

# biKNOXulars

Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

## Artist Vickie Henderson to Present October Program

Have you ever wondered what inspires an artist? Or just what catches an artist's eye and becomes the next subject for a painting? Join Vickie Henderson, local bird enthusiast, artist, author and photographer as she takes you on a journey with birds and highlights the avian lifestyles she discovers through her lens.

Vickie says "Most often, you will find Whooping Cranes in my art, a beautiful and elegant North American wetland bird that stands five feet tall with a seven foot wing span. This reclusive bird captured my heart with its grace and culture, especially when I learned that only 15 of these birds remained in the world in the 1940's. At the same time I launched my journey into gourd art and watercolor, I was introduced to a wonderful recovery project that is training Whooping Cranes to migrate from Wisconsin to Florida by teaching them to follow ultralight aircraft. Since Tennessee is the midway point for this migration, I have had the good fortune to meet many of the dedicated people involved in this project, exhibited along with them at wildlife festivals and found ways to make contributions to the project with my art and my writing."

Vickie is committed to the reintroduction project and to wildlife conservation. She is on Operation Migration Volunteer Board of Directors as Director and Board Chair.

If you would like to learn more, you can visit Vickie's blog at [www.vickiehenderson.blogspot.com](http://www.vickiehenderson.blogspot.com) You can also see her work at [www.vickiehenderson.com](http://www.vickiehenderson.com).

The meeting will be Wednesday, October 7th, at 7 p.m. in Room 117 of the UT Veterinary Building.

### **\*\*IMPORTANT PARKING INFORMATION\*\***

**It is VERY IMPORTANT that we park ONLY in Lot 66 behind the vet school. Parking in the staff lot along the street MAY RESULT in your vehicle being subject to a fine. Passes are no longer required.**

#### **Saturday, October 3, 8:00 a.m.**

Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery, Clinton

Leader: Ron Hoff ([aves7000@bellsouth.net](mailto:aves7000@bellsouth.net); 435-4547)

This TWRA facility is a good spot for wading birds, shorebirds, and waterfowl. 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. Meet at the parking area right inside the gate. The trip will be about 2 hours. If anybody is interested, we can then go to the watershed below Norris Dam and walk the songbird trail for a while and make a morning out of it. Contact Robin Barrow to arrange carpooling from Knoxville (865-297-2572).

#### **Saturday, October 10, 8:30 a.m.**

Cades Cove Campground and Sewage Ponds, Blount Co.

Leader: Warren Bielenberg (865-681-7884, [Birdglass44@aol.com](mailto:Birdglass44@aol.com))

This trip is a 3-mile walk over level terrain on paved roads and unpaved trails. Possible birds include Wood Ducks, Mallards, Bufflehead and Snipe on the sewage ponds; there may be other waterfowl or shorebirds as visitors change from day to day. Other birds expected would be woodpeckers (Pileated, Downy, Red-bellied, Hairy, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and flickers), both kinglets

White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Pine Siskins and American Goldfinch, E. Bluebirds, American Crows, Blue Jays, E. Phoebe, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warblers and other late migrants.

If you wish to carpool from Knoxville, meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Stokely Building on the northeast side of the Cedar Bluff exit, in the parking lot closest to Cedar Bluff. Otherwise, meet at the parking area by the campground store at 8:30. The store and the heated restrooms will be open. There are vending machines with snacks and hot and cold drinks. Folks may wish to bring snacks, lunch and water, especially if they want to explore the Cove after birding.

#### **Sunday, October 25, 8:30 a.m.**

Kyker Bottoms Wildlife Area, Blount Co.

Leader: David Trently (Home 865-531-1473, Work 865-974-8664, [NatureTours@avianpursuits.com](mailto:NatureTours@avianpursuits.com))

Meet at the paved parking area at Kyker at 8:30; David will arrive at dawn. We'll start out birding from the blind, then wander the nearby fields looking mostly for sparrows. Eventually we'll make our way to the area near the barn where we'll look for more sparrows, plus waterfowl. Anyone who's interested may want to walk through the wet fields trying for snipe, rails, Sedge Wren, etc. This is also a good time of year to see a few raptors, woodpeckers and some late warblers. Rubber boots suggested. We'll be out there at least until noon so you may want to bring a snack and drink. Contact Robin Barrow to arrange carpooling from Knoxville (865-297-2572).

