



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

April, 2016

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - SPRING 2016

Despite nasty weather conditions throughout most of Tennessee, the TOS Winter Meeting was another highly successful affair, thanks to a large contingent of KTOS members who were able to make the trip safely. A total of ninety-one species was observed including over 12,000 Sandhill Cranes and up to 9 Whooping Cranes. Thanks once again to Dwight Cooley for leading the Saturday field trip despite some early icy conditions. Also, although weather issues interfered, thanks to Damien Simbeck and Captain Steve for offering the weekend boat trips. Hopefully, we will be able to do that in the near future.

Speaking of the near future, our Annual Meeting will be held May 6-8 at Reelfoot Lake and hosted by the Memphis Chapter. This should provide wonderful opportunities to view the spring migrants. See details inside this issue of *The Warbler*.

By the way, have you noticed the fresh, crisp, new *Warbler* logo and heading? Thanks to Theresa Graham and Mindy Fawver for their efforts in this upgrade!

Also, in the slightly more distant future, the Buffalo River chapter is coordinating their efforts to host the fall meeting. Dates and details are yet to be determined, but this should provide an exciting new area to bird for many of us.

Thanks to Mary Zimmerman, we may have a contact person at the State Library and Archives to discuss a more centralized location to house our TOS memorabilia. Admittedly, I haven't had the opportunity to contact them, yet, but I hope to do so very soon. Keep your fingers crossed! Additionally, those of you who have TOS archives and items that you would like to remove from your basements, etc. please give me an estimate on the amount of space your collection occupies so we can discuss candidly with others the space we truly need. The Gold Star (so far) goes to Roy Knispel for being the first one to contact me with what he has so far. Thanks, Roy!

Finally, keep an eye to the sky. We have had several vagrants and rarities visit Tennessee this winter. The Black-legged Kittiwake and Little Gull at Pickwick, the Ash-throated Flycatchers in Clarksville and Chattanooga, the Black-chinned Hummingbird and Common Redpoll also here in Montgomery County, Rufous Hummingbirds in East and West Tennessee, Pacific and Red-throated Loons on various lakes, and the specialties Mark Greene has located in NW Tennessee including Townsend's Solitaire, European Goldfinch, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Snow Bunting among others. Although this is the April issue of *The Warbler*, the idea is the same. You never know what is out there until you look and when you do find something special; I promise you that it will make you smile!

Good Birding to One and All!!

Steve Routledge
President - TOS

TOS SPRING MEETING May 6 – 8, 2016

The Memphis chapter invites all TOS members to the Spring Meeting, to be held May 6, 7 and 8, 2016 at Reelfoot Lake State Park. Ellington Hall has been reserved for meeting registration and a Friday night reception, as well as committee meetings, board of directors' meeting and dinner on Saturday night.

TOS members who have not made reservations for lodging will find that Reelfoot Inn and Eagle's Nest are completely booked for the weekend. We have found one option in Tiptonville, and there are many options in Dyersburg! Below are just a few suggestions. All include complimentary breakfast. Dyersburg is a short 30 minute drive from Reelfoot Lake State Park.

Dragonfly Inn - \$88 per night

Address: 365 Sunkist Beach Road, Tiptonville, TN 38079

Phone: (731) 253-0206 or (731) 442-0750

Email: maryann@dragonflyinnreelfootlake.com

Owner Mary Ann Holt would love to get more birder business and has rooms currently available!

Hampton Inn Dyersburg - \$89 room rate

Address: 2750 Mall Loop Rd, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Phone: (731) 285-4778

Quality Inn - \$65 room rate

Address: 800 Silver Rd, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Phone: (731) 285-6951

Days Inn Dyersburg - \$59 room rate

Address: 2600 Lake Rd, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Phone: (731) 287-0888

Econo Lodge - \$55 room rate

Address: 815 Reelfoot Dr, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Phone: (731) 285-6954

Holiday Inn Express - \$109 room rate

Address: 822 Reelfoot Dr, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Phone: (731) 286-1021

Sleep Inns and Sleep - \$74 room rate

Address: 824 Reelfoot Dr, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Phone: (731) 287-0248

Camping at Reelfoot Lake State Park's south campground is another option. For more information visit their website at <http://tnstateparks.com/parks/campground/reelfoot-lake>.

Or if you like Airbnb rooms there are several available in the Dyersburg area. Here's a link to more information <http://tinyurl.com/dyersburg>.

