



Please join us on **Wednesday, March 4** at 6:45 pm in room 118 of the University of Tennessee Veterinary Medicine Bldg. Todd Freeberg will be doing a very interesting program on “Songbird Social Psychology.” As Todd puts it, “Our behavior is sensitive to the nature of the social groups in which we find ourselves - does the same sensitivity hold for birds? In this talk, I will review a few of our recent studies with Carolina chickadees that show their behavior is strongly influenced by variation in their social groups.”

Todd is Associate Head, Department of Psychology at the University of Tennessee and is a KTOS member.

## KTOS Participates at the Dogwood Arts Home and Garden Show

Over the weekend of February 14, KTOS participated in the Home and Garden Show at the Knoxville Convention Center. The three day event attracted people from Knox and surrounding counties who were looking for ideas on home and garden projects.

KTOS took this opportunity to rent a booth at the show in order to provide educational materials and outreach about what people can do in their backyards to combat the loss of 3 billion birds in North America. The club created two new handouts to go with several other pieces of educational materials which we handed out.



Chuck and Lola Estes

Over the three day event, eight different KTOS members spent time working in the booth. Most of our visitors were folks just looking for advice on feeding birds in their backyards. But we also had a number of people who were looking for program speakers, assistance with youth events and looking for advice on how to make their property more bird friendly.

All in all an excellent event for the club to participate in. KTOS is going to continue to look for ways in which we can fulfill our mission to educate the public on bird related topics.



## Results of the 2019 Seven Islands Bird Banding, Bluebird Trails and Prothonotary Warbler Box Monitoring

Mark Armstrong and his group carried out another successful banding year at Seven Islands in 2019. They did 13 banding sessions from March 21 thru October 19. Below are their results.

The 2nd number under the totals is recaptured birds.

Bird	Totals
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	42
Downy Woodpecker	5
Trail's Flycatcher	1
White-eyed Vireo	5
Tree Swallow	3
Northern Rough-winged Sw.	1
Barn Swallow	1
Carolina Chickadee	5-2
Eastern Tufted Titmouse	1-1
Carolina Wren	22-12
House Wren	2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1
Blue Jay	1
Eastern Bluebird	2-2
Wood Thrush	1

Bird	Totals
Wood Thrush	1
Gray Catbird	4
No. Mockingbird	17
Brown Thrasher	9-3
W. Palm Warbler	6
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3
Northern Waterthrush	1
Ovenbird	1
Common Yellowthroat	41-30
Mourning Warbler	1
Yellow-br. Chat	20-11
Eastern Towhee	11-3
Field Sparrow	50-17
Savannah Sparrow	1
Song Sparrow	21

Bird	Totals
Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Swamp Sparrow	7
White-throated Sparrow	2-1
No. Cardinal	23-6
Blue Grosbeak	3
Indigo Bunting	31-10
Red-winged Blackbird	10-1
Brown-headed Cowbird	2
Orchard Oriole	3
Baltimore Oriole	1
American Goldfinch	11-1
<b>Banded Birds</b>	<b>373</b>
<b>Recaptures</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>473</b>



In 2019 there were 49 Bluebird Boxes divided into the Upland and the Seclusion Bend Trails. Here is a summary of what used those boxes this year and in previous years.

### Seven Islands Bluebird Trail Summary 2019 Total Birds Fledged:

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bluebirds	63	62	40	19
Tree Swallow	59	52	81	86
Caro. Chickadee	16	24	9	7
Caro. Wren	0	6	9	16
House Wren	10	10	0	0
Tufted Titmouse	0	6	0	0

As you can, see there is a steep drop off in the number of Bluebirds that fledged in 2019. Mark was unsure of what to make of this. The heavy rains in early Spring may have caused a delay in Bluebirds beginning their first nesting cycle. It is something to watch moving forward.

There were also 5 Prothonotary boxes that were put out in 2019. Three of the boxes were used by Prothonotary Warblers and two were used by Tree Swallows. Here are the results of the boxes that were used by the warblers. A total of 10 warblers fledged from these three boxes.

	May 25	June 2	June 14	June 25	July 5	July 13
P1	No activity	No activity	2 eggs	4 eggs	2 chicks in pin feathers	fledged
P4	Moss in box	Nest complete	4 eggs	4 eggs	4 chicks in pin feathers	fledged
P5	No activity	2 eggs	4 eggs	4 feathered chicks	fledged	

## Seven Islands Happenings

Lots of good things are going on at Seven Islands State Birding Park. The Birders Information Center that was put up by KTOS and funded by the Marcia Davis Memorial Fund is completed and being well received.



