

# Tennessee Ornithological Society Memphis Chapter

<http://birdmemphis.org>

January 2025

## DECEMBER PROGRAM

Chapter member Allen Sparks presented *Elements of Compelling Wildlife Images* at the December meeting. Allen has been teaching photography classes for 12 years and is especially interested in photographing animal behavior. He often sits for hours waiting to get the right shot of a particular species. He observes animal behavior and knows where to go to get images of a particular species. He plans where and when to photograph with certain elements of composition in mind.

Some of the elements Allen recommends for more interesting images include complimentary backgrounds, reflections, early or late light, environmental elements, young animals, interactions, and flight. His images often tell a story. Allen showed many beautiful images to illustrate the use of these elements. His intentional selection of a backgrounds was quite impressive. He mentioned seeing a field of sunflowers and predicting the presence of dickcissels. He set out to get an image of a dickcissel complemented by a diffuse yellow background created by out-of-focus flowers. He showed several images of herons against a green water background that he selected to complement the bird's color or provide more subtle lighting. He also showed images with interesting environmental elements to complement a bird such as a heron against a background of colorful reeds and a wild turkey displaying in a field of small white flowers. He showed images of fox kits taken in a field behind his home. He said he waited to photograph the foxes until the field was mowed knowing that the shorter grass was needed to allow good images of the young foxes.

Allen noted that capturing reflections of birds in water requires focusing on the bird not on the reflection and being careful to include all the reflection. He uses specialized techniques such as a macro lens and fill flash

to get the true colors of dragonfly wings. He often uses eye-tracking photographic equipment to keep birds in focus in flight. He especially likes to capture birds banking in flight. He showed a great image of a banking Roseate Spoonbill with all the feathers of both wings and the tail fully displayed. Allen uses specialized camera equipment but we all can improve our images by incorporating some of these elements.



-Margaret Jefferson

# ..... Meeting Highlights .....

Treasurer Barbara Pyles reminded us to report any hummingbirds seen from Nov. 15 to March 15 to Cyndi Routledge.

Chapter President Liz Hall announced that Lichterman Nature Center would like to have TOS represented at their Birds and Seeds event. Volunteers are needed to man a table at the event answering questions about TOS and birds. The Chapter has a tabletop display and a membership brochure that can be used. The Birds and Seeds event will be Jan. 27, from 10 am to 3 pm. Several members could share the duties. Please let Liz Hall ([elizabeth.l.alford@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.l.alford@gmail.com)) know if you are interested.

## **Conservation**

Dick Preston noted that during its fall banding sessions Delta Wind Birds has now captured a total of 125 shorebirds, and placed 54 Motus radio tags, as well as 15 Druid Bluetooth tags that give continuous GPS location data, tracking bird movements to the nearest 10 meters. TOS and individual members have supported these efforts.

Van Harris noted two conservation success stories. The status of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker has been upgraded from endangered to threatened. The Guam Kingfisher that almost went extinct due to an introduced tree snake has been kept alive in captive breeding programs and was recently released on predator-free Palmyra Atoll.

## **Notable sightings**

Baltimore Oriole (1) Dec. 1, bird feeder, Millington, TN

Says Phoebe (1) Dec. 14, Shelby Farms Park, Raptor Center area

Gray Catbird (1) Dec. 14, Robco Lake/Coro Lake

Vermilion Flycatcher (1) Dec. 18, Robbins-Halle Nature Preserve, Collierville, TN

-Margaret Jefferson



# BIRDS & SEEDS

AT LICHTERMAN  
NATURE CENTER

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH  
10 AM - 3 PM

Seed swap and giveaway, plant sales,  
birding and gardening tips, demos,  
presentations and activities!



5992 QUINCE RD, MEMPHIS, TN 38119



## 2025 DUES ARE DUE

Dues payable by PayPal at  
[www.birdmemphis.org](http://www.birdmemphis.org) or by check,  
made out to MTOS.

Members who joined September 1, 2024 or  
later do not owe 2025 dues. See the  
newsletter for MTOS dues category amounts  
and a mailing address.

# SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

Submissions of any of the following are desired:

- Birding Events
- Stories about birds or birders
- Birding Tips
- Poetry, quotes, sketches, or photos
- Photo of birds or people at events or field trips.

Deadline is the 22nd of each month,  
Email submissions to [mtosnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mtosnewsletter@gmail.com)

## A LA CARTE

- **Winter Is the Perfect Time to Take Up Crow Watching**  
<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/winter-perfect-time-take-crow-watching>
- **Fayette County site along Wolf River to become newest TN state forest**  
<https://wreg.com/news/mid-south/fayette-county-site-along-wolf-river-to-become-newest-tn-state-forest/>
- **10 Fun Facts About the Red-winged Blackbird**  
<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/10-fun-facts-about-red-winged-blackbird>
- **As the Christmas Bird Count Turns 125, a Beloved Birding Tradition Looks to the Future**  
<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/christmas-bird-count-turns-125-beloved-birding-tradition-looks-future>
- **Test Your Bird and Word Savvy With This Creative Crossword Puzzle**  
<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/test-your-bird-and-word-savvy-creative-crossword-puzzle>
- **2025 MTOS dues are due!**  
[www.birdmemphis.org](http://www.birdmemphis.org)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

January / February 2025

**Saturday, January 4**

Holly Springs Mississippi CBC  
*Field Trip Leader:* Hal Mitchell  
[halmitchell@gmail.com](mailto:halmitchell@gmail.com)

**Saturday, January 4**

Collierville TN CBC  
*Field Trip Leader:* Cliff VanNostrand  
[birdinginthe901@gmail.com](mailto:birdinginthe901@gmail.com)

**Saturday, January 11**

Tunica/Northern Mississippi  
*Field Trip Leader:* Dick Preston  
[dickpreston48@gmail.com](mailto:dickpreston48@gmail.com)

Meet at the Outfitters gas station/convenience store in Eudora at 0800. We will carpool/caravan from there. The Outfitters is located at 8995 W. Commerce Street, Hernando (for GPS users). This is the intersection of Hwy 301 and Hwy 304 in Eudora. There will be very little walking, as birding will be primarily from roadsides.

**Wednesday, January 15, 7:00pm**

Chapter Meeting  
St. George's Episcopal Church  
2425 South Germantown Rd. Germantown, TN

**Saturday, January 25, 10am-3pm**

Birds & Seeds  
Lichterman Nature Center  
5992 Quince Road, Memphis, TN  
<https://moshmemphis.com/birds-and-seeds/>

**Saturday, February 8**

Wolf River WMA  
*Field Trip Leader:* Martha Waldron  
[martha.waldron@gmail.com](mailto:martha.waldron@gmail.com)

**Friday-Monday, February 14-17**

Great Backyard Count  
<https://www.birdcount.org/>

**Wednesday, February 19, 7:00 pm**

Chapter Meeting  
St. George's Episcopal Church  
2425 South Germantown Rd. Germantown, TN

**Saturday, February 22, 7:30am**

Shelby Farms Park  
*Field Trip Leader:* Cliff VanNostrand  
[birdinginthe901@gmail.com](mailto:birdinginthe901@gmail.com)

<https://tnbirds.org/events/>

\*CBC = Christmas Bird Count

# Winter Hummingbirds

- Do you have hummingbirds at your feeder **after** November 1st or **before** March 15th?
- Do you see hummingbirds that are **not** ruby-throated during either migration season?



## What do you do?

1. Try and get a picture!
2. Contact us at:  
[routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net)



- If you are willing, we'll travel to your place and attempt to band the hummingbird.
- It will then become part of our ongoing winter hummingbird research.



**If you have any questions OR need general information please feel free to reach out to us.**



## TOS Membership Information

Members may join online at [www.birdmemphis.org](http://www.birdmemphis.org) or by mail.

Benefits include monthly programs, field trips, quarterly journals, and state and chapter newsletters.

