



THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

April, 2017

Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - SPRING 2017

WOW!!!Wow is right. Wings of Winter, a brand-spanking new birding festival centered at Paris Landing State Park and Land Between the Lakes is beginning to take shape. Joan Howe of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge gave TOS members present at the winter meeting some insight into the plans for next winter's festivities. The festival will be a coordinated effort between the Henry, Benton and Stewart County Chambers of Commerce, The Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge, Cross Creeks National Wildlife Refuge, Land Between the Lakes, TOS and other area organizations. The proposed dates are January 19-21, 2018 and will include field trips to the area refuges, including areas normally off-limits in January. Brian "Fox" Ellis will join us as John James Audubon and possibly other well-known historical figures. In addition there are plans for a prominent keynote speaker at the Paris Landing Convention Center Saturday night. As of now, TOS' contribution will namely be in the area of field trip guides or other areas where manpower will be helpful. So, take a few moments and mark your calendars for this exciting inaugural festival. You may come as a volunteer, a participant, or both! Regardless, this event is a perfect way for our organization to link with others and promote the sport of birding that we all enjoy so much. Stay tuned for future details!!

Speaking of the TOS Winter Meeting, over fifty people signed up and forty-seven people were able to attend our winter meeting at Paris Landing State Park. Although we endured a little rain Saturday morning, the temperatures were spring-like the entire weekend. While the actual number of waterfowl seemed down versus the colder previous winters, our group still managed to account for ninety-five species. Not bad! Most attendees were then able to enjoy the Friday night and Saturday night buffets at the inn as well as the complimentary hospitality room afterwards, which was graciously offered by the lodge manager. All in all it was a really fun winter birding weekend.

Finally, just around the corner, we have two more meetings to look forward to attending. Our Annual Spring Meeting will be held in Knoxville May 5-7. East Tennessee is always rich with spring migrants, so plan to join us that weekend. Then, October 6-8 our Fall TOS Meeting will be held in Kingsport! This will be new birding territory for many of us. Exciting times ahead!

Cheers!

Steve Routledge

2017 TOS SPRING STATE MEETING KNOXVILLE, MAY 5-7, 2017

The Knoxville Chapter invites you to the 2017 Spring meeting, to be held May 5-7. Friday night registration will be held at the conference hotel from 6–9 p.m., while the Saturday afternoon 2 pm (**updated from the previously announced 1 pm meeting**) meeting and the Saturday 6 pm banquet will be hosted at the Knoxville Zoo, Lee Congleton Conference Center (enter through ranger’s station), located off I-40 at Exit 392. Half-price tickets to the zoo for Saturday afternoon are available by mail-in, advance purchase only.

The conference hotel is the Mainstay Suites, 144 Merchant Dr, Knoxville, TN 37912 (I-75, exit 108). A block of rooms is reserved at a discounted rate of \$84.00 plus taxes per night for a choice of a room with either two double beds or one king size. A free continental breakfast 6-9am (or earlier upon request), WIFI is included. Make your reservations for the hotel by April 5 by calling (865) 247-0222 and mentioning “TOS” for the discounted rate. All field trips will leave from the Mainstay Suites.

We are pleased to announce that the speaker for the Saturday banquet will be Dr. David Buehler, professor of Wildlife Science in the Department of Forestry, UT, Knoxville who will talk about his latest research on Golden-winged Warblers. The menu for the banquet includes roast beef, chicken breast, vegetarian lasagna, salad, vegetables and dessert.

Field trips are still being finalized, but possibilities include Seven Islands, Kyker Bottoms, Sharp’s Ridge, Norris Dam, Cove Lake, Cross Mountain, the upper Smokies and Cherohala Skyway. What do you desire? Target species?

Send your registration to KTOS by April 1.
For additional information, contact Tom Howe, blountbirder@gmail.com.

