

through the biKNOXulars

Newsletter of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

Patuxent volunteer, Charlie Robinson, to speak on Whooping Crane restoration

The next meeting of KTOS will be Wednesday, December 4. As I write this, the experimental Whooping Crane flock is in north central Tennessee, so I am pleased to announce our program title is "Whooping Cranes and Me"

Our presenter, Charlie Robinson, is a native of Washington, DC, but now lives in Beltsville, MD and Maryville, TN. He is married to Pat DeLozier, a native of Maryville. Charlie retired after 32 years as a Telecommunications Tech. He is now a Volunteer Interpreter at the Patuxent Research Refuge, National Wildlife Visitor Center in Maryland near D.C.

Charlie is a long time member of The Isaac Walton League, Past Chapter President of the Telephone Pioneers of America; Past Regional Vice President of Telephone Pioneer Family Campers and Past President of two other camping clubs.

Charlie will give us a brief history of the Patuxent Research Refuge, his early work with the whoopers, work as volunteer at the refuge and description of the Whooping Crane restoration program.

January meeting is traditional

Our January 8th meeting is traditionally less formal, without an official speaker. We invite club members to bring slides of recent trips to share. We will also do some of the planning for the TOS Spring Meeting, which our chapter is hosting in May.

Both meetings start at 7:30 p.m. in Room 117, UT Vet School on Center Avenue off Neyland Drive. Contact an officer if you need directions.

- *Charlie Muise, program coordinator*
Townsend, TN • lat 35 deg, 38'23" long 83 deg, 41'22"

Mark your December-January calendars

Christmas Bird Counts

- Norris • Saturday, December 14, 02**
- Great Smokies • Saturday, December 21, 02**
- Cades Cove • Sunday, December 29, 02**
- Hiwassee • Wednesday, January 1, 03**
- Knoxville • Saturday, January 4, 03**

See page 2 for details and contact information.

Saturday-Monday, January 18-20, 2003

KTOS Birding Weekend • Tallahassee, Florida.

Leader: David Trently. dtrently@utk.edu, 531-1473 h, 974-8664 w.

It's mid-winter, and it's time to head south! If this trip works well for our chapter, we may run more weekend trips like this, at different times of the year.

Highlights: Saturday—E.L. Huie water treatment facility and Newman Wetlands Center near Atlanta; Sunday—at St. Marks NWR south of Tallahassee; Monday—Wakulla Springs State Park (site of filming of some of the old Tarzan

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Field Trips - Let's go birding!

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movies) with a return to Knoxville after 9:00 p.m.

If there is interest from those planning to go, we may leave Knoxville the evening of Friday, Jan. 17, staying overnight south of Atlanta—and have more time for birding in Georgia on Saturday.

What kinds of birds are possible? Waders, water-fowl, rails, shorebirds, terns, N Gannet, C Moorhen, Limpkin, Short-eared Owl, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Vermilion Flycatcher, Sedge Wren, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Seaside Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird and yes, maybe a few warblers...and who knows what rarity might be around?!

Contact David Trently as soon as possible so that you can be included in the planning. There's no deadline for signing up, but you'll need to make plans in time to work out lodging and transportation arrangements.



Christmas Bird Counts

Dates and contact information for the Knox area CBCs

Norris

Sat., Dec. 14 - Norris; contact Chuck Nicholson; 494-8688; cpnichol@bellsouth.net

Great Smoky Mountains*

Sat., Dec. 21 - Great Smoky Mountains; David Trently; 531-1473 h, 974-8664 w; dtrently@utk.edu

Cades Cove

Sun., Dec. 29 - Cades Cove; Susan Hoyle; 909-0792; hoyle@cs.utk.edu

Hiwassee

Wed., Jan. 1 - Hiwassee; Kevin Calhoun; (423) 821-6802; kac@tennis.org

Knoxville

Sat., Jan. 4 - Knoxville; Dean Edwards; 560-9701; kde@angst.engr.utk.edu

* Attention GSMNP CBC participants!

The Smokies CBC on Sat., Dec. 21 will include a 5 p.m. gathering at the Cracker Barrel in Pigeon Forge (the

Additional Field Trips

Due to the busy Christmas Bird Count season, exact times and destinations for other field trips have not been finalized. We have definite plans to sponsor field trips on the weekends of December 7-8, 2002, January 11-12, 2003 and January 25-26, 2003. Plans for the weekend of January 18-20, 2003 are shown above.