Categories and dues are:

Individual	\$36
Family	\$40
Sustaining	\$55
College Student	\$15
Other Student	\$10
Lifetime	\$450 one time +\$18 yearly

Dues payable by PayPal at [www.birdmemphis.org](http://www.birdmemphis.org) or by check, made out to MTOS.

Please send dues to: Barbara Pyles  
8488 East Askersund Cove  
Cordova, TN 38018  
(901) 570-1009  
E-mail [brbpyles@gmail.com](mailto:brbpyles@gmail.com)

## Newsletter Delivery Options

To reduce printing and mailing costs, a digital version, which is usually expanded with photos and occasional articles, is provided. Notify Margaret Jefferson, [mjefferson100@hotmail.com](mailto:mjefferson100@hotmail.com). If you have no internet access, a printed version can be mailed.

## Chapter Newsletter Submissions

Email submissions to Deon VanNostrand [mtosnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mtosnewsletter@gmail.com)

*Deadline for submissions to the Newsletter is the 22nd of the month.*

## Field Cards

Please mail or e-mail your field cards and notable sightings to Dick Preston. [dickpreston48@gmail.com](mailto:dickpreston48@gmail.com)

## Tennessee Warbler Deadlines

- \*March 15 for the April Newsletter
- \*July 15 for the August Newsletter
- \*November 15 for the December Newsletter

Forward contributions to:  
Theresa Graham, Editor  
Email: [2graham@bellsouth.net](mailto:2graham@bellsouth.net)

## Chapter Meeting

**January 15, 2025. 7:00pm**

St. George's Episcopal Church,  
2425 South Germantown Rd. Germantown, TN  
Phone 901-754-7282

## Program

**Nick Smith, MTOS**  
*Bird Banding*

## Hospitality

Refreshments will be provided by Margaret Jefferson, Betty Blaylock, and Sue Ferguson.

## Upcoming Field Trip Information

**January 4:** Holly Springs, MS CBC  
**January 4:** Collierville, TN CBC  
**January 11:** Tunica/Northern Mississippi  
**February 8:** Wolf River WMA  
**February 22:** Shelby Farms/Agricenter

Thank you to all who contributed to this month's newsletter.

For our next issue, we would like to feature some photos of your favorite birds.

Please send your submissions to [mtosnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mtosnewsletter@gmail.com).

## New Member

Adrienne Bolton, [asocialworker140@gmail.com](mailto:asocialworker140@gmail.com)

## Treasurer's Report

As of December 22, 2024 the balance in the Treasury is \$14,655.32.

## New Business

Members may pay by check, payable to MTOS, or pay online with a major credit card via the PayPal option at our chapter website, [www.birdmemphis.org](http://www.birdmemphis.org).

Members who joined September 1, 2024 or later do not owe 2025 dues. See the newsletter for MTOS dues category amounts and a mailing address.

