

# through the biKNOXulars

Newsletter of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

## 'Attracting Birds to Your Yard' program tops March meeting

**T**he March meeting of the KTOS will focus on attracting birds to your yard. The presenters will be KTOS's own Susie Stout and Meredith Clebsch. Meredith will teach us a bit about native plants—why they are better than exotics, which ones to plant and how best to use them. Susie will talk about attracting birds with food, water and shelter.

In addition to being skilled birders, both women run local businesses that cater to environmentally minded nature lovers. Susie's family business, FeatherBeds, provides people around Knoxville with high quality birdseed and bird houses; Meredith and her husband run a native plant nursery in Loudon.

Susie has birded since ninth grade. She has focused on watching the birds in her own yard, learning their ways and trying various methods to attract them. Now she visits local schools to share her interest with children, teaching about birds, plants and environmental responsibility. She also writes a column for *Senior Living* called "Right Out Back"

Susie received the CARE for Education "WVLT School Volunteer of the Year" Award in 2001 and was Ijams Nature Center's Earth Flag "Volunteer of the Year" in 2000-2001.



Meredith Bradford-Clebsch received a degree in animal science from Clemson in 1977. After working with Peace Corps, she managed the second largest goat dairy in the US in California. Tiring of animal science, she enrolled in the botany graduate program at the University of Tennessee, where she met her future husband Ed. They moved to a small farm in Loudon County in 1983 and began Native Gardens. Her goal was, and is, to provide gardeners with native plants—something no other nursery was doing at the time. They now offer more than 250 species of plants via mail order.

They helped with initial planning for the TN Aquarium and the South Carolina Aquarium, providing plants through rescue and propagation.

Concerned with conservation, Native Gardens recently began to focus on using native grasses from local sources. This is important because a disproportionately large number of declining bird species breed in grasslands. Native Gardens provides design and consulting services. - *Charlie Muise, program coordinator*

**The March Meeting is Wednesday, March 6 Room 117, UT Vet School. Folks gather around 7 PM to socialize and the meeting starts at 7:30 PM**

### March Field Trips - Details Inside Page 3

◆ **Friday, March 1, 6 PM**

Woodcock Walk I • Ijams Nature Center

◆ **Saturday, March 2, 7:15 AM**

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

◆ **Friday, March 22, 6 PM**

Woodcock Walk II • Ijams Nature Center

◆ **Saturday, March 23, 8:00 AM**

Fort Loudoun Area

◆ **Saturday, March 30, 7:30 AM**

Oak Ridge Greenways

Any updated information will be posted on the KTOS hot line, 577-4717, ext. 80 and on tn-bird list server.



## Presidential Perch

**S**ome notes from the Feb. 20 Planning Meeting... At the TOS Winter Meeting at Pickwick Landing State Park, (well-attended by KTOS members, thank you!) The Important Bird Area program was discussed. Some simplifications in the paperwork have been made and we will be attempting to move forward on this once again. At the March Planning Meeting we will try to nominate at least one area. We need volunteers to serve on a few committees! One will be set up to work out recommendations on how to use the funds in the J. B. Owen Memorial.

Also, the 2003 TOS Spring Meeting will be hosted by our chapter. It is time to start thinking about this—especially where to hold it. We welcome suggestions of hotels that have banquet and meeting room facilities. We will be resuming an old KTOS practice: In honor of the passing of a member, we will donate a book to a library or school. We are looking into purchasing magnetic signs to attach to cars for when you are participating in bird counts, thus alerting others of what you are doing. These will say something like “Caution: Bird Survey in Progress” and will be available for purchase from the chapter.

KTOS beverage mugs should be available at the March meeting! See you there!!

David Trently, President KTOS

## Birding on the Web

By David Trently

**T**alk about poor timing! Last month I wrote how you go about signing onto the Tennessee birding listserve, TN-bird. Well, soon after that, a major change happened—the cost to maintain that list went so high that it was switched to a site that did not charge any fees (we as subscribers never pay a fee to be a member, but whoever maintains the list would have had to pay). So if you were to go to the TOS website you could no longer sign on to the listserve.

