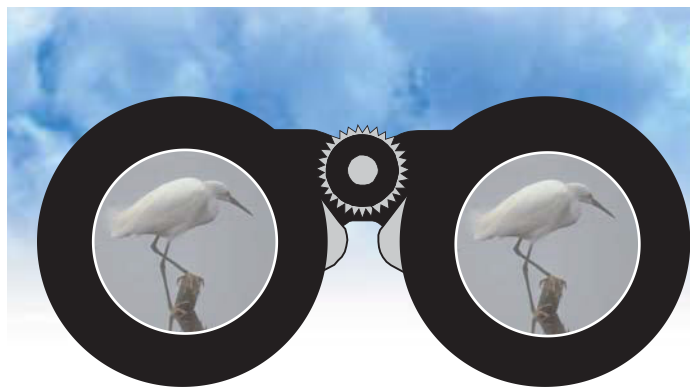


Through the

biKNOXulars

Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society



Mark Armstong to Speak on Hummingbird Banding
At November 7 Meeting



The November KTOS meeting will be Wednesday, November 7 at 7 p.m. in Room 117, UT College of Veterinary Medicine. Our program will feature Mark Armstrong who will share with us some of his experiences banding hummingbirds.

Mark says "Banding birds can reveal a lot about their lives as well as creating new questions. For the last two years I have been banding ruby-throated hummingbirds as well as wintering hummingbirds. Five rufous were banded in 2005 and 16 banded in 2006 as well as two late ruby-throats and two recaptured rufous. Over 600 ruby-throats have been banded in the last two years and I had a spectacular recapture of a ruby-throat in southern Mississippi. I'll go over the whole banding and measuring process for hummers and show how bands are made."

Don't miss this fascinating program!

Upcoming field trips

Hunting Hills Park Sunday, November 11

Reclaimed City of Knoxville site that has mixed habitats of scrub-shrub, first succession, open field habitat at the base of wooded Black Oak Ridge off Piney Grove Church Road. Meet at West Hills Elementary School at 9 o'clock.

Leader: Mark Campen
Phone: #865-414-5593
mark@tnike.com

Christmas Bird Counts

The tentative CBC schedule is:

Norris on Saturday, December 15th
Smokies (Sugarlands) Sunday, December 16th
Crossville Saturday, December 22
Cades Cove on Sunday, December 30th
Knoxville on Saturday, January 5.

Final schedule will be in December newsletter.

Round Two - Sharps Ridge Clean Up Saturday, November 17 - 9 - 11 a.m.

Litter clean up and non-native invasive plant removal; we will clean the overlook sign too.

Please mark your calendars and come help.



Presidential Perch - By Mark Campen

Well, it's official. The seasons are changing. As if the beautiful trees of red and yellow aren't sign enough, this morning I saw the first dark-eyed junco pecking at bits and running around the driveway. Winter is just around the corner. Hopefully, some much needed November rain will accompany the cooler temperatures. Keep your talons crossed!

I want to thank a few folks for their help in October. Tony King, David Johnson and myself were the only volunteers to participate in our Annual Sharps Ridge litter clean up on October 13th and 14th. Were the meeting announcement and newsletter notice not enough? Well, you are in luck! Please join us Saturday November 17, 9-11 am, for continued litter clean up, non-native, invasive plant removal efforts and to clean off graffiti from the overlook sign. I hope to have some protective Plexiglas to put over top of the clean sign to deter further damage to the sign. I will bring some tools, bags, gloves and refreshments.

(Continued on next page.)

"I once had a sparrow alight upon my shoulder for a moment, while I was hoeing in a village garden, and I felt that I was more distinguished by that circumstance than I should have been by any epaulet I could have worn." ~ Henry David Thoreau

Eastern Bluebird/Tree Swallow Nesting Success at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge

By: Wayne H. Schacher

Boy Scout Troop 246 of Knoxville built and donated 24 eastern bluebird/tree swallow nesting structures that were placed throughout Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge last winter. We monitored usage every 10 days through the 2007 nesting season with the following results. There were 24 total nest-starts, 15 by bluebirds and 9 by tree swallows. Three boxes were not used and one box was stolen.

