

VOLUME 26 • NUMBER 1

FEB 2003

# through the biKNOXulars

Newsletter of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

## Well-traveled Bob Steffy to present KTOS slide show at February 5th meeting

**M**embers, friends and anyone interested in birds are invited to attend the February 5th meeting of the Knoxville Chapter of TOS. We will start with a short business meeting that will include news about the upcoming Annual TOS meeting which our chapter will host here May 2-4. (Look for the announcement of the keynote speaker on page 3.)

Following business, Bob Steffy, our former treasurer and one of the more traveled of our members will present the KTOS slide show.

The show is of general interest to birders of all levels in East Tennessee and members are welcome to

check it out to show to scouts, churches, schools or other groups of people, especially kids and people who are interested in birds but are not experienced field birders.

Please join us! The meeting officially starts at 7:30 pm, but folks start to arrive to socialize at 7:00.

We meet in Room 117 (across the hall from Pendergrass Library), UT Vet School on Center Drive 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 CALENDAR

## February is loaded with birding activities

### *KTOS Field Trips*

**Sunday, February 2, 2:00 PM**

*Eastern States W.M.A. See page 1.*

**Saturday, February 8, 7:30 AM**

*Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge. See page 2.*

**Sunday, February 23, 2:00 PM**

*Freels Bend, Oak Ridge, TN. See page 2.*

### *Other Birding Activities*

**Sandhill Crane Weekend: Feb. 7 - 9**

*Kick-off in Chattanooga. See page 4.*

**Great Backyard Bird Count: Feb. 14 - 17**

*Count your feeder birds. See page 3.*

**TOS Winter Meeting: Feb. 21 - 23**

*Winter Meeting/Birding Weekend. See page 3.*

**Sunday, February 2, 2003, 2:00 PM**

*Eastern States Wildlife Management Area*

**Leader:** David Trently (dtrently@utk.edu; 974-8664 w; 531-1473 h)

HERE'S SOMETHING NEW WE'D LIKE TO TRY — SOMETHING WE PROBABLY SHOULD HAVE STARTED A LONG TIME AGO. THE EMPHASIS OF THIS TRIP WILL BE TO HELP IMPROVE BIRD ID SKILLS. WE WILL SPEND TIME STUDYING INDIVIDUAL BIRDS, USING VARIOUS FIELD GUIDES AS WE OBSERVE FIELD MARKS AND BEHAVIOR. WE WON'T BE TRYING TO SEE AS MANY SPECIES AS WE CAN, BUT TO HELP YOU REALLY LEARN THE ONES THAT ARE PRESENT. IF THIS PROVES TO BE A SUCCESSFUL FORM OF TRIP, WE WILL PLAN MORE LIKE THIS IN THE FUTURE.

*(Continued on page 2)*

*"You've always reminded me of a seagull, Jo. Strong and wild and fond of the wind and storms."*

- Beth (Jean Parker) to Jo (Katharine Hepburn) in *Little Women*, 1933. Screenwriters: Heerman and Mason.

## Field Trips - Let's go birding!

(Continued from page 1)

Meet in the UT Vet School parking lot on the corner of Neyland Drive and Center Drive. We'll be going to the area between Ijams and the forks of the river. It has a varied habitat, including woodlands, open fields and riparian areas. Wear good boots because some parts of it can be wet. Bring something to drink and we will be finished by 5:00 PM.

### Saturday, February 8, 2003, 7:30 AM

*Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge, Birchwood, TN*

**Coordinator:** Harold Howell  
(howellh2@bellsouth.net, 865-828-6302)

Meet at the Stokley Building parking lot at 320 North Cedar Bluff Rd. for carpooling. The group will go to Birchwood for Sandhill Crane Viewing Days sponsored by the Chattanooga Chapter of the TOS. Sandhill Cranes are the target birds, but a good number of ducks are possible, and there is good sparrow habitat nearby.