Here’s how to do it now: Send an e-mail to: **tn-bird-request@freelists.org** with the subject line as follows: **subscribe tn-bird** That’s all—nothing in the body of the e-mail, just the subject line. When you want to send a message, such as “I have a Fork-tailed Flycatcher nesting in my yard!!”, you send it to the following address: **tn-bird@freelists.org**

### Managing your subscription

Once you sign up, you will begin receiving e-mail ‘posts’, messages sent from other subscribers (it is hoped that all the messages will be about birding, but that’s another story...)

### Changing what you receive

At times, you may want to change what you receive. Here are some examples of what you can do. For all of the following, send the message in the subject line to the tn-bird-request address listed above.

- To be taken off the list, the subject line reads: **unsubscribe tn-bird**
- If you don’t want to receive individual messages

all day long, you type: **set tn-bird digest**. When you do this, you will receive ONE message every day, which will include all the posts sent in that day. To go back to individual messages type: **unset tn-bird digest** in the subject line.

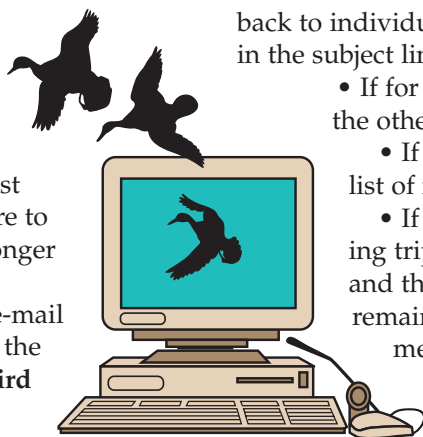
- If for some reason you want to know who the other subscribers are type: **who tn-bird**
- If you don’t want to be included in the list of members: **set tn-bird hidden**
- If you are going away on a 2-week birding trip to Ecuador, first buy my plane ticket and then type: **set tn-bird vacation**. You will remain subscribed, but won’t get any messages cluttering your in-box for when you return. Then: **unset tn-bird vacation** to get back to normal
- To see what your current settings are: **stats tn-bird**

• To see what other options are available try simply typing **flags** or **commands** in the subject line. This will return to you a listing of all options. Most importantly...remember to send commands to **tn-bird-request@freelists.org**

If you send ‘set tn-bird vacation’ to tn-bird@freelists.org, we will all know you are going on a birding trip, and did not invite us. We will then proceed to have a party at your house while you are gone.

Lastly...check out the following web page where you will find listserves for other states and countries, as well as for specific types of birding: **<http://birdingonthe.net/birdmail.html>**

This is great to review before you go on a birding trip, as you can find out what is being seen there.



## March Field Trips - Let's go birding!

### Friday, March 1, 6 PM

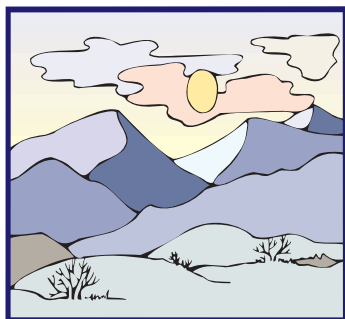
#### Woodcock Walk I • Ijams Nature Center

If you've never seen an American Woodcock this is a great chance to experience the unique courtship ritual of the males. Meet at Ijams Nature Center. We'll then go to the Forks of the River Wildlife Management Area nearby for the twilight walk. Dress for muddy conditions. Leaders: David Trently, Peg Beute and Shaney Palmer. Call 577-4717, ext. 11 to pre-register. This is a program coordinated by Ijams. It's free to Ijams members and \$2 a person to non-members. For adults and adults with children.

### Saturday, March 2, 7:15 AM

#### Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Birding hike along Big Creek Trail, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, North Carolina. Leader: David Trently: 531-1473 h; 974-8664 w; or e-mail at dtrently@utk.edu.



We will leave at 7:15 AM from the K-Mart parking lot on Asheville Highway (Exit 394 off I-40 onto US Route 11E, north of the interstate). It will be about an hour drive on I-40 to reach the trail-head, not far across the state line. This trail rises gradually (around

1000 feet in 4 miles) so it should be considered an easy to moderate hike, beginning at an elevation of 1750 feet. We will probably not go above 3000 feet. Bring lunch and water as we will be eating on the trail. We should return to Knoxville in late afternoon.

Since the birds expected are not different from those you could find without going so far, you should look at this as good excuse to see more of the Smokies.

