

# NewsHawk



4th Quarter, 2023

[www.nashvillebirds.org](http://www.nashvillebirds.org)

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NewsHawk deadline is the 15th of  
the month prior to publication  
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Our Websites

TOS [www.tnbirds.org](http://www.tnbirds.org)

NTOS [www.nashvillebirds.org](http://www.nashvillebirds.org)

NTOS Facebook [NashvilleTOS](https://www.facebook.com/NashvilleTOS)

Deadline for the 1st  
Quarter 2024 newsletter  
is December 15, 2023.

Please send information  
to [nashvillenews-  
hawk@gmail.com](mailto:nashvillenews-<br/>hawk@gmail.com)

*President's Message:*

**"How did it get so late so soon? It's night before it's afternoon. December is here before it's June. My goodness how the time has flown! How did it get so late so soon?" ~Dr. Seuss**

Here I sit composing the President's message for this 4Q NewsHawk and the above quote from Dr. Seuss seems all too apropos...where did 2023 go???

Our official summer hiatus ended with our **'Fall Flock' Pot-Luck dinner meeting on September 21<sup>st</sup>**. Thanks to all who brought the delicious food and sweet treats to share. Many thanks to Stacy Elliott for her wonderful program on eBird and Merlin.

**Elections for the upcoming 2024-2026 term** will be held at our November meeting. The slate of candidates is published within this publication per our By-laws. Please take a minute to look at it THANK those who are completing their terms, those who have agreed to continue serving NTOS into the next term and Cherie Parker who has agreed to be our new VP/Programs Chair.

The 46th season of our Wednesday morning **Radnor Lake Migration walks** kicked off on September 20<sup>th</sup> with Melinda Welton leading the group. Grant Winter led the September 27<sup>th</sup> walk and Cheri Parker and Danny Shelton will be leading our October walks. These walks continue to be an excellent outreach resource not only for potential members but for visitors to the Nashville area. I often get emails from folks who plan on visiting Nashville, including international visitors, that have read about the walks and ask to participate. This year alone I've had inquiries from birders from the UK, Canada, Australia and multiple US states. Seek out these guests during the walks and show them some NTOS hospitality. Additionally, please THANK each walk's leader either at the event or next time you see them. Without these wonderful volunteers there would be NO walks.

Many THANKS to all those who participated in the **FALL NTOS Bird Count**. Double thanks to Barbara Harris for coordinating and to Scott Block for compiling!! Look for posted results in the coming weeks on the NTOS website and on [tn-birds.org](http://tn-birds.org). Additionally, please mark your calendars for the **SPRING 2024 NTOS Count. It will take place on Saturday, May 4, 2024.**

The **2023 Fall TOS State meeting will be held in Chattanooga on October 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>**. In order to encourage folks to attend, CTOS has waived a registration fee for the event, but you still need to register. There will be a reception hosted by the

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**Chattanooga Chapter** on Friday night starting at 5 pm, field trips on Saturday and Sunday mornings to Chattanooga hotspots. We will hold our BOD meeting on Saturday afternoon followed by the traditional scientific paper sessions. Host hotel information and the registration form can be found in the last issue of The Warbler <https://tnbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Warbler-Aug23.pdf> and the TOS and NTOS webpages. We look forward to seeing many NTOS members there. And if you can't attend this meeting, mark your calendar and plan to attend the **Annual Spring Meeting to be held on April 26-28, 2024**, and hosted by the Knoxville Chapter. Watch for details as well as their announcement of the keynote speaker for the Saturday night dinner in upcoming TOS publications and the TOS webpage – [tnbirds.org](https://tnbirds.org)

The **2023 Membership Directory** has been printed. Copies were available at the September Fall Flock and will be available again at the October meeting. After that date they will be mailed to each member. THANKS to Pam Lasley for producing this publication and Susan Hollyday for your excellent proofing skills.

The **124<sup>th</sup> Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count for NTOS will be as follows: Saturday, December 16, 2023 (land count) and Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> (lake count)**. Details will be forthcoming at monthly meetings and on our webpage. In the meantime if you have any questions about the 'land' count contact me, [routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net) and for the 'lake count' contact Tarcila Fox, [tarcila@bellsouth.net](mailto:tarcila@bellsouth.net) or Richard Conners, [didymops07@gmail.com](mailto:didymops07@gmail.com). Please put CBC in the subject line. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to count!

Our **December monthly meeting, to be held on Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup> and will be our annual Christmas Party**. This meeting will begin at 6 pm with Pot-luck finger foods, beverages and good cheer. We'll hold a short business meeting beginning at 7:15 pm followed by a wonderful program on Cuba. So, mark your calendars and plan to attend this popular and merry celebratory meeting.

Until next time...

