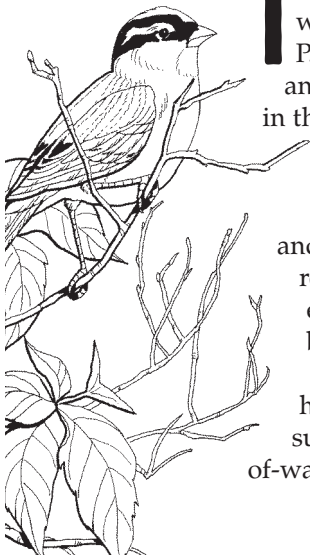




through the biKNOXulars

Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

Successional habitats are December 6 topics



The KTOS December 6 meeting will be presented by Lesley P. Bulluck, Ph.D. candidate and graduate research assistant in the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries at the University of Tennessee. Leslie will talk about and show images from her research dealing with forest ecology and management: bird communities in three different successional habitats: reclaimed coal surface mines, utility right-of-ways and timber harvests.

January 3 program: Picture Share

Calling all photographers and bird enthusiasts, January 3 is our annual club member picture sharing meeting. We love to see pictures of local birds, rarities, birds from travel and unidentified birds. All are welcome. Please contact Mark Campen by December 29, if you plan on bringing pictures either by e-mail: mark@fllake.org or phone: 414-5593

There may be a slide projector available in the room (but no carousel). For digital presentations, I can have the equipment available if you have your pictures on a CD or memory stick.

Both the December and January meetings will begin at 7 p.m. in Room 117 (across the hall from Pendergrass Library at the UT Veterinary Building on Neyland Drive).

- Mark Campen, president and program coordinator

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming field trips, counts & programs

Saturday, December 2, 8:30 AM

Field trip: Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge (See page 1)

December 16-January 1: Christmas Bird Counts

(See page 2 for contact information)

Monday, January 15: Christopher Cokinos

Author of "Hope is the Thing with Feathers" at Ijams Nature Center. (See page 2 for details)

January 13-21: Wilderness Wildlife Week

In Pigeon Forge. (See page 4 for details)

Saturday, December 2, 8:30 AM

Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge

Leader: David Trently (dtrently@utk.edu; 531-1473 h; 974-8664 w)

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the refuge parking area. (Contact leader in advance to work out carpooling if desired.) We will be walking on paved road and potentially wet trails, mostly on level ground. Bring water to drink.

We can expect to see lots of sparrows, hopefully some finches and should finish before noon.

- David Trently, Interim Field Trip Coordinator

*Then the little Hiawatha, Learned of every bird its language, Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in summer, Where they hid themselves in winter, Talked with them whene'er he met them...*

- The Song of Hiawatha, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, American writer/poet, 1807-1882

Christmas Bird Counts *By David Trently*

Every December, 57,000-plus birders from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, to the southern tip of South America, and from Guam to the eastern Caribbean take part in the Christmas Bird Counts, counting birds within 15-mile diameter circles, during the two-week period of Dec. 14 through Jan. 5. This year is the 107th time these events will take place. Will you be part of this effort?

Every birder should try to participate in at least one count every year. You can go out in the field, birding in a specified territory, or, if you happen to live within the count circle, you can make note of the numbers of birds seen at your feeders during the day of the count.

Birders of all levels are welcome and encouraged to take part. If you still need help identifying a lot of birds, then join a group. Count compilers can assign you to a party.

There are six counts within about an hour's drive of Knox County (see list below). I hope you all get a chance to help out this year. Maybe you will find a new species for your count!

Here are some numbers related to last year's CBC:

- 149 species were identified in Tennessee's 28 counts.
- Reelfoot Lake had the highest total (115)

Here are the species numbers for our nearest counts:

- Cades Cove = 66
- Great Smokies (Sugarlands) = 53
- Knoxville = 91
- Norris = 86
- Hiwassee = 99

The circle with the highest species number? Napo, Ecuador with at least 472 kinds of birds!

In the US it was Matagorda County, Texas, with 250.

And the award for the count circle with the most participants: North Bay, Ontario with 650!! (629 were feeder watchers)

Knoxville CBC is Saturday, December 30

We will be covering our usual circle centered in west Knox County. Folks are welcome to participate by joining a field party or by counting in their own backyards if you live within the circle.

