

the eagle

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a digital newsletter sent to members by e-mail



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Stephen Russell Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society / Virginia Society of Ornithology

BBC MEETS TUESDAY AT ETSU- BRISTOL.

Don Miller of Greeneville TOS will speak at April meeting of BBC

Don Miller, one of the region's most prolific birders and field ornithologists, will present a talk to the BBC next week about his plans and efforts to author and publish a new bird book for Upper East Tennessee. The book will be an annotated checklist of the birds of "**Hamblen and five adjacent counties**" -- *Greene, Cocke, Jefferson, Grainger and Hawkins*. That six-county area, adjacent to the five-county area of Northeast Tennessee to the north, will provide a continuous checklist coverage of 11 Upper East Tennessee counties.

The meeting will be held Tuesday, April 18 at the East Tennessee State University -- Bristol Center on the Volunteer Parkway in Bristol Tennessee at 7:30 p.m.

DINNER AT THE MAD GREEK - 6 PM.

<http://www.madgreekrest.com>

vastly expanded menu; redecorated; reserved table
2419 Volunteer Parkway, Bristol, TN -- across from Avoca School
Phone: (423) 968-4848

The majority of our members gather at the Mad Greek Restaurant at 6 p.m. for a fellowship dinner. Meals are on your own. The BBC monthly meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. at the ETSU Bristol Center and the program will be presented following a few brief announcements.

Bristol Bird Club Special Membership Benefit Report

Rob Moyle joins Kansas faculty, museum

Dr. Rob Moyle, son of Bristol Bird Club members **John and Polly Moyle**, has been selected to a position as assistant professor and assistant curator in the area of systematic ornithology at The University of Kansas at Lawrence. He begins his new job in August.



Rob took part in our 2004 Bristol Christmas Bird Count and visited with us this past Christmas while spending times with his folks at Kingsport. A committee of BBC planners had invited Rob to be our banquet speaker in September. His new position and starting schedule may prevent that.

His job in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, along with the Natural History Museum and Biodiversity Research Center at the University of Kansas, is a tenure-track position as assistant professor / assistant curator in the area of systematic ornithology. Kansas has one of the best university ornithological collections in America. The school's biology program is

among the nation's highest-ranked programs.

Rob is currently the Chapman Postdoctoral Fellow with the American Museum of Natural History in New York where he works with the Division of Vertebrate Zoology - Ornithology as the Cullman Molecular Laboratory Manager.

He earned his Ph.D. in 2002 at Louisiana State University, studying under **Dr. Fred Sheldon**. He studied *Molecular systematics of barbets and trogons: pantropical biogeography, African speciation, and issues in phylogenetic inference*. **Sheldon** serves as the director of the LSU Museum of Natural Science and is the George H. Lowery, Jr., Professor of Natural Science.

Rob took a master of science degree from the University of Rhode Island in 1996 and his bachelor of arts from Brown University in 1992.

In 1998, **Moyle** published *Flight Without Horizon References in European Starlings* in *The Auk* with Frank Heppner of the University of Rhode Island.

Moyle has a strong phylogenetic focus on questions regarding the evolution of avian diversity, using specimen-based research methods. He also is committed to ornithological research collections. He will take a diversity of scholarly approaches to the Kansas department. That department has 100 graduate students with three-quarters of the students studying for their Ph.D. and one-quarter their M.A. This is a very large and strong department with at least 70 full-time faculty.

Rob gave a presentation to the University of Kansas department in early February of this year, as part of the final step towards being selected for the position. Other finalists included **Dr. Jason Weckstein** a postdoctoral fellow of The Field Museum in Chicago, **Dr. Chris Witt**, University of California - Berkeley and Dr. Gary Voelker, University of Memphis.

In 1998, **Weckstein** traveled to the International Ornithological Congress with **Moyle**. They collected birds in South Africa for several weeks prior to the meetings. Both were students at LSU. **Weckstein** got his Ph.D. from LSU in 2003, studying *Systematics and cophylogenetics of toucans and their associated chewing lice*, published in *The Auk* 122:1191-1209.

Weckstein also got his masters degree from the University of Minnesota in 1997 and published research regarding sparrows with **Dr. Andy Jones'** former professor, **Dr. Bob Zink**. **Weckstein** is currently a post-doctoral researcher with the Field Museum of Natural History, Department of Zoology at Chicago.

