



Shreveport Society for Nature Study
BIRD STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER

Volume 26, Number 1
August 25, 2011

Next Meeting – September 13, 2011

**"Bird Diversity in the Amazon Rainforest and
the Threat of Deforestation"**

Dr. Erik I. Johnson

SEPTEMBER MEETING

When: Tuesday, September 13, 6:00 p.m.

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

Topic: Bird Diversity in the Amazon Rainforest and the Threat of Deforestation, presented by Dr. Erik I. Johnson

Dr. Erik I. Johnson will discuss bird diversity in the Amazon Rainforest related to deforestation. Dr. Johnson is a graduate of LSU's School of Renewable Natural Resources and a student of Phil Stouffer. He studied the effects of tropical rainforest fragmentation and deforestation on birds in the central Amazon at the [Biological Dynamics of Forest Fragmentation Project](#) (BDFFP) near Manaus, Brazil. He was also active in the documentation of oiled birds after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill off the coast of Louisiana. He is now working, in Louisiana, as a conservation biologist for the National Audubon Society. Visit his website to learn more <https://sites.google.com/a/tigers.lsu.edu/ejohn33/home>.

Refreshments start at 6:00 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6 to chat with other birders!

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, including directions to the LSUS Science Lecture Auditorium, call us at 318-797-5338.



<http://www.claiborneone.org/haynesville/butterfly.html>

**WILD BIRD CENTER EVENTS
BEGINNER BIRD WALKS**

The Wild Bird Center conducts field trips the first and third Saturday of every month, weather permitting. Meet at Wild Bird Center in the University Place Shopping Center (Target Shopping Center) at the corner of Youree Drive and East 70th Street. Destinations vary according to local sightings and may include local parks, country roads or a private backyard. Loaner binoculars are available. Be sure to bring a field guide.

For more information on any Wild Bird Center event, please call Dennis or Janice Forshee at the Wild Bird Center, 318-797-BIRD (2473).

VOLUNTEER NEEDED TO ENTER BIRD RECORDS

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Any Suggestions for the BSG?

Your Board of Directors is trying very hard to improve the Bird Study Group and make it more attractive to new birders. Give us your suggestions about how to grow the BSG.

BSG Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons	
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<i>President – Larry Raymond</i> (1).....	929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)
<i>Vice-president – Mac Hardy</i> (3).....	687-6738 (H), 797-5338(W)
<i>Secretary – Silviera Hunt</i> (1).....	220-0098 (H), 676-7156(W)
<i>Treasurer –</i>	
MEMBERS AT LARGE	
<i>Jerry Bertrand</i> (3).....	868-3255 (H/W)
<i>John Dillon</i> (2).....	243-2284 (H)
<i>Bill Hall</i> (2).....	797-1727 (H)
<i>Jim Ingold</i> (1).....	742-5067 (H), 797-5236 (W)
<i>Amanda Lewis</i> (1).....	861-5294 (H), 797-5215 (W)
<i>Nancy Menasco</i> (2).....	868-3255 (H/W)
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<i>Dennis Forshee</i> (3).....	797-2473(W)
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<i>Numbers in parentheses are years remaining of a 3-year term.</i>	
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<i>Beginning Birders – Dennis Forshee</i>	797-2473 (W)
<i>Bird Alert Service – Rosemary Seidler</i>	424-2972 (H)
<i>Bird Hot Spot – Larry Raymond</i>	929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)
<i>Bird Records – Mac Hardy</i>	687-6738 (H) 797-5338 (W)
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Direct inquires to the Editor, Amanda Lewis, at (318) 797-5215.



<http://www.claiborneone.org/haynesville/butterfly.html>

12th Annual

Haynesville Celebration of Butterflies

September 10, 2011

“Butterfly Capital of Louisiana”

Claiborne Parish Fairgrounds
Haynesville, LA

Admission:
3 for Adults
\$1 for children 6-18



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2011

9:00-9:30 Parade—Grand Marshal, Dump Hatter, renowned vocalist and inspiration for the book *The Famous Caterpillar*

9:45 Announcement of Parade winners

10:00-10:45 Bromeliads: Easier to Grow Than to Pronounce—
Michael Seal

10:30-12:00 Creative Fun for Children

11:00-11:30 Gems of Cairo—Dancing on Stage

11:30-12:15 Cheerleaders Performing on Stage

11:30-12:15 Bluebird Trails Across America—James Dean

1:00-1:45 Flapping about My Favorite Butterfly Plants
-Greg Grant

1:00-1:30 Silver Belles-Line Dancing on Stage

2:00-2:30 Gems of Cairo-Dancing on Stage

2:40-3:10 Strumdingers Ukulele Band

3:20-4:15 Wildflowers of Louisiana- Charles Allen, PhD

4:15-5:00 A Butterfly Buffet: Guess Who’s Coming to
Dinner?-Loice Kendrick-Lacy

5:00 Drawing for Butterfly Quilt

5:00-6:30 Supper Break

6:30-Until Country, Bluegrass and Gospel Music

Other Festival Highlights:

Sale of Butterfly Plants, Books, T-Shirts
Community Art & Photography Exhibits,
Craft & Food Vendors,

Take-home Butterfly Towers (complete with
caterpillars & food), Nature Photography
Contest, Container Gardening Contest

Directions to Festival Site

Haynesville is located on U.S. Highway 79 in the Piney Woods near the Arkansas border. It is approximately 1 1/2 hours from Shreveport and Ruston, 30 minutes from Magnolia, El Dorado, Minden and Springhill.

