

WARIOTO WARBLER

CLARKSVILLE NATIONAL AUDUBON CHAPTER

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 2

OCTOBER 2005

WARIOTO AT A GLANCE

REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, October 6, 7:30 p.m., Sundquist Science Complex, room E106A, APSU.

PROGRAM: Joe Schiller on the effects of mountaintop removal mining on the environment and people of the southern Appalachians. It will include a preview of the Warioto sponsored (in part) film festival [*Mountaintop Removing the Land and People*](#).

FIELD TRIP: Sunday afternoon, October 23 - trip to Gray's Landing, Britton Ford, and Paris Landing area concluding with dinner at the Park Restaurant. **Leave at 1:00 from the gravel faculty lot at 8th and College St.**, next to the Sundquist Building, (**NOTE CHANGE IN TYPICAL MEETING LOCATION**). See details below.

HOSPITALITY: Barbara Wilbur will provide refreshments following the program.

BOARD MEETING: At 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 6 in the Sundquist Building biology conference room, D126.

Visit our webpage at http://www.apsu.edu/schillers/Audubon/Warioto_Chapter.htm

PRESIDENTS LETTER, Joe Schiller

We continue to stand transfixed and aghast at the unfolding human and environmental calamity wrought by hurricane Katrina. It will be months before the true magnitude of the disaster is even assessed. However, Katrina, like many such events, was as much a human disaster as a natural disaster. Over two hundred years of levee building and canalization for the oil and shipping industry along the lower Mississippi have diverted from the delta all of the sediment that built the delta. It has subsided several feet in some places, especially in New Orleans. The annual flooding and silt deposition in the delta maintained the wetlands and barrier islands and offset the natural subsidence of the delta. Now, these delta sustaining sediments are diverted straight to the ocean bottom under the deep waters of the Gulf. With the protective barrier islands and marshes gone, and the delta a few feet lower than it used to be, New Orleans was practically defenseless in the face of any significant storm.

Hopefully we will eventually learn how the communities and ecosystems of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama can be repaired. It is estimated that the hydrologic engineering required to restore the delta flooding, and therefore reverse subsidence to rebuild the marshes and barrier islands would have cost only 16 billion dollars over a period of many years. The Bush administration refused to fund this. It is now almost certain that Katrina will be the most costly disaster in US history; however, if we only rebuild the city and its levees, we will have to rebuild it all over again after the next significant storm.

It is important that we learn many lessons from Katrina that apply well beyond the physically devastated areas. We need to learn that nature is bigger than us and we are still subject to her rules. We need to learn that we are overly dependent on fossil fuels and need to diversify our energy sources. We need to learn that our wasteful consumption of fossil fuels and other resources is causing global warming, and this, in turn, is increasing the chances of our suffering

similar extreme climate events. The 2-3 foot rise in sea level now predicted to occur because of global warming will make many more coastal communities in the US and around the world vulnerable to the increasingly strong storms caused global warming. Katrina is a window into our future-not some distant future, but tomorrow.

We need to learn that many other parts of the world have already suffered calamitous consequences of global warming to which we Americans have been mostly oblivious. Subsistence farmers throughout the world are most at risk from drought, floods, and other severe weather events: witness the current famine in Niger. Polar peoples ancient lifestyles and cultures will be lost: Alaskan villages on the Arctic ocean are already having to be relocated. The hundreds of millions living in low lying coastal areas and islands will be displaced by rising sea levels and stronger storms: the island nation of Tuvalu's 10,500 inhabitants are already being evacuated to New Zealand. These peoples have contributed very little to the creation of the global warming problem, but they stand to suffer the greatest loss. As was the case of the poor of New Orleans, the effects of global warming will disproportionately affect the poor in other parts of the world. Katrina's disproportionate toll on the poor of New Orleans is a mirror of the effects of our lifestyle upon the poor of the world.

People in rich developed countries will fare somewhat better, but it is going to cost them a bundle. Already storms like Katrina have increased insurance premiums for residences and businesses in coastal areas. Expect still higher rates soon. Hotter, drier summers increase costs for air conditioning and sometimes food if drought reduces agricultural production. Water will become increasingly scarce, and therefore expensive. The disruptions to oil and gas production in the Gulf caused by Katrina will cost all Americans more for transportation and heating. However, Katrina revealed only the fragile nature of our oil and gas infrastructure. Oil and gas prices were increasing before Katrina, and will continue to increase after Katrina, because the supply of oil and gas is leveling off, and will soon begin to decline. We cannot drill our way out of this basic fact. As these

effects ripple through the economy, costs of all products will increase. Katrina is a wake-up call we cannot afford to ignore.

No doubt we will repair the physical damage caused by Katrina eventually (at least until the next Katrina), but will we fix the way we think about the problem? We need to accept that we have to work with nature. We need to commit to doing things differently, such as channeling the Mississippi's energy to rebuilding the Mississippi Delta, and reducing our production of Greenhouse gases. These changes will cost money, lots of it, but it will cost us a lot more not to make these changes.