If you would like you can always call Reelfoot Inn or Eagle’s Nest and ask to be put on a waiting list just in case they have any last minute cancellations.

Reelfoot Inn (731) 253-6845

Eagle’s Nest (731) 538-2143

Saturday night’s dinner will be catered by Blue Bank Fish House and Grill. Dinner cost is \$20 per adult and \$10 for children. For the Saturday evening dinner program we will learn all about the Greater Prairie Chicken restoration project in our sister state of Missouri from Wildlife Biologist Matt Hill.

Depending on the weather, Reelfoot State Park will offer canoe trips on Saturday morning and pontoon boat rides on Saturday afternoon. Cost is \$10 per person for each morning and afternoon option. This fee should be paid to Reelfoot State Park on the day of the trip.

Field trips on Saturday will depart from the state park visitor’s center and explore local hotspots including Walnut Log Road, the main unit of Black Bayou, the Phillipy pits area and Mississippi levee. Depending on water levels, Long Point and Lake Isom may be included. Field trips on Sunday will be contingent upon what we find on Saturday.

Registration information will also be available on the TOS website <http://www.tnbirds.org/>

For more information contact:

Kate Friedman, MTOS President

(901) 826-4615

Katef5269@gmail.com

TOS SPRING MEETING 2016 REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) _____

Address _____

TOS Chapter _____

\$ _____ for _____ Registration(s) @ \$20 each

\$ _____ for _____ Dinner Reservation(s) @ \$20 each

\$ _____ for _____ Child’s Dinner Reservation(s) @ \$10 each

\$ _____ Total Amount Enclosed. Please make check payable to MTOS.

Indicate if Interested In:	Canoe Trip Saturday Morning	Yes	No
	Pontoon Boat Ride Saturday Afternoon	Yes	No

Mail registration form and check to MTOS Treasurer: Barbara Bullock Pyles
 518 Forest Hill Irene Road S.
 Cordova, TN 38018-4832

2016 TOS FALL MEETING AND SYMPOSIUM

Lawrenceburg, September 30-October 2, 2016

The Buffalo River Chapter TOS will host this fall's meeting and symposium at David Crockett State Park near Lawrenceburg, TN. The meeting will be held Friday, September 30 through Sunday, October 2. Activities will include field trips on Saturday and Sunday mornings, the annual symposium and board of directors meeting. A pre-meeting boat trip on Wheeler Reservoir in north Alabama may also be scheduled for Friday afternoon.

Accommodations at the state park will include six cabins, held for TOS members (\$155.00 per night, 2 night minimum) and camping (\$8.00-primitive, \$20-water/electric per night). Cabins (2 bedrooms, 2 baths) sleep 8 people each (a bedroom with queen bed, a bedroom with two queen beds and a sleeper sofa). Additional information about the cabins can be obtained at <http://tnstateparks.com/parks/cabins/david-crockett> but reservations for the TOS weekend must be made by phone. Call the park, 931-762-9408, and ask for Donna. The cabins will be held for only TOS reservations until August 31.

Additional accommodations will be available at Americas Best Value Inn (866-239-2992), Richland Inn (931-762-0061) or Rodeway Inn (931-762-4448) in Lawrenceburg. This is the closing weekend of the local fair, so rooms may fill quickly. It is recommended that you book early to ensure availability.

Field Trips will include hikes in Davy Crockett State Park led by park rangers as well as trips to Laurel Hill Wildlife Management Area and Natchez Trace Parkway.

Registration will be held from 5:00-8:00 Friday evening at Pavilion 1 and will include a dessert social (eat dinner before you come, but save room for dessert!) hosted by Buffalo River TOS members. A do-it-yourself s'mores bar will be included at the pavilion fireplace. Registration fee will be \$15.00 per person. To pre-register, please send check, payable to Buffalo River Chapter TOS, with your mailing address, phone number, e-mail address and chapter affiliation (if applicable) to Royce Neidert, 207 Old Jackson Hwy. Loretto, TN 38469, wneidert@lorettotel.net.

For additional information, contact Don Simbeck, 424 Riddle Lane, Loretto, TN (931-629-4944 or don.simbeck@gmail.com).

~ PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS ~
THE TOS WINTER MEETING
WHEELER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
JANUARY 23-24, 2016



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATA DUE IMMEDIATELY

Christmas Bird Count Data is now due for final compilation. If you compiled a Christmas Bird Count (CBC) this past season, please send the data to me as soon as possible so I can finish up my compilation to be published in our journal, *The Migrant*. Please include the following effort data along with the species data:

- 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 bird-life. These data are important and your efforts are much appreciated.

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

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

The results from the Great Backyard Bird Count of 2016 are in. From February 12th through the 15th, birders around the world submitted 160,000 checklists, containing over 18 million individual birds of 5,643 species. The United States led the way, with over 130,000 checklists listing 664 species (India led the world with 772 species reported on 7,500 checklists). Among U. S. states, Tennessee ranked 17th with 2,800 checklists submitted, and 25th with 141 species reported. The top five Tennessee counties for species reported were: Shelby (96); Henry (94); Blount (93); Davidson (87) and Knox (86). The top five in checklists submitted: Knox (296); Shelby (280); Blount (259); Davidson (239) and Hamilton (122). Sadly, eight of our ninety-five counties failed to submit a single checklist. Better luck next year.

Among U.S. states, California (365), Texas (353), Florida (320), Arizona (279) and Washington (215) led the species count. California, Pennsylvania, New York, Florida and Texas were the top five states in the number of checklists submitted.

Numbers current as of press time.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Tennessee Ornithological Society supported the State of Tennessee's Lands Unsuitable for Mining Petition (LUM). The public comment period closed on February 26th. The Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE) will now prepare a final petition evaluation document (PED) and environmental impact statement (EIS). Public notice will be given once this has been accomplished, with the documents made available for public review, followed by a 30 day waiting period. At that point, a Record of Decision will be announced. To see a complete overview of the entire LUM process, simply type "Tennessee Lands Unsuitable for Mining Petition" into your search engine. Thanks to all of you who took the time to send in a comment.

President Steve Routledge added TOS as a signatory to the following group letters:

- 1) From the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) to Congress in support of House of Representative bill HR 4480: "The Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act of 2016." TOS is a member organization of ABC.
- 2) From a coalition of environmental groups, led by the National Wildlife Federation, urging President Obama to take steps to provide greater protection of public lands and wildlife with regard to energy development.
- 3) From a coalition of environmental groups, led by the Defenders of Wildlife, in opposition to the Sportsman's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) bill (H.R. 2406). This bill, if enacted, would significantly weaken the ability of U.S. agencies to combat the illegal trade in elephant ivory and prohibit the EPA from regulating lead in ammunition or fishing gear on federal lands. It would also significantly weaken provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), exempting U.S. agencies from conducting environmental impact studies in many cases where now required.

President Steve Routledge also sent letters to:

- 1) The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), requesting TVA to consider alternatives to closing and filling all of their fly ash retaining ponds. TOS believes that at least some of these ponds can be adapted and maintained to benefit wildlife, particularly migrating shorebirds and wintering waterfowl.
- 2) The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, opposing a permit which would allow a significant increase in affluent discharges into the Hatchie River. Increases in heavy metals and other pollutants would have a substantially adverse effect on water quality and aquatic species in the river system. Additionally, increased siltation would lead to more bank erosion. The combination of these effects would likely result in decreasing the dense shrub layer required for nesting of Swainson's Warblers and a decrease in aerial insects, a critical food source for a host of other birds. The permit was eventually denied.

Committee Members:

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

Chris Sloan (Nashville)

Chuck Nicholson (Knoxville)

Cyndi Routledge (Nashville)

Vickie Henderson (Knoxville)

CHAPTER NEWS

The **LEE AND LOIS HERNDON CHAPTER** of TOS, also known as the Elizabethton Bird Club, is putting the finishing touches on several projects, including new birding checklists for Carter County and Roan Mountain. The chapter is also drafting official bylaws for governing the chapter's activities.

The 73rd consecutive Elizabethton Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, Dec. 19, with 24 observers in six parties plus one feeder watcher. A total of 73 species was tallied, with an additional four count-week species. This is slightly above the recent 30-year average of 71.7 species. The all-time high for this CBC was 80 species in 2012. Long-time count compiler Rick Knight noted that some of the highlights from this year's Elizabethton CBC included five Blue-winged Teal, which represented only the fourth time this duck has been found for this count, as well as Northern Shoveler and Greater Scaup.

