



KNOXVILLE CHAPTER OF THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Help Legacy Parks Preserve Natural Beauty in East Tennessee

Legacy Parks Foundation is an East Tennessee nonprofit that works to ensure our community enjoys exceptional recreational opportunities, natural beauty and open spaces, and that these assets exist for generations to come. Celebrating a decade of success, Legacy Parks has raised \$8 million for parks and open spaces; helped conserve 1,000 acres of forest and farmland; and added over 500 acres of parkland in Knox County, including at Seven Islands State Birding Park.



For 2017, Legacy Parks will focus on the three R's: Regional, River, and Rails, to include the following projects:

- Building new trails along Beaver Creek from Halls to Powell;
- Developing marketing and fundraising plans for the Maryville to Townsend greenway;
- Expanding the trail network Department of Energy conserved land in Anderson County;
- Increasing public access along the French Broad River and upper Holston River;
- Building the iconic three-mile G&O Trail along an old railroad from near Chapman Highway to Ijams Nature Center's Mead's Quarry

Please help us continue this great work for our community by taking these two easy steps: Visit www.legacyarks.org/friend/ to become a Friend of Legacy Parks and leave a legacy of your own.

Donating your nature photos can help Legacy Parks provide outdoor recreation resources and information to help more people Get Out & Play. If interested, please contact info@legacyarks.org.

February Meeting: “Hummingbirds Overwintering in East Tennessee” by Mark Armstrong

Please join us on **Wednesday, February 1, 2017** for a presentation by Mark Armstrong, a master hummingbird bander. He will give us an update on his ongoing study of hummingbirds especially those that are overwintering in this area. What species have been found? Are they increasing and moving beyond their expected ranges? Why may this be happening? And what type of care and feeding do they need in winter? He may not know all the answers but it should be a very interesting program.

Mark Armstrong has retired after a 36-year career working with the Knoxville Zoo as Bird Curator. In retirement, he is focusing on bird banding of all sorts. He has worked with and led the banding project at Seven Islands Birding State Park since 2005. They have banded over 6000 birds. This past summer he was a Seasonal Interpreter/Recreator at Seven Islands, organized the Bluebird Trail and led birding, dragonfly and night-time hikes.

He is a frequent and very popular speaker at festivals and conferences. He is a long-time KTOS member and past-president of our chapter.

The KTOS meeting begins at **6:45 P.M.** in room 118 of the University of Tennessee, College of Veterinary Medicine. For directions, visit the KTOS website at www.knoxvillebirding.org or contact Merikay Waldvogel at (865) 806-7505.

Please note: Doors automatically lock at 7:00 PM at the College of Veterinary Medicine. If you arrive late, you may have to call, text or email someone inside at the meeting to open the doors.



Ross's Goose, Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Source: Tom Howe



Presidential Perch

Well, this year sure started off with a bang. To begin with, in the first week of January, we documented two new species for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park! I found and photographed the first Long-eared Owl to be documented within the Park boundaries (it had apparently been reported before in the Smokies but without enough proof to be added on the park's list). And Morton Massey, a couple of days later, found the park's first Ross's Goose. Several members saw it and took pictures. You can see my own picture on the cover page. Take note of the field marks so you don't pass it over as a snow goose (which is a good find itself, by the way). The Ross's has a much rounder head than a snow, which gives a steeper profile to the forehead. The bill is stubbier, has a bluish area at its base and lacks or has very little black where the mandibles meet, known as a "grin patch". It is also a good bit smaller than some of the races of snow goose, but when its by itself out in a field, size can be a tough call to make. When I first saw it, there was a doe a good distance away staring at the goose. It likely had never seen one before either. But by the time I made my second pass, they were feeding right next to each other. This goose is quite rare in east Tennessee. However, that being said, for some reason they have been found this month in several east Tennessee counties. I hope you got out to see one. Some other good birds still in the area this winter are two dozen Sandhill Cranes at Lackey Creek in Blount County and a Long-tailed Duck at Concord Park in Knox County.

Of course, neither of the above records holds a candle to what happened late last year. Our very own members added two new birds to the Tennessee state list! Tony King found a Northern Wheatear at Windy Farm in Loudon county that dozens of birders were able to see thanks to Tony's diplomacy with the owner of the farm. Then Colin Sumrall found the state's first Bohemian Waxwing at Sequoia Park in Knoxville. Way to go Tony and Colin!

In news from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, past results from Project Feeder Watch have proven very valuable to documenting population changes in many birds, like the increase in Cooper's Hawks, Cardinals, Anna's Hummingbirds, Eurasian Collared Doves and more. It also showed decline, at least in the lower 48 states, in birds like the Evening Grosbeak. So, if you are home bound during winter and spring, you can still contribute to research and conservation of the birds you love just by keeping records of what you seen in your back yard. You can learn more at feederwatch.org. Cornell has done a tremendous service to birds and the birdwatching community with such projects, perhaps the greatest of which is developing and continuing to update eBird. If you haven't noticed, I often mention Cornell and recommend you support them. With a very reasonable contribution, you will be rewarded with their quarterly publication Living Bird, that is replete with excellent articles and photographs that will inform both beginner and life-time birders. LikeFor example, Snowy Owls don't irrupt south into the U.S. because of food shortages as we have always been

Presidential Perch (cont.)

told? Quite the contrary—they come south after they have had a bumper year with great food and many offspring. I learn something every time I pick up the magazine.