Detailed information for other field trips will be discussed at the December and January meetings, posted on tn-bird list serve and posted on the Knoxville TOS Bird Hotline, (865) 577-4717, ext. 80.

If you have questions or wish to volunteer to lead a field trip, please call Harold Howell at (865) 828-6302.

- Best regards, Harold

Planning Meeting: Room 128 Ellington Plant Sciences Building, Wed., Dec. 4, 6 PM. ALL members are invited. We have a lot to discuss. Bring your dinner!

one closer to the Park). For the past few years, a number of us have met there after spending the day counting in the Smokies and found this to be a very nice, warm place to meet and have a well-deserved meal. Come on over and share your day's birding with us.

100 Years of CBCs in Tennessee

The first Christmas Count in Tennessee was made by Magnolia Woodward of Knoxville in 1902. She counted birds around her home on Park Avenue. (Park Avenue was later changed to Magnolia Avenue in her honor.) Woodward also did counts for 1905 through 1915 except in 1910.

(Info from J.B. Owen's book on the history of KTOS.)

According to the Audubon website, this first Tennessee count was made on December 1, 1902. Count time: 2 hrs; Number of observers: 1; Birds counted: crow sp., 6 Carolina Chickadee, 3 Tufted Titmouse, 1 wren sp., 12 goldfinch sp.

The Goose Police!

Jane Southworth owns and operates the Geese Patrol of Brattleboro, VT. When a gaggle of geese invades an area where they are not welcome, she and her dog, Bess, evict them in an environmentally friendly way. Bess is a six-year-old Border Collie specially trained to round up, bark and unsettle Canada Geese. Within hours, the geese will be gone, although the Goose Patrol may have to continue their humane goose-control measures for several days to keep the area goose-free! - Submitted by Nancy Tanner

2002 Knox County Fall Bird Count Results - Dean Edwards, compiler

On Sunday, 29 September 2002, sixteen observers in 10-12 parties took part in the Knox County Fall Count. We found 104 species on the count day and 4 more during count week—the most species found since 1999—and 5282 individual birds. Over the past five years, we have recorded 132 species, three of those being added this year (Wilson's Snipe, Great Crested Flycatcher and Loggerhead Shrike).

The best bird was, without a doubt, the Loggerhead Shrike found in Farragut by Boyd Sharp. This species can, with effort, be found in the agricultural areas in the eastern part of the county, particularly during winter, but continues to decline.

As usual on our count, Blue Jays were passing through in large numbers. This year they outnumbered all other species with 673 tallied. However, European Starling (521) and Rock Dove (233) were severely under reported.

Wild Turkey continue to increase in the county and were found for the third consecutive year. A Peregrine Falcon made an appearance downtown the week before the count but could not be found on Sunday.

Other good birds included a Marsh Wren and 10 Wilson's Snipe at the UT Plant Science Farm and Northern Harrier at the new Seven Islands park in the eastern part of the county. Philadelphia Vireo, Bobolink and Gray-cheeked Thrush (3!) were also noteworthy. Twenty-one warbler species were recorded which is a bit low for our count. Palm Warbler was the most numerous (50) and a well-studied Blackpoll Warbler on House Mountain the most unusual.

Full details follow. I hope everyone is getting excited about the upcoming Christmas Bird Counts as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first CBC in Tennessee which took place right here in Knoxville.

Date: Sunday, 29 September 2002

Weather: clear, calm winds;

Temperature: Low: 59F, High: 83F;

Wind: calm; **Coverage:** 5:45 - 19:30

Party Hours: 35.00 hr by foot; 20.25 hr by car;
2.25 hr owling; 4.75 hr feeder watching
62.25 hr total party hours

Party Miles: 22.50 miles by foot; 236.00 miles by car;
8.00 miles owling; 266.50 miles total party miles

16 observers in 10-12 parties (see below for list)

104 species (+4 during count week);

