

Birding Hot Spots
of
Northwestern Louisiana

Second Edition



SHREVEPORT
SOCIETY
for NATURE
STUDY

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BIRD STUDY GROUP

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Bird Study Group Shreveport Society for Nature Study, Inc.

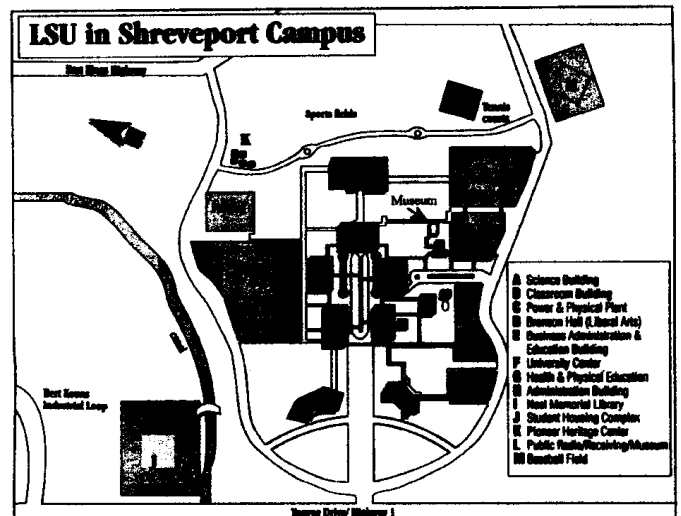
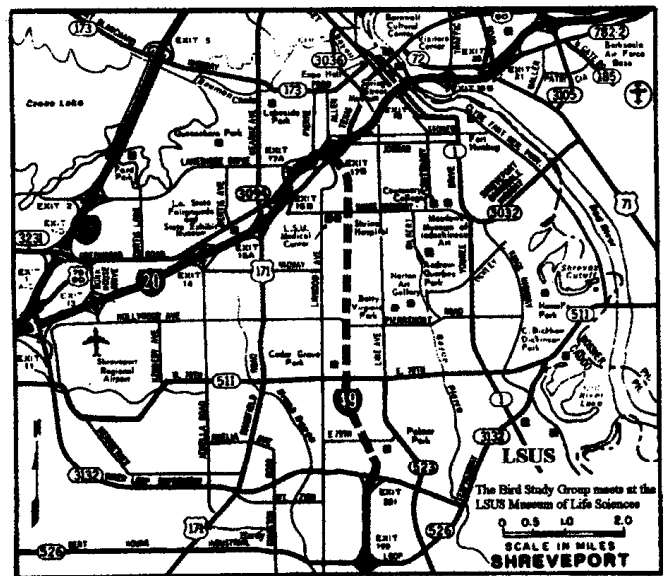
The Shreveport Society for Nature Study was incorporated on February 4, 1954, for the primary purpose of advancing knowledge and instruction in the natural sciences. The society, originally associated with the National Audubon Society, sponsored a series of nature-oriented films for thirty-seven years in an effort to foster conservation and education. With the advent of almost nightly nature programming available on television, the society was on the verge of disbanding after the 1986-87 season.

At this same time, an organizational meeting was held at the LSU in Shreveport Museum of Life Sciences on September 16, 1986, to discuss the formation of a Shreveport birding group. After several meetings, the SSNS Bird Study Group was organized, allowing the Shreveport Society for Nature Study, Inc., to continue in its role of advancing knowledge in the natural sciences.

Meetings of the Bird Study Group are held on the second Tuesday of each month, except July and August, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the LSU in Shreveport Museum of Life Sciences, located on the LSU in Shreveport campus. The group sponsors frequent field trips and publishes a newsletter ten times each year. Members of the Bird Study Group serve as compilers and participate in three official Christmas Bird Counts (Shreveport, Bossier-Caddo-Bienville, and Natchitoches), and two unofficial winter counts (Caddo Lake and Claiborne). The group also participates annually in the North American Migration Count, the Big Sit, and the Great Backyard Bird Count. A computerized database of birds seen in an eight-parish area of northwestern Louisiana (page 5) is maintained in conjunction with the LSU in Shreveport (LSUS) Museum of Life Sciences. Jeff F. Trahan has prepared a chart of seasonal occurrences of the birds of northwestern Louisiana that can be accessed at the Bird Study Group website. Information concerning the database of birds should be directed to Dr. Laurence M. Hardy, Director Emeritus of the Museum of Life Sciences.

Membership in the Bird Study Group is open to anyone interested in birds or the natural sciences. More information about the Bird Study Group can be obtained from any of the following sources:

- A. any recent issue of the Newsletter,
- B. by visiting our website on the internet at <http://www.birdstudygroup.org>,
- C. by calling the Museum of Life Sciences at 318-797-5338 (OK to leave a message),
- D. by e-mail to lsusmus@prysm.net, and
- E. by contacting any officer or member of the Bird Study Group.





INTRODUCTION

This site guide describes sixteen of the best publicly accessible birding locations in Caddo, Bossier, and Red River Parishes.