For Butterfly Festival Information Contact:

Loice Kendrick-Lacy at (318) 624-1929 or
(870) 234-4910

Mailing Address: 203 Troy St.
Magnolia, AR 71753

E- MailAddress:loicelacy@att.net

FOR THE CHILDREN

Karaoke under the Pavilion
Bumper to Bumper Kiddie Rides, James Roach
Spacewalk
Sidewalk Art Competition—Suzy Allen
Other Outdoor Activities



Festival Sponsors:

Claiborne Chamber of Commerce
Haynesville Garden Club
LSU AG Center

Join/Renew the BSG!

The Bird Study Group of Shreveport invites you to become a member.
Renewals, please update information below.

Name(s) _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (Home) _____ Work _____

Yes, please add me to the email Bird Alert

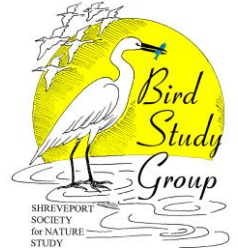
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Membership Levels: Regular (\$15.⁰⁰) Sustaining (\$35.⁰⁰) Family, *One Newsletter/ One Address* (\$20.⁰⁰)

Names of Family Members:

Donations: Library Refuges Refreshments General

Make check payable & mail to: SSNS- Bird Study Group
Museum of Life Sciences, One University Place,
Shreveport, LA 71115-2399

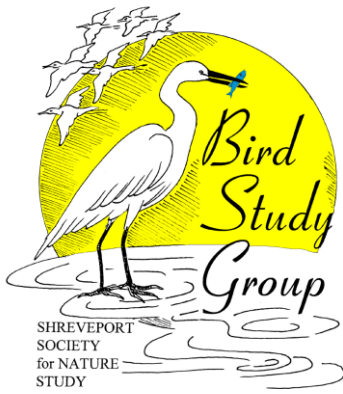


BIRD STUDY GROUP PHONE NUMBERS AND MORE

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Contact the BSG by email: lhardy@lsus.edu or phone (318) 797-5338.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.birdstudygroup.org>



Shreveport Society for Nature Study **BIRD STUDY GROUP** **NEWSLETTER**

Volume 26, Number 2
October 7, 2011

Next Meeting – October 11, 2011

"Increasing Access to Urban Wildlife:
The Development of One Forest Trail in Shreveport and the Potential for Others"

Presented by ABetterShreveport.org members: Jon Soul and Stephanie Pedro

OCTOBER MEETING

When: Tuesday, October 11, 6:00 p.m.

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

Topic: Increasing Access to Urban Wildlife: The Development of One Forest Trail in Shreveport and the Potential for Others." Presented by ABetterShreveport.org members: Jon Soul and Stephanie Pedro.

Come here about the development of the Coates Bluff Trail in Shreveport and future possibilities. ABetterShreveport.org is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Shreveport. Some of their projects other than the Coates Bluff greenway include creating a dog park, bike paths, and downtown revitalization. <http://www.abettershreveport.org/>

Refreshments start at 6:00 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6 to chat with other birders!

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, including directions to the LSUS Science Lecture Auditorium, call us at 318-797-5338.



REFUGE WEEK EVENTS AT THE RED RIVER NWR

THE BIG SIT!

Where: Red River National Wildlife Refuge Bayou Pierre Unit
709A Grand Bayou Loop/Parish Road 401
In Red River Parish, LA

Date: Sunday, October 9, 2011

Time: Before dawn 'til after dark (6:30 a.m. 'til)

Who can attend: The public is invited. Admission is free. **NO PETS PLEASE!**

Sponsored by: Friends of the Red River NWR, the Red River National Wildlife Refuge, and Shreveport's Bird Study Group. Contact Nancy Menasco, nmenasco@friendsofredriver.org, 868-3255.

What to bring: Binoculars, field guides, scope, chair, hat, drinks, and food.

Hosted by *Bird Watcher's Digest* magazine, the Big Sit is an annual, international, noncompetitive birding event. 2011 will mark the 17th Annual Big Sit. Sitters count birds observed or heard from within a 17-foot diameter circle. Sitters may come and go at will. Beginning birders are very welcome.

The Big Sit will be held at the refuge's Bayou Pierre Unit, which is located about 30 minutes south of Shreveport along the Red River and just off LA 1 in Red River Parish. Made up of three tracts totaling almost 4,000 acres, the Bayou Pierre Unit includes moist soil impoundments, which are flooded annually to provide habitat for migrating shorebirds, wading birds, and wintering waterfowl; bottomland hardwoods along the river; reforestation areas; and a cypress-tupelo swamp. Also located on the unit is a 1930's farmhouse that has been renovated by the Friends of Red River NWR to serve as a visitor contact, education, and research center. Restrooms are available onsite.

Directions to the Bayou Pierre Unit: From the intersection of Youree Drive/LA 1 and Bert Kouns Loop in Shreveport, go south on Youree Drive/LA 1 for 27.7 miles. Turn left (east) on Grand Bayou Loop/Parish Road 401 and proceed 0.7 mile. You will see the Red River NWR sign and a white house on your left. Turn in the driveway at the gate and park by the house. This is about a 35-minute drive from the Youree Dr./Bert Kouns intersection. Additional information: The turn on to Grand Bayou Loop/Parish Road 401 is 1.6 miles south on LA 1 from the blinking caution light at the intersection of LA 1 and LA 509 in Red River Parish.



