

# NEWSHAWK Bulletin



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## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

*THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009*  
*JAN SHAW - BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA'S "TOP END"*

Jan Shaw will show photos and video of her birding trip to Australia, covering the rainforests of the Queensland Coast and Cape York Peninsula, to the rugged and beautiful sandstone escarpment of Kakadu National Park and the rich riverine forests near Darwin, and to the desert setting of ridges and canyons of Kununurra in northern Western Australia. Some of the most interesting and beautiful birds include the Southern Cassowary, White-throated Grasswren, Rainbow Pitta, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Gouldian Finch, and the displaying male Victoria's Riflebird.

*THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2009*  
*CHRIS SLOAN - NORTH CAROLINA PELAGIC BIRD TRIPS*

Chris is an experienced pelagic birder with several months' worth of days at sea, mostly off the Outer Banks of North Carolina where he serves as a leader for Brian Patteson's pelagic trips. He will share with us some information about the fascinating bird and other life out in the Gulf Stream, and will show pictures of many of the common and rare species, including some potential species splits.

### Ed Schneider's Bird Photos for Sale

Ed Schneider's October NTOS program on the birds of Bells Bend was a real treat for the eyes. If you missed it, or if you'd like to see them again, Ed will be selling his gorgeous bird photos (including others not from Bells Bend) at our November 19, NTOS meeting. They are 8x10 in size and will sell for \$25.00. Ed is graciously giving 50% of the profits back to NTOS. Please consider this as a gift for yourself, another bird lover, and ultimately a gift to NTOS.

## CALENDAR

### PROGRAMS

Radnor Lake Visitors Center  
@7:15 p.m.

NOV 19  
AUSTRALIA

DEC 17  
PELAGIC BIRDING

### FIELDTRIPS

NOV 28  
PACE POINT

DEC 5  
SPRINGFIELD GREENWAY

### CHRISTMAS COUNTS

DEC 19 - NASHVILLE  
JAN 1 - HICKORY-PRIEST

# UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, November 28 - Pace Point, Britton Ford and Environs

This trip will be led by Mike Todd who is an excellent birder and lives in the area. The fields and water ways can really yield surprises. We will meet at the Metro Park and Ride in Bellevue at 6 A.M. The trip will last most of the day. Lunch may be purchased locally. Dress Warmly! We will be near water all day.

Saturday, December 5 - Springfield Greenway

NTOS member and Springfield resident, Tony Lance, will lead us along the new Springfield Greenway in Springfield, TN. We will meet at the Adventure Science Center at 7A.M. The walk will be about two miles and will last about two hours. There are plenty of opportunities for stops along the way. The Greenway follows along Sulphur Fork Creek.

# RECENT FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, August 29 - Peeler Park and Old Hickory Lake

The birding was slow this morning, but we had a few highlights during the NTOS field trip to Peeler Park in Madison and the south part of Old Hickory Lake. At Peeler we heard several *GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHERS* calling, saw a couple *PILEATED WOODPECKERS*, *WHITE-EYED VIREOS*, *BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER*, one first-year *CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER*, and several *COMMON YELLOWTHROATS* and *INDIGO BUNTINGS*. From Snow Bunting Peninsula at Old Hickory Lake we saw 25 *CANADA GEESE*, several *DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS*, a couple *PIED-BILLED GREBES* and *AMERICAN COOTS*, 1 *LEAST SANDPIPER* feeding on the boat ramp at very close range, 4 *BLACK TERNS* flying about, and some *PURPLE MARTINS* and *BARN SWALLOWS*. – Jan Shaw

Saturday, September 19 - Fall Flock - Shelby Park and Bottoms

Eight members of NTOS birded Shelby Park and Shelby Bottoms today as our September meeting, called Fall Flock. We weathered the humidity and drippy skies and had a wonderful time viewing and counting migrants. We saw a total of 58 species eight of which were warblers. Highlights included an *OSPREY* perched in the open along the river; *CATBIRDS* and *BROWN THRASHERS* seemingly in every bush we passed; both *ORIOLES* and both *TANAGERS*; numerous *AMERICAN REDSTARTS* and *MAGNOLIA WARBLERS*. – Kevin Bowden and Linda Kelly, NTOS Field Trip Coordinators

