



KNOXVILLE CHAPTER OF THE TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



## Presidential Perch

Things are getting really exciting now! Our field trips were listed as the “Adventure of the Month” on Outdoor Knoxville.com in April! Thanks go out to Vickie Henderson for writing the fantastic article that highlighted our activities. Be sure to check out the article and awesome pictures at [www.outdoorknoxville.com/adventure-of-the-month/birding-the-trails](http://www.outdoorknoxville.com/adventure-of-the-month/birding-the-trails). In other web news, Carole Gobert and Mark Campen have written a site description and birding guide for the Turkey Creek Wetland. Chuck Nicholson will soon have this article up on the “Birding in Tennessee” TOS site. We need to take a look at that website and see if we can update it with more sites such as Melton Hill and Concord Parks.

It’s also time to think about ways to engage those who might become new members. I want to thank Mildred Dixon for bringing to our attention Stephany McNew, a young lady who was at the Sharp’s Ridge clean-up. Stephany was enjoying a morning walk on Sharp’s Ridge, saw what we were doing, and offered to help. I am hoping that Stephany will join us on future field trips and come to the meetings. What a great way to meet new friends who share the same interests! However, we must put forth the effort to help these new hobbyists. It’s all about mentoring. Taking someone under our wing and making them fill comfortable. Helping them to learn just like Jim Campbell did for a lot of us. It is now our turn to pay it forward. With Outdoor Knoxville, the hummingbird festival, and other activities coming up, I am hoping we will attract more birder wanna-bees.

After last meeting’s vote, the “Discover Birds” activity book has been ordered. We will have a lesson plan to go along with the book thanks to Margaux Cowan-Banker. Vickie will be picking up a collection of the books in May so we will have them to sell at the June picnic. This is another great way to get the little ones involved early! Be thinking of an elementary classroom you may want to sponsor.

Finally, I am excited about the wine tasting event at my house on May 26! It promises to be a great social event and an opportunity to discover some excellent French wines. As I get to know the membership better, I am amazed by all the different “experts” we have - wine, wildflowers, butterflies, artists, pilots and, of course, birds! So cheers to a great group of birders!

*Billie Cantwell*

## May Program: Birding in France

Join us on **Wednesday, May 2, at 6:45 p.m.** to enjoy Mike Nelson’s presentation about birding in Southern France: “Enjoying Some Classic Old-World Birding while Taking in the Sights, Food, and Wine of the Region.” Mike will also talk a bit about bird recordings, nature photography, and what keeps him birding. You won’t want to miss this great presentation by a very skilled birder and photographer!

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

**Hawfinch**, a year-round resident species in France.

Wikimedia Commons.



## Officer Elections

The nominating committee puts forth the following names for officers of KTOS for the 2012 – 2013 calendar year. Elections will be held at the meeting on Wednesday, May 2.

*President:* Billie Cantwell  
*Vice President:* Patty Ford  
*Treasurer:* Carole Gobert  
*Secretary:* Melinda Fawver

*State Directors for 2012 – 2014:*

- Jean Alexander
- Harold Howell
- David Johnson

*Respectfully submitted, David Johnson  
 Nominating Committee Chair*

## Get Out and Get Birding! May Field Trips

### **Last Weekday Spring Bird Walk along Sharp's Ridge Thursday, May 3 @ 8:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Tony Headrick, (865) 621-9836**

This will be the last of the weekday Sharp's Ridge Memorial Park bird walks for this spring. Spring migrants will be the focus, with orioles, grosbeaks, warblers, and others expected. If you are new to birding or to KTOS field trips, this is a great way to get started. It's also a great way to brush up on your spring warbler songs and IDs if you're more experienced.

Meet at the ranger's house at 8:00 a.m. For site information and directions, visit:

<http://www.cityofknoxville.org/parks/sharpsridge.asp>.

### **Foothills Parkway Walk/Drive for Chucks & Whips Saturday, May 5 @ 7:45 p.m.**

**Leader: Mike Nelson, [madbirder@surfbirder.com](mailto:madbirder@surfbirder.com)**

This evening trip will focus on listening for Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will's-widows along the Foothills Parkway. We will begin at the base of the Parkway at U.S. Route 321 near Walland. Meet at the parking area/turnaround located shortly after you turn south off of Route 321 (right turn coming from Maryville).



