



## Tennessee Birding Trail

Several locations on the Tennessee Birding Trail will soon be improved and have educational signage promoting birdwatching and raising awareness of recreational opportunities on public lands. The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) provided two grants through its Environmental Stewardship program to Jefferson City and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation. One grant will rebuild the Mossy Creek wildlife observation towers located on Cherokee Reservoir in Jefferson City. A second grant will go towards the development of Tennessee Birding Trail roadside signage. In addition to the partnership grants, TVA installed "Birdwatching Opportunities" signs at seven TVA dam reservations and trails in eight counties in Tennessee. A new wildlife observation pier was also built within TVA's Worthington Cemetery/ Cedar Barrens Trail in Oak Ridge, Tenn. TVA is welcoming Ornithological Society members to lead field trips to TVA public lands. For more information and feedback, please contact Suzanne Fisher at TVA, (865) 632-6935, or visit [www.tva.gov](http://www.tva.gov).



**Eastern Bluebird.** Source: By Flying822 at English Wikipedia [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

## March Meeting: "Summer Birding on the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec"

Please join us on **Wednesday, March 2, 2016** for a slide talk by Memphis TOS member, David Hill, on his birding experiences on the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula, in Percé, Quebec.

David has been seriously interested in birds for 64 years. As a junior ornithologist, he was employed by the American Museum of Natural History in New York, The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission in Alaska, The Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard, and Audubon Society in Florida, Texas, and Boston.

He switched to aviation as a career in 1964, but continued his interest in wildlife conservation as an avocation. He was the founding president of the Menunkatuck Audubon Society in Connecticut, served on the U. S. delegations to both the United Nations' Conference on Marine Mammals in Norway in 1976, and the International Whaling Commission, in London, in 1974. In 1973, he founded RARE, an international wildlife conservation organization that today has a \$25 million dollar annual budget, and operates programs on nearly every continent.

David and his wife Elisabeth have spent the past two summers in Percé, at the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec. He will take us on a visual tour of his favorite birding spots there.

The KTOS meeting begins at 6:45 pm in Room 118 of the University of Tennessee, College of Veterinary Medicine. For directions, visit the KTOS webpage at [www.knoxvillebirding.org](http://www.knoxvillebirding.org).

## Bluebird Trail at Seven Islands

We are looking for a few dedicated folks to help monitor the Bluebird Trail at Seven Islands State Birding Park. Volunteers need to be able to commit to checking the boxes once a month beginning in April and ending in August. Our goal is to have multiple volunteers so the boxes are checked once a week. Materials and forms will all be provided. Boxes are scattered all around the park along the trails so you will need to be prepared for walking. Once our team of monitors is set we will have a training session. Please contact me at (865) 748-2224 or [woodthrush@bellsouth.net](mailto:woodthrush@bellsouth.net), if you are interested.

*Mark Armstrong*



## Presidential Perch

It's a late winter gray day today. To some this means dreary, but to me it is a chance to see birds in a different light. Without shadows, the colors are richer and details washed out by bright sunlight show through. The days are longer and the birds are coming alive again. The time to gear up and show their glory has come. Doves are strutting, chickadees are singing, cardinals are jousting and the redwings are unfurling their epaulets. What an awesome time spring is—veritably life from the dead. I hope you are experiencing its wonders.

We had quite a fascinating meeting in February with Dr. Buehler of UT expounding on his incredible discoveries about migration patterns of geo-tagged Golden-winged Warblers. One aspect he covered was their ability to redirect their migration to avoid inclement weather such as distant violent storms. The following is a link to an article he co-authored on the subject: [www.dropbox.com/s/lbzjt36c7i7ygg5/Dr.%20Buehler%20avoidance%20article.pdf?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/s/lbzjt36c7i7ygg5/Dr.%20Buehler%20avoidance%20article.pdf?dl=0)

We had some wonderful news from Paul James of Ijams Nature Center. They have offered to split the \$370 cost of purchasing Cornell's movie "The Messenger" and can hold showings at Ijams. Paul, we so much appreciate your generosity and devotion to KTOS. A motion to purchase was made and seconded, and a vote will be taken at the March meeting. We depend on your dues to keep up with items like these, so if you are behind on them, please bring them to the next meeting or mail them to our treasurer, Carol Gobert whose address is on the last page of this newsletter.

We have been given another opportunity to impact local children for birds. Holly Sledjeski Jones of UT Gardens approached me looking for volunteers to help teach children, up to 12 years old, about birds at their annual spring eggstravaganza event being held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., **Saturday, March 19, 2016** at UT Gardens. Their own volunteers will be doing some bird related crafts and wanted experienced birders to join them and teach identification. A sign up sheet will be passed around at the March meeting. Questions can be directed to Holly at [hjones@utk.edu](mailto:hjones@utk.edu).

In other birding news, there is a new branch of research that is going to greatly impact bird conservation going forward, and that is mapping a species migration by DNA analysis. Certain regional populations of a species carry unique genetic markers that can be studied from a single feather. Therefore, DNA in feathers from specimens captured during migration or on wintering grounds can be compared to that from breeding grounds and a complete map and timing of their movements can be generated.

## Presidential Perch (cont.)

This works with the thousands of museum specimens as well as with live captured and released birds. The potential gains in understanding how to conserve many locally declining subspecies is enormous, plus at a very reduced cost. You can read an overview of this research in Cornell's Living Bird, Winter 2016 vol. 35, issue 1. The original article is may be read at: [http://www.birdpop.org/docs/pubs/Ruegg et al 2014 Mapping Migration Using High-Resolution Genetic Markers.pdf](http://www.birdpop.org/docs/pubs/Ruegg%20et%20al%202014%20Mapping%20Migration%20Using%20High-Resolution%20Genetic%20Markers.pdf)

What amazing tool will they come up with next?

Happy Birding,

Tom Howe



Red-winged black bird, submitted by Tom Howe

## Get Out and Get Birding! March Field Trips

**Seven Islands State Birding Park**

**Wednesday, March 23, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

**Leaders: Morton Massey (865) 806-9967 and 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. For additional information and directions to the park, please see: [www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/SevenIslands.htm](http://www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/SevenIslands.htm).

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**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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**POSTMASTER:** Send changes of address to: *through the biKNOXulars*, 725 Mountain Pass, Knoxville, TN 37923

## ***March Field Trips (cont.)***

**Kyker Bottoms, Saturday March 5, 7:30 a.m.**

**Leader:** Tom Howe, [blountbirder@gmail.com](mailto:blountbirder@gmail.com), (865) 407-9620

**Jay Sturner:** [flowerpetalsonthecreek@yahoo.com](mailto:flowerpetalsonthecreek@yahoo.com)

Meet at the paved parking lot on Big Gully Rd. Target species include sparrows, waterfowl, and raptors. We sometimes see a Loggerhead Shrike

**Victor Ashe Park, Thursday March 17, 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](http://www.cityofknoxville.org/parks/victor.asp).

## ***KTOS Nominations: April Meeting***

New officers will be nominated at the **April 6, 2016** meeting, and will be voted on at the **May 4, 2016** meeting and instated at the June picnic. Any member can seek a position and all positions are potentially open. We will vote on President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and three state directors. Any nomination should be directed to David Johnson, [jjadmj@yahoo.com](mailto:jjadmj@yahoo.com).