



Louisiana Waterthrush.

Source: By William H. Majoros (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

## Sharp's Ridge Clean-up

On April 4, 2015 the following KTOS members participated in the clean-up of Sharp's Ridge: Ron Hoff, Dollyann Myers, David Johnson, Merikay Waldvogel, Jerry Ledbetter, Doug Schneeberger, DeeDee Blane, Diane Bunch, Tony Headrick, Tony King, Denise Nauman, Talissa Ralph, Don Adams, and Ron Shrieves. Thank you for your participation. This effort took over an hour, and netted five bags of trash including a television, five 5-gallon buckets, a car battery, and approximately 25 pounds of glass, plastic, and aluminum. We also saw some warblers!

*Tony King*

## Elections

A vote for KTOS officers will be held at the May meeting. The following have been nominated: President—Tom Howe; Vice President—Merikay Waldvogel; Treasurer—Carole Gobert; Secretary—Stephanie Durman; State Directors—Michael Plaster and Chris Welsh

## May Meeting: "What's Happening at Tremont in 2015?"

Please join us on Wednesday, May 6, 2015 for a presentation entitled "What's Happening at Tremont in 2015?" by Dr. Jennifer Jones, President and CEO, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, and Lee Bryant, Field Biologist at Tremont Institute.

Come meet Jen Jones, the new head of Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, who will speak on Tremont's mission, the role of citizen science, and some new and exciting research projects. Lee Bryant, a Master's student studying Louisiana Waterthrushes in the Smokies, will speak specifically about this ongoing citizen science project.

For more information about Tremont and its programs see:

[www.gsmit.org/CitizenScience.html](http://www.gsmit.org/CitizenScience.html) and/or [www.facebook.com/GSMITremont](https://www.facebook.com/GSMITremont).

The KTOS meeting begins at 6:45 pm in Room 118 of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine. For directions, please visit the meetings page on the KTOS website at: [www.tnbirds.org/chapters/knoxvill/KTOS\\_Meetings.html](http://www.tnbirds.org/chapters/knoxvill/KTOS_Meetings.html).

## North American Migration Count

Each May, birders take part in the spring North American Migration Count (NAMC) to count birds in the field and create a snapshot of migration across the continent. This day coincides with International Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 9, 2015. You can participate by taking part in counts organized in Blount County. Please contact Jean Alexander, (865) 977-0052, [jjadmj@yahoo.com](mailto:jjadmj@yahoo.com).

## Welcome New Members

Please welcome the following new members: Scott Keller and Johnny and Evangeline Baines.



## Presidential Perch

My perch overlooks a deeply sloping back yard with lots of tall mature trees. Spring brings returning birds swooping in and around the tree trunks and days filled with non-stop bird song. Almost overnight, trees leaf out and blooms fade and fall. This is about the time the warblers return. They flit around hiding behind new leaves or land on tree tops out of range of the naked eye. This is when I really appreciate birding with an expert and a group.

Warbler migration through Knox County is well underway as I write this column. Tony Headrick and a slew of old-time birding experts have met on Thursday mornings since April 16. The last warbler walk is scheduled for May 7 at 8:00 a.m. on Sharp's Ridge. These walks for me are the high point of the KTOS calendar. With so many pairs of eyes and ears, everyone is sure to spot birds you would not have seen on your own. I hope all of you have had a chance to participate. If not, join a field trip in May.

This year KTOS approved funding for Purple Martin house at the Knoxville Botanical Garden, which are now in place thanks to Jon O'Barr. KTOS also approved funding for binoculars for the Discover Birds program. Students from Norwood School on April 9 were the first group to use them. All worked just fine!

Speaking of programs, I am in charge of scheduling speakers and talks for 2015-2016. We normally have speakers for the October—May meetings, except January when we have our Members' Photo Share. Let me know if you are interested in doing a program or if you have a suggested speaker. I am also open to ideas other than slide lectures.

I appreciate all the help and advice given to me as acting president. The good news is that we have a full slate of nominated officers, including Tom Howe as president. They will be voted on at the May 6 meeting and take office at the June 3 meeting (our end-of-year Potluck Dinner at Ijams).

Several of us are travelling to Montgomery Bell State Park for the TOS state meeting April 30—May 2, 2015. KTOS is sponsoring a reception on Friday, May 1. We have worked with the state park's event coordinator to put on a lively event complete with good food and a cash bar. It should be fun.