## KTOS FINANCIAL REPORT CALENDAR YEAR 2009

	Sept	June-Aug	YTD
<b>Income:</b>			
Dues	\$ 116.00	\$ 128.00	\$1,719.00
Shade Grown Coffee	117.50	70.00	869.75
Interest	19.25	57.35	179.96
Silent Auction	0.00	0.00	0.00
Owen Memorial	0.00	0.00	20.00
Misc. (Hummer Event)	<u>1,375.08</u>	<u>50.00</u>	<u>1,425.08</u>
Total Income	\$1,627.83	\$ 305.35	\$4,213.79
<b>Expenses:</b>			
Newsletter	\$ 72.75	\$ 73.20	\$ 590.25
Supplies	0.00	8.80	103.29
Shade Grown Coffee	63.54	212.92	748.60
Member Dues to TOS	0.00	0.00	2,256.00
Misc. (NSF Returned)	<u>0.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>90.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 136.29	\$ 394.92	\$3,788.14
<b>Other:</b>			
J. B. Owen Award	\$ 600.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 600.00
Total other	\$ 600.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 600.00
<b>Account Balances:</b>			
KTOS Checking & Savings	\$ 4,088.55	\$ 2,616.09	
J. B. Owen Memorial	\$ 6,827.54	\$ 7,408.46	
Memberships	123	120	
Paid 2010 Memberships	8		
<b>New Members:</b>			
Mary Ann Fennell			
Vickie Henderson			
John & Marsha Ketchen			

### Nesting Box Usage and Success at SIWR, 2007-2009

At Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge, planning objectives since 2001 have included restoration of native warm season grassland habitats, and improvement of overall habitat diversity and quality through a variety of wildlife management techniques. Beginning in 2006, 24 nesting structures for Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows were placed in appropriate habitat, as part of those efforts. Monitoring for species usage began in 2007, and 14 additional nest boxes were placed.

Beginning in 2008 and continuing this past nesting season, volunteers Billie Cantwell and Colin Leonard completed more intensive nest box monitoring, placed additional EBB/TS nest boxes, including different box designs and predator-guards modifications, to a total of 42 EBB/TS nest boxes and 6 Carolina Chickadee boxes. This intensified effort has provided valuable management information regarding species usage, habitat preference, nesting season onset and duration, nest success and survival, and predator-deterrence. Last year, nestling banding through Mark Armstrong broadened the project. Continuation and growth of this project will build on our knowledge to the benefit of these valuable avian species.

Eastern Bluebird nesting in 2009 began earlier, with many nest starts by the third week of March, and extended longer, into the first week of August. Tree Swallow nest starts began by the first week of April, but extended into mid-July, longer than in 2008. Carolina Chickadee nest starts began in late March, earlier than 2008, and extended slightly longer, into mid-June. Sample-size limitations and spring weather variations make definitive statements about these findings tentative, but future monitoring could clarify any trends. Tree Swallow nest starts increased from 2007 [9] to 2008 [13], but decreased in 2009 [5]. Is this an anomaly, or are they losing prime nesting locations to earlier nesting activity by the bluebirds and chickadees? Two additional species used nesting structures in 2009, Carolina Wren (3 nest starts) and Tufted Titmouse (1 nest start, with a whopping clutch of 11 eggs, four of which failed to hatch while the remainder fledged successfully).

As reported in KTOS *biKNOXulars* last year (November 2008), while 2008 nest starts, nest successes and nestlings fledging increased dramatically for the bluebirds and tree swallows over 2007, nest depredation of occupied boxes, primarily by raccoons, became a larger problem. While this is a completely natural and expected phenomenon, we decided to try box design and predator guard modifications to reduce depredation rates. Besides the fencepost baffles and entrance hole screens used originally, standard nest boxes were deepened, horizontal boxes were used, entrance hole screens were lengthened with heavier gauge wire and some boxes were mounted on metal poles. The depredation rates decreased dramatically from 22 instances in 2008, to only 6 of 50 nest-starts in 2009.

Correspondingly, overall nest success jumped from 44% to 66%, back where it was in 2007. This reduction can be attributed to at least two factors. The horizontal boxes and those with the longer, heavier gauge wire guards produced regularly successful nests. Another nest box design might be included in the study this year. We'll see if the wily raccoon will solve these modifications, or seek dinner elsewhere!

