



36

VOLUME 28 • NUMBER 8

NOV 05

through the biKNOXulars

Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

'Birds of the Yosemite Area' is topic of November 2 program

Wednesday, November 2, long-time KTOS member Chuck Nicholson will present "Birds of the Yosemite Area." Nicholson has been a member of KTOS since high school. Over the years he has been a very active member of both the Knoxville chapter and the state-wide organization; TOS recognized him with a Distinguished Service Award for much of that work.

Nicholson has served as KTOS newsletter editor, Vice-President and President. For the state organization he has been *Tennessee Warbler* editor, *Migrant* editor and President. Nicholson authored *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Tennessee*. He currently is the State Curator and Webmaster. Nicholson earned his BS from UTK, MS from the University of Maine and PhD from UTK. He has been employed by TVA for 27 years and is presently Senior Environmental Scientist in environmental policy and planning, specializing in National Environmental Policy Act and Endangered Species Act compliance issues.

Chuck will focus on the birds, bird habitats and scenery of Yosemite National Park, and nearby Mono Lake and San Joaquin Valley of California. Yosemite encompasses almost 750,000 acres of land in the Sierra Nevada region of California, ranging from 2,000 feet to 13,000 feet in elevation. Over 150 bird species occur regularly in Yosemite. The park, created in 1890, is known for its giant sequoia groves and waterfalls.

Mono Lake is an important oasis in the dry Great Basin for nesting and migrating birds in the Pacific Flyway. Eared Grebes, Wilson's Phalaropes and Red-necked Phalaropes are among the most common of the nearly 100 bird species found in Mono Lake.

Chuck's presentation on Yosemite area birds will include beautiful scenery, big rocks, big trees, waterfalls and, of course birds. Please come join us at 7 p.m. in room 117 of the UT Vet building.

Kid Friendly Rating: ★★★ (Out of four)

- Tracey Muise, VP and program coordinator

 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Field trips and outings for November

Saturday, November 5, 3 PM

Hiwassee Refuge Sit-In. See page 1.

Saturday, November 19, 8 AM

Norris Songbird Trail. See page 2.

Sunday, November 27, 7:30 AM

Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge. See page 2.

Saturday, November 5, 3 PM

Hiwassee Refuge Sit-In and Cookout with Chattanooga TOS

Meet at 3 p.m. at Hiwassee Refuge crane viewing area. Knoxville leader: **Dan Mooney** (birds@birdnerds.com; 865-789-0806) Chattanooga leader: **Danny Gaddy**

This will be a joint field trip/cookout with the Chattanooga Chapter of TOS. Those wanting to carpool from Knoxville can meet at the Stokely Building (320 N Cedar Bluff Rd) for a 1 p.m. departure. There will be a birding stop or two along the way. Bring a folding chair, hot dogs, hamburgers, dessert

(Continued on page 2)

"Use what talents you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best."

- Henry Van Dyke, American author, educator (1852-1933)

November KTOS outings *(Continued from page 1)*

and whatever else you care to eat/share. Those that can bring a grill please do so. Come join the fellowship with your East Tennessee birding friends. There may be some Sandhill Cranes already at the refuge, as well as migrant ducks and geese. The land birding can also be quite interesting. Those that stay after dark might be treated to the sounds of the coyote with the declining full moon.

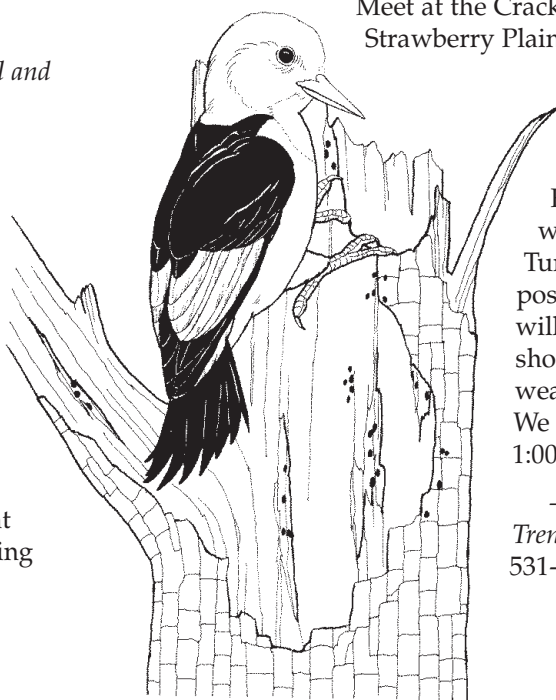
Come prepared with the appropriate clothing, a scope if you have one and spend the afternoon visiting, eating and birding.

