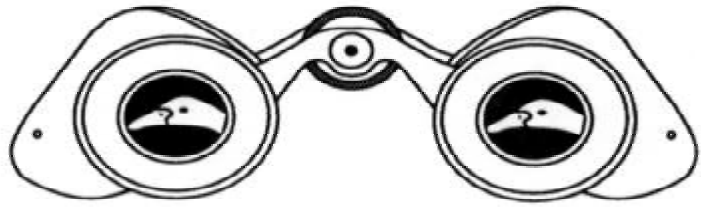


through the biKNOXulars



Newsletter of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

All Bluebirds Are NOT Created Equal - Thank Goodness!

The April Meeting will be held at ***Ijams Nature Center*** and will begin at **7:00 pm**

Dr. David Pitt will speak about bluebirds. He will use biographies of some of his banded bluebirds to illustrate variations (and some of the consequences of those variations) in longevity, number of mates, and number of offspring produced. Along the way he will review some basic bluebird biology, such as the nesting cycle, characteristics of productive nest boxes, and causes of mortality. Hopefully, he will be able to connect with the people and raise some questions and stimulate some thoughts.

Mossy Creek Dedication Ceremony

There will be a dedication April 22 at 10:30am for the Mossy Creek Wildlife Observation Area (WOA), new viewing blind, signs, and trails. All Knoxville TOS members are invited. The dedication is organized by Naturewatch, a coalition of agencies organized to improve and protect the environment of the Holston and French Broad watersheds. Partners involved in this project included Carson-Newman College, TWRA, TVA, and Jefferson City. Please join us and show your support!

April Field Trips

Sat. April 1, 6:30 am Oak Ridge Reservation and DOE's new Three Bend Wildlife Refuge.

Leaders Dev Joslin (482-7591) and Jim Evans (TWRA).

Meet at Wal-Mart parking lot in Oak Ridge (on Illinois Ave). We will tour the back roads of the reservation, walking through prime areas for sparrows, woodland and wetland birds, and waterfowl. Tour will cover at least one of 3 peninsulas in the Three Bend Scenic Preserve and Wildlife Management Area. Bring water and a snack. (Rescheduled from March 4th)

Sat. April 15, 7:30 am Cove Lake State Park.

Leaders Nell Moore/Dan Mooney (525-5681).

Meet at Cove Lake State Park in the parking area near the restaurant. We will walk around the lake and back to the observation platform. We will also explore the trail around the beaver pond. Likely birds will be spring migrants including, orioles, flycatchers, and warblers.

Sat. April 29, 8:00am, "PUBLIC" field trip to Sharp's Ridge.

Leader Dave Trently (531-1473).

Meet at the ranger's house. The walk will be along the road in Sharp's Ridge Memorial Park. Orioles, grosbeaks, warblers, and other spring migrants are expected.

Thursdays in April 8:00 am
Sharp's Ridge.

Leader Tony Headrick (687-9956). Meet at the ranger's house. Catch more spring migrants while the Ridge is "dripping" with them!

Two Tramps in Mudtime

You know how it is with an April day?
The sun is warm and the sky is clear,
And you're one month on in the month of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
A cloud comes over a sunlit peak,
A wind blows over a frozen arch,
And you're one month back in the middle
of March --Robert Frost

Conservation Corner

The Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries Need Your Help!

As spring migration approaches, this Conservation Corner is dedicated to a place so many of us flock to and enjoy.

- Editor

Dauphin Island is richly endowed with small pockets of wetlands, some seasonal, some permanent, providing reservoirs for ground water. This ground water eventually seeps down to the shallow aquifer, providing water for the Island. Most of these wetlands were platted in the 1950s and purchased by investors with the expectation of building at some time in the future. Dauphin Island has also been long recognized as a critical stopover point for neotropical migrants. The entire island is part of this critical habitat with spring migrants frequently making landfall on the western spit and working their way eastward to the heavier cover of the maritime forest.

At the annual AOS (Alabama Ornithological Society) fall meeting in October 1999, the Board initiated a property acquisition campaign concentrating our efforts largely on the acquisition of these wetland lots. The goal is to preserve the critical habitat for the neotropical migrants, expand the opportunities for birders and other nature lovers to observe the twice yearly spectacle of migration while providing the property owners with a viable option for realizing an appropriate return on their investment.

We have identified nine lots in a first group for acquisition and submitted a grant application to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a total of \$272,600 to acquire these lots. Of this amount, they will provide 1/3, \$91,066, and we must match with the remaining 2/3, \$181,534. We are confident of receiving the grant and should hear about the time you receive this newsletter. This first group of lots includes the four lots immediately adjacent to the Shell Mounds on the west (next to the Bee Tree and the water drip), and the four lots holding the Goat Trees, these eight lots being critical habitat and listed as wetlands on the National Wetlands Inventory Maps. Also included in this first increment is the lot adjacent to the entrance to the Sanctuary, needed to improve access and safety to the parking lot.

Although we cannot formally begin soliciting funds until the grant has been awarded, we have already received pledges of some \$74,000, \$50,000 from an individual towards the Goat Trees, \$10,000 from AOS towards the lots near the Shell Mound and \$4,150 in a 2-1 challenge grant from the Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust. We have a good start but we have a ways to go a balance of nearly \$107,000 to raise for this first phase. We need all the help we can get from you. Two of the lots next to Shell Mounds have been listed for sale. They are the most immediately threatened. Acting quickly to assure their preservation, we made an offer, which was countered and have just concluded a purchase contract, contingent on receipt of the grant and a valid appraisal, with closing in 120 days. We are urgently soliciting contributions to make up the balance of this purchase, as well as the balance of the property included in the grant request. Inasmuch as we cannot directly contribute matching funds to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Dauphin Island Foundation has joined us in this campaign and will act as the receiving agent for all donations. They are also a 501-(C)-3 organization and all donations will be fully tax deductible. As appropriate you will receive documentation for the IRS to validate the your deduction.