7TH ANNUAL RED RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE CELEBRATION

Where: Red River National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters Unit
555 Sunflower Road
Bossier City, LA 71112

Date: Saturday, October 15, 2011

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Who can attend: The public is invited. Admission is free. Donations to support the work of the Friends group for the refuge are very much appreciated. **NO PETS PLEASE!**

Sponsored by: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Friends of the Red River NWR.
Contact Nancy Menasco, nmenasco@friendsofredriver.org, 868-3255.

Join us as we celebrate northwestern Louisiana's own Red River National Wildlife Refuge and the other 552 national wildlife refuges that make up America's 150-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System! The 7th Annual Celebration will feature live hawks, herps and baby alligators, nature walks, hayride refuge tours, fishing games, nature projects for children, face painting, native plants exhibits and sales, the popular interactive Be A Bear obstacle course that follows a year in the life of a bear, "Bugs and Butterflies" exhibit, a hands-on archaeology exhibit, and many other fun nature-oriented activities. New this year will be a live Bald Eagle from Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park. As usual, we'll be serving a free catfish lunch.

The Art in Nature exhibit will feature local student entries in our second "Louisiana's Natural Treasures" art contest. Area students Pre-K through grade 12 are invited to submit their artwork featuring Louisiana wildlife and/or plants. Prizes will be awarded in multiple categories. For more information on the contest and an entry form, please visit our website at www.friendsofredriver.org or call Zac Burson at 426-4683 (Shreveport-Bossier area).

The Celebration schedule will be posted on the Friends of Red River NWR website at www.friendsofredriver.org as soon as it is finalized.

Directions to the Headquarters Unit: From the intersection of US 71 (Barksdale Boulevard) and Jimmie Davis Highway (LA 511) in Bossier City, go south about one-half mile on US 71 and turn right (west) on Sunflower Road. Proceed to the end of the road through the gate into the refuge. The Refuge is open to walk-in visitors daily



3RD ANNUAL YELLOW RAIL WALK AT RED RIVER NWR BAYOU PIERRE UNIT

Red River National Wildlife Refuge, Bayou Pierre Unit, Red River Parish

Saturday, November 5, 2011, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Contact – Nancy Menasco, 868-3255, nmcpa@aol.com, www.friendsofredriver.org

The Yellow Rail is a bird of marshes and wetlands; because of its secretive nature, it is much sought after by birders. A rope drag is often used to cause the rails to fly up where they can be seen. Last year's rail walk yielded 63 species, including Yellow Rail, Virginia Rail, Short-eared Owl, American Bittern, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, and over 60 LeConte's Sparrows.

We will be meeting at the farmhouse for a short orientation before the walk. We'll have the coffeepot on. Bring your rubber boots or waders for walking the moist soil impoundments. A change of pants, socks, and shoes is advised. Those who don't want to walk the fields can bird from the levees and roads of the refuge.

You're invited to join us for lunch at the farmhouse after the bird walk. Tentative menu is hearty salads. We will provide iced tea and water.

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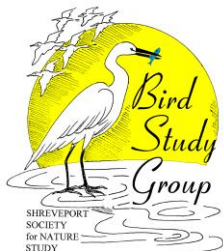
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Jerry Bertrand (3).....868-3255 (H/W)
John Dillon (2).....243-2284 (H)
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Roy Henderson(3).....861-7449(H)
Terry Davis (2).....934-2133(H/W)

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (Home) _____ Work _____

↑ Yes, please add me to the email Bird Alert

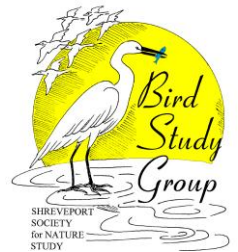
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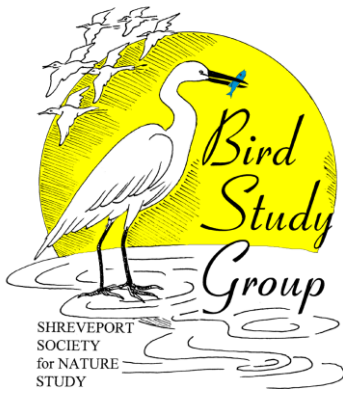


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Shreveport Society for Nature Study
BIRD STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER

Volume 26, Number 3
November 2, 2011

Next Meeting – November 8, 2011

"Identifying Birds of Prey"

Presented by Rusty Scarborough

NOVEMBER MEETING

When: Tuesday, November 8, 6:00 p.m.

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

Topic: "Identifying Birds of Prey" Presented by Rusty Scarborough

Raised in the mixed pine/hardwood bottomland of rural northwest Louisiana, Rusty Scarborough started his love of nature early. Then in his late teens, Rusty was introduced to the exciting world of falconry. Now over 25 years later, Rusty has achieved the level of master falconer and is introducing others to the sport. Over the last 20 years Rusty has presented bird of prey and falconry programs throughout Arkansas, Missouri and Louisiana. He has trained and hunted a number of birds including Red-tailed hawks, Harris's hawks, Kestrels, Red-shouldered hawk, Cooper's hawk, Ferruginous/Harris' hybrid and golden eagles. Rusty flies a cast that includes a passage female Harris's hawk and captive bred Harris's hawk. Rusty currently serves as Vice-President and Out-of-State Director of the Arkansas Hawking Association.