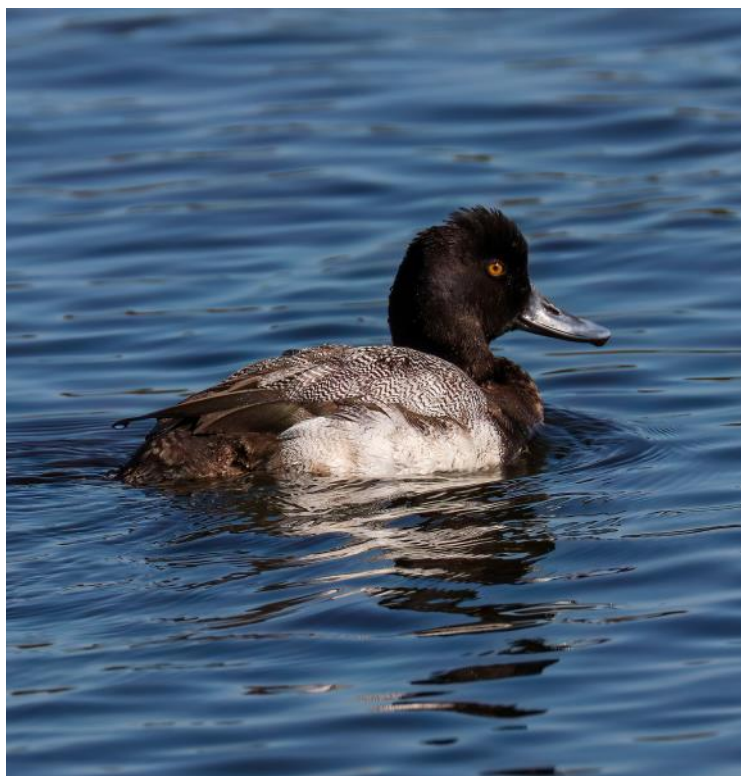
PHOTOS BY:  
**DEBRA KIENZLE**



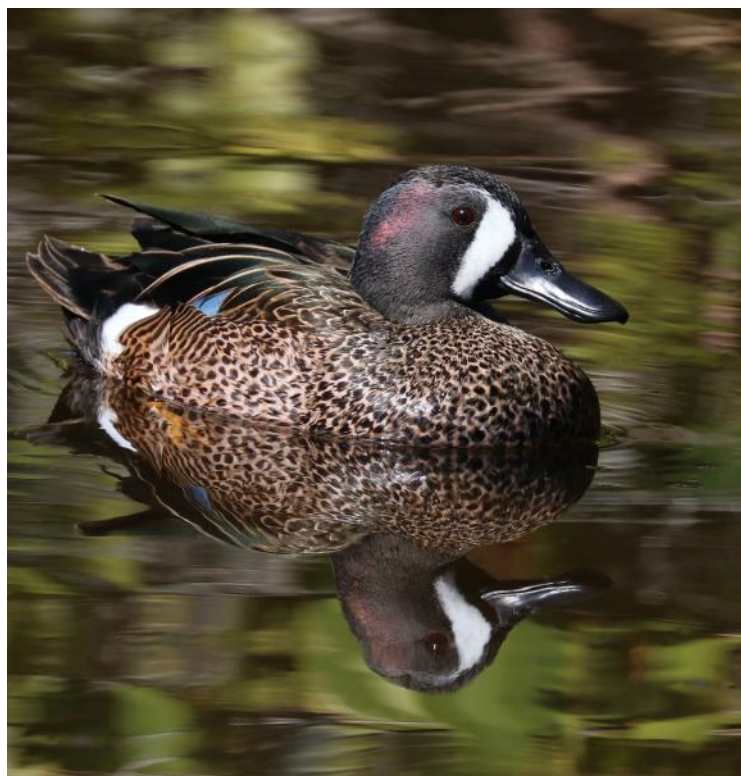
Common Merganser



Long-tailed Duck



Lesser Scaup



Blue-winged Teal



# Photos by: Allen Sparks



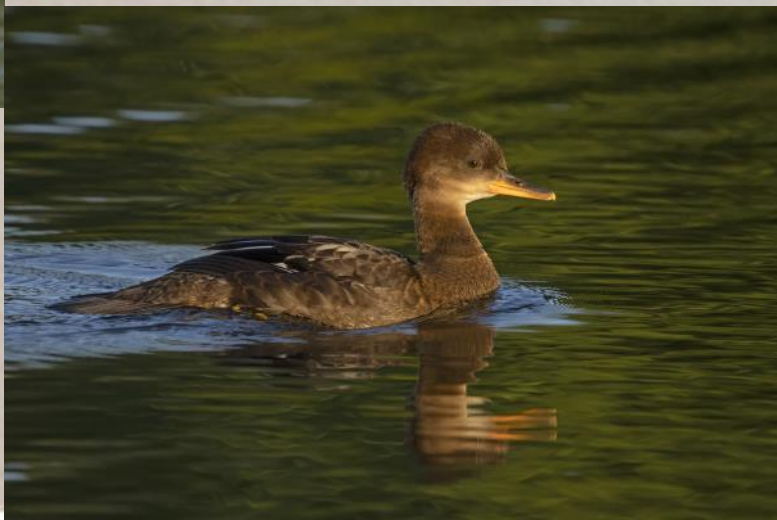
Wood Duck



Bufflehead



Mallard



Hooded Merganser

PHOTOS BY  
**JAY WALKO**



Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, Fish Hatchery, Centerton, AR