Moyle, **Weckstein** and **Chris Witt** (another of the finalists for the Kansas position) collaborated for a 2002 publication, *The perils of using host relationships in parasite taxonomy: phylogeny of the Degeeriella complex*. Johnson, K. P., **J. D. Weckstein**, **C. C. Witt**, R. C. Faucett, and **R. G. Moyle**. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 23:150-157.

Witt received his Ph.D. in 2004 at LSU, researching *Rates of molecular evolution and their application to neotropical avian biogeography*. His current position is a postdoctoral fellow, University of California, Berkeley, California. (He was co-advised by **Sheldon** and **J. Van Remsen** while working towards his doctorate at LSU.)

BBC members will take delight that **Rob** is an author of the American Ornithologists' Union 2001 monograph, No. 52, -- *Ornithology of Sabah: History, Gazetteer, Annotated Checklist, and Bibliography* with **Fred Sheldon**, (**Moyle**) and Jody Kennard. This is the second monograph from our BBC family. We always take pride that a founding member of the Bristol Bird Club, **Dr. Stephen Russell**, authored A.O.U. monograph No. 1, *A distributional study of the birds of British Honduras*. **Russell** earned his doctorate under the famous **Dr. George H. Lowery, Jr.**, at LSU.

Rob was awarded a 1999 AOU Research Awards while a Louisiana State University, Ph.D. candidate for his research "A coalescent approach to understanding genetic diversity and endemism in Borneo;"

Rob's areas of expertise include molecular systematics of kingfishers, biogeography and historical ecology of widespread tropical groups and the evolution and phylogeography of Bornean birds. He has traveled to Sabah since 2000, and continues to work on taxonomy and phylogeography of various bird groups there, with **Dr. Fred Sheldon** of LSU. Another of their publication was in 2005, **Moyle, R.G.**, M. Schilthuizen, M.A. Rahman, and **F.H. Sheldon**. *Molecular phylogenetic analysis of the White-crowned Forktail (Enicurus leschenaultia) in Borneo. Journal of Avian Biology* 36:96-101.

Moyle is one of the authors who published a paper recently in the top-tier research journal, *Nature*. The paper shows that oceanic islands are not necessarily the evolutionary "dead ends" that they have traditionally been portrayed to be and that a group of birds have actually accomplished what scientists had never previously been able to document; some island species doubled back and successfully re-colonized the continents from where they originated. The work was done with Dr. Chris Filardi who made this discovery by studying a group of Pacific island birds, known as monarch flycatchers. The *New York Times' Science Times* section carried a very nice article about the discovery in November 2005.

BBC members extend congratulations to the proud parents and members of our club for the excellent accomplishments of their son **Rob** !

Second Edition of Rick Knight's 1994 book,
The Birds of Northeast Tennessee -- An Annotated Checklist



PROGRESS !

BBC will set the course to produce the new edition by 2007

Rick Knight says he would like to finish the second edition manuscript of his famous book on Northeast Tennessee birds sometime in late fall to early winter. He has asked that the Bristol Bird Club again be the production and publishing manager for the project.

The first edition was the initial effort of what has grown to be four regional birding publications produced, funded and managed with the Bristol Bird Club and its members.

Knight's excellent first edition covers the five counties of Northeast Tennessee (Carter, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, Washington). Accounts for the 298 species recorded in this region were included, as were highly useful graphs showing the dates when species can be expected in the area. The book is long out of print and less than a half a dozen extra copies are known to be in the hands of BBC members. Original copies are now considered to be a collector's item. Only one or two copies have been made available to new birders since about 2000. It is believed that none has been for sale during that period.



Knight says a number of new species has been found in the 12 years that the book has been used by birders of the region and birders from other parts of the country. He has kept updates of records as they occur and recently has been compiling them towards the goal of producing the second edition. He also has recorded new dates for the 11 pages of graphs found in the first edition.

Knight hopes to include a number of photos in the second edition. They will mostly be of significant bird records for which quality production can be produced. At the present, intentions are to print the photos of those birds on inside pages in color. The second edition will, most likely, have a new cover design. It will include a number of additional pages compared to the original. He intends to include a better quality map of the area and more information and map locations for the best birding hotspots and significant areas.

