

NewsHawk



•**President**•
Cyndi Routledge
(Routledges@bellsouth.net)

•**Secretary**•
Kathy Ware
(kware615@comcast.net)

•**Treasurer**•
Pam Lasley
(plasley@comcast.net)

•**Program Coordinator**•
Tim Ryan
(Tim@RSLLC.us)

•**Field Trip Coordinator**•
Shelly Smith
(wkusmith@gmail.com)

•**NewsHawk Coordinator**•
Angie Elmore
(nashvilnewshawk@gmail.com)
NewsHawk deadline is the 15th of
the month prior to publication

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Bird Count Results and Updates -
www.nashvillebirds.org
[Publications]

www.nashvillebirds.org

3rd Quarter, 2026

President's Message...

It's been a busy spring for NTOS members! Field Trip Coordinator Shelley Smith has done an amazing job providing new and interesting field trips, resulting in record numbers of members and visitors taking part in those activities. Thanks to all!

Our new Instagram page is beginning to gain some traction as well. If Instagram is your thing, consider following along for announcements and timely information: [ntosbirds](https://www.instagram.com/ntosbirds).

Our Wednesday morning spring migration walks continue to be a wonderful outreach resource, and now, with the addition of Thursday evening migration walks at Shelby Bottoms, NTOS is reaching even more like-minded bird enthusiasts.

Our fall migration walks at Radnor Lake will begin on Wednesday, September 23, and at Shelby Bottoms on September 24. Please contact me at routledges@bellsouth.net if you're available to lead a Wednesday morning walk and contact Shelley Smith at wkusmith@gmail.com if you're willing to lead a Thursday evening walk. We need your help!

Remember, we do not have regular monthly meetings in July and August, however this year Field Trip coordinator, Shelley Smith has scheduled an August field trip to the Purple Martins in downtown Nashville, so look for that information within this newsletter.

We will 'flock' back together in September for our annual potluck dinner. Please see the invitation within this newsletter regarding the date and time. Note that just because NTOS is not meeting, it doesn't mean there aren't great bird happenings around the area! Please see the list of summer hummingbird festivals also in this newsletter. I'm sure volunteers are needed for these events, so if you're so inclined, reach out and offer your assistance. It's a great way to give back.

Our fall bird count will take place on Saturday, September 26. Like the spring count, it encompasses all of Davidson County. Barbara Harris will be coordinating, so if you're interested in counting, please contact her at harrbarbara@bellsouth.net. If you're an area leader, Barbara will soon be in touch, but please mark the date on your calendar today.

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SPEED BUMP DAVE COVERLY



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Finally, I hope many of you will attend our joint fall state meeting with the Kentucky Ornithological Society in Hardin, Kentucky, on September 18–20. Deadlines for lodging reservations at KenLake State Park (the host hotel) are forthcoming, so please see the article in this newsletter regarding those dates and the special code needed for a discount.

Have a wonderful summer, and we'll see you in September!

Until then,
Happy birding!
Cheers!
Cyndi

Third Quarter 2026 NTOS Field Trips

Please note: These field trips may be canceled if hazardous weather conditions arise. Any cancellations will be announced as soon as possible on the TN-Bird Listserv and NTOS's social media accounts.

No NTOS field trip in July

August NTOS Evening Field Trip: Purple Martin Watch Party (Downtown Nashville)- Wednesday, August 5th.

Join NTOS as we team up with the Warner Park Bird Research Program for an evening of one of Middle Tennessee's most impressive wildlife spectacles: a Purple Martin roost watch in downtown Nashville!

Each summer, thousands of Purple Martins gather at communal roost sites before beginning their migration south. Watching large flocks of these aerial insect-eaters swirl into a roost at dusk is an unforgettable experience and provides a unique opportunity to learn about their fascinating life history and migration ecology. Because Purple Martin roost locations can vary from year to year, the exact meeting location and start time will be announced once this season's roost has been identified and confirmed. Participants should plan for an evening event in downtown Nashville. This field trip will also take place on Wednesday evening rather than the traditional Saturday in order to avoid downtown Nashville crowds.