We're particularly interested in anyone that might have wintering hummers. Just contact me and I can provide you with further details.

For the folks that normally work the count, please contact me to let me know if you will or will not be available to count this year and if you might have room in your party for other folks that might wish to join a field party.

The website with forms and territory maps is at www-chaos.engr.utk.edu/~kde/birds/kcbc/KCBCpage.html

Dean Edwards, compiler

Phone: (865) 560-9701 h; (865) 660-9701 c,
kde@utk.edu

Other Area Christmas Bird Counts

- **Norris** - Saturday, Dec. 16, 2006

Chuck Nicholson, compiler:

Phone: (865) 405-7948 c; (865) 632-3582 w;
cpnichol@bellsouth.net

- **Great Smokies** (Gatlinburg) - Sunday, Dec. 17, 2006

David Trently, compiler: Phone: (865) 531-1473 h;
(856) 974-8664 w; dtrently@utk.edu

- **Crossville (New)** - Saturday, Dec. 23, 2006

Contacts: **Joseph Mast** Cell: 931-248-5500

Ed LeGrand - 908-638-5984; elegrand@sprintmail.com

- **Cades Cove** - Sunday, Dec. 31, 2006

Susan Hoyle, compiler:

Phone: (865) 909-0792 h; hoyle@cs.utk.edu

- **Hiwassee** - Monday, Jan. 1, 2007

Kevin Calhoun, compiler:

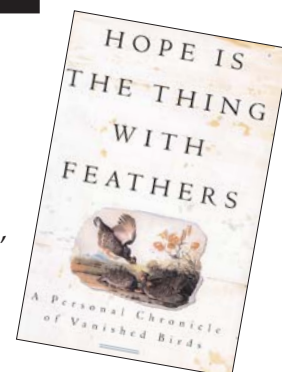
Phone: (423) 821-6802 h; kac@tennis.org

Author Cockinos to speak at Ijams Nature Center

Christopher Cockinos, author of the book *Hope is the Thing with Feathers: A Personal Chronicle of Vanished Birds*, will be at Ijams Nature Center for a talk and book signing on Monday, January 15.

Cockinos' book details the fate of such North American birds as the passenger pigeon, Carolina parakeet, heath hen, great auk, labrador duck and ivory-billed woodpecker. Birds that are either extinct or, in the case of the ivory-bill, maybe so. The program is in conjunction with the new "Lost Species" exhibit at Ijams.

For more information or to pre-register call 577-4717, ext. 10



OF NOTE!

Mathson is next newsletter editor

KTOS is pleased to announce that the next copy and design editor of the newsletter will be Jon Mathson.

Jon is an eighth grade science teacher at Bearden Middle School. Originally from Minnesota, he moved to Knoxville from Florida about a year and half ago. He has been interested in birds about eight years, ever since he took an ornithology class in college.

Please send all future newsletter items to Jon at mathsonj@k12tn.net

Patty Ford will continue as the newsletter's distribution editor.

Editor's note: This completes my fifth year as editor. It has been a privilege to serve a club with such a long distinguished history. Five years is a long time, but it's no where close to the record. Bettie Mason was editor for 12 years.

Jon becomes the tenth editor.

KTOS Newsletter editors:

1972-75	John Elson
1976-77	Lavada Harris
1978	Chuck Nicholson
1979	Marcia Davis
1980	Marcia Davis/Ron Hoff
1981-82	Ron Hoff
1983-94	Bettie Mason
1995-98	David Trently
1999-2001	Christine Tankersley
2002-06	Lyn Bales
2007-	Jon Mathson

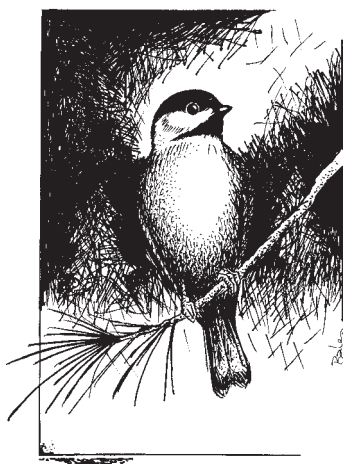
Congratulations Mark and Emily!

