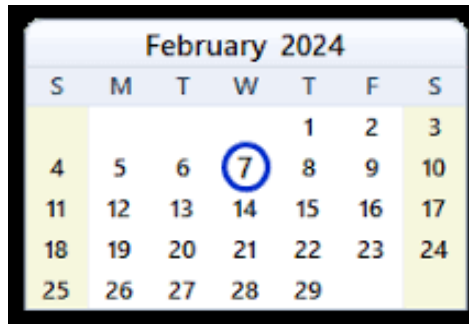


## Tellico Village Birding Club Newsletter – January 2024

### **Next Monthly Meeting**

The next monthly meeting will take place 2 PM Wednesday February 7th at the Yacht Club. The guest speaker will be Stephen Lynn Bales presenting “Local Birds Of Prey”.



A calendar for February 2024. The days of the week are listed at the top: S, M, T, W, T, F, S. The dates are arranged in a grid. The 7th is circled in blue. The calendar is framed by a thick black border.

February 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

The remaining 2024 meetings will be held the first Tuesday of each month at 6 PM in Room D of the Recreation Center.

Due to the Recreation Center being closed for Election Day the first Tuesday in both March and November, meetings are not scheduled for those months. Alternate events such as bird walks will be scheduled.

### **Birds Of Tellico Village Videos**

Episode 4, which is almost finished, has been delayed due to a few typos in the graphics, members of the production team taking vacations, and snow shutting down the village. Hopefully it will be released soon!

Below are links to the first three episodes on YouTube:

Episode 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mckVH7dfLXY>

Episode 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYRmThHKpMI&t=244s>

Episode 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PslripyEveU&t=200s>

### **Egg Teeth**

After the conclusion of Bill Hartman's presentation at our January meeting, someone (I believe that someone was Kristin Farrington, apologies if I am wrong) mentioned to me that bluebirds have a special baby tooth used to crack the eggs when they hatch. Turns out they are not the only ones: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egg\\_tooth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egg_tooth)

### **Patagial Marks / Identifying Red-tailed Hawks**

This fascinating link was included in a Facebook post comment discussing Red-tailed Hawk identification: <https://www.birdsoutsidemylwindow.org/2009/12/18/anatomy-patagium-patagial/>

### **Member Contribution – SuZanne Axt**

SuZanne provided a link to a story about the amazing bird with half male and half female plumage:

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/scientist-photographs-once-in-a-lifetime-sighting-of-bird-with-half-male-and-half-female-plumage/>

### **Member Contribution – Teresa Johnson**

From Teresa, "This book comes recommended by a friend of mine. It does sound interesting": *Better Living Through Birding - Christian Cooper*

### **Member Contribution – Kristin Farrington**

Kristin sent this picture of a Red-bellied Woodpecker enjoying home made suet:



### **Member Contribution – SuZanne Axt**

From SuZanne: I had a flock of robins in the trees next to my feeder. They didn't go to the feeder just hung out in the trees. Must have been around 30 of them! I was surprised they were here in January snow.

### **Member Contribution – Ron and Donna Armbrust**

From the Armbrusts: No new sightings. However we started making our own suet for the feeders. We crumble it into an open feeder and it is attracting more birds than we thought, especially the bluebirds, cardinals and brown thrashers. Large flocks of robins daily crowd around the birdbaths that we try to keep clear of ice.

### **Member Contribution – Susan Kilday**

From Susan: The snowy weather brought some new neighbors to Ski Cove (Tommotely). This week we had our first-ever sightings of male and female Redheads and Ring-necks, and a solo male Hooded Merganser, too. WOW, what gorgeous ducks!! Such a treat!

Among the usual songbird residents, we have droves of bluebirds roosting under the house eaves. But they are struggling to find food since their source has been buried (bye-bye bugs!), so we are providing a temporary supply of mealworms to supplement seed and a fresh supply of water to keep them hydrated and us entertained.

All this to say, we aren't getting a whole lot done around the house. But our souls are nourished!