### Sunday, February 23, 2003, 2:00 PM

*Freels Bend, Oak Ridge, TN*

For those not attending the TOS State Meeting, Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning (TCWP), Advocates for the Oak ridge Reservation (AFORR)

and the Knoxville Chapter of TOS invite you to come visit Freels Bend on the Oak Ridge Reservation.

Freels Bend is part of the Three Bends Scenic and Wildlife Management Area, which is normally closed to the public. We will see the historic Freels Bend Log Cabin, an interesting cave entrance, perhaps tiger salamanders and/or tiger salamander eggs. The scenic trails through the area pass through a number of habitats including small coves and wetlands, considerable shoreline of Melton Hill Reservoir, grasslands, shrublands and hardwood forest. Possible birds of interest include a variety of waterfowl, raptors and sparrows.

We will meet in the parking lot of the American Museum of Science and Energy at 2:00 PM and caravan from there to Freels Bend. We may divide into groups based on interests. Larry Pounds, renowned local botanist and Jim Evans, wildlife and bird specialist from TWRA, will co-lead the trip.

The weekend of February 14-15 is open at this time. We may have a trip for that weekend to discuss at the meeting. If you have suggestions, comments or wish to lead a particular hike, please e-mail Harold Howell at howellh2@bellsouth.net or call 865-828-6302. These trips and any updates will be posted on the KTOS hotline at Ijams Nature Center, phone 577-4717, extension 80.

- Best regards, Harold

## Pelagic Birding Trip to Cape Hatteras, NC being planned

**B**ecause of interest in weekend and out-of-state birding trips, I thought I would plan a special trip for this coming spring. More information will come on future issues of "through the biKNOXulars," but I wanted to get you a head start on planning, in case you want to fit this into your schedule.

The trip will be:

### Pelagic Birding Trip to Cape Hatteras, NC

Date will depend on when more KTOS birders can attend. Options are:

- May 31 (Saturday) and June 1 (Sunday)
- June 7 (Saturday) and June 8 (Sunday)

Pelagic trip cost will be \$90 per person (that only pays for the day on the boat, you will also need to consider lodging, food and travel costs).

If enough people sign up for this trip, we may be able to get some discounts.

To help avoid seasickness while on board, a good night's rest the evening before going out to sea is recommended. Thus, we may plan to drive out there two days before the scheduled voyage. We'll spend the day before voyage birding all over the coastal area. Then we'll likely drive home the day after the trip. So it's at least a 4-day trip.

Check out the following web page for LOTS of great info about pelagic birding:  
<http://www.patteson.com/>

Let me know if and when you might like to go. There's plenty of time to plan, but we might as well get started....

- David Trently, President, KTOS

## Foothills Land Conservancy receives first J. B. Owen Award

The Knoxville Chapter of TOS has selected the Foothills Land Conservancy to receive the first J.B. Owen Award.

J.B. Owen Awards provide funds for projects that promote the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee.

This Award, in the amount of \$250.00, is for

support of the Conservancy's important work in the acquisition of wetlands—for the welfare and conservation of cranes and other birds—in the area between the Yuchi and Hiwassee Island Refuges.

The Award will be presented to Randy Brown, Executive Director of the Conservancy, at the February meeting of the Bird Club.

 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

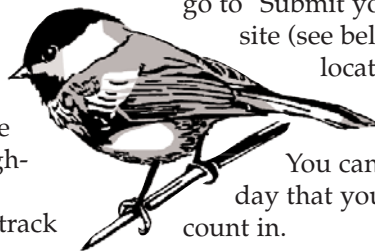
## The Great Backyard Bird Count is Feb. 14 - 17

The sixth annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will be February 14-17, 2003.

Here's what you do:

• **How to count:** On the day(s) that you count, watch your bird feeders, or take a short walk (less than 1 mile) in your neighborhood or park.

For each species of bird you see, keep track of the highest number of individuals that you observe at any ONE time. Be careful not to count the same bird over and over! If you record only the highest number of individual birds you see in view at one time, you're sure to never count the same bird twice.



• **Submitting your tallies:** At the end of the day go to "Submit your bird checklist" on our GBBC website (see below). Fill out the questions about your location, local habitat and count duration.