Onset of nest-building by eastern bluebirds at SIWR occurred the first week of April, and nesting activity ended in mid-July. Of the 15 bluebird nest-starts, 9 (60%) successfully fledged their broods. Clutch size averaged 4.6, with an average of 4.3 nestlings fledged (3 incubated eggs failed to hatch).

Tree swallow nest-building began the first week of April and nesting activity ended in mid-June. Of 9 tree swallow nest-starts, 7 proceeded through successful fledging (78%). Average tree swallow clutch size was 4.8 eggs per clutch, with an average of 4.2 nestlings fledged (4 incubated eggs failed to hatch).

Nesting sites for both species were obviously limiting. We hope to continue and expand this project into the future. It will be interesting to note any differences in nesting activity or success as more boxes are available, or any implications of drought-year activity or success as compared to years of normal rainfall.

Thanks again to Scout Troop 246!

Thank you Knoxville-Oak Ridge birders By Dick Gammage

My college room-mates at Exeter, England, from 50 years ago, visited me for 9 days birding last April-May. We used to bird watch as students along the Ex river valley and the Ex estuary. Tony and Roger express their thanks to the Club members who went out of their way to make their visit so enjoyable. In particular we thank Tony King, Jim Campbell, Marcia Davis and the Sharps Ridge leaders.

I found that my own enthusiasm for local birding was rejuvenated by my friends' thrill at seeing so many new and colorful birds. It helped to see a very stubborn Ruffed Grouse at our feet in the road and causing a traffic jam near Clingmans Dome. In the same area an accipiter got up, circling until it could clear the mountain ridge and dash north. Damn, what was that? Big and very pale underneath, no chestnut striations. Shortly afterwards a New Jersey birder asked us if we had seen the Northern Goshawk perched by the road! Both were new birds for me. The bird list for the Smokies has the Goshawk as a rarity. The other good sighting was a Swainson's Warbler perched right over my parked car at the Norris Birdsong Trail.

I asked my ex-room mates to choose their 6 most memorable bird sightings. They selected Hooded and Bay-breasted Warblers, Baltimore Oriole, American Goldfinch, Loggerhead Shrike and Eastern Meadowlark. As you might guess, they had close looks in good light at each species.

We have gotten together every few years to bird, usually in East Anglia. Great that we have been able to stick together through a common love of birds.

Presidential Perch Continued

Also, Ginger Goolsby and Patty Ford volunteered to help solicit members and meet the public at an outreach effort at Mast General Store in Downtown Knoxville on October 20th. Although we had a great turn out and it looked to be a great day to share KTOS info with one and all, there was a communication breakdown and we were unable to set up. A big thanks goes out to these ladies and to Lyn Bales and Ijams for loaning us a few items to set up. We will reschedule and try again soon!

I was notified recently that Wild Birds Unlimited in west Knoxville is under new management. I made contact with this business and have put on display KTOS newsletters and brochures. I look forward to building our relationship with this business and gaining their support with notification of Christmas Bird Counts, field trips and other club participation.

Welcome back Marie Oakes and Jerry Hadder! In your absence you have been elected President and V.P.!!! Just kidding. I'm sure the club looks forward to hearing all about your extended trip away from Knoxville, especially all the great bird watching you were able to do.

Related to the treasurer's return, once we ascertain our account information, I will once again make a motion to grant money to go towards the migratory birds wintering ground station research project that was published in the October newsletter. Please come to the meeting to learn more and vote on this worthwhile project.

I hope you have a great fall season watching birds and be sure to participate by leading (you don't have to be a bird watching master to lead us all to a good birding spot!) or going on a fieldtrip, buying some bird friendly, shade-grown coffee, bringing a friend to a KTOS meeting and telling another person about our organization.

Bird On!
Mark

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Elizabeth Carpenter passed away June 25, 2007, at home surrounded by family and loved ones. Mary is survived by her husband of 53 years, Kenneth B. Carpenter M.D. and her three sons, David Bentson Carpenter (Asheville NC), Steven Edward Carpenter (Knoxville TN) and Michael Alan Carpenter (Knoxville TN).