The guide was written by the following members of the Bird Study Group of the Shreveport Society for Nature Study, Inc.: Paul Dickson, Laurence M. Hardy, Hubert Hervey, James L. Ingold, A. Bradley McPherson, Nancy M. Menasco, Larry R. Raymond, Jeff F. Trahan, and Bill Wood.

Authors of the accounts are credited where appropriate throughout the guide. Laurence M. Hardy prepared the index and edited the final maps for all of the accounts. The editorial team responsible for the final guide included Laurence M. Hardy, Hubert Hervey, James L. Ingold, Nancy M. Menasco, Larry R. Raymond (chairman), and Jeff F. Trahan.

The intent of the guide is to provide directions to the selected sites and brief summaries of birds that can be seen in the favorite birding locations known to the Bird Study Group in northwestern Louisiana. The 16 sites chosen were based on public accessibility, quality of birding, and numbers of bird records in the LSUS Museum of Life Sciences bird database. The sites are numbered on the Map on page 6. You will need to read the individual site guide accounts for detailed directions to each one, using Shreveport as your starting location. You will need a valid Louisiana hunting or fishing license or a valid Wild Louisiana stamp to enter wildlife management areas (WMAs). Some WMAs require self-clearing permits.

For more information, contact the Bird Study Group. It is our hope that this guide will provide the information needed to find the best birding spots in northwestern Louisiana. Finding, identifying, and enjoying the birds at these sites is all up to you. A seasonal occurrence chart is available on the BSG website. Good luck and good birding! The next two pages are examples of the form (as of April 2004) used by the Bird Study Group members to report bird sightings. Copy and use it as needed.

Other good areas for which the Bird Study Group has records are known. At some time in the future, after more data is collected, several of these sites might be added as Hotspots.

Bird Study Group
 Museum of Life Sciences
 One University Place
 Shreveport, LA 71115-2399

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Date _____

Observers _____ Temperature _____ Time _____

Parish _____ Exact Location _____

Call the BSG at 797-5338 to report birds or mail your report to the Museum of Life Sciences, LSU in Shreveport, One University Place, Shreveport, LA 71115-2399, or e-mail your report to lsusmus@prysm.net. Note: * marks species not yet verified for our area.

GEESE, DUCKS

- ___ Bl.-bellied Whistling-Duck
- ___ Fulvous Whistling-Duck
- ___ Gr. White-fronted Goose
- ___ Snow Goose
- ___ Ross' Goose
- ___ Canada Goose
- ___ Tundra Swan
- ___ Wood Duck
- ___ Gadwall
- ___ American Wigeon
- ___ American Black Duck
- ___ Mallard
- ___ Blue-winged Teal
- ___ Cinnamon Teal
- ___ Northern Shoveler
- ___ Northern Pintail
- ___ Green-winged Teal
- ___ Canvasback
- ___ Redhead
- ___ Ring-necked Duck
- ___ Greater Scaup
- ___ Lesser Scaup
- ___ Surf Scoter
- ___ White-winged Scoter
- ___ Black Scoter
- ___ Long-tailed Duck
- ___ Bufflehead
- ___ Common Goldeneye
- ___ Hooded Merganser
- ___ Common Merganser
- ___ Red-breasted Merganser
- ___ Ruddy Duck

TURKEYS, QUAIL

- ___ Wild Turkey
- ___ Northern Bobwhite

LOONS

- ___ Red-throated Loon
- ___ Common Loon

GREBES

- ___ Pied-billed Grebe
- ___ Horned Grebe
- ___ Red-necked Grebe
- ___ Eared Grebe
- ___ Western Grebe

PELICANS

- ___ American White Pelican
- ___ Brown Pelican

CORMORANTS, DARTERS

- ___ Neotropic Cormorant

- ___ Double-crested Cormorant

- ___ Anhinga

BITTERNS, HERONS, etc.

- ___ American Bittern
- ___ Least Bittern
- ___ Great Blue Heron
- ___ Great Egret
- ___ Snowy Egret
- ___ Little Blue Heron
- ___ Tricolored Heron
- ___ Cattle Egret
- ___ Green Heron
- ___ Black-crowned Night-Heron
- ___ Yellow-cr. Night-Heron

IBISES, SPOONBILLS

- ___ White Ibis
- ___ White-faced Ibis
- ___ Roseate Spoonbill

STORKS

- ___ Wood Stork

NEW WORLD VULTURES

- ___ Black Vulture
- ___ Turkey Vulture

KITES, EAGLES

- ___ Osprey
- ___ Swallow-tailed Kite
- ___ White-tailed Kite
- ___ Mississippi Kite
- ___ Bald Eagle

HAWKS

- ___ Northern Harrier
- ___ Sharp-shinned Hawk
- ___ Cooper's Hawk
- ___ Red-shouldered Hawk
- ___ Broad-winged Hawk
- ___ Swainson's Hawk
- ___ Red-tailed Hawk
- ___ Ferruginous Hawk
- ___ Rough-legged Hawk
- ___ Golden Eagle