KTOS congratulates Mark Campen who recently married Emily Cary. She's a native (north) Knoxville. They met at church about three years ago.

KTOS Financial Report • December 2006

Compiled by Marie Oakes, Treasurer

	November	October	YTD
Income:			
. Dues	\$730.00	\$154.00	\$940.00
. TOS Fall Meeting Registrator	\$115.00	\$85.00	\$200.00
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$267.00	\$197.00	\$1,133.26
. Interest	\$23.18	\$24.94	\$71.10
. Owen Memorial	\$12.00	\$0.00	\$81.90
. Other Memorials	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$575.00</u>
Total Income	\$1,147.18	\$460.94	\$3,001.26
Expenses:			
. Newsletter	\$43.40	\$181.00	\$679.00
. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$31.92
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$81.19	\$124.49	\$785.91
. Member Dues to TOS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,570.00
. Fall Meeting Expense	\$114.50	\$0.00	\$114.50
. Miscellaneous	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$106.50</u>
Total Expenses	\$239.09	\$305.49	\$4,287.83
Other:			
. J.B. Owen Award	\$0.00	\$665.00	\$665.00
. Scout Project	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
. Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total Other	\$0.00	\$665.00	\$1,165.00
Account Balances			
. KTOS Checking & Savings	\$4,483.40	\$3,609.91	
. J.B. Owen Memorial	\$6,912.62	\$6,878.02	
Memberships			
	142	141	



with illustrations
by the author

Editor's first book 'Natural Histories' on sale in early '07

If you'll forgive a bit of shameless self-promotion, my book *Natural Histories: Stories from the Tennessee Valley* will be on sale in early 2007.

Published by the University of Tennessee Press, the book features the natural history of such diverse flora and fauna as passionflower, chickadees, snail darters, pawpaws, river cane, freshwater mussels, cicadas, whip-poor-wills and many more.

Each chapter not only looks at the biology of the species but also the curious ways it became entangled in human history. All of the narratives begin, end or pass through the Tennessee Valley but they often find their way into some of the most prominent stories in American history as well. Along the way we encounter people as varied as Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto, who passed through the valley in 1540, and naturalist John Muir, who did the same 327 years later.

Natural Histories is genre-straddling: part natural history, part our own history; but in effect, aren't they both one and the same? It's a book rich with connections, where one thing leads to another, leads to another. If you watch PBS, you could describe it as David Attenborough meets James Burke with a splash of Ken Burns. Conventional wisdom tells us that all things are connected: past, present, and future, and small actions can have huge consequences.

Natural Histories will be available in UT Press's spring catalog or at local retail outlets, bookstores and the Ijams gift shop.

- Many thanks, Lyn Bales (the gratefully relieved author)



Presidential Perch

- By Dan Mooney

How do you put eight years of thanks into a short message? This isn't a farewell address, but it may be a while before we see some of you again. As I hope you know by now, Laurie and I have sold our home (158 species on the yard list) and bought a motor home. Our intent is to travel and do volunteer work (birding oriented when possible) in state and federal parks and wildlife refuges for the next several years.

We want to express what a pleasure it has been to be associated with such a fine group of people. KTOS is blessed with good people volunteering to do their best to further the goals of the club. Laurie and I were lucky enough to be encouraged to participate in the local executive committee and became state directors soon after joining KTOS.

THANKS: to Joel, Chris, David and Charlie for stepping up to the plate and leading KTOS; to Christine and Lyn, great newsletters; to Bob, Jerry and Marie for handling the club finances in such a professional way; to Harold and David for regularly getting the field trips organized; Jean and David, Ron and Dollyann, Tony, Mark, Patty, Kathy, David, Chris, Jerry and Marie, Bob, Charlie and especially Tracey for

keeping all those committee meetings fun and entertaining; to Holly, Janet and Tony for all those refreshments; to Boyd, Jim, Betty Reid, Chuck, Nancy, Marcia, Wes, Howard, Harold, Chris, Daniel, David, Jean, Ron, Dollyann, David, Charlie, Tracey, Tony, Meredith, Frank, Sharon, Jim, Mark, Lyn, Mark, Ed and many others for the education in birds and wildlife on field trips.

