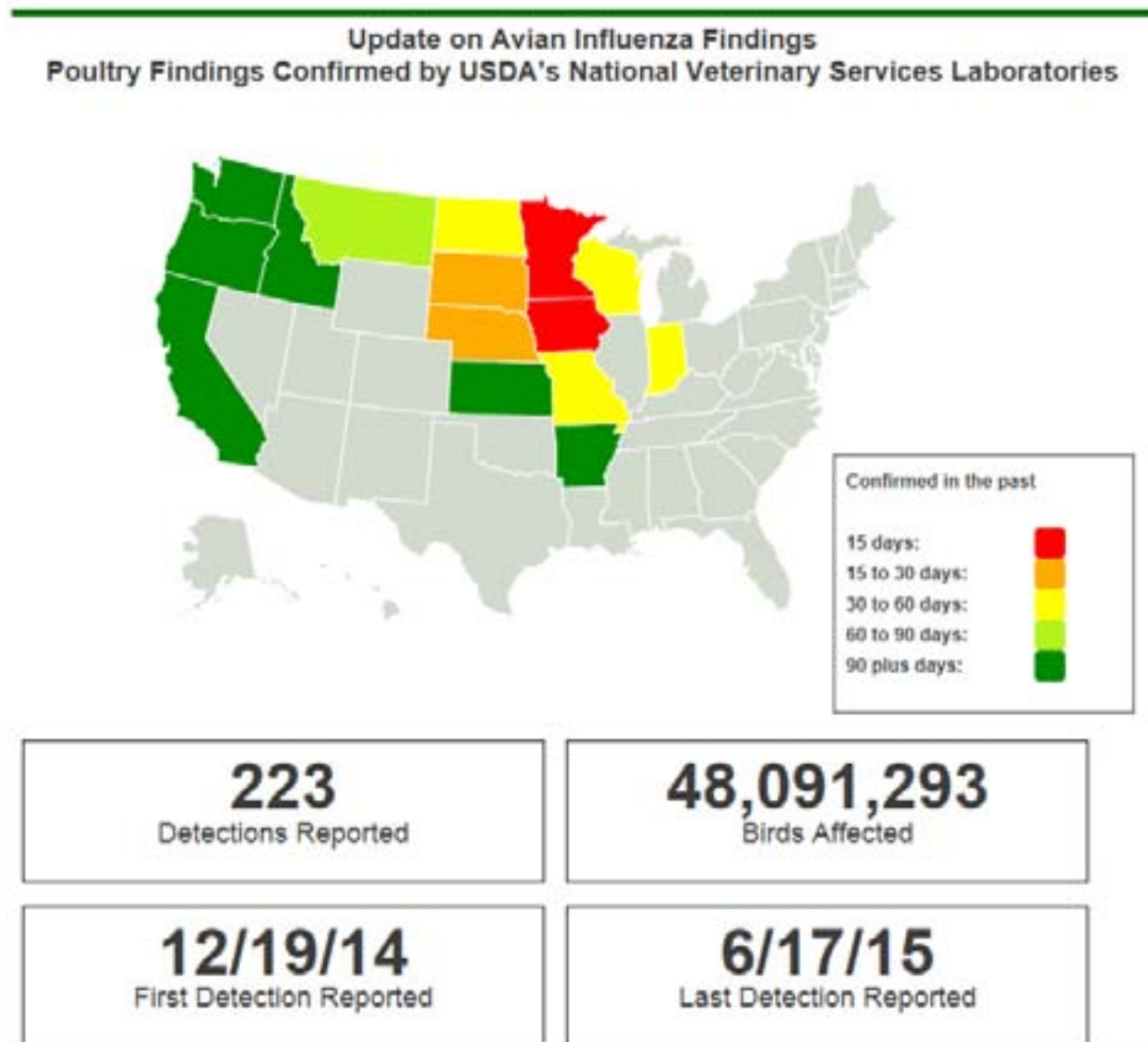
The information in this article comes mostly from the website of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Novel Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Viruses in Wild Birds of the United States

Beginning in December of 2014 there have been findings of infection with highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus in wild birds in the United States. The first findings were in the Pacific Flyway and have gradually spread to include the Central and Mississippi Flyway as well. While these viruses have not been found in passerine species, they have been found in raptors, ducks, geese and a Snowy Owl, and have transmitted to commercial poultry. Details on the findings can be found at the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service website [avian influenza update](#). An update on the current status of the outbreaks from the USDA website (dated June 19, 2015) is below.