Saturday, November 19, 8 AM

Field trip to Norris Songbird Trail and surrounding areas.

Leader: **Allan Trently**
ajtcorax@hotmail.com;
(865) 494-2830 h;
(865) 632-6356 w

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Norris Dam bathrooms just east of the dam. Directions: From I-75 take exit 122 (Norris/Clinton) and go east on TN 61 for approximately 1.5 miles and turn north onto TN 441 and go approximately five miles to the bathrooms that will be on the left, before crossing over the dam.



This will involve easy walking. We will go to about lunch (~11:30). Resident and wintering birds will be the targets. There are sometimes Red-headed Woodpeckers in the area. The birding on this trip will be combined with a nature/ecology walk with the Tennessee Valley Nature Club.

Sunday, November 27, 7:30 AM

Field trip to Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge.

Leader: **Dan Mooney** (birds@birdnerds.com;
865-789-0806)

Meet at the Cracker Barrel restaurant at the Strawberry Plains exit for a 7:30 a.m. departure, or by 7:40 at the Refuge. Targets will be winter sparrows (White-throated, White-crowned, Swamp, Field, Song, Savannah, Fox, maybe a late Grasshopper) as well as woodland passerines. Wild Turkey and Bald Eagle are always possible, along with a few raptors. We will probably walk 4+ miles so folks should be prepared for the forecasted weather and bring water and a snack. We should finish up between noon and 1:00 p.m.

- For additional info contact David Trently: dtrently@utk.edu; 974-8664 w; 531-1473 h



OF NOTE!

Welcome New KTOS Members

Sandra Underwood, Amy Billone and Shannon Burke, Jon and Daniella Mathson

Highland Rim Chapter to host winter meeting

The folks of the Highland Rim Chapter have agreed to host the winter TOS meeting during the last weekend in January 2006. They want to hold the meeting at the Ambassador Motel in Manchester. Lisa Trail, chapter president, said that she would appreciate any help or advise in organizing the event. If you want to help call Lisa at 931-728-6045 or Ruth Luckadoo at 931-455-4004.

-Submitted by Danny Gaddy

With pizza, we'll move some boxes

Volunteers needed to help me, Janet McKnight, relocate my nest box trail and purple martin pole. This will take most of a Sunday. The 30 nest boxes that are being moved need to be taken down, have a new location found for each one on my new property, erected on a post and baffled. We are moving only the boxes on my existing trail that has not been previously nested in. The martin pole was not nested in this past summer.

Please call me at (865) 856-2229 or (865) 271-8337 if you would like to help me help the birds! I will feed the crew pizza and lots of iced tea.

-Submitted by Janet McKnight

My Favorite Birder *By Janet McKnight*

For five years now I have been a KTOS member and have attended the club meetings with fair regularity. And I must admit, I'm in love with the entire room. Birders are such a wonderful group of people, and to spend an evening among the area's finest birders, who are also some of the area's finest people, is a pure pleasure. But there is one birder I always hope to see at the club meetings. And if he's there I can always count on kind words from him, and warmth and sweetness and knowledge and history...

He first became my friend up on Sharp's Ridge when he noticed I was a new birder—a student in his eyes—and he began to give me his tutelage on that very day when he found me my first Hairy Woodpecker.

He is very gifted with all of the knowledge he possesses about birds, and even more gifted with the ability to gently convey that knowledge to others. He is a natural teacher. And it's not just bird knowledge he has; the man is a walking history book, and can tell stories about local history and so many other things in a way that makes the listener want to stay and learn.