### Friday, March 22, 6 PM

#### Woodcock Walk II • Ijams Nature Center

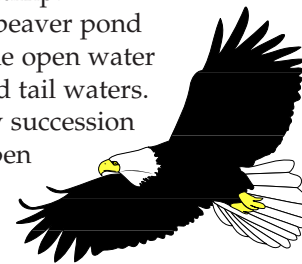
If you missed the woodcock walk on March 1, here's a second chance to experience their unique courtship ritual. Meet at Ijams Nature Center. We'll then go to the Forks of the River Wildlife Management Area nearby for the twilight walk. Dress for muddy conditions and expect to hear lots of frogs. Leaders: Lyn Bales and Peg Beute. Call 577-4717, ext. 11 to pre-register. This is a program coordinated by Ijams Nature Center. It's free to Ijams members and \$2 a person to non-members. For adults.

### Saturday, March 23, 8:00 AM

#### Fort Loudoun Area

Field trip to Fort Loudoun area beaver ponds, open water and tail waters. Leader Wes James (988-2433). Meet in the Tellico Canal Bathhouse/parking area adjacent to the canal that connects Tellico and Fort Loudoun Reservoirs. This area is reached by taking the first exit after crossing the Fort Loudoun Dam bridge. The exit says Tellico Village, Route 444. After taking this exit, go straight across the Tellico Parkway (Route 444) to the bathhouse and parking area. Same road that goes to the Tellico Canal boat ramp.

There are two major beaver pond areas to visit as well as the open water areas of the reservoirs and tail waters. There is also a lot of early succession "sparrow" habitat and open land. Expect to see several waterfowl and wading bird species, sparrows, raptors, (possibly bald eagle and maybe an early osprey) and numerous other passerines. We could finish up before lunch time. Walking moderate.



### Saturday, March 30, 7:30 AM

#### Oak Ridge Greenways

Field trip to Oak Ridge Greenways on the DOE reservation. Leader Dev Joslin (482-7591). Meet at Wal-Mart parking lot in Oak Ridge (on Illinois Ave). We'll tour the back roads of the reservation, walking through prime areas for sparrows, woodland and wetland birds and waterfowl. Target species include a variety of ducks, Bald Eagle, Wild Turkey, American Woodcock, Red-headed WP, Brown-headed and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Fox Sparrow and other sparrows and any early migrants. Bring water and a snack.

Any updated info will be posted on the KTOS hot line, 577-4717, ext. 80, and on tn-bird list server.

- Harold Howell, field-trip coordinator

#### NOTICE

### Planning Meeting

There will be a KTOS Planning Meeting on Wednesday, March 27 at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held in the Ellington Plant Sciences Building, Room 128, on the UT Agriculture Campus. All members are invited to attend and help us discuss plans for upcoming months.

## 102nd National Audubon Christmas Count • Local Summaries

The KTOS conducted the Knoxville Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, 5 January 2002, as part of the 102nd National Audubon Society CBC.

This count marked the 99th anniversary of the first Christmas Count conducted in Knoxville (and the first for Tennessee) around what is now Ijams Nature Center during the Christmas of 1902. We are looking forward to celebrating the Knoxville CBC's centennial next Christmas. Hope you'll join us and maybe we can mark the occasion by topping 100 species.

As for this year's count, we had a tremendous turnout with 48 observers in 19 field parties plus 6-9 feeder-watching parties. We spent 119.5 total party hours in the field covering 700 total party miles including 3 hours by Chris Welsh braving the cold waters of Fort Loudoun Lake in his kayak and 1 hour by Susie Stout on horseback. Additionally, 6 parties spent 4.42 hours owling while covering 76 miles.

A total of 90 species were found on count day plus 29 Sandhill Cranes seen during count week. This is a good tally falling just short of the record of 94 species seen in 1999 and 2000. Total number of individuals was 30,400 (207.5 birds per party hour).

We found most of the expected species but had some notable misses including Northern Bobwhite, Northern Harrier, American Woodcock and several species of waterfowl including Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon and Northern Pintail. Weather wasn't the best for waterfowl, many ponds were frozen and drought in recent years has left Hitch Pond in Blount Co. (historically a waterfowl hotspot) nearly dry for the last two years.

No new species were added to the count history this year but we did find several good birds.