KTOS would not exist without TOS. KTOS has been well represented in the last eight years in leadership at that level. Thanks: to Chuck for two years as state president, running the web-page, and being state curator (also on a couple of other committees); to Ron for chairing the state finance committee; to Chris for being editor of *The Migrant*; to Dean for state records committee; to David for being state treasurer; to Ron, Dollyann, David, Charlie and Chris for serving as state directors.

We intend to continue our membership in KTOS. I know the club is in good hands. KTOS has a strong committee with some fresh faces as well as experienced members on the executive committee.

I apologize for those names I have left off the list but as you know I am better with names if there are feathers involved!

Hope to see you at the spring meeting in Bristol.

Gourds for sale to benefit Seven Islands Foundation and SIWR

Wayne Schacher has many surplus gourds ready to hang to attract martins and other species.

Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge (SIWR) received the gourds as a donation. KTOS members can purchase the gourds for \$5.00 each and all the proceeds will go to Seven Islands. Contact Wayne Schacher if you are interested.

The gourds are dried, cleaned and drilled with a two-and-one-quarter-inch opening, as per "Wood-working for Wildlife." They are also unpainted and have holes for drainage and for attachment. Please note that they are predominantly "swan gourds."

There are some of the typical shape gourds as well, not the standard purple martin gourds. They have an elongated neck, sometimes straight and sometimes curved. Wayne has been told by Leon Effler (a Marcia Davis-referred expert) that they will be readily used. They, in fact, resemble the plastic gourds used at SIWR and elsewhere.

All proceeds will go directly to the Seven Islands Foundation to be spent on other structures and species-inventory materials. Wayne plans on attending the December KTOS meeting and bring representative

gourds to show people.

Anything not sold to KTOS will be made available to the general public.

For more information or to buy gourds contact: Wayne Schacher, 942 Fowler Street, Clinton, TN 37716; (865) 457-4355 or e-mail: whschacher@natreserv.com

Wilderness Wildlife Week is January 13-21

www.mypigeonforge.com/winterfest-wilderness.asp

This week-long event in Pigeon Forge provides a series of activities and presentations designed to connect people with the outdoor world.

Some of the programs scheduled are:

- **Bird Identification for Experienced Birders**, Fred Alsop of E.T.S.U., Sat., Jan. 20, 10 a.m.
- **Lost Species** - Paul James of Ijams Nature Center, Thurs., Jan. 18, 1:30 p.m.
- **Identifying Local Birds of Prey** - Lyn Bales of Ijams Nature Center, Thurs., Jan. 18, 9:45 a.m.

Hawk eat hawk world By Janet Lee McKnight

My son Devon, then seven, came to me as I was doing dishes. He wanted to tell me something, but he was hesitant.

I urged him to talk to me, and he said, "I found a dead hawk." I sighed and dried my hands.

"Show it to me," I said.

It was wintertime. I donned my coat and Devon led me out to the five-acre yard where we keep our two pet pigs. He thought I should know about what he had found, but he knew I would get upset at the discovery.

He was right, I did get upset, but more for the manner of the hawk's death than for the dead hawk itself.

It was a juvenile red-tail, and his grab for a meadow vole connected him to the electric wire that lined the base of the pig containment fence. The frozen vole was still clutched in a talon. The young hawk died trying to obtain food, the very act of survival. And he died by electrocution, from a wire that I had put in place. I felt wholly responsible for this death. The blood was on my hands, and I did not take it lightly.

Devon witnessed my extreme sadness. I was unwilling to down-play my devastation, because I wanted him to learn that this situation was truly tragic. The hawk did not die a natural death, but a human-induced, premature death. For me, this was tragic. I wanted Devon to understand and believe this as well.

I told him, "Please take the hawk away and put it someplace where I never have to see it again. And wash your hands when you are done."

I had every faith that my obedient boy would follow through.