### **Member Contribution – Mike Gregory**

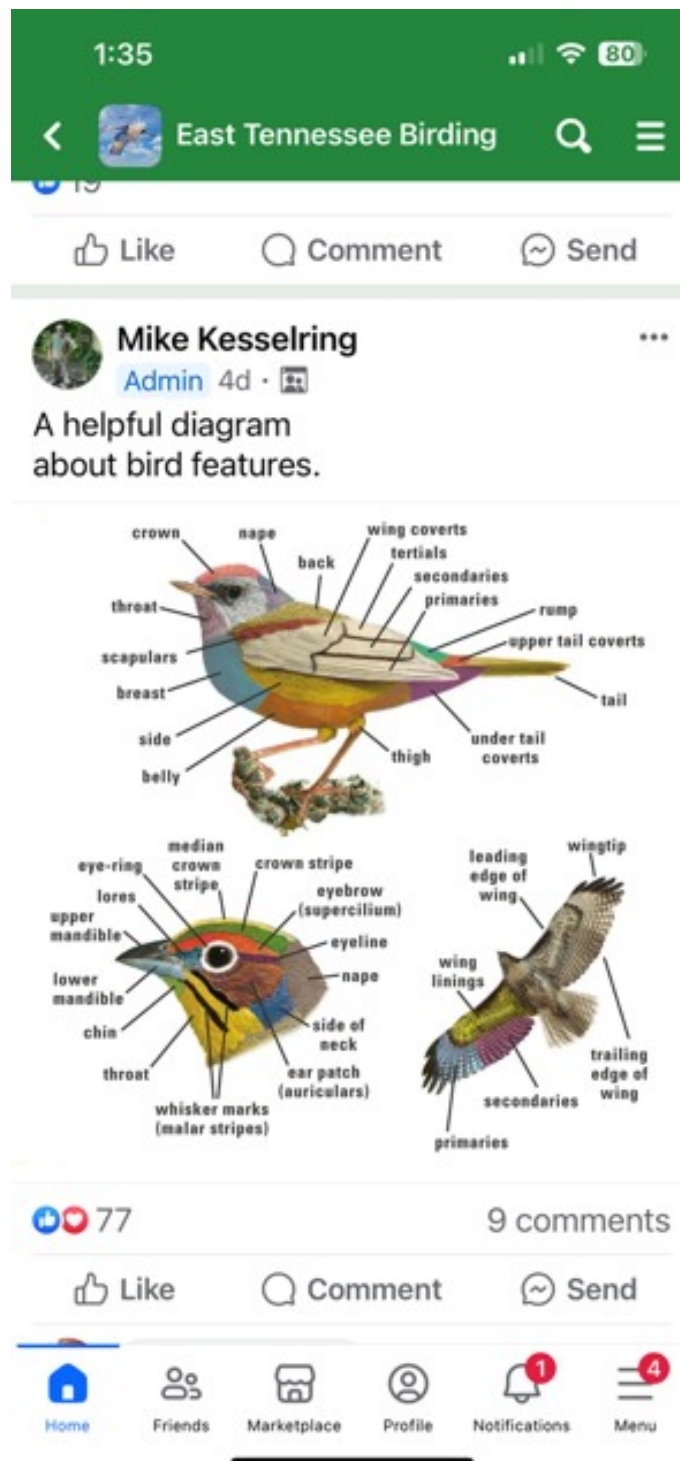
If anyone is looking for a half day birding trip, Linda and I recently took a ride down to the Hiwassee Refuge. The Observation Platform was very nice, and we saw hundreds of migrating Sandhill Cranes along with several hawks and songbirds in the area. Additionally, there is also another Observation Platform a mile or so down the road located at the Cherokee Removal Memorial Park. Its right on the Hiwassee River, where we observed several Eagles, American White Pelicans, along with waterfowl & gulls.

### **Member Contribution – Pat Ball**

From Pat: I think there must be a sign saying "free seed, suet and beer on Santee Way". I haven't seen any finches in months and I rarely see juncos, but both are everywhere. I broadcasted seed all over the snow crust on my deck and I'm having a great time watching the activity. Very fun. And of course my 4 p.m. Hawk doesn't miss a day.

## Member Contribution – Bill Hartman

Bill contributed an anatomy diagram featured in a recent Facebook post ...



### **Member Contribution – Linda Foster**

Linda reported a backyard Hermit Thrush. She included this “MOLTING IN BIRDS” quiz ...

1. True or False? Basic is the color most birds exhibit throughout the year.

- a. True
- b. False

This statement is True. Basic plumage is typically more drab than alternate plumage of birds during spring mating season.

2. True or False: The maximum number of molts a bird goes through in one year is two.

- a. True
- b. False

This statement is False. An example is the American white pelican. Adults of breeding age will go through three molts in a year, one complete molt (into basic plumage) and two partial molts (into two different alternate plumages).

3. True or False: some waterfowl (typically geese and swans) molt all of their flight feathers simultaneously, typically after nesting season.

- a. True
- b. False

This is True. As you can see in the picture, the flight feathers growing in are relatively all the same size which means the previous feathers were molted out at roughly the same time. Bird species that spend most of their time in or on the water can do this as they will be safer from land predators and still be able to grow their emerging feathers. Prior to molting, large flocks of non-breeding geese and swans will migrate to a safe location and all molt together. This is known as a molt migration.

4. Some birds go through multiple complete molts as they age from hatch year chick to adult. Why might this be important?

- a. It would signal to other birds their age, maturity, and potential dominance status.
- b. It can help camouflage them more as they gain life experience to survive.
- c. All of the above.
- d. None of the above.

c. All of the above. Young birds gain experience as they age. Some birds do not sexually mature until they are three-years-old or older. Correctly signaling your age would help you avoid conflict with adult mature birds which would help avoid injury. Young birds are also often darker and have more speckling/spotting/streaking than adult birds. This helps camouflage them from predators which increases survival.

5. True or False? Every bird goes through at least one complete molt (where all feathers are shed and re-grown over time) every year.

- a. True
- b. False

True. All birds molt all of their feathers at least once every year. Some birds experience multiple molts depending on the season and stage in the breeding cycle.

6. A bird spends a lot of energy while molting their feathers. Why expend that energy to molt?

- a. It ensures that the feathers function properly.
- b. It ensures that you look your best during breeding season.
- c. All of the above.
- d. None of the above.

All of the above. Feathers wear over time (similar to human hair) from use, abrasion, and ultraviolet radiation. By molting out old feathers and molting in new feathers, a bird ensures that their new feathers are strong, pliable, function for flight, and look their best to possible mates.

### **Member Contribution – Diane Naylor**

Diane sent a nice series of “bird feeder cam” pictures. Here are a few:



**Chipping Sparrow**



**Eastern Bluebird**



👑 New species



**Northern Cardinal**

👑 New species



**Carolina Wren**