PROGRAM REPORT, Sarah Johnson and Joe Schiller

Last month's program by Ivy Newman from The National Environmental Trust describing their Conserve Our Ocean Legacy (COOL) campaign was very informative. Ms. Newman described how the problems of over fishing, by-catch, habitat degradation, and ineffective resource management policies have all combined to cause the collapse of scores of valuable fisheries and threaten the economic, if not ecological, extinction of scores of species. The COOL campaign seeks to inform voters across the country of these and potential future losses in order to mobilize voters to support legislation for regulatory reform that will actually contribute to the restoration of these valuable fisheries (www.oceanlegacy.org).

This month's program will be presented by Joe Schiller on the effects of mountaintop removal mining on the environment and people of the southern Appalachians. It will include a preview of the Warioto sponsored (in part) film festival [Mountaintop Removing the Land and People](#).

FIELD TRIP PLANS, Barbara Wilbur

The October Warioto field trip is scheduled for **Sunday afternoon, October 23** with a trip to Gray's Landing, Britton Ford, and the general Paris Landing area concluding with dinner at the Park Restaurant. Tentative plans are: **leave APSU Sundquist Faculty Parking Lot (gravel lot on corner of College and 8th St.) at 1:00 p.m. NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING LOCATION!!** There is always the possibility that plans may change after newsletter publication so, ***if you are interested in this trip be sure to either email or call Barbara Wilbur.***

MARK YOUR CALENDERS now for **February 4, 2006**. That's the date for our annual field trip to **Wheeler NWR**, Decatur, AL, with refuge manager, Dwight Cooley as our leader.

September Field Trip Summary

Five Warioto Audubon members (Polly Coe, Sarah Johnson, Daniel Moss, Duane Rice and Barbara Wilbur) met Mike Todd and Don Manning at the Big Sandy levee Saturday morning, Sept. 24. Birds of note there included Sanderling, Pectoral Sandpiper and Black-bellied Plover. Magnolia Warblers flitted about in the trees along the trail. From the levee the group moved to downtown Big Sandy and the Big Sandy Market, then on to Pace Point where an Osprey was keeping close watch on Caspian and Common Terns. Back around the bay to a productive stop on the west side of the Big Sandy flats. A Green

Heron was waiting in a nearby willow tree while a Little Blue Heron, Pied-bill Grebes and Blue-winged Teal put on quite a show. Then on to Eagle Creek flats just off Bull Durham Road. WOW!! Two Mottled Ducks (the fourth sighting recorded in TN), a Bald Eagle, Great Egrets, a kettle of Broad-wing Hawks and a singing Pine Warbler greeted the group at Eagle Creek. A final stop at the Paris Landing Bridge produced a magnificent Peregrine Falcon, a Lesser Black-backed Gull and a Laughing Gull along with a Coot and numerous Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. The trip list totaled 61 species; the weather was great and the fellowship was outstanding!

CONSERVATION LETTER, Joe Schiller

It is hard to think about anything without in some way relating it to Katrina—so momentous are her effects. However, for many years the US has been experiencing a "Silent Katrina." In the Southeastern Appalachians, mountains have been melting away like the estuaries and barrier islands before Katrina. Valleys, streams, and wetlands have been buried under mountains of rubble and sludge. Floods have washed away people's homes and possessions and these people, mostly poor, have been left feeling abandoned and expendable. Whole towns have been rendered uninhabitable. Southern West Virginia has suffered so much damage from MR mining, 15-25% of the mountains, as to raise doubts about the long term habitability of the region. All of these concerns echo concerns expressed about New Orleans in the wake of Katrina, however, if anything, the prospects for New Orleans are brighter than those of southern Appalachia.

Warioto Audubon along with APSU's Student Organization to Advance Renewable Energy (SOARE), APSU's Center of Excellence for the Creative Arts, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clarksville, and Physicians for Social Responsibility are sponsoring a film festival, Mountaintop Removing the Land and People, over a six week period this fall (<http://www.apsu.edu/schillers/Audubon/Removing%20Mountains%20and%20People.doc>). Check it out and tell everyone you know. This film festival will explore the environmental and social devastation wrought by MR mining. I will provide an overview of the effects of MR and its status in Tennessee as well as show some "trailers" from some of the films in the film festival. So make sure you come to the meeting to get the sneak previews.

OFFICERS FOR THE 2005-06 YEAR, Steve Hamilton

The list and contact information for 2005-2006 Officers, Board Members-at-Large and Committee Chairs are given on the address page of this newsletter.

WARIOTO AUDUBON SOCIETY
C/O STEVE HAMILTON, EDITOR
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ARTICLES AND INFORMATION FOR THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER ARE DUE 21 OCTOBER

MAIL TO: Steve Hamilton, 290 Ardmoor Dr., Clarksville, TN 37043 or *hamiltonsw@apsu.edu*

NEW MEMBER FORM

Yes, I would like to become a member of the National Audubon Society and the local chapter: Clarksville Warioto Audubon Society for the introductory rate of \$20.00.

I will receive six issues of National Audubon magazine, the Warioto Audubon society newsletter (9) issues, and help to protect America's Birds, rescue endangered wildlife and preserve vital habitat.

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