



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

August, 2012

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On May 19th we gathered in Johnson City for our 2012 Annual Meeting. Hosted by the Bristol Bird Club (BBC) as a joint venture with the Virginia Society of Ornithology, it was a wonderful weekend of birding and camaraderie. From the Friday evening program by Dr. Andrew Jones, the Saturday and Sunday field trips, and the dinner and keynote address Saturday evening by Dr. Fred Alsop III, everything went off without a hitch. Of course, that doesn't happen without a lot of planning and hard work. Thanks to BBC president Wallace Coffey, Roy Knispel, Dave Worley, Rick Knight, Janice Martin and the many others who provided us with such a memorable experience.

Our Board of Directors meeting was held on Saturday afternoon. Treasurer Mac McWhirter reported that the 2011 audit was conducted by Jim Ferguson (Memphis). Jim found the books to be in good order, with no discrepancies noted. Mac also reported that the financial condition of TOS remains strong, in spite of the recent recession. Our Society's investments are held in a diverse portfolio of mutual and bond funds, with a current value over \$246,000. I shudder to think where we'd be without Mac's expertise and diligence during these tough economic times. Thanks, Mac. The Board voted to donate \$1,000 to the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC). The SELC is doing a significant amount of legal work in supporting the state of Tennessee's efforts to restrict mountaintop coal mining. This is an issue critical to breeding Cerulean Warblers, among many other species of concern. The Board also voted to authorize TOS to join the Center for Biological Diversity and several other conservation organizations in a lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The suit seeks to require the EPA to regulate the use of toxic lead in ammunition used in hunting. Please see the details outlined on page 3.

At the Annual Meeting Saturday night, the membership unanimously accepted two amendments to our Constitution and By-laws offered by the Constitution Committee Susan McWhirter (Memphis), Richard Connors (Nashville) and Danny Gaddy (Chattanooga)). Letters of Commendation were presented to Melinda Welton (Nashville) and Cyndi Routledge (Nashville) for their superior leadership during the Sandhill Crane Festival in January. Webmaster Chuck Nicholson (Knoxville) will soon have the draft minutes of the BOD and Annual Meeting posted on our website (www.tnbirds.org), and I encourage everyone to review them.

Our Fall Meeting will be held in Nashville October 12 – 14. Chapter president Steve Routledge and his team are hard at work to ensure we have an enjoyable weekend. Please help facilitate the planning process by registering early. Of particular importance is noting whether you are interested in a bird banding session. The Board of Directors will meet on Saturday the 13th. Anyone who desires to place an item on the agenda, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Lastly, please read the article concerning wild hogs on page 4. I believe this issue is important enough that TOS should join with TWRA in the effort to control the wild hog population. This will be discussed at the BOD meeting but I'd like to hear the opinions of those of you who will not be able to attend. Please contact me at: dickpreston@bigriver.net.

**TOS FALL MEETING
OCTOBER 12-14, 2012
REGISTRATION**

The TOS Fall Meeting will be held in Nashville on October 12-14, 2012. Registration will be held Friday, October 12, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Baymont Inn, 111 Penn Warren Drive, Brentwood, TN 37027. (Rooms are \$69, 1-615-376-4666). The Saturday afternoon meeting will be held at the Warner Parks Nature Center.

Fees are \$15.00 for registration. Checks should be made payable to Nashville TOS. Please send your checks and registration forms to: Susan Hollyday, 211 Wauford Drive, Nashville TN 37211.

Sandy Bivens, Superintendent of Nature Centers, has offered to set up a banding session at the Warner Parks Nature Center if there is enough interest. Please indicate if you are interested in attending a bird banding session at Warner Parks on the registration form.

For more information on the meeting, contact Steve Routledge, Nashville Chapter President, at eyerout@bellsouth.net.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name (s) _____

Address _____

TOS Chapter _____

\$_____ for _____ Registrations @ \$15.00 each

\$_____ Total amount enclosed. Make check payable to Nashville TOS

Bird Banding? Yes ___ No ___

Mail registration form and check to :

Susan Hollyday
211 Wauford Drive
Nashville TN 37211

GETTING THE LEAD OUT

Millions of non-target birds and other animals are poisoned each year from scavenging carcasses containing lead-bullet fragments or ingesting spent lead-shot pellets. Spent ammunition has been documented to cause lead poisoning in 130 species of wildlife and is a widespread killer of bald eagles, trumpeter swans and endangered California condors. Nearly 500 scientific papers have documented the dangers to wildlife from this type of lead exposure. Lead ammunition also poses health risks for people who eat game contaminated with lead bullet fragments. Conservative estimates place the number of birds killed from lead poisoning at 8 to 10 million annually, while others put it well in excess of 20 million.