FALCONS

- ___ American Kestrel
- ___ Merlin
- ___ Peregrine Falcon

RAILS, COOT

- ___ Yellow Rail
- ___ Black Rail
- ___ King Rail
- ___ Virginia Rail
- ___ Sora

- ___ Purple Gallinule

- ___ Common Moorhen

- ___ American Coot

CRANES

- ___ Sandhill Crane

PLOVERS

- ___ Black-bellied Plover
- ___ American Golden-Plover
- ___ Snowy Plover
- ___ Semipalmated Plover
- ___ Piping Plover
- ___ Killdeer

STILTS, AVOCETS

- ___ Black-necked Stilt
- ___ American Avocet

SANDPIPERS

- ___ Greater Yellowlegs
- ___ Lesser Yellowlegs
- ___ Solitary Sandpiper
- ___ Willet
- ___ Spotted Sandpiper
- ___ Upland Sandpiper
- ___ Long-billed Curlew
- ___ Hudsonian Godwit
- ___ Marbled Godwit
- ___ Ruddy Turnstone
- ___ Red Knot
- ___ Sanderling
- ___ Semipalmated Sandpiper
- ___ Western Sandpiper
- ___ Least Sandpiper
- ___ White-rumped Sandpiper
- ___ Baird's Sandpiper
- ___ Pectoral Sandpiper
- ___ Dunlin
- ___ Stilt Sandpiper
- ___ Buff-breasted Sandpiper
- ___ Short-billed Dowitcher
- ___ Long-billed Dowitcher
- ___ Wilson's Snipe
- ___ American Woodcock
- ___ Wilson's Phalarope

GULLS, TERNS

- ___ Pomarine Jaeger
- ___ Parasitic Jaeger
- ___ Long-tailed Jaeger*
- ___ Laughing Gull
- ___ Franklin's Gull
- ___ Bonaparte's Gull
- ___ Mew Gull

- ___ Ring-billed Gull

- ___ California Gull

- ___ Herring Gull

- ___ Lesser Black-backed Gull

- ___ Glaucous Gull

- ___ Sabine's Gull

- ___ Black-legged Kittiwake

- ___ Caspian Tern

- ___ Common Tern

- ___ Forster's Tern

- ___ Least Tern

- ___ Sooty Tern

- ___ Black Tern

PIGEONS, DOVES

- ___ Rock Pigeon
- ___ Band-tailed Pigeon
- ___ Eurasian Collared-Dove
- ___ White-winged Dove
- ___ Mourning Dove
- ___ Inca Dove
- ___ Common Ground-Dove

PARROTS

- ___ Monk Parakeet

CUCKOOS

- ___ Black-billed Cuckoo
- ___ Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- ___ Greater Roadrunner
- ___ Groove-billed Ani

OWLS

- ___ Barn Owl
- ___ Eastern Screech-Owl
- ___ Great Horned Owl
- ___ Snowy Owl
- ___ Burrowing Owl
- ___ Barred Owl
- ___ Long-eared Owl
- ___ Short-eared Owl

GOATSUCKERS

- ___ Common Nighthawk
- ___ Chuck-will's-widow
- ___ Whip-poor-will

SWIFTS

- ___ Chimney Swift

HUMMINGBIRDS

- ___ Ruby-th. Hummingbird
- ___ Blk-chinned Hummingbird
- ___ Broad-tailed Hummingbird
- ___ Rufous Hummingbird
- ___ Allen's Hummingbird

KINGFISHERS

- ___ Ringed Kingfisher
___ Belted Kingfisher

WOODPECKERS

- ___ Red-headed Woodpecker
___ Red-bellied Woodpecker
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
___ Downy Woodpecker
___ Hairy Woodpecker
___ Red-cockaded Woodpecker
___ Northern Flicker
___ Pileated Woodpecker

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

- ___ Olive-sided Flycatcher
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee
___ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
___ Acadian Flycatcher
___ Alder Flycatcher
___ Willow Flycatcher
___ Least Flycatcher
___ Eastern Phoebe
___ Say's Phoebe
___ Vermilion Flycatcher
___ Ash-throated Flycatcher
___ Great Crested Flycatcher
___ Tropical or Couch's Kingbird
___ Couch's Kingbird*
___ Tropical Kingbird*
___ Western Kingbird
___ Eastern Kingbird
___ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

SHRIKES

- ___ Loggerhead Shrike

VIREOS

- ___ White-eyed Vireo
___ Bell's Vireo
___ Yellow-throated Vireo
___ Blue-headed Vireo
___ Warbling Vireo
___ Philadelphia Vireo
___ Red-eyed Vireo