The number of nest boxes showing no usage increased this year [13] from 2008 [3]. An interesting finding involves those nest boxes placed on the wooden fence along Kelly Lane. While they are in ideal location and showed regular usage in earlier years, they also suffered regular depredation in 2008 because effective predator control was difficult along the fence. Usage of these boxes was down significantly in 2009, despite addition of modified boxes. Is this carry-over experience of poor nest success from the previous year? Are we at overall carrying capacity for nesting pairs? We'll see in future years. A second factor leading to the unused box total in 2009 is the deepened boxes seemed unacceptable to all but one pair of Tree Swallows. They will be modified with a shallower floor before next spring.

Banding of nestling birds, begun by Mark, Billie and Colin in 2008, resulted in a rapid confirmation that some bluebird nestlings return to their natal areas. During M.A.P.S. banding this year, we recaptured several bluebirds banded as nestlings in their boxes during 2008. A really fun project, revealing very useful management and natural history information on a variety of avian species at a very special place, Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge!

By Wayne H. Schacher  
whschacher@natreserv.com

## Ijams Nature Center

Tues., Oct. 13, 5:30 p.m.

Science Café: Tennessee's declining songbird research



*Presidential Perch*  
*Mark Armstrong*

Join Dr. David Buehler, Professor in Wildlife Science in the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries at UT. His research is focused on understanding factors that limit wildlife populations, especially for avian species that are declining. He is also interested in monitoring and managing for biological diversity. Currently, Buehler is directing research developing habitat models for neotropical migrant songbirds in the Southern Appalachians; cerulean warbler ecology and management in the Cumberland Mountains and the Southern Appalachians; golden-winged warbler population dynamics also in the Cumberland, and monitoring bird populations in native grasslands. The program is free. To register, call 577-4717, ext. 1

Hi Folks This president thing is still pretty new to me and I'm still feeling my way around. The first thing I would like to do is talk about the location of our monthly meeting at the vet school. Fortunately we can stay at the vet school, but we had a pretty good scare and were faced with the possibility of moving or paying for parking. I don't think anything was quite as convenient as the vet school for most of the membership. The best thing that came out of it was it made us look around for alternatives and see what would be possible. I would like to thank Patty Ford, Angela Hoffman, Judy Massey and Sharon Sheliga for their efforts to find other locations. I think in the end the two top candidates for meeting places that emerged were Ijams and Knoxville Zoo. Both were available for the low price of free and both had advantages and disadvantages. Unfortunately there is no telling when or if University policy will change, and we may be faced with making a change again, but we'll hope not.

### Spring 2010 TOS Budget

The state TOS meeting will be hosted by the Knoxville Chapter on May 1-2, 2010. A committee is investigating possible locations for the banquet, hotels, and field trips. We are nearing a decision about the speaker. As chair of the committee, I ask the club's approval of our preliminary budget and permission to pay necessary expenses, to be voted on at the October general meeting.

Jerry Hadder and Marie Oakes have devised a projected budget for the event, extrapolating from the budget of the last general meeting hosted by our club in 2003. The version of the budget below is slightly modified from the one presented in the newsletter last month because more information has been gathered: the estimated attendance has been lowered, banquet fees have been raised, and speaker costs have been adjusted. The actual expenses for a given item may be more or less than projected. The total budget of \$2,340 should be covered by revenue; KTOS should have no net expenses. However, revenue lags deposits and our treasury funds are limited. Paying the deposits necessitates careful stewardship of KTOS funds over the next year.