In the spring of 2004, my friend and I were having a chat on Sharp's Ridge, and discovered that coincidentally we were going to be in Ohio at Magee Marsh at the same time. So we made plans to meet up there and spend a day birding together. I went to the Magee Marsh boardwalk the afternoon before I was to meet my friend and his wife, just so I could check the place out and orient myself. Just pulling into the parking lot,

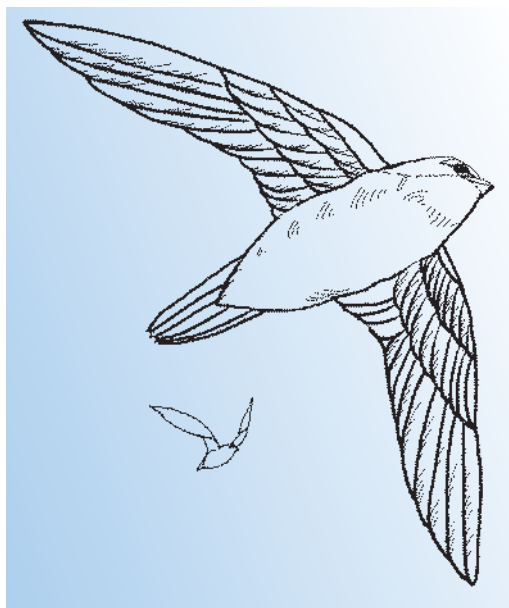
I got so excited—there were throngs of birders everywhere, and more cameras with monster lenses, scopes, and binoculars than I have ever seen. The place was hopping with people, all there for the spectacle of spring migration. Finding a parking space was not easy.

When I did, I jumped out of my truck and quickly donned my binocular harness. As I was straightening my straps, I looked up. The very first person I saw, standing there grinning at me, was my friend. In the masses of birders present, his were the first eyes I met. I'll never forget that memory of him! He walked with me to the boardwalk and promptly showed me my first Canada Warbler. I met him and his wife the next morning as planned, and I had the world's best guide and companions that day. It was a delightful day of birding in every way, made even better by the precious opportunity to spend time with my favorite birder.

At the end of that amazing day, my friend and his wife gave me a ride back to my hotel in Port Clinton. He made me feel complimented and put a smile on my face as usual by telling me that he was having the adoption papers drawn up to adopt me. Then he looked up and around and said, "You'll probably get Common Nighthawk here if you look for them tonight."

It turns out he was right. Jim Campbell knows these things.

BOOK REPORT



Check It Out: *"CHIMNEY SWIFTS: America's Mysterious Birds above the Fireplace"* by Paul and Georgan Kyle

There was a time in North America—before our log-cabin building, axe-wielding European ancestors arrived—when all Chimney Swifts nested and roosted in hollow trees. But these amazing birds proved to be highly adaptable. As we cut down all of the old-growth trees, the swifts began to nest and roost in the early settlers' chimneys. Today, just about all chimney swifts almost exclusively use human-made structures. Yet, modern chimney designs are having a negative affect on their population.

Paul and Georgan Kyle are in charge of a chimney swift research station in Austin, Texas. Their insightful book discusses the latest research on these beneficial birds that eat thousands of small flying insects—their diet includes mosquitoes, flies and termites.

The Kyle's book is the latest in the Louise Lindsey Merrick Natural Environment Series published by Texas A&M University Press, 2005, 152 pages, color and b&w photos and illustrations, paperback, \$16.95.



Presidential Perch

- By Charlie Muise

I must start this month's Perch with an apology. In May TOS voted to increase dues. Many Knoxville members agreed with this increase, to continue funding important research and conservation efforts and other important club work. While our chapter kept dues the same for another year, the cost of membership did rise. Unfortunately, this was not reflected in our newsletter before this month. Please note that this was not the fault of our editor, Lyn. The information simply never made it to him. Our treasurer Marie Oakes brought this to my attention after some members already renewed for 2006, sending in checks for the old amount. We greatly appreciate folks being on time with their dues, and hope that they will consider sending in the balance between the old and new dues. For everybody else, please remember that dues are due by the end of the year.

Where does TOS dues money go? Last month, as chair of the TOS Conservation and Research Fund Committee, I had the pleasure of announcing awards to: Friends of the Smokies for work studying Peregrine Falcons and grassland birds; Jim Giocomo for work researching grassland birds; and Lesley Bulluck for work on Golden-winged Warblers. The total of \$2500 was actually in the TOS budget for the first time this year. This budgeting, along with the dues increase, were part of a complete overhaul of TOS finances which the TOS finance committee is enacting.

