



<http://birdmemphis.org>

December 2025

## November Program

November's program, "Pop-up wetlands, window collisions, and bird conservation in the mid-South" from Delta Wind Birds President, Dr. Jason Hoeksema, went over the key role of providing habitat for migrating birds that rely on wetlands — one of the many habitat types that's decreased significantly over time.



Through a grant from the EPA, research conducted on-farm concluded that early flooding significantly reduced soil runoff loads, and didn't negatively impact crop yields. Waterbird surveys likewise showed that activity was most abundant in those actively flooded fall fields. Further research is being conducted through radio-tagged shorebirds, who migrate through the Mississippi Flyway in both the spring and the fall.

A new study was started this year, with invertebrate sampling studies aiming to assess habitat quality for Lesser Yellowlegs — results pending.

# SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

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Looking for submissions of any of the following:

- Birding Events
- Stories about birds, birders, or birding
- Birding tips
- Articles or other interesting things in the bird world
- Photos, poetry, art, quotes

Send your submissions to:

[mtosnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mtosnewsletter@gmail.com)

## **Hospitality Volunteers Needed for the January and April Meetings**

Two or more volunteers are needed to bring light snacks for the January 21 Chapter meeting and a volunteer is needed to help Pam Key with refreshments for the April 15 meeting.

If you would like to help, please contact Margaret Jefferson at [mjefferson100@hotmail.com](mailto:mjefferson100@hotmail.com)

## **Free Native Seeds**

Members are invited to pick up free native seeds at the December 17 chapter meeting, provided by member Mila Kedzierski. Over 10 varieties are available, including Field Thistle, Bitterweed, Evening Primrose, Goldenrod mix, and Blue Mistflower. The seeds are in nice individually-labeled packets.

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"Tennessee birders reported a total of 178 species (25th) on 593 checklists (24th). Cliff VanNostrand reported the most species (105) followed by Tim Lenz (88), Ruben Stoll (86), Sophie Dismukes (83) and Patrick Higgins (81). Roi and Debbie Shannon submitted the most checklists (15), followed by Stephon Johnson (10). Cliff VanNostrand and Tim Lenz tied with (9)."  
The Tennessee Warbler (2025)

# Christmas Bird Count 2025 is almost here!

The CBC is the Sunday before our December meeting - less than a month away!  
If you want to help with the CBC this year there are many opportunities!

Below on the left are some **Memphis** counts to consider:

## Sunday, December 14, 2025

Shelby Farms — George Payne, leader  
[gpayne@fisherarnold.com](mailto:gpayne@fisherarnold.com)

North Memphis/Frayser — Ryan Pudwell  
[rpudwell@gmail.com](mailto:rpudwell@gmail.com)

Overton Park — Margaret Jefferson  
[mjefferson100@hotmail.com](mailto:mjefferson100@hotmail.com) | 901-210-4808

Ensley Bottoms/TO Fuller State Park —  
Adrian Hall  
[adrianhall1974@gmail.com](mailto:adrianhall1974@gmail.com)

Anita Vincent  
[avin1129@gmail.com](mailto:avin1129@gmail.com)

Other area counts this year, their dates  
and leaders:

December 20 — Sardis, MS —  
Jason Hoeksema  
[jason.hoeksema@gmail.com](mailto:jason.hoeksema@gmail.com)

December 20 — Fayette County, TN —  
Cliff VanNostrand  
[birdinginthe901@gmail.com](mailto:birdinginthe901@gmail.com)

December 21 — Arkabutla, MS —  
Hal Mitchell  
[halmitchell@gmail.com](mailto:halmitchell@gmail.com)

December 27 — Wapanocca, AR/Shelby  
Forest, TN — Dick Preston  
[dickpreston48@gmail.com](mailto:dickpreston48@gmail.com)

January 3 — Collierville, TN —  
Cliff VanNostrand  
[birdinginthe901@gmail.com](mailto:birdinginthe901@gmail.com)

January 4 — Holly Springs, MS —  
Hal Mitchell  
[halmitchell@gmail.com](mailto:halmitchell@gmail.com)

Questions? Please contact the leader of  
the group you would like to join or me!

Happy birding!



