



Board Members Needed for 2012-2013

Looking for a way to become more involved in KTOS? With officer elections for the 2012-2013 year quickly coming up, now is the perfect opportunity to jump right in! We have board positions open at both the local and state level. Officers will be nominated in April, voted upon in May, and installed in June.

If you'd like to put forward a nomination for yourself or someone else, please contact Billie Cantwell at bfcantwell@gmail.com or (865) 212-9797. The following positions need filled for the coming year:

- Field Trip Coordinator
- Newsletter Editor
- State Director (3 openings)

Seven Islands Nest Box Report Online

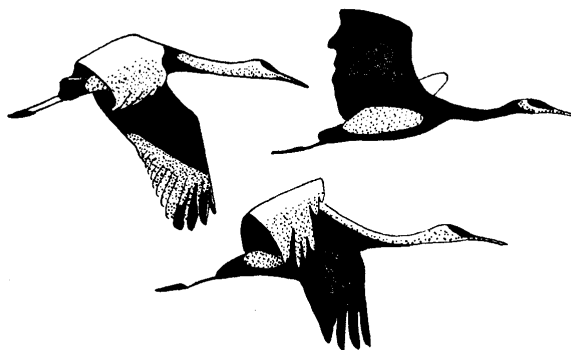
For the past several years, Wayne Schacher has provided a report on the annual results and trends resulting from monitoring the Eastern Bluebird, Tree Swallow, and Carolina Chickadee nest boxes at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge. Due to the length and comprehensive nature of his article, it is being posted on the KTOS website this year instead of being printed in full in the newsletter.

To read the article and all of the interesting results it contains, visit the home page of the KTOS website (www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html) and click on the "2011 SIWR Nest Box Report" link. Any questions, insights, or suggestions can be directed to Wayne at (865) 457-4355 or wschacher@natreserv.com.

February Program: Birds and Mammals of Australia

Join us on **Wednesday, February 1, at 6:45 p.m.** to see Ed LeGrand share photographs and video clips from his recent trip to Australia. His program, "Planning and Anticipating the Trip was Almost Half the Fun," will detail his self-guided birding and mammaling trip to the "land down under."

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



Sandhill Crane Festival Organizers Send Thanks

Dear KTOS Members,

What a wonderful showing and outpouring of volunteerism and support from your Chapter this past weekend at the 2012 Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival!! From manning and sharing scopes to greeting visitors, loading buses, answering questions, selling items, giving out surveys, supervising our education display, guiding visitors — you did it in fine fashion. Your participation and contributions made the Festival the success it was!

To each and every one of you:
THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!!

Cyndi Routledge & Melinda Welton



Presidential Perch

"Build it and they will come."

"The law of attraction."

"Be careful what you wish for."

I'm sure you've heard these sayings many times, and I believe they're true. If you put out that thought, wish, want, desire and make some *effort*, it will happen.

For years I wanted bluebirds in our yard but thought I'd never have them because we live in a wooded area. But I saw some nearby and thought, "I'm going to get them to come to my yard." Colin and I put up nesting boxes in the most open area and waited. We really didn't have to wait long. They were nesting that next spring! (The neighbor who I "borrowed" them from wasn't very happy though.)

Next, I wanted to make sure they stayed. We put up bluebird feeders, and it was great fun to watch them feed and feed their young. As I fed the birds, I always whistled and after a while, I discovered the most amazing thing: they and a few hundred other interlopers appeared when I whistled with wrens even flying in as I filled the feeder!

Unfortunately, the wrens and titmice generally ate most of the food, so I had to come up with a food mix to stop them from eating all the meal worms. I started with a mixture of peanut pieces, raisins, sunflower hearts, suet nuggets, and dried meal worms topped off with live meal worms. Now the bluebirds are the first in to get the live meal worms and then the others feed. Nuthatches, downies, chickadees, titmice, goldfinches, and wrens all come. We have a customer at Wild Birds Unlimited who feeds 15,000 - 20,000 meal worms a week to her 30+ bluebirds!

