



The Chattanooga Chat

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A Newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter
Tennessee Ornithological Society

April Meeting

Ascension Lutheran Church
720 S Germantown Rd
Thursday, April 11
5:30 p.m. Executive Board
7:00 p.m. Monthly Meeting

Program:

For our April 11 meeting we have Ron Hoff back. Ron has presented programs several times for us. This one is about his & Dollyann's trip to Peru in 2018. You can bet it will be good.

Thanks

Thanks to John Kuehnel who presented the program done 10 years ago by the late Dick Schier. He used the same photos and it was just as timely today as it was in 2009. John was with Dick when most of the pictures were taken.



Red-headed Woodpecker, one of 15 seen on CTOS field trip, March 19th, Chester Frost Park. Photo by Gary Lanham

April Field Trips

Reflection Riding Arboretum & Nature Center; every Saturday in April, 7:30 AM (April 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th)

Meet in the parking lot and be prepared to walk the property looking for Spring migrants. Bring binoculars, water and snacks.

More Birds & Battles, Chickamauga NMP Thursday, April 11th, at 8:00 AM, and Tuesday, April 16th, at 8:00 AM

Leaders: Danny Gaddy and Jim Ogden

Meet in the Visitor Center parking lot at 8:00 AM. This is a good time to check for warblers and other arriving migrants. Jim Ogden will go along with us to share his comprehensive knowledge of the history of the park. He is also great at spotting birds. We will make a birder out of him yet.

Tennessee River Gardens

Sunday, April 14th, at 8:00 AM

Leader: Clyde Blum

Take I-24 toward Nashville; at exit 174, go north on US 41 past the Highway Patrol station. Follow US 41 into Marion county. Pass the TVA Raccoon Mtn. entrance road, then take the first driveway on the right. Thanks to Ted Caldwell for arranging our visit.

Sequatchie Cove Farm

Friday, April 26th

Leader: Clyde Blum

More details to follow.

**McCoy Farm & Gardens, Signal Mtn
Saturday, April 27th, at 8:00 AM**

Leader: Kevin Calhoon

Kevin will take us around this historic property as we survey for birds. Come up Signal Mountain on US 127 and go through the business district of Signal Mountain. Pass Miles Road, then look for sign on right at a gravel drive. Turn in and follow drive, bearing left to larger parking area.

For further information on all field trips:
Pixie Lanham, planham@epbf.com
423-886-4321



American White Pelican, one of 250 seen on March 19th during CTOS field trip, Chester Frost Park. Photo by Gary Lanham

Research Opportunities

Hamilton County Migration Count

The count will be on Saturday, May 4, this year. For further information contact: Kevin Calhoon, kac@tnaqua.org

Smithsonian Yellow-billed Cuckoo Study

Hello members of TOS! We need your eyes and ears to be on the lookout for Yellow-billed Cuckoos this spring. I am working with the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and need as much data as we can get to help track YB cuckoos in the region.

If you are on a bird outing from April 9-June 20, can you please document the GPS coordinates of any YB cuckoos you see or hear? If you don't have a GPS unit, no problem! Smart phones with map applications can "drop a pin" (GPS

coordinates) and you can email it to me. If you have iNaturalist, that gives coordinates for specific individuals as well. Ebird is good too, but I'm looking for the precise location of the individuals.

In addition, documenting activity on the bird(s) would be helpful: for example, vocal vs. non-vocal? How many (solo or couple)? Any breeding activity? Any food acquisition or food sharing (a sign of breeding)? What about twig gathering or copulation?

Please send observations to
laurakmarsh@gmail.com



American White Pelicans, Chester Frost Park
Photo by Gary Lanham

Editor's Corner

Backyard Birds

Reviewed by Ray Zimmerman

Fully titled *Backyard Guide to the Birds of North America*, this volume is out of print, but readily available. This National Geographic guide is slimmer and less complete than their Field Guide to the Birds of North America, one of the better-known bird guides.

So, why read this less than compete field guide at all? For beginning birders, it provides excellent information on birding skills, bird finding, bird feeding, and backyard habitats. The authors devoted a full page to each species, so new birders can rapidly expand their knowledge base with facts old hands have acquired across the years.