On May 19, 2012, the Board of Directors approved TOS joining a lawsuit to require the Environmental Protection Agency to, among other things, "initiate rulemaking proceedings in order to develop and implement regulations that adequately protect wildlife, human health and the environment against the unreasonable risk of injury from bullets and shot containing lead used in hunting and shooting sports, which have the potential to cause harmful lead exposure to wildlife and humans."

The lawsuit was filed with the United States District Court, District of Columbia, on June 7, 2012. The Center for Biological Diversity (Arizona) is providing the lead attorneys and has assumed responsibility and liability for all costs involved with the lawsuit. Other plaintiffs include Cascades Raptor Center (Oregon); The Trumpeter Swan Society (Minnesota); Western Nebraska Resources Council (Nebraska); Preserve Our Wildlife Organization (Florida); and the Loon Lake Loon Association (Washington).

Let's be clear: this lawsuit is not about restricting hunting, it's about ending preventable lead poisoning of millions of birds and other wildlife and reducing health risks for people who eat shot game.

Contact President Dick Preston (dickpreston@bigriver.net) if you would like additional background information or a copy of the lawsuit as filed with the Court.

2012-2013 FEDERAL DUCK STAMP

The 2012-2013 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) is now on sale and anyone who enjoys wildlife and natural landscapes should purchase a stamp. Ninety-eight percent of the proceeds from the \$15 Duck Stamp support the acquisition of wetlands and grasslands for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Since 1934, Duck Stamp receipts of over \$750 million have protected over 5.3 million acres of habitat for wildlife and for future generations of Americans.

Wetlands provide vital habitat for bird breeding, nesting and rearing of young. Since 1780, the amount of wetlands in the conterminous United States has declined from 11 percent to just 5 percent by 1980.

Supporters of birds and the Refuge System need to buy Duck Stamps now! We are in a time where the impacts of climate change and tighter Federal budgets require flexibility and planning. Contributing to this fund increases the capacity of the Refuge System to acquire and protect sensitive wetlands.

President Dick Preston (dickpreston@bigriver.net) will have stamps available at the Fall Meeting in Nashville or via mail. Stamps can also be purchased at most post offices, sporting goods stores or online: www.duckstamp.com. Additional information is available from: www.fws.gov/duckstamps/Conservation/conservation.htm.

TOS AND WILD HOGS

You might well ask why TOS would want to concern itself with wild hogs in Tennessee. In addition to significant damage to agriculture and livestock, wild hogs cause substantial damage to forests and are a threat to native wildlife and the environment. They have a significant adverse effect on birds that nest on or near the ground. A conservative estimate places the annual losses caused by wild hogs in the United States at \$1.5 billion.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) has invited TOS to partner with them and 12 other organizations in controlling wild hogs in Tennessee, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Our Conservation Policy Committee and President-elect have endorsed the idea. Formal approval will be requested from the Board of Directors on October 13th in Nashville.

TWRA's goals are to stop the illegal transportation and translocation of wild hogs, increase outreach efforts, and assist landowners with wild hog problems.

The MOU basically asks three things:

- 1) The parties agree to work cooperatively toward the goal of eradication of unconfined wild hogs in Tennessee.
- 2) The parties will work together to create and implement outreach tools to effectively disseminate information to the public, defining the problems associated with wild hogs in Tennessee and how the parties are working cooperatively to help landowners combat the problems associated with wild hogs.
- 3) The parties will work together to identify and pursue alternative funding resources to aid this cooperative effort and use a portion of this funding to create a monetary reward program for individuals providing information leading to a conviction for illegal possession and/or transport of wild hogs.

In addition to TWRA, other organizations already signatories to the MOU include: Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Tennessee Association of Soil Conservation Districts; Tennessee Department of Health; Tennessee Wildlife Federation; and The National Wild Turkey Federation.

Additional details will be provided at the BOD meeting in Nashville. Anyone unable to attend the BOD meeting who wishes to express an opinion, or who would like more information, please contact President Dick Preston (dickpreston@bigriver.net).

HATCHER'S CELEBRATE 50TH WITH SPECIAL VISITORS

NTOS Members, Bob and Betty Hatcher are shown here celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 10, 2012, with two special VIP visitors, Challenger the Bald Eagle and Al Cecero. And how fitting it was, as Bob was the primary leader of Bald Eagle recovery efforts here in Tennessee during his time as non-game and endangered Species Coordinator for TWRA. He co-lead the start-up hacking program in the State and went on to establish and coordinate other locations where over 300 Bald Eaglets were released into the wild between 1980-2010. Both Bob and Betty are avid supporters, advisors and volunteers of the American Eagle Foundation and the ongoing work they continue to do to ensure the restoration and protection of the Bald Eagle and its habitat.