Saturday, October 17- H.G. Hill Track, Warner Parks

Eleven members of NTOS gathered in the cool morning today to cover some of the 324 acre Hill Track, owned by Friends of Warner Park. We were led by Ed Gleaves, NTOS member and Warner Park volunteer. The previous owner never allowed logging and the hills and valleys have magnificent old trees and beautiful fields. There are varied stands of oaks and hickories plus lesser numbers of poplars, maples, walnut, persimmon sassafras, mulberry, and others. We only birded a small portion of the property. Birds were most plentiful in the area around the barn. Highlights included a flock of 30 *WILD TURKEY*, *SHARP-SHINNED HAWK*, *CEDAR WAXWING*, and numerous *BLUEBIRDS*. – Linda Kelly

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Nashville and Hickory-Priest Christmas Bird Counts

Please join us for the 2 Nashville area Christmas Counts, Audubon's 110th year to be the sponsor. the NASHVILLE COUNT will be on DECEMBER 19, and you may choose a route from the following: Radnor Lake, Warner Park, Harpeth East, Harpeth West, Poplar Creek, Hwy 70, West Meade, Owls Hill, or Bells Bend. Please call JAN SHAW (331-2231) if you would like to participate. A \$5.00 fee is required of everybody except feeder watchers. Feeder watchers are encouraged to participate, but must live within the count circle. Susan Hollyday will host "Soup for Supper" at 6:30, followed by the compilation at 7:30 at her home at 211 Wauford Dr. 37211. To learn more about the Audubon Christmas Count and past results, you can check this website: [www.audubon.org/bird/cbc](http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc).

The HICKORY-PRIEST LAKE COUNT will be held on JANUARY 1 and will cover areas surrounding both lakes. Please call CHRIS SLOAN (662-5004) to participate in that count.

# RECENT EVENTS

## Nashville Fall Bird Count - October 3

The Nashville Fall Count was held on October 3 and totaled 111 species, 10 lower than last year, in part due to the strong winds and sunny skies all day. Some birds of interest included 98 *WILD TURKEYS*, 4 *CATTLE EGRETS* near Bells Bend Park, 4 *OSPREY*, 1 *BALD EAGLE* seen from Snow Bunting Peninsula at Old Hickory Lake, 3 *NORTHERN HARRIERS* at Bells Bend Park, 1 *EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE* in Rutherford Co., 2 *RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS* in Cheatham Co., 5 *YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS*, 1 *SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER* still near the 840/24 Interchange in Rutherford Co., 2 *GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS* at Harpeth East, 5 *RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS*, only 18 species of warblers with the majority being Magnolia, Black-throated Green and American Redstart, 1 early *WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW* at Harpeth West, and 83 beautiful *ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS*. Thank you to all who participated. Jan Shaw, compiler

## 50th AOU Supplement

The recently published 50th AOU Supplement, up-dating the AOU Check-list, included no major splits or lumps affecting TN. Most changes were systematic. However, there were a few changes of note:

- The sharp-tailed sparrows are renamed Nelson's Sparrow and Saltmarsh Sparrow (dropping the cumbersome Sharp-tailed from both names)
- "our" tanagers have been reassigned to the cardinal and grosbeak family, Cardinalidae, indicating a closer relationship to Cardinals than true Tanagers of South America. (They retain their common names)
- Genus names for several of the finches have been changed including the goldfinches, siskins, and redpolls. Of note for purely humorous reasons, the scientific name for Pine Siskin is now *Spinus pinus*.

## Conservation Policy Committee

The Conservation Policy Committee (CPC) drafts letters and takes other conservation actions on behalf of the Tennessee Ornithological Society throughout the year. The CPC, and President Dick Preston, would like to engage TOS members to join us in some of these actions for the benefit of Tennessee's birds and the birds of North America in general. We think that this is important because the numbers of letters that a lawmaker gets on a particular issue can influence their position.

