



The Chattanooga Chat

Ray Zimmerman, Editor: znaturalist@gmail.com

(423) 718-9393

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A Newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter
Tennessee Ornithological Society

April Meeting

Ascension Lutheran Church
720 S Germantown Rd
Thursday, April 13, 2016
5:30 p.m. Executive Board
7:00 p.m. Monthly Meeting
Program:

For the April 13 meeting one of our local members Fran Hiestand will show pictures from her trip to Australia last fall. It has been several years since we have had a program about birds in Australia. Fran saw lots of birds so I know it will be a good program. After the meeting Fran Hiestand and Sandy Caldwell (yes Fran is doing double duty) will provide refreshments.

Thanks

Thanks to David Hanni for presenting our March Program.



Eastern Screech Owl
Photo by Gary Lanham

Field Trips

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 8:30 AM, Chester Frost Park/Pinky's Point – Leader: Harold Birch - Meet at the fishing pier near the boat ramp. Expect to see Red-headed Woodpeckers, Brown-headed Nuthatches, Osprey, and possibly lingering loons and ducks, plus early migrants.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 8:00 AM, Guild Trail – Leader: Tommie Rogers - Meet in the lower parking lot across Scenic Hwy. from Ruby Falls. This is generally a prime location to see warblers and other migrants.

SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 7:30 AM – Reflection Riding Arboretum & Chattanooga Nature Center – Leader: Kevin Calhoon – Meet in the parking lot. This is always a good birding spot during migration.

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 7:00 AM Birding in the Smokies – Leader: Jeffrey Schaarschmidt - The plan is to stop at two main locations to locate our target species. First, we will stop by the West Prong Little Pigeon River to locate a pair of Common Mergansers. The birds have been seen with frequency at this location and are believed to be the same pair seen at this same location last year. Next, we will head to Clingman's Dome to look for Red-breasted

Nuthatches, Black-capped Chickadees, Ravens and Red Crossbills. If we don't locate Red Crossbills around the parking lot, there is the option for the more ambitious to hike to the closest Appalachian Trail shelter where they are much more frequently seen. In addition to the target species, participants should be able to see a good number of early migrants. Temperatures can be 10 to 15 degrees cooler near Clingman's Dome, so plan accordingly. We will stop along the way for lunch. We will meet at the Walmart, located at 2020 Gunbarrel Road. If you plan to go, please email or text Jeffrey so he will know who plans to attend - schaarschmidt@yahoo.com or 423-265-1313. Bring snacks/water.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 8:00 AM – Tennessee River Gardens, 22473 HWY. 41 – Leader: Clyde Blum –

There are always wonderful surprises on this trip. The Osprey are already there, but many other migrants should have arrived by that date.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 8:00 AM – More Birds & Battles of Chickamauga Park – Leader: Jim Ogden, Park Historian – Meet at the Visitor Center parking lot. This trip will be the third such trip and will be of interest to birders as well as students of Civil War history.

News Items

Hugh Barger Moving

I will be moving to the Nashville area in early April to be near my children and grandchildren. I am really going to miss all of the folks at the Chattanooga TOS. You have taught me so much about birds and birding, you have showed me where to go birding and above all you have been great friends. I hope to get back to town once in a while and I hope to see

you out birding around the state. Best wishes to you all.

Hugh Barger

David George Haskell will give a talk at UTC on April 17, presenting information from his new book.

<http://www.trgt.org/events-updates/2017/4/18/evening-with-david-haskell>

Chandler Robbins, Author of "Golden Guide", Passes at 98 years of Age – March 20, 2017

The world of birding and bird conservation lost one of its giants last night, with the passing of Chan Robbins. Many of you have participated in Breeding Bird Surveys, and that is an important part of Chan's legacy. For many of you, myself included, his field guide was the first one you owned and helped get you started on your birding endeavors. Many of you keep up with the life of Wisdom, the Laysan Albatross Chan banded in 1956, and who continues to produce chicks to this day. The list of his accomplishments is lengthy. A friend and colleague put together an obituary for the ornithological community, which I share with you below. I knew Chan personally, and he was a very humble, cheerful, and helpful person.

David Aborn

Chan is known for having [banded "Wisdom"](#) a Laysan Albatross - in 1956. She is still producing offspring at age 66, having last produced an egg in February 2017.

In the mid-1940s, Robbins became coordinator of the continent-wide collection of bird migration records. These 90 years of records are now being digitized and transcribed as part of the North American Bird Phenology Program.

Robbins co-wrote *Birds of North America: A Guide to Field Identification* in 1966, more commonly known as the "Golden Guide", which introduced innovative two-

page spreads that integrated text, illustrations, range maps and silhouettes and a range of plumages. The Golden Guide also represented bird vocalizations with sonograms, two-dimensional graphs of frequency and amplitude over time. Among Chan's many awards:

Linnaean Society of New York's Eisenmann Medal
U.S. Department of the Interior's Distinguished Service Award
American Birding Association, Ludlow Griscom Award
American Ornithologists' Union (now the American Ornithological Society), Elliott Coues Award
National Audubon Society, Audubon Medal

Partners in Flight Lifetime Achievement Award

In 2000, the American Birding Association established the [Chandler Robbins Award](#) for significant contributions to birder education and/or bird conservation. The Foundation for Ecodevelopment and Conservation (FUNDAECO) of Guatemala named the Chandler Robbins Biological Station, located in its Cerro San Gil reserve, in his honor.