Other highlights included Bald Eagle, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Pipit and Palm Warbler. The 72 Chipping Sparrows found during the CBC represented the most individuals of this species ever tallied for this count. A few winter finches had also arrived in the area, based on the Purple Finch and Pine Siskins detected during the CBC.

The 62nd Roan Mountain Christmas Bird Count was held Sunday, Dec 20, with nine observers in two parties. A total of 52 species was tallied, which is above the recent 30-year average of 45.4 species. The all-time high was 55 species in 1987. Highlights included: Ruffed Grouse, 1; Peregrine Falcon, 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 24; Gray Catbird, 1; Chipping Sparrow, 4; Purple Finch, 2; and Pine Siskin, 282. The most numerous bird on the count was Pine Siskin, with a total of 282 individuals found, followed by Dark-eyed Junco, 172; American Crow, 93; and European Starling, 57.

Compared to the mild weather for most of December, cold temperatures moved in ahead of the dates when the counts for Elizabethton and Roan Mountain were held. As a result, near normal temperatures reigned on the days the counts were conducted. There was even about an inch of snow on top of Roan Mountain.

At the club's January meeting, several members were recognized for seeing more than 200 species of birds in the five-county membership area of the chapter. This

award, given annually, honors the contributions of the late Howard P. Langridge to the chapter and birding in Northeast Tennessee. Member Gary Wallace also delved into the bird specimens in the Milligan College collection to give a fascinating program on winter birds, such as hawks, owls, woodpeckers and waterfowl.

A spring trip to Colorado is planned and about 10 members have expressed an intent to take part on this trip, which will reunite the club with former members Jim and Darla Anderson, who recently moved to Colorado.

Bryan Stevens



Gary Wallace is shown with some waterfowl specimens from the Milligan College collection. Wallace, a biology professor at the college, opened the collection to the membership as part of a January program on winter birds such as hawks, woodpeckers, owls and waterfowl.

Photo provided by Bryan Stevens

CHAPTER NEWS

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge Trip...Christmas Bird Count...Long Hunter State Park...LaGuardo - Old Hickory Lake area...lebanonbirding.org. What do these all have in common?

JOHN SELLARS LEBANON CHAPTER TOS!

We enjoyed a nice Christmas Bird count with members and birders from adjacent counties to help. In January, we offered an additional trip to Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in addition to our state meeting. (Side note-we had this planned prior the announced state meeting but encouraged all to attend either meeting or both!). The Wheeler NWR trip is usually an annual outing in our group, so please consider joining us in years to come!

At our recent February meeting we birded Long Hunter State Park area and nearby prior to our meeting. We then viewed *A Century of Birds: The Tennessee Ornithological Society* and will finish viewing it at March's meeting following a search for waterfowl in Old Hickory area lake. We meet at Cedars of Lebanon State Park for the majority of our meetings.

Where might you find out what we are doing in case you can come or are interested? Our new website, lebanonbirding.org is a great informational site that helps you keep up with us and other events in the birding world!

Future Spring plans include helping with the annual Elsie Quarterman Wildflower Festival bird walk scheduled for the end of April / early May at Cedars of Lebanon and assisting to create a BIRD trail at the park. Come join us!

Melissa Turrentine, President



Photo by Gerri Tomerlin

Birding Kingsport, the **KINGSPORT TOS CHAPTER**

We must start our report with the sad news of the passing of Judith Roach on December 25th of last year. Judy, a native of Paducah, Kentucky, was a long-time member of the Tennessee Ornithological Society and most recently was one of the founding members of Birding Kingsport. Many of us have fond memories of birding with Judy in east Tennessee and on trips with the Bristol Bird Club and TOS. One of my early birding memories was looking for birds with her in Oklahoma on a church mission trip.

On a lighter note, in the last *Warbler* report, I failed to include the name of our Vice President of Activities, Gary Bailey. Gary is an avid hiker, naturalist, and birder and is doing a great job of getting out in the field leading our club on bird walks and field trips in Kingsport and east Tennessee. He and his wife, Betty, our club treasurer, are frequent visitors to Seven Islands State Birding Park and have recently returned from a trip to Africa.

Recent bird walks have focused on the locations of the Kingsport Birding Trail on the South Fork of the Holston River at Fort Patrick Henry Dam, the TVA Trail below the dam, and western sections of the Kingsport Greenbelt at the Boatyard, TWRA boat ramp, and the confluence with the North Fork of the Holston River. Field trips have been to the Erwin Linear Trail and to Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge. On an overnight trip we visited birding hotspots in the Chattanooga area such as Brainerd Levee and Lake Chickamauga as well as returning to Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge and the Cherokee Removal Memorial.