A loving wife, mother, student of life and generous teacher of others, her interests and talents were diverse. Mary founded Carpenter Clock Repair in 1978. Her interest in Clocks was born of her love of antiques, an artist's eye for beauty, and her mechanical gifts she discovered through jewelry making. She was a passionate and accomplished photographer which was something she shared with her husband. In her spirit of adventure she sailed with the Memphis Delta Sailing Club and Concord Yacht Club. She was also a pilot flying as a member of the East Tennessee Pilots Club. She loved animals and worked with Welsh Corgis as a member of Knoxville and Oak Ridge Dog Training Clubs.

She was also an avid birder and enjoyed watching them in her beautiful yard where she had several feeders and numerous places for birds to drink and bathe. She was a member of the Knoxville Chapter Tennessee Ornithological Society and National Audubon Society.

Mary will be missed by all who knew her.

KTOS Financial Report - Calendar Year 2007

	May to Oct	April	YTD
Income			
- Dues	\$232.00	\$266.00	\$2,112.00
- Shade grown coffee	\$333.00	\$0.00	\$667.00
- Interest	\$162.25	\$ 29.48	\$243.23
- Silent Auction	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
- Owen Memorial	\$240.00	\$0.00	\$349.00
- Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Income	\$967.25	\$ 295.48	\$3,371.23
Expenses:			
- Newsletter	\$273.36	\$0.00	\$581.56
- Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$73.07
- Shade Grown Coffee	\$277.93	\$76.59	\$783.45
- Member Dues to TOS	\$66.00	\$1,517.00	\$1,510.00
- Miscellaneous	\$160.20	\$0.00	\$210.20
Total Expenses	\$777.49	\$1,593.59	\$3,158.28
Other:			
J. B. Owen Award	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Total Other	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Account Balances			
KTOS Checking & Savings	\$3,570.09	\$3,777.30	
J. B. Owen Memorial	\$7,088.60	\$7,191.63	
Memberships	148	145	
New Members			
Jim & Carolyn Caldwell			
Chris Ogle			
Gary & Linda Walker			
Note:			
Miscellaneous for current period: brochures advertising KTOS			
Compiled by Marie Oakes, Treasurer			

BIRDING IN NORTH DAKOTA By Jay Singer

We mentioned at the May KTOS meeting, that we were going to North Dakota, and it was suggested that we write an article about our travels. I stated that it might be a very short article if we did not like what we saw and/or found few birds. We liked what we saw and found birds.

Our fear was that North Dakota would be flat, treeless and hot. Parts of it are flat, particularly the eastern-most 40 miles in the Red River Valley. Parts of it are treeless, especially in the west, and it was sometimes hot. However, most of the state is rolling and does have trees. The east is farmland; the more arid west is pastureland, but 150 years ago it was all prairie. Shortgrass prairie on the western edge

tallgrass prairie on the eastern edge and mixed prairie for most of the rest of the state. There were lots of lakes, prairie potholes and woodland mixed with the prairie. Today the 13 National Wildlife Refuges preserve the woods, the prairie, the water and the birds that need them. The waters abound with ducks while the prairie support the ground birds and the woods support the passerines. Most birders we connected with were there for the sparrows.

There are three birding festivals held on three successive weekends in June and all three are advertised in *Bird Watcher's Digest*. The first, in the eastern half, was centered around two wildlife refuges and focused on sparrows and waterfowl. It had many events, big name speakers, dinners and outings. The second was held at a unique National Game Preserve established by Theodore Roosevelt to preserve the elk and bison that he saw becoming extinct. It focused on woodland birds and waterfowl. The third was held in the rural north central part of the state at two wildlife refuges and focused on prairie and wetland birds. If you attend the third festival, you would likely see the following birds; LeConte, Nelson's Sharptailed, Baird's, Grasshopper, Clay Colored, Savannah, Lark, and Vesper Sparrows, Sprague's Pipet, Bobolink, Western Meadowlark, Horned Lark, Piping and Snowy Plovers, White Pelicans, Franklin's Gulls, Common Loon, Western Kingbird and possibly Upland Sandpiper and Black Tern. If you drive around through farmland, woodland and larger lakes you should see Black Billed Magpie, Western Grebe and might see Horned, Red-Necked, and Eared Grebes, Spotted Towhee, Lazuli Bunting and Ferruginous Hawk. All of the common fresh water ducks can easily be seen in potholes and lakes. Earlier in the spring, Greater Prairie Chicken and Sharp-Tailed Grouse can be seen.