E. Whip-poor-will, Steven D'Amato.

### **Bluebird Box Monitoring at Seven Islands Saturday, May 12 @ 9:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Billie Cantwell, [bfcantwell@gmail.com](mailto:bfcantwell@gmail.com)**

Do you want to learn how to properly monitor songbird nest boxes? Would you like to have your own bluebird trail? Come to Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge and observe what we do to check the nest boxes. Most people are hesitant about looking into their nest boxes, but monitoring your boxes regularly can give bluebirds a greater chance of survival. We will be walking around the refuge, so please wear proper footwear and bring your binoculars. Meet at the parking lot at 9:00 a.m. and bring water and a snack.

For site information and directions, visit:

<http://www.tnbirds.org/birdfinding/SevenIslands.htm>.

### **Spring Migrants along Sharp's Ridge Sunday, May 13 and May 27 @ 8:00 a.m.**

**Leader: Mike Nelson, [madbirder@surfbirder.com](mailto:madbirder@surfbirder.com)**

Did you miss the April weekday walks or Saturday field trips at Sharp's Ridge this year? Fortunately, you have two more weekend opportunities to observe spring migrants at the park. Meet at the J.B. Owen overlook. For site info and directions, see listing in first column.

### **Bird Watching and Wine: A Perfect Pairing Saturday, May 26 @ 4:00 p.m. (birding) and @ 6:00 p.m. (wine tasting)**

**Leaders: Billie Cantwell, [bfcantwell@gmail.com](mailto:bfcantwell@gmail.com) &  
Mike Nelson, [madbirder@surfbirder.com](mailto:madbirder@surfbirder.com)**

Join KTOS for its first-ever birding and wine tasting fundraiser. After spending a few hours enjoying Billie's beautifully landscaped and bird-friendly yard, we will learn about and taste some bird-centric wine. All proceeds from this event will benefit KTOS.

The cost for the wine tasting is \$35 per person and is limited to 14 people. Attendees should bring a small dish to share. Mike will talk through each of the wines and explain their relation to birding. The event will be held at Billie's house at 1613 Cove Creek Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919.

Reserve your spot by emailing Billie (see address above) or by calling (865) 212-9797 or (865) 567-4273.

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## TOS/VSO Joint Spring Meeting

The Bristol Bird Club, a chapter of Tennessee Ornithological Society and the Virginia Society of Ornithology, invites members and all other interested birders to the Joint TOS/VSO Annual Spring Meeting on May 18-20, 2012. The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Johnson City, TN, just a few miles south of the Tennessee-Virginia state line.

On all three days, the meeting offers opportunities for birding field trips in the high mountain woodland and wild cranberry bog environments and in lake, river, and stream habitats. The meeting registration fee is \$25 per person, and the Saturday Banquet Buffet and Evening Program is an additional \$25 per person.

To learn more and to register for the event, visit [www.tnbirds.org/](http://www.tnbirds.org/).

--Adapted from *TNbirds.org*

# J. B. Owen Memorial Fund Annual Report

## J.B. OWEN MEMORIAL FUND ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR 2011 – 2012 May 1, 2012

The purpose of the J.B. Owen Memorial Fund is to honor the memory of J.B. Owen, longtime TOS member known to thousands in East Tennessee through his columns in Knoxville newspapers. The Fund provides money for projects that promote the welfare and conservation of birds in Tennessee. This annual report summarizes projects funded, contributions of members of the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society (KTOS), operating expenses, and other pertinent information as to the status of the Fund and its administration during 2011 – 2012.

### Award History

Previous J. B. Owen Award winners include:

- 2010: Foothills Land Conservancy of Maryville, Tennessee, for support of the Conservancy's important mission to protect and preserve the natural landscape of East Tennessee which has significant benefits for the conservation of birds in Tennessee.
- 2009: Than Boves for support of the project on *Relationships between Cerulean Warblers, Timber Harvest, and Ornamentation*. Jessica Owens for support of her project on "Chick-a-dee" calling behavior of tufted titmice (*Baeolophus bicolor*): *A test of the effects of habitat structure and body condition*.
- 2008: Than Boves for support of the project on *Relationships between Cerulean Warblers, Timber Harvest, and Ornamentation*. Mark Armstrong for support of *The MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity Station) at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge*.
- 2007: Keith Watson for support of the project on Breeding Bird Survey of Soak Ash and Cattail Wetland Habitats in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee.
- 2006: Jim Giocomo for support of the project on *Northern Saw-whet Owl Monitoring in Knox County, Tennessee*. Mark Armstrong for support of *The MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity Station) at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge*.
- 2005: Stephen Lyn Bales for support of outreach programs at Ijams Nature Center of Knoxville.
- 2004: Samuel Dement, David Vogt, and Keith Hobson for support of the project on *Stable-isotope feather analysis and foreign band encounter comparisons of wintering American Kestrels in similar habitats west and east of the Southern Appalachians*.
- 2003: Jennifer Powers for support of graduate research on the reproductive success and natal dispersal of American Kestrels.
- 2002: Foothills Land Conservancy of Maryville, Tennessee, for acquisition of wetlands in the area between the Yuchi and Hiwassee Island Refuges.