Wood Duck (f), Bentonville, AR



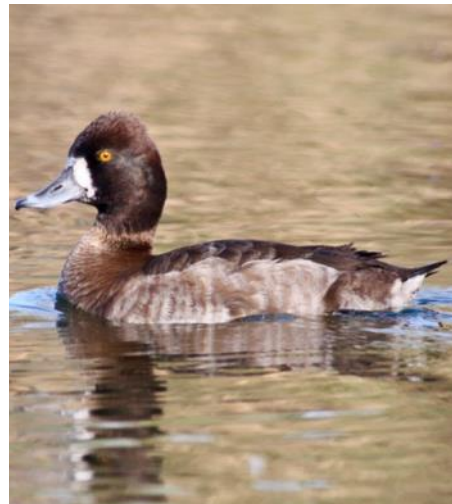
Northern Pintail, Gilbert, AZ



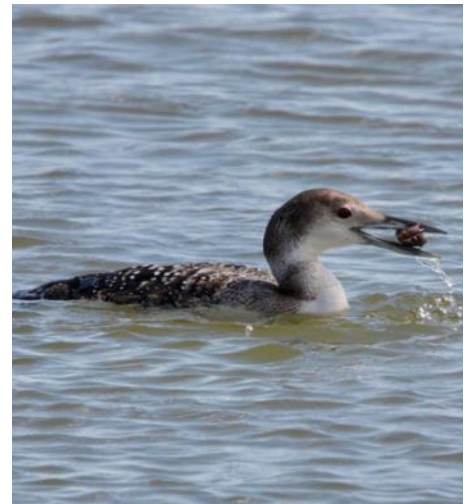
Black Scoter (f), Alma WWTP, Alma, AR



Pied-billed Grebe, Gilbert, AZ



Lesser Scaup (f), Gilbert, AZ



Common Loon, Jones Park/Marina,  
Gulfport, MS

# from the camera of:



Encanto Park  
Phoenix, AZ

Ring-necked Duck



Raleigh Springs Civic Center  
Memphis, TN

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck



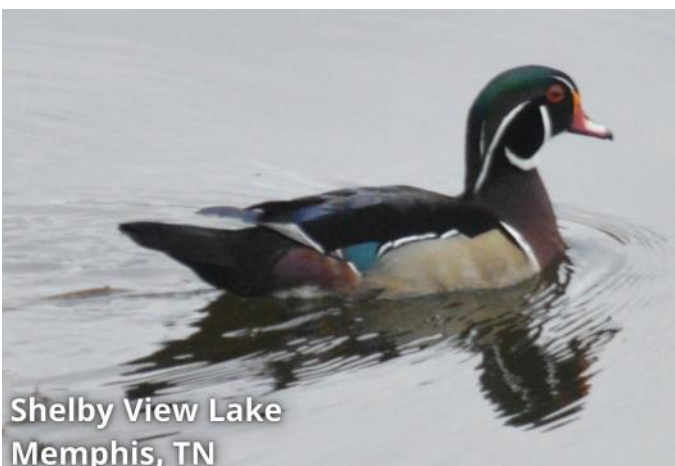
Gardener Rd. Marsh  
Memphis, TN

Blue-winged Teal



Rodney Baber Park  
Memphis, TN

Mallards and Hooded Mergansers



Shelby View Lake  
Memphis, TN

Wood Duck



Ravenwood Lake  
Bartlett, TN

Ruddy Duck





Bald Eagle



Red-tailed Hawk



Yellow-rumped Warbler



Golden-crowned Kinglet

PHOTOS BY  
**CLIFF  
VANNOSTRAND**



Mallard



Common Goldeneye



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck



Ring-necked Duck



Northern Pintail



Blue-winged Teal