JAYS, CROWS

- ___ Blue Jay
___ American Crow
___ Fish Crow

LARKS

- ___ Horned Lark

SWALLOWS

- ___ Purple Martin
___ Tree Swallow
___ No. Rough-winged Swallow

- ___ Bank Swallow

- ___ Cliff Swallow

- ___ Barn Swallow

CHICKADEES, TITMICE

- ___ Carolina Chickadee
___ Tufted Titmouse

NUTHATCHES

- ___ Red-breasted Nuthatch
___ White-breasted Nuthatch
___ Brown-headed Nuthatch

CREEPERS

- ___ Brown Creeper

WRENS

- ___ Carolina Wren
___ Bewick's Wren
___ House Wren
___ Winter Wren
___ Sedge Wren
___ Marsh Wren

MUSICAPIDS

- ___ Golden-crowned Kinglet
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet
___ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
___ Northern Wheatear
___ Eastern Bluebird
___ Veery
___ Gray-cheeked Thrush
___ Swainson's Thrush
___ Hermit Thrush
___ Wood Thrush
___ American Robin

MOCKINGBIRDS

- ___ Gray Catbird
___ Northern Mockingbird
___ Brown Thrasher

STARLINGS

- ___ European Starling

PIPITS

- ___ American Pipit
___ Sprague's Pipit

WAXWINGS

- ___ Cedar Waxwing

WARBLERS

- ___ Blue-winged Warbler
___ Golden-winged Warbler
___ Tennessee Warbler
___ Orange-crowned Warbler
___ Nashville Warbler
___ Northern Parula
___ Tropical Parula
___ Yellow Warbler
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler

- ___ Magnolia Warbler

- ___ Cape May Warbler

- ___ Black-throated Blue Warbler

- ___ Yellow-rumped Warbler

- ___ Black-th. Green Warbler

- ___ Blackburnian Warbler

- ___ Yellow-throated Warbler

- ___ Pine Warbler

- ___ Prairie Warbler

- ___ Palm Warbler

- ___ Bay-breasted Warbler

- ___ Blackpoll Warbler

- ___ Cerulean Warbler

- ___ Black-and-white Warbler

- ___ American Redstart

- ___ Prothonotary Warbler

- ___ Worm-eating Warbler

- ___ Swainson's Warbler

- ___ Ovenbird

- ___ Northern Waterthrush

- ___ Louisiana Waterthrush

- ___ Kentucky Warbler

- ___ Connecticut Warbler

- ___ Mourning Warbler

- ___ Common Yellowthroat

- ___ Hooded Warbler

- ___ Wilson's Warbler

- ___ Canada Warbler

- ___ Yellow-breasted Chat

TANAGERS

- ___ Summer Tanager

- ___ Scarlet Tanager

- ___ Western Tanager

SPARROWS

- ___ Spotted Towhee

- ___ Eastern Towhee

- ___ Bachman's Sparrow

- ___ American Tree Sparrow

- ___ Chipping Sparrow

- ___ Clay-colored Sparrow

- ___ Field Sparrow

- ___ Vesper Sparrow

- ___ Lark Sparrow

- ___ Black-throated Sparrow

- ___ Savannah Sparrow

- ___ Grasshopper Sparrow

- ___ Henslow's Sparrow

- ___ LeConte's Sparrow

- ___ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow

- ___ Fox Sparrow

- ___ Song Sparrow

- ___ Lincoln's Sparrow

- ___ Swamp Sparrow

- ___ White-throated Sparrow

- ___ Harris's Sparrow

- ___ White-crowned Sparrow

- ___ Golden-crowned Sparrow

- ___ Dark-eyed Junco

- ___ Lapland Longspur

- ___ Smith's Longspur

- ___ Chestnut-collared Longspur

CARDINALS, etc.