TOS SPRING MEETING 2017 REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) _____
Address _____
E-mail _____ Cell phone _____
TOS Chapter: _____ Office held? _____

- \$ _____ for _____ Registrations @ \$10 each
- \$ _____ for _____ Dinner Reservations @ \$25 each
- \$ _____ for _____ Child’s Dinner Reservations (age 12 & under) @ \$13 each
- \$ _____ for _____ Saturday afternoon Zoo tickets, adult @ \$10 each
- \$ _____ for _____ Saturday afternoon Zoo tickets, child @ \$8 each

\$ _____ Total amount enclosed. Make Check payable to KTOS

Mail registration form and check to:
Morton Massey, 6932 Westland Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919

Fall TOS Meeting – October 6-8, 2017

Birding Kingsport is looking forward to hosting the fall TOS meeting, Friday, October 6th through Sunday, October 8th. The hosting accommodations will be at Meadowview Marriott, 1901 Meadowview Parkway, Kingsport, TN 37660 with a room rate of \$111.00 plus taxes. The phone for Meadowview is (423) 578-6600. Refer to the Birding Kingsport Room Block. The board meeting and paper session will be in a meeting room at Meadowview.

This is a great venue for a meeting with the additional benefits of being the site of Cattails Golf Course which will provide a birding opportunity on-site. It is also at the foot of Bays Mountain making it very close to Bays Mountain Park, the largest city park in the state.

Bill Grigsby, President

~ PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHT ~ THE TOS WINTER MEETING PARIS LANDING STATE PARK FEBRUARY 17-19, 2017



Group photo of all those in attendance at the TOS Winter Meeting at Paris Landing State Park.
Photographer: Jean Owens, Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT 2017

by Dick Preston

The 20th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was conducted February 17 through February 20, 2017. This count, which started as a North American affair, is now a global exercise in citizen science. Records were set for the number of participants (214,018), complete checklists submitted (174,077) and species reported (5,941). More than 28 million individual birds were noted.

The GBBC is a joint project of Cornell University, the National Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada. Checklists are submitted through eBird.

The United States led the world with more than 113,000 complete checklists submitted, followed by Canada, India, Australia and Mexico. Colombia reported the most species, with an astounding 995, followed by India, Mexico, Ecuador and the United States (671).

Tennessee birdwatchers submitted 2,215 complete checklists, reporting 136 species. At least one complete checklist was submitted from 86 of the state's 95 counties. Shelby County led the way, with 278 checklists, followed by Davidson (246), Knox (165), Hamilton (142) and Williamson (125). Henry County reported the greatest number of species, with 103, followed by Davidson (99), Hamilton (97), Shelby (96) and Knox (94). Henry County benefited greatly from the 47 birders who attended the TOS winter gathering at Paris Landing State Park during the weekend.

The top five with complete checklists submitted: JC Finch (33), Francis Fekel (27), Morton Massey (24), Rick Houlk (22) and Susan Hubley (21). The top five in species reported: Dick Preston (103), Susan Hubley (95), Steve and Cyndi Routledge (93), Edmund LeGrand (92), with Mike Doss, Ashley Heeney and Gary Bailey tied at (91).

Reflecting the great number of observers and checklists submitted from North America, the top ten most reported species were: Northern Cardinal, American Crow, Mourning Dove, Dark-eyed Junco, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, House Finch, House Sparrow and White-breasted Nuthatch.

The ten most numerous species: Snow Goose, Red-winged Blackbird, Canada Goose, European Starling, Mallard, Ring-billed Gull, American Coot, Greater White-fronted Goose, Common Grackle and American Crow.

More information and lots of additional data can be found at:

<http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/>

Or simply enter "Great Backyard Bird Count" in your search engine.

Editor's note: totals are as of press time. Late submission of additional checklists will cause minor changes.

Winter Hummingbird Update

by Cyndi Routledge

The winter hummingbird season began before the “official” start date of November 15th this year with the return of K16452, a female Rufous Hummingbird, on September 26, 2016. “Frosty”, as her host dubbed her, was first banded on December 5th of 2015 as a hatch-year bird and spent the entire winter in Fairview, departing for her breeding grounds the 2nd week in April 2016. Her late September return was met with much excitement by her host as well as yours truly. Frosty remains in Fairview as of the writing of this article, and I expect she’ll take off once again for her breeding ground on that magical day when the winds are just right and she alone knows when it’s time to go.

It was another 3 months before the next winter hummers appeared and, to my delight, this time TWO were reported within hours of each other. Both turned out to be Rufous Hummingbirds as well. One was at a home in Antioch and the other in Brentwood. I banded both those females on a chilly December morning. The Antioch bird was a hatch-year bird and the Brentwood bird an adult. Both “ladies” were in fine shape and stuck around into mid-January. They both made it through what seems like our only really cold snap of the year due to their dedicated hosts. Reports from the hosts indicated that as the temperatures warmed up both birds departed. These hummer hosts and I hope that these two “ladies” will return next winter like Frosty.

