



KNOXVILLE CHAPTER OF THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Discover Birds Program Visits Sequoyah Elementary School

Discover Birds Volunteers were greeted by an enthusiastic group of third graders at Sequoyah Elementary School on May 14, 2013. Sixty-five students and their teachers participated in the program.

In the small-group bird walks led by KTOS volunteers, Tony King, Kelly Sturner, and Chris Welsh, students quickly spotted birds on the school campus and were treated to close views through spotting scopes. Kelly Sturner, a first-time volunteer with the program described her experience leading the bird walks. "I have very little skill in setting up spotting scopes on birds! But the kids were so patient and just lit right up when they saw their first bird through a scope. They were noticing details they had never seen before, like a cardinal has an orange bill and a robin has a yellow bill."

Chris Welsh also described the fun of watching kids really see the bird through the scope for the first time. "They look, and at first you can tell they aren't seeing through the scope. You tell them to get their eye a little closer to the eyepiece, and suddenly they light up with a 'wow!' as they see the bird looking back at them."

Additionally, the students rotated through a Bird Treasures presentation with hands-on objects they could see up close. Bird nests, owl pellets, feathers and talons were among the items that children could examine with Doug Schneeberger as they visited this program. Since some of the students had recently dissected owl pellets in their science class they were especially excited to see this item again!

A slide presentation on birds rounded out the program. Billie Cantwell brought along her bird song application for her smartphone and it became a great hit with the students. "...they were asking 'what app is that, I want it!' They really enjoyed hearing the songs and if I talked about a bird they would ask 'Can we hear what it sounds like?'"

Each child received a *Discover Birds Activity Book*, compliments of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society. One class was prepared with Tennessee Bird Checklists and after their bird walks, students were busy filling out the cards with the birds they had seen.

Classroom teachers received a welcome packet developed by Billie Cantwell, KTOS president, including Discover Birds program information, a 2013 Wild Birds Unlimited calendar and newsletter, a Cornell poster of common feeder birds, Watchable Wildlife items, and a KTOS brochure.

With the visit to Sequoyah we have reached 394 first, second, and third graders with the KTOS Discover Birds Program. We even came away from this visit with a teacher eager to volunteer with the program when she retires a year from now!

If you are interested in volunteering with the KTOS Discover Birds Program or if you know a school teacher who would be interested in having us visit her school, contact Billie Cantwell at bfcantwell@gmail.com or (865) 567-4273. Visit the [Discover Birds Blog](http://discoverbirds.blogspot.com/) for up to date information on school visits and student activities: <http://discoverbirds.blogspot.com/>



Students complete TWRA Field Checklist of Tennessee Birds



Doug Schneeberger talks with students about bird nests.



Presidential Perch

Well another summer is upon us, finally! We have been seeing lots of migrants come through and Sharps' Ridge has had the best spring in years. It is a feeding frenzy at my house at the moment what with all the chicks that have hatched plus the migrating birds passing through. It has been really fun to watch and photograph the six Rose-breasted Grosbeaks on my feeders.

Just a reminder that we will not meet in July or August. However, you can keep up with what is happening with KTOS at www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html, www.facebook.com/KnoxvilleTOS, and on our list sever where most announcements are made pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/knoxvilletos/

KTOS has had a great year with lots of great programs and field trips thanks to Patty Ford and Tom Howe. We have a wonderful group of volunteers that have kept our KTOS active and growing. The "Discover Birds" program is one that our KTOS can be very proud of and I look forward to seeing where we can take this program in the future. I want to thank all of you for your hard work, ideas and contributions. Unfortunately due to space I cannot list everyone here, (besides I would leave someone out and then feel horrible) so please know that I appreciate all of you. Thank You!

Have a great summer and keep on birding.....

Billie Cantwell

June Meeting

Please join us June 5, 2013 for the KTOS annual picnic at Ijams Nature Center ([2915 Island Home Ave., Knoxville, Tenn.](http://2915IslandHomeAve.com)). We will need a few volunteers to help set up tables and chairs, so arrive early, please. Bring a favorite dish to share around 6:15 p.m.. We will gather in the big meeting room and out on the back patio. Please bring a 10-lb bag of sugar to help Ijams attract lots of hummingbirds for our Hummingbird Festival in August! We will also install officers for the 2013-14 year,

There will be no summer meetings. We will gather again at Ijams for the fall picnic on September 4, 2013.

Get Out and Get Birding! June Fieldtrips

Schoolhouse Gap Trail, Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Saturday, June 1, 2013

Leader: Tom Howe (865) 748-9610,

thowe@lillyco.com

Meet at Kroger in Alcoa ([244 S Hall Rd Alcoa, Tenn.](http://244SHallRdAlcoaTenn.com)) at 7:30 a.m. We will hike the Schoolhouse Gap Trail looking for Swainson's Warbler. Two miles of easy to moderate hiking. Bring snacks and water. Other potential birds will include Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Hooded, and Worm-eating Warblers, Acadian Flycatcher and much more. Should be done around 1:00 p.m.