# January and February Field Trips

## **Rodney Baber Park**

January 31<sup>st</sup> at 4:45 PM

Led by Ryan Pudwell

## **Reelfoot Lake**

February 7th

led by Mark Greene

## **Ghost River Area**

February 14th

led by Larry Chitwood

## **Shelby Farms (Amphitheater Loop)**

February 21st

led by Adrian Hall





# Monthly Feature Hotspot

It was interesting to see what happened as a result of the appearance of Ash-Throated and Vermillion Flycatchers at Halle Stadium. In less than a week, 35+ birders documented not only the two rare birds, but a total of 58 species including several that had not previously been recorded at that hotspot. In watching what happens when the birding community focuses on a single location, it gave me an idea. What if each month we feature a hotspot and encourage members of the local birding community to visit that location as they are able at some point during the month? It would help us collect more data for the featured hotspot and help birders learn some new locations. I also think a little bit of criteria would be good to aid in selecting hotspots to feature. The criteria can and should change over time but here are some guidelines that I think provide a good start.

-Ryan Pudwell



Vermillion Flycatcher (Left) Ash-throated Flycatcher (Right)  
Both seen at Halle Stadium starting on October 25, 2025

1. The hotspot must have a species list less than 100 all time.
2. It must have no more than 20 species previously observed for the month it would be featured.
3. It must be an easily accessible and a safe location for people to visit.
4. It should have potential for yielding a variety of species (based on habitat, geography, or history)

The feature hotspot for December 2025 is  
The Dixon Gallery and Gardens  
located at 4339 Park Ave Memphis, TN 38117

Contact Ryan Pudwell to suggest a location  
for consideration as a feature hotspot in the future.  
rpudwell@immanuelmemphis.org 901-356-7995

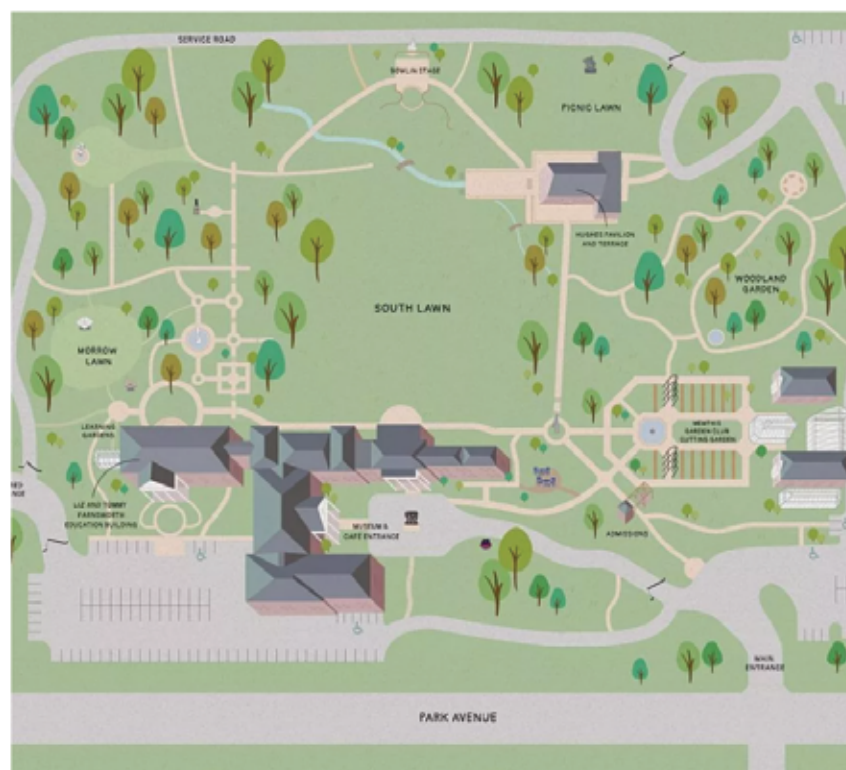
# DIXON

GALLERY & GARDENS

Feature Hotspot  
December 2025

The Dixon Gallery and Gardens is located on Park Ave near Cherry Rd. It occupies 16 acres, including a variety of garden spaces and an Art Gallery. Admission to the Dixon is free thanks to gifts from generous donors. They are open to the public Tuesday-Saturday and Sunday afternoons. They are closed on Mondays.