- ___ Northern Cardinal

- ___ Rose-breasted Grosbeak

- ___ Black-headed Grosbeak

- ___ Blue Grosbeak

- ___ Indigo Bunting

- ___ Painted Bunting

- ___ Dickcissel

ICTERIDS

- ___ Bobolink

- ___ Red-winged Blackbird

- ___ Eastern Meadowlark

- ___ Western Meadowlark

- ___ Yellow-headed Blackbird

- ___ Rusty Blackbird

- ___ Brewer's Blackbird

- ___ Common Grackle

- ___ Great-tailed Grackle

- ___ Brown-headed Cowbird

- ___ Orchard Oriole

- ___ Bullock's Oriole

- ___ Baltimore Oriole

FINCHES

- ___ Purple Finch

- ___ House Finch

- ___ Red Crossbill

- ___ Pine Siskin

- ___ Lesser Goldfinch

- ___ American Goldfinch

- ___ Evening Grosbeak

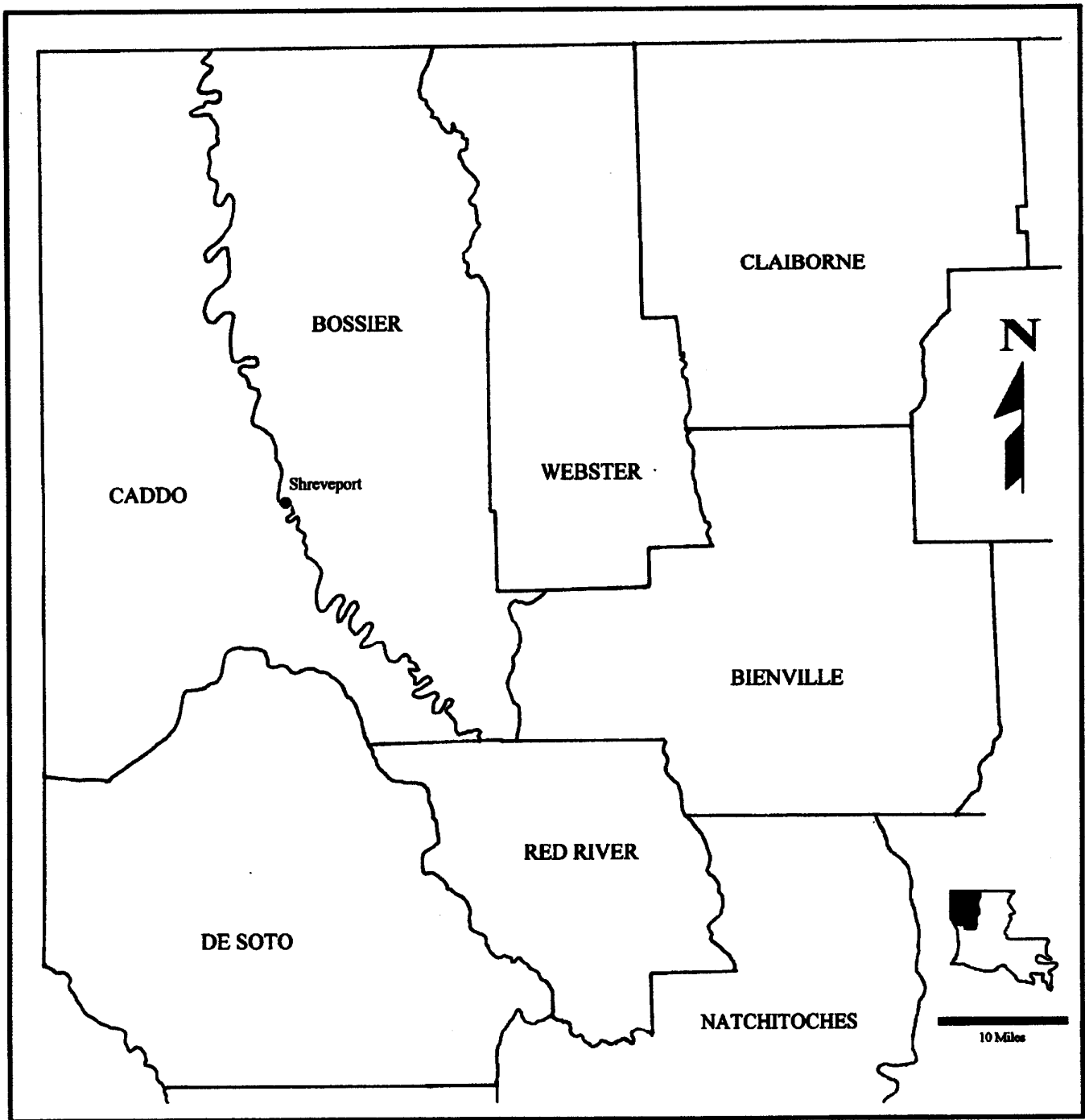
WEAVER FINCHES

- ___ House Sparrow

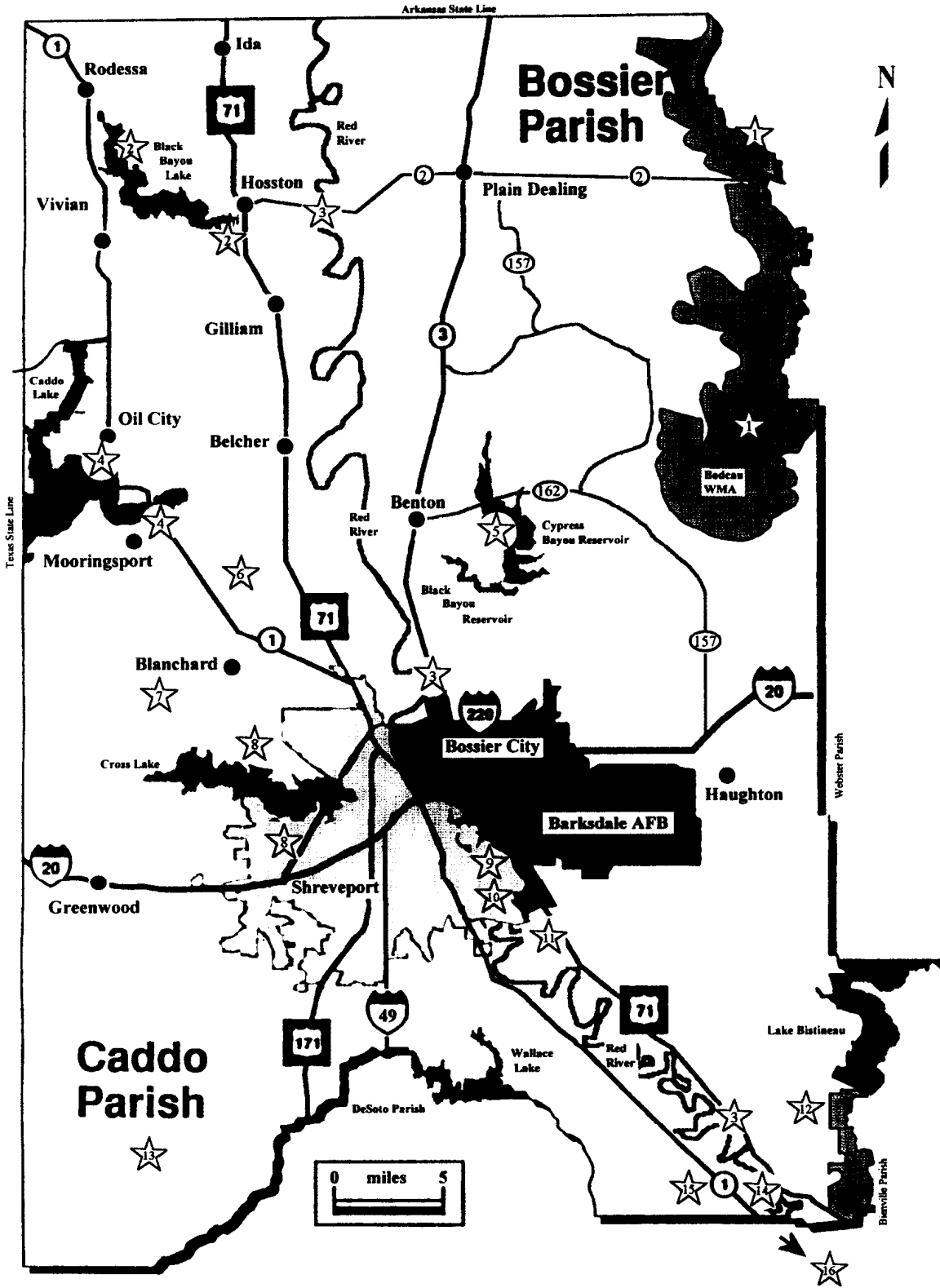
Others:

- _____

Notes:



The seven-parish area and part of Natchitoches Parish of northwestern Louisiana for which the Bird Study Group maintains a computerized database of bird sightings. Use this map to mark other favorite places.



Locations of the Hot Spots are indicated by numbered stars. See the appropriate site guide for directions and maps.

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 1

Bodcau Bayou Wildlife Area

by *Hubert Hervey*

How to get there: Take I-20 east from Shreveport to the Haughton-Filmore exit. Go north on LA 157 to Bellevue. Turn right on park access road which leads to the dam and camping areas. An alternate route which gives easier access to northern parts of the park is to go farther east on I-20 to the Dixie Inn exit. Take U.S. 371 north to Sarepta. Just before entering Sarepta, watch for a park sign stating Wenks Landing, which has a boat launch and picnic facilities. Crow Lake Road in Sarepta leads to a good place to put a boat in the water and paddle the short distance downstream to Wenks Landing.

