



KTOS Hosts the TOS 2017 Spring State Meeting

Our Chapter had the privilege of hosting the TOS state meeting this spring from May 5—7, 2017. It was well attended with about 60 who signed up for the banquet that was held at Zoo Knoxville. The zoo was once again very gracious to grant us the use of their Lee Congleton Conference Center where we have held the meeting twice before.

The event began with an evening meet and greet at the Mainstay Suites off Merchant Drive where our out of town guests were staying. Many of our own attended and brought great food and wine. I can't thank all of you enough for pooling your resources and making this event such a success. I especially want to thank Merikay for her support and wisdom to push me along. Ron and Dollyann brought their J.B. Owen books and gave them away for whatever donation the recipients were willing to give. We raised \$198 for the J.B. Owen Fund and Ron was so grateful to go home with a lot fewer books.

Saturday morning we had field trips to Seven Islands (Morton Massey & Bill Keeler), Cove Lake (Tony Headrick & Chuck Estes), Sharp's Ridge (Chuck Nicholson & Tom Howe). Sunday we went to Sharp's Ridge, Cross Mountain, and Gupton Wetlands (Mindy Fawver & Doug Bruce). Some outings of course were more productive than others, Sharp's Ridge being at its best with 17 warbler and 5 vireo species. Many were especially excited by great looks at a singing Canada warbler. Some were fortunate to see a Philadelphia vireo.

At the Saturday night program, we were blessed with an excellent spread catered by the Zoo followed by the evening's program by Dr. David Beuhler, UT professor of wildlife science. He spoke mostly about his ongoing research on the Golden-winged Warbler, and particularly on the incredible data provided by the geolocators they attach to the warblers' backs with a harness. It measures the daylight period from day to day. This allows the researcher to know within about 50 miles where the bird was located on any given day, that is, once they recapture the bird and remove the geocator to download the data. It does not transmit. The unfortunate results of all his research seem to indicate that the Appalachian populations of the Goldenwings are in great peril of being extirpated due to loss of successional breeding habitat here, and more so by the loss of forest habitat in the Venezuelan mountains where they spend the winter. Dr. Beuhler's presentation was expectedly well done and entertaining.

We also had a brief business meeting headed up by TOS President Steve Routledge during which Cindi Routledge gave a glowing report on the Discover Birds Program. She has promoted the program with wondrous skill in schools and government agencies. She even had it translated into Spanish and had it delivered to Cuba by Vicki Henderson who wrote the program and drew all its artwork. The meeting was capped off with the TOS Distinguished Service Award being granted to three Chattanooga TOS members in honor of their tireless decades of work establishing the Soddy Mountain Hawk Watch—Jim and Cynthia Wilkerson and Bill Haley. Their parting words for us were that they need help desperately if the hawk watch is to continue, as they are up in years and need to cut back. I hope a few of us can commit to continuing this effort that is unmatched in the Southeast. Let's do it.

KTOS June Meeting: Ijams Potluck

Please join us on **Wednesday, June 7, 2017** at 6:00 pm for our annual Potluck Dinner at Ijams Nature Center. Please bring an entree, veggie, salad, dessert, beverage, etc. Plates and silverware will be provided. Bring your own cup or glass. Come early to bird the trails at Ijams. We will install next year's officers at this meeting. Ijams is located at 2915 Island Home Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. (865) 577-4717. For information, visit the KTOS webpage at www.knoxvillebirding.org.

Reminder. Please bring sugar donations for the Ijams humming bird feeders. Lyn Bales expressed his gratitude for KTOS members' sugar donations last year.

Loggerhead Shrike © Steve Honeysuckle
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Presidential Perch

Well, the last few weeks have been full of bird activity—from county counts to hosting the TOS state meeting—and migration isn't over yet! Preliminary reports on the counts look good. Exceptional participation in the Blount County count looks like the total species list will top 100. Bravo to all who helped out. Next year let us boost our support of Loudon and Anderson Counties too. The best surprise I had on the count was a seeing a Black-billed Cuckoo which also landed out in the open where I shot my first ever picture of one. I had just seen a Yellow-billed Cuckoo plus heard another when this one flew up all in the same spot. I believe that's only the second one near my yard in forty years. Dickcissels are breeding again on Meadow Rd in Blount Co., plus Jean Alexander had some at a new site off Peppermint Rd. If you've never seen one of this once very rare bird to the area, now's the time. Their populations fluctuate considerably as habitat changes. Contact one of us and we will guide you there.

The American Birding Association is a resource I have not touted enough lately. Their website aba.org keeps you abreast of latest happenings in the birder's world with entertaining articles, rare bird alerts, and bird quizzes. For instance, Nate Swick, in his most recent blog, posts an eclectic list of several links to various articles about birds from how it has been shown that birdwatching improves your mental health (Yeah!) to the destruction of seabird migrants in the wake of hurricanes (blog.aba.org/2017/05/blog-birding-320.html). They also have especially excellent resources and programs for rising young birders, taxonomic listings, a code of birding ethics (very important), a shop full of birding accessories and much more. Please spend some time on their site. It's a little busy looking at first, but using their menus makes it easy.

Well, my tenure is coming to a close. This is my last Perch. Writing has been something I've enjoyed far more than I expected. And I've appreciated the feedback I have received from all of you. We are a great family of bird lovers and I hope everyone continues in that wonderful comradery. The great news is that Jimmy Tucker has agreed to be president for the next year! We will be confirming him during the Pot Luck on June 7. Please come and encourage him on this new journey.

Farewell,

Tom Howe



Scarlet tanager seen on recent fieldtrip. Source: Jimmy Tucker.



Black-and-white warbler, seen on recent fieldtrip. Source: Jimmy Tucker.



Vinous-throated parrotbill. Source: Michael Plaster.

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Japanese tit. Source: Michael Plaster.



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Great crested grebe. Source: Michael Plaster.

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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.



knoxvillebirding.org

**2016 — 2017
Chapter Officers**

President

Tom Howe
(865) 407-9620
blountbirder@gmail.com

Vice President

Merikay Waldvogel
(865) 691-8117
quiltalive@aol.com

Treasurer

Morton Massey
massey6932@comcast.net
(865) 806-9967

Secretary

Talissa Ralph
talkurt@cybermesa.com
247-4014

Newsletter Editor

Michael Plaster
(865) 694-4814
KTOS.Editor@gmail.com

Newsletter Distribution

Merikay Waldvogel
(865) 691-8117
quiltalive@aol.com

Field Trip Coordinator

Vacant

State Directors, 2016 – 2018

Ron Hoff
Dollyann Myers
Open

State Directors, 2015 – 2017

Michael Plaster
Chris Welsh

through the biKNOXulars
725 Mountain Pass Lane
Knoxville, TN 37923

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to: *through the biKNOXulars*, 725 Mountain Pass, Knoxville, TN 37923



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Oriental turtle dove. Source: Michael Plaster.