

NewsHawk

NASHVILLE CHAPTER TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Upcoming Programs

April - No Meeting

May 20 - Costa Rica: Tropical Birding in the Age of Corona or “The Savage Life Chose Us” by Graham Gerdeman, Mike Smith and Frank Fekel

In early March 2020, three birders from Tennessee (Graham Gerdeman, Mike Smith and Frank Fekel) naively set out on a highly anticipated Costa Rica adventure, little knowing that the global Coronavirus pandemic was about to completely upend life as we know it. Arriving hours before non-resident travel into the country was halted, they experienced the highs of nearly empty epic hotspots, and the lows of hotels and national parks closing around them, an end to buffet

[continued on next page]

President's Message

It's hard to believe it's been well over a year since we've had an NTOS monthly meeting but time marches on and thankfully it seems we're finally on the cusp of being able to resume some 'normal' activities thanks in great part to science! As of now we will have our first 'in-person' meeting the 3rd Thursday in May. To be exact...**May 20th at 7:15 pm** with the caveat that it meets 'group gathering rules' set forth by State Parks and Ranger Steve Ward at Radnor at that time. By waiting till May, we were advised that it would give a bit of extra time for the State to feel safe lifting a few more gathering restrictions and for a few more members to get vaccinated. Masks will be required, as well as any other required safety protocol...but we'll finally be able to be together again! Mike Smith, Graham Gerdeman and Frank Fekel will be presenting a program about their adventures in Costa Rica. Which they were able to complete just as the world was 'shutting down' due to the pandemic back in February of 2020. Come if you're able and if you're not quite 'ready' that's okay. All in due time. Lastly, if anything changes between now and then, we'll notify you by email.

In addition, we are excited to announce that we will be holding our annual spring Wednesday walks again! We will shorten this spring session by one walk..so the first walk will take place on **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28TH. Meet in the parking lot outside of Radnor's Visitor's center at 7:30 am.**



Nashville Chapter
TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

[continued on next page]

Upcoming Programs

Breakfasts, and bathing in gallons of hand sanitizer at every stop. Along the way, they found 450 species of birds. This is their story.

June 17 - Northern California by Graham Gerdeman

In 2019, Graham Gerdeman joined two other Tennessee birds on a week-long trip to the Monterey Bay Area for some terrestrial birding as well as a long weekend on the water with pelagic birding icon Debi Shearwater during her last season of 44 years of leading trips. Graham will review a selection of birds from both land and sea along the California coast from San Jose south to Big Sur, with a few marine mammals for good measure.

We'll venture up the road and over the spillway and then down to Long Bridge. Stay for an hour or the whole morning. Masks will be required for safety within 6 feet of each other. Many thanks to Kevin Bowden, Danny Shelton, and Jim Arnett for volunteering to lead us as we 'tip-toe' back to the things we've dearly missed.

Please mark your calendars for the annual Spring Bird count. It will take place on Saturday, May 1st. Barbara Harris is the coordinator. If you've never done this count or any of our counts before and would like information you can contact Barbara at: harrbarbara@bellsouth.net. For those who have counted in prior years, your area leader will be in touch soon. The more eyes the more birds seen and you'll never know what surprises you might find on one of these counts. It's easy and it's fun.

I'm also happy to announce that the current Executive Board of Directors and most Committee Chairs of NTOS have all agreed to continue serving. In addition, it's with pleasure that I nominate the following 3 members to be our new State Directors for the 2021-2023 term. Amy Pardo, Jerry Webb and Hugh Barger. All have accepted the nomination and agreed to serve. Please consider this and the official slate, found within this newsletter, as written notice of the slate of nominees. We will re-read the list at our May meeting and vote in June in accordance with our By-Laws. As always, we thank all those who serve us including but not limited to our current State Directors Barbara Harris, Rick Blanton and Melinda Welton for their 3 years of service to NTOS as their tenure ends August 31, 2021.

Please check out the upcoming NTOS field trips that Coordinator Mike Smith has put together for us as well as the programs coordinator Susie Russenberger has scheduled, rescheduled and scheduled again. All can be found in this issue of the newsletter, on the TOS webpage under 'Events' and on our own NTOS page. Many thanks to both of these individuals and all others who have worked hard for NTOS during this pandemic.

