



# through the biKNOXulars

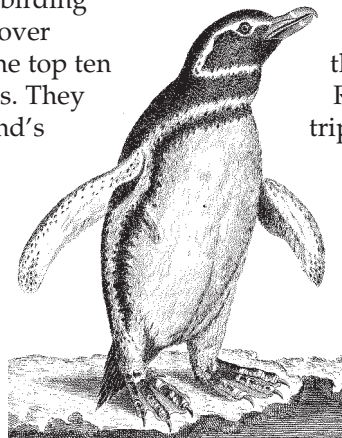
Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

## The Sub-Antarctic Islands of New Zealand and Australia are topic of February 2 program

**W**ednesday, February 2, KTOS member Ron Hoff will present "The Sub-Antarctic Islands of New Zealand and Australia."

Ron Hoff and his wife Dollyann Myers have traveled to more than 50 countries on birding excursions. Dollyann's life list is now over 5,850 species of birds, putting her in the top ten of American Birding Association listers. They have declared their trip to New Zealand's sub-Antarctic islands as one of their favorites ever.

The New Zealand sub-Antarctic islands consist of five island groups in the Southern Ocean southeast of New Zealand. The United Nations has deemed them a World Heritage Natural Site. The islands are notable for their diversity and high



population density of birds, particularly pelagic or seabirds. 126 species of birds, including 40 pelagic species, five of which are endemic, can be found there. The islands are home to one-third of the world's seabirds; over half of the world's albatrosses (15 species) and penguins (8 species) breed there.

Ron Hoff's program will highlight their recent trip to this remote, fantastic and little-known region. He has photos of several species of albatrosses and penguins and will even feature some mammals found there, including sea lions and a sperm whale.

See you Wednesday, February 2 at 7 p.m. in Room 117 (across the hall from Pendergrass Library) of the UT Veterinary building just off Neyland Drive.

- Tracey Muise, program coordinator

 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## February field trips. There are birds out there, let's find 'em.

### Saturday & Sunday, February 5 & 6

*Sandhill Crane Viewing Days. See page 1.*

### Saturday, February 19, 7:30 AM

*Cades Cove, Great Smokies. See page 2.*

### Saturday, February 26, 8:00 AM

*Piney Grove Park, Knoxville. See page 2.*

### Sunday, February 27, 8:30 AM

*Kyker Bottoms WMA. See page 2.*

### Saturday & Sunday, February 5 & 6

*13th Annual Cherokee Heritage/Sandhill Crane Viewing Days*

Festivities begin at Birchwood School at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 5 and continue until 4 p.m. (For more details look on page 3.)

As always there will be regular shuttle bus trips from Birchwood School to the Hiwassee Refuge on Saturday for crane and wildlife viewing. You may drive your own vehicle on Sunday. We have not planned a formal field trip because

(Continued on page 2)

*"Still cheerily the chickadee, Singeth to me on fence and tree."*

*"Midwinter" by John Townsend Trowbridge (1827-1916)*

## February field trips

(Continued from page 1)

many people want to go on different days and at different times, but we hope you will be able to come and help support the festival!

### Saturday, February 19, 7:30 AM

*Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park*

Leader: **David Trently**

(dtrently@utk.edu; 974-8664 w; 531-1473 h)

LEAVE from the Stokley Building parking lot at 320 North Cedar Bluff Road by 7:30 a.m. or meet at the Townsend Y at 8:30 a.m.

The plan is to park at the Cades Cove campground parking lot and walk in to the settling ponds. We'll bird around the ponds and in the fields all the way to Sparks Lane. If traffic isn't terribly heavy, we can take a drive around the cove, stopping at some potentially good birding sites. Some species we can hope to see: Wood Duck, Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered Hawk, Wild Turkey, Dark-eyed Junco...and we can hope for Common Raven, Red Crossbill, Pine Siskin and maybe even a phalarope on the pond!

Bring lunch as we will likely be in the cove until mid-afternoon.

