

# biKNOXulars

Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

## Topic of December Program - Bachman's Sparrows: Life history and the population in Fort Campbell, TN/KY

Emily Hockman will be our guest speaker. Emily's master project is the Bachman's Sparrow which has declined across its range due to habitat loss from fire suppression.

Come learn about the identification, life strategy, habitat, and history of the elusive Bachman's Sparrow. Populations of the sparrow are relatively small and scattered in the Southeast, and this small bird is often overlooked. Emily will be giving a short talk about the species and her research project in the oak savannas at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Some ideas about where to look for Bachman's Sparrows around the region will be discussed, as well as some talk about other grassland/savanna species as time allows.

The meeting will be **Wednesday, December 2**, at 6:45 PM in room 117 of the UT Veterinary Building.

### KTOS FIELD TRIPS FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

**Saturday, December 5, 8:00 a.m.**

Fort Loudon Dam Area

Leader: Tony King (865-988-6172)

Meet at the Tellico Canal Bathhouse/ parking area. From U.S. 321, take the first exit after crossing the Ft Loudon Dam, which is marked Tellico Village/ Rte 444. At the stop sign, cross straight across Tellico Pkwy (Rte 444) to enter the bathhouse and parking area; it's the same road that goes to the Tellico Canal boat camp. We will wander the grounds and shore as well as the overlooks, searching for gulls, wading birds, waterfowl, and raptors. With time permitting, we will cross the dam and check the area of the beaver ponds. We could finish up before lunch time. Walking should be easy to moderate.

**Saturday, December 12, 2009, 8:30 a.m.**

River Bluff in Knoxville

Leader: Wayne H. Schacher

(Home: 865-457-4355) whschacher@natreserv.com

We have permission via Legacy Parks Foundation to hike and bird behind a gate on a woodland parcel of property which includes the River Bluff overlook in South Knoxville. This property is part of LPF's "Urban Wildlife & Historic Corridor" project. Woodland habitats predominate, but the parcel also includes a couple of large ponds and a low elevation trail along Fort Loudon Reservoir. We will be able to view downtown Knoxville and the river from the spectacular River Bluff overlook. A gem along the South Knoxville waterfront, our birding inventory will lend support and value to LPF's completion of this project.

Roadways offer good hiking, with many route options. Directions: From the Knoxville interstates, take US Highway 129, exit at UT Hospital/Cherokee Trail, follow Cherokee Trail uphill past condo complexes to a parking area (on the left) near the blue waterpower.

## Foothills Land Conservancy Topic of January Program

Our speaker for our January meeting is Bill Clabough, Executive Director of Foothills Land Conservancy. Bill was born and raised outside of Maryville, TN, in a small community called Wildwood. Bill also spent 14 years in the Tennessee General Assembly, serving both in the house and senate. He is an avid hiker and volunteers with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy on trail maintenance projects.

Bill joined the Foothills staff in 2006 and hit the ground running with 21 conservation easements the following year. Under his charge, over 5,000 acres in eight ET counties have been protected from commercial development. Last year, FLC accepted 15 conservation easements – including land designated for 2 public parks in Knox County, a working farm in Roane County, and over 120 acres of old growth timber in Lenoir City.

Mr. Clabough will provide an overview of Foothills Land Conservancy's conservation programs and resources available to ET landowners. A private organization, Foothills Land Conservancy's mission is focused on the preservation of the rich wildlife habitats, as well as the agriculture, scenic, and cultural resources of our region. Working with landowners, the Conservancy offers creative, free-market alternatives for the conservation of agricultural and forest lands.

The meeting will be **Wednesday, January 6**, at 6:45 PM in room 117 of the UT Veterinary Building.

**\*\*\*\*SEE NEXT PAGE FOR CHRISTMAS BIRD  
COUNT INFORMATION\*\*\*\***

**Saturday, January 30, 9:05 a.m.**

Maryville Bicentennial Greenbelt Park

Leader: Kathy Bivens (865-983-7349.)