Happy birding! Cheers! Cyndi

## **Slate of Nominees 2024-2026**

The following is the Slate of Nominees for the 2024-2026 term and is being published per our By-laws. The term begins January 1, 2024 and ends on December 31, 2026. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at our November NTOS meeting prior to the vote. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer for an office or committee position, please let me know at [routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net)

Thank you.

### **Officers:**

**President:** Cyndi Routledge

**1st VP & Programs:** Cherie Parker

**2nd VP & Field Trips:** Mike Smith

**Secretary:** Margie Dunham

**Treasurer:** Pam Lasley

**Curator:** Susan Hollyday

### **State Directors:**

Amy Pardo, Jerry Webb, Hugh Barger, Angie Elmore and Ken Oeser

### **Committee Chairs:**

**Media Coordinator:** Angie Elmore

**Finance:** Susan Hollyday

**Membership:** Steve Routledge

**Legislative Affairs:** Melinda Welton

## ***Upcoming NTOS Meeting Programs***

NTOS meetings are held at the Radnor Lake Visitors Center on the third Thursday of every month. Meet and Greet at 7:00 pm; Business Meeting at 7:15; Program at 7:30 pm.

### **October 19 – Mexico with the Routledges**

Oaxaca, Mexico...one of the most ethnically diverse states in Mexico; home to some of the best food, mole (MOH-lay) and mezcal in the country. With stunning natural landscapes, beaches, colorful markets, wonderful people and of course BIRDS! Join Cyndi and Steve Routledge as they share with us the sights and sounds of their November 2022 adventures in Oaxaca with Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.

### **November 16 – Joan Howe - National Wildlife Refuges of Tennessee: It's All About the Birds!**

Join in a discussion with Ranger Joan Howe of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge as she explains the emphasis and management of national wildlife refuges in this area that focus on migratory birds, and how birders can help with some of the challenges they are now facing.

### **December 21 – Steve Lasley – Cuba**

Cuba is a politically controversial island nation only 90 miles from the U.S. As with many islands, geographical isolation over time has cultivated an incredible varieties of unique life forms. A large percentage of the plant and animals there are endemic - about 50% of all plants and one third of all vertebrates. Birds are no exception. Cuba's sub-tropical climate make it a good environment for some species to remain year round. Twenty seven bird species are endemic to Cuba. Join our intrepid birders as we go on a quest for the endemics.

## ***Upcoming Field Trips***

### **Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, Green Door Gourmet, Nashville**

We will tour this 200+ acre working organic farm which is nestled along the Cumberland River right across from Bells Bend Park. Featuring a mix of cedar forest, upland hardwoods, and large agricultural fields, it forms a habitat mosaic that should attract a wide variety of birds. We plan to hike around the entire property along a set of gravel and grass roads that visit these different habitats, and the total distance traveled should be approx. 3 miles. We have timed this trip to coincide with the peak of fall sparrow migration and plan to spend the bulk of our time exploring the open fields along the river. The farm also features restrooms and organic farm shop where we will conclude the trip. (Contact information: [ms722@bellsouth.net](mailto:ms722@bellsouth.net) Please include "NTOS Field Trip" in the subject line.)

### **Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>: Woods Reservoir Boat Tour (near Tullahoma)**

NTOS member Jeffrey Cowell has graciously offered to organize a boat tour of Woods Reservoir aboard his pontoon boat during mid-November, which is right when waterfowl migration kicks into high gear. We will spend several hours on the water searching for newly arriving migrants. The trip is open to NTOS members, and will be limited to **10** participants, which will be filled on a first-come, first serve basis. We will go out on the water in two shifts so that everyone has a chance to participate. The first group will go out at 9:00 am, and the next group will go out at 12:30pm. As participants sign up, they will be added to one of the two trips, and an email will be sent prior to the trip notifying everyone which trip they will be on. The boat will leave from the Morris Ferry Boat Dock at 99-79 Morris Ferry Dock Rd, Estill Springs, TN. A few notes: dress in layers; it can be much colder on the water. There are no restrooms on site although you can use Jeffrey's camp if it's an emergency. If you have a life jacket, please bring one. (Contact information: [ms722@bellsouth.net](mailto:ms722@bellsouth.net) Please include "Woods Reservoir Boat Trip" in the subject line.)

### **Christmas Bird Counts**

In lieu of a field trip, we hope that you will join our annual Audubon Christmas Bird Counts. This important citizen science project allows us to track long-term population trends of species and can be a vital part of making informed conservation decisions...and the best part – no experience is necessary! You don't need to be an expert in order to contribute – just bring your enthusiasm and a pair of binoculars! See the comments from Cyndi Routledge about the dates and places.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Reviewed by Cindy Kershner*

Looking for some holiday gift suggestions? How about a good book? Here's a random, eclectic and very incomplete selection of books for bird and nature lovers published in 2022 and 2023.