The other bird I have wished for is a Rufous Hummingbird. On January 3 that wish came true! I have left out feeders before but never this long. I had forgotten about it, to be honest. It was our coldest morning yet, and Colin had gone out to check a faucet that I had left connected to the hose. He saw something fly away from the feeder, and it was a hummingbird! I can't describe the excitement I felt as I ran to make fresh food. (The nectar was frozen, and the poor bird was licking the ice!) Of course, Mark Armstrong was the first person I called. Mark and Jane came out on January 5th and banded Ruffie (an immature male). Others who came to see the bird included Robin Barrow, Peggy Burkman, Kim West, and Vickie Henderson. Ruffie was a life bird for each person! Vickie has even written about the adventure on her blog (vickiehenderson.blogspot.com/). It's amazing what a small little bird can do for people.

if you want a special bird or something else: make a wish, believe it, and put some effort in drawing it to you. It will come!

Billie Cantwell

Get Out and Get Birding! February Field Trips

**Cove Lake State Park with possible Norris Dam stop
Sunday, February 12, 2012 @ 8:00 a.m.**

Leader: Mike Nelson, madbirder@surfbirder.com

This trip will focus on winter ducks at Cove Lake State Park, but other birds are welcome to show themselves too, of course! Bald Eagles and other wintering species are often seen at this location. The group may also continue on to Norris Dam if people are interested in doing so.

Meet at the Stokley Building, 320 Cedar Bluff Road, at 7:00 a.m. to carpool, or meet in the parking lot at Cove Lake at 8:00 a.m. For site info and directions, visit www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/CoveLake.htm. Norris Dam info can be found at www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/NorrisArea.htm.

Hiwassee Island Eco Cruise

Saturday, February 18, 2012 @ 1:30 p.m.

**Coordinator: Alice Woody, gamwoody@comcast.net
or (865) 573-4937 before 9 p.m.**

In this extra-special club outing, KTOS will cruise the Tennessee River to Hiwassee Island via Blue Moon Cruises and Tours. The cost is \$39.00 plus tax per person, which will include a 3 ½ hour cruise with a naturalist interpreter and a full barbeque buffet. According to the company's website, we can reasonably hope to see some lingering cranes, eagles, osprey, and other resident and migrating species.

Participants should make their own reservations by calling Blue Moon Cruises and Tours at (888) 993-2583 or by using the reservation system on their website (www.bluemooncruises.org). Please Identify yourself as a member of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society when making your reservation.

On the day of the cruise, be sure to arrive at the dock of Sale Creek Marina no later than 1:30 p.m. (3900 Lee Pike, Soddy Daisy, TN, 37379). For specific directions, visit www.bluemooncruises.org/directions/hiwassee.htm. For those wishing to carpool, we will meet at the Stokley Building, 320 Cedar Bluff Road, at 11:30 a.m.



Rufous Hummingbird, Vickie Henderson.

KTOS Financial Report Calendar Year 2011

	Dec	Nov	YTD
Income			
. Dues	\$576.00	\$926.00	\$3,390.00
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$150.00	\$172.00	\$1,151.25
. Interest	\$7.92	\$7.48	\$117.19
. Owen Memorial	\$100.00	\$4.00	\$563.00
. Duck Stamp Sales	\$38.00	\$0.00	\$395.00
Total Income	\$871.92	\$1,109.48	\$5,616.44
Expenses			
. Newsletter	\$69.03	\$53.05	\$864.80
. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$90.38
. Shade Grown Coffee	\$297.01	\$62.84	\$1,380.39
. Member Dues to TOS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,076.00
. J. B. Owen Award	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$600.00
. Duck Stamp Program	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$412.98
Total Expenses	\$366.04	\$115.89	\$5,424.55
Account Balances			
. KTOS Checking & Savings	\$4,133.32	\$3,734.99	
. J. B. Owen Memorial	\$8,645.50	\$8,537.95	
Memberships	106	106	
Paid 2011 Memberships	106	106	