This is the largest area covered in this site guide. It includes every type of birding opportunity available in northwestern Louisiana because of the diverse habitats. The only exception is the lack of large areas of open or deep water and the birds attracted to this habitat. Although Ivan Lake should attract more birds, daily use by boaters keeps most of the birds away.

All 32,471 acres are owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and managed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Bodcau includes:

1. **Lovely Swamps** – This is my favorite part with many mature cypress trees.
2. **Wide Bayous** – A good area for float trips and canoeing.
3. **Upland Streams** – The best known **Wild Turkey** country in our area.
4. **Open Lake** – Water sports, fishing and boating prevail on Ivan Lake.
5. **Hillside Seep** – Near Wenks Landing, find ferns and flowers.
6. **Old Prairie Remnant** – Unique plants and wildflowers remain from wild prairie days.
7. **Pine Hills** – Timberlands are managed for timber production.
8. **Old Pine Stands** – **Red-cockaded Woodpecker** once nested and may return.
9. **Grassland** – Is limited to the dam area and old homesteads.
10. **Wildlife Food Plots** – These are good birding areas which are replanted annually.
11. **Campgrounds and Picnic Areas** – Provide a nice place to stay and bird.

Located north of Bellevue and stretching to the Arkansas line, Bodcau forms a very important corridor for migrating birds. The mixture of food plants and mixed forest is important because much of northern Louisiana has been planted in pine plantations, is in open pastures, or is in open cropland. The Nature Conservancy has recognized the unique and critical nature of eight areas within Bodcau and has acquired them for protection.