### Saturday, February 26, 8:00 AM

*Piney Grove Park, Knoxville, TN*

Leader: **Mark Campen**

(865-414-5593 w; 865-406-6377 h; campen@tnike.com)

This trip will be the beginning of a series of trips to some small areas around Knoxville that have not been on our traditional list of birding areas. Since the areas are small, participants will be limited to a maximum of seven for each trip. We will have several trips, so that all who wish to go can be accommodated. Please call Mark at the numbers above to sign up for the trip. These trips will involve easy walks along gravel paths and some woodland walking. Meet at West Hills Elementary School for carpooling.

### Sunday, February 27, 8:30 AM

*Kyker Bottoms Wildlife Management Area*

Leader: **Charlie Muise**

(865-9778429 h; cmmbirds@yahoo.com)

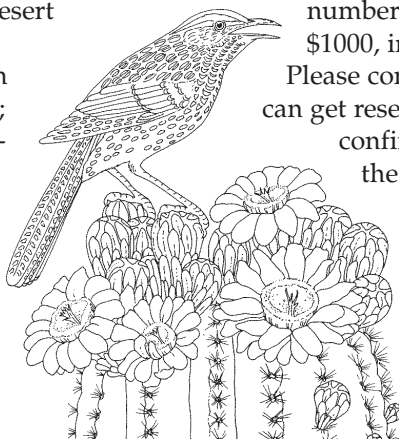
Meet at approximately 8:30 a.m. at the paved parking area at Kyker Bottoms. The target for this trip will be waterfowl and sparrows. We could have some relatively rare sparrows since we have excellent sparrow habitat. All areas of Kyker Bottoms will be newly open, which will give us a chance to look for rails and other swamp species. We should finish at Kyker Bottoms around noon.

- Best regards, Harold Howell, Field Trip Coordinator

## KTOS Field Trip to southeastern Arizona

May 7-15, 2005 • David Trently, trip leader

Over 175 species of birds are likely during this nine-day, eight-night trip to one of the premier birding areas in the U.S. We will visit most of the top birding places, including Madera Canyon, Patagonia, the Chiricahua Mountains, Mount Lemmon and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. Come with us and see Cinnamon Teal; Gray Hawk; Golden Eagle; Gambel's Quail; Spotted Owl; Elegant Trogon; Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet; Mountain and Mexican Chickadees; Canyon Wren; Phainopepla; Virginia's, Red-faced and Olive Warblers; Hooded Oriole; several species of hummingbirds and much more!



While birding will be the primary purpose of the trip, we will also be identifying things such as butterflies, dragonflies, wildflowers, cacti and hopefully a few snakes and lizards and more!

Cost for the trip will depend somewhat on the number of people going, but it should be under \$1000, including airfare.

Please contact me as soon as possible so that I can get reservations started. I need to have six people confirmed to go by March 1 in order to run the trip.

Contact info: David Trently  
(daytime) 974-8664; (nights) 531-1473;  
avianpursuits@yahoo.com

## Cherokee Heritage/Sandhill Cranes at Birchwood • Feb 5

**T**he 13th Annual Cherokee Heritage and Sandhill Crane Viewing Day at Birchwood School will be Saturday, February 5. As in years past, there will be guest speakers and exhibits at the school in Meigs County. Buses will shuttle people back and forth to Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge to see the sandhill cranes

- 8:45 AM **Welcome to Birchwood** Presenter: Hoyt Branham, Lifetime resident of Birchwood
- 9 AM **Planning TWRA's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.** What does the future hold? Presenter: Kirk Miles, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA)
- 10:15 AM **Following the Sequoyah Trail. From Tennessee to Oklahoma.** Presenter: Charlie Rhodarmer, Sequoyah Birthplace Museum
- 10:45 AM **Pinson Mounds: A Middle Woodland Period Complex near Jackson, Tennessee.** What we know. Presenter: Mark R. Norton, Tennessee State Regional Archaeologist
- 11 AM **Lunch** and time to enjoy the exhibits. Food sold at the school as a fundraiser. The 2nd Nature Band: Don King, Dave Woodward and Bret Miller will provide music

and other birds near the public gazebo.