The information center is divided into three sections. The left side has information on birds that could likely be seen in the park during the current season. There is also a checklist of the birds of the park.

The middle section contains some pictures of common species that use the park during the current season. These pictures will be rotated out as the seasons change. Barry Spruce is providing the photos.

The right section contains information on suggested hikes visiting birders should take based on the time they have available. There are maps for 1 hour, 3 hours and

4+ hours. KTOS has also developed a list of key birding points of interest in the park to help all birders with locating birds better.

The park continues to be hampered by the heavy rains in January and February. There are several sections that have been flooded or close to it. Please be advised that the trails (Martin Way, Prothonotary Lane and Sparrow Retreat) that run along the river may be closed due to the high water levels. Seclusion Bend out past the far barn has been especially hard hit by the flooding.



The creek that runs down to Wayne's Pond (Waterthrush Creek) is completely full as is Wayne's Pond. Hopefully it will remain that way into spring migration and will attract both species of waterthrushes.



The new bridge has been open for a few months now. A nice loop trail was created last fall by the two AmeriCorps workers and is definitely worth the walk across the river to use it.

A few years ago the Great Blue Heron colony that was located just west of Wayne's Pond got relocated on the island. The colony is now in full swing for the upcoming nesting season. Great Blues can be seen carrying nesting materials to fix up their last year's nests and a few birds appear to already be laying eggs. Spring is around the corner.



From Left: Mark Crockett, Ranger Nate Housley, Glenn Crocker, Tony Headrick

A new information kiosk was installed at the park in late February. This kiosk will replace the one that is currently located in the main parking lot. Team leader and KTOS member Tony Headrick oversaw the construction and installation of the kiosk.

Park Manager, Justine Cucchiara, recently had her first child and will be on leave until June. Ranger Nate Housley will be filling in for her. KTOS member Stephanie Mueller will be heading off for six weeks to State Parks Ranger School in early March. In addition to the new kiosk, the park is planning to put up a major new educational display system in the Bluebird Barn in the next month or two.

### Top eBirders

BY SPECIES | BY CHECKLISTS

Updated ~16 hrs(s) ago.

1	Bill Keeler	128
2	Ruben Stoll	127
3	Morton Massey	125
4	Luke Thompson	123
5	Mark Greene	122
6	Daniel Redwine	120
6	Victor Stoll	120
8	Beth Schilling	119

### Looks Who's Number 1

On February 19, KTOS member Bill Keeler hit number one in Tennessee for 2020. While not his primary objective for the year, Bill was thrilled to be atop the board for the first time in his birding career. Over the previous 3 days, Bill had been birding in West Tennessee with Bob Collier, Howard Cox, Barry Spruce, Beth Schilling and Morton Massey. Highlights of the trip was seeing Long-eared Owls in Dyer County, Rough-legged Hawk and American Tree Sparrows in Lake County and Western Meadowlarks in Obion County. Congrats to Bill even though he knows it will be short lived. The Stoll brothers are lurking.

Over the next several months we plan to highlight several KTOS members who are heavily involved with birding or bird related activities. We begin our series with an individual who makes his living on photographing birds and leading trips to photograph wildlife.



**Barry Spruce** was born in the small sea coast town of Dover, New Hampshire, a long way from East Tennessee. At the age of 10 he received his first camera as a Christmas present. Four months later he took a picture of then president Gerald Ford and became totally hooked on photography.

At the age of 27, Barry relocated to East Tennessee to continue his career in the automotive parts manufacturing field. But photography kept pulling at his shirt tail and in 2007 he started his second career as a nature and wildlife photographer.

Barry's early days as a professional photographer was mostly spent selling his photos at festivals and indoor events. In 2015 he opened a small gallery near the entrance to the park. Then in 2017 he opened his current gallery in Townsend.

Today, Barry's professional career includes a number of different activities. He teaches photography to individuals, at workshops and even a UT non-credit class. He presents at various wildlife festivals, participates at photography seminars and leads several wildlife guided tours. One of his more notable tours is his winter Snowy Owl Trip to the New England.



Snowy Owl



Common Loon

While photography equipment has changed a lot over the years, getting the really good picture hasn't changed much. It takes lot's of patience, lot's of skill and you need to shoot hundreds of photos to get one really special shot.

Barry didn't start out photographing birds. It wasn't until 2009 that a friend introduced him to shooting birds on a trip to Florida. Since that time Barry spends more and more time focused on birds.