Present plans are to have the Bristol Bird Club produce the second edition. This will include, but not be limited to, contracting typesetting and layout, working with raising funding for production and hiring a printer. The project will come up for approval by the membership in the near future.

If all goes well, the book will be made available for distribution by the first of the year.

Other books managed, produced and published by the BBC include:

1994 Rick Knight, *The Birds of Northeast Tennessee -- An Annotated Checklist.*

1999 J. Wallace Coffey, John L. Shumate, Jr. *Bird Study in Shady Valley, Tennessee 1934-1999.*

1999 Tony Decker, *The Birds of Smyth County Virginia.*

2001 Richard H. Peake, *Birds of the Virginia Cumberlands.*

To find a bird where I least expect it, to know its call before I see it, to know its sex and age when I do, to watch it feed and nest and rest without, I hope, disturbing it, that's why I bird. No doubt that's part of what drives others to haunt the swamps of Arkansas or Louisiana, looking for something invisible in the thicket, clattering at a dead trunk.

*by Phil Wedge
Assistant Professor of English
University of Kansas*



BBC VOLUNTEERS HELP FRIENDS OF STEELE CREEK

Thanks to Larry McDaniel, Laura O'Bryan, Ellen Parker, Chris O'Bryan and Charlie Parker for volunteering their time to help the The Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park work the race concessions. The friends operate the booth at the Bristol Motor Speedway during the March race.

This is just one more great way that the good people of the Bristol Bird Club contribute to good things that happen in our area. Thank you all again.

The Friends earn thousands of dollars each year which is used to help fund research, natural history programs like Wildlife Weekend and for trail improvement and other visitor services.

Our good BBC members have made a considerable contribution to help our most responsible and active advocates for both the Friends and the natural history efforts at Steele Creek Park Nature Center.

BBC 13th of month field trip

Our next walkup field trip will meet at the ETSU Bristol Center on the Volunteer Parkway in Bristol Tennessee. The meeting will usually be 8 a.m. unless a notice of time change is given. The April field trip is Thursday, the 13th. Birders are going rain or shine. Each outing will be to wherever the group agrees to go birding. You always know the date. No field trip leaders are designated. The group just gets together and goes birding !

BBC DUES ARE WAY PAST DUE
Members who have not paid dues by May
will be removed from the *THE EAGLE* mailing list
and this will be your last newsletter.

BBC Treasurer Janice Martin says we are significantly behind with our membership dues collections for 2006. It is very important that we get the dues in because we will soon have to mail our dues payment to the Tennessee Ornithological Society.

\$20 Individual \$26 Family \$30 Sustaining \$15 Student \$10 Associate
(Associate Members must be members of another TOS Chapter)

Make your check payable to the Bristol Bird Club and mail to our BBC Treasurer:

Janice Martin
701 Euclid Ave.
Bristol, VA 24201

janice@bristolbirdclub.org

BRISTOL BIRD CLUB CALENDAR

Apr 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

Apr 18 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at ETSU-Bristol Center. Dinner at Mad Greek at 6pm

Apr 22 BBC Migration Field Trip to Standifer Gap Marsh, Chattanooga, TN **This is an overnight event.**

Apr 22 Bristol Arbor & Earth Day Celebration DeFriece Park 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

Apr 22-24 Spring Nature Festival - Warrior's Path State Park, Kingsport. Experience the delights of spring nature discovery . Participate in seminars taught by professionals, and hikes guided by trained naturalists. Topics include: spring wildflowers, tracking, astronomy, stream life, local geology, spring trees, and more!

Apr 23 Abingdon Arbor Day & Earth Day Celebration (BBC display will be up), Veteran Memorial Park, Abingdon, VA 2p.m. to 4 p.m.

Apr 28-30 Carolina Bird Club Annual Spring Meeting, Asheville, NC at Ramada Plaza Hotel, 435 Smoky Park Hwy. This is a block south of I-40 off exit #44. For reservations call 828-665-2161 or 1-800-678-2161. Saturday night speaker will be Paul Super, Science Coordinator at the Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center on Purchase Knob, Great Smoky Mountains National Park. His subject will be Protecting the Birds of the Smokies: Avian Research and Management. Friday night speaker is Christine Kelly, Mountain Nongame Wildlife Biologist for the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. She is in charge of the Peregrine Falcon research. Excellent mountain spring warbler migration expected on field trips with birding experts.

