

biKNOXulars

Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

NOVEMBER'S PROGRAM TO BE ON BIRDS OF TAHITI AND SOUTHERN POLYNESIA

Dollyann Myers and Ron Hoff took a 17-day pelagic trip to Southern Polynesia in September/October of 2005. This is a little known and little visited area of the world.

Ron has put together a slide program to show some of the unusual birds and landscapes of this region. Photos of Tuamotu Sandpiper, Bristle-thighed Curlew, and 40 lb. Wahoos are included.

We will meet at 7 o'clock on Wednesday, November 5 in Room 117 of the UT Veterinary Building.

Upcoming field trips and programs

Tuesday, November 18, 8:30 a.m.
Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery, Clinton
Leader: Tony King (865-988-6172)

This TWRA facility is a good spot for wading birds, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Savannah sparrows are also possible. Directions: From I-75 north of Knoxville, take Exit 122, TN 61, Norris-Clinton. Take TN 61 west towards Clinton. Go 3.8 miles and take the first left after crossing the large bridge over the Clinch River. This road is not well marked - watch for the TWRA Hatchery and Wildlife Observation Area signs. If you go through a stoplight after crossing the river, you have gone too far. Shortly after turning off of TN 61, you will arrive at the hatchery gate on the right, which is where we will congregate. For more information, see <http://www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/EagleBend.htm>.

Saturday, November 29, 8:30-2:00
Ft. Loudoun Lake Loop
Leader: Marcia Davis (865-558-1458)

This trip will visit Louisville Point Park, Polland Creek, Phelps Dairy Pond, Scenic Point, Tellico Boat Launch, Ft. Loudoun Dam and Marina, Lenoir City, and Concord Park. We'll search for waterfowl, gulls and all things avian. To carpool, meet at 8:30 AM at the west end of the Kroger parking lot, east of the intersection of Northshore Dr and Pellissippi Pkwy. Lunch at Calhoun's Restaurant at Ft. Loudoun Dam.



Photograph of a Murphy's Petrel which was discovered breeding on one of the Polynesian Islands visited by Ron and Dollyann.

Don't miss what promises to be an interesting and informative program.

****IMPORTANT NOTICE****

Due to the current UT policy regarding free parking, we are having to get dated parking permits to put in our cars. I believe these permits are issued on the day of the event and expire on the following day. Therefore, when you arrive for Wednesday's meeting, drive by the regular entrance to our meeting place before you park. Someone from the club will be standing at these entrance doors and will have a parking pass for you display on the dash of your car.

Saturday, November 22, 8:15 a.m.
Seven Islands WMA
Leader: David Trently (Home 865-531-1473, Work 865-974-8664, NatureTours@avianpursuits.com)

Meet at the boat launch area. Seven Islands contains excellent field and riparian habitat, plus some wooded areas. We may see any normal resident birds, including raptors, sparrows and possible waterfowl along the river. We could also see some late migrants.

We'll spend about three hours birding here, including, for those interested, walking through some of the grassy fields looking for uncommon sparrows. Bring a snack and something to drink. Directions: From I-40, take Exit 402 Midway Rd and turn south. Continue on Midway for 2 mi., then turn left onto Maples Rd. Watch for the green refuge signs. At the end of Maples, turn right onto Kodak Rd. After about a quarter mile, turn left onto Kelly Ln. Just before the parking lot, take the left turn to the boat launch area.

TOS FALL MEETING

November 7-9, 2008
TOS Fall Meeting, Chattanooga, TN

The Chattanooga Chapter extends an invitation to all TOS members across the state to attend the TOS Fall Meeting, to be held November 7 - 9, 2008. Most of the meeting events will be held at the [Chattanooga Nature Center](http://www.chattanooga-nature-center.com).

See (<http://www.tnbirds.org/>) for further information.

"I realized that if I had to choose, I would rather have birds than airplanes."
 Charles Lindbergh



Presidential Perch

Nesting Box Usage and Success at SIWR, 2007-2008

By Wayne H. Schacher
whschacher@natreserv.com

The Perch will return next month.

ANNUAL DUES

It is time to pay your dues. Membership dues are \$26 for an individual, \$30 for a family and \$13 for a student.

When paying your dues this year, please include your address, phone number and e-mail address so Marie can update her files.