Conservation Committee Update

At the January meeting, president Billie Cantwell announced co-chairs for the KTOS conservation committee, Vickie Henderson and Wayne Schacher. Wayne and Vickie bring diverse interests and experience to the committee and look forward to working with the membership to further conservation in the Knoxville area. Current projects include repairing the osprey nesting platform at Looney Island, restoration of the Kingston Steam Plant shorebird habitat, and monitoring the status of Sandhill Cranes in Tennessee. Committee projects may include hands-on activities or efforts to support a conservation issue.

If you would like to join the committee or recommend projects, please contact Wayne at wschacher@natreserv.com or Vickie at viclcs@aol.com.



Peregrine Falcon, Daniel S. Kilby.

Birding Briefs

Kurt Sickafus emailed in mid-December to report on the birds being seen around his place in Corryton. On December 11, he saw one **Wilson's Snipe**; on December 13, **2 Hooded Mergansers** showed up, followed by one **Ring-necked Duck** on December 14; and on December 15, a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** and a **Peregrine Falcon** made an appearance.

On January 8, **Ron Hoff** and **Dollyann Myers** spent a few hours birding at Melton Hill Dam Park in Roane County. While there, they observed **350+ Bonaparte's Gulls** in a single raft above the dam. In the campground area, they also saw **2 Brown-headed Nuthatches**, **both species of kinglets**, **many juncos**, and **7 Fox Sparrows**. Ron reported on TN-Bird that this "has been the most reliable place for this species [Fox Sparrow] we have found in recent years."

And the nesting eagles are back! **Tony King** reported that the pair of **Bald Eagles** in Lenoir City has returned to the same sycamore tree, which makes for the seventh year in a row. One bird was first seen sitting on the nest on January 17.

Email your cool birds (species, number, date, location) to Angela Hoffman at ahoffman07@bellsouth.net or leave a message at (865) 670-8822.

KTOS membership: Join or renew by mailing your annual dues to Carole Gobert, 1304 Barcelona Drive, Knoxville, TN 37923. Dues levels: \$26/individual, \$30/family, \$38/sustaining, \$13/student, or TOS life membership for \$450 with \$8 annual fee to Chapter.



www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html

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Harold Howell
David Johnson

State Directors, 2011– 2013

Mark Armstrong
Chris Welsh

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KTOS Helps Rebuild Osprey Nest Structure

On Tuesday, January 10, KTOS members and friends rebuilt the Osprey nesting structure on Looney Island (Knox County) that was blown over in the spring storms of 2011. Wes James and Erica Wald from TVA, along with Wayne Schacher, Colin Leonard, Justine Cuccahara, Sarah Rabeda, and Billie Cantwell, ferried over to Looney Island that morning and worked together as a team to fix the structure.

Wes James of TVA wrote this in a follow-up email to the club: "We want to thank KTOS for their long-term interest and help on this project and others. As I said yesterday, we put that structure up probably ten years ago with help from KTOS folks. Hopefully the osprey will return in March and find their new structure location to their liking! Thanks again and we will be in touch."



*The happy and successful work crew on Looney Island.
Photo credit: Billie Cantwell.*

Nesting Box Usage and Success at SIWR, 2008-2011

By Wayne H. Schacher
whschacher@natreserv.com

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 initiatives. Beginning in 2006, nesting structures for eastern bluebirds and tree swallows were placed in early successional habitats.

SIWR volunteers and KTOS members Billie Cantwell and Colin Leonard began intensive monitoring for species usage of these structures in 2008. Continuing through the 2011 nesting season, and assisted my SIWR Wildlife Technicians Justine Cucchiara and Aaron Manzke, a total of 49 EBB/TS nest boxes and 3 Carolina chickadee boxes were monitored at 10-day intervals from mid-March through early August in 2011. This intensified effort continues to provide 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 has broadened the scope of this project. Continuation and growth of this project will build on our knowledge to the benefit of these valuable avian species.

