



The Chattanooga Chat

CHATTANOOGA CHAPTER OF THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Renee Watson bands a Piping Plover



Piping Plover

Photo from Shutterstock

APRIL MEETING

April 10, 2025 at 7pm
Ascension Lutheran Church
720 S. Germantown Road

“Watch Your Step!

Banding Piping Plovers and Dodging their Nests in North Dakota”

Renee Watson’s program describes the intricacies and challenges of her research on a long-running Piping Plover study by the USGS in the vast and beautiful prairie landscapes alongside the Missouri River and nearby lakes.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As you well know, April and May are fabulous months to bird in the Chattanooga area. Thanks to our field trip director, Kent Pennington, we have great trips lined up for you to enjoy, and I want to encourage everyone to take full advantage of what CTOS is offering its members.

You'll find access to information regarding our trips on our newly revamped website www.chattanoogatos.org. The calendar tab will give you a full listing of trips coming up soon. Just click on the trip to find information about leaders, meeting times, and other helpful tidbits. As you'll see, we have trips to Standifer Gap Marsh, Crabtree Farms, Enterprise South Park, Duck River National Wildlife Refuge, as well as a chimney swift watch party at Urban Stack.

Additionally, you'll be able to join quite a few trips during the TOS Spring Meeting, May 2-4. Once you click on the meeting listed in the calendar, you'll find a link to the meeting registration. As I've said before, this is a great way to connect with top birders from around the state and discover what Tennessee has to offer all birders. Before long, we'll publish the list of the Spring Meeting trips for which you'll be able to sign up. I encourage you, as well, to register for the Saturday night dinner at Puckett's. It will be a time of good food, fellowship, and fun. Our own, Dr. David Aborn, will be our featured speaker that evening.

I wish everyone a fabulous spring birding experience, and I look forward to seeing you at the Spring Meeting.



Chimney Swift photo by David Aborn

DUCK RIVER ADVENTURE

Check your calendars! We are planning a trip to Duck River National Wildlife Refuge for April 18 and 19. We'll be leaving Chattanooga on Friday, April 18 at 8 am and returning Saturday afternoon, April 19. Overnight accommodations can be found in Dickson just off I-40. The time travel to Dickson from Chattanooga is 2hr 40 min. Duck River NWR is located in Humphreys County, TN near the town of Waverly where the Duck River confluences into the Tennessee River. Birders will find 4000 acres of managed land. Species include shore birds on the mud flats, wading birds in the 14 impoundments (pools) , migration species of warblers and other woodland birds, and ducks throughout the refuge. Most of the refuge is accessible by car. Spotting Scopes and cameras are recommended. There are no fees, also no restroom facilities but they can be found close by if needed. Be sure to check out Ebird Duck River Unit Bar Charts.

- April 18-Leave 8 am from Chattanooga and arrive in Dickson Tn 9:45 am (central Tlme)
- Eat in Dickson and make necessary overnight arrangements.
- Arrive at the refuge at 1 pm. bird till dark.
- April 19- Breakfast in Dickson leave at 8 am and arrive at the refuge 845 am . leaving around 3 pm. Central Time.
- Arrive back in Chattanooga around 7 pm. Eastern time.

There is a Walmart and other food services in Waverly, 10 -15 mins from the refuge.

<http://www.fws.gov/tennesseerefuge/MapsDuckRiverBig>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/hotspot/L132063.htm>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MDSbYcAjmM&t=39s>

If you are interested in going, please contact Kent at kentpenn1175@gmail.com. Depending on how many people are interested, we can carpool.



Magnolia Warbler

Photo by David Goldsmith

MORE UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

When: April 5 at 8am

Where: Standifer Gap Marsh

Rachel and Andrew Burgess will be leading this trip. This landscape features large pockets of open water as well as strands of wet grasses, bulrushes, and sedges. Just a few of the more than 200 species found here include Virginia Rails, Least Bitterns, American Bitterns, Green Herons, Willow Flycatchers, Belted Kingfishers, Warblers, Vireos, Song and Field Sparrows, Tree Swallows, Red-winged Blackbirds, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Eastern Phoebe.

When: April 13, 8:30am

Where: Crabtree Farms

This trip will be led by Barbara Johnson. Crabtree Farms, a 22-acre community farm alongside Chattanooga Creek, has a variety of bird habitat, including mature wood edges, grassy fields, cultivated areas. The large clearing also affords good overhead looks at flyovers. Baltimore orioles, scarlet tanagers, and yellow-crowned night-herons have been seen on previous years. This is a beginner-friendly trip for all ages. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes, and bring bug repellent and binoculars. (Loaner binoculars will be available.) Call Barbara at 410-703-4664 with questions. Canceled in the event of rain.

When: April 24 and April 25, 7:15pm – 9:00pm, Chimney Swift Watch Party

Where: Urban Stack, 12 West 13th Street

Come watch as migrating chimney swifts, fresh from the Amazon, gather to roost en masse in a downtown chimney. The birds begin gathering around sunset (8:20) If you'd like to come for dinner/drinks ahead of time at 7:15, email Barbara at chimneyswifts423@gmail.com so we can give the restaurant a head count. To watch the birds only, just show up! Paid parking in the lot behind Urban Stack. Binoculars and lawn chairs are helpful but optional.

When: April 14 through April 30- Most weekdays at 7am.

Where: Enterprise South

Kent Pennington will be looking for Warblers most weekday mornings at Enterprise South. If you would like to join him, email him at kentpenn1175@gmail.com

What: Spring TOS meeting

When: May 2-4

Where: Marriott Courtyard, downtown Chattanooga

Friday evening's reception will be held at the [Courtyard by Marriott Chattanooga Downtown](#), from 5-8 PM. Registration packets, name badges, and field trip sign-ups will be available during the reception, and also in the morning prior to field trips.

Plans are in progress for 4 field trips on Saturday and 2 field trips on Sunday.

Saturday afternoon's Board of Directors meeting will also take place at the Courtyard Marriott. Saturday night's banquet and program, beginning at 6PM, will be at nearby [Puckett's Restaurant](#). Dinner will be a buffet with conventional and vegetarian choices. Our speaker is Dr. David Aborn. We will be able to accommodate only 70 people for the dinner and speaker program on Saturday evening, so register soon. You can register on the website at <https://tnbirds.org/event/tos-meeting-may-2-4/>



Birders at the Honors Course
Photo by David Stone



Size comparison: Chipping Sparrow and White-throated Sparrow
photo by David Stone