Rusty has a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Conservation with a minor in Microbiology from Louisiana Tech University. After ten years as Education Program Coordinator for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Governor Mike Huckabee Delta Rivers Nature Center in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Rusty has taken on new challenges back home in Louisiana. Rusty is now the Park Naturalist for Caddo Parish Parks & Recreation's Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park in Shreveport, Louisiana. In addition to managing the park Rusty continues his close work caring for and training the bird of prey collection at the park which includes eagles, owls, hawks and falcons. Rusty holds certifications with the National Association for Interpretation as Certified Interpretive Guide and Certified Interpretive Trainer.

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Direct inquires to the Editor, Amanda Lewis, at (318) 797-5215.



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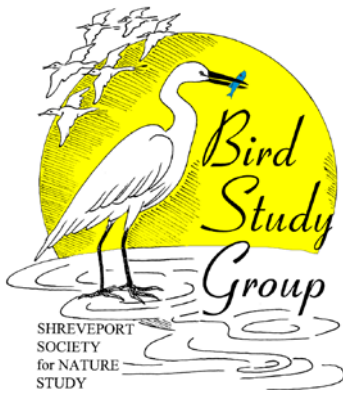


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Shreveport Society for Nature Study
BIRD STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER

Volume 26, Number 4
February 3, 2012

Next Meeting – February 14

**"The Red River National Wildlife Refuge:
An update plus birding the refuge"**

Presented by Pat Stinson, Refuge Manager

FEBRUARY MEETING

When: Tuesday, February 14, 6:00 p.m.

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

Topic: "The Red River National Wildlife Refuge: An update plus birding the refuge" Presented by Pat Stinson
Refuge Manager

Refuge Manager, Pat Stinson, will present an update on recent progress at the Red River National Wildlife Refuge, including the opening of the new visitor's center. He will also discuss birding at the refuge and bird-related volunteer opportunities.

Pat received a BS in Forestry from LA Tech and a MS in Wildlife at LSU. He has been with the Federal government for 13 years. His positions include: biologist at Barksdale, Refuge Manager at Mandalay & Bayou Teche NWRs, migratory bird biologist, Migratory Bird Office in Jackson, MS, and now Refuge Manager at the Red River NWR.

Refreshments start at 6:00 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6 to chat with other birders!

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, including directions to the LSUS Science Lecture Auditorium, call us at 318-797-5338.



Sandhill Crane Field Trip

Saturday, February 4, 2012. 7:30 am-3:00 pm

Jim Ingold will lead the annual field trip to see Sandhill Cranes this Saturday, February 4, 2012. We will leave the museum parking lot at 7:30 am and be back by 3:00 pm. Bring your lunch/snacks and drinks. Contact Jim Ingold for information, 742-5067.

New Information about Area Birding Sites

By Hubert Hervey

That old standby of Shreveport birders, C. B. Bickham Dickson Park, also recently known as the LSUS Red River Education and Research Park, has a feature that I discovered today, 5 January, 2012. The Matthew Campbell Memorial Birding Trail, with 12 stations, is an easy walking trail on a level, rock surfaced roadway. I started my easy walk at the former stable parking lot. The habitat is Red River bottom land, hardwood forest, and scrub undergrowth. I spent 3 hours there today, scoping the lakes and walking the trail. I wound up with 57 species on a clear, comfortable day, with very light southerly breezes.

The trail is named for a boy scout, in troop 92, who had heart condition, loved nature and birds, but unfortunately died from complications following heart replacement surgery. His memorial birding trail is about a mile long, marked with posts describing 12 resident bird species and interesting details about their lives. When you walk the trail please leave extra time to read the information posted. There were no mosquitoes present, so go soon before mosquito season starts.

I always enjoy seeing our winter migrant species, but I found unexpected high numbers of the following:

522 White Pelican, resting on the first lake, taking flight in groups of 50 or so as the thermals improved soaring conditions, until as many as 3 layers of pelicans, at different altitudes, angled off in the direction of their choice, where abundant fish

awaited their arrival at Red River, Cross Lake, Caddo Lake or other area waters. They seemed to vanish only to reappear, depending upon the angle of the view seen.

5 Brown Creepers came into the screech owl tape, presenting their comical creeping approach to life, whether moving up a tree trunk or heading downward, often presenting a profile on the side of a tree, or peering around the side of the trunk thinking he was in hiding, but curious enough to leave his head in plain sight, if I was good enough a birder to locate him.

7 Hermit Thrushes, with their characteristic sweet calls, and drooping, flicking wing motions, also responded to the screech owl tape. A screech owl answered to the north. One of the Hermit Thrushes took a black fruit from a vine, and as he flicked his wings and tail, spat out the outer husk, eating the delicious? fruit on the inside. I say he was determined to have his last meal even if he exposed his presence to the screech owl.

Among the many ducks present I jumped 2 Wood Ducks at the sign post beside a slough that explained about the beauty of the Wood Duck, and his squealing call, that has the duck hunter calling them squealers. The male flew only a short way and then showed his multicolored beautiful plumage, in best courtship posture to the nearby hen, as I watched, those two, to the exclusion of some 50 other nearby ducks.

