



The Chattanooga Chat

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A Newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter
Tennessee Ornithological Society



Snowy Owl visiting Chattanooga, January 16, 2021. Photo by Jefferey Scharschmidt

Monthly Meetings are on hiatus for the immediate future.

Chattanooga's Snowy Owl

Just when we thought it was going to quiet down, a [Snowy Owl](#) perched on the boat house of a private residence along Bel Harbor Drive, on January 17, 2021. This is perhaps the first ever visit by a Snowy owl to Chattanooga. The Snowy Owl came to most of the local birders' attention thanks to a report on eBird. Dozens of observers have seen the bird in the same area. **The Snowy**

Owl hasn't been seen since January 20, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

Field Trips

Fellow Chattanooga TOS members: Under the current Covid-19 environment it is difficult to know each person's comfort level for outings. I would be happy to coordinate outings and any member who would like to lead an outing please contact me with place, times, and dates.

Remember this is just a club and leaders do not need to be guide level birders. It

is just a time to get together and see some birds and enjoy the outdoors and each other's company. My email is gbrunvoll@epbfi.com.

Thanks, Gary Brunvoll, Vice President for Field Trips

Christmas Bird Counts

Hiwassee:

15 Participants found 89 species on the Hiwassee CBC held on January 1. This result was a little below normal. The most interesting birds included a total of 18,139 Sandhill Cranes, second most ever counted on this CBC, and 635 American White Pelicans, by far the highest total ever for this species. There were very few waterfowl and no owls reported.

I want to thank everyone who helped with this count!!

Kevin Calhoon, Compiler

Chattanooga:

Twenty-seven observers found 97 species on the Chattanooga CBC on Saturday December 14, 2019. That is a decent and a little above average specie count and had a lot of interesting species. Highlights include:

Northern rough-winged Swallow – Bruce Dralle first found this bird a couple of weeks ago. I believe this is a first for this count.

Pacific Loon – Chester Frost Park – spotted by Dan Jacobson

Sora –Standifer Gap Marsh

Lincoln's Sparrow – Baylor School

Marsh Wren – Baylor School

Peregrine Falcon

White-crowned Sparrow – VW

Osprey –Very rare on this count

Northern Harrier

No Brown Creeper or Barred Owl
I want to thank everyone who made this a successful count!

Kevin Calhoon
Count Compiler

Chapter members also participated in the Nickajack Bird Count.

Rare Bird Bonanza

Except where otherwise indicated, text and photos by Jeffery Scharschmidt

The rare bird bonanza started with Tennessee's first reported [Cassin's Kingbird](#) being seen at Bell's Bend Park in Nashville. The Cassin's Kingbird was first observed by Mary Glynn Williamson on December 6, 2020. While the Cassin's Kingbird hasn't been reported in a few days, it is likely still present.

Maryville's Pacific-slope Flycatcher



The bonanza continued with the Tennessee's first reported Pacific-slope Flycatcher being observed along Maryville's greenway. The Pacific-slope was first observed by Evan Kidd on about December 28, 2020.

An interesting story about how this bird was identified appears on our Chapter

web page.

<http://chattanooga.org/2021/01/18/ra-re-birds-in-tennessee-chattanooga/>

White-throated Swift,

The bonanza then moved to Chattanooga with Tennessee's first reported [White-throated Swift](#). The White-throated Swift was first observed by Wolf Jedamski, on January 10, 2021, and **was sighted as late as January 16, 2021. The bird hasn't been reported since**, but we are hopeful that it will return.

Chattanooga's female Anhinga

Then, on January 12, 2021, Libby Wolf photographed a flyover of a female [Anhinga](#) while birding at Standifer Gap Marsh. She states the bird flew in the direction of the VW Marsh. A day later a birder reported that he thought he saw the Anhinga towards the back of the VW Marsh, but also stated it was out too far to be certain. On January 18, 2021, Sally Michaud reported seeing what was probably the same female Anhinga flying west over the Curtain Pole Rd Marsh. **There haven't been any reports on this bird since.**

Chattanooga's Bullock's Oriol



On January 13, 2021, Tennessee's first [Bullock's Oriole](#) in 25 years, started visiting the feeders in Diane Whitman's

backyard. Diane graciously allowed visitors. **This bird was last observed on January 19 at 4:45 pm.**

Chattanooga's Redpolls

Chattanooga has had two separate confirmed Redpoll sightings in the past few days. The first reports involved two Redpolls which have been intermittently observed near where the Snowy Owl was being observed.



Common Redpoll by Tim Jeffers

A single female Redpoll was observed on Zephyr Lane, but it flew before the observer could take a photo. Attempts to relocate it were not successful. However, two days later two Redpolls were photographed on Preserve Drive. These birds were associating with Pine Siskins. There have been no additional observations at either location, since they were initially reported, and several local birders have actively searched for them. A much more consistent Redpoll has also been observed in the backyard of the mustard-yellow house next to the Ohio Reservation National Military Park on Missionary Ridge, which is located at 25 S Crest Rd.

The homeowner doesn't mind people looking at his feeders from the Military Park, HOWEVER he asks that observers not enter his property. This Redpoll prefers the platform feeder on the opposite

side of the yard from the park. It has been associating with a flock of House Finches. **It was still visiting the feeders on January 22, 2021.**

Chattanooga's Pacific Loon

Chickamuga Lake has also played host to a Pacific Loon. The Pacific Loon was first reported to eBird on December 6, 2020, as being seen from the Booker T.

Washington State Park boat ramp, by John Diener.

The Pacific Loon, assuming there is only one present, continues to be reported up-and-down the lake at various locations, including Chester Frost and the Vincent Road boat ramp. It was most recently reported yesterday (January 18, 2021) from the Vincent Road boat ramp.

Chattanooga area Red Crossbills, Evening Grosbeaks

The Chattanooga-area has also seen Type-1 Red Crossbills, visiting the Deer Creek Subdivision, just into Collegedale, and a good size flock of Evening Grosbeaks just a couple of miles into Bledsoe County, at Debrah Shannon's house. Both species were present as of January 18, 2021



Evening Grosbeaks visiting a feeder in Bledsoe County

Editor's Note A more complete article appears, with more photographs, on our

web page.

<http://chattanoogatos.org/2021/01/18/ra-re-birds-in-tennessee-chattanooga/>

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ChattanoogaTOS.org

Select membership level, click “Add to Cart”, and you will be taken to the Secure PayPal site where you can pay by credit card or PayPal account

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

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