As an eBird hotspot, the Dixon has a bird list of 55 species all time, with only 10 species observed in the month of December. This location should predominately be good for birds that favor woodland habitats. Species that prefer more open spaces might be found in the cutting garden area. Also, in the winter, a wide variety of species are possibilities as flyovers. Make sure you leave some time to check out the museum as there are typically two or three exhibits on display.





# Field Trip Notes

from Ryan Pudwell

During the Month of November we had a couple field trips. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, we ventured over to Fayette County to visit the Wolf River State Forest. There were 6 people in attendance for this trip, and we saw a total of 28 species, where one of the highlights was a Blue-headed Vireo.

On November 15th, we had a field trip to a few spots north of Downtown Memphis. There were 11 people in attendance. We started with a walk along the Bearwater Greenline and then made our way over to the Maynard Stiles Water Treatment Facility. After Maynard Stiles, about half the group continued over to the Historic Porter Leath Campus for a brief visit. Across the three locations, we observed a total of 41 species, with the main highlights being a Black Scoter (continuing for a week at that point), a Surf Scoter that stopped in for the day, and a couple Bald Eagles. Regular Field Trips will resume in late January after the Christmas Bird Counts are done.



## A Sunday at Shelby Farms Park

Chad Brown

For the last three Sundays I have gotten up early (for me), and taken my binoculars and McDonald's breakfast to a picnic table at Beaver Lake at Shelby Farms Park . The table I sit at is under a canopy of trees and faces away from the lake overlooking a grassy field with more trees in the distance. At first there doesn't seem to be any birds but, as my eyes get used to the view, I see movement here and there. If I can tear myself away from my breakfast sandwich and pick up my binoculars I begin to spot the occasional familiar bird. Nothing exotic, just the usual residents and a few early winter birds. Bluebirds, Juncos, White-throated Sparrows, and I did get a good look at two N. Flickers and a Downy Woodpecker. Crows and Canada geese flew by .

I finally broke down and added the Merlin Bird ID app to my cell-phone and tested it out at the table. I saw a bird in a nearby tree darting about and I was pretty sure it was a Kinglet. Merlin said it was a Golden-crowned Kinglet. I'll have to go with that since I never got another look at it. After the few minutes it took me to finish my sausage and egg biscuit, I took a short walk down to the



to see if any waterfowl were in residence on the lake. Not much, a Bufflehead and several Gadwall, so I got back in the car and moved to the small parking lot that overlooks Hyde Lake at the end of the one way road. From there I, armed with my binoculars, little point and shoot camera .....and my phone, walked the trails in the direction of Chickasaw Lake. As I have often found when birding, other things at times take my attention. This tree



caught my eye and I thought it was worth a picture. I was not seeing many birds and decided there might not be anything else to photograph.

I walked on, with the help of my walking stick that I use more for balance than propulsion, on towards Chickasaw Lake. There were a few ducks and grebes on the lake, but not as many as I had hoped. A few Ring-necked Ducks, two or three Pied-billed Grebes and a group of Mallards. The Mallards conveniently came out of the shadows into the sunlight and posed for my second photo.

## Mallards on Chickasaw Lake:



At this point I thought that would be the extent of my pictures since the other ducks were too far away.

I walked on to complete my circuit of the lake on the gravel path.

As I came abreast of the little marsh on the right side of the trail, I spied a Great Blue Heron stalking through the very shallow water amongst the reeds. It was very intent on it's mission and totally ignored me as I stood there not 30 feet away and captured this view 2 seconds before he scored a meal of a small fish with a lightning fast strike.



That pretty much made my day. I walked on for another mile, but that was the highlight of the outing.



# Got a Winter Hummingbird?



HAVE YOU HAD A HUMMINGBIRD AT YOUR FEEDER  
BETWEEN **NOVEMBER 1ST AND MARCH 15TH?**

**OR**

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT LEAVING OUT A  
HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER ALL YEAR LONG?

HELP **SOUTHEASTERN AVIAN RESEARCH** CONTINUE OUR  
ONGOING '**WINTER HUMMINGBIRD**' PROJECT!