For Birchwood, this is a dual celebration/remembrance. The exhibits and speakers will spotlight Native American Heritage as well as the wildlife at the nearby refuge and beyond.

Below is the schedule of events at Birchwood School:

- 1 PM **Moccasin Bend National Archeological District Moves Forward.** What are the dreams? Presenter: Jim Thompson, Friends of Moccasin Bend National Park
- 1:15 PM **Update on the Whooping Crane Reintroduction Project.** Presenter: Geoffrey Dixon, Operation Migration
- 2 PM **The Saw-whet Owl: Catching and Banding our Smallest Owl at Maryville.** Presenter: Jim Giocomo, University of Tennessee
- 2:30 PM **Exploring the Historic Unicoi Turnpike** Presenter: Linda Caldwell, Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association
- 3:15 PM **Music.** Tom Morgan, Lynne Hass, Dalton Roberts and local Birchwood legend "Red Bird" Clingan bring their unique blend of traditional music to wrap-up a great day!

- Submitted by Ken Dubke

## Great Backyard Birdcount Challenge - By Janet McKnight

**I**t's time for the Great Backyard Birdcount, a project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Interested birders can count what they see in their yards over the course of the count period, which is February 18-22.

I love this opportunity to partake in citizen science and help Cornell get a snapshot of where the birds are, what they are and how many. I always count on the Sunday of the count weekend and thoroughly enjoy taking the day to survey the birds that are on my property. This will be my fourth yard count, and as the years pass I am accumulating valuable data for my personal records, and for Cornell—feeding two birds with one scone!

Last year I counted 245 individual birds representing 29 species. The data is very easy to submit online at [www.birdsource.org](http://www.birdsource.org) and if I can call it easy, it definitely is (I haven't made friends with a computer yet.)

I encourage all of my fellow club members who usually watch the birds in their yards anyway to add

some valuable information to the Cornell database and count their yard birds this year.

If anyone wants to have a friendly competition with me, I'll buy dinner for the birder who has the most birds and/or species in their yard for the count. Just call me and let me know if you want to beat me to Olive Garden.

Janet can be reached at: (865) 856-8332 h, (865) 856-2229 w, (865) 271-8337 c.





## SIWR: Improving habitat diversity and enhancing quality - Part One

By Wayne H. Schacher • wwschacher@natreserv.com

*Author's note: This is part one in the fifth in a series of newsletter articles on Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge (SIWR) in Knox County. The Knoxville Chapter of Tennessee Ornithological Society has actively supported the concept and development of SIWR, and its membership is providing invaluable information on avian fauna usage of the Refuge, and other technical assistance. The partnership with KTOS at SIWR is most gratefully appreciated.*

In previous articles, we've examined the purpose behind the establishment of Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge (SIWR), identified its potential, presented the emphasis on improving the quality of early successional habitats and the land management plan which guides these efforts. What other opportunities exist on SIWR to diversify or enhance habitat and how will they be accomplished?

SIWR contains a solid foundation of riverine and upland terrain attributes. The Refuge lies on a major river, includes several islands, contains limestone outcrops with some partially-wooded bluffs, has an upland pond and stream corridor, has partially established fence rows and property boundaries, with several abandoned buildings and other structures. Each provides opportunity to diversify habitat and improve its quality to the benefit of native plant or animal communities on the Refuge. Each attribute has been included in the Land Management Plan, with many improvements already underway.

Where woodlands and wooded fingers exist on SIWR they will remain protected to mature, with management limited to exotic/invasive plant control. In a long-term investment toward improved habitat quality, volunteers have planted 3,000 native tree seedlings. Primary objectives of these plantings are to expand and stratify, wooded, riparian buffer zones

along both the river and stream corridors, to widen sections of fencerow and boundary, to increase 'edge' and transitional habitats and to provide strata missing in sinkhole and selected "odd" areas. Each native tree or shrub species was selected to provide one or more benefits: hard mast or soft mast production, nesting, roosting or escape cover, shoreline stability, landscape aesthetics.