The Kingsport Christmas Bird Count was conducted Saturday, December 26th, 2015 with 20 participants, including a family from California. We found 75 species and 5840 birds. This is a lower number than normal because of the high temperature --- a record 74° and the high flow in the South Fork of the Holston River.

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.

Bill Grigsby, President

CHAPTER NEWS

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER TOS activities have not been affected by this year's winter weather. In fact, our chapter meetings have continued to draw larger than average audiences possibly due to our new webpage. This is quickly becoming the "go to" place online for KTOS meeting and field trip information as well as resource links to other birding organizations. All TOS members are encouraged to take a look. Go to www.knoxvillebirding.org.

Our chapter programs this past fall and winter have often come from our own members. Ron Hoff shared his trip to Jamaica with Dollyann which started out as a comedy of errors but resulted in a number of life birds, thank heavens! Mike Nelson, our own chapter's globetrotting international birding guide, created an incredible PowerPoint presentation recounting his adventures guiding and pursuing elusive birds. He works for Bird Asia and guides primarily in Southeast Asia.

In November, Danny Shelton travelled from Nashville, to share with us the background story of the making of his documentary "A Century of Birds." We particularly enjoyed learning about the origins of TOS and the people who made it happen.

In January, we turned the meeting over to our chapter's own photographers, of which there are many. Eleven photographers given just five minutes (more or less) took us to Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Arizona, Southern California, Maryland, Maine, Northern Ohio, Brazil, and, of course, Tennessee. It was quite a night. Look under Resources on our chapter webpage for links to some of the photographers and their work.

In February, Dr. David Buehler, UT Professor of Wildlife Biology, discussed his research on the declining Golden-winged Warblers throughout the eastern United States. To study them, he captured and fitted the birds with geolocators that continuously recorded daylight patterns. The birds have to be recaptured and the geocator removed for the data to be downloaded. Everyone was fascinated by his excellent presentation. The highlight of his research was his happenstance discovery that newly arrived males on Cross Mountain in Caryville, TN immediately left the breeding grounds when violent storms were approaching from west of the

Mississippi River. The birds returned to Florida and one even to Cuba then immediately returned after the storm passed—all within a few days.

The chapter has held regular field trips, including walks at Seven Islands State Birding Park, Cove Lake State Park, UT Plant Sciences Farm, The Cove at Concord Park, and the Kingston Lake Shore Park and Gupton Wetlands. In mid December, Chris Welsh led a group of five members on a five-day trip to Northern Virginia and Eastern Maryland, to see shore birds and migrating snow geese.

In January, with ice and snow preventing others in the state from travelling to the Winter TOS meeting at Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Decatur, Alabama, eighteen members of the Knoxville chapter made it. Good numbers of ducks, eagles, and Sandhill Cranes were present as well as a few Whooping Cranes.

Finally, we want to invite everyone to our annual Wonder of Hummingbird Festival at Ijams Nature Center in South Knoxville on Saturday, August 20. Speakers, banding activities, bird walks, children's activities and vendors are all planned for the day's activities. Save the date!

Merikay Waldvogel, KTOS Vice President



KTOS members Jerry Ledbetter, John Hurley, Toby Koosman and Robin Nichols at Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

Photography: Merikay Waldvogel

CHAPTER NEWS

The **MEMPHIS CHAPTER** of TOS has a hard working committee organizing details for the TOS State Meeting at Reelfoot Lake State Park the weekend of May 6-8, 2016. We can't say it often enough, but if you plan to attend, make hotel reservations at Reelfoot Inn as soon as possible, as they are booking quickly. The weekend will include hikes to several birding hot-spots, canoe and pontoon boat excursions, informative meetings, delicious meals, door prizes and an exciting speaker. You won't want to miss it!

Over the past few months MTOS members have enjoyed several hikes to birding destinations such as Collierville Boardwalk, Wapanocca Wildlife Refuge, T.O. Fuller State Park, and Strawberry Plains Audubon Center. Members also covered several locations for the Christmas Bird Count. In January, several members traveled to the Wolf River Management Area for an afternoon-evening hike. Highlights of the trip included 6 American Woodcocks and a Short-eared Owl.