### New Projects Funded

In September 2011, an award of \$300.00 was made to Eagle Scout Evan Searfoss to construct an observation tower begun but never completed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) at the Kyker Bottoms Refuge in Blount County. At the KTOS October meeting at which Than Boves was the featured speaker, Boves was presented with a \$300.00 award to use in performing stable isotope analysis on feathers collected over the past three years from Cerulean Warblers during his research on this species in the Appalachian Mountains. Stable isotope analysis can help determine the geographic origin of feathers and thus show to where the Ceruleans in the study areas dispersed after migrating from their breeding grounds.



*A Belted Kingfisher, a species that might be found in many of the areas protected by the Foothills Land Conservancy. Image: Steven D'Amato.*

# J. B. Owen Memorial Fund Annual Report

## Project Progress

Foothills Land Conservancy, 2002 and 2010 Owen Award winner. With broad support that has included contributions from KTOS, the Foothills Land Conservancy has preserved over 30,000 acres in eighteen Tennessee counties. "In 2011 Foothills partnered with landowners on nineteen land protection projects covering 4400 acres!" ([www.foothillsland.org/about.shtml](http://www.foothillsland.org/about.shtml))

Evan Searfoss, 2011 Owen Award winner. With a bit of assistance from several KTOS members, Evan Searfoss completed construction of the observation tower at Kyker Bottoms Refuge. A few hundred feet from the equipment shed, the sturdy blind offers a panoramic view of the surrounding fields and water.

Than Boves, 2008, 2009, and 2011 Owen Award winner. Than Boves reports that study of Cerulean Warbler long-distance breeding dispersal has been initiated by sending ten pairs of tail feathers from individual birds captured in two different seasons to the stable isotope lab at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center in Washington, D.C. "We are waiting on these results to determine how we should proceed. If the feathers display isotopic signatures that match their known breeding grounds, we will then send out the rest of the feathers for analysis. Alternatively, if feathers do not show the appropriate signatures, this means that Cerulean Warblers either molt their tail feathers during migration or do not deposit isotopes in a manner that will allow us to assess their geographic origin of growth."

## Financial Summary

Interest earnings again fell (from \$210.26 last year to \$94.03 this year). One of the fund's two certificates of deposit matured in May and was renewed at a lower rate. The Fund's certificates of deposit are currently earning slightly over 1 percent. KTOS did not make a contribution to the Fund in 2011, but members donated \$619.00 and the Fund's balance grew slightly to \$8,737.50.

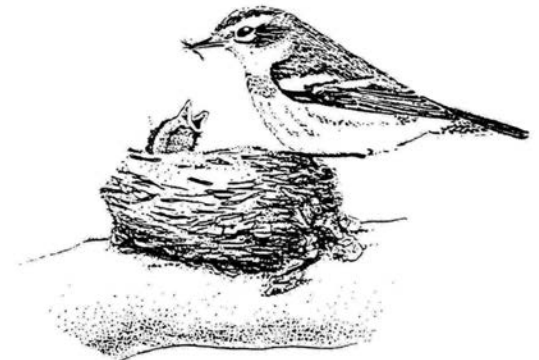
J.B. Owen Memorial Fund Financial Summary	
Fund Balance (April 30, 2011)	\$8,624.47
Donations from KTOS members	\$619.00
Interest	\$94.03
Distributions	(\$600.00)
Fund Balance (April 30, 2012)	\$8,737.50

## Other Accomplishments

The J.B. Owen Memorial Fund Committee maintained a memory book to archive records of fund-related activities.



Submitted by J.B. Owen Memorial Fund Committee:  
 Carole Gobert, Chairperson; Jean Alexander; Jerry Hadder;  
 David Johnson; Marie Oakes; Bob Steffy; and Diane Steffy.



