



WARIOTO WARBLER



CLARKSVILLE NATIONAL AUDUBON CHAPTER

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 3

NOVEMBER 2008

WARIOTO AT A GLANCE

ANNUAL POTLUCK BANQUET: Thursday, November 6, **6:00 p.m.**, Hilldale United Methodist Church, 1751 Madison Street, Clarksville.

PROGRAM: Scott Somershoe, Tennessee State Ornithologist with TWRA, will present “**Important Birding Areas and the Yucatan**” following our potluck meal.

FIELD TRIP: No field trip this month. We will have a December field trip and the CBC on January 3rd

BOARD MEETING: No board meeting.

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

JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER

We will hold the annual potluck dinner in the fellowship hall at the **Hilldale United Methodist Church** at 1751 Madison Street (**entrance to the fellowship hall and additional parking around back**). Please bring plenty of food to share with others. We need main dishes, salads and desserts. **We begin at 6:00 p.m. and the program follows the meal.**



Fine dining and good fellowship with nature-lovers, what more could you ask? This is always a great event, but to make it special we need YOU to attend – and try to bring a friend!

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE, Barbara Wilbur

Each and every Warioto program is good, but make your plans now to whip up a tasty dish and attend the November potluck meeting so you can hear - and get to know - Scott Somershoe (more info elsewhere in newsletter). We are SO fortunate he can be with us.

Next, let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation for all the warm expressions of sympathy following the death of my mother. Your thoughtfulness meant much to me. Thank you!

And lastly, let me sincerely apologize for literally sleeping through an Audubon meeting. I have been quite ill off and on for several months and the Oct. meeting date was a bad day. I was embarrassed and felt even worse when I realized what I'd done. However, I am pleased to report a doctor just may have identified the cause of my ongoing illness - an antibiotic frequently prescribed for reoccurring sinus infections.

Now that I have rambled, let me close by encouraging you to make a special effort to be involved in Warioto Audubon! Attend the meetings, enjoy the field trips, and take part in the bird counts! We need each and every one of you!!

CHAPTER PROGRAMS, Kathy DeWein

Important Birding Areas and the Yucatan: Scott Somershoe will give a brief update on the Important Bird Area program status in Tennessee. He is working on data collection

important for the IBA program, i.e. wading bird surveys, eagle monitoring, etc. He will discuss status and results of statewide monitoring programs. Scott will also provide an introduction to the Watchable Wildlife Website that he is developing through TWRA. Finally, he will talk about a very recent trip to the Yucatan peninsula, specifically Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, to band birds for a research project.

October's monthly Audubon meeting was heavily attended by citizens concerned with mountain top coal removal updates. SOARS students attended and spoke on the necessity of being politically aware of what environmental issues were being presented to our state and acting by singing up to vote. They also passed out Power Vote brochures for those interested in a project of energy action coalition. Dave Cooper and Eric Blevin followed with current issues of coal removal in Virginia and how the Tennessee coal industry is starting up again to remove seams once mined and abandoned. Eric ended the program with various upcoming meetings for those interested in acting on their commitments to the environment.

Upcoming programs:

December – “Corps of Engineers Water Management in the Cumberland River Basin” by Mr. Richard Tippit, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers

February – Blaine Hyle, a wildlife biologist with the USDA will speak. Topic to be determined.

March – Tom Payne, a local butterfly enthusiast, will do “Flowers and Fritillaries” a program about butterfly conservation, threats, and attraction plants. He will have his collection and videos to identify local species.

FIELD TRIPS, Chris O'Bryan

We will NOT be having a field trip for the month of November, but we will be having a trip in early December. The current proposed date is Saturday, December 13th. Some of the possible localities for this trip could be at Radnor Lake or even Reelfoot Lake in West Tennessee to observe the eagles and other diverse avifauna in that region. We can use the December field trip as a “winter warm-up” for our January 3rd CBC.

HOLD THE DATE FOR CBC, Debbie Hamilton

January 3, 2009 will be the Christmas Bird Count Date for the Warioto Audubon Society group. We need field counters and feeder counters so mark your calendar and plan on counting birds that day.