A brief discussion of avian influenza and its symptoms can be found here http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/birdbiosecurity/AI/.

If you happen to come across what you think to be a bird infected with avian influenza, or the carcass of a dead bird do not pick it up and report your finding to 1-866-4-USDA-WS. To learn more about how you can help, visit <http://usda.gov/birdflu>.





Fifth Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival August 22nd!

by Vickie Henderson

Hummingbird breeding season is well underway with Ruby-throated males giving fast chase to females visiting nectar feeders in their territory. Other than feeder activity, most of what is happening during hummingbird nesting season remains a mystery to the average hummingbird enthusiast. David Pitts, Professor of Biology at UT Martin, has made it his business to find and monitor hummingbird nests in his yard in middle Tennessee, and his results are intriguing. His research is revealing previously unknown information about where Ruby-throated hummingbirds nest, how close together females build their nests, and how many seasons the nests remain in use.

Dr. Pitts will present his research on Saturday, August 22nd, at the fifth annual Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival, at Ijams Nature Center. Visitors to the festival will also see hummingbirds up-close with Master Bander Mark Armstrong, as he demonstrates how hummingbirds are captured, weighed, measured and banded before released to continue their migration journey.

August and September are busy migration months in east Tennessee when thousands of hummingbirds from northern breeding territories are moving south through our state on their way to wintering grounds in Central America and southern Mexico. In addition to banding, this year's festival will treat visitors to renowned speakers on nature topics, live animal demonstrations, guided nature walks and vendors selling food and drinks, locally made arts and crafts, bird feeders and supplies, garden items, and other nature-related items.

Naturalist Paul Schneeberger will present a slide show for children and lead them on a nature walk, and Steve McGaffin, Naturalist and Educator for the Knoxville Zoo, will lead a butterfly walk. Other nature walks will be held throughout the day. Lynne McCoy, a wildlife rehabilitator who takes in 600-800 birds and mammals per year, will bring a few of her mammals and birds of prey to meet festival visitors, and Dr. Louise Conrad, Ijams' veterinarian, will exhibit Ijams' resident rat snake.

Expert speakers will give programs from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm. T. David Pitts will speak on hummingbirds. David Unger, Professor of Biology, Maryville College, will speak on bears and other predators. Chris Ogle, with TWRA, will talk about the Golden Eagle Project in Tennessee. Stephen Lyn Bales, naturalist and author, will speak about the Secrets of our Backyard Birds.

The Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival will take place Saturday, August 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and has an admission of \$5.00. Children under six are admitted free. Hummingbird banding will take place from 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The festival is co-sponsored by the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society and Ijams Nature Center, and will be located at Ijams Nature Center, 2915 Island Home Ave., Knoxville, TN 37920 (865-577-4717).

For more information about the festival or to join the festivities as a volunteer, contact Billie Cantwell at 865-567-4273.

A Tiny Hummingbird and a Big Tanker Truck

by Vickie Henderson

A brand new Conestoga tanker trailer just released in June is sporting a tiny hummingbird on its “tail”. Conestoga Transport, a Knoxville based company that transports petroleum products around the country, has been putting wildlife images on the tails of its trailers for some time now, featuring both birds and mammals.

In December of 2014, Wallace Coffey of Bristol, TN, happened to see a trailer with three juvenile owls on the tail as it was rolling along TN Rt. 394 near the Bristol Motor Speedway in Sullivan County. When the driver pulled into a delivery stop, Wallace was surprised and delighted and followed him.

Wallace shouted up to the driver’s open window, “Just another person wanting to know about the owls on the back of your big rig.” The driver climbed down from the cab with a wide smile on his face, proud to share the artwork, saying, “I have people stop and ask about it everywhere. They love it.” He described the owner of the company as a “historian and a conscientious conservationist.”

Wallace sent an email describing this event to the Bristol list serve and followed it with an email to me suggesting that a hummingbird would make a great trailer tail. I agreed and, on June 19th, it happened! My hummingbird image was added to Conestoga’s newest trailer. It was stunning to see the trailer in person—a shiny silver tank with Conestoga in large red lettering on the side, and on its tail, a tiny juvenile hummingbird approaching the blossoms of a bright red Cardinal Flower.

