



2016 Attu Trip Members.

October Meeting: “Birding Attu, Alaska” by Morton Massey

Please join us on **Wednesday, October 5, 2016** for a presentation by our own Morton Massey, who embarked on a birding trip of a lifetime this past May 2016.

According to Morton, since the late 1970s, avid bird watchers have sought out the remote, forbidden and lucrative island of Attu which lies at the end of the Aleutian chain 1500 miles from Anchorage. Nowhere else in North America have more rare species been seen. Prior to 2004, birding tour groups stayed on the island in an old abandoned Loran Satellite station. From 2004 to 2010 there were no trips. Since 2010, only about 10 birders per year have had the opportunity to visit Attu and this has been by boat from Adak, Alaska.

In May of 2016, Morton was one of 11 birders that went to Attu. The group included the current ABA record holder Neil Haywood, three birders doing an ABA big year, and another who had done one the previous two years. All were in pursuit of migrating species that usually summer in far east Russia but sometimes land on the far west Aleutian islands to make refueling stops during migration. While the total number of species is fairly low, Attu rarely disappoints in helping birders push up their ABA life lists. Come hear about Morton’s adventure illustrated with photos he took.

The KTOS meeting begins at 6:45 in Room 118 of the University of Tennessee, College of Veterinary Medicine. For directions, visit the KTOS webpage at www.knoxvillebirding.org.

Welcome New Members

Please welcome the following new/changed/returned members: Andy Troutman, Scott and Molly Gilbert, Dana Murphy, and Angie and Sam Smith.



Hooded warbler, Tom Howe.



Bar-tailed Godwit seen on Attu Trip, photograph by Neil Haywood.



Presidential Perch

Today was a day that will remain etched in my mind for a while and will hopefully change my ways for the future. What happened was a Foothills Parkway hawk watch field trip that, for all intents and purposes, was a royal flop. You can count the number of hawks we saw on less than one finger. That's right—zero hawks and even zero vultures! There was weather moving through that I knew wasn't best for migration, but I thought there would at least be a few hawks aloft. Not so. My issue is that I hate to cancel anything barring a downpour. I need help in this area. We have our calendar, Facebook, and TN-Bird emails that can get the message out immediately, so why am I so reluctant to cancel? I guess I always believe there is hope that something good can come out of it. And actually something did—a member saw her lifer Hooded Warbler, a beautiful male, and of course the fellowship with other members is always encouraging. So, for that I am very grateful. But as far as hawks go, the only conceivable way it could have been worse would be if something like a Harpy Eagle landed nearby just as my camera battery died. That would be hard to survive. Oh well—we will definitely bird on! And with everyone's input we can make it more successful. Corporately, there is a lot of good knowledge and experience in our midst—please share it.

In the news, the Myrtle and Audubon's Warblers may be coming back. You may have been a birder long enough to know that back in 1973 these two species were lumped into one Yellow-rumped Warbler based on a narrow range of overlap where interbreeding was common. However, this range has not expanded in 50 years, indicating a reduced viability of the offspring. Plus, new advances in DNA research seem to support their being considered separate species. Not only that, but there are two other forms in Central America, one of which is likely a third species, the Goldman's Warbler. Read the article on this topic at www.allaboutbirds.org/goodbye-yellow-rump-will-we-see-a-return-to-myrtle-and-audubons-warblers. Or, if you are a member of the American Ornithologist's Union, you can read the original work at <http://www.bioone.org/doi/10.1642/AUK-16-61.1>.

I want to thank all who helped out with the Hummingbird Festival in August. Attendance was down from previous years for perhaps several reasons, including other festivals happening on the same date. Ijam's Nature Center will likely be inviting your input on how things can be improved for next year, so please put your thoughts together. The September picnic was also well attended and I am sure I speak for all that the food was once again fantastic. Thank you for your commitment to KTOS and sharing your best culinary treats. From our palate to your heart, it was most appreciated.

Looking forward to meeting you all again in October.

Tom Howe

Get Out and Get Birding! October Field Trips

UT Plant Sciences Farm (RSVP required)

Saturday, October 1, 2016, 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.

Jay Sturner, (865) 244-7819,
yourcatoliver@hotmail.com

Due to strict regulations for visiting this property, this field trip will only be available to members of KTOS and is limited to twelve participants and four cars. Please contact Jay Sturner to reserve your place. Additional details will be provided to those attending.

Gupton Wetlands

Thursday, October 20, 2016, 9:00 A.M. to noon

Tony King, (865) 988-6172,
tonytheking1027@aol.com

Go west on I-40 from Knoxville, take the Midtown exit (350), turn left under the interstate, left on Rt 1, and left onto Swan Pond Rd. Turn right on the second juncture with Swan Pond Circle Rd., then the first right into a gravel lot. Maps often have incorrect road names. The coordinates for this location are 35.925441 N, 84.517937 W.

Seven Islands State Birding Park

Wednesday, October 26, 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.

Jay Sturner (865) 244-7819,
yourcatoliver@hotmail.com

Meet in the main parking lot (2809 Kelly Lane Kodak, Tenn.) From there we will walk about three miles through various habitats. Expect to encounter 50 or more species, both resident and migratory. All skill levels are welcome and encouraged to participate.

For additional information and directions to the park, see blountbirder@gmail.com

Kyker Bottoms Refuge

Saturday, October 29, 2016, 8:00 A.M. to noon

Tom Howe, (865) 407-9620

Come join us to hunt for sparrows, raptors, perhaps a Red-headed woodpecker and a loggerhead shrike. We will meet at the paved parking lot on 1709 Big Gully Rd in Maryville. The coordinates for this location are 35.602006 N, 84.122571 W.

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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

**2015 — 2016
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Speakers for 2016-2017 KTOS Meetings

October 5, 2016
November 2, 2016
December 7, 2016
January 4, 2017
February 1, 2017
March 1, 2017
April 5, 2017

May 3, 2017
June 7, 2017

“Attu, Alaska Trip” by Morton Massey
“Bird Photography” by Barry Spruce
Open - Suggestions welcome!
Members Photo Share - Sign up at December Meeting
Open - Suggestions welcome!
“100 Years of Birding GSMNP” by Kristine Johnson
“Future Bird Conservation Projects in Tenn.” by David Hanni
“Just Back From Cuba” by Ron Hoff
Annual Meeting - Potluck at Ijams