Apr 29 Northeast Tennessee Annual Spring Bird Count by the Herndon TOS

May 1-7 New River Birding and Nature Festival

May 5-6-7 Roan Mountain Naturalist Rally.

May 5-7 VSO Spring meeting. Breaks Interstate Park. Sponsored by Buchanan County Bird Club

May 5-7 TOS Spring meeting. Nashville. Sponsored by Nashville Chapter TOS.

May 7 Steele Creek Park "Ridge Life Walk" North Ridge Trail. Moderate hike. Park wildlife and wildflowers 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

May 12-13 Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally, Konnarock, VA

May 12-13-14 Clinch Mountain Trails Spring Migratory Birding Festival Mtn Trails loop of Virginia Birding Trail. Saltville, Va. and Marion, VA. Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management area birds and butterfly walks will likely be Sunday morning, May 14, due to an open hunting season on the area Saturday.

May 12-14 Clinch Mountain Trails Spring Migratory Birding Festival, Hungry Mother State Park. Three days of bird watching for songbird and hawk migrations. A juried bird-themed arts and crafts festival, guest speakers and birding by canoe.

May 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

May 13 Birding with the Herndon Bird Club, Sycamore Shoals State Park 8 a.m.

May 13 Appalachian Trail Days, Damascus: 2-4pm "Tiny Critters Tell Tales - - A Look into Our Streams" by Andy Brown at Rock School Auditorium (includes a monitoring session)

May 13 Steele Creek Park "Rooster Front" on Vance Drive. Wetlands Search for frogs and toads 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

May 16 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at ETSU-Bristol. Dinner at Mad Greek, 6 p.m.

May 18 Wildlife / Wildflower Hike, Steele Creek Park Nature Center, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

May 19-20-21 Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival. Headquarters: Mt. Lake Hotel
1-800-346-3334

May 19-20-21 Appalachian Trail Days at Damascus, VA.

May 20-21 Bristol Bird Club Natural Tunnel State Park Birding Weekend (IMBD Event), BBC members and park naturalists to lead hikes along the Natural Tunnel segment of the Virginia Wildlife and Birding Trail. Participants will view many species of birds passing through Southwest Virginia during the spring migration. There will also be a session on wildlife photography. Virginia Wildlife and Birding Trail. 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Duffield, Virginia

May 31 Native Tree Hike, Steele Creek Park, meet at Mill Creek Parking lot on Borad Street. 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Jun 3 Bibbee Nature Club (West Va. state bird club) Warbler Day - Tazewell Co., VA. Meet at the Hardee's at the 4-way in Tazewell at 7:00 a.m. to noon. Witten Park, the Mud Fork area, and Burke's Garden.

Date to be Announced - BBC Owl Prowl (Northern Saw-whet Owl), Roan Mountain, TN

Jun 10 BBC Whitetop Mt. / Elk Garden Field Trip. Bird hike from Whitetop parking area down ridge thru the confier and northern hardwoods to the parking lot in Elk Garden -- an easy, beautiful and very birdy few hours. This has been a tremendously enjoyable walk and well attended.

Jun 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

Jun 17-18: 60th Annual Rhododendron Festival Roan Mountain, TN.

Jun 18 Rhododendron Bloom Hike. Grayson Highlands State Park, Va.
Hike traverses the best rhododendron bloom on Wilburn Ridge. Massie
Gap. 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

Jun 20 Regular date for BBC meeting but no meeting in June
due to annual picnic which takes its place -- even though the picnic is July 1
this year.

Jun 23-25 VSO Statewide Summer Field Trip Mount Rogers, VA.

**Jul 1 (Saturday) Bristol Bird Club Annual Picnic, Civitan Shelter, Steele Creek
Park, Bristol Tennessee**

**Jul 8-16 Asa Wright Nature Center Trip to Trinidad. Good turnout.
Reservations are already paid. The trip is full.**

Jul 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

**Jul 15 BBC Funfest/Wards Feed Store Bird Walk (Bays Mountain
Park, Kingsport)**

Jul 15 14th Annual Butterfly Count, Roan Mountain. Sponsored by the North American
Butterfly Association. Meet at the Roan Mountain State Park visitor center at 10
am.