This is what drivers will see if they happen to be on the road behind this tanker--a tiny hummingbird traveling all over the country, promoting wildlife and reminding everyone to take care of our environment!



Vickie Henderson standing beside the Conestoga Trailer that wears her hummingbird image.
Photo credit: Melissa Carter

Operation Migration 2015-2016

The Whooping Crane Migration (Eastern Partnership) is tasked with accepting, training and safely delivering Whooping Crane chicks allotted from the gene pool. Starting in early May 2015, Operation Migration (OM) received seven crane chicks. The seven were trained at Patuxent, MD under the experienced eye of Brooke Pennypacker and others. On July 1 the chicks were individually boxed in MD and air transported to Wisconsin, again by Windway Capital Airways (this is their 33rd flight for OM).

In Wisconsin the chicks were transported a short distance by road and released into their summer abode at White River Marsh Wildlife Refuge (WRMWR). Their training area was previously readied for their arrival by a busy group of volunteers. The landing strip was mowed (using a bigger and better riding mower), the wet and dry pen was fenced, the top net on the dry pen installed, the pump assembled at the well head for water use, feeders assembled and cleaned and the observation blind resurrected. All in a good work day. "The Beast" was up and running about a week later. At WRMWR the chicks will be trained to follow and fly with the ultra-light (UL) aircraft. Currently the crane chicks are too young to fly. Then in early October, weather permitting, the migration will start from Wisconsin to St. Marks Wildlife Refuge in Florida, 1100 miles away. The hope is for the chicks to arrive safely in Florida before Christmas 2015.

Meanwhile, in the wild marsh country in Wisconsin, aerial survey observations by pilot Ben Paulan reported unprecedented nest success among the breeding cranes. At least thirteen Whooping Crane nests were spotted with an equal number of wild chicks. Only time will tell how many survive, but the numbers are the best yet. More adult cranes are of breeding age plus the black flies of past years have diminished. These chick results would pave the way for the Eastern Migratory population to be self-containing in numbers. Truly a dream, but the intention of this noble project.

This project consumes a lot of money. This year's budget is \$240,000. In order to acquire funds OM requests donations from the public at the rate of \$200.00 per mile. So far Craniacs have contributed 16% of the budgeted amount. Kudos to the Lee & Lois Herndon Chapter of TOS for their pledge. Hopefully most TOS Chapters will contribute to this worthy cause. To pledge go to Operation Migration website <http://www.operationmigration.org/contribute.htm>. You too may become a Milemaker.

On another scale of fundraising, the International Crane Foundation (ICF), Baraboo, WI, has requested money to address the issue of Whooping Crane attrition through gunfire. They propose a long term education program for public awareness and recognition of Whooping Cranes. The new initiative is titled "Keeping Whooping Cranes Safe". The TOS board was made aware of this initiative at the centennial meeting in Nashville. The TOS treasurer agreed to accept contributions toward this cause, while the board decides how best to support the \$10,000 request for ICF.

At the most recent count there were 93 Whooping Cranes in the Eastern Partnership Flock. They will head south in October and winter around us. The hope is that you are lucky enough to see one or more of these rare birds of North America.

Bird On!

Tony King, Certified Craniac

865-988-6172

CHAPTER NEWS

THE FRED J. ALSOP, III CHAPTER of Tennessee Ornithological Society, Kingsport, Tennessee

On Tuesday, June 23rd, fifty members and guests gathered at the Food City's Press Room to enjoy an excellent presentation, "Trekking with a Birder" by Dr. Fred J. Alsop, III. This was followed by presentation of a proclamation from the Mayor of Kingsport to Dr. Alsop. The proclamation recognized the formation of the new chapter of the TOS in Kingsport and the fact that it is named in honor of Dr. Alsop for his contributions to ornithology, education and conservation.

Saturday, March 7th, a group of 12 birders and bird watchers met at a Kingsport coffee shop to discuss the need for having a local birding organization in Kingsport. This was followed by a formal gathering Tuesday, March 24th at the offices of Downtown Kingsport Association. Thirty-six people attended and there was a consensus that a new organization should formed.