As the New Year rolled on and January gave way to an unusually warm February, I thought winter hummer season had ended with these 3 Rufous hummers. But, to my delight, during the last week of February I received a referral email from Mitch Robinson at Strawberry Plains Audubon with pictures of a hummingbird visiting a feeder in West Point, Mississippi. Since I’m licensed in Mississippi to band hummingbirds, and this bird was within my MS territory, off I set to band it on February 26th. K53078 was banded as an AHY female Rufous Hummingbird, bringing the 2016-2017 winter season to a close with 3 new and one return hummingbird.

Winter hummingbird banding remains a highlight for me each year as well as a source of delight and great mystery. Why do these hummers choose the yards they do? Where are they going, and where did they come from? Will they return?? As my hummingbird colleagues and I work to answer these and many more questions please help us out and consider leaving your hummingbird feeders up next winter. And if you are one of the lucky ones who gets a winter hummingbird...give me a call!



Photo was taken by Graham Gerdeman

Operation Migration 2016-2017

By the time you get to read this, because of the warmer winter in the south east United States, northward migration will be completed. Some Whooping Cranes (WC) of the Eastern Migratory Population (EMP) began flying north during the last week of February 2017. WC's will return to favorite sites, e.g. White River Marsh and Necedah Wildlife Refuge and others in Wisconsin. Some will remain in Indiana. Soon nesting activity will take place so that we may follow WC's raising chicks for the next season. Currently there are 103 (estimated) WC's in the EMP and when the 9 chicks from last year arrive their numbers will be added to make 112 WC's in the EMP.

When United States Fisheries and Wildlife Services (USFWS) announced in October 2015 that costume rearing of Whooping Cranes in the Eastern flock would cease, the announcement led everyone to believe OM closed its doors. Thus, donations to OM via Milemaker campaign and other methods decreased by 54% in 2016. OM's new duties consist of tracking the Whooping Cranes of the EMP and recording interactions with other cranes and the type of habitat that they are selecting. OM is still very active and still needs your support, financial and otherwise. Whether you choose an Annual Campaign or Give a Whoop Campaign or a monthly donation every dollar is most welcomed and necessary for OM's survival. Please call 800-675-2618 where Chris will be more than happy to help. Monthly contributions can be processed more efficiently than single or one time gifts, resulting in high percentage of your gift being directed to our work and you are in control. At any time, you can increase, decrease, pause or stop your support, all at your convenience. Your monthly gift will help ensure that OM can continue their incredible work to safeguard Whooping Cranes and continue the education and outreach programs. Financial help from TOS chapters is always welcomed.

Unfortunately, Crane 4-11 was found dead in IN on January 3, 2017, apparently shot. The perpetrators have yet to be cornered. The reward for information leading to the culprits stands at \$16,000 with OM contributing \$3,500. 4-11 was the twentieth WC of the EMP to be killed since 2001 and being female and having raised chicks she was an extremely valuable loss.

Should you be lucky enough to see any of the cranes, please report your sighting to <http://www.bringbackthecranes.org/what2do.html>.

Tony King
Certified Craniac

Larry E McPherson's film "The Loggerhead Shrike," which recently aired on the Memphis PBS affiliate WKNO, is now available on "Vimeo On Demand" for rental (\$4.99) and/or purchase (\$12.99). The film is 22 min 33 sec duration. A 45-sec trailer can also be viewed for free on the Vimeo page for the film.

Description of "The Loggerhead Shrike" film:

Filmed over two years in Arkansas "The Loggerhead Shrike" shows the unique behavior and vocalizations, some never filmed before, of these fascinating birds. And it follows a pair of Loggerhead Shrikes as they navigate a path with many dangers to successfully raise a family. The filmmaker's research for the narration for the film included correspondence with the world's leading shrike experts and biologists, which led to his co-authoring an article in a professional journal with an international readership revealing the shrike's previously unknown behavior of removing grasshoppers' digestive tract before consuming the insects.

