



November Meeting: “A Raptor’s Life” by Barry Spruce

Please join us on **Wednesday, November 2, 2016** for a presentation entitled “A Raptor’s Life” by our own Barry Spruce of Townsend.

Barry is a nature and wildlife photographer who lives in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains in Townsend, Tennessee. Growing up in New England, he was exposed to a great variety of nature and birds from the rugged rocky coastline to the highest peaks of the White Mountains. He moved to Knoxville back in 1990. He is a member of KTOS as well as the Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers (SANP) and past president of Blount County Photo Club. He has done speaking engagements all over East Tennessee including Chattanooga TOS.

This presentation will cover raptors and their habits in the Eastern Time Zone of the USA. This is a photography-based presentation so be prepared for a lot of Bird “eye candy.”

The KTOS meeting begins at 6:45 in Room 118 of the University of Tennessee, College of Veterinary Medicine. For directions, visit the KTOS website at www.knoxvillebirding.org or contact Merikay Waldvogel (865) 806-7505.



Chimney Swifts, Source: By Richard Crossley (Richard Crossley) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Chimney Swift Tower at Seven Islands State Birding Park

Seven Islands State Birding Park and its friends group recently agreed to pursue a project to construct a Chimney Swift tower at the park. Chimney Swift towers are being constructed all over the eastern part of North America in order to assist this species both with summer nesting habitat as well as migrating stop over shelters. Due to loss of natural habitat and the dwindling number of useable residential chimneys, Chimney Swifts will be facing more and more challenges in the years to come.

The Chimney Swift tower will be constructed of concrete block and faced with either brick or stone. It will stand 12 to 15 feet high and will set on the former home site of the Cresswell family near the barn at the end of the road. Construction will hopefully take place this winter and be ready for spring migration. Last month, the JB Owen fund voted to award \$750 to go toward the construction of this tower.



Barry Spruce



Presidential Perch

Once again one of my favorite times of year has arrived. Late October and early November bring calm, sunny but nippy days with lots of bird activity. It is a perfect occasion to relax on the deck and soak it in while I recover from post-bicycle wreck surgery on my humerus. A few Tennessee warblers still linger but most of the activity centers around the chickadees, titmice, and nuthatches vying for feeder access as they bustle to store the seeds in nooks and crannies in tree bark. Blue Jays are also preparing, burying acorns in the lawn. The doves, however, have a different strategy—just pig out and fatten up. (In fact, they eat so much of my sunflower seed, I am tempted to make them pay me back with a sacrificial meal, but I digress.) And then there are new sounds filling the air: Yellow-rumped warblers' "tcheps", Golden-crowned kinglets' "tsee-tsee-tsees" and the explosive drilling of Yellow-bellied sapsuckers. The latter three are welcome new arrivals in recent days. The changing of the seasons is always such a sublime event to me that inspires hope in new adventures ahead as we pursue our love of birdwatching.

All this enjoyment would not be possible were it not for a phenomenon built into birds called by the German word Zugunruhe. It is a concept I have observed for a while, but the word is new to me. So, if you want to know how to pronounce it, ask Merikay! It is a term for the anxious restlessness birds display as they sense the time to migrate is drawing near. I see it especially exaggerated in robins. They get this wild look about them as they frantically bulk up for long flights. This is caused by the triggering of their hormones by the change in day length, which has been proven by manipulating it in the laboratory. I think a similar thing happens to us late in winter when we want to head south because we cannot wait for spring. Of course, it also happens to some, as when a Sabine's Gull or Brown Booby shows up in west Tennessee causing the same wild-eyed look!

As much as we can get lost in our enjoyment of birds, let us not forget the other goals of TOS's charter—the study of and conservation of birds. Steve Routledge, TOS President, has sent out messages about TWRA soliciting our comments about bird hunting and the deadline is coming up soon. Here are his words from a recent email to the TN-Bird community:

"TWRA has requested public input for waterfowl and other migratory bird hunting, including the expanded Sandhill Crane hunt, for 2017-2018. The comment period is October 15—November 15, 2016. These comments will be considered by TWRA's Wildlife Division staff and may be considered as proposals for regulation changes. Comments may be submitted by mail to: 2017-2018 Hunting Season Comments, TWRA, Wildlife and Forestry Division, P.O. Box 40747, Nashville, TN 37204 or e-mailed

Presidential Perch (cont.)

to twra.comment@tn.gov. Please include "Waterfowl Season Comments" on the subject line of e-mailed submissions."

Please take a few moments to send your comments in to help save Sandhill cranes and stave the real problem of mistakenly shooting Whooping cranes.

Thank you, and happy birding,

Tom Howe

Get Out and Get Birding! November Field Trips

Victor Ashe Park

Thursday, November 17, 9:00 a.m.

Tony King, (865) 988-6172

We will meet in the parking lot at Victor Ashe Park (4901 Bradshaw Rd., Knoxville, Tenn.). The park is about 120 acres and is mostly level with open, mowed fields and some rougher, brushy fields, woodland edges, and woodlands. For directions, visit www.cityofknoxville.org/parks/victor.asp.

Seven Islands State Birding Park

Wednesday, November 23, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Morton Massey, (865) 806-9967 and
Jay Sturmer, (865) 244-7819

Meet in the main parking lot (2809 Kelly Lane, Kodak, Tenn.). From there we will walk about three miles through various habitats, with a focus on raptors, sparrows, and other late fall species.

For additional information and directions to the park, see www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/SevenIslands.htm

December Meeting

The upcoming program for our December 7 meeting is a "A Mike Nelson Surprise"

KTOS member Mike Nelson spends most of the year leading birding tours in exotic places in Southeast Asia. He is home for the end-of-year holidays and he has offered to give a program at the December meeting. His program last year in December was one of the highlights of the year. Expect high quality photos and sound recordings of rare birds you may never get to see in your life time. Hope you can join us!

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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

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

Speakers for 2016-2017 KTOS Meetings

November 2, 2016	"A Raptor's Life in Photographs" by Barry Spruce
December 7, 20106	"A Mike Nelson Surprise: Birding Faraway Places"
January 4, 2017	"Members' Photo Share" – Sign Up at December Meeting
February 1, 2017	Open – Suggestions Welcome!
March 1, 2017	"100 Years of Birding GSMNP" by Kristine Johnson
April 5, 2017	"Future Bird Conservation Projects in Tenn" by David Hanni, TWRA
May 3, 2017	"Just Back From Cuba" by Ron Hoff
June 7, 2017	Annual Meeting – Potluck at Ijams