**Jul 18 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at ETSU-Bristol.
Supper at Mad Greek at 6pm**

**Jul 22 BBC Funfest/Wards Feed Store Bird Walk (Bays Mountain
Park, Kingsport)**

Jul 29 Virginia Highlands Festival, Virginia Creeper Trail Bird Walk. 7:30 a.m.
Abingdon, VA.

Jul 29 -- Aug 13 58th Annual Virginia Highlands Festival at Abingdon, Va. While
the festival has many excellent natural history and birding events, plan for traffic
and time for schedule when birding to Musick's Camp Campgrounds via I-81
at Abingdon and Va. Rt. 75 towards Musick's, Weir Dam and Middlebrook Lake
to TN Rt. 44 and U.S. 421. Abingdon traffic can be extremely heavy during
the festival and long waits for off ramp to Va. Rt. 75.

Aug 6 5th Annual Elizabethton Butterfly Count, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sycamore Shoals
State Historic Area(Don Holt)

Aug 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

Aug 15 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at ETSU-Bristol. Dinner at Mad Greek at 6pm

Aug 24 -- Aug 27 Bristol Motor Speedway Fall Race at Bristol (night race Sat. Aug 26)

Plan for traffic and time for schedule when birding to Musick's Campground, Weir Dam, Middlebrook Lake at Bristol TN via Bristol Beltway (TN 394), VA Rt. 75 from Abingdon to U.S. 421 (including TN Rt. 44 which is part of that route from US 421 to VA Rt. 75 at stateline) and US 421 north from Shady Valley towards Bristol.

Sep 8 BBC's Sponsored Mendota Hawk Watch begins , weather permitting.

Sep 8-9-10 Roan Mountain Fall Naturalist Rally.

Sep 15-17 Bristol Bird Club Natural Tunnel State Park Fall Birding Weekend. Join our birders on hikes along the Natural Tunnel segment of the Virginia Wildlife and Birding Trail. Participants will view many species of birds passing through Southwest Virginia during the autumn migration. Virginia Wildlife and Birding Trail. 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

Sep 15-17 Clinch Mountain Trails Spring Migratory Birding Festival, Hungry Mother State Park. Three days of bird watching for songbird and hawk migrations. A juried bird-themed arts and crafts festival, guest speakers and birding by canoe.

Sep (usually 3rd or 4th Friday but date to be announced) Bristol Bird Club Annual Banquet. No regular monthly meeting schedule for Sept.

Sep 19 Regular date for BBC meeting but no meeting in September due to annual banquet which takes its place.

Sep 30 BBC's Sponsored Mendota Hawk Watch last day of season coverage.

Oct. 7 Bird Walks at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area with Lee & Lois Herndon TOS Chapter 8 a.m.

Oct 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

Oct 14 15th Annual Shady Valley Cranberry Festival, Johnson County, TN

Oct. 14 Bird Walks at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area with Lee & Lois Herndon TOS Chapter 8 a.m.

Oct 17 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at ETSU-Bristol. Dinner at Mad Greek at 6pm

Oct. 21 Bird Walks at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area with Lee & Lois Herndon TOS Chapter 8 a.m.

Oct. 28 Bird Walks at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area with Lee & Lois Herndon TOS Chapter 8 a.m.

Nov 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

Nov 21 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at ETSU-Bristol. Dinner at Mad Greek at 6pm

Dec 9 Bristol Bird Club Annual Regional Christmas Party (final date TBA)

Dec 13 BBC 13th of the Month Field Trip, ETSU-Bristol Center 8 a.m.

Dec 16 Elizabethton Christmas Bird Count

Dec 17 Roan Mountain Christmas Bird Count

Dec 19 BBC meeting 7:30pm. at Steele Creek Lodge. Supper at Mad Greek, 6 p.m. Annual Christ Bird Count Planning meeting.

Dec 31 Bristol Christmas Bird Count

Jan 1 Shady Valley Christmas Bird Count

Jan 3 Compilation Meeting for Christmas Bird Counts 7:30 p.m. Steele Creek Park Lodge. Dinner at 6 p.m. at the Mad Greek.

Bristol Bird Club Officers 2005-2006

President-**Bill Grigsby**-Kingsport, Tennessee

V. President-**Larry McDaniel**-Johnson City, Tennessee

V. President-**Dave Worley**-Rosedale, Virginia

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Statistician-**Richard P. Lewis**-Bristol, Tennessee

THE EAGLE

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Bristol Birds Net Photo Gallery located at:

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