Offset rows of several oak species (pin, willow, shumard, eastern white, cherrybark) and black walnut will provide hard mast, alternate rows of American crabapple, American plum and red mulberry will provide soft mast, with silky dogwood, American sycamore, green ash, river birch and buttonbush providing variety and soil stability. Maintenance of seedlings that have been planted is ongoing, with additional plantings to further diversify and improve habitat and landscape aesthetics planned in coming years.

Another area of emphasis on SIWR is expansion and enhancement of wetland habitats. The tree and shrub seedlings planted along riparian corridors are a good start. To further develop wetland habitats, water control structures are planned to create impoundments along the lower end of the stream corridor, possibly in an open field location and in series on the upstream end of the stream corridor. Controlled and prolonged retention of seasonal flow and rainfall will stimulate herbaceous wetland vegetation, and provide specialized habitats for amphibians, reptiles and small mammals. The ability to manipulate these shallow water habitats will allow specific forage plantings, in hope that they will be increasingly attractive to migrating or wintering waterfowl and shorebirds.

*- Part Two of this article will appear next month*

## KTOSers attend 'Operation Migration' Open House at Hiwassee



The Friends of Operation Migration (OM) held an Open House at Hiwassee on Dec. 4, 2004. The event raised money for and awareness of OM and their effort to re-establish an eastern migratory flock of endangered whooping cranes. Some of the KTOS members in attendance were (left to right): Allison Bassett, Lyn Bales, Ginger Goolsby, Marcia Davis, Harriette Spiegel, Janet McKnight and Harold Howell. Marcia holds a door prize won at the event.

*-Submitted by Harold Howell*



## Presidential Perch

- By Charlie Muise

Hello KTOSers,

Dues are due! Actually, past due. Our Treasurer Marie Oakes informs us that 1/3 of members have paid for this year. Dues should be paid by the first meeting each year. We will be forced to remove from our membership anyone who has not paid by the end of March. Checks made out to KTOS may be sent to Marie. Her address is on the back of this newsletter.

Another way you can help our club financially is to stop receiving the paper version of this newsletter. Please go to [www.tnbirds.org](http://www.tnbirds.org) to see the online version—in color. Contact me, Lyn Bales or Cindy Day if you would like to cease receiving a mailed paper copy.

Several East Tennessee Chapters are hosting the winter meeting on January 28–30 in Dayton, TN. Thanks to the leadership of people like Dan and Laurie Mooney, Jean Alexander and David Johnson, Wallace Coffey and Danny Gaddy, this looks to be a great weekend! I will be leading one of the walks, as will Daniel Moss and Wallace. Several members of TWRA will be on hand during the weekend to answer questions on what's going on in the state.

The Dogwood Arts Festival will be here before we know it. On Friday, April 22 we will sponsor an event at Ijams Nature Center featuring a talk about attracting wildlife to your yard by Sam and Mary Ann Venable. He is a noted *News Sentinel* columnist and she

is a master gardener. That night we will also hold a silent auction to benefit the JB Owen Fund and Ijams. Please contact Kathy Bivens as soon as possible if you have something you would like to donate to the auction. The next day, Saturday April 23, we will hold a public bird walk at Sharps Ridge. I hope to see many club members at both events.

One major topic of conservation concern in Tennessee is the divestment of publicly owned, publicly accessible lands by TVA. Some of these lands have been sold to developers who made exclusive, gated golf communities. This is not only of concern to birders, but also to others who need access to such lands—hunters, hikers, fishermen. If you have an opinion on this issue you should contact Congressman Duncan. His Knoxville number is (865) 523-3772.

Elections for club officers and members of the Executive Committee are in May. I am in the process of putting together a nominating committee. If you would like to serve on it, please contact me. Once the committee is set, they will be seeking nominations.

