



KNOXVILLE CHAPTER OF THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Please join us on **Wednesday, December 1, 2017** at 6:30 pm in Room 118 of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, located at 2505 EJ Chapman Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919

This month's topic is "Birding Florida - a Photographic Safari"

Go on a Photographic Safari with Barry Spruce, Scott Keller, and Jimmy Tucker. The trio will regale us with stories of their journeys from the Spring of 2017. They ventured to: Bunche Beach, Sanibel Beach, Ding Darling, Stormwater Treatment #5 and Celery Fields in Sarasota. Be ready to be awed and amazed at their beautiful shots and fun stories.



Item's of Business from November's Meeting

Last month we nominated two charitable items to vote on at November's meeting:

1. Chuck Estes - Eaglebend is in need of Starling Proof Purple Martin Gourds. We will vote on how many to get for Eaglebend.
2. Donation of \$150 to Lynn McCoy.
3. Morton Massey - Donation of \$250 to Treemont.

Please note the rules of expenditures:

Expenditures above \$100, or which are not approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee, may be approved by a majority vote of members at a general meeting. For events incurring numerous expenses a budget shall be prepared and presented for approval by a majority vote of members at a general meeting.

Basically, we nominate one month and vote the next!



Bird of the Month - The Wild Turkey

Ben Franklin thought the turkey would have made a better national bird than the Bald Eagle. No, he wasn't crazy. He disapproved of the eagle because of its scavenging habits and because the eagle had no obvious economic value—Franklin was not an ecologist understanding the interconnections between species, he was the man who wrote “A penny saved is a penny earned,” and he was a man who appreciated good food. Of course he'd prefer the turkey.

John James Audubon, who painted most of the birds of the continent, chose the Wild Turkey as the very first painting in his *Birds of America*. He studied birds as they went about their lives, but shot them in order to paint them. When he was working in the American wilderness, he had no access to stores, so would eat birds after painting them. This may be why he so appreciated the turkey. He made the Bald Eagle his second drawing in the book, but had an excellent reason to give priority to the turkey—somehow a bird that feasts on carrion and fish just doesn't taste very good.



Turkeys are native to the Americas, but English colonists were already familiar with them before arriving in America. Turkeys had been domesticated in Mexico for millennia before conquistadors brought them back to Spain and traded them with people in Europe and the Middle East. They made their way via trade to Britain by 1532, and many of the colonists had eaten those farm birds. When the first English colonists arrived in America, imagine how thrilled they were with the real thing. The turkeys they encountered here were thrillingly wary, intelligent creatures, not the silly birds whose wildness and spirit had been dampened by domestication. And turkeys living in pre-Columbian eastern forests were fattened on American chestnuts, beechnuts, and acorns, making them far more delicious than those eating chicken scratch. Whether or not participants of the first Thanksgiving dinner feasted on turkey, there is small wonder that the tradition become so entrenched.

Besides their deliciousness to human palates, turkeys played an important role in the American landscape. Their primary food from late summer through winter is “mast”—acorns, hickory nuts, walnuts, and beechnuts. Turkeys swallow even the hardest nuts whole. A muscular chamber of their stomach (the gizzard) easily pulverizes even the toughest, thickest of shells. One 18th century physiologist found that a turkey's stomach could completely mash up 24 walnuts in 24 hours. Another scientist of the same century fed steel needles to a turkey and found that its gizzard ground them into tiny pieces within 36 hours. Fortunately for both us and them, the turkeys we eat on Thanksgiving weren't fed steel needles, so we don't have to worry about what's in our giblet gravy.

Turkeys eat other food items as well as mast. They are true omnivores, feeding on berries, fruits, soft seeds, and small animals, from insects, snails, and slugs to the eggs and chicks of ground-nesting birds.

Wild Turkeys were once abundant in the forested parts of the country. They were almost wiped out because of at least three different things:

- Clearing so many forests for farms and cities and to use the wood for building materials destroyed their habitat.
- One of their primary foods, the American chestnut, was wiped out from chestnut blight.
- They were terribly overhunted, especially by people selling them to stores and restaurants (market hunters).



Fortunately, turkeys have been reintroduced where their populations were wiped out, some of their habitat has been restored, and conservation laws now protect them from being overhunted, so right now turkeys are found in a much wider range than they had when colonists first arrived in America.

