



## **Cleanup: Sharp's Ridge, April 9, 2016**

Did you realize that Sharp's Ridge is a Memorial Park, Dedicated in the year 1953, to Veterans of all wars? The Park was "made possible by subscriptions of public spirited citizens of Knox County, Tenn." A pink marble block says so! Furthermore, "Sharp's Ridge Memorial Park will forever stand as a memorial to Lee McClain, by the fruits of his labor this park was established. Lee McClain 1886-1956." Also the Knoxville Rock Garden Society founded in 1934, erected a sign in 1953. Therefore, while we birders enjoy ourselves we need to remember those before us who made our birding so enjoyable I still do not know who Sharp was...That is a story for later!

The tarmac road atop Sharp's Ridge, from the fence to the turnaround, is about one and a quarter mile in length. Per the auspices of city of Knoxville, KTOS is the sponsor of that stretch of road. Signs, one at each end, confirm this relationship. Therefore, normally twice a year, in fall and spring KTOS has an organized patrol and clean up of the road.

On April 9, 2016, after a drive through the area, it was deemed clean. However, at the J.B. Owen Overlook, there were major changes, so it was decided to concentrate manual efforts at the overlook.

The City of Knoxville Public Service Dept. had given the overlook a major facelift. Gone were the Barberry, Boxwood, and Holly shrubs and the English Ivy vines. They had been replaced by Schip Laurel, which were flowering. The deck and railing had been repainted, customary grey, covering all graffiti. The graffiti attracting sign of the Smoky Mountains had been removed. (Dee Dee will be relieved, since she spent hours cleaning the graffiti, over the last TEN years!)

## **Cleanup (cont.)**

Furthermore, upon looking over the rail, all the saplings had been felled, way down the hill. Ailanthus, Persimmon, and Bush Honeysuckle had been felled. Then all that had been felled had been dragged up to the road, and piled, and later removed. Evident on the ground was blue, green and brown colored trash from years of accumulation. It was decided to concentrate on those items. So Tom Howe, Kirk Huffstater, and Landon Wilhite went way down the hill and managed to drag up to the road six heavy bags of mainly glass, whole and broken. As a result of their efforts the slope looked clean for the first time in years. The hillside looked clean in between the clumps of coppicing Bush Honeysuckle.

Doug Schneeberger walked the road towards the Ranger's house, and back, collecting a bag of trash, which was added to the pile for pickup by the city. Kirk also used a hand saw to cut four branches from a Pawlonia tree which had been ring-barked some ten years earlier. Talking about being pesky!

An Excused Absence was called in for David Johnson. Donuts, provided by the King were appreciated by all. Thank you all for your participation. Check out the "New Overlook" while birding at Sharp's Ridge.

**BIRD ON!**  
Tony King Certified Craniac!  
(865) 988-6172

## **June Meeting: Ijams Potluck**

Please join us on Wednesday, June 1, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. for our annual Potluck Dinner at Ijams Nature Center. Please bring an entrée, veggie, salad, dessert, beverage, etc. Plates and silverware will be provided. Bring your own cup or glass. Come early to bird the trails at Ijams. We will install next year's officers at this meeting. Ijams is located at 2915 Island Home Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. [(865) 577-4717]. For further information, visit the KTOS webpage at [www.knoxvillebirding.org](http://www.knoxvillebirding.org).

**Reminder:** Please bring sugar donations for the Ijams hummingbird feeders. Lyn Bales expressed his gratitude for KTOS members' sugar donations last year. He still needs one or two volunteers to help with the Ijams hummingbird feeding program. Call him at (865) 577-4717 if you are interested for additional details.



## Presidential Perch

What an unusual spring! After a very warm March, migration was stalled by a cold spell in early April. Then it was quite thin after, based on my observations, and has yet to reach a crescendo. My guess is that the birds piled up waiting on the weather, sensing that food would be scarce, if they moved too soon, then they shot through like a cannon and passed over us. Even on our excellent field trip to Cross Mountain on May 7, we only had one transient—a single Tennessee Warbler; however, the resident birds were shining (see the pictures I captured of the Cerulean and Blackburnian Warblers in this issue).