Then enter your high counts for each species sited on that day and location. You can submit one bird checklist for each day that you count or for each new area that you count in.

• **Problems Getting Access to the Internet?** Many libraries, schools, bird clubs and other community-based groups will be helping, too.

For more information or to report your tallies go online to BirdSource at [www.birdsource.org](http://www.birdsource.org). You also can go online to check the results for your city, state or any other location you like.

The GBBC is a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It is sponsored by Wild Birds Unlimited.

### GBBC statistics from 2002:

Total Checklists Submitted:	46,546
Total Species Observed:	505
Total Individual Birds Counted:	4,727,536

 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## Robbins announced as TOS keynoter

Chandler Robbins will be the keynote speaker at this year's TOS Annual Meeting to be held here May 2-4 at the Episcopal School of Knoxville.

Robbins is a Wildlife Research Biologist, formerly with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and now with the Biological Resources Division of the U. S. Geological Survey. For the past 57 years he has been stationed at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland, studying migratory bird populations.

Robbins attended Harvard, then did graduate work at George Washington University and the University of Maryland. He received the ABA's Ludlow Griscom Conservation and Education award, and was recently called a "living legend" by Ted Floyd, editor of "Birding."

Watch upcoming newsletters for more details about this year's Annual TOS meeting.

- Charlie Muise, program coordinator

 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## TOS Winter Meeting Feb. 21-23 at Camden, TN

The 2003 Winter Meeting/Birding Weekend will be February 21-23 at Camden. Field trips on Saturday and Sunday will be to the Big Sandy and Duck River units of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge. See the TOS website [www.tnbirds.org](http://www.tnbirds.org) for full details.

- Chuck Nicholson, TOS President

## Kingbird Kaufman and storyteller Kingfisher to kick off Cherokee Heritage and Sandhill Crane Weekend, Feb. 7 - 9

**T**he 11th Annual Cherokee Heritage and Sandhill Crane Viewing Days will be held February 7-9, 2003. The event has become so popular that it has been extended an extra day.

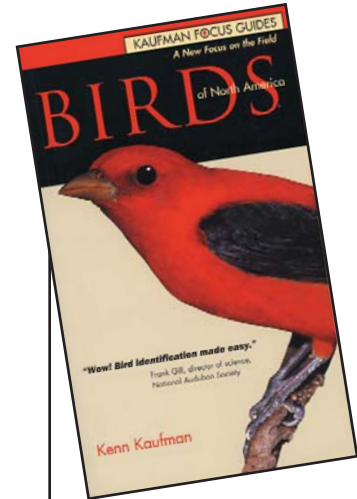
This year, the event will begin with a kick-off fundraiser on Friday evening, February 7, at the Chattanooga Choo-Choo. The Friday night kick-off "An Evening for the Birds," will feature Kenn Kaufman, world-renowned author, illustrator and bird expert. Kaufman will be joined by Choogie Kingfisher, Kituwah-Cherokee storyteller from the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. Kingfisher has received widespread recognition as a storyteller of traditional Cherokee myths and legends.

Admission for the Friday night kick-off is \$15.00 and includes a ticket to sample desserts donated from restaurants throughout the Chattanooga area. There will also be a silent auction. Proceeds from the kick-off will benefit bird conservation and habitat protection along the Hiwassee/Tennessee River corridor and the Cherokee Memorial being developed on the Hiwassee Refuge. For lodging, the Chattanooga Choo-Choo is offering a special \$69 package: call 1 (800) 872-2529. For event details or to purchase a ticket, go to [www.chattanooga.org](http://www.chattanooga.org) or call (423) 886-4130.

The main events for the weekend will take place on Saturday, February 8 at the Birchwood School in Birchwood, Tennessee. Exhibits featuring traditional arts and crafts of the Cherokee will be on display and a variety of guest speakers will be present discussing the unique wildlife and cultural heritage of the area. (See schedule below.) A special program will be available for children, led by Alicia Craig, noted children's education specialist and Senior Manager of Nature Education for Wild Birds Unlimited, Inc.