Direct link to the film is: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/theloggerheadshrike>

SUMMARY OF THE 14TH NORTH AMERICAN CRANE WORKSHOP

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The 14th North American Crane Workshop (NACW) was held in Chattanooga, TN January 12-15, 2017. The NACW is held every three years and brings together researchers and crane enthusiasts (aka craniacs) to learn the most recent information about Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) and Whooping Cranes (*Grus americana*). The North American Crane Working Group (NACWG) organizes the workshops, and the location of workshops is always in places where one or both crane species can be found, and the time of year is chosen to coincide with the peak of crane abundance at that location. Past workshops have been held in such places as Grand Island, NE, Wisconsin Dells, WI, Gainesville, FL, Sacramento, CA, and Lafayette, LA.

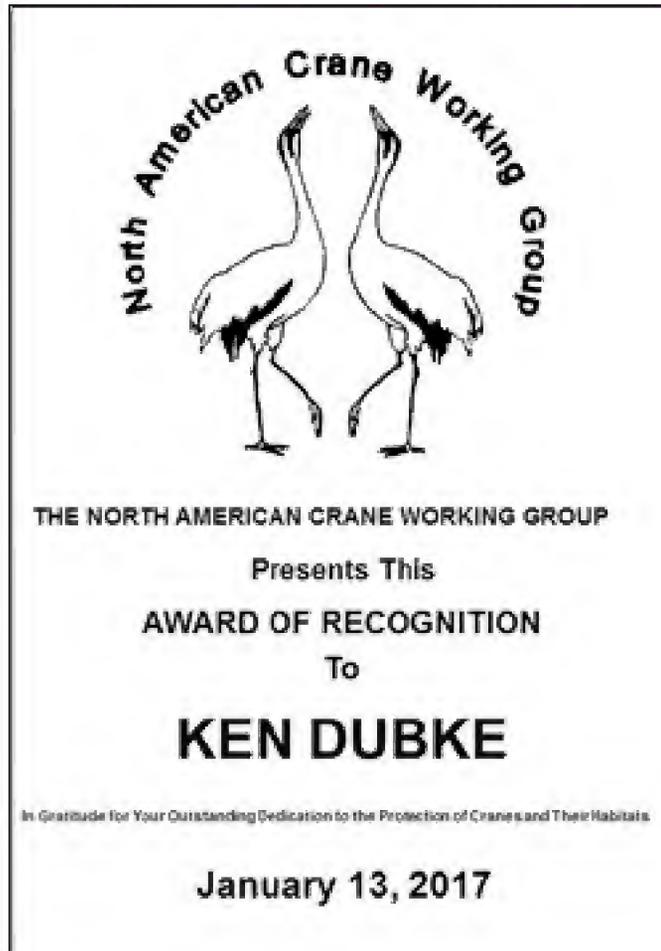
The Chattanooga workshop was attended by 70 people, and there were over 50 presentations. There were field trips to both Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in TN and Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in AL, and as a bonus for the attendees, both trips coincided with the annual crane celebrations at the respective locations. At Hiwassee, attendees got to see about 5,000 Sandhill Cranes from the viewing area, while at Wheeler there were about 10,000 sandhills and the group got to see 18 Whooping Cranes! Seeing the Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) at Wheeler was an added bonus for many, although for some of the attendees from out west, even Carolina Chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*) was a lifer!

Another part of the NACW is the presentation of the Walkinshaw Award, which is given to someone who has made significant lifetime contributions to our understanding of and to the protection and management of North American Cranes. This year's recipient was Tom Stehn, who spent 30 years as a US Fish and Wildlife Service biologist studying Whooping Cranes on their wintering grounds in Aransas, TX. His work helped give us a complete picture of Whooping Crane population dynamics, as well as improving habitat management of their wintering areas. In addition to Tom Stehn, the NACWG wanted to recognize Ken Dubke for all the work he has done as an advocate for the cranes at Hiwassee, so he was given an award of special recognition. If it were not for Ken, the workshop would never have been held in Chattanooga because there would be no cranes or crane festival to see. Because the cranes are large, vocal, and congregate in significant numbers, Ken, along with his late wife Lil, recognized the value of the cranes at Hiwassee for educating people about birds and conservation. He also used the connection between cranes and the Cherokee to raise awareness about the importance of the area to Cherokee history and culture, which led to the creation of the Cherokee Removal Memorial. For many years, Ken was the lifeblood of the annual Sandhill Crane and Cherokee Heritage Festival, and it is fortunate that such a distinguished body of crane experts and enthusiasts got to see the popularity and impact of Ken's legacy for themselves. Those of you who know Ken know that he is NEVER at a loss for words. When he received his award, however, all he could say was "Very humbling". Thank you for all you have done, Ken!