All are welcome to attend, whether you are an experienced birder or simply curious about one of nature's most spectacular gatherings. Bring binoculars, a lawn chair if desired, water, and weather-appropriate clothing. Please be mindful that, with this number of birds, a "purple rain" of bird droppings is a high risk so dress accordingly :)

Additional details, including meeting location and event timing, will be shared closer to the event date.

We hope you'll join us for this exciting summer gathering and witness one of Tennessee's most remarkable birding events!

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September NTOS Field Trip: Saturday Morning Bird Walk at Radnor Lake - September 19th at 7 am

Have you been wanting to experience one of NTOS's popular Radnor Lake bird walks but can't make it on a weekday morning? This fall, we're bringing the tradition to the weekend with a special Saturday bird walk at one of Middle Tennessee's premier birding destinations.

Join us on Saturday, September 19, for a morning of birding at Radnor Lake State Park. Mid-September is an exciting time of year at Radnor Lake, with fall migration underway. We'll be on the lookout for migrating songbirds, resident woodland species, waterbirds, and whatever surprises the morning may bring.

We will meet at 7:00 a.m. in the parking lot near the Radnor Lake Visitor Center (1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville, TN 37220). Please plan to arrive early, as parking can fill quickly due to the park's popularity. Carpooling is encouraged whenever possible.

Our route will follow the traditional Wednesday morning bird walk path, traveling from the Visitor Center area to Long Bridge where participants can either continue around the lake to complete the loop or head back to the visitor's center. The pace will be leisurely, with frequent stops to observe, identify, and enjoy the birds along the way.

Whether you're visiting Radnor Lake for the first time or are a longtime birder, all skill levels are welcome. Be sure to bring binoculars, water, and comfortable walking shoes.

We hope you'll join us for a Saturday morning of birding at one of Nashville's most beloved natural areas!

Fall Bird Count- Saturday, September 26th

Join us for the Fall Bird Count in Nashville on September 26, a great opportunity to contribute to community science while enjoying a morning of birding with fellow enthusiasts.

Participants will help survey birds across the Nashville area, documenting fall migrants and resident species as they move through Middle Tennessee. Whether you're an experienced birder or just getting started, all are welcome to take part in this annual event and help build a snapshot of local bird populations.

NTOS Thursday Evening Bird Walks Return this Fall to Shelby Bottoms!

Our spring Thursday evening bird walks were such a hit that we're bringing them back this fall!

Join the Nashville chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society for a series of casual evening bird walks at Shelby Bottoms Park as we enjoy the excitement of fall migration. Whether you're new to birding or have years of experience, these walks are a great opportunity to get outside, meet fellow birders, and see what feathered visitors are passing through Nashville.

For the walks this fall, we will meet at Shelby Bottoms Nature Center (1900 Davidson St. Nashville, TN 37206) at **5:00 PM each evening**. We will visit hidden pond, walk along the trail through the field, and visit the zig zag bridge before making our way back to the parking area. Bring binoculars if you have them, comfortable walking shoes, and your curiosity. All are welcome! Come for one walk or join us for all four!

Walk Dates: • September 24 • October 1 • October 8 • October 15

During the walks, we will be on the lookout for migrating warblers, sparrows, hawks, and waterbirds. Bring binoculars if you have them, comfortable walking shoes, and your curiosity. All are welcome! Come for one walk or join us for all four!



LET'S FLOCK BACK TOGETHER

FALL POTLUCK
RADNOR LAKE VISITOR CENTER
SEPTEMBER 17TH
6 PM

BRING YOUR FAVORITE DISH TO SHARE.
DRINKS, PAPER PRODUCTS, & UTENSILS PROVIDED.



TOS-KOS Joint Fall 2026 Meeting September 18-20, 2026

Our TOS Fall 2026 meeting will be joint event with the Kentucky Ornithological Society September 18-20th. Keynote speakers will be Cin-Ty Lee and Andrew Birch, co-authors of Field Guide to North American Flycatchers: Empidonax and Pewees.