5282 total individuals; 84.85 birds per party hour

Species Totals: 17 Double-crested Cormorant, 14 Great Blue Heron, -CW- Great Egret, -CW- Green Heron, 1 Black Vulture, 33 Turkey Vulture, 244 Canada Goose, 10 Wood Duck, 16 Mallard, -CW- Blue-winged Teal, 3 Osprey, 1 Northern Harrier, 2 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 4 Cooper's Hawk, 1 Red-shouldered Hawk, 2 Broad-winged Hawk, 16 Red-tailed Hawk, 2 American Kestrel, -CW- Peregrine Falcon, 4 Northern Bobwhite, 3 Wild Turkey, 29 Killdeer, 10 Wilson's Snipe, 233 Rock Dove, 289 Mourning Dove, 3 Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 5 Eastern Screech-Owl, 3 Great Horned Owl, 1 Barred Owl, 14 Common Nighthawk, 214 Chimney Swift, 22 Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 11 Belted Kingfisher, 77 Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 44 Downy Woodpecker, 8 Hairy Woodpecker, 36 Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted), 14 Pileated Woodpecker, 8 Eastern Wood-Pewee, 12 Empidonax sp., 36 Eastern Phoebe, 4 Great Crested Flycatcher, 9 White-eyed Vireo, 5 Yellow-throated Vireo, 8 Blue-headed Vireo, 1 Philadelphia Vireo, 6 Red-eyed Vireo, 1 Loggerhead Shrike, 673 Blue Jay, 298 American Crow, 140 Carolina Chickadee, 70 Tufted Titmouse, 34 White-breasted Nuthatch, 139 Carolina Wren, 3 House Wren, 1 Marsh Wren, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 170 Eastern Bluebird, 3 Gray-cheeked Thrush, 19 Swainson's Thrush, 7 Wood Thrush, 166 American Robin, 29 Gray Catbird, 157 Northern Mockingbird, 41 Brown Thrasher, 521 European Starling, 1 Cedar Waxwing, 4 Tennessee Warbler, 1 Nashville Warbler, 2 Northern Parula, 9 Chestnut-sided Warbler, 18 Magnolia Warbler, 2 Black-throated Blue Warbler, 1 Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle), 8 Black-throated Green Warbler, 2 Blackburnian Warbler, 2 Yellow-throated Warbler, 6 Pine Warbler, 3 Prairie Warbler, 50 Palm Warbler (Western), 4 Bay-breasted Warbler, 1 Blackpoll Warbler, 4 Black-and-white Warbler, 12 American Redstart, 2 Ovenbird, 1 Northern Waterthrush, 28 Common Yellowthroat, 1 Hooded Warbler, 6 Summer Tanager, 5 Scarlet Tanager, 42 Eastern Towhee, 11 Chipping Sparrow, 30 Field Sparrow, 3 Savannah Sparrow, 57 Song Sparrow, 150 Northern Cardinal, 42 Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 2 Blue Grosbeak, 65 Indigo Bunting, 5 Bobolink, 322 Red-winged Blackbird, 40 Eastern Meadowlark, 89 Common Grackle, 69 Brown-headed Cowbird, 1 Orchard Oriole, 86 House Finch, 140 American Goldfinch, 5 House Sparrow

Observers: Frank Bills, Sharon Bostick, Howard Chitwood, Dean Edwards (compiler), Paul Hartigan, Audrey Hoff, Ron Hoff, Susan Hoyle, Kristine Johnson, Ed Manous, Dollyann Myers, Chuck Nicholson, Truett Patterson, Martha Rudolph, Boyd Sharp, Susie Stout

J. B. Owen Memorial Endowment Guidelines

The J.B. Owen Endowment Committee of KTOS has drafted the following guidelines for management of the Endowment. Club members are encouraged to review these guidelines for discussion at the December meeting.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the J.B. Owen Memorial Endowment is to honor the memory of J.B. Owen, longtime Tennessee Ornithological Society (TOS) member known to thousands in East Tennessee through his columns in Knoxville newspapers. J.B. Owen was an active member of the Knoxville Chapter of TOS (KTOS) from 1947 until his death in 2002. He was awarded the TOS Distinguished Service Award in 1990 (Nicholson, C.P. 2001. "In Memoriam: J.B. Owen (1915-2001)," *"The Migrant,"* 72(1): 34-35, Knoxville, TN, March). The Endowment provides funds for projects that promote the study of birds in Tennessee through research, conservation, and environmental education, including nature writing.