A variety of activities will also be available for adults, including guided bird watching hikes, wildlife viewing of sandhill cranes and bald eagles. The event is sponsored by the Chattanooga Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

For more information go online to: [www.state.tn.us/twra/](http://www.state.tn.us/twra/)



• *Kenn Kaufman is a gifted speaker and author of several books including the Peterson Field Guide to Advanced Birding, Kingbird Highway, and Birds of North America. He is currently a field editor for Audubon and a columnist for numerous magazines.*

• *Choogie Kingfisher is a traditional storyteller of the Cherokee Nation. He has received widespread recognition for his storytelling of traditional Cherokee legends and myths.*

### Activity Schedule • Birchwood School & Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge

#### Saturday, February 8

- 8:00 AM Learn Backyard Birds... Kevin Calhoun, TN Aquarium
- 9:00 AM Hot Breakfast..... Birchwood School Cafeteria
- 9:30 AM Birds of Prey Program..... American Eagle Foundation
- 10:30 AM Cherokee Tales..... Choogie Kingfisher
- 11:30 AM Children's Bird Program.. Alicia Craig, Kenn Kaufman
- 1:00 PM Bird Tracking..... Dr. David Aborn, U.T. Chattanooga
- 2:00 PM Cherokee Tools..... Choogie Kingfisher
- 3:00 PM "The Trail Where They Cried" .. Meigs H. S. Drama Class
- 4:00 PM Traditional Music... Morgan, Haas, Roberts & Redbird

#### ALL DAY

- Displays, Arts and Crafts..... Birchwood School
- Shuttle Buses to Hiwassee Refuge to see cranes and other birds

#### Sunday, February 9

- Crane viewing continues at Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge

#### Directions:

Birchwood is located on TN Hwy. 60, three miles from the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge, midway between Dayton and Cleveland.

- From I-40, take U.S. Hwy. 58 south to TN Hwy. 60, turning right (north) on Hwy. 60.
- From I-75, take TN Hwy. 60 north to Birchwood. Follow signs to the event.

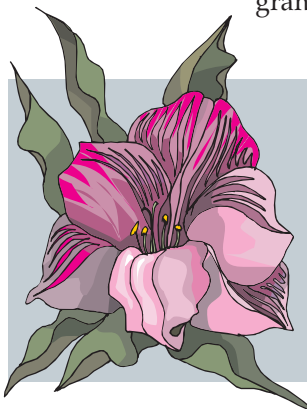
## Louise Fuller, longtime KTOS member and leader, passes away

Louise Marshall Fant Fuller, 84, long active in the Knoxville Chapter of TOS died Friday, December 6, after suffering from Alzheimer's for a number of years.

Lou was KTOS President (1988-89) and Secretary (1984-87). She was very active in TOS' efforts to preserve valuable publicly owned property, such as the Eastern Wildlife Management Area, Lakeshore Park and House Mountain State Park and was on a committee appointed by Mayor Ashe to study improvements to Sharp's Ridge. She and Marcia Davis planned the non-credit birding course at UT; she was active in the Breeding Bird Atlas project; she suggested the chapter history that J.B. eventually wrote; and spent countless hours in a successful effort to preserve land near Ijams. Lou was also named one of "Knoxville's 200" as one aspect of the celebration of Knoxville's 200th birthday.

Lou was a retired instructor in the University of Tennessee English Department and earned her Master's Degree there. She was preceded in death by

her husband, Dr. H. Woodrow Fuller. She is survived by a son, George Carey Fuller of Boulder, Colorado, daughter Margaret Fuller Sadler of Knoxville, four grandchildren, a sister and a brother.



In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to: TOS, c/o Jerry Hadder, 18 Rockingham Lane, Oak Ridge, TN 37830; Friends of the Smokies, PO 5650, Sevierville, TN 37864; the Knox County Public Library, Sequoyah Branch, 1140 Southgate Road, Knoxville, TN 37919, or to the library of your choice.