Two easy four-hour float trips are recommended: first – a trip from Crow Lake to Wenks Landing is in a wide bayou with easy paddling; second – a trip downstream from the dam that enters a pristine, aged Cypress Swamp area, but may require a few portages in times of low water.

To attempt to name all the birds in this large, diverse area would be to list nearly every bird known to northern Louisiana. We have 141 species recorded in our database. The most unusual of these are

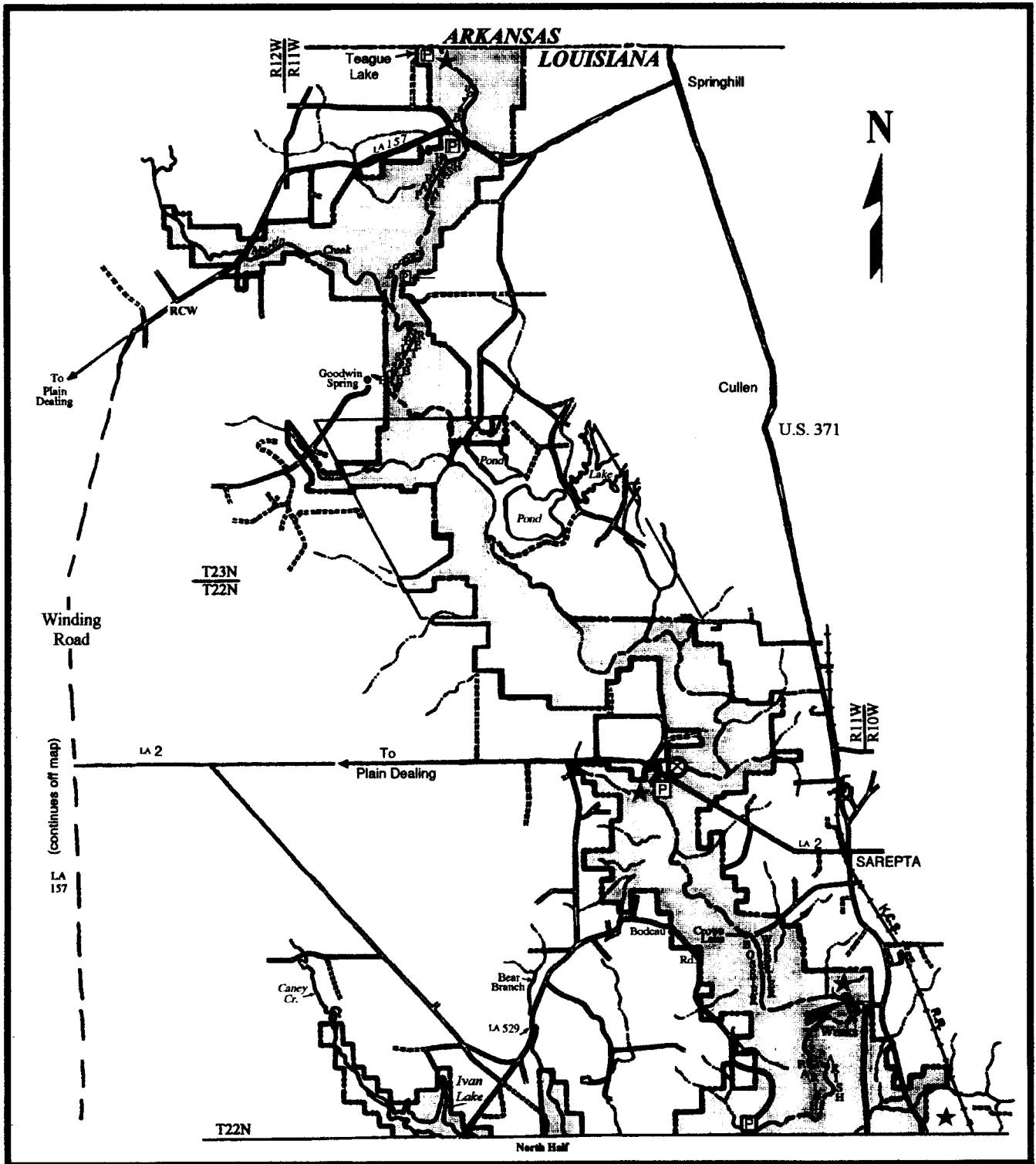
1. **White-tailed Kite** seen 04-07-89 at the headquarters by the manager, Richard McMullen.
2. **White-breasted Nuthatch** is common near water and nests in hollow trees.
3. **Northern Parula** nests in Spanish moss and old man's beard lichen along the bayou.
4. **Prothonotary Warbler** nests in hollows near water.
5. **Henslow's Sparrow** banded by Jim Ingold 02-19-94 and observed again 03-05-94 during a BSG outing.
6. **Great-tailed Grackle** seen 05-04-93 by float trip members of BSG.