### **Oslo Learns to Swim**

Rex the warthog and Oslo the osprey bird are best friends, and this first in a new series in the Level 1 Ready-to-Read books is written and illustrated by Doug Cushman. Rex wants to swim, but Oslo has some serious objections. Ages 4-6.

### **How Birds Sleep**

Cuddled up, upside down, on the wing, underground or out in the open, the sleeping habits of more than 20 birds from around the world are highlighted in this lovely book written by David Obuchowski and illustrated by Sarah Pedry, a husband-and-wife team in their first picture book collaboration. Ages 4-8.

### **I Am a GREAT Friend**

All the capybaras have a symbiotic relationship with the bevy of birds on their backs, except rambunctious Baby Capybara and he just doesn't understand why the birds don't want to hang out with him. After all, he does fun stuff like play the drums! It turns out that he needs to find the right friend. Written and illustrated by Lauren Stohler, the illustrations in this book made me laugh out loud. Ages 4-8.

### **I Really Want to Make Lemonade**

After seeing lemons fallen from a tree, Really Bird really wants to make lemonade with his friends Cat and Rabbit. The trio figures out not only how to make the drink but manage to clean up the park by working with others in this slightly preachy but enjoyable book that is one in a series written and illustrated by Harriet Ziefert. Ages 5-7.

### **Birds (A Day in the Life): What Do Flamingos, Owls, and Penguins Get Up to All Day**

An hour-by-hour look at what's happening and when in the life of birds around the world. Written by Dr. Alex Bond, the principal curator of birds at the Natural History Museum in London, England, and illustrated by Henry Rancourt, the book highlights songs, nests, eggs, feeding, flying, and much more throughout the day. Ages 5-8.

### **Home Away from Home**

Bird-loving, 11-year-old Mia has too many changes going on in her life, and she's hoping a month with her grandmother in Maine at what she considers her "home away from home" will be the break she needs. But a pesky new neighbor her age and a beautiful bird of prey mean more changes. Lessons are learned and it all turns out well in this enjoyable book by past Newbery Honor Winner Cynthia Lord. Ages 8-12.

### **Nature's Best Hope: How You Can Save the World in Your Own Yard (Young Readers' Edition)**

When Douglas Tallamy's book, *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard*, was published in 2020, it caused quite a positive stir. The young readers' edition, adapted from the original by Sarah L. Thomson, covers the same ground, and it is easier and faster to read but just as informative and relevant. Ages 8-12, black & white photos.

### **The Swallowtail Legacy: Betrayal by the Book**

When the protagonist of a book is named Meadowlark Elizabeth Heron-Finch, you know birds will play some kind of role, although in this book by Michael D. Bell, it's not living birds. The second of the new Swallowtail Legacy mystery series, this entertaining book is set on an island in Lake Erie. Ages 8-12.

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### **101 Things to Do on a Walk**

The title says it all in this engaging book from Lonely Planet Kids. Close to home or farther afield, these detailed activities can make a walk more interesting and will help youngsters learn how to pay attention to nature. Ages 9-12.

### **Wildscape: Trilling Chipmunks, Beckoning Blooms, Salty Butterflies, and Other Sensory Wonders of Nature**

Keen observer and blogger at the Humane Gardener, Nancy Lawson writes about all aspects of nature, but birds get more than their fair share in this informative book. Divided into 5 sections—Scentscape, Soundscape, Tastescape, Touchscape and Sightscape—her personal stories, well-researched information and excellent color photos make for an interesting read. Adults.

### **An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us**

Author Ed Yong won the Pulitzer Prize for *I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grander View of Life* (an excellent book!). Here he describes the Umwelt (how the world is experienced by a particular organism) of insects, sea creatures, reptiles and animals other than humans, and it's amazing. For example, you may know that birds are tetrachromats and see four colors (blue, green, red and UV), as opposed to humans who are trichromats (no UV), but the ways in which some other organisms experience the world may surprise you! Photos. Adults.

### **The Pollinator Victory Garden: Win the War on Pollinator Decline with Ecological Gardening**

This book covers the topic thoroughly, as might be expected from Kim Eierman, the founder of EcoBeneficial. It is excellent for someone (like me!) trying to figure out how to “attract and support bees, beetles, butterflies, bats, and other pollinators.” There are illustrations, color photos and extensive lists of plants and resources. Adults.