Host hotel is KenLake State Park Resort in Hardin, KY. Both cottages and lodge rooms are available with prices ranging from \$111-\$143/night, plus taxes. **To get the discounted rates you must use group 3076 when you make your reservation. Reservations can be made online or by calling 270-474-2211. Make cottage reservations before July 18th and lodge room reservations before August 18th to get the discounted rate.** Cancellations must be made at least 48 hours in advance of arrival, or you will be charged for one night.

Breakfast is not included in the room rate, but there is a dining room on-site. You should plan on getting to the dining room early for meals as it could get busy.

Plans for the weekend are still evolving. Details on BOD meeting, Saturday night keynote event and field trip times will be provided on both the TOS and NTOS webpages as they become available.

For now, mark your calendars, reserve your rooms and plan to join friends from TOS and KOS for a weekend of fall migration birding.



SPRING BIRD COUNT SUMMARY

The spring count for our area, which was held on April 25 this year, yielded a total of 154 species. We had 59 observers taking part. Some highlights were a Black-Bellied Whistling Duck at Percy Priest, a Pacific Loon, also at Percy Priest, a Neotropic Cormorant at Old Hickory, a Lincoln's Sparrow at Shelby Bottoms, and Soras at both Shelby and Radnor Lake. The highest species count was at Bells Bend and Old Hickory Lake, both with a total of 95 species.

We are now publishing the bird count results on the website instead of the NewsHawk.
<https://nashvillebirds.org/bird-count-results-and-updates/>

NTOS HISTORIAN NEEDED!
 FOR INFORMATION AND
 JOB DESCRIPTION
 CONTACT CYNDI -
 routledges@bellsouth.net

How a non-birder
 describes a bird
 they saw in their
 yard and want you
 to ID it:



What they actually saw:



Hello, I'm the European Starling everyone blames

60 ancestors. 134 years. 200 million of us.

THE HISTORY

1890: Released
 in Central Park

WHY: A Shakespeare
 fan's romantic idea

NOW: 200 million
 in North America

WHAT I DO WELL

• Eat millions of
 crop insects

• Aerate lawns
 hunting grubs

• Murmurations =
 natural spectacle

• Mimic almost
 any sound

IRIDESCENT
 PLUMAGE —
 Beautiful in
 the right light

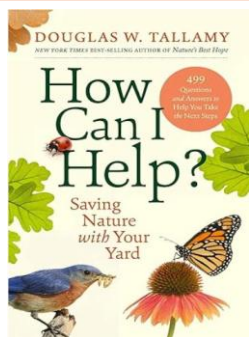
MIMIC —
 Can copy car alarms,
 phones, other birds

SURVIVOR — What
 I was designed to be

I'm not the invasive species. The IDEA was invasive.
 I'm just living with the consequences. Like you.

HUMMINGBIRD FESTIVALS

- AUG. 1 & 2 - 10 AM TO 5 PM WOODLAND'S NATURE STATION IN LBL
- AUG. 8TH - TNWR - 8 TO NOON
- AUG. 15TH - ROTARY PARK - CLARKSVILLE 8 AM TO 1 PM
- AUG. 22ND JEFFER'S BEND - HOPKINSVILLE, KY - 9 TO NOON
- AUG. 29TH - BANDING DEMO - BELLS BEND 8AM TO 11 AM
- SEPT. 5TH - BARFIELD CRESCENT PARK - 8 AM TO NOON
- SEPT. - WARNER PARK



How Can I Help? Saving Nature with Your Yard; 499 Questions and Answers to Help You Take the Next Steps

By Douglas W. Tallamy

Famed biologist and naturalist E.O. Wilson called insects and arthropods “the little things that run the world,” because of the disproportionate role they, especially caterpillars, play in food webs. In fact, 96 percent of North American terrestrial birds rear their young on insects and spiders; for example, Carolina chickadees feed some 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars before the babies fledge. Birds migrating also depend on insects, as do the birds at your feeder in winter, when evidently the seeds you provide are only about 50 percent of their diet.