Our chapter has had some wonderful speakers over the past few months. Than J. Boves PhD, Professor of Avian Ecology at Arkansas State University gave an informative talk on the life cycle of the Cerulean Warbler. Jared Nance spoke on the history and future of the Wapanocca and Big Lake National Wildlife Refuges. MTOS member David Hill presented beautiful photos of birds and wildlife from his travels to Gaspé Peninsula in Canada, and Kristen Lamberson, Native Plant Specialist at Strawberry Plains Audubon Center, talked about creating a bird habitat in your backyard. We are looking forward to our annual pot-luck banquet in March, as John and Dale Stokes will be bringing a variety of birds of prey.

Kate Friedman, MTOS President

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)
e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net

The **NASHVILLE CHAPTER** of TOS welcomed 2016 and the start of the "next" 100 years with a few new changes. As reported in the last *Warbler* we have gone "electronic". The debut publication of the quarterly newsletter, *The NewsHawk*, was released in January. As with anything new there will be a tweak or two but for the most part it was a very successful launch. Big thanks to our new media coordinator, Rick Blanton for all his hard work.

2016 also will find NTOS trying out a "split" meeting location. We will be meeting on our traditional 3rd Thursday of the month at Radnor Lake from January thru August and then meeting at Warner Park Nature Center September thru December. Both locations offer unique settings and opportunities, and it's our hope that our membership will continue to grow by offering our meetings in this fashion.

Our two Christmas bird counts were held on December 19th and the Lake Counts on January 1st. The December 19th count saw the lowest species totals since 2006 while the Lake Counts were about average. The warmer temperatures both in Tennessee and up north kept waterfowl counts low as there was no need for the ducks to venture down to find "open water". Many thanks to all who participated in these annual Christmas counts. We can't do it without you.

Spring is right around the corner according to the famous groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, which means our annual Spring Wednesday morning Radnor Lake Walks will be here before we know it. Dates this year are April 20 & 27 and May 4 & 11. Each walk will begin at 7:30 in the Visitor's Center Parking lot at Radnor Lake State Park. Many thanks to Melinda Welton, Richard Connors, Kevin Bowden and Josh Stevenson for volunteering to lead these spring walks. If you're in the area please join us for an hour or all morning, as you never know what will show up at Radnor Lake during migration.

We look forward to seeing everyone in May at the Annual Spring TOS meeting at Reelfoot Lake!

As always, good birding!
Cyndi Routledge, NTOS President

Whooping Crane Outreach Continues Thanks to Grant from Tennessee Ornithological Society

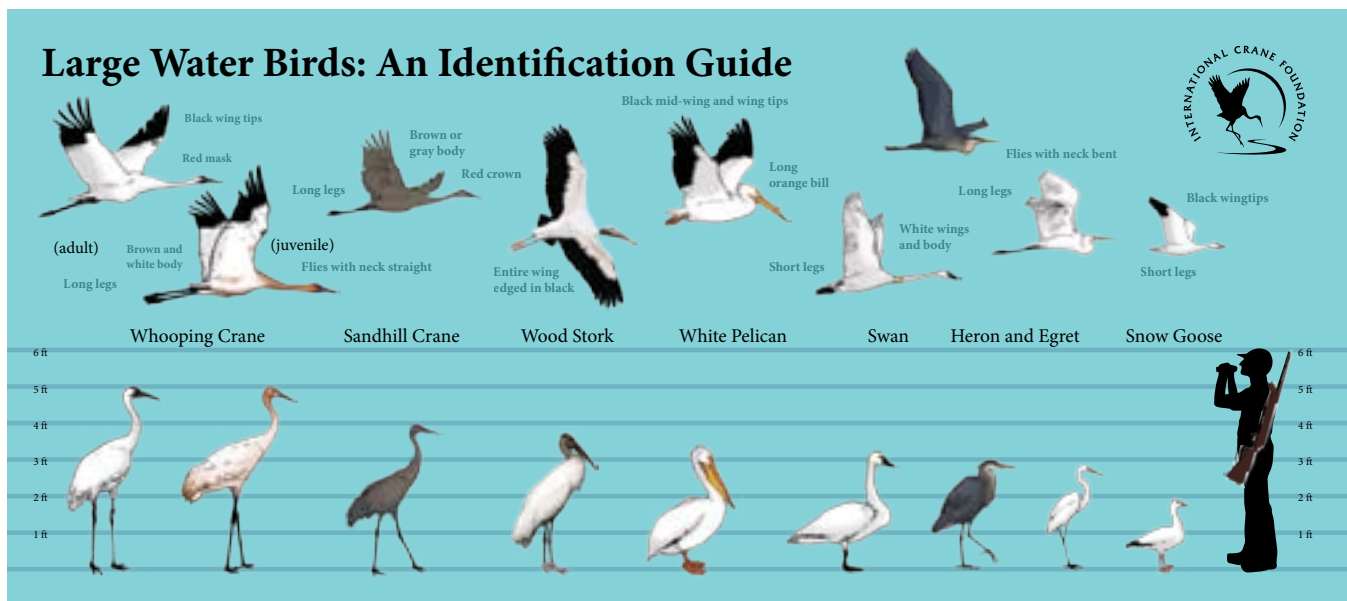
In October I was lucky enough to attend the Tennessee Ornithological Society's fall meeting in Nashville. I had a wonderful time meeting Tennessee birders who care about conservation, and who presented me with a check for the International Crane Foundation's Keeping Whooping Cranes Safe program. We have been using funding from TOS and from other donors and grant sources to mount a pride campaign for Whooping Cranes. Our first pilot community where we are experimenting with different ways to raise awareness has been in northern Alabama.