North American Crane Workshop Recognized Ken Dubke with Award



Ken Dubke receiving his award. Photographer: Glenn Olsen



Ken Dubke's award. Designed by David Aborn

Discover Birds in Spanish and in Cuba! by Vickie Henderson

Inspired by a desire to take activity books to Cuba as gifts during a January 2017 trip and made possible by an amazing group of volunteers, we now have a Spanish translation of the Discover Birds Activity Book!

The Spanish version was created by Barbara Routledge of Calera, Oklahoma, a Spanish teacher at Durant Middle School in Durant, Oklahoma who was recruited by her sister-in-law, Cyndi Routledge of Clarksville, TN. The translation process took about two months, and Barbara expresses gratitude and appreciation to her students, Jhoana Ramirez and Angel Lopez, who helped her, and to Jhoana's parents who helped out when they were 'stuck'. We are especially grateful to Barbara and her students for tackling this time-consuming project!

We also appreciate Toby Koosman of the [National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis \(NIMBioS\)](#) in Knoxville, TN, who put the translation through another careful edit, focusing on correct word usage for science-related terms.

As with every new edition of the publication, Mindy Fawver of Knoxville is our go-to person for design, arrangement and print-ready format. Mindy reviewed the book as she worked and found a few activities that had to be further revised to accommodate additional letters in the Spanish version (such as the crossword puzzle!) We are indebted to Mindy for both her design talents and her editing!

While the translation was being completed, [Naturalist Journeys](#), owned by Peg Abbott of Arizona, agreed to fund the printing of 125 Spanish books to take to Cuba and other Spanish-speaking countries during their travel tours in 2017 as a part of the company's conservation mission. Additionally, after reading about [Susan Holladay's](#) gift of activity books to a Cuban classroom of children learning English in 2014, Naturalist Journeys was pleased to receive an additional 125 complementary English books for their mission.

The printing of the Spanish books was coordinated by Cyndi Routledge, of Clarksville, who was the hub of this wheel! With a tight time-table, Cyndi coordinated the printing of the Spanish books and shipped both English and Spanish versions to Naturalist Journeys in Arizona and to our Miami hotel in time for our January 2017 departure!

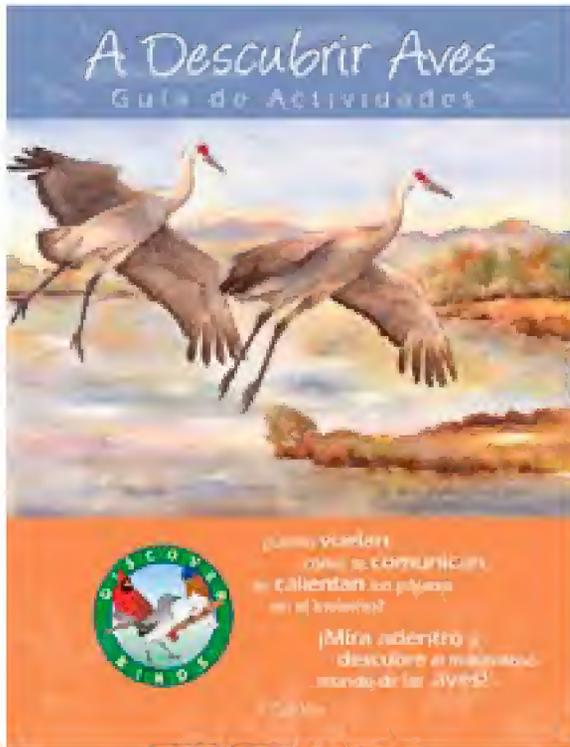
The icing on this translation saga was the very rewarding experience of gifting English and Spanish activity books--a total of 80 books--to educators in Cuba while we also enjoyed seeing Cuban and regional endemic birds and learned about many aspects of Cuban life. As we traveled, we sadly encountered several endangered and endemic birds in cages in homes. While this is against Cuban conservation law, enforcement is difficult. Educator, Odey Martinez, said he hoped the books would help him inspire and teach children to keep Cuba's birds out of cages and in the wild for the future.

