

Ghost Bird of the South

by Lyn Bales

**Wednesday December 1st @ 6:45
Room 117 of the UT Veterinary Building**

Lyn's Jim Tanner/ivory-bill book is finished.

The legendary "Ghost Bird of the South," the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, has been popping in and out of existence for the past century. Is the species extinct or not? It's a question that remains unanswered and may never be answered conclusively. How do you prove a negative?

Probably never common, the largest woodpecker ever found in the United States, the ivorybill lived in forested bottomlands and swamps from coastal North Carolina across the gulf to east Texas. Cornell grad student and former KTOS member James T. Tanner studied the most documented population in northeast Louisiana in the late 1930s. What did he learn?

Join author and former KTOS newsletter editor Stephen Lyn Bales for a discussion about the completion of his new book *Ghost Birds*. Nancy Tanner will be present and the two of them will talk about the day they discovered unpublished photos of an ivorybill that led to a recent article in "Smithsonian" magazine.

Lyn will bring books to sell. They make great Christmas presents!

Stephen Lyn Bales is a naturalist at Ijams Nature Center here in Knoxville.

~Billie~



"I once had a sparrow alight upon my shoulder for a moment, while I was hoeing in a village garden, and I felt that I was more distinguished by that circumstance than I should have been by any epaulet I could have worn."

~Henry David Thoreau (1817 -1862)~

KTOS FINANCIAL REPORT - CALENDAR YEAR 2010

	November	October	YTD
Income:			
. Dues	\$ 958.00	\$ 0.00	\$2,478.00
. Shade Grown Coffee	152.50	184.00	989.50
. Interest	18.65	18.27	201.04
. Silent Auction	0.00	0.00	0.00
. Owen Memorial	195.00	0.00	197.00
. Spring Meeting	0.00	0.00	2,509.00
Donation	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total Income	\$ 1,324.15	\$ 202.27	\$ 6,474.54
Expenses:			
Newsletter	\$ 97.45	\$ 64.95	\$ 725.13
Supplies	24.48	0.00	227.26
Shade Grown Coffee	231.38	80.97	995.79
TOS Member Dues	0.00	0.00	2,292.00
Spring Meeting	0.00	0.00	2,060.98
UT Garden Rental	0.00	0.00	25.00
J.B.Owen Award	300.00	0.00	300.00
Operation Migration	400.00	0.00	400.00
Total Expenses	\$ 1,053.31	\$ 145.92	\$ 7,026.16

Account Balances

. KTOS Checking & Savings	\$3,256.50	\$4,399.00
. J.B.Owen Memorial	\$8,536.67	\$7,073.33
Memberships	119	116
Paid 2011 Memberships	37	1
New Members:		
Judith Mallory		
Chris and Judy McMillan		
Kelly Moran and Jason Sturner		

**January Photo Sharing is Back
Your Favorite Photos**

January 5th @ 6:45

Room 117 of the UT Veterinary Building

Now is the time to start preparing those special photos!

Local birds.

Your favorite birds.

Photos from trips where you found more "exotic" birds.

We want to see them all!

We would like as many members as possible to participate so please limit your presentation to 10 - 15 photos. Presentations need to be on either a CD or memory stick.

Please contact Billie Cantwell by 7/28/10

865-212-9797 or BFCantwell@gmail.com

Bring a friend, tell a neighbor.

Come on out for an evening of entertainment. See you there! ~Billie~

Field Trips for

December/January



Sunday, December 5, 8:30 AM

Royal Blue WMA

Trip leader: David Trently,

naturetours@avianpursuits.com; 865-531-1473 (h); 865-974-8528 (w); or 865-771-8288 (day of the trip only).

This is a re-scheduling of the trip that had to be postponed in November.

Meet at the Ingles grocery store at 430 E Emory Road north of Knoxville at 8:30 a.m., or after 9:00 at the parking area for the field trip which is at GPS coordinates: N 36.36207 W 84.22568

This area is off I-75 Exit 141 (Oneida exit), on the east side of the interstate, at the second major bend in Old Kentucky Road, heading southeast. I have not birded there during this season, but expect it might be a worthwhile destination. The site has a marsh, a large pond that may have some waterfowl, mostly level dirt roads and plenty of wooded areas. We should be done there in about 2 hours, at which time we could check out some other areas of Royal Blue, as well as Cove Lake State Park on the way home.

Sunday, January 9, 8:00 AM

Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge

Trip Leader: Mark Armstrong

woodthrush@bellsouth.net, 865-577-5398, cell 865-748-2224)

Meet at the main parking area at the end of Kelly Lane. We will walk out the road and down toward the river near the wetlands area. From there we will walk along the river back to the last red barn, or as participants decide. Hoped-for sightings include: Northern Bobwhite; Bald Eagle; Pileated Woodpecker; Northern Harrier; Savannah, Fox, & White-crowned Sparrows. Bring a snack and something to drink. The trip should end by noon. For directions, see:

<http://tnbirds.org/birdfinding/SevenIslands.htm>

Announcement

Robin Barrow has resigned as Field Trip Coordinator.