In State news...we have a new TOS President. Dr. Michael Collins, professor of ornithology at Rhodes College, to the reins on January 1, 2021. Michael began his tenure as TOS President

[continued on next page]

Upcoming Field Trips

April 17 - Beaman Park

By mid-April, many neotropical migrants will be arriving back in Middle Tennessee; some will stay to breed, while others will continue their northward journey to more northerly attitudes. Come join us as we explore the steeply forested hillsides and creek bottoms in search of the new arrivals. Louisiana Waterthrushes should be setting up shop, along with Yellow-throated Warbler and Northern Parula. It's also the best spot in the country to find Worm-eating Warbler. In addition, we can also expect to find other migrating warblers, thrushes, and tanagers, along with some lingering winter visitors. An added bonus is the spring wildflower display, and if conditions are right, lots of newly emerged spring butterflies should be on the wing as well. We will meet at 7:00 am at the Creekside trailhead parking lot located off of Little Marrowbone Rd. Please wear sturdy footwear as the trails can be muddy, especially after it rains.

[continued on next page]

as a one-time exception to the normal installation of the officers, due to the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic. The vote took place at the Board of Directors meeting on November 11th, 2020 during our Zoom meeting. All other officers and committee chairs will be installed at the annual meeting in the coming weeks, which will also be a Zoom meeting due to the lingering pandemic. Date, time and details will be forthcoming so watch the TOS webpage under 'News' for that information (<https://tnbirds.org/news/>).

Finally, I want to take a minute to thank each of you for your support, encouragement and patience as we together, chartered this once in a lifetime world crisis. Two migration seasons will have come and gone and a third will be in full swing when we officially step back into our meeting room at Radnor. Through it all I was comforted by the regular turn of the seasons, the annual cycle of birth, growth and migration. I've discovered hidden birding places closer to home, learned to slow down a bit and took stock of what was important in my life. I hope through it all you've found the same comfort, sense of place and peace.

Be well, stay safe and we'll see you all very soon!

Cheers and as always,
Happy birding...
Cyndi Routledge, President

Return Of The Radnor Lake Wednesday Morning Walks

We're happy to announce the return of the ever-popular Wednesday morning migration walks at Radnor Lake. We will 'tip-toe' back into this walks by holding **ONLY THREE this spring**. The first will be on Wednesday, April 28th, and be led by Kevin Bowden. We will meet in the west parking lot outside the Visitor's Center near the kiosk. At 7:30 am we'll venture up the road, across the spillway and down to Long Bridge looking for spring migrants and the last of the winter species. Once at Long Bridge the walk is 'official' over however some will chose to venture around the lake; feel free to join them if you're up for it.

[continued on next page]

Upcoming Field Trips (continued)

Parts of the hike involve some relatively steep ascents/descents as we work our way up and over the ridge, but we will take our time, looking and listening for birds along the way. For additional information, please email ms722@bellsouth.net with the subject "Beaman Park NTOS Field Trip".

May 1st - NTOS Spring Count

Our field trip for early May will coincide with our annual NTOS Spring Count: come team up with some of the most experienced birders at the top hotspots in town during the absolute peak of spring migration. All levels of experience are appreciated, and every bird counts, so please consider being a part of this important citizen science event! Last year, 150 species were tallied across 9 different locations, including 32 species of warblers! A full list of the routes is listed below, so please pick the one that works best for you.

2021 Spring Count Locations:
Beaman Park, Bells Bend Park,

[continued on next page]

Masks will be required when within 6 feet of your fellow members so don't forget them and have them on-hand.

The second Spring walk will take place on Wednesday, May 5th. Danny Shelton will be leading us that morning. Finally, the last walk for this spring will take place on Wednesday, May 12th with Jim Arnett leading the group.

Join us if you're up for it and if you're not quite ready to take this step 'into public' then mark your calendars for the Fall walks, which will begin on Wednesday, September 22nd.

Slate of Nominees for June Election

Please accept the following list of members as the official Slate of Nominees for the June 2021 Election/Upcoming Term 9/1/21 to 8/31/23 unless otherwise noted. Due to circumstances of the pandemic this will serve as the first and second reading of said slate. If any member would like to submit an additional name for consideration, please contact Cyndi Routledge and it will be gladly added to the Slate of the official election in June.

President - Cyndi Routledge

1st VP & Programs - Susie Russenberger (committed for one term expiring 08/31/22)

2nd VP & Field Trips - Mike Smith

Secretary - Margie Dunham

Treasurer - Pam Lasley

State Directors -

2020-2022 - Angie Elmore and Ken Oeser (already in place-will not appear on official ballot but duly noted).