Several weeks later, I was walking through the yard when some movement to the right caught my eye. There among the frozen waste of the garden was a sharp-shinned hawk. He was standing atop a large meal, tearing away at flesh and swallowing hastily. The hawk was nervous that I was there, but unwilling to leave his food just yet. He kept his fierce, cognizant eyes on me as he ate.

I was able to observe him for several minutes until my old hound dog Pocus came along and scared him away. I immediately went over to see what the hawk had been eating.

My precious son had decided that an empty garden would be a suitable resting place for a dead red-tailed hawk. The guilt and sadness I felt over the red-tail's death diminished as I realized that it had not died in vain after all. Another hawk of another species was helped through the winter by this death.

Nature turned my sadness around, as it always does. I sent out a silent thanks to a red-tailed hawk, and to an opportunistic "sharpie"; I wished him well.

BOOK REPORT

America's most colorful lost bird - By Lyn Bales

It's one of those off-the-wall hypothetical questions poised after a long day of chasing passerines and perhaps a glass of Merlot after dinner: "What is your favorite bird that you've never seen or ever hope to see?" For me, it's simple: the Carolina parakeet.

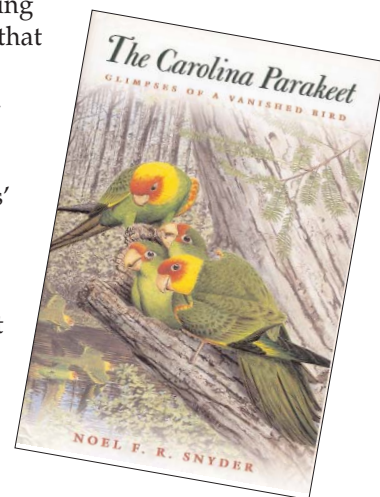
Now that I've read Noel Snyder's *The Carolina Parakeet: Glimpses of a Vanished Bird*, I grieve even more. The only member of the parrot family to have lived in North America, it was arguably the most colorful bird to have graced our skies. It was also highly gregarious: nesting, roosting and foraging in chatty, lively flocks. But the birds' vitality and vibrancy weren't enough to save them. The magnificent creatures have been extinct for over 80 years. But why?

In his book, Snyder examines all aspects of the lost species including the late reports that the bird existed in central Florida into the 1930s, well after 1904, the most commonly accepted date of their last appearance in the wild. Generally, the late accounts were dismissed because they weren't made by trained ornithologists, but using information gleamed in personal interviews the author conducted in the 1970s with the people who actually saw the birds, Snyder reopens the book on the parakeets last days on the planet.

Snyder also speculates on why the birds were so colorful. How did it serve the species? Using historic accounts and the parakeets' affinity for cockleburs to make his case, the answer will surprise you.

If you desire to learn more about a species that you will never see or hope to see, this is the book for you.

- *The Carolina Parakeet: Glimpses of a Vanished Bird*, Noel Snyder, Princeton University Press, 2004, 140 pages



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 February issue is January 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.....Mark Campen
1309 Adair Drive
Knoxville, TN 37918 (865) 414-5593
mark@tnike.com

VICE PRESIDENT.....
(Currently vacant.)

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

New president takes office, vice president position open

Dan and Laurie Mooney have sold their house and are moving out of town. (See Presidential Perch on page 4.) Vice President Mark Campen will automatically become president due to Dan's resignation.

Mark or the nominating committee will find a candidate to fill the vacant vice president position. The membership must vote on the candidate. Volunteers are being sought.

An announcement will be made in the newsletter one month prior to the vote-taking meeting.

State director positions vacated, candidates found, vote required at January meeting

Currently two vacant positions for state director exist for KTOS.

One position is the remainder of Laurie Mooney's term that resulted from their relocation.

The second vacancy is the remainder of Charlie Muise's term caused by the move of the Muises to Georgia.

The candidates are David Johnson to serve the remainder of Charlie Muise's term, and Jean Alexander to serve the remainder of Laurie Mooney's term.

In order to fill these two positions, the membership must vote on these candidates. A vote is required at the January 2007 meeting.

Welcome new KTOS members

Jay and Diana Singer

2007 KTOS membership dues

KTOS Treasurer Marie Oakes is now accepting membership dues for 2007. For additional information, see "KTOS Membership" at top left of this page.

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.