From time to time we will be posting Action Alerts. These alerts will clearly state the action we are requesting with background information on the issue. The action will usually be a phone call or a letter to one or several state representatives or members of the TN delegation to Washington. We will provide phone numbers and addresses, or links where you can find them. (Remember, since the anthrax scare several years ago, letters need to be faxed or emailed to Congress.)

We promise to be strategic and not overload you with requests for action. We expect that Action Alerts will average less than one per month. These alerts will be generated either by the TOS Conservation Policy Committee or by the Bird Conservation Alliance, which TOS is a members of. We anticipate that tn-birds subscribers have a commitment to bird conservation and we hope that you will make the time to respond to as many of our Action Alerts as you can.

Thank you in advance for your time to contribute to the protection of what we all value. –  
Melinda Welton and Bob Hatcher, TOS Conservation Policy Committee Co-chairs

## Help Project FeederWatch Track Backyard Birds

Bird watchers needed to help scientists discover changes in bird populations

By sharing information about which birds visit their feeders between November and April, backyard bird watchers can help scientists track changes in bird numbers and movements from year to year, through Project FeederWatch, a citizen-science program from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

Project FeederWatch begins on November 14 and runs through early April. Taking part is easy. Anyone can count the numbers and kinds of birds at their feeders and enter their information on the FeederWatch website. Since 1987, more than 40,000 people from the United States and Canada have taken part in the project.

Project FeederWatch is for people of all ages and skill levels. To learn more and to sign up, visit [www.feederwatch.org](http://www.feederwatch.org) or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (866) 982-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Cornell Lab members) participants receive the FeederWatcher's Handbook, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds, a calendar, complete instructions, and Winter Bird Highlights, an annual summary of FeederWatch findings.

## Welcome New Members!

BISHOP, Andrew  
1219 Joseph Avenue  
Nashville TN 37207  
216-310-2661  
[andrewp.bishop@gmail.com](mailto:andrewp.bishop@gmail.com)



# Chip Notes



9/1 - Jan Alexander had a female *ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK* at her feeder. It was one for the record books, a new early date.

9/1 - Ed Schneider reported a *GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER* in his backyard in White's Creek. It was being chased by a *YELLOW-THROATED VIREO*, amongst 3 gleaning *BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS*. He also had 2 immature *CHESTNUT-SIDED*, 3 *BLACK-AND-WHITE*, and his first of fall *TENNESSEE WARBLER*.

9/2 - Gary Casey 7 *COMMON NIGHTHAWKS* flying about the parking lot of the Publix store. After getting on the interstate and heading west he spotted an even larger group around the lights at the soccer field.

9/4 - Ed Schneider reported a *YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER* in his yard. He also had a couple of young *CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLERS*.

9/6 - Jan Shaw 1 adult *BALD EAGLE* at Radnor Lake perched in a tall dead tree on the east side of the north cove. It could be seen from the road and the platform along the Lake Trail.

9/6 - Jeff Wilson reported happy "daze" in Memphis. In a tour of the area he found a total of 24 *BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCKS*, including a hen with young. He also found 2 *BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS*, his *GREEN-WINGED TEAL* of the season, 3 distant *WOOD STORKS* and a distant *ANHINGA*.

9/8 - Frank Fekel birded Radnor to Long Bridge. The best bird of the day was a male *MOURNING WARBLER* seen briefly in the underbrush, just before Long Bridge. There was also a *KENTUCKY WARBLER* in the area. A male *GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER* near the dam was an additional treat.

9/11 - Phillip Casteel, Frank Fekel, and Mike Smith birded in Shelby Park and Bottoms. The highlights of the day were an *OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER* on Mission Hill in Shelby Park, 9 species of Warblers, and a single *SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER* at the pedestrian bridge shorebird pond in Shelby Bottoms.

8/13 - Jeff Wilson found an adult *SABINE'S GULL* sitting on the rock dike viewed from the upper parking lot at Mud Island near downtown Memphis. He watched it for a while, and then the bird flew north and out of sight in the rain.

