



January MTOS Meeting and Program Cancelled Due to Snow/Ice.

The snow on Monday night/Tuesday morning and the continuing low temperatures made driving hazardous through Wednesday so, in the spirit of safety and caution, the meeting was cancelled.

Field Trip Reports:

Fayette County CBC - December 15, 2017: Fayette County had a total of 76 species for the 2017 CBC. The notables include:

First record for Ross's Goose

Third records for Blue-headed Vireo and Le Conte's Sparrow

Record low count for Mourning Doves

Record high counts for Eastern Phoebe (34), Tufted Titmouse (100), Pine Siskin (20), Snow Goose (408)

Low counts of sparrow, hawk and owl species that were likely owing to overgrown fields in the Wolf River Wildlife Management Area that are due for prescribed burns this spring.

(submitted by Fields Falcone)

Arkabutla Lake CBC - December 30, 2017: 10 participants from the Memphis Chapter of TOS.

87 species, with 2 Count Week species

New to count - Glaucous Gull

New high counts - Killdeer, Turkey Vulture, Wilson's Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, Short-eared Owl.

New low count - Ruddy Duck (1)

Notable misses - Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Horned Grebe, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, American Coot, Herring Gull, Forster's Tern, Brown Creeper, Brown Thrasher. (submitted by Van Harris)

Moon Lake, Mississippi CBC - January 3, 2018: 93 species observed (new high count). 60,000 Snow Geese, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Long-tailed Duck, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Bald Eagle on nest, four Great Horned Owls. (Dick Preston)

Wings of Winter Birding Festival - January 19-21, 2018: The 1st Wings of Winter Festival was held at Paris Landing State Park. 10 chapter members were among 84 participants. Featured speakers were Brian Fox Ellis, who portrayed John James Audubon, and noted wildlife writer and artist Julie Zickenfoose. Both presentations were truly outstanding. Field trips included Paris Landing State Park; Cross Creeks NWR; Tennessee NWR (Britton Ford, Big Sandy and Duck River units); and Kentucky Dam. A photography workshop and a beginning birder class were also conducted. (Preliminary) species total for the weekend was 98. Noteworthy sightings included: Mute, Tundra and Trumpeter Swans; Sandhill Cranes; 20 species of geese & ducks; more than 70 Bald Eagles, Red-breasted & Brown-headed Nuthatches; Lapland Longspurs and American Tree Sparrows. Having been judged a great success, planning is already underway for next year. (Dick Preston)

More info on Feb. 10 TVA & Robco Lakes Field Trip: After meeting at the TVA Lakes on the levee overlooking the pond, we will stop along Riverport Road to view acres of Gadwalls and backtrack south through Boxtown and Coro Lake to Robco Lake. I have not been to Robco this season, so plans could change if access is blocked. BBQ aficionados can lunch at Interstate BBQ if they so desire. (Virginia Reynolds)

Interesting sightings:

Virginia Reynolds - at feeders in yard - Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Orange-crowned Warbler. Jan. 11, 2018.

Dick Preston - Shelby Farms - Long-billed Dowitcher, Merlin, Sandhill Cranes, Common Goldeneye (also at Herb Parsons Lake), and at least 8 Short-eared Owls continue on Gardener Road. Cackling Geese and Lapland Longspurs (Ensley Bottoms), Short-eared Owls (Arlington).

Conservation:

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act, one of the nation's oldest wildlife conservation laws, is celebrating its 100-year anniversary in 2018 - and it is under unprecedented threat. A new administration policy, along with a bill moving forward in the House of Representatives, would weaken the law by eliminating any protection for migratory birds at risk of being killed at industrial developments.

The Tennessee Ornithological Society has joined with a diverse group of organizations, led by the American Bird Conservancy, in opposing the policy change and the bill in the House of Representatives.

Read more at the American Bird Conservancy website: www.abcbirds.org/. (Dick Preston)

TENNESSEE BIRD CONSERVATION MEETING

The first Tennessee Bird Conservation meeting was held at the Nashville Zoo on January 9 – 10, 2018. The meeting was organized by David Hanni of The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. Comprised of a diverse group of organizations, the purpose of the meeting was to encourage cooperation, coordination and information exchange, to benefit birds in Tennessee and throughout the Americas. More than 60 people attended.

In addition to TOS, other groups included: The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation; The Tennessee Valley Authority; Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture; Tennessee River Gorge Trust; The Tennessee Division of Natural Resources; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Southeastern Avian Research; The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; representatives from The University of Tennessee (Knoxville and Chattanooga); Austin Peay State University; Rhodes College; and Fort Campbell. Memphis chapter president Michael Collins and conservation chair Dick Preston represented our chapter.