If many of the birds mentioned would add to your life list, then a trip to North Dakota is worthwhile. I would recommend the third festival, The Burke County Birding Festival, held at Lostwood NWR. The folks who run it are small-town warm, casual and friendly and the local birders who lead the tours are very knowledgeable. Snacks and beverages are provided for the early morning tours as well as two lunches and a dinner and it is all free. It is a good opportunity to experience rural North Dakota at its best. The towns are very small and far apart and the nearest city, Minot, is over 50 miles away. During the last three weeks in June that we spent in North Dakota, the temperature was generally in the upper 70s, with a day or two in the upper 80s but also a day or two that barely made it into the 50s.

To me the prettiest part of North Dakota was the Turtle Mountain area in the far north central region of the state along the Canadian border. It is hilly, has lots of woods, meadows and lakes, and very few people. It is the one area of North Dakota where it is possible to see the Philadelphia Vireo, although we were unsuccessful in our attempts. The highlight for us was a canoe trip on a pleasant lake with lots of inlets, no other people and White Pelicans, Common Loons, and Red-Necked Grebes.

KTOS MEMBERSHIP

Join or renew your membership in KTOS by mailing your annual dues to: Marie Oakes
18 Rockingham Lane
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Membership dues are \$26 for an individual, \$30 for a family, and \$13 for a student. Sustaining memberships are \$38 and Life membership with TOS is \$450 with an annual fee of \$8 to the local Chapter.

DEADLINE for December issue is November 23.

Due to cost and space restrictions, please limit your article to 700 words. For a color version of this newsletter or for past issues, go to the TOS home page, <http://www.tnbirds.org> and click on "local chapters/Knoxville"



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Book Review

Natural Histories *Stories From the Tennessee Valley* By Stephen Lyn Bales

As most of you may know, our friend and fellow club member Lyn Bales has published a book, *Natural Histories, Stories From the Tennessee Valley*. As a friend of Lyn's, I was privy to fascinating snippets about the contents of the book during his long, arduous process of writing it. I was also privy to the many, intense hours he put in to complete his project. But not until I received and read my copy of *Natural Histories* did I finally understand. The amount of fact-finding and research it must have taken to put *Natural Histories* together is impressive. I always knew Lyn was a gifted writer, but I was nonetheless astounded by the artistry of this book.

Natural Histories is formatted to follow the seasons through the Tennessee Valley. Each chapter puts focus on a specific plant or animal that has impacted the history of this region in immeasurable significance. Lyn crafted each chapter in a way that is attention-grabbing, attention-keeping, entertaining, educational, and in some cases, emotional. The information is woven together in such a flowing, interesting way that this reader devoured the book, cover to cover, in three evenings. Furthermore, Lyn possesses the rare dual talent of writer and artist, and each chapter features an exquisite drawing of the plant or animal in focus.

The subject matter of *Natural Histories* would appeal to any nature lover, but the nature lover who lives in Tennessee will find such pleasure in this read. *Natural Histories* belongs on the book shelves of all of us, and every nature-loving Tennessean we know. Lyn deserves it; he is a good friend, a great person, and an exceptional author.
By Janet Lee McKnight

DON'T FORGET TO ORDER COFFEE

November's order will be delivered in December just in time for all the holiday festivities so remember to order extra. I urge you to make KTOS your coffee source. All of our coffee is fair trade, organic and shade grown. It's good for the club but more importantly, it's good for migrating birds.

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