Lou's passion for the important causes she championed should serve to inspire all of us. Sadly many of us feel that we lost Lou some years ago when her brilliant mind was dimmed by Alzheimer's. And

I will remember her passion for writing the English language correctly and concisely, and I can only hope that this note does not contain too many words or punctuation errors which would have attracted her red pen!

- Barbara Finney

## J. B. Owen Memorial Award

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 2001. 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 the annual J.B. Owen Award, with expected value of \$250 to \$500 per year.

The J.B. Owen Award is open to anyone with a project that promotes the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee. Applicants should submit the following information:

- Cover letter with short project description and applicant contact information
- Resume
- Project proposal, of up to three pages, showing topic of the project, problem to be addressed, objectives, expected results and significance, deliverables (for example, written report, journal article, presentation), project location and project schedule.

Each year, applications are due by May 1 and should be sent (preferably) by e-mail to: [marieoakes@msn.com](mailto:marieoakes@msn.com) or mailed to Jerry Hadder, 18 Rockingham Lane, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830. The J.B. Owen Endowment Committee of KTOS will evaluate applications and will typically announce the J.B. Owen Award winner the following September.



## Presidential Perch

It's February. Not exactly the month birders long for. By now we may have seen most of the birds that winter in our region, CBC's are over and we start to think about the upcoming spring migration, which seems so far away (Purple Martins are already back in Florida ;-). What's a birder to do?!

Why not spend some time meeting with other birders? This month we have two excellent opportunities for this. The Sandhill Crane Viewing Days and the TOS Winter Meeting. Both will offer fine birding and the ability to share stories with other birders from across the state.

It's also a good time to study birds. While sitting home tired of the cold, open a book and try to make the varied gull plumages less confusing. Or learn, really learn, the common birds. Experienced birders recommend studying the common birds so that something out of the ordinary is easier to notice.

Sparrows for instance. Have you ever marveled at how a birder can pick out an uncommon sparrow species from a group of dozens of similar-looking

"little brown jobs" skulking through dense vegetation?

What's the secret? Being so familiar with regularly occurring species that you can quickly recognize something with a different appearance, or even behavior. Song Sparrow is a really good one to start with. You should see them every time you go birding in East Tennessee, every month of the year. With practice, you can even recognize them in flight.

To help you get started, we're offering a new kind of field trip this month: a Bird Identification Field Trip. We won't be trying to see as many birds as possible. We may end up spending a half hour looking at just one bird...really looking at it, with field guides open. Looking at every field mark we can see. Watching how the bird feeds, flies, walks, what sounds it makes. Then comparing that to similar species we may find.

If this proves to be something useful, we'll try to do more of these type trips. So come on out and forget that it's February. Start to hone your birding skills before all those colorful songbirds start to return.

You'll be happy you did when you find yourself quickly identifying the dozens of Yellow-rumped Warblers and then spending most of your time picking out that really rare Kirtland's Warbler instead!!!

- David Trently, President KTOS

## 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.

**PRESIDENT.....David Trently**  
1029 Morrow Rd.  
Knoxville, TN 37923 (865) 531-1473  
dtrently@utk.edu

**VICE-PRESIDENT.....Charlie Muise**  
9068 Tremont Rd.  
Townsend, TN 37882 (865) 448-1736  
cmmbirds@yahoo.com

**TREASURER.....Jerry Hadder**  
18 Rockingham Lane  
Oak Ridge, TN 37830 (865) 483-9287  
marieoakes@msn.com

**SECRETARY.....Don Vowell**  
6909 Quail Dr.  
Knoxville, TN 37919  
don@vowell-law.com

**EDITOR.....Stephen Lyn Bales**  
1801 Kemper Ln.  
Knoxville, TN 37920 (865) 577-6978  
lbales@ijams.org

**EDITOR (Distribution)...Cindy Day**  
11417 N. Couch Mill Rd.  
Knoxville, TN 37931-2908 (865)927-1417  
n.c.day@worldnet.att.net

## TOS HOME PAGE: [HTTP://WWW.TNBIRDS.ORG](http://www.tnbirds.org)

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