



KNOXVILLE CHAPTER OF THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

December & January Programs

Rocky Hill Children Discover Birding

Join us on **Wednesday, December 5, at 6:45 p.m.** to hear Paul E. Super, speak on his research in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP). Paul is an Affiliate Professor of Biology at Western Carolina University and the Research Coordinator for the Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center at the GSMNP. His presentation will provide a brief overview of some of the research and protection activity occurring at the park focusing on the park's birds. Over 245 species of birds have been recorded within the park, including year-round residents such as the Carolina race of the Dark-eyed Junco, neotropical migrant breeders including Black-throated Green Warblers, and endangered species such as the Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

After the holidays, be sure to join us on **Wednesday, January 2, at 6:45 p.m.** for our annual photograph share program. This program provides the perfect opportunity to show off your photography skills, and it is also a great time to socialize with everyone at the beginning of the new year. All photographers and birders, novice or seasoned, are encouraged to bring a short selection of their bird and nature-related photographs to share with the group. A laptop and overhead projector will be provided, so please bring your images on a flash drive. Also, please limit your presentation to no more than 10 minutes so everyone has the chance to share with our appreciative audience. If you're interested in participating, please let our vice president, Patty Ford, know so she can add you to the line-up. (See contact information on page 4.)

Both meetings will be held in Room 117 of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine. For directions, visit the Meetings page on our website at www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html.



On November 16, 2012 six KTOS members met at Rocky Hill Elementary School to present the "Discover Birds" program to six first grade classes. It was a beautiful crisp morning when Tom Howe, Chris Welsh, Mark Campen, and Tony King set up spotting scopes, binoculars, and pictures. The children enjoyed seeing numerous bird species.

Paula Schneeberger had a "show and tell" program demonstrating the different types of bird beaks, talons, and feathers. Billie Cantwell presented a slide show on birds and their songs.

Each child received the "Discover Birds" activity book and each teacher received a packet of information. Each packet had a lesson plan, poster on common backyard feeder birds, a 2013 bird calendar, and other bird related newsletters and information.

These events are only possible with the financial support of the KTOS members who sponsored these and the upcoming classes. Sponsors include: Sharon Sheliga, Patty Ford, Eddy Whitson, Deedee Blane, June Welch, Jerry Ledbetter, Marikay Waldvogel, Bob & Lynne Davis, Paula Schneeberger, Vickie Henderson, Margaux Cowan-Banker, Colin Leonard, and Chuck and Lola Estes.



Red-cockaded Woodpecker,
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Common Yellowthroat.
Source: Wikimedia Commons



Presidential Perch

As we approach the end of 2012, I looked back at what the KTOS has accomplished over this year. It is very exciting to see that KTOS has new members who are actively participating in our various events. We have had some interesting fund raising adventures that were also educational. (Who doesn't like to learn about birds and wine?) The Hummingbird Festival was a great learning experience and benefited KTOS in numerous ways. We have taken the enhanced "Discover Birds" Project to include a field trip, "show and tell," and a slide show for the children. We had many great field trips and interesting programs. None of this could have been accomplished without the hard work of KTOS members who have generously donated their expertise, talents, time, and efforts. A big thank you to everyone!

As 2013 approaches, it is going to be just as busy for KTOS. We have the Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival in January 2013 and volunteers are needed to help make it another great event. We have more "Discover Bird" presentations, the state spring meeting in April, and our next Hummingbird festival in August 2013. In the meantime, keep your feeders filled, keep a hummingbird feeder out, and keep a watch out to see who shows up. Make sure you let us know who came to visit!

Winter Hummingbirds

We are seeing the beginnings of another pretty good winter hummingbird season this year. As of November 19, 2012, a total of eight Rufous Hummingbirds have been banded in East Tennessee, including three in Mountain City, two in Kingsport, two in Gatlinburg/Sevierville, and one in New Market. Recently, an Allen's Hummingbird returned to a home in Russellville. The really amazing thing about the Mountain City hummingbirds is that they are all at one home. This is common in Louisiana and Florida but is unheard of in Tennessee.

If you are interested in attracting these birds to your home, I encourage you to put up a feeder. However, please know that these birds are rare at this time of year and you may not be able to attract one.

The banding of wintering hummingbirds is part of a continuing study started by Bob and Martha Sargent of the Hummer/Bird Study Group to identify them and track their movements. If you do get a bird, please contact me at (865) 748-2224. I would like to catch, identify, and band your bird so that we know what it is and can potentially learn something of its movements. Banding is a quick and safe process and it is about the only tool we have now to study the movements of hummingbirds.

