

The Chattanooga Chat

The newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society





The
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 of the
 Tennessee
 Ornithological Society

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THE CHATTANOOGA CHAT

The *Chattanooga Chat* is published monthly by the Chattanooga Chapter for the Tennessee Ornithological Society.

Field Trip Report: Monteague Park



A few participants from the Monteague Park field trip. From R to L, Luke Thompson, Jeffrey Schaarschmidt, John Diener, Lizzie Diener, and Bob. Not pictured, Gary Brunvolle.

A small group of birders attended the Monteague Park field trip, lead by Luke Thompson.

What started out as a very overcast day with little bird activity turned into a very birdy day once the sun broke through.

In total 40 species were observed, including a Peregrine Falcon flying over with a Rock Pigeon in its talons.

Other notable species were a flyover American Pipit and a Merlin, as well as several White-crowned and Vesper Sparrows.

Thanks to Luke Thompson for agreeing to lead this field trip.

The full eBird checklist can be found here: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S97215720>

Michael Todd Sets New Tennessee Life List Record

On October 25, 2021, Michael Todd followed a report and observed Tennessee's fifth state record for a Limpkin.

That Limpkin was Todd's 389th species observed in Tennessee, setting a new state record.

Todd's record breaks the former record set by legendary Tennessee birder Jeff "the Old Coot" Wilson. Wilson had



Michael Todd holds the record at 389 species of birds observed in Tennessee

observed 388 species in Tennessee before he passed away in 2013.

However, Todd's record may not last long as Tennessee birder Mark Greene is only a single bird behind at 388.

There are several other birders who are within a few species of Todd and Greene, but they are harder to track as their data is not posted on eBird.

ON THE COVER: A Ruffed Grouse observed during the Chattanooga Birding Club's May field trip to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Photo by Jeffrey Schaarschmidt

Winter Migration Forecast For Finches

Each year **The Finch Research Network (FRN)** produces a Winter Finch Forecast. Their forecast is based on seed production in the Canadian boreal forest.

Their forecast predicts southward migration of target species for all of North America. This article discusses the forecasted migration only as it relates to the eastern United States and Tennessee.

To check out the full forecast, visit FRNs website by following the link at the end of this article.

Based on FRN's forecast Tennessee will not see any large movements of finch species, with the exception of Evening Grosbeaks and possibly Type 1 Red Crossbills. A breakdown of the Finch Forecast, as it relates to Tennessee is as follows:

Pine Grosbeaks: Pine Grosbeaks are expected to keep closer to home due to the excellent crop of mountain ash berries.

White-winged Crossbills: Poor cone crops have been reported in Canada. However, White-winged Crossbills are not expected to have any significant movement south

of New York and New England.

Red Crossbills: Based on the good spruce and hemlock crops most Red Crossbills species are expected to remain close to their normal ranges. However, some southern movement of Type



A Budworm outbreak has resulted in poor spruce seed production, which will likely result in an Evening Grosbeak irruption similar to last winter's.

1 Red Crossbills into the Appalachians is expected. While the report notes southern movement into the

Identifying Red Crossbills

It is nearly impossible to distinguish the different types of Red Crossbills by sight. Matt Young (info@finchnetwork.org) will identify types if you email him your audio recordings or upload audio to an eBird checklist.

Appalachians, it doesn't state how far south Type 1 are expected to travel. As such, it appears Tennessee will not see substantial Type 1 Red Crossbill movement.

Purple Finches: This species appears to have benefited from abundant food sources during breeding seasons and observers were reporting "a crazy number of Purple Finches" in Mid-August. Most of these birds are expected to leave Canada, but with abundant food sources it is questionable how far south they will migrate this winter.

Common & Hoary Redpolls: Redpolls will likely stay in the north given the average to good seed crops on birches, alders, and spruce.

Pine Siskin: With excellent spruce, hemlock and eastern white cedar crops in southeastern Canada and Northeastern U.S. it is likely that we will see fewer Pine Siskins in Tennessee than past winters.

