



# The Chattanooga Chat

Ray Zimmerman, Editor: [znaturalist@gmail.com](mailto:znaturalist@gmail.com)

(423) 718-9393

March 2019: Vol. 43, No. 5

A Newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter  
Tennessee Ornithological Society

---

## March Meeting

**Ascension Lutheran Church**  
**720 S Germantown Rd**  
**Thursday, March 14**  
**5:30 p.m. Executive Board**  
**7:00 p.m. Monthly Meeting**

### Program:

John Kuehnel will present the program done 10 years ago by the late Dick Schier. The program uses the same photos and is just as timely today as it was in 2009. John was with Dick when most of the pictures were taken. When Dick retired he presented a program every year of the birds he had photographed the previous year and they were always well-received.

## Thanks

Thanks to David Stone who shared some of his observations on many of our common birds at The Honors golf course the past 30+ years.

## Field Trips

**Chester Frost & Pinkey's Point**  
**Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 AM**  
Leader: Harold Birch 423-903-1655

Meet at the boat ramp. We should see Brown-headed Nuthatch, Red-headed Woodpeckers, and Osprey.

## Chickamauga Battlefield

**Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 8:00 AM**

Leader: Danny Gaddy 423-316-5647

Meet at the Visitor Center parking lot. Park Historian Jim Ogden and Danny will take us around the battlefield. We will look for early migrants while Jim gives historical interpretations of the sites where we are birding. Jim is a nationally known Civil War historian whose walks and talks are always entertaining and informative.

## Brainerd Levee

**Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:30 AM**

Leader: Tommie Rogers

Bring a scope if you have one to scan for migrating shore birds.  
Meet at the Shallowford Road entrance.

For more information contact Pixie Lanham [planham@epbf.com](mailto:planham@epbf.com)  
423-886-4321

## In Memoriam

We have lost another Chattanooga TOS member. Some of you may remember Bill and Betty Wampler. I was just informed that Bill Wampler passed away on January 22nd. His funeral was on the 26th. - David Aborn

## Spring Meeting

I'd like to invite everyone to attend the TOS Annual Spring meeting to be held

in Nashville April 26-28. The Baymont Inn is once again the host hotel and is currently holding a block of 30 rooms until March 15. NOTE THE EARLY CUT-OFF DATE !!! Mention your TOS membership when registering.

Currently, the rooms are \$124.99. Also, if you are planning to attend the banquet dinner Saturday April 27 at the Nashville Zoo, featuring keynote speaker David Pitts, please let us know by April 19, one week prior, for catering purposes.

We appreciate your early input and look forward to seeing you all this spring. Let's go birding!!  
Steve Routledge

### Editor's Corner

The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World  
By Andrea Wulf  
Reviewed by Ray Zimmerman

When Alexander von Humboldt left Cuba for his home in Prussia, after five years of travels up the Orinoco River, across the Andes, and back by way of a transect through Mexico, he took with him 40 trunks of rocks, minerals, preserved birds, dried mammal skins, pressed plants etc. Analysis of the plants he entrusted to his travelling companion, Frenchman Aimé Bonpland.

On route to Europe, he stopped in Philadelphia and sent a message to then-president Thomas Jefferson, offering to report valuable information on the new nation's neighbors to the south. Jefferson was as much interested in the specimens as the geography of Mexico or South America or the *Political Economy of Cuba* (which became the title of one of von Humboldt's books).

Though modern nature enthusiasts have traded butterfly nets and guns for cameras and binoculars, collections were

important research instruments in those times. Von Humboldt spent years analyzing the collections and generously donated specimens to museums, universities and other scientists.

The author describes von Humboldt as a polymath, one of those rare geniuses with expertise in multiple areas, and especially mentions his ability as an artist as well as a scientist. His drawings were important to the success of his books, particularly *Kosmos*, a massive effort to describe all human learning and achievement which incorporated writings of other scholars (paid for their contributions) and stretched to five large volumes.

The author credits von Humboldt with originating the contemporary view of nature with its numerous dynamic connections and replacing an earlier static view of the world; she includes a list of numerous significant persons he influenced, including Henry David Thoreau, Charles Darwin, George Perkins Marsh, John Muir, and Theodore Roosevelt.

This is a well-researched and well-written narrative. It explains the source of our current view of nature and the origin of a multitude of scientific and conservationist ideas afoot in our culture today.



The Tennessee River below Chickamauga Dam, 2.24.2029  
by Ray Zimmerman

## **The Songs of Trees**

I have also been reading *The Songs of Trees* by David George Haskell. Haskell has presented programs for our chapter in the past and has developed a strong reputation as a literary naturalist. His articles have appeared in scientific journals as well as popular news publications such as the *New York Times*.

This latest book includes information on how trees share chemical messages through their roots and through the network of fungal mycelia which surround them. He also describes trees as they support the birds and other wildlife of the forest community. This book is both informative and a great read.

## **What Have You Seen?**

February 16

The 3 White-winged scoters are still present as of right now, 9:21 am. Same location, currently swimming north.  
Valerie Wininger

On Fri, Feb 15, 2019 at 8:31 AM  
Comcast <massey6932@comcast.net>  
wrote:

The three White-wingers Scoters found yesterday afternoon by Bruce Dralle are still present from the Wolftever parking area near Harrison Bay in Hamilton County this morning. There is also a male long-tailed Duck. All of these are back towards the Harrison Bay entrance

Morton Massey  
Knoxville TN

February 14

This afternoon there were three White-winged Scoters seen from the Wolftever Creek Parking Area along Highway 58.

I also had a flock of fifty-six American White Pelicans flying to the North over Chester Frost Park.

Bruce Dralle

February 14

Late this morning, hundreds of Sandhill Cranes were flying north over the Birchwood area (Hamilton and Meigs counties).

Charles Murray

February 8

Headed down to Marion County to look for long-tailed duck. Figured second front might make it leave. Didn't find it. Red-breasted Mergansers, Canvasbacks, Redheads, Gadwalls, Lesser Scaup were present along with usual suspects. Headed up Raccoon Mountain since I had never been there and needed a few birds to hit 100 species on my Marion County list. Picked up Red-breasted Nuthatch, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Pileated WP to hit 100. Ran into Ron Hoff and Dolly Ann Myers earlier looking for the long-tailed. Just let me know when you're headed to Rutherford County. I'll try to get you on those winter birds you need. Got a good spot for Winter Wren. Remembered it after we went our separate ways. Beautiful day to be outside.  
Good birding  
Stephen Zipperer

February 3

This afternoon I found a Pacific Loon hanging out with three Common Loons at the Vincent Road boat ramp in Harrison, TN. The bird slowly drifted down river to Pecan Point area which is the sharp right curve in the road heading towards the boat ramp. The bird was relocated with a Red-throated Loon! Both birds were seen by many birders. Greater and Lesser Scaup were also seen at this location, and other duck species.

Libby Wolfe

February 2

Sorry for the late post, but Saturday February 2, I found 8 White-winged Scoters at Pecan Point on Vincent Rd in Harrison, TN. The scoters eventually joined a raft of approximately 135 Greater Scaup. These birds have not been relocated.

Libby Wolfe

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 (Meigs County), my home in Birchwood (Hamilton County), and at a TWRA boat ramp on Thatch Road which is near Birchwood but may be considered Harrison (Hamilton County). 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](mailto: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.