Cherohala Skyway

Saturday, June 8, 2013 @ 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Mike Nelson, madbirder@surfbirder.com

Get up early to beat the heat and see high-elevation birds of the mountains on this early June trip. The group will meet at the Hardee's in Tellico Plains ([127 Bank St., Tellico Plains, Tenn.](http://127BankStTellicoPlainsTenn.com)) at 7:45 a.m. The group will head to the Cherohala Skyway that bridges Tennessee and North Carolina. We will begin the drive up by checking the pull-offs along the way for breeding migrants like La. Waterthrush, N. Parula, Black-and-white Warbler, and Red-eyed Vireo. At another overlook, we will check the open forest below for Red-headed Woodpecker and Pine Warbler before continuing up to some woodland for Blackburnian and Canada Warblers. Once past the 5,000-foot elevation mark, the group will come to Hooper Bald and check for Northern Bobwhite, Least Flycatcher, Veery, Gray Catbird, Blue-headed Vireo, and Hairy Woodpecker. At Huckleberry Knob, we will walk the bald looking for breeding Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Hermit Thrush. On the way back down, we will stop in some rhododendron forests to check for Hooded and Black-throated Blue Warbler.

This is an all-day field trip, and the group should arrive back around 5:00 p.m. Bring a packed lunch as we will stop for a picnic-style lunch.

Heritage Center Walking Trail

Thursday, June 18, 2013 @ 9:00 a.m.

Leader: Tony King, (865) 988-6172

Meet at the main entrance to K-25 (Heritage Center) across from the small pond. Parking lot is on the left.



Mark Armstrong, Master Bander, holds a Hummingbird for visitors.

Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival — August 24, 2013

by Vickie Henderson

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird weighs only ~0.1 ounce, and has a brain approximately the size of a BB (~4.5 mm). Yet, hummingbirds are considered masters of navigation, timing, and memory. Year after year, a male hummingbird may return to the exact same breeding territory and land on the same favored perches on the same calendar date each spring. Females will return to the same nest site, refurbish the nest, and use it for a number of successive years.

On August 24, 2013, at KTOS's third annual Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival, visitors will again have the opportunity to see Ruby-throated Hummingbirds up-close at the banding table with Mark Armstrong, certified Master Bander of both hummingbirds and songbird species. In addition, visitors will be treated to renowned speakers on nature topics, live animal demonstrations, guided walks and vendors selling food and drinks, locally made arts and crafts, bird and garden items, and a "Bird Bargain Barn" selling gently used merchandise with nature themes.

A hummingbird information booth will show the mapped locations of wintering hummingbirds that have been banded throughout Tennessee in the fall and winter months, and Naturalist Educator, Paula Schneeberger will be on hand to answer questions. Chris Mahoney, Master Gardener from Chattanooga, will also be available to discuss plants and flowering shrubs that can help attract hummingbirds to your garden.

This year's festival features speakers from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with T. David Pitts, Professor of Biology, University of Tennessee at Martin on the topic, "The Hummingbirds that Nest in your Yard". Other speakers include Marcia Davis, Birdlife Columnist for the Knoxville News Sentinel, David Unger, Professor of Biology, Maryville College, and Steve McGaffin, Naturalist and Educator for the Knoxville Zoo. Lynne McCoy, a wildlife rehabilitator who takes in 600—800 birds and mammals to rehabilitate and release back to the wild when possible, will bring a few of her "ambassadors" to meet festival visitors.

The Wonder of Hummingbirds Festival will take place Saturday, August 24, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and has an admission fee of \$5.00. Children under six are admitted free. The festival is co-sponsored by the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society and Ijams Nature Center and will be located at Ijams, [2915 Island Home Ave., Knoxville, Tenn., \(865\) 577-4717](http://www.ijams.org).

KTOS will sponsor the "Bird Bargain Barn" where gently used items will be sold. Should you have any items that you would like to donate, please price them and either bring them on the morning of the festival or give them to one of the officers to bring.

We will be needing lots of volunteers for the festivals. If you are interested in helping please contact Billie Cantwell, (865) 567-4273 and watch the KTOS yahoo list serve for announcements (pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/KnoxvilleTOS/).

KTOS membership: Join or renew by mailing your annual dues to Carole Gobert, 1304 Barcelona Drive, Knoxville, TN 37923. Dues levels: \$26/individual, \$30/family, \$38/sustaining, \$13/student, or TOS life membership for \$450 with \$8 annual fee to Chapter.



www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html

**2012 — 2013
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Upcoming Votes

KTOS has been piloting the Discover Birds Program to interest kids in birds and, more generally, the environment around them. Our team of volunteers identify a classroom teacher, arrange a visit to the school and coordinate a Discover Birds Visit to all the classes on that teacher's grade level. The teachers receive a packet that includes Discover Birds Project information, a sample lesson plan, a 2013 Wild Birds Unlimited calendar and newsletter, a Cornell poster of common feeder birds, Watchable Wildlife items, a KTOS brochure, and Discover Birds Activity books for each student (<http://vickiehendersonsketchbook.blogspot.com/p/discover-birds-activity-book.html>). Each program, delivered in the school by KTOS volunteers, includes a slide show, a close up view of bird treasures including feathers, talons, and nests, and an outdoor bird walk. We have presented programs at three area schools, reaching nearly 400 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders. We now need more Discover Birds Activity Books to distribute in the coming year. The possibility of KTOS purchasing 400 books at a cost of \$600 will be discussed at the June meeting and a motion for purchase requested. The vote will be held at the September meeting. Additionally, we will discuss accepting the Discover Birds Program as "routine expense" and allowing the Executive Committee to make purchase approvals for the program in the future.

A motion was made and passed for KTOS to spend up to \$2200 to purchase t-shirts and hats for future KTOS Hummingbird Festivals. Because of the amount of the expenditure, a second vote will be needed and will be taken at the June meeting. Additional details will be provided at the June KTOS meetings.