- Orange-crowned Warbler (1) — *found along the Third Creek Greenway at the same spot as last year*
- Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus* sp.) (1)—*almost certainly the same bird that has visited Jean Stierberger's place for the last four years but it has avoided recapture and confirmation*
- Wild Turkey (15)—*2nd year on the count for this increasingly common species*
- Red-headed Woodpecker (10)—*surprisingly not a record number*
- Loggerhead Shrike (1)—*increasingly rare in Knox Co.*
- "Yellow" Palm Warbler (1)—*seen well alongside a "Western" Palm*
- Common Loon (1)
- Great Egret (1)—*for the 12th consecutive year*
- Bald Eagle (1 imm, 1 sub-adult during count week)
- Turkey Vulture (103)—*smashes the old (pitiful) record of 39*
- American Robin (3340)
- Cedar Waxwing (1690)
- American Crow (1769)
- Common Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird—*Hey, we missed both last year!*

As expected given the high level of participation, especially feeder watchers, several records were broken for common backyard species including Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, Blue Jay, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch and Eastern Bluebird. Other record counts included Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Wild Turkey, Ring-billed Gull, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, Orange-crowned and Palm Warblers (both tie old records).

Complete results are given on below.

— K. Dean Edwards

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### Knoxville, TN (TNKN), Saturday, 5 January 2002

**Species Totals:** 1 Common Loon, 67 Pied-billed Grebe, 5 Horned Grebe, 1 grebe sp., 18 Double-crested Cormorant, 176 Great Blue Heron (\*\* old record, 173 in 1999 & 2000), 1 Great Egret, 2 Black-crowned Night-Heron, 51 Black Vulture, 103 Turkey Vulture (\*\* 39, 1999), 686 Canada Goose, 11 Wood Duck, 65 Gadwall, 276 Mallard, 8 Northern Shoveler, 16 Ring-necked Duck, 1 Lesser Scaup, 12 Bufflehead (\* good number, record is 15), 46 Hooded Merganser, 2 Ruddy Duck, 7 duck sp., 1 Bald Eagle: 1 immature (2Y), CW adult (~4Y), 10 Sharp-shinned Hawk (\*\* 7, 1995), 7 Cooper's Hawk (record is 9), 1 Accipiter sp., 16 Red-shouldered Hawk (\*\* 7, 1995), 40 Red-tailed Hawk (record is 45), 2 Buteo sp., 13 American Kestrel, 15 Wild Turkey, 391 American Coot, -CW- Sandhill Crane (29, would have been a record), 136 Killdeer, 2 Common Snipe, 37 Bonaparte's Gull, 3057 Ring-billed Gull (\*\* 2256, 1997), 1 Herring Gull (1W), 882 Rock Dove, 693 Mourning Dove, 10 Eastern Screech-Owl, 5 Great Horned Owl, 2 Barred Owl, 1 Rufous Hummingbird / *Selasphorus* sp., 34 Belted Kingfisher, 10 Red-headed Woodpecker (record is 14), 150 Red-bellied Woodpecker (\*\* 131, 2000), 43 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 77 Downy Woodpecker (\*\* 75, 2000), 15 Hairy Woodpecker (record is 18), 53 Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted), 18 Pileated Woodpecker, 11 Eastern Phoebe (record is 12), 1 Loggerhead Shrike, 685 Blue Jay (\*\* 675, year to be determined), 1769 American Crow, 456 Carolina Chickadee (\*\* 441, year to be determined),

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

285 Tufted Titmouse (\*\*\*) 242, 2000), 12 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 52 White-breasted Nuthatch (\*\*\*) 51, year to be determined), 14 Brown Creeper, 222 Carolina Wren, 6 Winter Wren, 67 Golden-crowned Kinglet, 36 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 354 Eastern Bluebird (\*\*\*) 342, 2000), 25 Hermit Thrush (record is 27), 3340 American Robin, 276 Northern Mockingbird, 24 Brown Thrasher (\*\*\*) 15, year to be determined), 10,167 European Starling, 2 American Pipit, 1690 Cedar Waxwing (\*\*\*) 1054, year to be determined), 1 Orange-crowned Warbler (\*\* ties record, multiple years), 403 Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle), 1 Pine Warbler, 6 Palm Warbler: 1 "Yellow" Palm Warbler, 5 "Western" Palm Warbler, 111 Eastern Towhee, 36 Chipping Sparrow, 146 Field Sparrow, 24 Savannah Sparrow, 2 Fox Sparrow (Red), 510 Song Sparrow, 89 Swamp Sparrow, 787 White-throated Sparrow, 7 White-crowned Sparrow, 41 Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored), 464 Northern Cardinal, 246 Red-winged Blackbird, 65 Eastern Meadowlark, 21 Common Grackle, 8 Brown-headed Cowbird, 26 Purple Finch, 253 House Finch, 297 American Goldfinch, 85 House Sparrow, Total individuals: 30,400 Compiler: K. Dean Edwards, Knoxville CBC (TNKN)