In November of 2015, ICF launched a Whooping Crane pride campaign centered on Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Decatur Alabama, where many TOS members have been to see Whooping Cranes during the winter time. We have started a pledge campaign; created a Whooping Crane mascot that attends outreach events; posted billboards; produced a 30 second radio and television public service announcement with a local spokesperson; conducted radio, television and newspaper interviews; worked with partners to increase K-12 and public outreach programs; tabled at gun shows and other local events; conducted workshops on Whooping Crane outreach for environmental educators and teachers; provided materials for hunter education classrooms; added ten new Whooping Crane education trunks to schools, museums and other outreach facilities; and helped grow the Festival of the Cranes at Wheeler NWR to over 3,000 participants. We even have a beer made by a local brewery with messaging about Whooping Cranes in the local community on the can. We have used TOS funding for many parts of this campaign, including to pay for part of a run of 10,000 large water bird ID guides, which we have given to gun show participants, outdoor stores, hunting permit offices, state parks and other locations. All of these cards have been distributed, and we have found funding for a second run.

We have received a lot of positive feedback from locals, many of whom have been truly surprised to hear that Whooping Cranes are wintering in Alabama. It has been so amazing to see people at Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge enjoying their first ever sightings of Whooping Cranes. The excitement in their voices as they observe these beautiful birds truly makes my heart soar.

We are working with Auburn University to evaluate the impact of our campaign and the effectiveness of the various activities. What can you do now to help Whooping Cranes? Please sign the pledge to protect Whooping Cranes, available at savingcranes.org. The most important part of this pledge is sharing it with your friends and family—together we can create communities that are guardians and stewards of these beautiful birds.

Lizzie Condon, Keeping Whooping Cranes Safe Coordinator, International Crane Foundation



OPERATION MIGRATION

The 2015-2015 Operation Migration flight ended on February 6 with the safe arrival of 6 young Whooping Cranes at St. Marks Wildlife Refuge in Florida. Their 1100 mile ultra-light led trip from Wisconsin took 115 days to complete, and was one of the most harrowing of the 15 aircraft assisted migrations to take place. Many days were lost to unfavorable winds, bad (at times dangerous) weather and uncooperative chicks.

In the midst of this Operation Migration learned this would be the final flight of ultra-light led migration of Whooping Cranes. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that under their adaptive management strategy they have gained enough information from the flights, and it is time to adjust their actions.

Despite their differences with USFW, Operation Migration continues to help the partnership look to the future as we try to mitigate the lack of natural reproductive success of Whooping Cranes within the Eastern Migratory Population.

Now is an appropriate time to thank Operation Migration, craniacs, supporters, volunteers, migration stopover hosts and extended family and friends for unwavering support and encouragement provided over the last 15 years. What an amazing adventure it was.

Finally, OM's budget was \$240,000; supporters raised this plus more. Stay tuned for how we may help as OM continues to champion the cause for Whooping Cranes.

Tony King, Certified Craniac
865-988-6172

WHAT IS THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT OF 1918?