Finally on the way out a Sharp-shinned Hawk briefly passed over a flock of Dark-eyed Juncos causing them to scatter, and dive into the brushiest cover available. I never begrudge the hawk his prey, but couldn't they specialize more on European Starlings, House Sparrow, Red-winged Black-birds, or Brown-headed Cowbirds. Two Rusty Blackbirds sang their jarring so-called song as I left, with a heart full of thanks for the people who endeavor to make the bird world available for us to enjoy.

Remember me?



Photo by Bill Wood 2/06/2005, Keithville
.....**Calliope Hummingbird**

Calliope Hummingbird

A winter vagrant in Louisiana.

The Calliope Hummingbird is the smallest bird in North America, north of Mexico. Its summer breeding range is northwestern United States and into Canada. It is the smallest long-distance bird migrant, overwintering in Mexico. It is a tiny hummingbird, with a total body length of 3.5 inches and weighing 0.1 gram. They have green upper parts. The male has a throat streaked red and white. The female has a dull whitish throat and whitish or cinnamon-buff chest and belly. The juvenile resembles an adult female (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, All About Birds).

This species is a vagrant to northwest Louisiana. It was spotted in Keithville in 2005 by Bill Wood. Terry Davis had a probable Calliope hummingbird on January 31, 2012 in Shreveport. Other hummingbird winter vagrants to our area include: Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, and Allen's. The Rufous hummingbird is a rare winter hummingbird to our area as well.

Keep your hummingbird feeders filled with fresh 3 to 1 nectar. Local birder, Paul Dickson is an official hummingbird bander. It is extremely important to document these winter hummers so watch for any hummer in your yard this winter and please call the

Museum of Life Sciences (797-5338) or email the bird alert (birdalert@birdstudygroup.org) if one arrives. **Just a reminder to leave out your feeders during the winter!**

NWLA WINTER HUMMER WATCH

http://www.birdstudygroup.org/Humminbirds_and_friends.html

WILD BIRD CENTER EVENTS BEGINNER BIRD WALKS

The Wild Bird Center conducts field trips the first and third Saturday of every month, weather permitting. Meet at Wild Bird Center in the University Place Shopping Center (Target Shopping Center) at the corner of Youree Drive and East 70th Street. Destinations vary according to local sightings and may include local parks, country roads or a private backyard. Loaner binoculars are available. Be sure to bring a field guide.

For more information on any Wild Bird Center event, please call Dennis or Janice Forshee at the Wild Bird Center, 318-797-BIRD (2473).

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Your Board of Directors is trying very hard to improve the Bird Study Group and make it more attractive to new birders. Give us your suggestions about how to grow the BSG.



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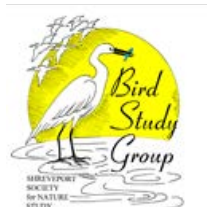
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Shreveport Society for Nature Study
BIRD STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER

Volume 26, Number 5
March 9, 2012

Next Meeting – March 13th

"The Mystery of Bird Migration"

Presented by Dr. Jim Ingold

MARCH MEETING

When: Tuesday, March 13, 6:00 p.m.

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

Topic: "The Mystery of Bird Migration" Presented by Dr. Jim Ingold, BSG member and LSUS Ornithologist

Refreshments start at 6:00 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6 to chat with other birders!

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, including directions to the LSUS Science Lecture Auditorium, call us at 318-797-5338.

Field Trips

Rio Grande Valley

March 31- April 7, 2012

Contact Mac Hardy 797-5338 if you are interested. Caravan or not. Birders will stay in Harlingen at the home of John Darling. Possible trips include: King Ranch, Harlingen area: Estero Llano Grande State Park, Laguna Atascosa NWR, Santa Ana NWR, Sabal Palms Sanctuary, Hugh Ramsey Nature Park, Harlingen Thicket Nature Park, World Birding Center (South Padre Island Nature center, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, and Harlingen Arroyo Colorado).

Birding Scavenger Hunt

Saturday, April 21, 2012 7:00 a.m. to noon

Meet at the Red River National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center parking area at 7 a.m. to receive a mystery list of birds. Compete with 2 person teams. Birds don't have to be found on the refuge, so fill up your gas tank. The team to see the most birds on the list gets their lunch purchased by the rest of the group. This has been a fun event in the past. Come out and join the fun. Call Larry Raymond if you are planning on participating,

Coates Bluff Birding Hike

Saturday, May 5, 2012

This will be a walking birding hike of the Coates Bluff trail in Shreveport with Larry Raymond. More information will be posted next month.

Recent Improvements in Area Birding Locations

The Red River National Wildlife Refuge

By Hubert Hervey

Great News! The long awaited RRNWR Visitors Center is now open. The Friends of RRNWR is supporting a bird feeding station located between the exhibit area and Lake Carolyn. High quality monoculars are provided beside the picture windows to help with identification of the waterfowl on the more distant areas of the lake, and binoculars will help you enjoy seeing the birds using the feeders. On a trip there in February I observed a Red-headed Woodpecker, Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch, and House Finch at the feeders while Mourning Dove fed on the ground under them. Gadwall rested on the water, while Double-crested Cormorant chased fish, and a Great Egret waited for a meal to swim into reach. Then a Belted Kingfisher plunged into the water and struggled up to a limb to consume a fish that challenged his abilities. During the Refuge Celebration in October I was quite pleased to show the hay ride participants a Bald Eagle perched on a snag at the south end of the lake, and a young boy with one of the miracle cell phones captured a superb image of our National Symbol. Refuge personnel will keep the headquarters building open during the week, and the Friends group is planning to keep it open with the help of many volunteers on week-ends. This environmentally friendly Headquarters facility is located in Bossier City just south of Jimmy Davis Bridge, at the end of Sunflower Rd, but will enjoy even easier access upon the completion of the Arthur Ray Teague Parkway which is under construction. Walking trails have been developed and maintained through the woodland and along the lake.