A lot has been going on in the environmental world. Sadly, some of it has been bad. TVA went ahead with the land swap in Marion County, giving land that had been taken by eminent domain to a developer, in exchange for land that was not developable. Then they said that that deal was a model of the way TVA will do business in the future. While I commend the important research efforts TVA is supporting, such as their leadership in the shore-bird work going on across the state, I fear that such land deals will destroy both habitat, and public access to water. The TOS Conservation Policy Committee (CPC) drafted a letter that was sent by president Danny Gaddy in the spring.

Last month the U.S. House of Representatives passed a measure written by Richard Pombo (R-California), which, if enacted, would greatly cripple the Endangered Species Act. This act has helped to bring back species such as the Osprey and the Peregrine Falcon, as well as a few fish species in

Tennessee. It is only because of this important law that many species still exist. The version of the bill passed by the house would removed Threatened status, remove protections from many places that are prime habitat for endangered species and require the U.S. government to notify developers and others of the presence of such species within 90 days, or exempt them from following protecting the species. This law is a terrible idea, and we need to make sure that our Senators hear from us. Please contact Senators Alexander and Frist today (contact info at bottom of page) and tell them that the ESA needs no changes! Danny also signed and sent a letter drafted by the CPC on this issue.

Remember, without habitat, there will be no birds for us to enjoy. That is why we love to hear of people like Janet McKnight buying land that contains lots of fine habitat! Janet has many positive plans for her new property, Wood Thrush Ridge, which some club members visited in October. One of those plans involves setting up nesting boxes, and she could use some help. If you can help her, see her at the next club meeting. She is in charge of our refreshments every month.

Kyker Bottoms, one of the prime birding locations in our area, closes to the public November first for the winter. I'll be leading a trip there on October 29. Let's go find some sparrows and waterfowl!

KTOS Financial Report • November 2005

Compiled by Marie Oakes, Treasurer

	October	September	YTD
Income:			
. Dues	\$116.00	\$46.00	\$1,350.00
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$189.00	\$82.00	\$1,118.95
. Interest	\$61.68	\$0.00	\$180.83
. Silent Auction	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$613.40
. Owen Memorial	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$71.00
. Miscellaneous	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
Total Income	\$366.68	\$128.00	\$3,334.18
Expenses:			
. Newsletter	\$40.30	\$141.00	\$483.30
. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$51.96
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$363.18	\$0.00	\$874.91
. Member Dues to TOS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,346.00
. Miscellaneous	<u>\$13.52</u>	<u>\$25.00</u>	<u>\$56.60</u>
Total Expenses	\$417.00	\$166.00	\$2,812.77
Other:			
J.B. Owen Award	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
Total Other	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Account Balances			
. KTOS Checking & Savings	\$3,275.71	\$3,882.82	
. J.B.Owen Memorial	\$6,696.09	\$6,639.30	
Memberships	148	145	

Senator Lamar Alexander, 302 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510 or phone (202) 224-4944
Web Form: alexander.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Contact.Home

Senator Bill Frist, 509 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510 or phone (202) 224-3344
Web Form: frist.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=AboutSenatorFrist.ContactForm

Operation Migration/Whooping Cranes need your HELP!

Open Letter from Operation Migration Co-founders Bill Lishman and Joe Duff

Editor's Note: *This is the fifth year of Operation Migration's effort to reestablish an eastern flock of migratory whooping cranes. If you believe in this project, they need your help! OM receives no governmental funding, but rather relies on individual financial contributions. Tennessee has always led the way in donations, but this year they need your money more than ever.*

This year Operation Migration is facing its biggest challenge ever.

The great news is that we have twenty bright-eyed whooping crane chicks this year, and like energetic teenagers they are ready and anxious to fly south. We have dedicated pilots and an enthusiastic ground support team. The problem is our funds—or should we say, the lack of funding.

When these birds hatched we had no idea what the events of 2005 would bring; the shortfall in grants; the doubling of fuel costs. Nor did we have any idea that our donation receipts would not be able to compensate for these unexpected events.

Because this project has been such an amazing success, we thought that in addition to our long-time supporters, many new donors would rush to help. But with weather and other events elevating the need for support of many humanitarian causes, it is understandable that aid to an endangered species may have been downgraded on many people's giving list—or even left off entirely. As a result, we find ourselves with the



smallest ever amount of funding to cope with the biggest and most costly year of the project to date.

At this point, with so many birds, higher expenses, and soaring fuel costs, we can only get the birds as far south as Kentucky/Tennessee before we run out of gas...both literally and figuratively. For this reason

we're writing to solicit your financial assistance.