A big thank-you to all the generous volunteers who made our Spanish translation possible and to Naturalist Journeys for funding the inaugural printing and distribution. My personal thanks also to Knoxville traveling companions, Billie Cantwell and Colin Leonard, who inspired this journey and helped me navigate and record our experiences.

The Spanish translation of Discover Birds is now available as a free pdf on the Tennessee Ornithological Society website: <http://www.tnbirds.org/education.html>

You may also enjoy visiting the Discover Birds Blog post, Sharing Discover Birds with Cuba: <http://discoverbirds.blogspot.com/2017/02/sharing-our-discover-birds-activity.html>

Discover Birds in Spanish and in Cuba!



Discover Birds Spanish 2017 Cover



Omar Ramirez & Vickie Henderson
Topes De Collantes, Cuba. Photo by Billie Cantwell



Students Jhoana Ramirez and Angel Lopez work on Spanish Translation. Photo by Barbara Routledge

CHAPTER NEWS

The **HERNDON CHAPTER** of Tennessee Ornithological Society has had a busy winter season, but most members are eager for spring's arrival and the return of many favorite species of birds.

The chapter conducted its annual Christmas Bird Counts in Elizabethton and Roan Mountain. The 2016 Elizabethton CBC tied a previous record for high count.

The 74th consecutive Elizabethton CBC was held Saturday, Dec 17. Twenty-four observers in six parties, plus one feeder-watcher, participated. Conditions were generally favorable and featured mild temperatures (35-66 degrees) on a mostly cloudy day with windy conditions, especially in the higher elevations. A total of 80 species were tallied, tying the all-time high for this count set in 2012. A dozen species of ducks (plus four more in count week) were counted on this year's Elizabethton CBC.

The 64th Roan Mountain CBC was held Wednesday, Dec. 21, with six participants in two parties. Conditions were generally favorable. A total of 42 species were tallied, slightly below the recent 30-year average of 46.

The chapter is almost ready to release a brochure targeted toward children to encourage an early interest in birding. Titled "Let's Go Birding", the brochure is a joint project of the chapter with Carter County Parks and Recreation. The brochure will feature color photographs of 33 of the region's most common birds. Children can tally on the brochure any of the species that they observe.

Several chapter members were honored with the Howard P. Langridge Award for most bird species found in a calendar year in the five-county area of Northeast Tennessee. Pete Range, Jim Anderson, Rick Knight, Roy Knispel, Glen Eller, Jerry Bivens and Harry Lee Farthing were this year's recipients for seeing at least 200 species in the count area in 2016. Knight led the group with 225 species.

The sales of the chapter's 2017 calendar, which featured full-color photos of dozens of Tennessee bird species, provided another successful fundraiser for the group.

Officers for the chapter are: Kim Stroud, president; Vern Maddux, treasurer; Debi Campbell, secretary; and Rick

Knight, vice president for field trips; and Bryan Stevens, vice president for public relations. The chapter meets on the campus of Northeast State Community College in Elizabethton.

Bryan Stevens, Newsletter Editor



Photo by Bryan Stevens

Standing from left: Pete Range, Jim Anderson, and Rick Knight; seated from left, Roy Knispel, Glen Eller, Jerry Bivens; and Harry Lee Farthing. These TOS members are recipients for the 2016 Howard P. Langridge Award.

TOS Commemorative Patch

Thanks to Bristol's Bill Bridgforth, we now have a TOS 100 Year Anniversary commemorative patch available (see below).

They are \$3 apiece for the three inch patch. Individuals or chapters may contact me at eyerout@bellsouth.net to order them directly.

Steve Routledge



CHAPTER NEWS

We have sad news to share from the **KINGSPORT CHAPTER**. Zellie Earnest a longtime resident of Kingsport passed away January 24th of this year. If you met Zellie, you made a friend. Zellie and his wife, Pat, were leaders in service being active in their church, Meals on Wheels and serving youth in our community. Zellie volunteered on the troop, district, and council of the Boy Scouts and on maintaining the Appalachian Trail. He was most widely known for his conservation work for the Eastern Bluebird throughout the region. He was founder of the Kingsport Bluebird Society, doing work himself and mentoring others to build, erect, maintain, and monitor bluebird nest boxes. He was instrumental in developing multiple bluebird trails in the Kingsport area. We will miss Zellie's mentoring spirit.