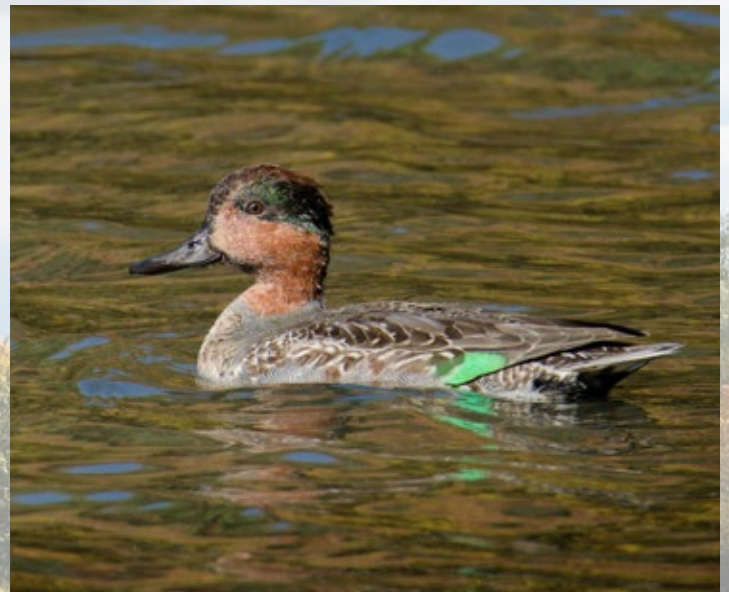
Scan the QR code to find out more about winter hummingbirds and how you might become one of the lucky few who host one of these rare visitors.



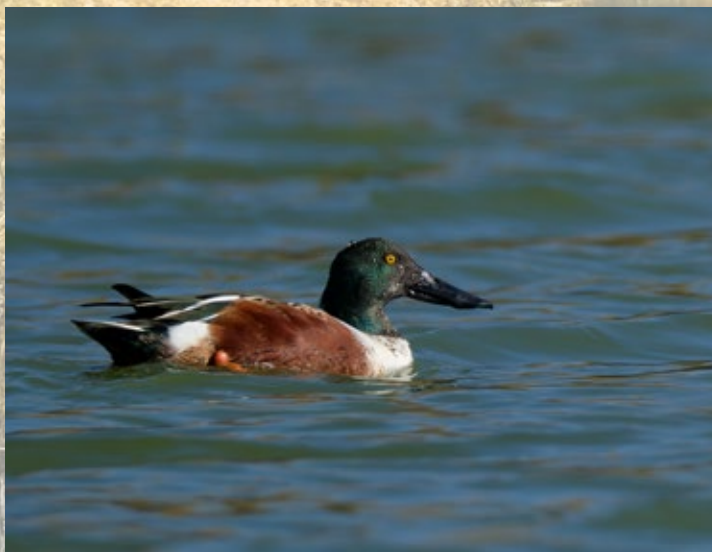




**Buffleheads**



**Green-winged Teal**



**Northern Shoveler**



**Ring-necked Duck**





Blue-winged Teals



Common Merganser



Greater White-fronted Goose



Harlequin Duck



Northern Pintail



Northern Shoveler

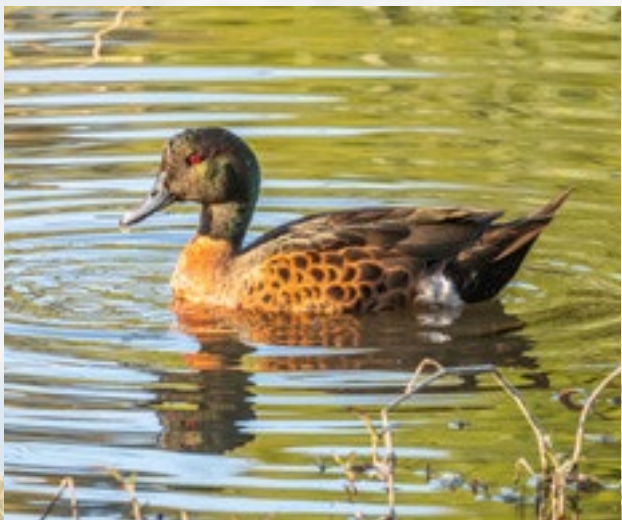
Photos by:

**John Matthew Erickson**





Black Swan



Cinnamon Teal



Greater White-fronted Goose



Maned Duck



Mottled Duck



Wood Duck





Shelby County, TN

American Wigeon  
(+Ruddy Duck)



Shelby County, TN

Buffleheads



Craighead County, AR

Greater White-fronted Goose



Shelby County, TN

Horned + Pied-billed Grebe



Shelby County, TN

Snow Goose  
(+Canada Geese)



Rutherford, County TN

Wood Ducks

Photos by:

**Ryan Pudwell**



# Sophie Dismukes



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck



Canada Geese



Canvasback



Redhead  
(+Ring-necked Ducks)



Ring-necked Ducks



Ross's Goose (+Canada Geese)





Knob-billed Duck



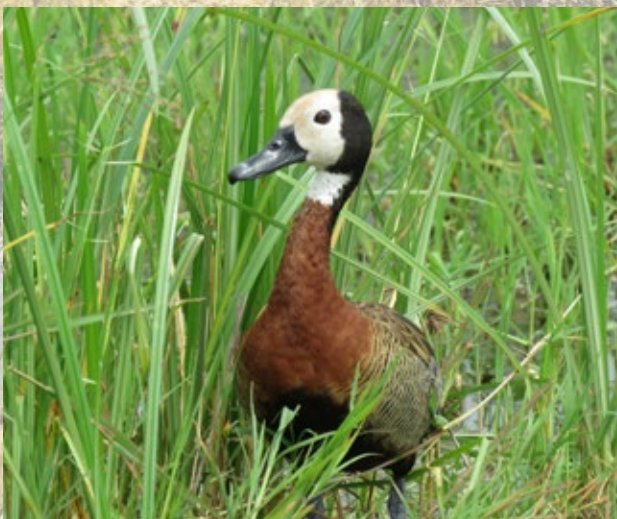
Egyptian Geese



Knob-billed Ducks



Fulvous Whistling-duck



White-faced Whistling-duck



Egyptian Geese

Photos by:

**Van Harris**



### 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 Caroline Schratz [caroline.schratz@gmail.com](mailto:caroline.schratz@gmail.com). If you have no internet access, a printed version can be mailed.

#### Chapter Newsletter Submissions

Email submissions to Sophie Dismukes [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  
E-mail: [2graham@bellsouth.net](mailto:2graham@bellsouth.net)

### Chapter Meeting

**December 17th, 2025, 7:00pm**

St. George's Episcopal Church  
2435 South Germantown Rd. Germantown, TN  
Phone: (901)-754-7282

#### Program

Herb Roberts, Vice-President of the Pacific Bird Conservation  
*The Mariana Avifauna Conservation Program (MAC)*

#### Hospitality

Refreshments will be provided by Ed Thomas & Margaret Jefferson

Thank you to all who contributed to this month's newsletter!  
For our next issue, we would like to feature some photos of:



#### Raptors



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

#### New Members

Riley Metcalfe and Jaikin Harrell  
[rileydmetcalfe@icloud.com](mailto:rileydmetcalfe@icloud.com) and [jaikinharrell@gmail.com](mailto:jaikinharrell@gmail.com)

Sherri and Kevin Reasons  
[Sherri821@comcast.net](mailto:Sherri821@comcast.net)

Meg Webster  
[meg.m.webster@gmail.com](mailto:meg.m.webster@gmail.com)

Cindy White  
[cindy.kwhite59@yahoo.com](mailto:cindy.kwhite59@yahoo.com)

#### Treasurer's Report

As of November 22, 2025 the balance in the Treasury is \$13,765.71. Proceeds from the November 19 Silent Auction and Holiday Sale were \$197.35. Thank you to the many members who participated in this successful event.

The chapter made a \$250 honorarium/donation to Delta Wind Birds, the nonprofit group that November program speaker Dr. Jason Hoeksema of Oxford, MS leads.

The chapter also made a \$750 donation to the Mid-South Raptor Center this month. The last MTOS donation to the Raptor Center was made in October 2023.

#### MTOS Dues Policy Note

A new member who joins MTOS between September 1 and December 31 of a given year is credited with dues payment for the next full year.  
Example: If a person joins MTOS on November 5, 2025, the due payment applies for the remainder of 2025 AND also covers the 2026 year.