The RRNWR presently consists of 4 units, the Headquarters Unit described above, the Bayou Pierre Unit in De Soto and Red River Parishes, the Spanish Lakes Unit in northern Natchitoches Parish, and the Lower Cane Unit in southern Natchitoches Parish. All of the above units offer birding opportunities, and some are already available, others are in the developmental stage. Located south on La. 1, the Yates Tract of the Bayou Pierre Unit is utilized by birders interested in birds using wetland management areas. The Friends group holds an annual rail drag there. The levees for controlling the water level in the former rice fields have been rebuilt and it is now possible to flood the fields enticing thousands of waterfowl to visit. In October I had two Fulvous Whistling Ducks at this location, and last week I saw thousands of ducks. I was especially pleased to see so many Pintail, and a few American Widgeon in the mix with over a thousand Mallards. The Yates Tract and the Pintail Tract are the major portions of the Bayou Pierre Unit, and we are eagerly awaiting improved access to the Pintail Tract, which will provide some of the best mature Cypress Swamp Forest habitat anywhere!

The Spanish Lowlands Area is located on both sides of I-49 south of the Powhatan Exit. A maintenance building has been built on Powhatan Rd, east of I-49, and parking and birding access is available here. Others areas of Spanish Lowlands west of I-49 have had a small egret rookery located on some of the bar pits, and improved public access is planned. I plan to keep you informed of these developments.

The Lower Cane Unit of the RRNWR located east of the Cloutierville Exit off I-49 is the least accessible from a Shreveport area birders point of view, yet excellent birding exists in the rice fields and former rice fields. I have seen numerous Sandhill Crane, and many geese and ducks on this unit. A good way to gain access to this unit would be to join the Friends of Red River National Wildlife Refuge, and watch our email news for information about when trips to Lower Cane or Pintail Tract at Bayou Pierre will take place. We have plans to make all of this available for your enjoyment.

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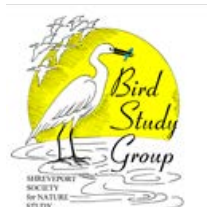
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Shreveport Society for Nature Study
BIRD STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER

Volume 26, Number 6
May 7, 2012

Next Meeting – May 8th

"The Future of the BSG"

Discussion led by Larry Raymond

MAY MEETING

When: Tuesday, May 8, 6:00 p.m.

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

Topic: Come to discuss the future plans of the BSG. Bring your ideas for the newsletter, Bird Alert, website, and how to grow the membership. Please forward any ideas to Larry (lraymond@caddo.org or 929-3117 (H), 929-2806 (W)) before the meeting so that they can be added to the agenda.

Refreshments start at 6:00 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6 to chat with other birders!

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, including directions to the LSUS Science Lecture Auditorium, call us at 318-797-5338.

Field Trips

North American Migratory Bird Count, NAMC

Saturday, May 12, 2012

Contact: Jim Ingold, 797-5236

The list will be called at 7:45pm at the LSUS Museum of Life Sciences. Pizza will be provided.

International Migratory Bird Day Celebration

Saturday, May 12, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (see schedule below)

At the Red River National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters Unit and Visitor Center

Sponsored by the Friends of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge

Bird walks, canoeing & kayaking on Lake Caroline, and more.

Directions to the Headquarters Unit & Visitor Center:

From the intersection of US 71 (Barksdale Boulevard) and Jimmie Davis Highway (LA 511) in Bossier City, go south about one-half mile on US 71 and turn right (west) on Sunflower Road. Proceed to the end of the road through the gate. Follow the main gravel road not quite one-half mile, bearing left at the fork in the road to the new Visitor Center. 555 Sunflower Road, Bossier City, LA 71112.

Schedule of Activities:

8:30 a.m. – Bird/nature walk. Children accompanied by an adult are welcome on the bird walk.

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. – Canoeing/kayaking on Lake Caroline. Members of the Bayou Chapter of the Ozark Society will be on hand to instruct you in the basics. Canoes and kayaks and PFD's (life jackets) will be provided. All ages are welcome. Wear shoes you can get wet!

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. – Refuge tours by cart. Tour the refuge trails in a 10-passenger cart.

Visitors may walk the refuge nature trails, take an informal refuge tour, or participate in other bird-related activities. Throughout the day there will be a slide presentation focusing on the theme of this year's International Migratory Bird Day, "Helping Birds Every Day."

www.friendsofredriver.org or Contact Nancy Menasco at nmenasco@friendsofredriver.org or 868-3255.

RRNWR Sunday Bird Walks with Bill Wood

2nd and 4th Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

At the Red River National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters Unit and Visitor Center

Sponsored by the Friends of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge

Learn about Refuge birds with seasoned birder Bill Wood. Bill will lead bird walks on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Both novices and advanced birders are welcome.

Loaner binoculars and field guides for use on the Refuge are available through the Friends Backpacks for Birders loaner program.

Bird walk begins at 10:00 a.m. Please come early to check out backpacks or binoculars.