Cynthia Routledge



Operation Migration 2012-2013

Due to the limited gene pool of the Eastern Population of Whooping Cranes, this year's crop amounted to 26 Whooping Crane chicks. These were hand raised in Patuxant, MD until old enough to be handled by the programs of respective hosts. This year the chicks were divided as follows: Louisiana 13, Direct Autumn Release 7 and Operation Migration 6.

OM's six were released from MD and transported in crates via the courtesy of Windway Capitol Corp. who provided their corporate aircraft, once again, to safely deliver them from Baltimore, MD. to Oshkosh, WI.

From Oshkosh they were transported in an air conditioned van to their summer home at White River Marsh in Green Lake Co., WI, where they were released to prepared pens on 6-23-10.

From now until the ultra-light led migration south in October they will undergo training at White River Marsh to ready them for the journey. We may keep up with their daily routine via field journal entries and web cam. Currently the chicks are a beautiful cinnamon color and flightless. View them on OM field journal site! (http://www.operationmigration.org/Field_Journal.html)

The Mile Maker campaign for this migration is under way. This year the sponsorship is \$200.00 per mile. As of July 1, 2012, 16 miles of the 106 miles of the migration route in TN have been sponsored. Hopefully this year TOS and friends will exceed the 6.5 miles sponsored last year. OM needs your financial support to make the migration a success.

There were 14 pairs of whooping cranes in the Eastern Migration Population nesting this year (out of a population of approximately 107 cranes). As of May 17, 2012, there were 6 chicks produced and living wild. They are difficult to survey even by plane, but success reports are sent in by DNR WI Bev Paulan who used to be an OM employee.

Next time news of the migration of 2012-2013 will be our topic, as well as news about FAA training for pilots and the safer aircraft the pilots will be using .

Get ready for fall migration!

Tony King
Certified Craniac!
865-988-6172

CHAPTER NEWS

GREENEVILLE CHAPTER - Highlights from spring and early summer in Greene County: Greater White-fronted Goose (20 on 3 and 10 March); Blue-winged Teal (late male on 9 June); Redhead (7 March); Hooded Merganser (female with 8 young on 8 April); Northern Bobwhite (1-5 at many sites in May and June); Great Blue Heron (new nesting site observed in Tusculum in May and June); Bald Eagle (adult on 11 May); Northern Goshawk (juvenile on 3 March); Merlin (22 April); Sandhill Crane (1 flyover on 27 March and 1 other on 9 and 23 June); Spotted Sandpiper (23 June); Dunlin (14 April); Black-billed Cuckoo (17 May); Barn Owl (pair with 2-3 downy young on 8 and 14 April); Willow Flycatcher (9 June); Loggerhead Shrike (21 March); Common Raven (1-2 at low elevation on 10 April and 6 May); Horned Lark (1-2 on 24 March and 9 June); Marsh Wren (2-3 on 1 and 14 April); Blue-winged Warbler (28 April); Nashville Warbler (28-29 April); Cerulean Warbler (6 May); Swainson's Warbler (2-5 on 28 April and 16 June); Dickcissel (1-13 at many sites in May and June).

Don Miller

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER - At the June picnic officers for the 2012-2013 year were installed, including Billie Cantwell as president, Patty Ford as vice president, Melinda Fawver as secretary, and Carole Gobert as treasurer. David Johnson, Jean Alexander and Harold Howell also began terms as state directors. Michael Plaster will be the newsletter editor and Robin Barrow will be responsible for newsletter distribution. Alice and Gary Woody will serve as field trip coordinators.

At the May program Mike Nelson made a series of presentations based on his birding trips to France and other countries. He shared some of the many recordings and photos he has collected over the years in diverse birding environments and shared a slide show of Rankin Bottom birds set to music using bird calls as instruments. Mike also hosted a wine tasting fundraiser with a presentation of wines from the area in France that he and other KTOS members birded. 14 lucky people took part in the fundraiser.

Volunteers from the Clinch River Raptor Center brought a variety of rescued, non-releasable birds to share with the group at the April meeting, including two Screech Owls (gray male and red female), a Barred Owl, a Red-Tailed Hawk, and an American Kestrel.

"Bird Attitudes - Inspiring Art and Conservation" – a presentation by Vickie Henderson at the March meeting included slides of her sketchbook drawings and studies, watercolor paintings and gourd art based on photos she has taken. She also talked about The Discover Birds Activity Book which is a publication designed by Vickie to get kids excited about birds.