Chan retired in 2005 but continued to work at the Bird Banding Lab on a regular basis. His colleagues at [Patuxent created this web page](#) dedicated to Chan. The [slideshow](#) is definitely worth watching.

<http://www.audubon.org/news/in-memory-chandler-s-robbins>

Selected publications

- Robbins, Chandler S.; P. F. Springer; and C. G. Webster. 1951. "Effects of five-year DDT application on breeding bird population," *Journal of Wildlife Management* 15(2):213–216.
- Stewart, R. E. and Chandler S. Robbins. 1958. *Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia*. North American Fauna No. 62. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Robbins, Chandler S.; Bertel Bruun; and Herbert S. Zim. 1966. *Birds of North America: A Guide to Field Identification*. Golden Press, Inc., New York, NY. [ISBN 978-0-307-13656-5](#).
- Robbins, Chandler S. and W. T. Van Velzen. 1967. *The Breeding Bird Survey, 1966*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Special Scientific Report—Wildlife No. 102.
- Whitcomb, R. F.; Chandler S. Robbins; et al. 1981. "Effects of forest fragmentation on avifauna of the eastern deciduous forest." Pages 125–205 in R.L. Burgess and D.M. Sharpe, editors. *Forest Island Dynamics in Man-Dominated Landscapes*. Ecological Studies 41. Springer-Verlag, New York. [ISBN 978-0-387-90584-6](#).
- Robbins, Chandler S.; D.K. Dawson; and B.A. Dowell. 1989. *Habitat Area Requirements of Breeding Forest Birds of the Middle Atlantic States*. The Wildlife Society, *Wildlife Monographs* no. 103.
- Robbins, Chandler S., senior editor; E. A. T. Blom, project coordinator; et al. 1996. *Atlas of the breeding birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA. [ISBN 978-0-8229-3923-8](#).

Lead Shot and Birds

Lead shot and other lead ammunition used in hunting has impacted waterfowl and other wildlife for generations, at least according to some researchers. A debate about the recent ban on lead ammunition for hunting on federal (now revoked) continues. Pros and cons are nicely summed up in this Christian Science Monitor article.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2017/0303/Lead-shot-OK-d-for-federal-lands-what-does-that-mean-for-conservation>

Notes from the Field

Observation of a Bluebird Nest

3 March 1st egg
4 March 2nd egg
5 March 3rd egg
6 March 4th egg

All four eggs hatched on 18 March.

I've lived in this house since July 1972. This is the earliest I've seen. I do remember one year that there was a nest with five eggs the last week of March but not hatched yet. They later hatched.

Jonnie Lyons

Saturday morning (March 4) at about 8:00 AM EST I watched a male Purple Martin for about 5 minutes at The Honors golf course in Ooltewah on a gourd stand. March 5 I saw two at another stand at the golf course. It is possible he or others may have been here days earlier. The earliest I have ever seen any here was Feb. 22 in 2005. The latest date for the first one seen here by me ironically was March 11 the very next year (2006). However, unlike in past years where I checked them every morning early, I now live off property and yesterday morning was the first morning I had been out there that early this year. The reason I say that is because when the first ones show up each year I never see them except in the early morning. Some years it may be into April before I start seeing them most all day. Sometimes even in early April hours may go during the middle of the day without seeing any at the gourds. I do not know what they are doing during those hours. Once nest building starts I usually see them all day long. I do not know if others have observed the same thing but I would think this is common with Martins.

David Stone

March 9

We heard a vireo singing in our neighborhood this morning on Signal Mountain around 11 AM and thought it was a Blue-headed Vireo.

After a thirty-minute search, we found the bird and confirmed that it was a Blue-headed, our FOY.

While searching for the vireo, we also came upon a Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Pixie and Gary Lanham

March 13

With late-day rain and falling temperatures predicted, the birds responded with increased activity around my home (Birchwood in Hamilton County) and elsewhere around the area, particularly this morning. My principal highlights for the day involved the "Nuthatches, Creepers" section of the TWRA/TOS Field Checklist of Tennessee Birds. For the first time ever, I was able to observe at least one of each of the 4 species in one day. For those who aren't familiar with the checklist, they are: Red-breasted Nuthatch (first sighting in a few weeks), White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and a first-of-the-year (FOY) Brown Creeper, which was seen near the Dry Branch TWRA boat ramp on Burdette Road/Shahan Road in Birchwood (Meigs County). Numerous Pied-billed Grebes and a Horned Grebe were seen at the Dry Branch boat ramp area. In all, 47 species were noted.

Charles Murray

Join TOS

Membership dues:

\$28- individual \$32- Family
\$15- student \$40- sustaining
\$460- Life (Life members must pay \$10 local chapter dues each year.)

Send checks payable to "TOS" to:

Gary Lanham, TOS Treasurer
21 Cool Springs Road
Signal Mountain, TN 37377
chattanoogatos@outlook.com

If you are a new member, please include your address, phone number, and an email address for Chat delivery and bird walk information.

All dues, donations, gifts, and bequests are tax deductible under Sec. 501 (c)(3), the Internal Revenue Code