2021-2023 - Amy Pardo, Jerry Webb and Hugh Barger

Curator - Susan Hollyday

Media Coordinator - Rick Blanton (committed for one term expiring 8/31/22)

Finance - Pam Lasley

Middle TN Bird Records - Stephen Zipperer (official TOS position)

Legislative Affairs - Melinda Welton

Outreach - still seeking a person

Upcoming Field Trips (continued)

Harpeth East, Harpeth West, Old Hickory Lake, Owl's Hill, Radnor Lake, Shelby Park and Bottoms, and Warner Park.

To sign up, please email harrbarbara@bellsouth.net, and indicate which route you'd like to sign up for, and you'll be put in touch with the local route leader to get the meeting time and place.

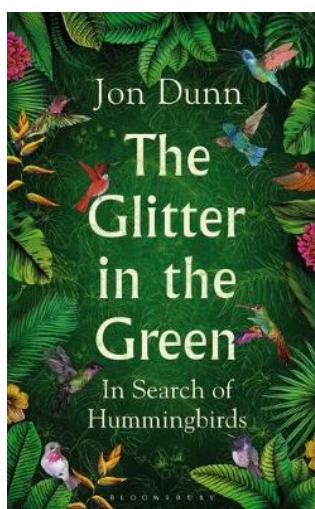
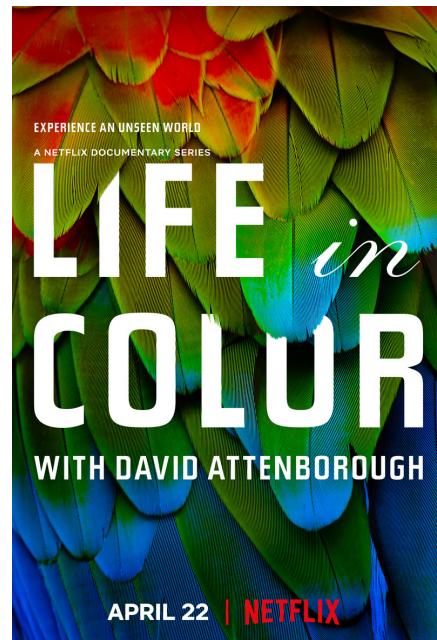
May 29th - Fort Campbell with Daniel Moss

Come join Daniel Moss as he leads us through the back country of Fort Campbell in search of the special species that call this active army post home. Fort Campbell offers unique habitats within our region the most notable of which is one of the largest remaining tracts of native tall grass prairie in the eastern U.S., known as the barrens, and part of the vast Pennyroyal Plain which once covered 3.7 million acres of western Kentucky and north central Tennessee. In addition to the expected breeding birds, our main targets will be Bell's Vireo, Henslow's

[continued on next page]

Bringing Nature Into Your Home: Life In Color with David Attenborough

Sir David Attenborough's latest documentary called *Life In Color* is set to hit Netflix on Earth Day (April 22nd). Split up into three episodes ("Seeing in Color", "Hiding In Color" and "Chasing Color") at approximately 50 minutes apiece, this documentary series explores how various animals, including birds, use color to their advantage. The catch to this series is that the viewer is given a window into what the animal sees through the use of special cameras developed for the series that offer a unique perspective not seen before. If you would like to check out the preview, it can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYj-7lrjC4c>.



Book Review: The Glitter in the Green: In Search of Hummingbirds

On April 20th, Jon Dunn, a natural history writer, photographer and hummingbird enthusiast, releases his opus to our smallest family of birds. *The Glitter in the Green: In Search of Hummingbirds* has Jon exploring the

[continued on next page]

Upcoming Field Trips (continued)

Sparrow, Dickcissel, and perhaps even Bachman's Sparrow. The trip should last about half the day. Please dress for the weather, and make sure to bring plenty of water and insect repellent!

We will meet at 7:00 a.m. at the former Ft. Campbell hunting and fishing station parking lot located at the corner of Lafayette Rd. And 101st Airborne Division Rd. Where we will meet up with Daniel. DO NOT proceed to any of the birding destinations on your own.