Don't miss the Hummingbird Festival on July 29, 2012, from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, hosted by KTOS and Ijams Nature Center. Bob and Martha Sargent will give a presentation and Mark Armstrong will be doing banding demo's. Details can be found on the KTOS website at <http://www.tnbirds.org/KTOS.html>

Melinda Fawver

Members of the **MEMPHIS CHAPTER** of TOS will participate in an hour long radio program about birds and birding. We hope that this will encourage more interest in what we do and bring in new members. Jim Ferguson and a committee of past presidents drafted amendments to our Constitution which were adopted at our March meeting.

On August 18, 2012, we'll have our annual picnic at the Raptor Center. Member Knox Martin reports that he has had a fairly quiet spring at the Center, though he received 11 baby Kestrels which was a record. One of them was found walking along the trolley line in downtown Memphis, and another was on the runway at FedEx. He's also had baby Cooper's Hawks, Broad-winged Hawks, and a baby Barred Owl. He sent a non-releasable Bald Eagle to Seneca Park Zoo in New York. This is the 10th year for the Raptor Center, and Knox has worked in raptor rehabilitation for 26 years. When you're in Memphis, you should go by and see the work being done at the Raptor Center. Our chapter has supported the Center from its beginning providing volunteers and some financial support.

We'll resume our monthly meetings in September on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at St. George's Episcopal Church, 2425 South Germantown Road, Germantown, TN.

Officers elected for 2012-2013 are David Blaylock, President; Pam Key, Vice-President; Barbara Bullock Pyles, Treasurer; and Knox Martin, Secretary.

David Blaylock

CHAPTER NEWS

NASHVILLE CHAPTER - NTOS members have enjoyed the spring migration once again. Our six Wednesday morning Radnor walks were very well attended with an average of 23-35 people attending each week. Many thanks to Scott Block and Kevin Bowden for leading the walks and to Susan Hollyday for diligently compiling the list each time.

Our spring count was also very successful as we found 164 species, tying the previous high. Black-billed Cuckoo was a special treat to get. Thanks to all who led and/or participated and to Jan Shaw for coordinating the count.

Richard Connors once again lined up several good programs. Scott Somershoe, our state ornithologist, recounted his "accidental" Big Year. Jan Shaw shared her three week excursion to South Africa, not only illustrating the diverse avifauna, but also capturing the dynamic landscape that South Africa offers. Stephen Lyn Bales enlightened us all with his tales of Jim Tanner and his quest and encounters with the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. In May, Bob Hatcher described the top 10 Tennessee bird partnerships that he has been involved with in his 34 year career, partnerships in which we all benefit. As always, we appreciate the efforts of all of our presenters.

A hearty congratulations to NTOS members Melinda Welton and Cyndi Routledge for receiving a Letter of Commendation from TOS president Dick Preston during the recent TOS/VSO spring meeting in Johnson City. Their tireless efforts involving the Sandhill Crane Festival has helped to generate a renewed enthusiasm for the preservation of our wintering Tennessee cranes.

Finally, let me invite all of you to the TOS fall meeting in Nashville to be held October 12-14. We have several trips lined up as well as a banding demonstration at Warner Parks for those interested. Look for the registration form in this issue of *The Tennessee Warbler*.

Steve Routledge

ASSOCIATION OF NATURE CENTER ADMINISTRATORS LEADERSHIP AWARD

TOS Member, Sandy Bivens (NTOS), is the recipient of the 2012 Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) Leadership Award!

Sandy was the sole recipient of the award this year and was chosen from candidates across North America. This prestigious award is given to outstanding professionals in the field of nature center administration. The award will be presented to Sandy at ANCA's Annual Summit held in August.

Sandy has been with the Nashville Metro Parks system for over 35 years and is currently the Superintendent of Metro Nature Centers.

How fortunate we all are here in Middle Tennessee to know Sandy and to benefit from her knowledge and giving spirit.

CONGRATULATIONS SANDY!
Cyndi Routledge

OCTOBER 31ST DEADLINE

The deadline date for the December issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is October 31st. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

Submit Material To:

Theresa Graham, Editor
PO Box 366, Oakland TN 38060
(901) 465-4263 (home)
(901) 748-9324 (fax)
e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net



During the Saturday night 2012 Annual Meeting, held in Johnson City and hosted by the Bristol Bird Club, Letters of Commendation were presented to Melinda Welton (Nashville) and Cyndi Routledge (Nashville) for their superior leadership during the Sandhill Crane Festival in January.





SEND CORRECTIONS & CHANGE OF ADDRESS REQUESTS TO:
npmcwhirter@gmail.com

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