



# The Chattanooga Chat

Ray Zimmerman, Editor: [znaturalist@yahoo.com](mailto:znaturalist@yahoo.com) 315-0721

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A Newsletter of the Chattanooga Chapter  
Tennessee Ornithological Society

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## Meeting

**Ascension Lutheran Church**  
720 S Germantown Rd  
Thursday, March 10, 2011  
5:30 PM Executive Board Meeting  
7:00 PM Monthly Meeting:

**Program:** Tennessee State Ornithologist Scott Sommershoe will give a presentation on his birding trip last August to Southern California. He will also give us a primer on using ebird to report bird sightings and an update on the Watchable Wildlife website. He will also discuss his plan to establish an official bird trail in Chattanooga and solicit our input for that project.

**Refreshments:** Barbara McMahon will provide refreshments before the meeting.

**Thanks to** Tim Jeffers for presenting our February program. Katherine Boyles and Lois Bean provided refreshments.

## Field Trips

Saturday, March 5, 830 PM  
Stevenson, Alabama and Nickajack Lake  
Harold Birch (423) 842-4623 or  
[birchh@bellsouth.net](mailto:birchh@bellsouth.net)

To get to Nickajack Dam, take I-24 West towards Nashville, cross Nickajack Lake and take the next exit after crossing the bridge. (Look for the big fireworks sign.) Turn left and go under the interstate, driving 2-3 miles to the dam. The parking lot is below the dam. After we check out the lake, we'll travel to Stevenson City Park (about 45 minutes). It is an excellent spot for ducks

and we may see several species. This is a beautiful park and is also good habitat for other migrating birds. If anyone would like a ride from Chattanooga contact Harold.

Saturday, March 19, 8:00 AM  
Brainerd Levee  
Ray Zimmerman 315-0721 or  
[znaturalist@yahoo.com](mailto:znaturalist@yahoo.com)

Meet at the parking lot near the intersection of Shallowford Road and Moore Road.

Ducks are preparing for their departure, but a number should still be in the area if the water levels are right. Some early arrival shorebirds are possible. If you have access to a scope, you may want to bring it. Dress for the weather, which can get quite windy on the levee.

## Crane Days and Crane Sightings

(Reports excerpted from messages on tn-bird mailing list)

January 4  
One adult Whooping Crane  
Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge  
Charles Murray, Birchwood, TN

January 13  
Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge area  
Hundreds of Sandhill Cranes,  
8 - 10 Bald Eagles.  
Charles Murray, Birchwood, TN

January 14

One Whooping Crane on Hiwassee Island Also sighted  
Four adult bald eagles  
3 immature bald eagles  
large numbers of Sandhill Cranes,  
Charles Murray, Birchwood, TN

January 15

One Whooping Crane  
11 immature Bald Eagles  
4 Adult Bald Eagles  
Charles Murray, Birchwood, TN

January 18

Hiwassee crane viewing  
This morning we viewed the cranes at Hiwassee . Nobody was at the viewing area. It was eerie to witness thousands of cranes in the early gray mist and hear them vocalizing.  
Susan Baumgardner

Sunday, January 16,

Hundreds of Sandhill Cranes, Canada Geese, 2 Ross's Geese, Great Blue Herons. Four Bald Eagles (2 adults) 2 immature Red-shouldered Hawks. A lone Great Egret, 39 Canvasbacks, Ruddy Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks, Bufflehead, hundreds of Mallards, and 3 Bald Eagles., Sandhill Cranes (7-10 thousand)  
There were not a large number of waterfowl species, although there were thousands of Mallards around the island!  
We saw several pairs of Bufflehead.  
Peregrine Falcon flew over us.  
One flock of 12 Dunlin.