The Kingsport chapter was started April 28th with members passing chartering bylaws and submitting dues to the state organization. Acting officers were elected: President, Bill Grigsby; Secretary, Kim Pruden 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. Later that week members Bill Grigsby, Rack Cross and Angela May attended the 100th anniversary meeting of the TOS where the chapter was officially welcomed by President Ron Hoff.

On Saturday, April 25th, a group from Birding Kingsport participated in a Healthy Kingsport activity by leading an urban bird walk in an area near the downtown section of the Kingsport Greenbelt on the Kingsport Birding Trail. In addition to normal urban birds, nesting Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were observed.

In May, Birding Kingsport participated in two events at Natural Tunnel State Park, Duffield, VA. On Saturday, May to lead a bird walk for students from the Emerson Waldorf School in Chapel Hill, NC. During the walk 40 species were observed. The walk was followed by a

presentation by Rick Phillips. On May 6th, members let the annual spring bird walk on their birding trail observing species.

On May 9th member assisted in the Elizabethton Spring Count covering the western Sullivan County area. 51 species were observed including nesting Eastern Kingbirds, Green Herons, and Great Blue Herons.

Upcoming activities include 3 bird walks for Kingsport's FunFest.

Bill Grigsby, President



NASHVILLE CHAPER - 2015 - 2017 Officers:

President – Cyndi Routledge

1st VP – Programs – Danny Shelton

2nd VP – Field trips – Tarcila Fox

Secretary – John Kell

Treasurer – Pam Lasley

Curator – Susan Hollyday

State Directors

2015-2017: Tony Lance, Barbara Harris, Rick Blanton

2014-2016: Amy Potter, Chloe Walker

Steve Routledge, President

CHAPTER NEWS

The 72nd consecutive Elizabethton Spring Bird Count was conducted on Saturday, May 9, by members and friends of the **LEE AND LOIS HERNDON CHAPTER** of Tennessee Ornithological Society. This year's count was held about two weeks later than usual, thus altering the occurrence or numbers of some species. Rick Knight, the long-time compiler for the count, noted that there were fewer wintering ducks and sparrows, but more of the late-arriving migrants, such as cuckoos, Empidonax flycatchers, orioles and certain warblers.

- A total of 43 observers in 10 parties covered Carter County and parts of adjacent Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington counties.
- A total of 150 species was tallied, slightly above the average of 147 over the last 30 years. The all-time high count was 161 species in 2005. A total of 150 species or more has been reached 10 of last 12 years.
- The numbers found of some species set new records. For instance, the 87 Great Blue Herons found on the count was the most ever tallied for a spring count, as were the 77 Black Vultures. Other birds setting new high-count numbers included Chuck-will's-widow (16), Acadian Flycatcher (48), Great Crested Flycatcher (23), Warbling Vireo (18), Orchard Oriole (42) and Baltimore Oriole (28).
- Semipalmated Plover made it onto this year's count for the first time since 1994. A Black Tern represented only the third occurrence of this species on this annual account.

The chapter has been invited by Ken Gough, chairman of the Carter County Parks and Recreation, to form a partnership to promote birding opportunities in Carter County. This is an effort still in the initial stages, but the club's membership has expressed excitement at the possibilities in such a partnership with county government. Long-time member Fred Alsop is spearheading negotiations for a Memorandum of Understanding between the chapter and the parks and recreation organization.

A new slate of officers has been elected for 2015-2016. Roy Knispel will serve as president. Bryan Stevens will be vice president. Kim Stroud and Charles Moore will continue as treasurer and secretary, respectively.

The chapter recently held two summer bird counts for Unicoi County and Carter County, respectively.

Long-time compiler Rick Knight said that while additional counts in spring, fall and at Christmas provide data on seasonal bird populations, summer is the most important season for the majority of species.

The 22nd annual Carter County summer count was held Saturday, June 13, with 16 observers in five parties. Participants found 116 species. This is slightly above the average of 113 species over the previous 21 years. Count totals during this span have ranged from 105 to 121 species.

Highlights included a female Common Merganser, which has been lingering since spring. It's also the first June record for this duck in Northeast Tennessee. Other highlights include a non-breeding Common Loon and four Double-crested Cormorants near a new nesting site at Watauga Lake, as well as three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, two Eurasian Collared-Doves and a single Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

This year marked only the second annual Unicoi County Summer Count, which was held Saturday, June 6, with 15 observers in five parties. Participants found 110 species, down one from last year's total of 111.