It has been an interesting summer, and I'm looking forward to an interesting fall and winter. Billie Cantwell has a great line-up of speakers already scheduled for the year. In May we'll be hosting the spring TOS meeting, and Robin Barrow has been working hard on budget and finding a site for the meeting and banquet. It is always a lot of work, but it will be well worth it for the club to share a beautiful time of year with fellow birders. On the banding side, we completed the fifth MAPS season at Seven Islands in early August and we have started our regular banding sessions at the refuge that will go through the winter. Our total for the MAPS season were 253 banded, 81 recaptures, 23 unbanded birds for a total of 357. We banded lots of Field Sparrows, Cardinals, Common Yellowthroats and Indigo Buntings as usual but also had an unexpectedly high number of Tree swallows and low numbers of Yellow-breasted Chats. Ruby-throated Hummingbird banding will be going on until they are pretty much all gone. So far 346 birds banded in Seymour, Ijams and Purchase Knob have headed south this year with one of my bands. The odds are against it, but I'm hoping another bander encounters one of my birds and helps to fill in the gaps about what we know about their migration. Next summer it will be interesting to see who returns. This past summer I had return birds from 2006 (only 3), 2007 and 2008. I have to admit it is a pretty awesome feeling to watch a scrappy little male court a female and at the same time know I banded him the previous year as a goofy kid, and he has been to Mexico and back to poop in my hand again. Thanks, Mark

### 2010 TOS SPRING MEETING PLANNING BUDGET

Projected Expenditures	Projected Revenue	Price	Number		
Speaker lodging	\$ 85	Tickets (pre-registration)	\$ 900	\$ 10.00	90
Speaker fee	50	Tickets (registration)	0	\$ 11.00	0
Speaker meals	36	Banquet tickets	1,440	\$ 18.00	80
Photocopying	50	Banquet (late registration)	0	20.00	0
Name tags (150 w pin)	26	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,340</b>		
Hall rental	179				
Friday expenses	120				
Door prizes	150				
Banquet cost	1,440				
Contingencies	204				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,340</b>				

## KTOS MEMBERSHIP

Join or renew your membership in KTOS by mailing your annual dues

to: Marie Oakes  
18 Rockingham Lane  
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

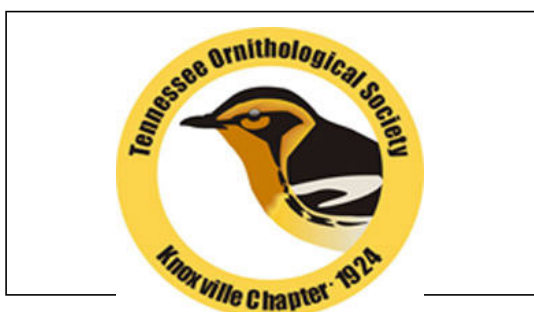
Membership dues are \$26 for an individual, \$30 for a family, and \$13 for a student. Sustaining memberships are \$38 and Life membership with TOS is \$450 with an annual fee of \$8 to the local Chapter.

**DEADLINE** for Nov. issue is Friday, Oct. 23

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"



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### Monthly Planning Meeting

The October Planning Meeting will be held on the FOURTH Thursday this month (rather than the 3rd Thursday). ALL MEMBERS are urged to attend all planning meetings. We meet at 7 p.m. in the building across the street from the Veterinary Building.

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### What is KnoxvilleTOS?

- Have you ever wanted to go on a field trip but couldn't find your newsletter to get the details?
- Ever wonder what is going on at KTOS?
- Would you like to post photos of that extra special bird you spotted so other club members could see it?
- Missed a meeting and wondered what happened?

You can find all this and more at **KnoxvilleTOS**. You can find links to the history of the club, birding areas and photos of past events. You can voice your opinion, read the minutes of the last meeting or read the notes on the planning meeting.

We now have 28 members on **KnoxvilleTOS**. (A big thanks to all that have joined!) This is where all the club information will be available and members have the ability to communicate with each other. We want to encourage all members to join so that we are all connected with all the news, events and decisions that affect our club.

It is easy to join. Members will receive an email saying [bfcantwell@gmail.com](mailto:bfcantwell@gmail.com) has sent you an invitation to join the **KnoxvilleTOS** group. All you have to do is click on "Join this group". Another page will come up with a summary of the group and again ask you to click on "Join this group". If you are not a yahoo member you will need to answer a few questions i.e. gender and birthday. This info will **not** be shared on the site. You will need to select a yahoo ID and password. **PLEASE make your ID your name**. You are almost done. The next thing you will be asked is to select the email address that you want to use and choose your message delivery - individual emails, a daily digest or **NO emails!** That's it! Now you can be part of the new and up to date **KnoxvilleTOS**. Thanks for joining.

Should you have questions, problems or concerns, please contact Billie Cantwell.  
[BFCantwell@gmail.com](mailto:BFCantwell@gmail.com)