Some other children's books I looked at but didn't have time to read and review:

**Eagles in the End Zone** by Heidi E. Y. Stemple, illustrated by Eva Byrne (ages 4-6);

**Eco Girl** by Ken Wilson-Max (ages 4-8);

**Palace of Books** by Patricia Polacco (4-8);

**A Dream of Birds** by Shenaz Patal, Illustrated by Emmanuelle Tchoukriel, Translated by Edwige-Renee Dro (5-8);

**The Famously Funny Parrott: Four Tales from the Bird Himself** by Eric Daniel Weiner, illustrated by Brian Biggs (7-10); and

**Goosebumps: SlappyWorld: Night of the Squawker** by R.L. Stine (8-12).

## **THE 11 BEST BIRDING APPS IN 2023!**

### **(IPHONE & ANDROID)**

I can't imagine leaving my smartphone at home when birding! As technology continues to advance, it has become an invaluable tool. For example, I have birding apps for just about everything, including field guides, checklists, automatic sound recognition, and even apps that help me find local birds that I'm looking for! But trying to find birding apps that work well can be difficult. I have downloaded some losers that were deleted immediately.

One of my favorite tips for birding beginners is to download a great field guide on your phone or tablet. *It will change your life by being able to quickly access so much information in the palm of your hand instead of trying to leaf through a paper field guide.*

### **#1: iBird Pro Guide to Birds**

iBird Pro is my favorite field guide that I use on my phone! It's super easy to search for birds using different features (size, color, location, etc.). *It's also nice that they have BOTH drawings AND pictures of each bird, which really helps me correctly identify each species.* Lastly, the vast library of sounds is also extremely valuable. Being able to compare sounds and calls has assisted in many tricky identifications.

### **#2: Audubon Bird Guide**

My favorite part of this field guide app is that it is free! It's great that the Audubon Society put all of this work and time into creating a fantastic electronic field guide, and now they give it away! I have this field guide on my phone alongside

iBird Pro. For tricky identifications, I find it helpful to consult them both. *If you are a beginner birder, I'd recommend getting this app before spending money on one of the other field guides.*

### #3: Merlin Bird ID

Not sure what bird you saw? *This app, created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is here to help.* Incredibly, this birding app uses Artificial Intelligence to help with identification. I recently started playing with the app and uploaded a picture of an American Robin and Mourning Dove from my backyard, and it nailed them both. *Pretty easy species to identify but a solid start!* If you don't have a picture, answering the five questions Merlin asks is also pretty accurate.

### #4: The Warbler Guide

Seeing a warbler is one thing, but trying to identify the correct species is a whole other challenge. This birding app is useful because it focuses on helping to identify warblers by sight or song as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### #5: Raptor ID

Raptors are incredibly hard for me to identify. Normally they are soaring too far away to get a good view. Even when they are close enough to see, I get frustrated with the subtle differences between certain hawks or the possibility I am looking at a juvenile. Raptor ID by HawkWatch International specializes in the 34 raptor species in North America. So if you struggle with birds of prey like me, this may be the app for you.

### #6: Larkwire

*Do you think that learning bird sounds by listening to call after call can get boring and repetitive?* Well, then this birding app might be just what you need. *Larkwire turns learning bird sounds into a fun game!* And as you master some of the easier birds, the game keeps progressing to more challenging species.

### #7: Chirp! Bird Song USA

Chirp is used to learn songs for birds that live in the United States and Canada. *This birding app is very similar to Larkwire, except it's a bit less expensive.* Listen to the songs, read the helpful tips, then try the quiz to test your memory. Answer fast to earn a score multiplier and get on the high score table.

### #8: Quizlet

Quizlet is a unique choice for this list because it was not designed to be an app for learning birds. Regardless, it is incredibly helpful! Think of Quizlet as electronic flashcards. *But instead of making all the flashcards yourself, you*

*can search and add cards that other users have created.*

There are many flashcards already available that can teach you how to identify different birds. Within a few minutes, you can download a deck and start quizzing yourself.

### #9: eBird

This bird watching app is probably the one that I use the most. It keeps track of every bird you have ever seen and organizes the data in just about any way you can imagine. Interested in your life list total? Curious how many birds have been observed in your backyard? Want to compare your stats against other eBird users? The eBird app can also be used to find a local birding hotspot which is a valuable tool, especially when traveling.

### #10: iNaturalist

I consider myself a dedicated eBirder, and it's hard to recommend any other listing app or website. But if you also enjoy tracking reptiles, mammals, amphibians, or plants that you have observed, then it's worth checking out iNaturalist. Basically, anything you see, the app keeps track of for you AND helps you identify it. *Just upload a picture and let Artificial Intelligence do the rest (and if that doesn't work, then another member will help you).*

### #11: BirdsEye Bird Finding Guide

This birding app helps you find local areas where birds are being seen. The BirdsEye Bird Finding Guide app is one of my favorites! Its goal is to help find local bird species that you want to see. It's especially great for rare birds or birds that you have not observed yet. The app syncs with your eBird account and uses your location to show what bird species have been spotted and recorded by other users. You can then pull up a map to show the location where it was observed.



"Not yet. Don't fly off until the moment they raise their binoculars."