Highlights included a lingering Ring-necked Duck, two Ruffed Grouse, a Bald Eagle, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and 10 Least Flycatchers. Other noteworthy birds included two Warbling Vireos, three Common Ravens, six Red-breasted Nuthatches, three Winter Wrens, five Golden-crowned Kinglets, and two Hermit Thrushes.

Bryan Stevens, Newsletter Editor

CHAPTER NEWS

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER TOS was busy in the spring with monthly meetings, field trips and the Discover Birds Program.

In March, Dr. Todd Freeberg, of the UT Psychology Department gave a presentation entitled "Why is the chick-a-dee call of parids so complex?" Field trips were made to Kyker Bottoms, Forks of the River, Cades Cove and Maryville Greenway. Members were in favor of buying 6 binoculars which came with 6 for free for the Discover Birds program.

In April, KTOS member Ron Shrieves, Mac Post and Christine Hamilton, co-authors of "Urban Hikes in Knoxville and Knox County," presented their book. There was a field trip to Seven Islands State Birding Park which included bird banding by Mark Armstrong. Other trips were the annual weekly field trips to Sharp's Ridge for migratory birds led by Tony Headrick.

In May, Dr. Jennifer Jones, President and CEO of Tremont Institute in the Smoky Mountains, and Lee Bryant, field biologist at Tremont Institute, gave a presentation. Jen Jones presented "What's Happening at Tremont in 2015?" and Lee Bryant spoke about her research on Louisiana Waterthrushes. Volunteers presented the Discover Birds Program at Sevierville Primary School. Chuck Estes led a very interesting hike at Frozen Head State Park which focused mainly on vocal identification. There were also trips made to Beverly Park off Tazewell Pike and Cades Cove. Bird banding continued at Seven Islands State Birding Park.

In June we had our annual monthly meeting at Ijams, and new officers were introduced. Tom Howe will be taking over as President, Merikay Waldvogel will continue as Vice President, Carole Gobert will continue as Treasurer. Stephanie Durman will take over as secretary. Jay Sturner is the new field trip coordinator. Michael Plaster and Chris Welsh will serve as state directors for 2015-2017.

For the past 2 months Billie Cantwell and members of KTOS prepared for the 5th annual "Wonder of Hummingbirds" festival. See page 5 for full article. Check out the KTOS Wonder of Hummingbirds Facebook page for a schedule of speakers and activities. Or go to Ijams web page at ijams.org.

The Discover Birds program was presented to several schools this year and reached a total of 529 students.

Vickie Henderson, creator of the book, recently had one of her hummingbird photographs chosen to be added to back of a Conestoga Trailer. See page 8 for full story and picture. You can see Vickie and all of her incredible paintings at the Hummingbird Festival.

Jay Sturner, the new KTOS Field Trip Coordinator, introduced to the club impromptu bird walks entitled, "Jay Walks," starting in June (in addition to regular field trips). While offering spontaneity and variety to the calendar, these Jay Walks are mainly a result of Jay's hectic and unpredictable schedule as a stay-at-home dad. In other words, he is trying to take advantage of any opportunity to get out and bird! So far, Jay has led hikes to Alum Cave Trail in the Smoky Mountains, Seven Islands State Birding Park, William Hastie Natural Area, Forks of the River WMA, Forney Ridge Trail in the Smoky Mountains, and Eastridge Business Park. Jay is an extremely knowledgeable birder and brings a wealth of knowledge and humor to these hikes. In addition, he is a trained botanist, naturalist, writer and poet.

Karen Wilkinson, KTOS Secretary

MEMPHIS CHAPTER - At our annual March Potluck Allan Trently, Stewardship Ecologist with the Tennessee Natural Areas Program, presented an overview of the many birding and other wildlife watching opportunities at State Natural Areas in West Tennessee. In April USGS Biologist and Memphis Chapter member Dan Twedt discussed research to determine best practices for restoring bottomland hardwood along the Mississippi River for use by songbirds. Our final program of the season detailing the history of the Black-bellied Whistling Ducks nesting at Ensley Bottoms was presented by Dick Preston.