**Knoxville Observers:** Jean Alexander, Lyn Bales, Peg Beute, Frank Bills, Ruth Boys, Edward E. Clebsch, Marcia Davis, K. Dean Edwards, Chris Foelli, Reid Gerhardt, Paul Hartigan, Madeleine Hassil, Amber A. Hensley, Audrey Hoff, Ron Hoff, Tom Howe, David H. Howell, Harold Howell, Susan Hoyle, Jim Human, Kevin M. James, Wesley K. James, Peggy Jaskolka, Pennie Jennings, David Johnson, Kristine Johnson, Tony King, Janet McKnight, Alison McNutt, Bill McNutt, Dollyann Myers, Charles P. Nicholson, Joseph Pyle, W. Kelly Roy, Martha Rudolph, Michael G. Ryon, Daniel Schilling, Elizabeth Schilling, Boyd Sharp, Robert Steffy, Jean Stierberger, Susie Stout, Allan J. Trently, David J. Trently, June Welch, Chris Welsh, Corwin Witt, Alice M. Woody

### **Norris, TN, Saturday, December 15, 2001**

The Norris, TN CBC was held Dec. 15, 2001. The count circle is centered on Norris Dam. Good participation with 17 observers in 8 parties and 53 party-hours. The total number of species 78, a new record. The previous high was 77 in 1999. New record high counts for individual species: • Black Vulture - 90 (previous high 23 in 1995) • Turkey Vulture - 70 (previous high 23 in 1999) • Red-headed Woodpecker - 9 (previous high 6 in 1995) • Red-bellied Woodpecker - 82 (previous high 74 in 1999) • Downy Woodpecker - 57 (previous high 52 in 1997) • Eastern Phoebe - 24 (previous high 11 in 2000) - *wonder how many of the 24 are still around* • Tufted Titmouse - 219 (previous high 162 in 1987) • Northern Mockingbird - 91 (previous high 61 in 2000) • Cedar Waxwing - 525 (previous high 428 in 2000). Individual species counts tying all-time highs: Sharp-shinned Hawk - 4, American Coot - 62, Hermit Thrush - 20. New to count: Sedge Wren - 1. The waterfowl count was fairly low with 9 species and the only warbler found was the Yellow-rumped. There were no blackbirds reported. American pipit was reported for only the 4th time and there was 1 Evening Grosbeak.

**Species Totals:** Common Loon 3, Pied-billed Grebe 2, Horned Grebe 5, Great Blue Heron 14, Canada Goose 219, Wood Duck 1, American Black Duck 1, Mallard 75, Green-winged Teal 9, Ring-necked Duck 19, Lesser Scaup 25, Bufflehead 2, Ruddy Duck 1, Black Vulture 90, Turkey Vulture 70, Sharp-shinned Hawk 4, Cooper's Hawk 2, Red-shouldered Hawk 8, Red-tailed Hawk 22, American Kestrel 9, Wild Turkey 6, American Coot 62, Killdeer 17, Common Snipe 2, Bonaparte's Gull 12, Ring-billed Gull 20, Rock Dove 135, Mourning Dove 150, Great Horned Owl 2, Barred Owl 3, Eastern Screech-Owl 1, Belted Kingfisher 9, Red-headed Woodpecker 9, Red-bellied Woodpecker 82, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 17, Downy Woodpecker 57, Hairy Woodpecker 9, Northern Flicker 39, Pileated Woodpecker 22, Eastern Phoebe 24, Blue Jay 308, American Crow 593, Carolina Chickadee 213, Tufted Titmouse 219, Red-breasted Nuthatch 6, White-breasted Nuthatch 89, Brown Creeper 9, Carolina Wren 148, Winter Wren 8, Sedge Wren 1, Golden-crowned Kinglet 43, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 19, Eastern Bluebird 224, Hermit Thrush 20, American Robin 98, Northern Mockingbird 91, Brown Thrasher 10, American Pipit 3, Cedar Waxwing 525, European Starling 349, Yellow-rumped Warbler 161, Northern Cardinal 192, Eastern Towhee 85, Chipping Sparrow 31, Field Sparrow 52, Savannah Sparrow 16, Fox Sparrow 1, Song Sparrow 252, Swamp Sparrow 5, White-throated Sparrow 296, White-crowned Sparrow 24, Dark-eyed Junco 220, Eastern Meadowlark 31, Purple Finch 33, House Finch 167, American Goldfinch 180, Evening Grosbeak 1, House Sparrow 10, Total individuals: 5992 Compiler: Charles Nicholson