Presentations included: game bird and non-game bird programs in Tennessee (David Hanni - TWRA); Full Life Cycle Conservation of the Cerulean Warbler and Golden-winged Warbler (Dr. David Buehler, UT-K and TOS); Louisiana Waterthrush Migration and Connectivity (Eliot Berg Tennessee River Gorge Trust); Southeastern Avian Research (Cyndi Routledge – SEAR and TOS); Efforts with Black Vultures (Brett Dunlap - USDA); Tennessee State Parks Birding Trails (David Lincicome – TDEC); Migratory Bird Joint Ventures and Avian Conservation Assessment Database (Becky Keller – AMJV); Conservation Efforts by TVA (Damien Simbeck); TOS (Dick Preston and Melinda Welton) and our own Michael Collins presented preliminary data on his Loggerhead Shrike Distribution and Migration Study. (Dick Preston)

TWRA Soliciting Public Comments: The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) is soliciting public comments about the upcoming 2018-2019 hunting season through Feb. 15. Do you have concerns about season length or bag limits for any game species, like gallinules, rails or Northern Bobwhite?

Submit your opinion and recommendations by e-mail to: TWRA.huntingcomments@tn.gov (please include "Hunting Season Comments" in the subject line) or mail your comments to: **2018-19 Hunting Season Comments; TWRA, Wildlife & Forestry Division; P.O. Box 40740; Nashville, TN 37204.**

FYI:

Delta Wind Birds Winter North Delta Field Trip, Panola County, Mississippi - January 6, 2018:

18 of us braved the chilly weather to bird Panola County. Things got off to a great start, as we quickly found the continuing dark-morph Rough-legged Hawk on Pride Road, near the unplowed fields. Lots of Northern Harriers also entertained us there. Near the end of Holly Grove Road, we enjoyed a huge blackbird flock that included more Brewer's Blackbirds than any of us had seen in Mississippi - more than 1200, at least. Also in the flock were a few Rusty Blackbirds. A nearby Barn Owl provided a brief glimpse. We did check for the Sprague's Pipit, but no luck. We didn't have great luck with Sandhill Cranes, with only 3 distant flying birds. (Cooler weather brought 200+ to the area Jan.15, on Curtis Rd. in Panola County, per Mardi Russell.)

Frozen ponds along Samuels Rd. made the area less birdy, although a handful of Bald Eagles were seen. Our latest Le Conte's Sparrow spot was fruitful, turning up at least a dozen of these little beauties. After a quick lunch and warm-up session at the Windy City Grille in Como, we headed to Sardis Lower Lake, which we found jammed with waterfowl. A large number of Hooded Mergansers were seen, and Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Ducks were well represented. Canvasback and Common Goldeneye were seen as well. Good numbers of American White Pelicans accompanied by a number of gulls were at the spillway area. "Lester" the frequently seen Lesser Black-backed Gull was in his usual spot near the swimming beach.

Here are some eBird checklists, which will surely accumulate more photos:

Pride Road: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S41672222>

Holly Grove Road: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S41675343>

Ballentine Road: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S41684885>

Lower Sardis Lake:

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S41684768>

(Jason Hoeksema)



(above) Convoy of birders counting Blackbirds.



(Far right above)
Scoping ducks at Sardis.

(below) American White Pelicans
at Sardis spillway. (photos - C. Brown)

Annual March Potluck Supper

Our annual potluck dinner will take place before the program and meeting on March 21st. The chapter will provide BBQ, sauce, bread and a variety of soft drinks. Members are requested to bring a favorite side dish (hot or cold salads, beans or veggies) or a dessert, which can serve four to eight people. Members may also bring their favorite adult beverage, if desired. Cost is \$6 for adults (reduced from last year) and \$3 dollars for children, 18 years old and under. A silent auction will be held, with viewing and bidding prior to dinner, and pledges collected after the program. Please contact treasurer Barbara Pyles (Brbpyles@gmail.com or cell phone: 901-570-1009) if you wish to donate an item for the auction. Items may be brought to the February meeting, or pick-up may be arranged.

Volunteers are always needed to help with set-up and clean-up. Doors will open for volunteers at 5 PM. Members may arrive anytime after 5:30, but please have all food at the church by 6:30, when the serving lines open. The program will begin at approximately 7:15 PM.

In order to ensure we have enough BBQ, please RSVP to Dick Preston (dickpreston@rittermail.com or 901-837-3360), with the number of attendees, and the food item you will bring.

Program: “Bird on a Stick”

Presented by Dawn Wilkins, Professor of Biology at UT Martin

Professor Wilkins teaches Animal Ecology, Ecological Methodology, Field Investigations in Biology, Conservation Biology, and Field Ornithology. Her research interests focus on woodpecker communities in bottomland hardwood forests.