Another thing I just learned was that I need to brush up on my own birding skills. I have Jimmy Tucker to thank for that. He shared a USFWS Migratory Bird post on Facebook that included a link to an online birder certification program. I thought this would be fun. It was, but be prepared to have your abilities stretched, particularly as you have to identify vocalizations from various habitats. I just did some practice tests and it got me to studying before I take the real test. I challenge you to look into it at www.birdercertification.org.

Get out and enjoy the birds.

Tom Howe

Get Out and Get Birding! February Field Trips

Maryville Greenway

Thursday, February 16, 9:00 A.M.

Leader: Tony King, (865) 988-6172

Meet at the walk bridge behind the Blount County Library.

Cades Cove

Saturday, February 18, 8:00 A.M.

Leader: Warren Bielenberg, (865) 681-7884,

birdglass44@aol.com

Meet at the Cades Cove Campground parking lot.

Seven Islands State Birding Park

Wednesday, February 28, 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.

Leader: Jay Sturner (865) 244-7819 (call/text)

Meet in the main parking lot at the entrance to the park. Many species from a variety of habitats will be seen. This event is part of a monthly birding series held on the 4th Wednesday of every month. Please see www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/SevenIslands.htm for additional information and directions to Seven Islands.



Bohemian Waxwing, Source: By Eddie Carle (Eddie Carle Uploaded by Anonymity) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>), via Wikimedia Commons]

2016 Annual Report

Notable Sightings

Income	2015	2016
Dues	\$2,935.00	\$4,156.00
Shade Grown Coffee	\$1,209.50	\$1,159.00
JB Owen Fund Donation	\$11,125.00	\$173.00
Interest	\$44.66	\$3.31
Hummingbird Festival	\$9,587.00	\$0.00
Activity books/class sponsorships	\$86.00	\$0.00
Donations	\$47.80	\$0.00
T-shirt sales	\$1,209.00	\$234.22
Spring TOS Meeting	\$100.00	\$160.00
JB Owen Book sales		\$193.82
Total Income	\$26,343.96	\$6,079.35

Expenses	2015	2016
Newsletter	\$178.86	\$176.80
Supplies	\$409.74	\$17.52
Shade Grown Coffee	\$1,424.12	\$1,206.29
Member Dues to TOS	\$2,452.00	\$1,976.00
J B Owen Award	\$750.00	\$750.00
"Discover Birds"	\$577.35	\$0.00
Hummingbird Festival	\$6,641.07	\$0.00
Operation Migration	\$0.00	\$0.00
T-Shirts	\$426.23	\$0.00
TOS Meeting	\$537.50	\$0.00
Room Rental - Panera	\$50.00	\$0.00
Crane Donation	\$10,000.00	\$200.00
Weebly Website	\$132.90	\$0.00
Speaker	\$50.00	\$275.00
Chimney Swift Tower Seven Islands		\$750.00
TWRA		\$1,500.00
Spring TOS Meeting		\$500.00
Total Expenses	\$23,629.77	\$7,351.61

Account Balances	2015	2016
KTOS Checking and Savings	\$15,584.87	\$16,110.19
JB Owen Memorial	\$8,797.54	\$8,545.28

Membership	134	120
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On December 4, 2016, from the tip of Maloney Road Park, Jay Sturner observed eleven Snow Geese foraging on the property of the UT Plant Sciences Farm. Of these, six were white morphs, two were blue morphs, and three were juveniles. On December 14, 2016 he saw a Peregrine Falcon at Cherokee Farm. Then, on December 18, he saw a rare Franklin's Gull near the Concord Park Boat Launch. This may or may not have been the same bird first seen by Terry Crowe 21 days earlier. In addition to hundreds of Bonaparte's and Ring-billed Gulls, four Herring Gulls and a rare Lesser Black-backed Gull were also seen, the latter pointed out by Morton Massey. A few days later, at Admiral Farragut Park, Jay Sturner found a Sandhill Crane, and on January 3 at Cherokee Farm he saw a Dunlin. The Dunlin was first reported by Jerry Ledbetter and many people came out to see it.



Dunlin, Cherokee Farm, Source: Chris Welsh

Hermit Thrush Jay Sturner

Hermit Thrush—
So old, so wise; so
rooted in earth's antiquity
he's already gone rust
from bottom up.



Hermit Thrush, Source: By Matt MacGillivray (Flickr: hermit in the park) [CC BY 2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Snow Goose, Source: By Cephas (Own work) [GFDL (<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>) or CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons



KTOS membership: Join or renew by mailing your annual dues to Morton Massey, 6932 Westland Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919. Dues levels: \$26/individual, \$30/family, \$38/sustaining, \$13/student (high school or younger), or TOS life membership for \$450 with \$8 annual fee to Chapter.



knoxvillebirding.org

**2016 — 2017
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Cuban Parrot (Caymen Race), Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, Grand Caymen, British West Indies,
Source: Michael Plaster.