The entire OM team is totally committed to the Whooping Crane project and the 2005 Migration. Many of us are not only volunteering our equipment and expertise, we are also now donating our time in order to stave off grinding to a halt before reaching Florida.

Getting the 2005 cohort safely to Florida means the flock will be increased by a third! Whether

from a foundation, corporation or individual, your contribution—small or large—is crucial to making this happen.

PLEASE be as generous as you can, and be assured your donation will help save a species.

Sincerely yours, Bill Lishman and Joe Duff

This is urgent. Send donations to:

Operation Migration
1623 Military Road, #639
Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14304-1745

Needed: Whooping Crane pen cleaners

On Friday, October 14 at 8 a.m., Operation Migration's Class of 2005 left Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin. If all goes well and they receive the much needed funding (see above), they'll pass through the Tennessee Valley in mid-November.

While in this part of our state the 20 young cranes will spend time on the ground in a temporary pen at Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Meigs County. But before that happens the pen will have to be prepared and all trash—broken bottles, aluminum cans and spent

shells—will be removed from the interior of the enclosure. (These items are usually buried in the mud along the water's shoreline.)

As of this writing, the pen has not been set up but it will be a few weeks before the cranes arrive. The clean-up usually occurs in early November.

If you would like to help with this conservation effort contact: Lyn Bales at (865) 577-4717, ext. 19, or e-mail him at: lynbales@comcast.net

Editor's Note: *I need your help.*

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 dues are \$26 for an individual, \$30 for a family and \$13 for a student. Sustaining memberships are \$38 and a Life membership with TOS is \$450 with an annual fee of \$8 to the local chapter.

DEADLINE for December issue is November 26. 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



PRESIDENT.....Charlie Muise
2632 Montvale Road,
Maryville, TN 37803 (865) 977-8429
cmmbirds@yahoo.com

VICE-PRESIDENT.....Tracey Muise
2632 Montvale Road,
Maryville, TN 37803 (865) 977-8429
traceson@yahoo.com

TREASURER.....Marie Oakes
18 Rockingham Lane
Oak Ridge, TN 37830 (865) 483-9287
marieoakes@msn.com

SECRETARY.....Kathy Bivens
114 Boulder Street
Maryville, TN 37804 (865) 983-7349
volkathy@yahoo.com

EDITOR.....Stephen Lyn Bales
1801 Kemper Lane
Knoxville, TN 37920
(865) 577-6978
lynbales@comcast.net

EDITOR (Distribution)...Patty Ford
5525 Lonas Drive
Knoxville, TN 37909-3248
(865) 584-8473
pattyford@comcast.net

Don't delay! 2006 (Increased) Dues due NOW

Bird Club membership dues for 2006 are due now. The treasurer needs to submit dues to TOS on December 31, 2005. So please don't delay. The TOS portion of the dues has increased. Membership dues are \$26 for an individual, \$30 for a family and \$13 for a student. Sustaining memberships are \$38 and a Life membership with TOS is \$450 with an annual fee of \$8 to the local chapter.

Send your dues to Marie Oakes, 18 Rockingham Lane, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

Help Wanted: For bird-related programs

We are looking for members who are willing to present bird-related programs at area schools, libraries, clubs, etc. You don't have to be an expert about birds, but you should be comfortable talking about them in front of a group. We will be preparing some programs to be given using Power Point, and some as slide shows. You can have one with sample dialog already written, or just "wing" your talk. TOS has three main purposes—education, research and conservation of birds.

Some members have been doing programs for a while now, especially Bob Steffy who prepared a very good slide show for this purpose, but it's time KTOS starts increasing what we do related to education.

Let me know if you are interested in this project. You can volunteer to do one program a year, or try to do some every month! Once we know there are people available to do these, we'll start contacting places where we think such programs would be appropriate.

We'd also like your ideas on what types of programs to put together.

Contact David Trently if you are interested or want more information.
dtrently@utk.edu; h 531-1473; w 974-8664

through the biKNOXulars

(USPS 697-010)

Published monthly, except January, July and August by the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, 5525 Lonas Rd., D-11, Knoxville, TN 37909.

Subscription Price \$8.00. Periodical Postage paid at Knoxville, TN 37901.

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to:

through the biKNOXulars, 5525 Lonas Rd., D-11, Knoxville, TN 37909.