J.B. OWEN FUND COMMITTEE: The J.B. Owen Endowment Committee of KTOS administers the Endowment; determines whether specific projects satisfy the PURPOSE; and makes recommendations for use of Endowment funds, for approval by majority vote of the Officers of KTOS. The Committee can set requirements for monitoring use of Endowment funds, milestones and deliverables. The Treasurer of KTOS is Chairperson of the Committee. Other members of KTOS serve on the Committee on a voluntary basis. Committee membership is approved annually by majority vote of the Officers of KTOS. There are no restrictions on the size of the Committee or on the length of service of Committee members.

ENDOWMENT LEVEL: It is intended that the Endowment be increased through gifts, projects sponsored by KTOS, and other sources.

FUNDING LEVEL: The target funding level for a given year is five percent of the Endowment value at the beginning of that year. However, given variability in Endowment earnings, the actual funding level for projects is to be recommended by the Committee for approval by majority vote of the Officers of KTOS. In the case of unused funds, the Committee may decide to carry the funds over to fund projects the following year or to place such funds in the Endowment.

KTOS CONTRIBUTION: If the Endowment does not generate sufficient proceeds to support the FUNDING LEVEL, the Committee may request that KTOS make up the shortfall from its treasury. Such request must be approved by majority vote of the Officers of KTOS, and then presented for approval by majority vote of members in attendance at a General Meeting of KTOS.

REPORTING: The Committee shall provide a report at the General Meeting of KTOS in May of each year as to the projects funded, the KTOS contribution, operating expenses, and other pertinent information as to the status of the Endowment and its administration.

OPERATING COSTS: Operating expenses (e.g., postage, stationary) associated with administering the Endowment shall be paid from the treasury of KTOS as part of the general business of KTOS, unless otherwise directed by the Officers of KTOS.

CHANGE OF RULES, TERMINATION OF ENDOWMENT, ETC: The Endowment thus established may be changed in any way, including termination, by the Committee, with approval by majority vote of members in attendance at a General Meeting of KTOS. Changes will be reported as described in REPORTING.

HOT CUP! What better way to prepare for an early morning of birding than with a steaming hot cup of your favorite beverage? And what better container to hold that beverage than the KTOS Thermos Cup. The lidded vessels are emblazoned with the KTOS logo and can be purchased at the next KTOS meeting. Profits from the sale of these attractive white cups will go to the J. B. Owen Memorial Endowment Fund.

Here's a hint: They make great holiday gifts, stocking stuffers and eggnog mugs!





Presidential Perch

It's once again time for the annual Christmas Bird Count season, an event begun over 100 years ago as a means of seeing how many birds could be counted without the use of a shotgun. Here are some questions and answers about this event.

How does the Count work?

The counts, sponsored by the National Audubon Society (NAS), are conducted between December 14 and January 5 each season. Each count is a circle with a diameter of 15 miles. Usually the circle is separated into territories where individual birders or teams of birders spend as much time as possible during the 24 hour count period counting every bird they can identify. Numbers are totaled and sent to the local count compiler who then sends the data to NAS where it is loaded into a huge database, allowing for comparisons from year to year.

Who participates in the count?

Over 50,000 birders take part in nearly 2000 CBC's throughout North and South America and the Caribbean. All birders are asked to take part. If you consider yourself a novice birder, you should go with someone with more experience. This will help improve your own bird identification skills. But be sure to do your part to help with actual counting and identifying birds. If you live within a count circle and

will not be spending time birding in the field, you are still encouraged to participate. Feeder watchers are a big part of many CBCs. The North Bay, Ontario, circle has over 800 participants, 825 of which are feeder watchers—all for a total of about 45 species!

Why do we Count?

Of all the sciences, ornithology probably receives the greatest contribution from non-scientists—birders. The data collected can be used to identify trends in species populations, or to help understand how weather affects where birds spend the winter. Some bird clubs use the counts as a social event, gathering afterwards to compare results, or giving prizes to the team with the most species.

Why do we have to pay \$5 to participate?

Ah, one of the most asked questions of the CBC. NAS uses the money to defray the costs of maintaining the database as well as printing and mailing a summary booklet to all the participants. Don't let the cost keep you from participating, however. You can still contribute your numbers, but your name won't appear in the summary report.