KTOS FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 2008

Table with 4 columns: Category, Aug-Oct, June-July, YTD. Rows include Income (Dues, Shade Grown Coffee, Interest, Silent Auction, Miscellaneous, Total Income), Expenses (Newsletter, Supplies, Shade Grown Coffee, Member Dues to TOS, Misc., Total Expenses), Other (J.S. Owen Award, Total other), Account Balances (KTOS Checking & Savings, J.B. Owen Memorial), and Memberships (Memberships, Paid 2009 Memberships, New Members, Linda Denton, Bob & Sue Howdeshell).

Boy Scout Troop 246 of Knoxville had built and donated 24 eastern bluebird/tree swallow nesting structures that were placed throughout Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge in 2007. These boxes were monitored throughout last year's nesting season, and the results reported in biKNOXulars (November 2007). Fourteen additional nest boxes were built or donated by Wild Birds Unlimited, and were placed during 2008. Most of the original boxes had baffle predator guards on their fencepost. The Wild Bird Unlimited nest boxes had woven-wire predator guards mounted around the entrance. The generosity of Kathy Getsey at Wild Birds Unlimited is most appreciated.

Billie Cantwell and Colin Leonard monitored usage every 10 days through the 2008 nesting season with the following results. Corresponding 2007 data are included in brackets.

There were 50 total nest-starts [24 in 2007], 34 by Eastern Bluebirds [15] and 13 by Tree Swallows [9]. A third species, Carolina Chickadee had 3 nest starts in 2008. Three boxes were not used, the same number as in 2007, though different boxes.

Onset of nest-building by Eastern Bluebirds was slightly earlier in 2008, with many boxes having nests by April 1. Nesting activity continued into the third week of July, slightly longer than in 2007. Of 34 bluebird clutches, 17 (50%) successfully fledged their broods, down from 60% nest-success in 2007 [9 of 15]. Clutch size averaged 5.1 [4.6], with an average of 3.8 nestlings fledged, a decrease from 4.3 in 2007.

Tree Swallow nest-building began in mid-April, a week later than in 2007 with nesting activity ending in late June, a week longer than in 2007. Of the 13 tree swallow nest-starts, only 4 were successful fledged, 31%. This is a significant reduction in nest-success from 2007 when 7 of 9 broods successfully fledged [78%]. Average tree swallow clutch size (3.5 eggs) was also reduced from 2007 [4.8], with an average of 3.3 nestlings fledged [4.2] per successful nest in 2008.

Carolina Chickadee nest-building began the second week of April and went until the first week in June. Only 1 of 3 nest-starts was successful. In that successful nest, the clutch size was 6, with 5 nestlings fledged. The remaining incubated egg did not hatch.

Despite the presence of fencepost baffles and entrance, woven-wire predator guards on most of the nest boxes, depredation was a significant problem in 2008. For some reason, the tree swallow nests seemed especially vulnerable. The main culprit seems to be the raccoon, though in some cases snakes were the problem. The nest boxes mounted along the fence around the Sheriff's paddock seemed targeted as they were not effectively fitted with predator guards. We hope a series of changes next nesting season will deter some of the depredation. Strategies include installing baffle and entrance predator guards where lacking, deepening some of the nest boxes, lengthening the entrance, woven-wire guards and devising a way to protect the boxes mounted on the fence. While some depredation is to be expected and is inevitable, we'll try to reduce it from this year's levels. Any suggestions will be appreciated.

In addition to monitoring nest box usage and success in 2008, Billie and Colin coordinated with Mark Armstrong to band many of the nestlings just prior to fledging. A total of 54 eastern bluebirds and 9 tree swallow nestlings were banded. It will be very interesting to see if recaptures of these nestlings show up in future activities at SIWR.

With the high usage, nesting sites still seem to be limiting at SIWR. We hope to continue and expand this project into the future. It will be interesting to note any differences in nesting activity or success with additional years of monitoring. Special thanks to Wild Birds Unlimited and to Billie, Colin and Mark for their dedicated efforts!



SEEING 7000 SPECIES OF BIRDS

A VERY LONG JOURNEY

Dollyann Myers recently saw her 7000th world species, a small group of Spotted Crocias, on the island of Java, Indonesia. The journey to this plateau actually started on a cattle farm in west Tennessee, where she grew up and developed an interest in nature and wildlife early on. It was in the early 1970's when she saw an Eastern Towhee (back then it was named Rufous-sided Towhee) in her back yard in Memphis and wondered what that pretty bird was named. She joined the Memphis bird club around 1976 and soon started making many life-long friends. In 1977 she went with the Memphis club to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands for her first foreign birding trip. After that she traveled with some Memphis members to Mexico almost every winter for several years either just birding or participating in Christmas Counts. Thanks in large part to her 35-year job with Delta Air Lines, she eventually began chasing birds around North America, where her ABA list now stands at a respectable 758.