9/14 - Phillip Casteel reported a *BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO* seen on Mission Hill was the surprise bird of the day, along with an *EASTERN SCREECH-OWL*.

9/15 - Linda Kelly drove by the Hill Track this morning on the way home from getting her flu shot. There were 9 *TURKEYS* and 3 deer standing near the gate!

9/20 - Linda Kelly counted 38 *HUMMERS* sitting in the trees and bushes near her feeders plus another ten birds flying around the yard and in a pine tree nearby.

9/21 - Ed Schneider reported his first-of-season *RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET* in a mixed flock of warblers in his backyard.

9/22 - Kevin Bowden made a quick trip out to Bell's Bend Park and found a pair of *RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS*. He also observed a pair of *AMERICAN KESTRELS* flying, hovering and soaring near the Outdoor Center. His other bird of note was a Wilson's Warbler.

9/28 - Gary Casey made a mid-afternoon trip to Radnor and turned up a group of 28 *PIED-BILLED GREBES* and 128 *GADWALLS*.

9/28 - Chris Sloan reported that as he pulled into his driveway in the almost dark, some movement caught his eye as he crossed a small creek. He was surprised to see an immature *NIGHT-HERON* just landing in the mowed grass and walking up to the creek

9/28 - Richard Connors was at Natchez Trace SP on Monday and Tuesday. On Monday evening he saw a total of aprox. 140 *PIED-BILLED GREBES* on two small lakes in the area - the most he can remember seeing at one time, at least away from the big water of Kentucky Lake. Tuesday morning most were gone.

10/2 - Dee Thompson heard some crows raising a real ruckus and saw two adult *BROAD-WINGED HAWKS* soaring. She also reported she still had hummingbirds coming to her feeders and *CATBIRDS* have been busy in the grapevine which lines her deck.

10/4 - Jan Shaw and Dave Hawkins were birding in back of the ranger's house next to the Radnor Lake spillway. A *BEWICK'S WREN* popped up onto the bluebird house and back down to the ground where it foraged for a short while. This is the first time Jan has seen a Bewick's at Radnor.

10/8 - Chris Sloan spotted a juvenile *PEREGRINE FALCON*

as it flew past his office window near downtown Nashville.

10/9 - Frank Fekel found a male *BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER* at Radnor - a relatively rare fall migrant in the Nashville area.

10/10 - David Kirschke and Frank Fekel birded Radnor and found another rare fall migrant, an immature *BLACKPOLL*. Looking to see the cause of a lot of bird-chatter and fussing, they found a *COMMON NIGHTHAWK* roosting lengthwise on a branch being mobbed by titmice, chickadees and wrens.

10/10 - Frank Fekel reported he still had a *HUMMINGBIRD* coming to his feeder.

10/10 - Mary Zimmerman had a *HUMMINGBIRD* on the wire near her feeder in the morning. It was chased off by a *PEWEE* which was actively feeding in the yard.

10/10 - Dee Thompson reported a steady stream of *HUMMINGBIRDS* at her feeder all day long. She noted that most seemed to be on the move, approaching from the northwest and flying off to the southeast, though a few stayed in nearby trees, coming back and forth to the feeders.

10/11 - Linda Kelly reported seeing a *NORTHERN HARRIER* while riding the train to Monterey in Putnam County.

10/12 - Daniel Moss spotted a *SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER* while driving around Clarksville. It appeared to be an adult since he saw some pink on the belly.

10/12 - Frank Fekel birded Radnor and had the best day this fall for warbler migration with large flocks of warblers fluttering around at various points along the Lake Trail. Of note was the evident arrival of *YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS*, a sure sign that winter is coming. He'd had only 2 a few days earlier, but had close to 50 this day.

10/13 - Donna Ward reported hearing a *RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH* calling in her yard in McKenzie, TN.

10/17 - Linda Kelly was looking at the first *REDWING BLACKBIRD* of the season at her feeder when she noticed 3 *WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS* on the ground beneath the feeder.

*NEWSHAWK BULLETIN*  
M.A. Zimmerman  
2806 Huntleigh Drive  
Nashville, TN 37206

*FIRST CLASS*