Our coffee sales continue to go well. We have netted over \$200 so far. But more importantly, we are patronizing a local small business, supporting fair trade and drinking coffee that is grown in a much more environmentally responsible way. Please contact me for your orders.

We are still looking for someone to replace Harold Howell as Field Trip Coordinator. He has done a great job for several years now, and it's time for someone else to take over. Please contact him or me if you have any questions.



### OF NOTE!

## Welcome New Members

Ryn Daugherty, Gary and Alice Woody

## Correction to '04 Knox County Fall Count

The two Golden-crowned Kinglets listed in the totals for the 2004 Knox County Fall Count should have been listed as two Ruby-crowned Kinglets. The compiler apologizes for the error. - *Thanks, Dean*

## Zeiss Binoculars for sale

**For Sale:** Zeiss 8x40B binoculars. About 15+ years old, but still in very good condition. Very weather resistant and rugged. \$200 or best offer.

Contact Ron Hoff at [rondolly@esper.com](mailto:rondolly@esper.com) or call (865) 435-4547 and leave message.

## Don't delay! 2005 Dues due NOW

The KTOS dues for 2005 are due now. So please don't delay, do it today! See back of this newsletter for membership levels and payment information.

## KTOS Financial Report • February 2005

Compiled by Marie Oakes, Treasurer

	January	YTD
<b>Income:</b>		
. Dues	\$286.00	\$286.00
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$148.00	\$148.00
. Interest	\$62.54	\$62.54
. J. B. Owen Memorial	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$496.54</b>	<b>\$496.54</b>
<b>Operating Expenses:</b>		
. Newsletter	\$0.00	\$0.00
. Supplies	\$18.00	\$18.00
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$0.00	\$0.00
. Member Dues to TOS	<u>\$886.00</u>	<u>\$886.00</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$904.00</b>	<b>\$904.00</b>
<b>Other Non-recurring Expenses:</b>		
. J. B. Owen Award	\$0.00	\$0.00
. Memorials	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Account Balances:</b>		
. KTOS Checking & Savings	\$2,999.42	
. J.B. Owen Memorial	\$6,479.80	
<b>Memberships</b>		<b>154</b>

## KTOS Membership

Join or renew your membership in KTOS by mailing your annual dues to: **Marie Oakes**, 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.

**DEADLINE** for March issue is **February 19**. Due to cost and space restrictions, please limit your articles to **600 or 700 words**.

For a color version of this or past issues go to "local chapters/Knoxville" starting at the TOS Home Page:

**HTTP://www.tnbirds.org**



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## Knoxville CBC hits 100 species! - By Dean Edwards

The Knoxville Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was held on Sunday, 2 January 2005. We had 44 people counting either in the field or in their own backyard. A record 96 species were found on Sunday with four additional species located during the count week (three days before and after count day). That makes a total of 100 species during the count period—a first in the 103-year history of the Knoxville CBC! During that time, there have been 161 species identified on count day and two others that have only been found during the count week.

A videographer with the WBIR news team spent part of the day in the field with me and put together a nice story on the count which aired on three news broadcasts Sunday night and Monday morning. The response from the story has been overwhelming and it is clear that it reached a huge audience. KTOS sent a letter of appreciation to the station thanking them for the coverage.

Some of the good birds found on the count include a late Northern Waterthrush (new to the count and the eighth warbler species found during the count history), Merlin, 15 species of waterfowl including a pair of Common Goldeneyes, Sandhill Crane, Horned Lark, Brown-headed Nuthatch, House Wren, Gray Catbird (during count week), Loggerhead Shrike and Lapland Longspur (during count week).

Full results will be given later. I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone for making this count such a success in recent years and encourage everyone to participate in the Knox County Spring Count on Sunday, 24 April 2005. Watch the April newsletter for details on that count.



*through the biKNOXulars*

(USPS 697-010)

Published monthly, except January, July and August by the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, 11417 N. Couch Mill Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-2908. Subscription Price \$8.00. Periodical Postage paid at Knoxville, TN 37901.

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to: *through the biKNOXulars*, 11417 N. Couch Mill Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-2908.