Meet behind the Blount County Public Library at the pedestrian bridge over the Greenbelt. Parking is available at the library; you can come through the main entrance of the library and go straight ahead through the library and out the back door to the meeting area. Dress warmly and we will take a stroll along paved trails in Greenbelt Park and look for winter birds and water fowl. If we are lucky, we may spot a Black-crowned Night Heron or two that have been spending recent winters in Maryville. The Greenbelt Park (also known as Bicentennial Park) is part of the Blount County Greenway system that connects Maryville and Alcoa. We will walk an easy route that is mostly level, and will finish by 11 AM. This trip is appropriate for all birding levels, all ages and fitness levels. We will not cancel due to cold temperatures, but if it is raining or snowing this trip will be canceled.

Contact the leader with any questions or suggestions

## KTOS FINANCIAL REPORT CALENDAR YEAR 2009

	Nov	Oct	YTD
<b>Income:</b>			
Dues	\$ 916.00	\$ 34.00	\$ 2,669.00
Shade Grown Coffee	204.25	0.00	1,074.00
Interest	18.08	13.25	211.29
Owen Memorial	0.00	17.00	37.00
Misc.(Inc. Hummer Event)	0.00	0.00	1,425.08
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,138.33</b>	<b>\$ 64.25</b>	<b>\$ 5,416.37</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>			
Newsletter	\$ 63.60	\$ 69.60	\$ 723.45
Supplies	0.00	8.29	111.58
Shade Grown Coffee	185.92	0.00	934.52
Member Dues to TOS	0.00	0.00	2,256.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	90.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 249.52</b>	<b>\$ 77.89</b>	<b>\$ 4,115.55</b>
<b>Other:</b>			
J.B. Owen Award	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 600.00
<b>Total other</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 600.00</b>
<b>Account Balances</b>			
KTOS Checking & Savings	\$ 4,916.41	\$ 4,045.35	
J.B. Owen Memorial	\$ 6,874.85	\$ 6,857.11	

<b>Memberships</b>	127	124
Paid 2010 Memberships	40	10

### New Members:

Christine Jones  
Mary Laura Koella  
David Scanlon & Jewel Tabor

### Report from Executive Committee Submitted by Kathy Bivens

**Editors Note:** Jerry Hadder, CPA and his wife, Marie Oakes, CPA have served over the last eight years in the position of Treasurer for our Chapter. We have been very fortunate to have each of them and both of them together lend their expertise and time to volunteer to serve as treasurer. First Jerry, and then later Marie, have kept us financially organized, financially stable, and have kept our bills paid and excess funds invested wisely. The following note was received by David Johnson who is chairman of the KTOS Nominating Committee:

"David – I want to give the KTOS Nominating Committee advance notice that Jerry and I will not be candidates for KTOS Treasurer in future elections. We cannot continue as Treasurer and Chairperson of the Owen Committee after this year because of the many conflicting demands of our retirement schedule. To the extent that (our) schedule allows, we will be available to assist the next Treasurer in the transition. We are very appreciative of the support and confidence of KTOS during our eight years of service. Marie"

For any member who is considering serving the club as an officer please consider the position of Treasurer. The responsibilities of the treasurer are:

The treasurer shall receive and disburse funds; manage financial assets and financial reporting; and maintain membership roles for

the Organization. At the end of each calendar year the treasurer shall provide an annual financial status report for publication in the Chapter's newsletter.

The treasurer shall act as chairperson of the Financial Committee and of the J. B. Owen Endowment Committee. The treasurer and president shall be authorized to sign checks. The treasurer shall obtain either the written approval or the co-signature of the president for any check in excess of \$200.00.

The Treasurer also is a member of the Executive Committee which consists of all elected officers, state directors from this Chapter and the immediate past president.

Please consider serving as treasurer or in any other elected office next year. Nominations will begin to be solicited by the nominating committee in early March. Many times these offices are held by the same individuals year after year only because nobody else volunteered to serve in that position. Wouldn't it be nice to have multiple individuals running for every office every year? Wouldn't it be nice to actually have a full ballot in May with multiple choices for each office? If you are interested in serving as treasurer or in any other capacity, please contact David Johnson in person, by phone (865-977-0052) or by email (jjadmj@infionline.net).

### 110th ANNUAL AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Holidays are here again and you know what that means --Christmas Bird Counts! We encourage everyone to participate in one or more of the four local Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) sponsored by the National Audubon Society and KTOS.