She has an M.S. in Biological Sciences from Eastern Kentucky University and a Ph.D. in Biological Sciences from Mississippi State University. Her Master’s thesis studied acoustic communication in Red-bellied Woodpeckers and her Ph.D. research investigated the winter foraging ecology of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers.

TOS Membership Information

Benefits include monthly programs, field trips, quarterly journals, and state and chapter newsletters.

Categories and dues are:

Individual	\$36
Family	\$40
Sustaining	\$55
College Student	\$23
Other Student	\$ 5
Lifetime	\$450 one time +\$18 yearly

Please send dues to:

Barbara Pyles

518 Forest Hill-Irene Rd. South

Cordova, TN 38018-4832

(901)570-1009 E-mail

brbpyles@gmail.com

Newsletter Delivery Options

To reduce printing and mailing costs, a digital version, which is usually expanded with photos and occasional articles, is provided. Notify Margaret Jefferson at mjefferson100@hotmail.com. If you have no internet access, a printed version can be mailed.

Chapter Newsletter Submissions

E-mail or call Chad Brown

cwb496@bellsouth.net or (901) 754-3385

Deadline for submissions to the

Newsletter is the 22nd of the month.

Field Cards

Please mail or e-mail your field cards and notable sightings to Dick Preston.

E-mail: dickpreston@rittermail.com

Tennessee Warbler Deadlines

*February 28 for the April Newsletter

*June 30 for the August Newsletter

*October 31 for the December Newsletter

Forward contributions to:

Theresa Graham, Editor

P.O. Box 366 Oakland, TN 38060

(901) 465-4263 or e-mail:

2graham@bellsouth.net

Chapter Meeting

February 21, 2018 at 7:00 PM

**St. George's Episcopal Church, 2425 South Germantown Rd.
Germantown, TN Phone 901-754-7282**

Program at 7:00 PM

"The Art of Decoys" presented by Rusty & Dianna Johnson.

Hospitality

Refreshments will be provided by **Thomas & Andrea Blevins** along with the help of **David Young**.

Field Trip Information

February 3, 2018 - Reelfoot Lake State Park & NWR: Leader will be **Knox Martin**, contact at knoxmartin2@aol.com or (901) 685-8827. Meet at the State Park Visitor Center parking lot in Tiptonville, TN at 8:00AM. We will bird the boardwalk behind the Center for a while so late arrivals can catch up.

February 10, 2018 - TVA & Robco Lakes: Leader will be **Virginia Reynolds**, contact vabreynolds@gmail.com or (901) 767-3547. Meet at TVA Lakes (ash ponds) on the levee at 8:00AM. Additional information on page 2.

Special Events

Great Backyard Bird Count - February 16-19, 2018. The GBBC is a free, fun and easy event that engages birders of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Anyone can take part, from beginning birders to experts, from your backyard or anywhere in the world. For instructions go to: www.birdcount.org then click on instructions (pdf) under GBBC toolkit. If you do not have an account you can create one at no cost at that time.

Plan ahead:

Annual Potluck Supper and Silent Auction - March 21, 2018 at the March meeting at St. George's Episcopal Church. Contact Dick Preston to RSVP your number of attendees.

[See Page 4 for details.](#)

Debra and Thomas Kienzle, on an outing to Arlington, TN, on December 16th, 2017, encountered the **Rufous Hummingbird** pictured below that had been reported there. Debra caught the bird drinking at the feeder (left) and Tom snapped the picture of it during a winged approach (right).



Shifting their efforts to their backyard, **Tom** submitted his photos of the **Carolina Wren** on the suet feeder and the male **Eastern Bluebird** waiting his turn as the female eats her fill on the same suet feeder.



Photos Dec. 31, 2017.

Andrea Cowart photographed **Short-eared Owls** and **Greater White-fronted Geese** on Gardener Road at Shelby Farms on Jan.12, 2018.





Thomas Blevins photographed this **Red-tailed Hawk** at Shelby Farms on Gardener Road December 11, 2017. The **Whooping Cranes** (below), at Wheeler NWR - Wildlife Observation Pool, Morgan County, AL. December 26, 2017.



The **Barn Owl** (above) photographed December 23, 2017, at Old Cotton Gin - Clarksdale Road in Crittenden County, AR. (T. Blevins)



Thomas Blevins photographed the **Common Redpoll** (above) on Turtle Creek Drive, Collierville, TN, on December 21, 2017, and the



the **Swamp Sparrow** (to the right) at Robbins-Halle Nature Preserve, Shelby County, TN, on December 25, 2017.