Over a dozen bird walks and field trips have kept Birding Kingsport members busy, venturing outside the area to Cove Lake State Park (thanks to Ron and Dollyann), Seven Islands State Birding Park, Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge and Chattanooga hotspots, Burke's Garden, Virginia, the winter TOS meeting at Paris Landing, and Wings over Water Encore on the Outer Banks.

The 117th Audubon Christmas Count was held December 31st, at the end of an unusually warm December with 19 participants. 72 species and 6589 birds were found. These numbers are lower than have been recently experienced due to the warm weather.

Our January program was an update on the ETSU Eagle Cams that provide high def, real-time views with two cameras at two different locations on Boone Lake in Washington and Sullivan counties. Currently both nests have eggs being incubated. The link to the eagle cams is <http://www.etsu.edu/cas/biology/eagle-cam/cameras.php> and their Facebook page is "ETSU Eagle Cams". Activities at the Greater Kingsport Boys and Girls Club have centered on monitoring feeders and the wetland on the Kingsport Greenbelt with the youth and getting ready for spring migration.

Our meetings are held at the Downtown Kingsport Association, 229 Broad Street, Kingsport on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Check out www.birdingkingsport.org

We look forward to seeing you in Kingsport this fall – October 6th-8th!

Bill Grigsby, President

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER - Officers: Tom Howe President, Merikay Waldvogel Vice President, Morton Massey Treasurer, Talissa Ralph Secretary. State Directors: Ron Hoff, Dollyann Meyers, and Michael Plaster.

During the fall KTOS continued its community outreach through the Discover Birds program. Volunteers from KTOS lead bird walks and gave presentations at local schools.

Support of ongoing projects include the building of a Chimney swift tower in Seven Islands State Birding Park.

The Knoxville chapter is also gearing up for hosting the state-wide Spring meeting in May.

October speaker Morton Massey was one of 11 birders who went to Attu, Alaska. 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.

November speaker Barry Spruce gave a photography-based presentation on raptors. He is a nature and wildlife photographer who lives in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains in Townsend, Tennessee.

December speaker Mike Nelson spoke about his birding tours in Asia from the high Himalayas to the deep tropical rain forests, and from the wide plains of China to the remote islands in the Banda Sea. Many of Asia's most desired locations were viewed along with loads of its fantastic resident birds. Mike's photos dazzled.

In January KTOS members shared photos of birds both local and from trips around the world. February speaker Mark Armstrong, a master hummingbird bander, gave us an update on his ongoing study of hummingbirds, especially those overwintering in the Knoxville area.

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 6:45 p.m. in Room 118 of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine.

Talissa Ralph Secretary

CHAPTER NEWS

MEMPHIS CHAPTER would like to thank Georges McNeal, MTOS VP and Program Chair, for the great line-up of speakers this past fall and winter. Dr. Michael Collins, Department of Biology at Rhodes College, presented his research in November on avian body size and how it may be related to climate change. We were delighted to have MTOS Member, Nitya Vittal for our December meeting. Nitya shared with us some of her pictures and experiences while working and traveling in India, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Kenya and Tanzania. In January artist and MTOS member Sally Markel shared her passion for painting birds in watercolor. Our February meeting featured MTOS member and photographer Larry McPherson. Larry shared his documentary on *The Loggerhead Shrike*, which was recently featured on our local PBS station.

MTOS birding hikes have recently traveled to destinations such as Shelby Farms, T.O. Fuller State Park, and TVA's Robco Lake. In December several CBC hikes covered Fayette County, Sardis Lake, Overton Park, Arkabutla Lake, Wapanocca Wildlife Management Area, and Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park. Several MTOS members also participated in Strawberry Plains Audubon Center's winter bird count and were treated to a delicious lunch provided by the Strawberry Plains staff. In February several MTOS members traveled to Reelfoot Lake for the annual Eagle Fest.

The Chapter held their annual March potluck banquet. The club purchased BBQ and MTOS members brought a dish to share. This year's program was presented by David Haggard, Interpretive Specialist with TN State Parks. David brought a variety of birds of prey and other animals. New at this year's banquet was a Silent Auction.