Thank you!
Mark Armstrong

Get Out and Get Birding! Winter Field Trips

A trip is tentatively planned for **Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge** in Decatur, Ala. in January 2013. For trip updates, visit the Field Trips page on our website at www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html. Also, do not forget to addend the **2013 Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival** at the Hiwassee Refuge on January 19th and 20th.

Kyker Bottoms Refuge/Toqua Boat Ramp
Saturday, December 1, 2012
Leaders: Dollyann Myers & Ron Hoff (aves7000@bellsouth.net)

We will meet at the parking lot of the Stokely Building (320 N. Cedar Bluff Rd., Knoxville, Tenn.) for carpooling. We will return around 1:00 pm. The trip to Kyker Bottoms Refuge will last about an hour. We will then travel to the Toqua Boat Ramp area located on Tellico Lake. We will be looking for everything, but mostly ducks and wintering sparrows. Bring snacks and water as needed. There are places for each along the way, if needed.

Victor Ashe Park
Thursday, December 13, 2012 @ 9:00 a.m.
Leader: 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 Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, December 16, 2012 @ 8:30 a.m.
Leaders: Eric Bodker, (ericSusan@bellsouth.net) & Wayne Schacher (whschacher@natreserv.com), (865) 457-4355

We will meet in the parking lot at the refuge. An extensive list of migrant and wintering species has been documented in the past decade there. We will walk the range of native grassland, field, woodland and wetland edge habitats in uplands, past Wayne's Pond, along the riparian zone of the French Broad River and then return to the parking lot.

Tommy Schumpert Park
Thursday, January 10, 2013 @ 9:00 a.m.
Leader: Tony King, (865) 988-6172

We will meet at the park (6400 Fountain City Rd., Knoxville, Tenn.). For directions, visit knoxcounty.org/parks/park_directions.php.

A Confused Child, the Twelve Days of Christmas

When I was a child we learned various Christmas Carols in elementary school, including the *Twelve Days of Christmas*. I was confused by numerous things in the song including the numerous references to birds that I had never seen or only heard of in cartoons. As you know the song mentions a Partridge on the first day, a Turtle Dove on the second day, "collie birds" on the fourth day, geese on the sixth day, and swans on the seventh day. Most, if not all, of these birds would have been known to English children during the 19th century who lived in the countryside. But to me, a Partridge was a cartoon in the credits for the *Partridge Family* TV show, a Turtle Dove could be a flying turtle, collie birds were "calling birds," a goose was Donald Duck's cousin, and a swan was what an ugly duck would grow up to become. However, over time I was able to learn about these birds and had the opportunity to see them.

Assuming that the song is only discussing birds that are indigenous to England, some of the species can be determined. The partridge in the song could refer to the "English Partridge" (Grey Partridge) or the introduced "French Partridge" (Red-legged Partridge). The collie bird is the European Blackbird, based on collie meaning as black as coal. There are numerous swan species that could be present in England, but the only all year around wild resident is the Mute Swan. *Michael J. Plaster*



English Partridge, Source: Wikimedia Commons



Turtle Dove, Source: Wikimedia Commons



European Blackbird, Source: Wikimedia Commons



Mute Swan, Source: Wikimedia Commons

Birding Briefs



On November 3, 2012 KTOS members observed 47 bird species Wears Valley, Sevier County, Tenn. between 9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.. These species include: Mallard (1); Wild Turkey (2); Turkey Vulture (1); Red-shouldered Hawk (1); Red-tailed Hawk (2); Virginia Rail (2); Killdeer (3); Belted Kingfisher (1); Red-bellied Woodpecker (3); Downy Woodpecker (3); Hairy Woodpecker (1); Northern Flicker (4); Pileated Woodpecker (1); American Kestrel (1); Eastern Phoebe (2); Blue Jay (8); American Crow (5); Carolina Chickadee (3); Tufted Titmouse (3); White-breasted Nuthatch (2); Marsh Wren (1); Carolina Wren (6); Golden-crowned Kinglet (1); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1); Eastern Bluebird (8); Hermit Thrush (2); American Robin (13); Northern Mockingbird (3); European Starling (21); American Pipit (1); Cedar Waxwing (44); Palm Warbler (1); Yellow-rumped Warbler (10); Eastern Towhee (3); Chipping Sparrow (2); Field Sparrow (1); Savannah Sparrow (6); Song Sparrow (15); Swamp Sparrow (11); White-throated Sparrow (3); White-crowned Sparrow (2); Northern Cardinal (3); Red-winged Blackbird (175); Eastern Meadowlark (12); Common Grackle (20); House Finch (2); and American Goldfinch (28).