Seasonal field trips included TVA and Robco Lakes, Wall Doxey State Park in Holly Springs, Mississippi, the Collierville Boardwalk, Overton Park, Shelby Farms and the Greenline, and Shelby Forest. Our Traditional Spring Count covered 10 locations around Shelby County.

Chapter members continue to contribute time and talent at Strawberry Plains Audubon Center by conducting a wildlife photography workshop and leading Saturday bird walks.

CHAPTER NEWS

Memphis Chapter - Continued from page 12

A number of TOS members enjoyed the 3rd annual Hatchie BirdFest as both volunteers and participants. Walks and programs covered birds of prey, hummingbirds, birding by ear, butterflies, and wildflowers. In the keynote address "Bringing Back the Birds" Emily Jo (EJ) Williams, American Bird Conservancy's Director of North American Birds and Habitats, outlined actions which can be taken to eliminate the top threats to birds including loss of habitat on both breeding and wintering grounds, free-roaming cats and dogs, misuse of pesticides, window collisions, communication towers, and wind farms. She provided an overview of work done by the Conservancy and its numerous partners with species on the U.S. Watchlist of Birds of Conservation Concern. EJ highlighted exciting research on the Golden-winged Warbler conducted here in Tennessee. She concluded her presentation with a challenge to all of us to help halt extinctions.

We welcome Jared Nance as the new manager at Wapanocca N.W.R, Arkansas. Among Jared's first projects was to put together a Wapanocca Family Day to get local families outdoors together. Their event featured a fishing rodeo, a live animal exhibit, archery, interactive stations, a mobile aquarium and nature walks including a bird hike led by Dick Preston.

Chapter members Dr. Stephen Schoech and Dr. Sarah Kistler are moving to Hawaii. We wish them well! Dr. Schoech retired after 15 years as Ornithology Professor at U Memphis. Over the years he and his students have presented for us numerous programs. Their research at Archbold Biological Station with the Florida Scrub Jay has provided considerable insight into reproductive physiology and behavior.

Charlie Rollins of Bartlett, member since 1975, has passed away. Charlie was a business executive and avid gardener and birder. We extend sympathy to his wife Sue, also a TOS member.

Congratulations to our newly elected officers: Kate Friedman, President and Georges McNeil, Vice President. Please check our website in September for a list of next year's speakers and field trip opportunities birdmemphis.org

Gaynell Perry, President

The **STEPHEN M. RUSSELL CHAPTER** (Bristol Bird Club) has had a busy and interesting spring of birding thanks to great trips planned by member, John Moyle. These club field trips included a morning of birding at Steele Creek Park in Bristol, Tennessee, and another at Warrior's Path State Park in Kingsport. The next was a trip to Rogersville in Hawkins County where we birded several locations and then were treated to a delicious lunch at the home of our hosts Susan and Mike Hubley on John Sevier Lake. In May we had three club birding trips. The first was to Winged Deer Park in Johnson City, TN. The next was to Seven Island State Birding Park along the French Broad River. The third was to Breaks Interstate Park on the border of Virginia and Kentucky. Even with some days of undesirable weather conditions we averaged nine participants and 38 species on these trips.

At the March meeting, members Brookie and Jean Potter presented a very interesting program on their trip to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Vice President Bill Grigsby gave a program in April which he called "More Birds...see more birds by building a better backyard habitat" in which he included information about an interactive website from Cornell University to help make a plan for your backyard. In May, Bill Grigsby and Wallace Coffey teamed up to report on the 100th Anniversary Celebration of TOS at the State Meeting at Montgomery State Park. They included a portion of the movie "A Century of Birds" from that meeting.

Our Annual Picnic was held Saturday, June 27, at Steele Creek Park at the Civitan Pavilion. There were twenty members present to enjoy good food, fellowship, and a mixture of sunshine and much needed rain. President, Lois Cox thanked the officers who have served with her and then introduced the new officers who were elected in May and took office at the end of the picnic. The officers for 2015-16 are:

President: Janice Martin

1st Vice President: Kevin Blaylock

2nd Vice President: Wallace Coffey

Treasurer: Nancy McPeak

Secretary: Faye Wagers

Lois Cox, President



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The deadline date for the December issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is October 31st. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

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