The authors also provide vignettes, such as "Excavations and Drumming," which appears in the section on woodpeckers. Other brief articles address, "'How do Owls Hunt in the Dark?'" "Attracting hummingbirds," "Why do Birds Migrate?" etc.

Though I would recommend this book to a beginning birder as great reading, it is not a field guide in the traditional sense. The section on Corvids is very complete, including the Common Raven, Black-billed Magpie, Fish Crow, American Crow, and several jays. Meanwhile, the section on ducks and geese includes only two species.



American White Pelicans, flying north from Chester Frost Park. Photo by Gary Lanham

What Have You Seen?

March 19

Forty-nine species were noted in the Birchwood area today. Highlights from my property and from the TWRA boat ramp on Thatch Road in Hamilton County and from the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge, Shadden Road, Blythe Ferry Lane, the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park, and Blythe's Ferry in Meigs County will be noted below.

My property in Birchwood: Red-breasted Nuthatch, 35 Cedar Waxwings, 7 Purple Finches

Shadden Rd: American Kestrel, Lesser Scaup.

Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge: 24 Green-winged Teal

Blythe Ferry Lane: 3 Northern Bobwhite – a First-of-Year species (FOY), Bufflehead
Cherokee Removal Memorial Park: Tree Swallows, Ospreys (at least 5)

Blythe's Ferry: 3 Cliff Swallows – a First-of-the-Year species seen flying under the Highway 60 bridge

Thatch Road: Horned Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Ducks (3), American White Pelican, Common Loon
Charles Murray

March 21

Yesterday (3/21), I heard a Yellow-throated Vireo; Flipper Bend area, Mowbray Mtn.
David Aborn



Red Breasted Nuthatch, Chester Frost Park.
Photo by Gary Lanham

March 3

This afternoon there were two Pectoral Sandpipers in the big open field across from the Camp Jordan Arena.

Bruce Dralle

March 1

The Northern Rough-winged Swallow remains at the Brainerd Levee this afternoon.

Observers saw Barn and Cliff Swallows at Amnicola Marsh this evening.

Bruce Dralle

February 27

Yesterday morning we saw 3 Purple Martins at The Honors Course in Ooltewah. This is the third earliest date for that location I have seen (earliest was Feb. 22, 2005).

David Stone

February 27

I made my first conclusive sighting of Ospreys for the year as they perched on a utility pole at the north end of the bridge over the Hiwassee River in Meigs County this morning. The pair was noted and photographed. According to Bing Maps, the location is 4710 State Highway 58 South, Decatur, TN 37322.

Charles Murray

February 26

Forty-seven species were noted today. The most significant observations of the day were the migration of several large flocks of Sandhill Cranes flying north, mostly at high altitudes. I estimated around 1,000 cranes passed over the HWR area. The peak time of the crane flights began at approximately 4 PM. Another HWR highlight was the presence of 8 duck species: Gadwall, Am. Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, and Ring-necked Duck. Lesser Scaup and Bufflehead were also seen on a pond beside Blythe Ferry Lane as I traveled to the CRMP from HWR. Other notable species for me were as follows:

HWR: Hairy Woodpecker – a FOY for me, about 30 Am. White Pelicans, 2 Great Egrets, and one or more Pine Warblers

CRMP: 2 adult Bald Eagles

Home: Wild Turkeys, Red-breasted Nuthatches, a suet-loving Swamp Sparrow, and at least 3 Purple Finches.

Charles Murray

January 16

Birds were quite active in several areas that I visited in or near Birchwood today. Eight first-of-year species were noted at sites in Birchwood at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge, the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park,

Blythe Ferry, my home in Birchwood, and at a TWRA boat ramp on Thatch Road which is near Birchwood but may be considered Harrison. A total of 54 species were identified today. Highlights included: 10 duck species, including Green-winged Teal (CRMP), and Common Goldeneye (Thatch, >20), and Bufflehead (Blythe Ferry and Thatch)

Red-throated Loons and Common Loons (Thatch)

Great Egrets (HWR)

Bald Eagles, a total of 5 (HWR, CRMP, and Thatch)

Whooping Crane – maybe Sandhill Crane Festival visitors will see it this weekend (HWR)

Red-breasted Nuthatches, Winter Wren, 2 Hermit Thrushes – the first time I've seen them on suet feeders, and Purple Finches (Home)

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.