Unlike the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 is little known to the general public. So what is it?

First enacted in 1916, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (Act) makes it illegal for anyone to take, possess, import, export, transport, sell, purchase, barter or offer for sale, purchase or barter, any migratory bird or the parts, nests or eggs of such bird except under the terms of a valid permit issued pursuant to Federal regulations. The migratory species protected by the Act are listed in 50 CFR 10.13. and include over 800 species in the United States.

The Act implements conventions between the United States and four countries (Canada, Mexico, Japan and Russia) for the protection of migratory birds.

In accordance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004, included are all species native to the United States or its territories, which are those that occur as a result of natural biological or ecological processes. Not included are nonnative species whose occurrences in the United States are solely the result of intentional or unintentional human-assisted introductions.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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 \$350 to \$750 to promote the study of birds in Tennessee through research, conservation, and environmental education.

The Fund was established in 2002 and to date has given out over \$7,000 in awards to support such diverse projects as research into the reproductive success and natal dispersal of American Kestrels; the study of the relationships between Cerulean Warblers and timber harvest; investigation of the potential impacts of hemlock decline on nesting Louisiana Waterthrushes in the Walker Valley; construction of an observation platform at Kyker Bottoms and TWRA's Golden Eagle tracking project. Awards have gone to the Foothills Land Conservancy to acquire wetlands and establish conservation easements and to Ijams Nature Center and the Clinch River Raptor Center for their educational and rehabilitative work with injured raptors. No matter how small or how extensive the project, 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 June 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.

BIRD-SMART GLASS PRODUCTS

Collisions with buildings kill hundreds of millions of birds every year in the United States, but simple solutions are available. These can include patterned glass, window films and tapes, and external screens, netting and louvers.

The American Bird Conservancy's (ABC) new Bird-Smart Glass program makes it easy for homeowners and architects to discover effective solutions to stop birds from dying at windows. These choices fit every style, budget, and climate. Although no material can be guaranteed to eliminate all collisions, these products are among the best available.

The materials listed on the ABC website have all been documented to reduce collisions, and the list continues to grow as more manufacturers of glass, window films, and external screening systems create new products or document the effectiveness of existing products.

Visit abcbirds.org and search "bird-smart glass" to learn more.

Editors note: TOS is a member of The American Bird Conservancy

Trails and Trilliums 2016

Celebrating the Natural Wonder of the South Cumberland Plateau

The 13th annual Trails and Trilliums Festival will be held April 15–17 at the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly — easily the most popular event of the year for the Friends of South Cumberland State Park.

The weekend opens Friday with hikes to Shakerag Hollow and Lost Cove followed in the evening by the Trails and Trilliums Children’s Choir Concert and Student Art Exhibition in the Assembly Auditorium. A casual reception, Wine and Wildflowers, will be held next door at Harton Hall with the opportunity to view the works of guest artists participating in ART for the PARK. Birders take special note of artists Sue McGrew and Lendon Noe.



Sue McGrew



Lendon Noe

On Saturday both casual and dedicated hikers can explore the natural wonder of the South Cumberland Plateau by signing up for any of 11 guided hikes. Vans will carry participants to Lost Cove, Fiery Gizzard, Foster Falls, Grundy Lakes, and Hawkins Cove, where the soon-to-be-developed Mountain Goat Trail borders a South Cumberland State Park Natural Area.



At the Assembly, outdoor lovers of all ages can enjoy programs that include ‘Wings to Soar’ - guaranteed to thrill the bejeebers out of the audience giving a whole new meaning to the phrase ‘Fly By.’

ART for the PARK, an art and vendor sale, continues through the weekend, with many nature themed works that showcase the integration of forest beauty into our lives. Overhill Gardens will have a broad variety of native plants for gardeners recreating forest enchantment at their homes. Saturday night crescendos into the always fabulous ART for the PARK gala with dinner, art, and music benefitting Friends of the South Cumberland.

The fun continues through Sunday with hikes and an opportunity to learn about and build Fairy Houses. Artists, vendors, food and music will be available throughout the day.

The Weekend’s grand finale is the Cumberland Wild Hike into History program. An all star panel of historians, naturalists and local experts will discuss the amazing history of the South Cumberland including Native Americans, pioneers, sawmills, coal mines, and old growth forests.

Registration is open online at www.Trailsandtrilliums.org.



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