Please make your check out to the Dauphin Island Foundation, and send to P.O. Box 1295 Dauphin Island, AL 36528. Designate it for FODIAS-Property Acquisition. Be sure to include your name and address and any memorial or dedicatory designation that you might wish attached in future public recognition of your support. We thank you for your generosity. **And the birds thank you!**

-Carolyn Snow, AOS

Going once...Going twice....SOLD!

Everyone loves an auction, and what could be better than an auction of bird books, feeders, and other bird-stuff? KTOS wants to have an auction to raise money for our local chapter's education and conservation projects, and we need everyone to pitch in!! What we need are bird-related items that we can include in a silent auction: extra copies of field guides; bird feeders or houses; stationary; or anything else bird-related that you want to donate to the club. We plan to hold the auction at a state meeting sometime this year, so that we have a large audience of interested bidders (and birders!). So bring anything you want to donate to the next meeting, and we'll start a collection of items to include in the auction. If you can think of a local business that might want to contribute some items, by all means ask--you never know what people are willing to donate.

Oak Ridge Nature Walks

April 2000 Community Adventure Rambles on the Oak Ridge Reservation, sponsored by ORNL and the American Museum of Science and Energy.

Saturday, April 8, 3:30 PM - 6:00 PM: Adventure Ramble at Freels Bend.

A cross country hike focusing on wildflowers and other interesting plants, but anything goes!

Larry Pounds (Oak Ridge, 483-8635).

Hat, long pants, tick/insect repellent, and water bottle recommended.

Thursday, April 13, & 27, 7:15 PM: Night Sounds and Stars

A moon- and star-lit walk in the relative quiet and dark of lovely Freels Bend (weather permitting).

We will listen for the sounds of wildlife, chorus frogs, owls, and insects, followed by an hour of star-gazing with and without telescopes.

Led by Paul Lewis (UT Department of Physics and Astronomy), staff of ORNL's Environmental Sciences Division.

Flashlights recommended.

Saturday, April 15, 3:00 - 5:00 PM: Creek-side Ramble: Aquatic Life in Lower Bear Creek or Upper White Oak Creek.

John Smith (574-7352) and Kelly Roy (574-7422), Environmental Sciences Division (ORNL).

Long pants, tick/insect repellent, and water bottle recommended.

** Meet at 3:00 PM at the lobby of the American Museum of Science and Energy.

Saturday, April 22, 7:00 - 10:00 AM: Early Bird Walk at Freels Bend.

Jim Evans (TWRA, 574 8204) and Kelly Roy (574-7422).

Saturday, April 22, 8:00 - 10:30 AM: Lazy Folks' Bird Walk at Freels Bend.

Dev Joslin (482 7591).

Participants must pre-register with Lissa Clarke at the American Museum of Science and Energy (576-3200) no later than noon of the day before the announced activity. Participants will caravan in their cars from the appointed meeting place to the adventure site. If cancellation of an adventure for bad weather or other reasons is necessary, an announcement of cancellation will be placed on the X-10 information phone line [574-9836(574-XTEN)]. Participants should know to call at least one hour before the scheduled walk. Walks meet at the parking lot on the south side of the Scarboro Operations Site on the east (left) side of Scarboro/Pumphouse Road, and just south of the intersection with Bethel Valley Road unless otherwise noted.

Bulletin Board

Knox County Spring Count Sunday, 30 April 2000

Our annual Spring Count will be held on Sunday, 30 April 2000. As always, you are encouraged to get out enjoy the spring migration by counting birds anywhere in Knox County, including your own feeder. If you normally work this count but will be unable to do so this year, please contact the compiler so that we can assure that your territory will be covered. Please send your count results to the compiler as soon as possible or bring them to the May meeting.

compiler: Dean Edwards 521 E Old Andrew Johnson Hwy Jefferson City TN 37760 (865)475-4592 kde@utk.edu

Greetings from the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History: We have one scholarship available for a high school youth to attend a Victor Emanuel Birding Camp this summer. For more information contact:

Jim Berry, President
Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History
311 Curtis Street
Jamesown, NY 14701-9620
(800)758-6841
jim@rtpi.org

FIELD TRIP REPORT: Wes James, TVA Biologist, led a KTOS field trip on the Tellico Dam Reservation on Saturday morning (3/18). Thirty birders were present for a walk along the earthen portion of the dam and to two beaver ponds near by. A special thanks goes to Kay Wilson for publicizing the trip to the folks in Tellico Village. We observed 49 species, including an osprey gathering sticks. The osprey appeared to be trying to start a nest on a power tower, but dropped one stick, and flew off with another without trying to place it. Double-crested cormorants were present in large numbers. We also observed great blue herons sitting on nests. Other species seen include:

Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Gadwal, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Kestrel, Killdeer, Common Snipe, Bonaparte's gull, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downey Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadow Lark, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch.

Upcoming field trips: May 20, Cross Mountain, Leader Bob Collier
May 27, Field trip to Fort Loudon Dam and area, Leader Janet McKnight

TOS Home Page: <http://www.tnbirders.org>

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