#### Norris, Saturday, December 19, 2009

contact: Chuck Nicholson  
[cpnichol@bellsouth.net](mailto:cpnichol@bellsouth.net)  
865-405-7948

#### GSMNP-Sugarlands, Sunday, December 20, 2009

contact: David Trently  
865-531-1473, [naturetours@avianpursuits.com](mailto:naturetours@avianpursuits.com)

#### GSMNP-Cades Cove, Sunday, December 27, 2009

contact: Susan Hoyle  
[hoyle@cs.utk.edu](mailto:hoyle@cs.utk.edu)

#### Knoxville, Saturday, January 2, 2010

contact: Dean Edwards  
865-660-9701, [kde@angst.engr.utk.edu](mailto:kde@angst.engr.utk.edu)  
<http://www-chaos.engr.utk.edu/~kde/birds/kcbc/KCBCpage.html>

The organizers of these counts plan to be present at the December KTOS meeting to sign everyone up and provide additional information. In addition, there are several other counts in the area. More information including dates and contact information for organizers is typically available online at [www.audubon.org/bird/cbc](http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc).

Birders of all skill levels can participate. You can join a group in the field, cover an area on your own, or (if you live in the count area) count in your own backyard.

The National Audubon Society does require a \$5 fee from each participant. This fee goes toward maintaining the public online database from the 100+ years of CBCs ([www.audubon.org/bird/cbc](http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc)). For your \$5, you will receive a book summarizing the results of all of this year's CBCs.

## New Refuge to Protect Migratory and Resident Birds in the Dominican Republic

(This article and history from Dev Joslin - Former member KTOS)



*Presidential Perch*  
*Mark Armstrong*

(Washington, D.C., October 20, 2009) Leonel Fernández, President of the Dominican Republic, has announced the creation of a new refuge “Reserva Biologica Loma Charco Azul” on the north-western border of Sierra de Bahoruco National Park, a global biodiversity hotspot. The decision extends protection in the region by 111 square miles, providing essential habitat protection for the globally threatened Bay-breasted Cuckoo and threatened resident and migratory birds that depend on the Island of Hispaniola. American Bird Conservancy and its partner Grupo Jaragua prepared the proposal for the Secretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales to designate the new protected area and conducted the biodiversity inventory work needed to justify the new area.

“With 30 endemic bird species, Hispaniola ranks high in global importance for bird conservation,” said Dr. George Wallace, American Bird Conservancy’s Vice President of Oceans and Islands. “With forests in Haiti virtually gone and an accelerated rate of forest loss in the Dominican Republic, many of these species face a bleak future—of the 30 species, 14 are ranked by IUCN as globally threatened. That’s why expanding land protected in the vicinity of Sierra de Bahoruco is so important and such a significant accomplishment.”

In addition, over 30 species of Neotropical migratory birds have been recorded there; they form an important component of the biodiversity during the northern winter, making up more than 50% of the bird life in some habitats, particularly pine forests.

“Loma Charco Azul contains populations of several threatened endemic birds and migratory species and, until now, was an unprotected portion of the Sierra de Bahoruco Important Bird Area,” said Yvonne Arias, President of Grupo Jaragua, which has partnered with American Bird Conservancy on the conservation of threatened and migratory birds in the region.. “Key among the endemics there are the Bay-breasted Cuckoo, and a good population of the vulnerable Hispaniolan Parrot. We applaud the action of President Fernández to designate this important new protected area.”

History - TOS and Dominican Republic

Though few members of TOS realize it, we are a sister organization of the Dominican Republic Bird Club. A Little History of this:

### According to James Brooks:

“The relationship with the Dominican Republic goes back to 1991 when Audrey Hoff and I opened Destinations Travel with the first organized birding tour any company ran to that country. We did three other group trips there over the next two years, including one with a side trip to Cuba, where I had also birded in 1991. In 1996 Bob Ford established the link with the Dominican Republic Bird Club through TOS and Partners in Flight, and asked if I would accompany him on a private tour of Hispaniola, which we did from March 24-29, 1996. That trip was remarkable to me for being able to finally find the White-winged Crossbill, which has since been split from its North American cousin. We camped in the Bahoruco Mountains on the Haitian border with members of the DR bird club. Haitian smugglers were passing through our camp site all night long, most carrying one or more gallon containers used to bring back gasoline to Haiti. Since that trip sensitive areas of the Bahoruco Mountains have been placed under protection by the DR government.”