Forty-eight total nest starts were recorded in 2011, a rebound from 39 nest starts in 2010 to near the 50 nest start totals for both 2008 and 2009. Of the 2011 total, 65% [31 nests] successfully fledged young, a slight decrease from 2010 [76%], but in line with 66% nest success in 2009. In a new development in the monitoring program, twig nests built by male house wrens filled 3 boxes this year, without attracting nesting females. These nest starts [9.7%] account for most of the reduction in nest success from 2010 to 2011. Maybe next year female house wrens will decide to use the nest boxes at SIWR.

The high nest depredation experienced during 2008 [22, with 44% total nest success] remained low in 2011 with 3 eastern bluebird nests [6%] experiencing depredation. Modified box designs and improved predator guards installed in 2010 remained successful deterrents. The 3 nest boxes experiencing bluebird depredation will be inspected for possible modification.

During 2011, 57% [12] of eastern bluebird nests successfully fledged young, a decrease from 2010 when 73% [16 nests] fledged successfully. All six [100%] tree swallows nests fledged in 2011, an increase from 2010 [75%, 4 nests]. Nest starts by Carolina chickadees jumped from 10 [90% success] in 2010 to 16 in 2011, with 75% [12 nests] successfully fledging. The single tufted titmouse nest start successfully fledged [100%] in 2011, while the single Carolina wren nest start in 2011 was abandoned [0%].

The strongest peak for nest-building by eastern bluebirds began the second/third weeks of March in 2011, earlier than in 2010 [fourth week of March], with fledging completed by mid-May. A lesser peak for this double-brooded species occurred in late June/early July,

with fledging complete by the end of July. Tree swallow nest starts occurred from mid-April to early May with fledging taking place from late-May to mid-June. In 2011, Carolina chickadee nest starts were more variable than in 2010, extending from mid-March to early May with fledging complete by early June. In 2010, Carolina chickadees consistently began nesting activity in early to mid-April and ended the latter half of May. Nest building by the tufted titmouse took place the first week of April, with fledging in late May.

Thirteen [25%] of 52 available nest boxes were not used during 2011, a decrease from 2010 when 20 boxes [41%] were unused. Despite these unused boxes, as in 2010, both Carolina chickadees and tree swallows built nests over active eastern bluebird nests.

A decreasing trend in Eastern bluebird nest starts at SIWR [34 in 2008 to 32 in 2009 to 21 in 2010] appears to have stabilized with the 21 nest starts in 2011. Tree swallow nest starts at SIWR continue to bounce around with 6 nest starts during 2011 intermediate compared to past years, 9 nest starts in 2007, 13 in 2008, 5 in 2009 and 4 in 2010. Of note, both eastern bluebirds and tree swallows use some of the artificial martin gourds available at SIWR. In another trend, Carolina chickadee nest starts continue to rise from 3 [2008] to 9 [2009] to 10 in 2010 and 16 in 2011. Is this trend related to their earlier nesting activity noted above? Are Carolina chickadees responding to nest box competition by claiming nesting sites earlier? These trends will be interesting to watch into the future.

In 2011, average clutch size for eastern bluebirds was 4.6 [4.3 in 2010], 5.2 for tree swallows [4.7 in 2010], 5.2 for Carolina chickadees [6.1 in 2010] and 6 for tufted titmouse. For 2011 the average number of fledglings produced per successful nest were: 3.8 for eastern bluebirds [3.9 in 2010], 4.3 for tree swallows [3.7 in 2010], 4.4 for Carolina chickadee [5.8 in 2010] and 6 for tufted titmouse. Each of these values fall within expected ranges for these species, based on previous year's 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 in 2011 with 3 eastern bluebird nestlings and 8 tree swallow nestlings banded. 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!