Turkeys can survive cold temperatures in winter as long as deep snows don't cover too many of the acorns and other food they find on the ground.



Please go to: www.knoxvillebirding.org for all KTOS information.

- Calendar (Fieldtrip Info)
- Newsletters
- Membership Information
- Contact Us
- FaceBook
- Photo Share
- Resources



Being part of a like minded community is important. Please remember to check the status of your membership. Morton Massey will be happy to answer any questions. You can email him at knoxtnbirds@gmail.com. Please remember to put "Membership" in the subject line.



Field trips and social gatherings are a great way of getting to know one another. Fields trips can be lead by any of our members regardless of skill level. We all can learn from one another. If you have an idea or would like to lead a trip, please contact Melinda Fawver at knoxtnbirds@gmail.com. Please remember to put "Field Trip" in the subject line. Please remember to tell Melinda that she is doing an amazing job!

Since field trips are ever changing, we will not be adding them to the newsletter. Always check the Calendar at www.knoxvillebirding.org to view upcoming Field Trips, Festivals, Bird Counts and Social Gatherings.

Shade grown coffee is a great product and environmental friendly for our beloved feathered friends.

To order shade-grown coffee, email David Johnson and Jean Alexander at jjadmj@yahoo.com. Your order must be turned in Thursday night before for meeting each month. David and Jean bring orders to the monthly meetings.

Thank you, David and Jean for your continued service!

Sun-Grown Coffee	Shade-Grown Coffee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Grows faster ✗ Requires more water, fertilizer and pesticides ✗ Supports less biodiversity ✗ Degrades ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grows slower ✓ Requires less water, fertilizer and pesticides ✓ Supports greater biodiversity ✓ Sustains healthy ecosystems ✓ Allows farmers economic diversification ✓ Tastes better



Cat Wars' is a well-written summary of a complicated problem

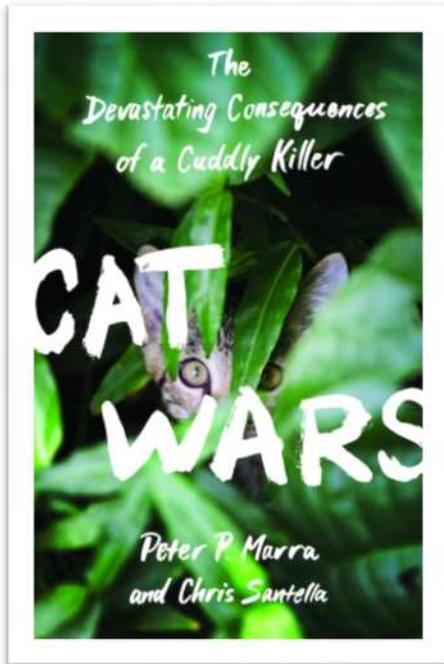
Joel Greenberg reviews 'Cat Wars,' a book about a complicated problem that deserves great attention: the impact of cats on birds and other wildlife. By Joel Greenberg | Published: 10/5/2017

The controversy has been raging for years now between those who oppose the lethal control of outdoor cats and those who see such measures as an essential element in protecting biodiversity.

The data are clear that cats on the prowl, whether feral or owned, consume vast numbers of wildlife. The authors of this important new book cite a study that quantified the annual carnage in the United States: from 1.3 billion to 4 billion birds; 6.3 billion to 22.3 billion mammals; 95 million to 299 million amphibians; and 258 million to 822 million reptiles (Loss et al., 2013).



The impacts of cats on smaller landmasses can be particularly devastating. One study attributed 14 percent of all animal extinctions on islands to cat predation. On Stephens Island, off New Zealand, it appears that the island's eponymous "wren" was obliterated through the efforts of Tibbles, the lighthouse keepers' pet, and her progeny.



Denial of the numbers seems to be eroding, but many cat advocates still contest the need for lethal control. They have resorted, in large measure, to advocating trap-neuter-return, a program in which people provide food to cats, concentrating them, and then capture, neuter, and return the animals to the wild. The assertion is that, by receiving food and being rendered sterile, the treated cats will slowly disappear through natural mortality as they live out their lives free of the need to hunt. As Peter Marra and Chris Santella effectively document, however, the assertions are simply not so for two principal reasons: "caretakers fail to trap and neuter enough cats," and "most colonies are constantly receiving new animals."