The field counters will meet at 6:00 a.m. at Shoney's on Riverside Drive and will be assigned a counting area within the count circle. Feeder counters can count from their home if it is within the count circle.

Additional information about the 38th Warioto CBC will be found in next month's newsletter. Historical information about the National CBC (the 109th) can be found at the NAS web site, <http://www.audubon.org/Bird/cbc/>.

CONSERVATION LETTER, Joe Schiller

There are several very important votes this election. On the federal level, both Barack Obama and John McCain have voiced support for legislation to fight global warming, to support energy conservation and renewable energy, and to protect the environment. However, if you listen closely as each candidate reels off their list of positions you will easily detect a difference in priorities. Obama's position on global warming legislation is more ambitious, and in the opinion of most climate experts, more likely to succeed. Obama's policy would auction carbon credits providing a more accurate and higher price for carbon emissions and also providing more revenue to apply to energy conservation programs, research, and incentives for the adoption of renewable energy. Obama always starts with solar, wind, efficiency, and other renewable energy approaches and gives only qualified support to "clean coal," off shore drilling, and nuclear power generation. He always emphasizes we cannot drill our way out of high energy prices (something all competent oil geologists will confirm, even if they work for Exxon/Mobile). McCain always starts off with "we have to drill everywhere" and build 45 new nuclear power plants before finally getting around to solar, wind, and other renewable energies. McCain has repeatedly missed Senate votes that would have passed important renewable energy legislation that could have led to real progress in renewable energy development. His proposal to build 45 new nuclear reactors would be an environmental and financial disaster. It takes 10 years and 10 billion dollars to build one nuclear power plant. Once built, they are very expensive to operate, maintain, secure, and ultimately to dispose of. A wind farm that provides the equivalent amount of energy as a typical nuclear power plant can be planned and built in less than two years for a lot less money. Soon, it will also be possible to build solar energy power plants in much less time and at less cost than nuclear plants. And wind and solar plants produce no pollution and are not targets for terrorists. You could build a lot of solar and wind power plants for 450 billion dollars!

Locally, Senator Rosalind Kurita is waging a spirited write-in candidacy to retain her state Senate seat. Senator Kurita won the state Democratic Party primary only to have the State Democratic Executive Committee overturn her election substitute Tim Barnes onto the ballot. Senator Kurita has the strongest environmental voting record of any currently serving senator and was awarded

the conservation legislator of the year award from the Tennessee Conservation Voters Association. Senator Kurita sponsored legislation to end mountaintop removal mining of coal in Tennessee. Senator Kurita has been very supportive of energy conservation and renewable energy legislation in the senate and Governor Bredesen appointed her to the Energy Commission he formed this year. Senator Kurita deserves to be rewarded for all of her past good work on behalf of the Tennessee Environment. When you vote, please consider choosing "write in" for state senate seat and typing the letters "K-U-R-I-T-A."

Last month was pretty crazy. Given all the huge banks and financial institutions failing or teetering on the brink, the federal government passing a controversial \$700 billion bill to shore up the economy, and all the presidential and state and local political campaigns; you would certainly be forgiven if you missed the part about the renewable energy incentives attached to the financial bailout bill. The bill increased incentives for homeowners and businesses to purchase and install solar energy systems. The bill extended the solar Investment Tax Credit (ITC) for another eight years. Under the plan's terms, homeowners can qualify for a federal tax credit that equals 30 percent of a photovoltaic system's cost beginning January 1. The current cap of \$2,000 is removed. So if you are a home or small business owner and have been considering installing a solar electric system, the deal just got quite a bit sweeter. In addition, business owners will no longer trigger payment of an alternative minimum tax by claiming the credit. The solar Investment Tax Credit has also been extended to utilities, which now can take direct advantage of the ITC through the ownership of solar projects. It is becoming increasingly likely that congress will reconvene after the election to pass additional economic stimulus measures. The Democrats are rumored to be seriously considering a green jobs measure as an important part of this legislation. This is an idea that is gaining wide support at the international level as well. The concept called a '[Green New Deal](#)' will call on world leaders, including the new US president, to move the economy away from the kind of speculative investment schemes that led to our current financial meltdown, and instead towards a Green Jobs program that will invest in efforts to "restore the natural systems that underpin the world economy." Let us take the opportunity to press congress to support such an effort, even if they were not already contemplating it!