If you are willing to serve in this position, contact Mark Armstrong or any member of the Executive Committee.



*Presidential
Perch*

Hi Folks

I guess I enjoy all the seasons but winter sure is fun. I really enjoy getting out in the cold and searching for whatever sparrows, waterfowl or raptors that may be out there. We have four Christmas Bird Counts in our immediate area. The dates and contact information are in this issue. Work usually conflicts with my participation in some of those counts but I try to make some of them, and I would encourage everyone to try to participate in at least one count.

Saw-whet Owls are definitely in our area and good numbers have passed over us. We caught and banded one on November 7 at Seven Islands. Our efforts at House Mountain have not panned out. Three of the banders from the Hummer/Bird Study Group have set up in their yards in Alabama and have collectively caught almost 30 owls. Everyone associated with Saw-whet banding is astounded with their success.

We really need a Field Trip coordinator and if anyone is interested please contact me or any of our club officers.

~Mark~

COFFEE FOR THE BIRDS

Enjoy your morning cup of coffee on the patio and listen to the songbirds. There's a connection between the two. Conventional, "modern" coffee plantations are replacing wildlife habitat at an alarming rate, the the population of songbirds across North and South America is in significant decline. "Shade grown" coffee, the traditional method of coffee farming, offers a promising alternative.

The only way to encourage shade grown coffee farming is to buy the product. Production follows demand, and many farmers are switching back to shade grown methods as consumer awareness increases.

See David Johnson and place your coffee order and help preserve bird habitat.

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

KTOS Membership Form

Please support KTOS by joining or renewing today as a member. Your membership dues allow us to offer engaging monthly meetings and exciting field trips. Chapter members receive our newsletter, *Through the BiKNOXulars*, ten times per year, along with membership in the state Tennessee Ornithological Society. By being a state member, members will also receive the publications *The Tennessee Warbler* and *The Migrant*.



KTOS's membership year runs January 1 through December 31. Membership dues are to be paid before the start of the new calendar year.

New member or renewal

I would prefer to receive the chapter newsletter by:
e-mail or paper copy .

Name(s): _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
E-mail: _____
Phone: _____



- Individual \$26/year
 - Family \$30/year
 - Student \$13/year
 - Sustaining \$38/year
 - Life membership with state TOS \$450/one-time cost with \$8 annual dues to local chapter
 - Additional donation to J. B. Owen Memorial Endowment \$ _____
- Total enclosed: \$ _____



Please bring your completed application and check made payable to KTOS to the next meeting or mail to:
Carole Gobert, KTOS Treasurer
1304 Barcelona Drive
Knoxville, TN 37923

Nesting Box Usage and Success at SIWR, 2007-2010

By Wayne H. Schacher

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.

Beginning in 2008 and continuing through 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 to a total of 45 EBB/TS nest boxes and 4 Carolina Chickadee boxes in 2010. 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. Since 2008, nestling banding by Mark Armstrong and Billie have broadened the scope of the project. Continuation and growth of this project will build on our knowledge to the benefit of these valuable avian species.

Overall nest starts in 2010 [39] were down from 2008 [50] and 2009 [50]. Despite that decrease, there were 30 successful nests [76%] in 2010, compared to 36 successful nests [66%] in 2009 and 22 successful nests [44%] in 2008. The nest depredation problems encountered in 2008 [22] and 2009 [6] were reduced to a single nest depredation in 2010 due to modified box designs and improved predator guards. For 2010, Eastern Bluebird nests successfully fledged at 73%, Tree Swallow nests fledged at 75%, 10 Carolina Chickadee nests fledged at 90% and both Carolina Wrens' nests fledged [100%].

Eastern Bluebird nesting in 2010 began during the fourth week of March, about a week later than in 2009, and finished by the end of July, about a week sooner than in 2009. Within this timeframe, two distinct peaks of bluebird nesting activity occurred (late March and mid-May). Similarly, Tree Swallow nest starts began in mid-April, a week later than in 2009 and extended into the first week of July, a week shorter than in 2009. Carolina Chickadee nest starts in 2010 consistently began from early to mid-April and ended the latter half of May. Again the pattern held, starting a week later than in 2009 and ending 1-2 weeks earlier than in 2009. Sample-size limitations and spring weather variations make definitive statements about these findings speculative, but the pattern of delayed starts and shorter nesting duration makes future years of monitoring interesting to clarify a trend or provide an explanation. Nests of Carolina Wrens showed two nesting

intervals, one from early April through mid-May, the second from early June through the first week of July.

Of interest this year was a significant increase in nest boxes that went unused through the entire nesting season. In 2010, 20 boxes went unused, compared to 13 in 2009 and 3 in 2008. Despite these unused boxes, several instances of intense competition for nest boxes were observed. Both Carolina Chickadees and Tree Swallows built nests over active Eastern Bluebird nests and Tree Swallows were observed harassing an incubating Carolina Chickadee female. While we've succeeded in greatly reducing nest depredation, have some of the nest box design variations and improved predator guards rendered those nest boxes unacceptable, in otherwise suitable habitat? Another 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 and continued very low in 2010 despite addition of modified boxes. Is this carry-over experience of poor nest success from the previous years? Each of these questions will be investigated this coming year.