**Norris Observers:** Ellen Bean, Dean Edwards, Tracey Everson, Grace Foster, David Hankins, Harold Howell, Susan Hoyle, Dev Joslin, Tony King, Nell Moore, Charlie Muise, Charles Nicholson, Laurie Pearl, Martha Rudolph, Boyd Sharp, David Trently, Kim Welch

## Great Smoky Mountains National Park, TN Dec 29, 2001

Number of Participants: 20, Number of Party Hours: 87, Total birds on count day: 2,630, Species reported on count day: 56, Low Temperature: 19 F (-7 C), High Temperature: 48 F (9 C), AM Weather: clouds - clear, rain-none, snow-none, PM Weather: clouds - partly clear, rain-none, snow-none

**Species Totals:** Great Blue Heron 1, Turkey Vulture 9, Wood Duck 5, Cooper's Hawk 3, Accipiter sp. 1, Red-shouldered Hawk 1, Red-tailed Hawk 5, American Kestrel 4, Ruffed Grouse 3, Wild Turkey 31 HC, Killdeer 38, Rock Dove 92, Mourning Dove 40, Eastern Screech-Owl 5, Belted Kingfisher 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 18 HC, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 19, Downy Woodpecker 56, Hairy Woodpecker 22, Northern Flicker 7, Pileated Woodpecker 32, Eastern Phoebe 11, Blue Jay 10, American Crow 178, Common Raven 12, Carolina Chickadee 207 HC, Black-capped Chickadee 48, chickadee sp. 11, Tufted Titmouse 93, Red-breasted Nuthatch 40 HC, White-breasted Nuthatch 57, Brown Creeper 25, Carolina Wren 49, Winter Wren 16, Golden-crowned Kinglet 93, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 4, Eastern Bluebird 40, Hermit Thrush 6, American Robin 67, Northern Mockingbird 12, European Starling 68, Cedar Waxwing 53, Yellow-rumped Warbler 27, Eastern Towhee 7, Field Sparrow 2, Fox Sparrow 1, Song Sparrow 55, Swamp Sparrow 3, White-throated Sparrow 125, Dark-eyed Junco 137. Compiler: David Trently

**Smokies Observers:** Mark Armstrong, Lyn Bales, Ed Clebsch, Meredith Clebsch, Marcia Davis, Tracey Everson, David Hankins, Audrey Hoff, Harold Howell, Susan Hoyle, Kristine Johnson, Jim Lowe, Charlie Muise, Chuck Nicholson, Martha Rudolph, Boyd Sharp, Glenn Taylor, Allan Trently, David Trently, Keith Watson

### CLASSES

University of Tennessee Non-Credit Course

## Birdwatching for Beginners

Course #222854 - Fee: \$95

Mon., Mar. 4 - May 6, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM  
9 Classes (No Class MAR. 25)

UT Ellington Plant Sciences Bldg., Room 114

Call (865) 974-0150 to register



Explore the fascinating world of birds through lecture and Saturday field trips. Learn to identify birds by sight and song. Learn about their behavior and importance to our ecological balance.

Binoculars and a field guide are required.

These and the Saturday morning field trips will be discussed at the first class. **Instructor: Charles Nicholson**, environmental scientist with TVA, author of *Atlas of Breeding Birds of Tennessee* and President of the Tennessee Ornithological Society.

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