Here is a list of birds seen from a boat trip (Blue Moon Cruise).Canada Goose  
Mute Swan, Gadwall, American Black Duck, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback – 39, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Pied-

billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle – 27, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, American Coot, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Dunlin, Ring-billed Gull, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay  
American Crow, Carolina Chickadee  
Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet  
American Robin, Eastern Towhee  
Northern Cardinal  
David Trently  
Knoxville, TN

February 22, Hiwassee Refuge  
400 Sandhill Cranes, 2 immature Bald Eagles, 1 Fish Crow, Several Black Vultures.  
Charles Murray, Birchwood

### **More Sightings:**

January 7

The Pine Siskins keep bringing friends. There are 20 coming to my feeders now.  
Tommie Rogers  
Marion co

February 8

Chester Frost Park  
Peregrine Falcon  
Kyle Waggener

February 13

Ross's Goose, Olan Mills property next to Chattanooga State  
Kevin Calhoon

Hiwassee State Wildlife Refuge  
60 species including 8 whooping cranes and 4 Ruddy Ducks  
Than James Boves (UT Knoxville)

Rhea County Airport  
100 Sandhill Cranes  
Charles Murray (Birchwood)

Marina Hills Drive  
2 Whooping Cranes  
David Chaffin (Cleveland)

Tundra Swans at Soddy Lake  
Several reports throughout January

February 18, Hiwassee Refuge  
Redheads, Gadwall, 1 Whooping Crane  
1 Osprey, Sandhill Cranes  
Charles Murray, Birchwood

February 19  
David Stone saw a Brown Thrasher singing repeatedly as if it were spring at the Council Fire Golf Course. He cannot recall hearing one sing this early in past years.

February 21  
I had a pretty good morning banding out at Greenway Farm this morning. The highlight was a Brown Creeper; only the second one I have ever banded out there. The other birds banded today were: White-throated Sparrow - 6  
Northern Cardinal - 4  
Eastern Tufted Titmouse - 3  
Yellow-rumped Warbler - 3  
Downy Woodpecker - 1  
Field Sparrow 1  
Hermit Thrush - 1  
Brown Thrasher - 1

A lot of the wintering birds I have captured this winter (White-throated Sparrows, Fox Sparrows, Yellow rumped Warblers) have had decent amounts of fat (2 to 4 on a scale of 6). I usually don't see them put on fat until March, as they prepare for migration. I'd like to know what they are feeding on and what makes this year different.  
David Aborn, Chattanooga, TN .

Chickamauga Dam  
Dreama and I observed 3 Osprey while crossing the Chickamauga dam and another one at Woftever Creek at Harrison Bay (Rt 58 North) on Saturday 2/12/2011. They have returned for the nesting season. They will be reconstructing their nest sites for the upcoming nesting season.  
Charles Dean

March 26  
Hayden Wilson's Farm  
2 Barn Owls and numerous woodcock spotted by participants in the field trips.

#### **Letter from Bob Catcher**

I am no longer on the TOS Conservation Policy Committee, but recommend that the CPC, other conservation organizations, and individuals take prompt appropriate action concerning proposed total loss of Congressional funding for State Wildlife Action Plans. During FY 2001 through FY 2010, Congress has allocated \$703 million for State Non game Programs, in order to manage jeopardized species and avoiding their becoming Endangered or Threatened. Of this \$703 million, TWRA has received \$14.2 million, or an average of \$1.42 million per year over the last ten years. If these funds would no longer be available, it would likely leave a very large hole in already tight State Nongame programs, with substantial impacts on our birds and other species.

Thanks.

Bob Hatcher  
Retired TWRA NG-ES Coordinator (1978-2001), and  
Eagle Consultant, American Eagle Foundation  
Brentwood, TN

The letter was forwarded by Dick Preston

## Join and Support TOS

\$28 – Individual                      \$32 - Family  
\$15 - Student                        \$40 - Sustaining  
\$460 – Life member (Life members must pay  
additional \$10 local chapter dues each year.)

Send checks to Cathy Lockwitz, P.O. Box  
2003 Collegedale, TN 37315. (423) 653-1640  
Note: all dues, donations, gifts, and bequests  
are tax deductible under Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the  
internal Revenue Code of the U.S. Please  
make checks payable to TOS

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## YOU ARE INVITED TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE CHATTANOOGA CHAPTER, TOS

Membership in TOS is:  
The Chattanooga Chat, monthly newsletter  
The Tennessee Warbler, statewide newsletter  
The Migrant, quarterly journal  
Meetings, Field Trips and Special Events  
Conservation and Educational Projects  
Increasing knowledge and enjoyment of our  
natural world

### To Our New Members

A warm welcome to “The Wonderful World  
of Birds”... Join in the fun... Come to all of  
our events and bring your friend(s) if you  
wish.

Chattanooga TOS Website:  
[www.chattanoogatos.org](http://www.chattanoogatos.org)



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**P.O. Box 2003 Collegedale, TN 37315**