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Tennessee Rare Bird Reports

Following is a list of rare birds observed in Tennessee in the preceding month.

A **Black-legged Kittiwake** was observed at Morris Ferry Dock on Woods Reservoir on November 22.

Three **Surf Scoter** were located by Alan Troyer on the Fowler Road irrigation pond in Lincoln County, on November 22.

A **Black-legged Kittiwake** was observed at Pickwick Dam in Hardin County, on November 8.

A **Kumlein's Iceland Gull** was observed on the up-river side of Pickwick Dam in Hardin County, on November 8.

A **Prairie Falcon** was photographed in Bedford County, on November 5. After a lot of searching the bird was relocated on November 6, but has not been relocated since.

The **Limpkin** that was discovered at Duck River Unit, in Humphrey's County, on October 25, continued through November 8.

Winter Migration Forecast, Continued from Page 3

Evening Grosbeaks: Spruce trees have experienced major Budworm outbreaks that will restrict food sources, and it is likely that Tennessee will see an irruption similar to last winter's.

NON-FINCH SPECIES

The Winter Finch Research Network also predicts potential irruptions for three passerines.



Blue Jays: There will be a moderate flight along the Lake Ontario and Erie, due to seed production. However, it is unlikely to result in any notable increase in Blue Jays in Tennessee.

Red-breasted Nuthatches: There appears to be a small "echo flight" of this species, however most will remain in northeast.

Bohemian Waxwings: Food supplies are considered good to excellent. However, given Tennessee has only a single record of this species, it is extremely unlikely that Tennessee will see this species this winter.

You can check out the forecast for the entire country on the Finch Research Network's website:

www.finchnetwork.org

Events

December 9th at 6:00 p.m. - **Club Meeting and Program** - Held in the event hall at Audubon Acres, 900 N Sanctuary Rd, Chattanooga, TN 37421. Barbara Johnson will present the program: The Ordinary, Extraordinary Chimney Swift. The program will include details of the club's plan to promote community awareness and conservation of the Chimney Swift population, which has declined by 70% in recent decades. Program includes chimney swift natural history, ways we can help them, and where you can watch hundreds of migrating birds funnel into Chattanooga chimneys (plus videos!).

December 21- Nickajack Christmas Bird Count will take place will be held on **December 21**. If you would like to participate, please call or text Bruce Dralle at (404) 213-1019.

December 18th - Chattanooga Christmas Bird Count - If you would like to participate, please call or text Kevin Calhoon at (423) 785-4070.

January 1 - Hiwassee Christmas Bird Count - If you would like to participate, please call or text Kevin Calhoon at (423) 785-4070.

Do you want to lead a fieldtrip?

The Club is looking for members to lead field trips. If you would like to lead a field trip in the upcoming months, please contact our Vice President of Field Trips, Gary Brumvoll, at gbrunvoll@epbfi.com. Gary will make sure your event is added to our online calendar and promoted future issues of the newsletter.

Chattanooga Chapter of Tennessee Ornithological Society

Membership Form

You can also join online on our website: <http://chattanoogatos.org/joining-or-renewing-as-a-member/>

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

(Please ensure letters and numbers are unambiguous; use upper case letters if necessary)

Mobile phone number: () _____ - _____

Annual Dues:

Individual Membership: \$28.00

Family Membership: \$32.00

Student Membership: \$15.00

State Sustaining Membership: \$40.00

State Life Membership: \$460.00 (local dues of \$10.00 still payable each year)

FYI: \$10.00 of your dues is retained at the local chapter, and the rest goes to the state organization. The extra contribution in the State Sustaining Membership goes to the state, but you may also designate an additional contribution for either the local chapter or the state organization. All dues, donations, gifts, and bequests are tax deductible under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

You can send a check for dues at the address below. *Make checks payable to "TOS".*

Fran Hiestand, CTOS Treasurer
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