WILD BIRD CENTER EVENTS

BEGINNER BIRD WALKS

The Wild Bird Center conducts field trips the first and third Saturday of every month, weather permitting. Meet at Wild Bird Center in the University Place Shopping Center (Target Shopping Center) at the corner of Youree Drive and East 70th Street. Destinations vary according to local sightings and may include local parks, country roads or a private backyard. Loaner binoculars are available. Be sure to bring a field guide.

For more information on any Wild Bird Center event, please call Dennis or Janice Forshee at the Wild Bird Center, 318-797-BIRD (2473).

REPORT ON THE LEAST TERN CONFERENCE

By Hubert Hervey

The first week of April, 2012, I attended a conference called by the USACE and USF&WS for members of the Endangered Interior Least (ILT) Tern Working Group. This will serve as my report to the BSG Members on the conference and the future of the endangered status of the ILT. The program featured two days of speakers, with ample opportunity for questions, and to get our personal viewpoints stated, based on our experience with ILT's, out to the entire group. I also had the opportunity to renew friendships with people I had taken on Red River surveys, and hope to continue to work with to benefit ILT's. The overall impression I had was that of professionalism of those leading the ILT recovery effort.

The number of ILT's set as a goal in the Recovery Plan of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was 7,000. We now have over 20,000. So the groundwork is in place to begin delisting the ILT as an endangered species. This is a complex legal matter, laid out in the ESA, which must be adhered to by the people wishing to delist the ILT. I expect this process to take a few years. Then the ILT will not have the protection of the ESA, which to this point has certainly benefitted our Red River nesting population. The financial barrier of mitigating for loss of nesting habitat will be weakened, because mitigating for the impact of controlling the Red River with a continuation of the Navigation Channel into Arkansas, will not hold the impact it had when the ILT was an endangered species. The USACE must demonstrate that new dams will have a better than one to one ratio of benefits to cost.

Several new terms are now part of my vocabulary:

Metapopulation; the meaning is to manage the ILT on a population wide basis. The danger here is that the Lower Mississippi River ILT population, ranging from 10,000 to 17,500 is now to be thought of as the secure population that will serve to repopulate any peripheral group that is impacted by catastrophic conditions on any particular river system. This concept has not been proven, and diminishes the value of the ILT populations more distant from the Mississippi River. It also ignores the fact that this peripheral group may have developed a greater genetic diversity, or could develop this diversity in the future, just because of the difficulty in surviving the extreme conditions they meet in varying conditions. I resist the idea that the Mississippi River birds are of primary concern.

Modeling; which in this context is used to mean creating the ability to predict the future with complex computer programs. This notion was proved to work on the Greater Sage Grouse, with 85,000 birds which are easily counted when the males come to the spring lek to strut their stuff. The males are counted and the number doubled. All leks were not counted, but the number of males present at the ones that were counted was then multiplied by the number of leks. The argument against this revolved around comparing migratory birds to non-migratory birds. The fate of ILT's for 7 or 8 months of the year is unknown, the exact wintering location poorly known, and completely out of the control of those of us who are concerned about the species. The complex formula presented, quickly went over my head with details that only a mathematical genius could comprehend. I foresee the future of the species as going to a fate determined by geniuses that seldom leave the confines of the computer cubical. They will never break a sweat, or have a suntan, as they determine the fate of birds that are always in the sun.

Monitoring; is the passé term used to indicate that we were still counting ILT's. Since we now know how many there are, we no longer need to count what is here. I rather disagree, since trends will still need to be known, but must give way to the next term which is ---

Managing; is the term now used to handle the next phase of the ILT recovery plan. I saw a barge where ILT's have successfully nested for 2 years. Total construction cost was under 1,000. It is located in a backwater lake at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Missouri, just across the Mississippi River from Alton, IL, location of the conference. I had an extended visit with Dr. Charlie Deutsch of Riverlands who has offered any assistance he can give to establishing a barge for ILT's on the Red River. I should certainly hope this will happen as a part of any mitigating process for damaging ILT habitat upstream in the future by more dams. Other inventive ideas have also been tried, with millions of dollars being spent. Regrettably, I found some of the conference participants more concerned over the continuation of their funding, than in the future of an endangered species. The facilitator did a good job of keeping the various factions, each with their own agenda to support, under the control demanded by the necessity of civility.

CHANGED AND IMPROVED BIRDING AREAS

By Hubert Hervey

This month's list of changes and improvements to your favorite birding places will specialize in areas along the Red River. We start near the twin cities, with the change to Cane's Landing and Stoner Woods, go on to Bishop's Point at Lock and Dam # 5, and end up with a little known area south of Natchitoches, east of I-49.

Cane's Landing in Bossier Parish is an area in private hands just north of Bass Pro Shop. My concern was that the ongoing construction of The Margaritaville Casino adjacent to Cane's Landing would have some impact on this prime area that has produced such special birds as: Cassin's Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Willow Flycatcher and other impids, Lazuli Bunting, Couch's Kingbird, and nesting Gray Catbird. After checking with Terry Davis, our consensus is that the new building will be far enough distant to have little to no affect on birding that area. As for Stoner Woods south of the Stoner Avenue Boat Launch in Shreveport, conditions there have progressed to being a woodland birding hotspot with better trails than ever. Terry says that a strong wind might help birding conditions at Stoner by improving some of the habitat.