I can't remember a spring without Northern waterthrushes on my creek banks, Cape May warblers in the treetops and Bicknell's thrushes in my birdbath. Well, I may have that last one wrong. Some days I find I've even forgotten what it was I was trying to remember. But we bird on, nevertheless!

Due to the early deadline for this issue of the newsletter, I wasn't able to complete the field trips for June, July, and August. Keep your eye on our calendar at [www.knoxvillebirding.org](http://www.knoxvillebirding.org) for the latest schedule of events. I appreciate your feedback and your patience when issues arose over sending out announcements from the calendar. I still have some things I would like to improve with the new website. In fact, if any of you have expertise on the inner workings of Microsoft Outlook, I have a few questions for you. Please contact me. I would appreciate it even more if someone would step up to the plate and plan the field trips as Field Trip Coordinator. It isn't a call to lead all the field trips, by no means—just to coordinate them. We have many birders that can lead trips.

In the news, if you don't have a bird app with calls/songs, you will now have access to Cornell's library of sounds through eBird. What I have listened to so far are unedited field recordings that actually present birdsongs as you would hear them with the din of other birds in the background. It is a great tool that I am sure will continue to be refined going forward. Please see [ebird.org/content/ebird/news/searchrelease](http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/searchrelease) for an article on this new release. And if you want to delve deeper into birdsong and start recording them and viewing them as a spectrogram, Cornell has free software named Raven Lite that will do just that. Visit their site [www.birds.cornell.edu/brp/raven/ravenoverview.html](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/brp/raven/ravenoverview.html) for additional information. This would be especially useful if you want to learn the calls/songs made by birds migrating at night. You can compare your recordings to existing spectrograms from Cornell's sound library.

## Presidential Perch (cont.)

I thank Marcia Davis for mentioning our May meeting in her newspaper article. We had a record number of new visitors who came and blessed both us and our speaker by buying many of her books. Keep sharing about KTOS! We have many business cards available at our check-in table every meeting for you to have as a handy resource to give out.

Happy Birding,

*Tom Howe*

## Get Out and Get Birding! June Field Trips

**East Tennessee Technology Park (former DOE K-25 Site),**

**Thursday, June 16, 2016, @ 9:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Tony King, (865) 988-6172**

Meet at the old guard house (white concrete block building) parking lot at the west end of Oak Ridge on the north side (right side going west) of the Oak Ridge Turnpike (Hwy. 58 South) approximately 4.3 miles west from the Illinois Ave. and Oak Ridge Turnpike intersection in Oak Ridge.

**Gupton Wetlands**

**Thursday, July 21, 2016 @ 9:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Tony King, (865) 988-6172**

Go west on I-40 from Knoxville, take the Midtown exit, exit 350, turn left under the interstate, left on Route 1, and then left onto Swan Pond Rd. After arriving at Swan Pond Rd., turn right at the second intersection with Swan Pond Circle Rd., then the first right into a gravel lot.

## Welcome New Members

Please welcome the following new members: William and Gaynell Whitacre, Deborah Roberts, and Don Mossman.



**Photographs: April and May, 2016**



**Cerulean warbler, Tom Howe.**



**Blackburnian warbler, Tom Howe.**



**Sharp's Ridge Cleanup, April 2016, Denise Nauman.**

**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 (high school or younger), or TOS life membership for \$450 with \$8 annual fee to Chapter.



[www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html](http://www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html)

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## Summer Schedule

KTOS does not meet during the summer months. We will reconvene and eat again at Ijams on September 7, 2016! Have a great summer. The newsletter is also not published during the summer months. Watch our webpage for information and news: [www.knoxvillebirding.org](http://www.knoxvillebirding.org).

## Colonial Waterbirds Surveys

As you may know, TWRA is coordinating surveys of colonial waterbird colonies this year. Several of the sites that still need to be surveyed are in the Knoxville area, primarily to the southwest of the city. Some of the locations can be accessed by land but many would require a boat since they are islands on the Tennessee River. Let us know as soon as possible if you are interested in helping - by land or by river - and we can send you coordinates for each site.

Please contact:

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