Saw-whet Owls are fantastic little birds and an interest of mine for a long time. If you look at field guides and other books they show the winter range includes all of the southeast including Tennessee. The problem is few people ever see them. I've looked at Christmas counts for the last twenty years and one maybe two birds are seen in the in the seven state region each year. If you look at what banders are doing farther north of us they are banding hundreds of birds year after year and the birds just seem to disappear. Any bander will tell you that they are probably catching only a small portion of the birds that are actually coming through. This year I have been fortunate to have banded six birds so far this migration season right in my own little patch of woods. I have lived in my current home for seven years and never had a clue that they were here. So, of course the birds don't really disappear but they are quiet, completely nocturnal, small and just hard to find. The approved technique for catching owls for banding is playing an audio lure of their spring courtship call. Even though it is winter birds of all ages and sexes respond and investigate the call. One more interesting thing about banding owls is you use a black light to age the birds. Old feathers are dull in the light but fresh feathers glow pink. The fluorescence is from porphyrins which are a red blood cell pigment that deteriorates over time so new feathers glow but old feathers do not.

I would like to encourage everyone to support your local bird club and volunteer for club officer positions. Openings will be coming up and it only strengthens the club to have many participants.

Also, Christmas Bird Counts are also coming up beginning in mid December. I always enjoy getting out and trying to find something good. ~ Mark

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### **\*\*ANNUAL DUES\*\***

Annual payment to TOS is due **December 31**, so please make your payment this month. Membership dues are \$26 for an individual, \$30 for a family and \$13 for a student. You can either pay Marie or Jean Alexander at the December meeting or you can mail your check to Marie Oakes, 18 Rockingham Lane, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

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New Refuge (Continued)

### **Further history according to Dev:**

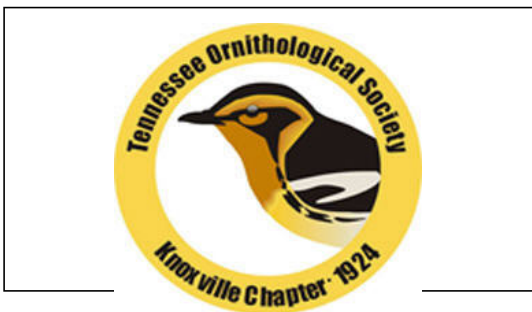
In 1998, 12 members of TOS toured much of the Dominican Republic with local guides affiliated with the Bird Club of the DR. Bob Ford and Partners in Flight helped plan this trip, but Bob had to cancel at the last minute. We saw a number of threatened species—including the La Selle Thrush, Golden Swallow, Chat Tanager, and Bay-breasted Cuckoo. We met with the Dominican Republic Bird Club and officials of the federal government involved in conservation. Members of TOS on that trip included Dev and Harriet Joslin, Ron and Dollyann Myers, Bob and Diane Steffy, Christine and Roger Tankersley (all of Knoxville TOS) and John Froeschauer and others from the Nashville club.

Greetings from Costa Rica,  
Dev Joslin,  
Monteverde, CR

## 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 Feb issue is Friday, Jan 29  
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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## Sharp's Ridge Clean Up

On Saturday, November 14, 2009, KTOS members participated in a litter clean up on Sharps Ridge. The members met at 9 a.m. at the lookout and what a sight. It was a beautiful morning! This year it was decided to separate the trash from recyclables. Glass, plastic and aluminum were collected in separate bags and taken to a recycle center. The recyclables were 50 % or more of the total trash picked up. It was also suggested that at our next clean up we should once again do some invasive plant removal. Participants included Mark Campen, Tony King, Denise Nauman, Deedee Blane, Janet McKnight, Gary and Alice Woody, Wayne Schacher, Robin Barrow, Colin Leonard and Billie Cantwell.  
A big THANKS to all who helped!

