



The Chattanooga Chat

Ray Zimmerman, Editor: znaturalist@gmail.com

(423) 718-9393

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A Newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter
Tennessee Ornithological Society

September Meeting

Thursday, September 10, 2020, 5:30 PM

Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center

This meeting is held at a different time and place so that we can meet outdoors with social distancing. Participants will have an opportunity to view the Sandhill Crane exhibit at Reflection Riding and perhaps some time for birding along the trails. Bring your own dinner and officers will be available to hear your comments and suggestions.

Our officers and Directors for this year were selected by email voting. We are getting a late start to the year due to a delay in the vote, but our officers are anxious to resume our popular field trips and meetings.

President – Corey Hagen
VP Programs -- Mike Seeber
VP Field Trips – Gary Brunvoll
Treasurer – Fran Hiestand
Secretary – Ray Zimmerman
Historian – Barbara Johnson
Statistician – Keven Calhoon

Please note that election is not required for the following positions, and the position does not entitle the volunteer to voting membership on the board of directors, but important duties are being fulfilled by:

Chat Newsletter editor – Ray Zimmerman
Facebook and website management – Jeffrey Schaarschmidt
Youth Advisor – Luke Thompson



Online Renewal

The Chattanooga Chapter of TOS now accepts [online renewals](#) for membership. Check out web page for further information.

Mapping Biodiversity

Clinton Jenkins et al have created a nice set of GIS biodiversity maps, now available online. Their website includes United States [maps](#) of bird diversity, endemic bird species, “bird priorities,” US distribution of globally small ranged birds and US small ranged birds and US range of threatened birds.

Photos in this issue by Ray Zimmerman included a Great Blue Heron at Chickamauga Dam, and a Great Egret at the Curtain Pole Road portion of the Tennessee Riverpark.



New Birding Hotspot

Sequatchie County has a new hotspot: “Stone Creek and nearby E Valley Roads”. This is the area where Swallow-tailed Kites have been found recently. Numerous birders have been to see them and have reported them to eBird, but only a few have used the hotspot to report their sightings. This is understandable as the hotspot was so recently created.

If you have been to see the kites and have not used the hotspot but would like to you can easily move your checklist by opening it, selecting “Edit Location” near its top and choosing “Nearby Location on a Map”. This will open a map with a bunch of teardrop markers; click on a marker to show its name. Once you've found the correct marker (it will be a big red one), simply choose “Continue” and your checklist is moved.

This works fine if you have just one or two checklists but if you have submitted multiple lists, it may be easier for you to merge the personal location with the hotspot and I will be glad to show you how to do this if you email me off list.

The great advantage to having hotspots is to allow easy exploration of the data for the site so I hope that a lot of these lists will get moved to the hotspot. You will still be able to create bar charts, etc. showing just your own observations there but you (and others) will also be able to see the larger picture.

Carole Gobert

Ravenmaster: My life with the Ravens at the Tower of London

Christopher Scarife, Reviewed by Ray Zimmerman

The Ravenmaster holds a unique position and is the only person who could write this unique memoir. Scarife has charge of the resident population of ravens at the Tower of London. His family lives with him on the grounds. He knows each of the ravens by name and interacts with them daily.



I received the audio version of this book as a gift from a friend, which is the best way to hear such stories. Scarife is a talented storyteller, and he relates the tales with genuine enthusiasm.

Continued on page 3



Ravenmaster, Continued

The Ravenmaster and his staff care for the Ravens and maintain the records and traditions of the office. The uniform for public duties seems an anachronism but lends an air of dignity and creates a persona to the officials

The Tower is steeped in history and the Ravenmaster relates much of the history of his office, including names of his predecessors and their accomplishments.

Most interesting of all though are the birds. He describes their personalities and the hierarchy within the flock which determines the order of release from their night quarters each morning. Apparently they know a good thing when they have it and rarely fail to make their nightly return.

Ravenmaster is, undoubtedly, a great read. I found the recorded version excellent company on long distance drives.

Sightings

August 24: Bird Banding at Greenway Farm

I got 2 net checks done before rain moved in at Greenway Farm. It's too bad that I got rained out, because it was shaping up to be a good morning:

Hooded Warbler = 3

Canada Warbler = 2

Northern Cardinal = 2

Carolina Wren = 2

David Aborn

August 30

A brown booby is below the railroad bridge below the Chickamauga dam Hamilton County, likely the same bird that was at Nickajack previously. He was spotted yesterday by Bruce Dralle and primarily remains on one of the 3 barge tie-ups downstream of the RR bridge.

Tim Jeffers



August 21

Brown Booby Sighting, Nickajack Dam
Rick Houlk has tried to send out two bird reports this morning and they don't seem to be getting to anyone. He said the bird is present, has flown around some and is now back resting.—Morton Massey

Join CTOS:

Membership Dues

Individual: \$28

Student \$15

Family: \$32

Sustaining: \$40

Lifetime: \$460 (Lifetime members must pay \$10 local dues each year.)

NEW: Join or renew your membership online!

Click this link to see our web page:

ChattanoogaTOS.org

Select membership level, click "Add to Cart", and you will be taken to the Secure PayPal site where you can pay by credit card or PayPal account

All dues, donations, gifts, and bequests are tax deductible under Sec. 501 (c) (3), the Internal Revenue Code.

Need to pay by check?
Make your check out to "TOS" and send to:

Fran Hiestand,
CTOS Treasurer
8935 N. Hickory Valley Rd
Chattanooga, TN 37416

If you are a new member, please include your address, phone number, and an email .

July 29

I traveled to Sequatchie County this morning to look for Swallow-tailed Kites and other notable valley species not usually seen in Southeast Tennessee except in the Sequatchie Valley. I met Roi and Debbie Shannon on Stone Cave Road at mid-morning with some fog still lingering in the area. The three of us had no initial success finding the kites that had been reported in that area in recent days. However, four kites were then seen near the intersection of Stone Cave Road and Tennessee 283. Soon other kites appeared, and Roi and Debbie saw eleven or twelve. I saw at least nine which landed in or were flying near a single tree! From there I went to Bledsoe County to look for Scissor-tailed Flycatchers. Despite traveling into some areas where they can usually be seen, I failed to find that species. I also found no Dickcissels. When I returned home to Birchwood, I traveled to the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Meigs County. About 5:15 PM I observed a lone Swallow-tailed Kite flying near the boundary between the viewing area and private property to the west of the HWR viewing area. This was the first time I have ever seen a Swallow-tailed Kite outside the Sequatchie Valley. I noted 35 other species at various sites for the day.

Charles Murray

Please submit articles and photos to Ray Zimmerman,
znaturalist@gmail.com