Cleanup Time!

The **Rankin Bottoms Project** will be sponsoring a cleanup at Rankin Bottoms, in Cocke County, on **Saturday, December 8, 2012** starting at **10:00 a.m.** and ending at 2:00 p.m. Gloves, bags, litter-grabbers, snacks, drinking water, and a Rankin Bottoms T-shirt will be provided. Of course, there will be an opportunity to do some birding on upper Douglas Lake before and after this event. Please contact, Leslie Gibbens, gibbenslj@gmail.com, (423) 487-3161, if you are interested in participating.

Christmas Bird Count Time!

Sad News

This year's **Christmas Bird Counts (CBC)** are right around the corner! Held each year, Christmas Bird Counts provide an opportunity for birdwatchers to use their identification skills to help with bird research and conservation. The tallies of different bird species gained from CBCs are routinely used by scientists as a way to monitor winter bird populations. This year, participation in the count is free!

To organize the count, interested participants are encouraged to attend the upcoming KTOS meeting on Wednesday, December 5, 2012. Some of the compilers will be present to answer questions, hand out forms, and assign territories to cover. Currently, no one is identified as the compiler for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. If you wish to participate in any of the bird counts but are unable to attend the meeting, you may contact the respective compiler(s) for the counts in which you are interested. Count dates and compiler information appear below.

Cades Cove CBC

Saturday, December 29, 2012

Compiler: Susan Hoyle, (865) 909-0792, hoyleshrike@gmail.com

Norris CBC

Saturday, December 15, 2012

Compiler: Chuck Nicholson, (865) 405-7948,
cpnichol@bellsouth.net

Knox County CBC

Saturday, January 5, 2012

Compiler: Dean Edwards, (865) 660-9701, kde@utk.edu

Sandra Rose Kolak of Maryville, Tenn. passed away on Friday, November 9, 2012 at the age of 68. She was born in Inez, Martin County, Ky. She was a member of Fairview United Methodist Church in Maryville. She was a member of KTOS and was an avid birdwatcher with over 600 species of birds on her "Life List." She was also an avid tennis player and quilter. She is survived by her loving husband, Alvin H. Kolak.

Final Call for Dues

It's the final call for your 2013 dues! You can renew at the December meeting or by mailing your payment to Carole Gobert, 1304 Barcelona Dr., Knoxville, TN 37923. For those new members who joined at or after the Hummingbird Festival in July, your dues were for 2013, so you do not need to pay again until next fall.

KTOS 2013 dues are \$26 (individual), \$30 (family), \$38 (sustaining), \$13 (student), \$8 (TOS life members). TOS life membership is \$450. A KTOS membership form is available at <http://tinyurl.com/9gjss2f>.

Seven Island Wildlife Refuge MAPS

This year was the 8th season of MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) at Seven Island Wildlife Refuge. MAPS is a program administered by the Institute for Bird Populations (www.birdpop.org). It is national effort and each station uses the same banding protocol and similar start and end dates. The intention is to provide information about breeding species. At this station, we begin in late May and have eight sessions during the summer and end in early August. It has always been a very busy station but this year was our biggest year ever with a total of 403 birds banded, 197 recaptures, and 30 not banded for a total of 630 birds. The top five birds that were banded were Field Sparrows (99), Indigo Buntings (47), Common Yellowthroats (44), Northern Mockingbirds (28), and Northern Cardinals (24). This was a very good year for Field Sparrows with 85% of the birds banded being youngsters. We caught these streaky breasted youngsters from the first through the last session.

As part of the banding protocol, we tallied all birds seen or heard within 300 feet of our nets independent of their banding. This year we caught a Blue-winged Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Scarlet Tanager in our nets but they have not been recorded as breeders at our site. The Scarlet Tanager was a youngster out on his own and feeding on blackberries in the hedgerow. It was only the second time one has been banded at our site. The Blue-winged Warbler was a first banding record for the refuge. By banding for many years, one starts to generate records indicating the longevity of various species. We caught a Yellow-breasted Chat this year that we banded in 2005 when he was at least 2 years old, which makes him at least 9 years old now. He is our oldest documented bird to date. As with any banding station, we owe a lot gratitude to the volunteers that get up early, put up and take down nets, and remove birds from the nets. None of this valuable information would be possible without their dedication and hard work. Thank you all very much! *Mark Armstrong*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Katie McCallie
The Land Trust for Tennessee
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423-305-1783 office
423-315-6100 cell

November 20, 2012

THE LAND TRUST FOR TENNESSEE PARTNERS WITH TWRA TO SUCCESSFULLY ADD CRITICAL ACREAGE TO HIWASSEE WILDLIFE REFUGE, SITE OF SANDHILL CRANE MIGRATION & HISTORIC TRAIL OF TEARS.