The ecological issues involving the predatory nature of a carnivore like the domestic cat are pretty obvious. But *Cat Wars* also devotes attention to the various diseases that cats can host. The authors give two recent examples of human deaths caused by cat-borne pathogens: a man in Colorado who died of *Yersinia pestis*, the bacteria behind the various types of plague, and a girl who succumbed to rabies in New York. The health risk to humans is recognized by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, which maintains that "stray dogs, cats, and ferrets should be removed from the community."

The parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* can also thrive in cats and cause great harm to both humans and wildlife, particularly marine organisms. The authors attribute the spread of the parasite by cats as a serious impediment to the preservation of such rare species as Hawaiian Crow, Hawaiian monk seal, and sea otters.

Cat Wars covers not only the data corroborating the problems posed by loose cats but also the people involved in the story. Marra and Santella interview researchers and activists on both sides. The reader learns of efforts underway to bridge differences between factions, so the massive mortality caused by cats can be effectively reduced. This is a well-written summary of a complicated problem that deserves great attention. To ignore the facts and adopt ineffective measures will only hasten the impoverishment of our planet's biodiversity.

Joel Greenberg was a founder and principal of [Project Passenger Pigeon](#) and is the author of *A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction* (Bloomsbury, 2014) and other books. In our February 2014 issue, he co-authored an article about the [demise of the Passenger Pigeon](#).

KTOS membership: Join or renew by mailing your annual dues to Morton Massey, 6932 Westland Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919. Dues levels: \$26/individual, \$30/family, \$38/sustaining, \$13/student (high school or younger), or TOS life membership for \$450 with \$8 annual fee to Chapter.



2017 - 2018

Chapter Officers / Staff

President

Jimmy Tucker

Vice President

Merikay Waldvogel

Treasurer

Morton Massey

Secretary

Talissa Ralph

Newsletter Editor / Website

Amy Tucker

Discover Birds

Tom Howe

Field Trip Coordinator

Melinda Fawver

State Directors

Ron Hoff

Dollyann Myers

State Directors

Michael Plaster

Chris Welsh

For more information :

knoxtnbirds@gmail.com

Please remember to put your inquiry in the subject line. Example: Membership, Discover Birds, etc...

Presidential Perch



Hello All,

This is a season to be thankful. I (Amy) am thankful that my husband taught me to love birds. I am thankful to get to know each and everyone of you. I am thankful to live vicariously through our globe trotting members. There is a big world out there and so many birds and animals to see. Please love your family this upcoming holiday and share the love of birding to anyone who will listen. We will see you in December.

*May Love and Laughter light your days and warm your heart and home
May Good and Faithful friends by yours wherever you may roam
May Peace and Plenty bless your world with joy that long endures
May all life's passing seasons bring the best to you and yours*

From our home to yours, Slainte!

Happy Thanksgiving, The Tuckers

Thank you to Bill Keeler for stepping in and helping out with the greeting! He is a natural!

Thank you to Morton Massey for doing informative and fantastic eBird Ed Sessions.

Please thank Tony King for his dedication to our group. It is not easy lugging those coffee cups around. Please be sure to sign up and bring a treat to the next meeting.

Thank you to all of the author's and photographers that contributed to this newsletter.

A big THANK YOU to all those who participate in the Discover Birds Program. They are the ones molding our next generation of birders!

Thank You



Would you like to learn more about birding apps and how to use them? Does birding photography interest you? Have you ever wanted to Bird by ear? Have you ever wanted to take a transcontinental trip but didn't know how to go about planning? All of these questions could be answered. We would like to gauge the interest of you, our members. Please let us know your thoughts by emailing us at knoxtnbirds@gmail.com. Please remember to put "Ed Sessions" in the subject line.

Be on the lookout for new Social Gatherings. We are thinking of doing the following: Wings and Wine, Birding and Beer, Progressive Birding, Birding and Brunch.

If you would like to host a small event please email knoxtnbirds@gmail.com. Please remember to put "Social Gathering" in the subject line.