Eastern Bluebird nest starts decreased from 34 [2008] to 32 [2009] to 21 in 2010. Tree Swallow nest starts at SIWR increased from 2007 [9] to 2008 [13], but decreased from 5 in 2009 to 4 in 2010. Carolina Chickadee nest starts continue to rise from 3 [2008] to 9 [2009] to 10 in 2010. In 2010, average clutch size for Eastern Bluebirds was 4.3, 4.7 for Tree Swallows, 6.1 for Carolina Chickadee and 4.0 for Carolina Wren. The average number of fledglings produced per successful nest were: 3.9 for Eastern Bluebirds, 3.7 for Tree Swallows, 5.8 for Carolina Chickadee and 3.5 for Carolina Wren. Each of these values fall within the expected range for these species based on previous years data.

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 surveys, several bluebirds banded as nestlings in their boxes in previous years were recaptured. Banding efforts continued with 20 Eastern Bluebird nestlings banded this year. 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!

whschacher@natreserv.com



Standing from left to right: David Johnson, Laurie and Dan Mooney, Jerry Ledbetter, Tony King, and Deedee Blane. Kneeling is Mark Campen and Parson (Photo by Denise Nauman)

The above members were the clean-up team on Sharp's Ridge, Saturday morning, November 13.

110th Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count

It is time for the Christmas Bird Counts! We encourage every- one 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 18

Contact Chuck Nicholson, cpnichol@bellsouth.net

GSMNP-Sugarlands, Sunday, December 19

David Trently, naturetours@avianpursuits.com; 865-531-1473 (h); 865-974-8528

There will be an optional morning meeting at 8:00 at the Sugarlands Visitor Center. Please come if you have not already been assigned a territory.

We'll meet at Smoky Mountain Brewery & Restaurant in Gatlinburg (<http://www.coppercellar.com/Restaurant-SmokyMountainBrewery.html>) at 2:00 in the afternoon to warm up and compare notes. (earlier if bad weather)

Cades Cove , Sunday December 26

Contact Susan Hoyle at hoyleshrike@gmail.com

Knoxville, Sunday, January 2

Dean Edwards, 865-660-9701 kde@angst.engr.utk.edu

The organizers of these counts plan to be present at the December KTOS meeting to sign everyone up and provide additional information.

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.

2011 Annual Spring Meeting Memphis, Tennessee April 29 - 30 & May 1, 2011

The 2011 TOS Spring Meeting will be held in Memphis from Friday, April 29 through Sunday, May 1st. The Memphis chapter is hosting the meeting. Registration Friday evening will be held at the Plantation Oaks Suites & Inn, 6656 Hwy 51N, 3 miles south of Millington. Dinner and program Saturday evening will be held at the Neighborhood Bistro, adjacent to the Inn. To reach the hotel from I-40, take exit 24B (Millington/Hwy 385) west to Millington. Go 16 miles, turn left (south) on Hwy 51N. The hotel will be 2.2 miles ahead on the left. For additional information, contact Jay Walko (walko@bellsouth.net).

Lodging: A block of rooms at the Plantation Oaks is being held for TOS. Rate is \$69.95 per night for either King or double beds. Reservations may be made toll free: 888-422-1459; (901) 872-8000; Fax: (901) 872-1000; e-mail: (angie.plantationoaks@bigriver.net). Website: www.plantationoaksinn.com.

Field Trips: Trips will be held Saturday and Sunday mornings. Destinations will include Shelby Forest, Shelby Farms (Penal Farm), including the Mid-South Raptor Rehabilitation Center, The Earth Complex (Pits) and the North Treatment Plant.

Program/Speaker:

Our speaker will be Kathy Shelton, Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks. Kathy's topic will be "The Effects of the Great Oil Spill of 2010 on the Wildlife of the Gulf Coast."

Registration: The registration fee is \$10. Saturday dinner (buffet) and program is \$20.

KTOS MEMBERSHIP

Join or renew your membership in KTOS by mailing your annual dues to: Carole Gobert
1304 Barcelona Drive
Knoxville TN 37923

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 Sat Jan 22

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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Winter Hummingbirds

Winter hummingbirds are out there. They are rare birds indeed but there are always a few that show up in our area. The only way to get one is to leave out a feeder this winter especially near some flowering plants. The recent freeze we had severely nipped back some of my plants but there are many still blooming. If you are lucky enough to get one I would be glad to identify and band it. You never know what you are going to find. Last winter at Musick's campground near Bristol I caught a Rufous hummer that was banded in Pass Christian, MS the previous winter. I recently banded a young male Rufous hummingbird in Hampton, TN. As birds move during the winter or return to their breeding areas we may be lucky to have a bird recaptured. The most amazing of stories happened last summer. A female Rufous was caught in Alaska and she had been banded the previous winter in Tallahassee, FL. Folks are on pins and needles waiting to see if she returns to Tallahassee. That could be us. Please contact me if you have one or hear of one. Mark Armstrong, 865-577-5398 or woodthrush@bellsouth.net