Kate Friedman, President

Hard to believe it's 2017! But as time moves on so does the work of the **NASHVILLE CHAPTER** of TOS. Our two current conservation projects "Keeping Cats Indoors". [https:// abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/](https://abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/) and "Window Strikes" <https://abcbirds.org/program/glass-collisions/> are continuing this year. Members have been sharing the "Cats Indoors" brochures and talking with local veterinarians, neighbors and friends through this grassroots Club effort. The "window strike" project,

coordinated by members Melinda Welton, Ashley Heene, Denise Weyer and I are moving full steam ahead with a cooperative effort with Jim Hester of Metro Nashville Parks. It's our hope to raise funds to purchase the different products that help to prevent window collisions and install them first at Shelby Bottoms Nature center as a "show-case" and then expand our efforts to the other Nature Centers within Metro Nashville. Stay tuned for information and fundraising efforts with this ongoing project.

Steve Routledge, Ashley Heene and I have been working on updating the NTOS brochure. Final edits and tweaks are underway and printing will take place shortly.

Our two Christmas Bird Counts occurred on December 17th and December 31st. The unseasonably mild temperatures and rain didn't stop our members from coming out and participating in good numbers. Compilation of the data revealed an average number of species. Most notable bird was probably the Rufous Hummingbird in the Radnor Lake portion of the circle. A huge thank you to Ann Inouye, Richard Conners, Tarcila Fox and Scott Block for their work coordinating and compiling the people and the numbers.

Our 41st year of Wednesday morning Radnor Walks will begin on April 19th and run through May 10th beginning at 7:30 am in the west parking lot of Radnor Lake State Park. These walks are always popular in the spring and continue to serve as a wonderful community outreach program. An advanced thank you to Kevin Bowden, Pam Lasley, Ed Schneider and Susan Hollyday for volunteering to each lead one of the four walks this spring.

Elections for upcoming officers and board of directors will be forthcoming, and I'm happy to report that just about our entire team has volunteered to retain their current positions for another two years. This kind of continuity and volunteer spirit is a hallmark trait of the good folks of TOS.

Finally, we look forward to seeing everyone in Knoxville at the Annual Spring TOS meeting. Travel safely and as always, good birding!

Till next time
Cyndi Routledge, President

MOSQUITOES AND AVIAN DISEASE IN HAWAII

Hawaii is the bird extinction capital of the world, and avian malaria and pox were one of the major factors in the wave of extinctions that occurred around the start of the 20th century. There is strong negative association between Hawaiian passerines, which are mostly confined to the cooler, higher elevations, and the disease-vector system, which is limited to the warmer, lower elevations. As a global climate change increases temperatures and alters rainfall patterns, the mosquito-disease zone will expand upward in elevation, thereby increasing the transmission risk to the remaining bird species and causing another wave of extinctions.

Recent advances in biotechnology hold exciting promise for potentially resolving this decades-long conservation crisis. There are now multiple techniques for modifying, suppressing, or even eliminating mosquito populations to prevent the transfer of avian diseases. Most of these techniques have been limited to small field tests or confined to the laboratory, but within the next few years there is the potential for these techniques to be tested and applied at a larger, landscape scale. Some have already been used in other parts of the world to control mosquitoes to reduce the spread of dengue fever and other human diseases, or to control agricultural pests.

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has been actively involved in these discussions, and developing an overall strategy that include extensive public engagement before any decisions are made or management actions taken. There were two sessions focused on this issue at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress in Honolulu (September, 2016), followed by a two-day workshop on eliminating the non-native mosquitoes throughout the state.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Domestic cats can make wonderful pets, but outdoors, cats are a non-native and invasive species that threaten birds and other wildlife, disrupt ecosystems, and spread diseases. Now numbering well over 100 million in the United States, cats kill approximately 2.4 billion birds every year in the U. S. alone, making cat predation by far the largest human-caused mortality threat to birds. The American Bird Conservancy's (ABC) Cats Indoors Program educates the public and policy makers about the many benefits to birds, cats, and people when cats are maintained indoors or under an owner's direct control. In addition to advocating for responsible pet ownership, ABC also opposes Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) for feral cats, because of the persistent and severe threats posed by feral cat colonies.

Source for both articles: American Bird Conservancy (www.abcbirds.org)

Editor's note: TOS is a member organization of ABC.

June 30th Deadline

The deadline date for the August issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is June 30th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

Submit Material To:

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“THE TENNESSEE WARBLER”

Published by the
Tennessee Ornithological Society
274 Beech Grove Rd
McMinnville, TN 37110

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