So, what can an individual do to help the birds we all love? It turns out there are many things!

Known for his books about nature, including the New York Times bestseller, *Nature's Best Hope*, Douglas W. Tallamy is asked many questions by email and at his numerous presentations. In this latest book, he's answered 499 of those questions, offering a wealth of information about the many things you can do to increase the biodiversity of insects, plants and animals in your yard.

This book can be read beginning to end, if you want to simply learn as much as possible, as I did. But it's also organized in a way that, if you have a specific interest, you can find the answers. Divided into ten sections, including Pest Control, Conservation and Restoration, Home Landscapes, and Supporting Wildlife at Home, with each section divided into subsections, Tallamy discusses the value of native plants, turning off your lights, reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides and herbicides, plus many more topics, and he offers useful information about how to do these things. It's a fascinating and educational read.

Tallamy is a professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and has created a native wildlife habitat at his home, 10 acres that had been used for farming, that after re-wilding he now often uses for research. He is one of the founders of Homegrown National Park, believing that if half of the lawns in the United States were replaced with native plants, we could create what amounts to a 20-million-acre national park, with many advantages to our birds and bees.

Reviewed by Cindy Kershner

NTOS THIRD QUARTER MEETINGS

The Nashville Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society (NTOS) meetings are held at the Radnor Lake Visitors Center at 1160 Otter Creek Road on the third Thursday of every month (except July and August). We usually gather and greet one another at 7:00 pm; have a Business Meeting at 7:15; followed by a program at 7:30 pm. All are welcome. Membership in NTOS is not required.

JULY 16 – NO MEETING

AUGUST 20 – NO MEETING

SEPTEMBER 17 -

“Big Year Birding - US and Canada” Presented by Tim Ryan

In 2024, his third-year birding, Tim embarked on a Big Year for the ABA Area (Canada and USA including Alaska and Hawaii). Over the course of the year, he birded in 32 states and provinces and logged 818 species in eBird. Tim will talk about his planning, logistics, and luck involved in this effort, describe some of his sightings, tell of some of the thrills and perils of chasing rare birds – sometimes successfully, and sometimes not. Tim Ryan has lived in Nashville since 2021 and started birding with NTOS in early 2022. Before retiring at the end of 2023, he developed wind and solar energy projects. He is currently the 1st Vice President & Program Coordinator.

eBird Taxonomy Update Splits Warbling Vireos, Yellow Warblers, and More

By Matthew D. Medler March 23, 2026

Warbling Vireos are easy to overlook—small, olive-gray songbirds that stay high in treetops. But when they return to their breeding grounds across much of North America this spring, birders may want to take a closer look and listen. That's because late last year ornithologists split the widespread Warbling Vireo into two species: Western Warbling Vireo and Eastern Warbling Vireo.

This split was one of the headlines of the 2025 eBird taxonomy update, an annual process by Cornell Lab of Ornithology taxonomists that revises the list of the world's bird species based on the latest ornithological knowledge. Eastern and Western Warbling Vireos will be a thorny ID challenge. The birds are nearly identical beyond subtle differences in measurements, plumage, song, and genetics. Fortunately for birders, geography provides a major clue—breeding warbling vireos east of the Rockies are generally Eastern Warbling Vireos, while warbling vireos nesting in the Rockies and westward are Western Warbling Vireos.

The annual taxonomy update is a massive effort that reassesses all the world's birds—not just species but genera, families, and more. This year's update resulted in 40 species gained from splits and 18 lost through lumps, bringing the world's new bird species total to 11,167.

Pam Rasmussen, a senior research associate at the Cornell Lab who serves on the taxonomy committee, says there's plenty of lumps, splits, and reevaluations still to come to keep pace with the sheer volume of recent studies. “[Doing this] yearly is not even perfect,” she says. “In my opinion, it's still not coming out fast enough ... because there's so much more that needs to be done.”

View a list and details of [all of the changes in the 2025 eBird taxonomy update](#).