*Cerulean Warbler feeding its young at the nest. The J. B. Owen Fund has supported research on this species.*

## Upcoming Trip to Belize

KTOS and The Partnership for International Birding (PIB) ([www.pibird.com](http://www.pibird.com)) are joining together to offer a birding adventure to Belize in February 2013. This Central American country offers fantastic birding opportunities, but not so many new birds that you are overwhelmed trying to tell them all apart. You will certainly see many of the species you are familiar with in the U.S., but they will be joined by different and amazing birds such as the Agami Heron, Jabiru, Bat Falcon, and Limpkin. Other notable birds include numerous parrot and hummingbird species, trogons, motmots (perhaps up to three species), Rufous-breasted Spinetails, Gray-throated Chats, Honeycreepers, and Euphonias. While Belize does not have any nationally-endemic birds, you will have a chance to see most of the Yucatan regional endemics like the Ocellated Turkey, Yucatan Jay, and possibly the Black Catbird.

Though the trip details and pricing are still being developed, we wanted to let you know now about this opportunity so you can consider participating in this "un-Belize-able" adventure. More details will be provided in future issues of the newsletter. The trip is being planned by former KTOS member and PIB employee David Trently. David will be an assistant guide on this trip - so be prepared to also look for butterflies, dragonflies, wildflowers, and Howler Monkeys as well!

If you think you might be interested, you can contact David at [david@pibird.com](mailto:david@pibird.com), and he'll place you on a list of those to get updated information once it becomes available. A portion of each participant's trip cost will benefit KTOS.

For a list of birds recorded in Belize, including some photographs, visit: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_birds\\_of\\_Belize](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_birds_of_Belize).



National Bird of Belize: the Keel-billed Toucan.  
Wikimedia Commons.

## North American Migration Count

Each May, birders take part in the spring North American Migration Count (NAMC) to count birds in the field and create a snapshot of migration across the continent. This day coincides with International Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 12. You can participate by taking part in counts organized in Anderson and Blount counties or by counting in your own county if you live elsewhere.

For contact info of each county compiler, see below. The county compilers can also answer questions about the count, give you a designated area to cover, or get you connected to a group that's already going out.

You will need to submit the following data to the compiler after the count. If you're in area without an organized count, submit your data to Ron Hoff (info below).

- checklist with the tally for each species identified
- miles covered and hours spent counting (including stop and start times) by car, by foot, owling, and by other means (boat, etc.)
- hours spent watching feeders (if any)
- weather data and temperatures
- # of birding parties
- # of participants, their names, and their contact info
- location(s) where you counted
- documentation of any rare species, including written details and photos (if possible), and anything else about the count that is significant like extraordinary weather, etc.

### **Anderson County & all non-organized counties:**

Ron Hoff  
282 Hackworth Lane, Clinton, TN 37716  
(865) 567-9679  
[aves7000@bellsouth.net](mailto:aves7000@bellsouth.net)

### **Blount County:**

Jean Alexander and David Johnson  
(865) 977-0052  
[jjadmj@yahoo.com](mailto:jjadmj@yahoo.com)

Have fun and be careful. If there has been any heavy rain recently, please be aware that low areas may be flooded. NEVER drive through moving water.

Thanks for your efforts to help record data about the birds of Tennessee. It is much appreciated.

*Contributed by Ron Hoff*

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

### 2011 — 2012 Chapter Officers

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Harold Howell  
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*State Directors, 2011– 2013*

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## Slim Pickin's at Clean-Up Day

On the morning of April 7, eleven KTOS volunteers arrived at Sharp's Ridge armed with bags and gloves as part of our semi-annual clean-up day. The area was looking good and almost litter-free when we arrived, but it looked even better after we left. We hauled away a small pick-up load of trash and recyclables. Some of our group even climbed down the hillside to bring up a trophy tire or piece of foam.

After an hour's worth of work, we were rewarded with doughnuts provided by Tony King and, having indulged in sugary goodness, we were ready to smile for the traditional group photo. We spent a few minutes birding after our labors, but nothing unusual was spotted.

Participants included Tony King (leader), Billie Cantwell, Colin Leonard, David Johnson, Deedee Blane (our graffiti removal expert), Diane Bunch, Patty Ford, Eddy Whitson, Mildred Dixon, Stephany McNew (a passerby who kindly offered to help), and Gary and Alice Woody.

*Submitted by Alice Woody*