December of 1992 found her starting to date her now husband, Ron Hoff. International birding mostly replaced chasing ABA birds and became a priority with them. They have pursued it steadily since then. Dollyann has now visited some 66 countries and territories. She is often asked if there are any places left to go birding that she hasn't already been to, which usually brings a quick response saying "my goodness, yes!". She has visited every continent except Antarctica, and that's in the planning stages.

It has been an incredible journey, with many stories to relive and memorable bird sightings too numerous to list. One doesn't see this many bird species without the help of many guides, friends, and other people. Dollyann very much appreciates all the help she has received over the years in finding these birds. She often wonders how she managed to discover what she feels to be the best hobby in the world. She plans to keep birding for the rest of her life in some form or another. If age and/or physical restrictions keep her and Ron from doing normal birding trips, then they plan to sit on the deck of some pelagic trip, ticking seabirds, having drinks, and watching yet another glorious sunset. Sweet!

By: Ron Hoff

Mark Armstrong Receives 2008 J.B. Owen Award for Support of MAPS

The Knoxville Bird Club has selected two winners of the 2008 J.B. Owen Award. As reported in the September newsletter, Than Boves of the University of Tennessee Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries received an Owen Award of \$500 for support of his project on *Relationships between Cerulean Warblers, Timber Harvest, and Ornamentation*. The second winner for 2008 is KTOS member Mark Armstrong, who will receive an Owen Award of \$418 for support of his project on *The MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity Station) at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge (SIWR)*. Mark received the 2006 Owen Award for support of SIWR MAPS activities in which 410 individuals were banded in May-August 2007. An "After MAPS" phase was initiated to see how long some of the late breeders remained at the refuge and was extended to include fall migration and winter. In the "After MAPS" phase, 371 individuals were banded. Mark will use the 2008 Owen Award for replacement mist nets and for construction of a canopy over the banding table to provide shade while the station is in operation. The projects of Than Boves and Mark Armstrong provide outstanding opportunities to achieve the Owen Award goal of promoting the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee.

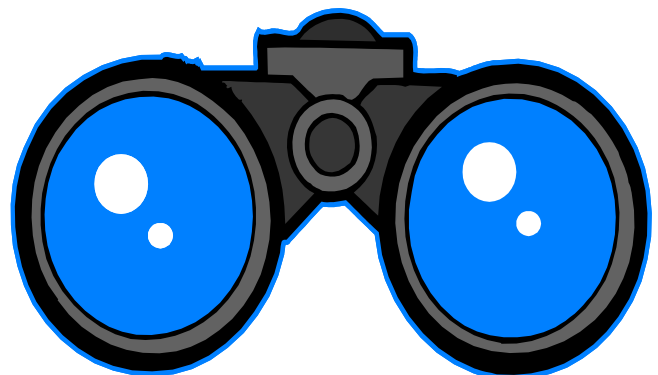
NIKON OUTING

You asked for it so here it is.

A day out with Ken Worthington the Nikon King. Please come join us on Saturday November 15 at Wild Birds Unlimited. Wild Birds is located at 7240 Kingston Pike, in the Gallery Shopping Center next to Silver Spoon.

Ken Worthington will be here with a selection of Binoculars, Spotting Scopes and a Digiscope outfit for you to tryout. He will have a wide variety of binoculars for you to use and Ken will be available to answer your questions on optics. Come and view the birds, check out the optics and have a good time.

Look forward to seeing everyone on November 15th from 12 to 3.



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 Life membership with TOS is \$450 with an annual fee of \$8 to the local Chapter.

DEADLINE for Dec. issue is Nov 21.

Due to cost and space restrictions, please limit your article to 700 words. For a color version of this newsletter or for past issues, go to the TOS home page, <http://www.tnbirds.org> and click on "local chapters/Knoxville"



Avian Pursuits Group at Big Bend National Park in May 2008

Left to right- Chris Welsh, Mac Braid, David Trently, Harold Howell (behind David), Bob Braid, Susan Schott, Larry French, Ginger Goolsby and Deedee Blane



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SHADE GROWN COFFEE

Don't forget to order your shade grown coffee to be delivered in December. Which reminds me - why not order some extra coffee this month to give as gifts to special people when the holidays roll around.

Remember every purchase you make helps preserve habitat for birds.

See David Johnson to place your order.

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