CHATTANOOGA, TN. –The Land Trust for Tennessee and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) successfully partnered to purchase 68 acres of critical wildlife habitat located along Blythe Ferry Road near the confluence of the Hiwassee and Tennessee Rivers. This essential acreage is now part of the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Meigs County thanks to the tremendous support of individuals, foundations and the community. This peaceful stretch of tall grasses was slated for a high density residential development with a waste water treatment facility. That project fell through, and The Land Trust for Tennessee spent the last two years in negotiations to protect this property from other incompatible development proposals. This vital acreage increases the physical size of the Refuge, enhances public enjoyment of historical and scenic land that is rich in wildlife population, and adds value for our state's tourism and recreation.

This piece of land and other properties along the Hiwassee River corridor, one of The Land Trust's high priority conservation areas, are an essential part of the Sandhill Crane's natural migration pattern. Over 14,000 of the birds descend on the Refuge for two to three months each winter. In addition to the annual Sandhill Crane Festival held every year at the Refuge, Blythe Ferry itself was a site for Cherokee camps and a major departure point for the Trail of Tears. Proposed development would have threatened the home to spectacular wildlife special to this region, and would have ruined the historic context for visitors to experience the Old Wagon Road leading to the ferry and to the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park that adjoins these 68 acres.

Through a federal wildlife habitat grant, TWRA committed \$250,000 toward the project, and The Land Trust for Tennessee raised the remaining private funds necessary to purchase this land for public use. Generous support poured in from foundations and wildlife enthusiasts across Tennessee and beyond, including a large gift made by an anonymous donor through the International Crane Foundation. "Thanks to this anonymous donor's dedication to Sandhill Cranes and their habitats, we are thrilled to be able to help secure land that provides critical buffers for Sandhills and many other species along the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in Tennessee," International Crane Foundation's President and CEO Rich Beilfuss said.

After reading an article about the Blythe Ferry Project in Tennessee Wildlife magazine earlier this fall, Bill and Judy Tindall led the pack with a generous leadership gift. "Having lived on flyways in NY and MN we both grew up with an interest in migratory waterfowl," Mr. Tindall explained. "For many years we raised and released wood ducks, as well as maintained wood duck nesting boxes in northeast Tennessee. At one time we maintained a flock of various North American waterfowl on our pond. We are pleased to be able to contribute to the Refuge for the benefit of migratory birds."

The Land Trust is so appreciative of the many donors who made this addition to the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge possible including the visionary support of the Farrow Family Foundation, Lyndhurst Foundation, Riverview Foundation, SunTrust Foundation, Bill and Judy Tindall, Carlene and Greg Vital, and Libby and Frank Duff.

The Land Trust for Tennessee and TWRA will celebrate and dedicate the 68-acre addition during the upcoming Sandhill Crane Festival on Saturday, January 19th at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge.

The Land Trust is a private, nonprofit organization that has worked with willing landowners, the State of Tennessee, communities and various like-minded partners to protect more than 84,000 acres in 53 counties across the state since

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www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html

**2012 — 2013
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Upcoming Votes

It is anticipated that a motion will be made and passed to support the Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival with a donation of \$250. Because of the amount of the donation, a second vote will be needed and will be taken at the January meeting.

With this donation, KTOS will be a Project Sponsor of the 2013 Festival and the Dinner with Darwin. KTOS' name and/or logo will appear at the Hiwassee Refuge and Birchwood School festival venues and at the Dinner with Darwin event.

The 2013 Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival could be an even greater success than last year, which had 7000 visitors. The 2013 Festival will be held on January 19th and 20th at the Hiwassee Refuge in Meigs County and the Birchwood Elementary School in Rhea County.

During the November meeting motions were made to 1) purchase activity books and 2) donate \$700 to the J.B. Owen Memorial Fund. A second vote will be taken on these motions at the December meeting.



Sandhill Cranes, Source: Wikimedia Commons