To learn more about Barry Spruce and his studio go to [barrysprucephotography.com](http://barrysprucephotography.com)



Please go to: [www.knoxvillebirding.org](http://www.knoxvillebirding.org) for all KTOS information.

- Calendar (Fieldtrip Info)
- Newsletters
- Membership Information
- Contact Us
- FaceBook
- Photo Share
- Resources



Being part of a like-minded community is important. Please remember to check the status of your membership. Morton Massey will be happy to answer any questions. You can email him at [knoxtbirds@gmail.com](mailto:knoxtbirds@gmail.com). Please remember to put "Membership" in the subject line.



Field trips and social gatherings are a great way of getting to know one another. Fields trips can be lead by any of our members regardless of skill level. We all can learn from one another. If you have an idea or would like to lead a trip, please contact Tow Howe at [knoxbirds@gmail.com](mailto:knoxbirds@gmail.com). Please remember to put "Field Trip" in the subject line.

Always check the Calendar at [www.knoxbirds.org](http://www.knoxbirds.org) to view upcoming Field Trips, Festivals, Bird Counts and Social Gatherings.

*Shade-grown coffee is a great product and environmentally friendly for our beloved feathered friends.*

*To order shade-grown coffee, email David Johnson and Jean Alexander at [jjadmj@yahoo.com](mailto:jjadmj@yahoo.com). Your order must be turned in the Thursday night before the next meeting each month. David and Jean bring orders to the monthly meetings.*

*Thank you, David and Jean!*

<b>Sun-Grown Coffee</b>	<b>Shade-Grown Coffee</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Grows faster</li> <li>✗ Requires more water, fertilizer and pesticides</li> <li>✗ Supports less biodiversity</li> <li>✗ Degrades ecosystems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Grows slower</li> <li>✓ Requires less water, fertilizer and pesticides</li> <li>✓ Supports greater biodiversity</li> <li>✓ Sustains healthy ecosystems</li> <li>✓ Allows farmers economic diversification</li> <li>✓ Tastes better</li> </ul>



**2020 Membership Renewals:**

Annual dues can be turned in at KTOS meetings or mailed to KTOS, 1553 Dutch Valley Rd, Clinton TN 37716. 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.



**2019 - 2020**

**Chapter Officers / Staff**

President  
Morton Massey

Vice President  
Bill Keeler

Treasurer  
Melinda Fawver

Secretary  
Laura Tappan

Newsletter Editor  
Position Open

Website  
Morton Massey

Discover Birds  
Tom Howe

Field Trip Coordinator  
Tom Howe

Meeting Refreshments  
Howard Cox

Website Blog  
Karin Beuerlein

**State Directors**

Ron Hoff (2019 - 2020)  
Bill Keeler (2019 - 2020)  
Tony Headrick (2019 - 2020)  
Chris Welch (2019 - 2021)  
Tom Howe (2019 - 2021)

# Presidential Perch by Morton Massey

## Let's Talk Name Change

I've been president of the club now going on 9 months. During that time we have increased our outreach to the community through things like working the Home and Garden Show, taking our Better Backyards For Birds Program to civic groups and leading new birder walks. Seems I'm running in to new folks almost daily and talking about KTOS.

What I have found is that when meeting new people, when I say I'm with KTOS, the Knoxville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, a glazed look comes over their face. A similar reaction was seen at the Home and Garden Show. When people stopped at our booth and read the name on our large banner, you could see they were trying to figure out just who we were.

I believe we need to change the name of our club. Not the legal name, but the doing business as name. If we simply called ourselves the Knoxville Bird Club then people would immediately know what we are. And we wouldn't have to spend time explaining we are not professional ornithologists, we are just birdwatchers.

So lets have a serious discussion over the next few months and see if it makes sense to rename our club to something simple to understand.

## Upcoming Events in March

- 1 Kyker Bottoms Bird Walk
- 4 KTOS Monthly Meeting
- 25 Birding with Friends at Seven Islands Walk
- 28 Halls Wetlands Bird Walk
- 28 Birds Eggstravaganza Program at UT Gardens

All bird walks are subject to change. Please make sure to look on the KTOS calendar on our website for walk details. We are not posting many KTOS walks on our Facebook page to prevent more birders showing up than the walk leaders can support.



April's program will be a presentation by several KTOS members talking about how to create "Better Backyards for Birds". This program has been developed to educate the public on how they can help to reverse the loss of 3 billion birds in North America since 1970.