This meeting commemorates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TOS. I want to recognize and thank our own Ron Hoff, who has served as President of the state organization during this anniversary year. We hope you can join us. For meeting information and registration, contact Cyndi Routledge at [routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net) Phone: (931) 206-3517. *Merikay Waldvogel*

## Get Out and Get Birding! May Field Trips

### Weekday Bird Walks along Sharp's Ridge

**Thursday, May 7 @ 8:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Tony Headrick, (865) 621-9836 and/or  
Tony King (865) 988-6172**

Meet at the ranger's house at 8:00 a.m. For site information and directions, visit [www.cityofknoxville.org/parks/sharpsridge.asp](http://www.cityofknoxville.org/parks/sharpsridge.asp).

Spring migrants will be the focus. If you are new to birding or to KTOS field trips, this is a great way to get started. It is also a great way to brush up on your spring warbler songs if you are more experienced.

### Frozen Head State Park Birding Hike

**Sunday, May 10, @ 7:30 a.m.**

**Leader: Chuck Estes, (865) 207-0127**

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the parking area at the amphitheater in the park. For general directions to the park, visit: [www.outdoorknoxville.com/places/trails/regional/frozen-head-state-park-trails](http://www.outdoorknoxville.com/places/trails/regional/frozen-head-state-park-trails). We will hike Lookout Tower Trail (old gravel jeep trail) at an easy birding pace for ~ 2 miles which will get us to an area to see Cerulean Warblers. The trail has a steady, moderate grade. You can turn around at any point. This is a great place to see various migrants. Bring a snack, water, and rain gear as needed. We should be back at the parking area by noon.

### Cades Cove Loop Road Bicycle Trip

**Saturday, May 23 @ 7:30 a.m.**

**Leader: Tom Howe (865) 407-9620,  
[blountbirder@nxs.net](mailto:blountbirder@nxs.net)**

Come explore Cades Cove by bicycle. The cove road is closed to cars until 10:00 a.m. during which we should have time to reach potential Henslow's Sparrow habitat as you approach Cooper Road. This 11 mile loop will involve some strenuous biking. We should bring at least one scope which I can carry in a backpack. I recommend you bring your lunch. RSVP to Tom.

### Beverly Park off Tazewell Pike

**Thursday, May 21 @ 9:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Tony King, (865) 988-6172,  
[tonytheking1027@aol.com](mailto:tonytheking1027@aol.com)**

We will meet in the parking lot near the clubhouse at 9:00 a.m. For directions to the park, visit: [www.outdoorknoxville.com/places/trails/north/beverly-park-trails](http://www.outdoorknoxville.com/places/trails/north/beverly-park-trails).

*J.B. Owen Memorial Fund  
Annual Report for 2014-2015  
May 1, 2015*

The purpose of the J.B. Owen Memorial Fund is to honor the memory of J.B. Owen, longtime TOS member known to thousands in East Tennessee through his columns in Knoxville newspapers. The Fund provides money for projects that promote the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee. This annual report summarizes projects funded, contributions of members of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society (KTOS), operating expenses, and other pertinent information as to the status of the Fund and its administration during 2014-2015.

**Award History**

Previous Owen Award winners were:

- 2002: Foothills Land Conservancy of Maryville, Tennessee, for acquisition of wetlands in the area between the Yuchi and Hiwassee Island Refuges.
- 2003: Jennifer Powers for support of graduate research on the reproductive success and natal dispersal of American Kestrels.
- 2004: Samuel Dement, David Vogt, and Keith Hobson for support of the project on Stable-isotope feather analysis and foreign band encounter comparisons of wintering American Kestrels in similar habitats west and east of the Southern Appalachians.
- 2005: Lyn Bales for support of outreach programs at Ijams Nature Center of Knoxville.
- 2006: Jim Giocomo for support of the project on Northern Saw-whet Owl Monitoring in Knox County, Tennessee; and Mark Armstrong for support of The MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity Station) at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge.
- 2007: Keith Watson for support of the project on Breeding Bird Survey of Soak Ash and Cattail Wetland Habitats in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee.
- 2008: Than Boves for support of the project on Relationships between Cerulean Warblers, Timber Harvest, and Ornamentation. Mark Armstrong for support of The MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity Station) at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge.
- 2009: Than Boves for support of the project on Relationships between Cerulean Warblers, Timber Harvest, and Ornamentation. Jessica Owens for support of her project on "Chick-a-dee" calling behavior of tufted titmice (*Baeolophus bicolor*): A test of the effects of habitat structure and body condition.
- 2010: Foothills Land Conservancy of Maryville, Tennessee, for support of the Conservancy's important mission to protect and preserve the natural landscape of East Tennessee which has significant benefits for the conservation of birds in Tennessee.
- 2011: Than Boves for stable isotope analysis on feathers collected over the past three years from Cerulean Warblers during his research on this species in the Appalachian Mountains. Evan Searfoss to complete the construction of an observation tower at Kyker Bottoms Refuge in Blount County.
- 2012: Tiffany Beachy, for support of her project Investigating Potential Impacts of Hemlock Decline on Stream-Side Birds in the Walker Valley.
- 2013: The Tennessee Izaak Walton League to assist in its efforts in conserving east Tennessee's natural resources with a special focus on maintaining wetlands in such places as Turkey Creek in west Knox County. The Clinch River Raptor Center for its work in rehabilitating injured raptors.