Special Notes regarding this trip - the trip is **limited to 10 participants**, and will be filled on a first-come first-serve basis. **NO cameras** are permitted, and I need to provide a list of names to Daniel ahead of time, so if you wish to participate, please email ms722@bellsouth.net with the heading "Ft. Campbell NTOS Field Trip". Also, per current Ft. Campbell regulations, everyone will be required to wear a mask, even in the field (this could change in the future).

entirety of the hummingbird spanning from just short of the Arctic Circle to islands in the shadow of Antarctica. Along the way, he encounters storytellers, birders and scientists and deftly weaves a story of all the fascinating adaptations and history surrounding hummingbirds.

Final Thoughts From The Editor

With Texas's worst storm in probably a hundred years in the rear-view window and power restored throughout the state, the last month offered a great reprieve from a difficult winter. It began with an Elegant Tropic seen at Estero Llano Grande, a city park in Mission, TX and continued with Mountain Bluebirds seen at Falcon Dam (just past the famed Salineno birding preserve that was sold and then rescinded; thankfully). A couple weeks later I hit a trifecta in my home city of Brownsville by ticking three lifers in a day: Golden-crowned Warbler, Tropical Parula and Blue Bunting. Not to be forgotten was a sighting of a Crimson-collared Grosbeak also seen at Reseca De La Palma. Even with the successes there were birds dipped on, Yellow-faced Grassquit (missed at both Reseca De La Palma and Estero Llano Grande), Black-capped Vireo (also missed at Estero) and my nemesis bird, Morelet's Seedeater which was seen at Salineno by several in our group yet I was off looking in a different area. Nemesis indeed!

With the coming of spring migration, birders everywhere are prepping for the similar thrills of warblers in spring plumage as well as the lovely songs of birds attempting to lure a suitable mate.

Despite all the optimism that this time holds I can't help but feel a little shaken by some things witnessed over the last handful of months. An assault on science that seems to be coming from all sides. Whether it be the effectiveness of masks or vaccinations or things more closely related to the natural world it would seem that disinformation and/or the reluctance to accept scientific recommendations are the true epidemic we are facing.

One such example resulted from an outbreak of salmonella in Pine Siskins that was devastating birds, especially on the west coast. As salmonella is spread via bird fecal matter, bird feeders

[continued on next page]

were contributing to the spread as the concentration of birds to one area was making the transmission much more likely. Several articles in places like the Bay Area, Washington state and Oregon were making the case that residents should take down their feeders until Pine Siskins vacated. Said articles were shared in Facebook groups dedicated to bird feeding and were met with overwhelming resistance. Claims ranged from “birds will freeze to death if I don’t feed them” to “I’ve not found any dead birds” to justify ignoring the recommendation. One even went so far as to assert that being able to see them was more important than losing a few.

Sadly the misinformation appears to even be coming from fellow environmentalists when it comes to a recently released documentary called *Seaspiracy* released on Netflix. Although the issues raised in the film are quite real, a plethora of marine biologists and others have taken umbrage with many of the finer details as well as the ultimate conclusion that the only way to save the ocean is to completely forego eating fish. Those raising issues with said details were swiftly met with attempts to try to intimidate them into silence on where the film falls short. George Monbiot, one of the key voices in the film, tried to deflect the criticism by claiming that all documentaries have questionable details and only “radical” films seem to be called to the mat over them. A perfect example of the ends justify the means type of thinking it would seem.

Thankfully, I have the utmost confidence in each of you. But we all face gray areas when it comes to interacting with nature and supporting causes connected to their preservation. Is 20 feet a suitable distance to photograph this nest? 40? 60? Should I enter this person’s property to find this bird? This article seems like it may sway people to the cause, should I forward it to everyone?

As we start to venture out into the world again, let’s all resolve ourselves to be seekers of truth, unbiased and willing to error on the side of the safety of the things we cherish. Not only will we be better for it but we’ll have the satisfaction in knowing we have done our small part to offer the next generation an opportunity to experience the wonders of nature.

Take care and happy birding!

Rick Blanton

NTOS Media Coordinator

P.S. If you plan on a post-COVID trip to the Lower RGV to share in our wonderful variety of birds, please give me a shout.

Officer List

- President - Cyndi Routledge (routledges@bellsouth.net)
- Secretary - Margie Dunhum (margiedunham@comcast.net)
- Treasurer - Pam Lasley (plasley@comcast.net)
- Program Coordinator - Susie Russenberger (susierussenberger@comcast.net)
- Field Trip Coordinator - Mike Smith (ms722@bellsouth.net)
- Media Coordinator - Rick Blanton (potofgoldfinch@gmail.com or 423.534.3182)