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH BENEFITS BIRDS AND PEOPLE

Connection with nature promotes wellness



Ithaca, NY-More than 100 studies have shown that getting closer to nature reduces stress and promotes a feeling of well-being in children and adults. So, filling feeders and counting the birds that visit may be just what the doctor ordered! For more than 20 years, that's what participants in the Cornell Lab of

Ornithology's Project FeederWatch have been doing-benefitting themselves and the birds.

"It is a great winter time activity for the whole family," says Alaska FeederWatcher Nancy Darnell. "If you have children, they will come to love watching the birds. All of this is fun and a chance to contribute to scientific studies, too!"

The 2008-09 season of **Project FeederWatch gets underway November 8** and runs through April 3. Participants count the numbers and kinds of birds at their feeders each week and send the information to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Participants submitted more than 115,000 checklists during the 2007-08 FeederWatch season, documenting unusual bird sightings, winter movements, and shifting ranges—a treasure-trove of information that scientists use to monitor the health of the birds and of the environment.

"Being a FeederWatcher is easy and fun, and at the same time helps generate the world's largest database on feeder-bird populations," says project leader David Bonter. "We are grateful for the contributions our participants have made for the birds and are proud of the joy they say it brings to their busy lives. Since we started in 1987, more than 40,000 people have submitted observations, engaging with the wildlife beyond their windows."

"Project FeederWatch opened up a whole new world for me," says participant Cheri Ryan of Lockport, Kentucky. "It's so interesting to watch the activities of the birds. I learn something new each time I participate."

Scientists learn something new from the data each year, too, whether it's about the movements of common backyard birds or unusual sightings of rarely-seen species. Highlights of the most recent season include the largest southward movement of Red-breasted Nuthatches in the history of the project—part of an expected influx of northern birds that fly farther south when their food supplies run short. Other northern species showing up in record numbers included Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins. Among the rare birds reported was a Streak-backed Oriole in Loveland, Colorado—the state's first report of this bird, native to Mexico. A

December nor'easter deposited a Dovekie in Newton, Massachusetts, the first time this North Atlantic seabird has ever been reported to Project FeederWatch.

Long-term data show some species increasing in number, such as the Lesser Goldfinch in the Southwest. Other populations continue a downward trend, such as the Evening Grosbeak throughout their range. Once one of the most common species seen at feeders in the northern half of the continent, the grosbeaks are declining for unknown reasons.

Beyond the benefits to birds and science, however, is the benefit to participants. "Nature is not merely an amenity; it is critical to healthy human development and functioning," says Nancy Wells, Cornell University assistant professor of design and environmental analysis. Her studies find that a view of nature through the window or access to the environment in any way improves a child's cognitive functioning and reduces the negative effects of stress on the child's psychological well-being. Wells also notes that when children spent time with nature early in life it carries over to their adult attitudes and behavior toward the environment.

Project FeederWatch welcomes participants of all ages and skill levels, from scout troops and retirees to classrooms and nature center visitors. To learn more and to sign up, visit www.feederwatch.org or call the Lab toll-free at (800) 843-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher's Handbook*, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds in their area, a calendar, complete instructions, and the FeederWatch annual report, *Winter Bird Highlights*.

Many FeederWatchers echo this comment from Mary Strasser of Wisconsin: "The greatest reward for me as a participant in Project FeederWatch these many years has been observing birds and behavior that I might have missed had I not been part of this project."

**WARIOTO AUDUBON SOCIETY
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ARTICLES AND INFORMATION FOR THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER ARE DUE 14 NOVEMBER.

MAIL TO: Steve Hamilton, 3040 Snardon Mill Rd., Allensville, KY 42204 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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