Let us consider Bishop's Point next. If you have not been there lately you will be pleased to learn that the crushed rock road has been replaced by a very good asphalt road, all the way to the boat launch. This improvement allows you to slowly drive with your windows down, dust free, with no gravel crunch to interfere with hearing the birds sing. Just yesterday, mid- March, I heard a Brown Thrasher singing in the thicket near the first pond. I enjoyed seeing the beaver at his lodge and watching a pair of Ring-necked Ducks mixing in with the large flock of American Coots. Paul Dickson predicted that Bishop's Point would become a favorite birding location for the BSG when he learned that the Red River Commission was going to develop it as a boat launch. As usual Paul was right. This is where Pat and I located a dozen birds swimming across Red River; one of our few records of Red-throated Grebes.

The last area I would like to get you acquainted with is a drive along the Red River levee. We have all read the many signs placed at all entry roads to the levee proclaiming driving on the levee is prohibited by the Red River Levee Board. Well there is one place where this is not so! Are you familiar with Adra, Louisiana, or even Aloha Quad? Adra, in Natchitoches Parish, is a very small community next to the Red River levee, accessible only by a road along the levee. Thus school bus and mail delivery on the levee is necessary. It has some of the best wetland habitat in north-central Louisiana. Rather than give detailed instructions on how to get there, just let me say that you exit I-49 at the Cloutierville Exit, and using your Gazetteer, work your way east and north to the Red River. Drive south along the levee enjoying the scenery, without worrying about breaking the law. This levee road extends for miles, all the way to Lock and Dam 3. Along the way you could access the Lower Cane portion of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge. You could also arrange for a visit to the Northwestern State University Crawfish and Wetlands Research Center, which is located where the levee road meets the asphalt highway to Lock and Dam #3. This journey will take the better part of the day, so pack a picnic lunch. There is a picnic table at a secret boat launch south of Adra and miles of bar-pits adjacent to the Red River. As we ate, we enjoyed watching an Osprey hunting for his meal. The secret boat launch would make a great spot to create a canoe trail, remote and esoteric. Ozark Society members are you paying attention. Charlie Lyon told me of this wonderful area during the Breeding Bird Atlas Survey, ~1995, and I finally found it. Now you know about it also.

NOTICE Regarding BSG Membership Dues

All memberships are for a calendar year beginning January 1, 2012. Memberships received during September through December of 2011 are good for the entire calendar year of 2012.

Benefits of Membership in the Bird Study Group

1. You are a part of one of the most active birding groups in Louisiana.
2. Memberships support conservation efforts that affect birds in Louisiana.
3. Memberships support student research and study of bird biology.
4. Memberships provide for a small honorarium for out-of-town speakers.
5. Memberships support the widely acclaimed web site of the BSG (www.birdstudygroup.org).
6. Memberships support the refreshments for the BSG meetings.
7. Members participate in the Christmas Bird Counts, the North American Migration Count, the North American Hawk Watch, the Backyard Bird Count, and the Big Sit.
8. Memberships support the bird library at the Museum of Life Sciences
9. Members can easily participate in the online Bird Alert email List Server (to sign up email: birdalert@birdstudygroup.org).
10. The BSG Newsletters are online and access is not restricted.

You get all of the above benefits for the modest annual membership cost of: \$15 for one membership, \$20 for a family membership, and \$35 for a sustaining membership.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED TO ENTER BIRD RECORDS

We would like to have a volunteer to enter current and backlogged records into the BSG Bird database beginning as soon as possible. We have many valuable records to be entered. The process is very easy and a volunteer will receive complete instruction at the museum. We would like a volunteer for a few hours a day or week on a regular schedule so that we can get as many records entered. At this time it contains 59 years of observations, from 1952 to the present, a total of 268,989 records.

Any Suggestions for the BSG?

Your Board of Directors is trying very hard to improve the Bird Study Group and make it more attractive to new birders. Give us your suggestions about how to grow the BSG.

The BSG Listserve (Bird Alert) is coming.

As soon as testing is completed I will send an e-mail to the BSG e-mail list that the Bird Alert is working, with instructions on how to post, to subscribe, and to view the list archives. At that time we will automatically enroll all BSG members that have an active e-mail address. If your name is not in the To: list of the e-mail that means that we do not have an active address for you. If you have other questions please let me know (lhardy@lsus.edu)



BSG Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons
BSG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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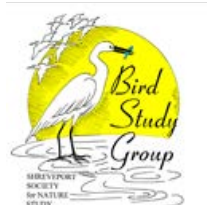
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Direct inquires to the Editor, Amanda Lewis, at (318) 797-5215.



Join/Renew the BSG!

The Bird Study Group of Shreveport invites you to become a member.
Renewals, please update information below.

Name(s) _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (Home) _____ Work _____

Yes, please add me to the email Bird Alert

Leave me out of the BSG member directory

Membership Levels: Regular (\$15.⁰⁰) Sustaining (\$35.⁰⁰) Family, *One Newsletter/ One Address* (\$20.⁰⁰)

Names of Family Members:

Donations: Library Refuges Refreshments General

Make check payable & mail to: SSNS- Bird Study Group
Museum of Life Sciences, One University Place,
Shreveport, LA 71115-2399



BIRD STUDY GROUP PHONE NUMBERS AND MORE

Bird Study Group meets the second Tuesday of each month, September through June, 6:00 p.m. To be placed on the list to send & receive emails, email birdalert@birdstudygroup.org.

Contact the BSG by email: lhardy@lsus.edu or phone (318) 797-5338.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.birdstudygroup.org>