**New Projects Funded**

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation was awarded \$500 to cover a portion of the cost of a GPS cellular transmitter for tracking one Golden Eagle as part of a larger project across the Appalachian Mountains to document wintering eastern Golden Eagles on their wintering grounds.

**Project Progress**

2014 Owen Award winner Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation reports via Scott Somershoe that two transmitters were put on Golden Eagles this past winter but one was lost almost immediately and no data was returned from it for unknown reasons. The plan is to purchase a new transmitter before the end of the fiscal year which will be put on an eagle captured during the coming winter.

2012 Owen Award winner Tiffany Beachy reports via Lee Bryant, Masters student in Environmental Science: The 2014 Louisiana Waterthrush (LOWA) breeding season had a return rate of 85.7% with six of the seven banded males studied in 2013 returning. "Between target and passive mist netting, a total of 71 LOWA were banded over the course of the season. Thirty-three territories were followed, spanning from Abram's Creek in the Cades Cove picnic area to the Townsend Wye and up Walker Valley past Tremont's campus. We found and monitored 19 nests—five were abandoned before egg laying (only two nests were found within untreated hemlock-dominated forest, and both were abandoned), nine fledged successfully, and five were depredated (64.3% raw nest success).

"The 2015 breeding season started earlier than ever on March 10 with the first LOWA sighting, a banded bird from 2013 named Mr. Dorsey who has returned for his third year breeding in Walker Valley. Birds have since then steadily trickled into the valley and along Laurel Creek Road for a current total of 22 banded males—18 returns and four banded this year. Most returning birds have

Continued on Page 4

**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 (high school or younger), or TOS life membership for \$450 with \$8 annual fee to Chapter.



[www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html](http://www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html)

**2015 — 2016  
Chapter Officers**

*President*  
Vacant

*Vice President*  
Merikay Waldvogel  
(865) 691-8117  
[quiltalive@aol.com](mailto:quiltalive@aol.com)

*Treasurer*  
Carole Gobert  
(865) 254-8841  
[cpgobert@hotmail.com](mailto:cpgobert@hotmail.com)

*Secretary*  
Karen Wilkinson  
(865) 404-8506  
[karenlwik@gmail.com](mailto:karenlwik@gmail.com)

*Newsletter Editor*  
Michael Plaster  
(865) 694-4814  
[KTOS.Editor@gmail.com](mailto:KTOS.Editor@gmail.com)

*Field Trip Coordinator*  
Tom Howe  
(865) 407-9620  
[blountbirder@nxs.net](mailto:blountbirder@nxs.net)

*State Directors, 2014 – 2016*  
Jean Alexander  
Harold Howell  
David Johnson

*State Directors, 2013 – 2015*  
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

## J.B. Owen Memorial Fund (cont.)

taken up their previous year's territory and unbanded birds have promptly filled in gaps where previously banded birds have not returned. In 2014, 15 birds were fitted with geolocators, three of which have returned; the information from these birds will provide insight into migratory patterns and wintering ground locations. Of 17 known pairs, five nests have been found (four nests belonging to banded males, one to an unbanded male). We are recording GPS locations of banded males in order to map their territories and pinpoint areas of high use that will later be surveyed for vegetation, stream characteristics, and hemlock health."

### Financial Summary

Interest earnings again fell (from \$49.50 last year to \$37.32). The Fund's CDs continue to earn less than 1 percent. KTOS did not make a contribution to the Fund in 2014 but members donated \$194.00 and \$1,000.00 was donated by Cynthia Ellis in memory of her mother, J.B. Owen's only sister, Myrtle O. Hazlewood. Because of this generous donation the Fund's balance increased to \$9,402.37.

Fund Balance (April 30, 2014):	\$8,671.05
Donations:	\$1,194.00
Interest:	\$37.32
Distributions:	(\$500.00)
Fund Balance (April 30, 2015):	\$9,402.37

### Other Accomplishments

The J.B. Owen Memorial Fund Committee maintained a Memory Book to archive records of Fund-related activities.

Submitted by J.B. Owen Memorial Fund Committee, Carole Gobert, Chairperson; Jean Alexander; Chuck Estes; Lola Estes; David Johnson; June Welch