When taking part in any count, do your best to make correct identifications. If you're unsure of any species, it's ok to report it as 'unidentified duck', 'accipiter species', Downy/Hairy Woodpecker, etc.

Finally, it's important to remember to HAVE FUN on the Christmas Bird Counts!! For more info, see: <http://www.birdsource.org/go> to "Choose a project" ... "Christmas Bird Count" - David Trently

State TOS Fall Meeting, Board Meeting Notes - By Laurie Mooney

Columbia, TN • November 1-3, 2002

- Chris Sloan is now the state treasurer, effective 11/02/02.

- Any articles you have for the "Migrant" should be submitted to Chris Welsh.

- The state finance committee is still in need of volunteers, if you are interested contact Chuck Nicholson.

- Tnbirds.org - State TOS website. The website is receiving an average of 130 visits a day. Chapter material on the web site needs to be current. If someone is interested in reviewing and updating the Knoxville section of the website, contact Chuck Nicholson. More information can be added as well.

- Putting the "Migrant" on-line is being discussed. This has been discussed at several of the past state meetings. An approximate cost will be submitted at the May 2003 meeting as well as if the money is available in the "Migrant" trust.

- Spring 2003 meeting - May 2-4, 2003. Knoxville, TN, Episcopal School of Knoxville meeting location. More detailed information will be in the next issue of the "Warbler."

- Winter Meeting, Jan. 2003. This is not an official TOS Business Meeting. It is tentatively planned for the Duck River WMA. A specific date and location will be provided later.

Motions Passed:

- The president of the TOS will appoint proxy voters if one of the members of the Conservation Committee has a conflict.

- The president of the TOS will appoint a new Conservation Policy Committee chairman and 5 members to represent TOS in the political arena. The TOS board of directors will set the policies and guidelines.

KTOS State Board of Directors members are Dev Joslin, Ron Hoff, Chris Welsh, Dan Mooney & Laurie Mooney.

A pair of memorable sightings - by Kay Wilson

Every year I have one or two birding experiences that I consider to be special. Here are my two favorites for 2002.

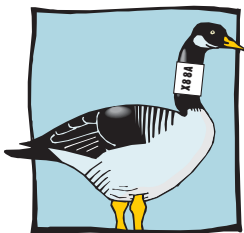
- In August while doing some casual birding in Michigan I spotted a medium size nondescript bird sitting on a bare tree branch with a very small bird sitting alongside it. How unusual, I thought.

After watching for awhile, I figured out what was going on. The bigger bird was a juvenile Brown-headed Cowbird, the little bird was a Common Yellowthroat. As I continued to observe, the Yellowthroat flew off and brought food back several times and fed it to that big loafer!

- In September I took my binocs out on the deck one evening expecting to enjoy the "usual" birds in my backyard. Surprise! Lifting up my binocs, the first thing I saw was a big Yellow-billed Cuckoo feasting leisurely on caterpillars in the nearby wild cherry tree.

He apparently didn't mind being observed as he continued moving slowly through the branches with head tilted and using that big yellow ringed eye to

spot his prey. None of my bird books do justice to the beauty of that bird.



Wanted: Goose Band Sightings!

Before passing off that Canada Goose as "just another goose," we are asking you to take a second look to see if any have neck bands.

Kelly Roy of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory is asking for details of geese with collars having the following black letters on white background combinations:

AA, AC, AE, AJ, AK, AR, CM, CP, CR, CT, CU, CX, CY, EA, EC, EP, JA, JP, JT, JU, JY, TH, TJ, UX, and XA

(These letters will have two numbers between them, e.g. X88A)

Geese with leg bands should be reported as well. Information needed includes the date seen and the specific location. Send reports to:

W. Kelly Roy, roywk@ornl.gov
Oak Ridge Nat'l Laboratory, P. O. Box 2008
B-1505 MS-6036, Oak Ridge TN 37831-6351
Ph (865) 574-7422, Fax (865) 576-3989

KTOS Membership

Renew your membership with KTOS by mailing your annual dues to Jerry Hadder, 18 Rockingham Lane, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. Membership fees are \$18 for an individual and \$20 for a family. Sustaining memberships are \$28 and a Life membership with TOS is \$200 with an annual fee of \$8 to the local chapter.

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