We need to do more birding in this area to increase our migratory bird species count. In my opinion, this area ranks as the most important area for our conservation concerns in northwestern Louisiana, in part, because it serves as a valuable corridor for migrating birds. It is in great shape now and our job should be to see that it stays that way.

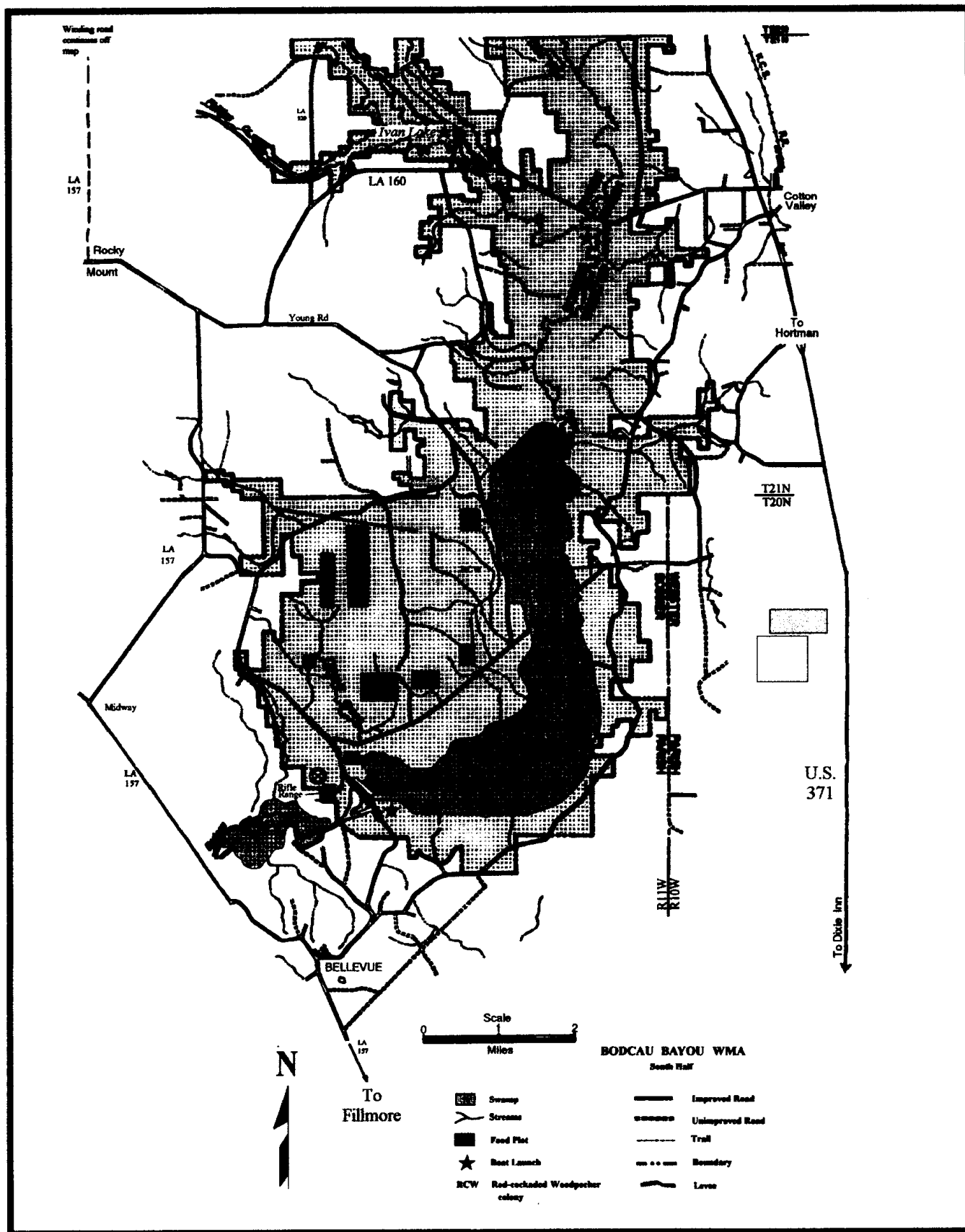
Specialties

Hooded Merganser, Wild Turkey, Barred Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, and Henslow's Sparrow (rare).

Notes



Bodcau Bayou Wildlife Area, north half



Bodcau Bayou Wildlife Area, south half

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 2

Black Bayou Lake (Northern Caddo Parish)

by *Jeff F. Trahan and Larry R. Raymond*

Scenic Black Bayou Lake is located in northern Caddo Parish between Vivian and Hosston. The narrow lake includes about 4,000 impounded acres and is approximately seven miles long. A boat lane runs through the middle of the lake between many beautiful cypress trees covered in Spanish moss. The Parish of Caddo Parks and Recreation Department maintains two parks with boat ramps and access to the lake at both the southern end of the lake, near Hosston, and the northern end of the lake, between Vivian and Rodessa. Birding opportunities are plentiful from a boat and from within both of the parks. There are 84 species from this area recorded in the BSG database.

Noah Tyson Park

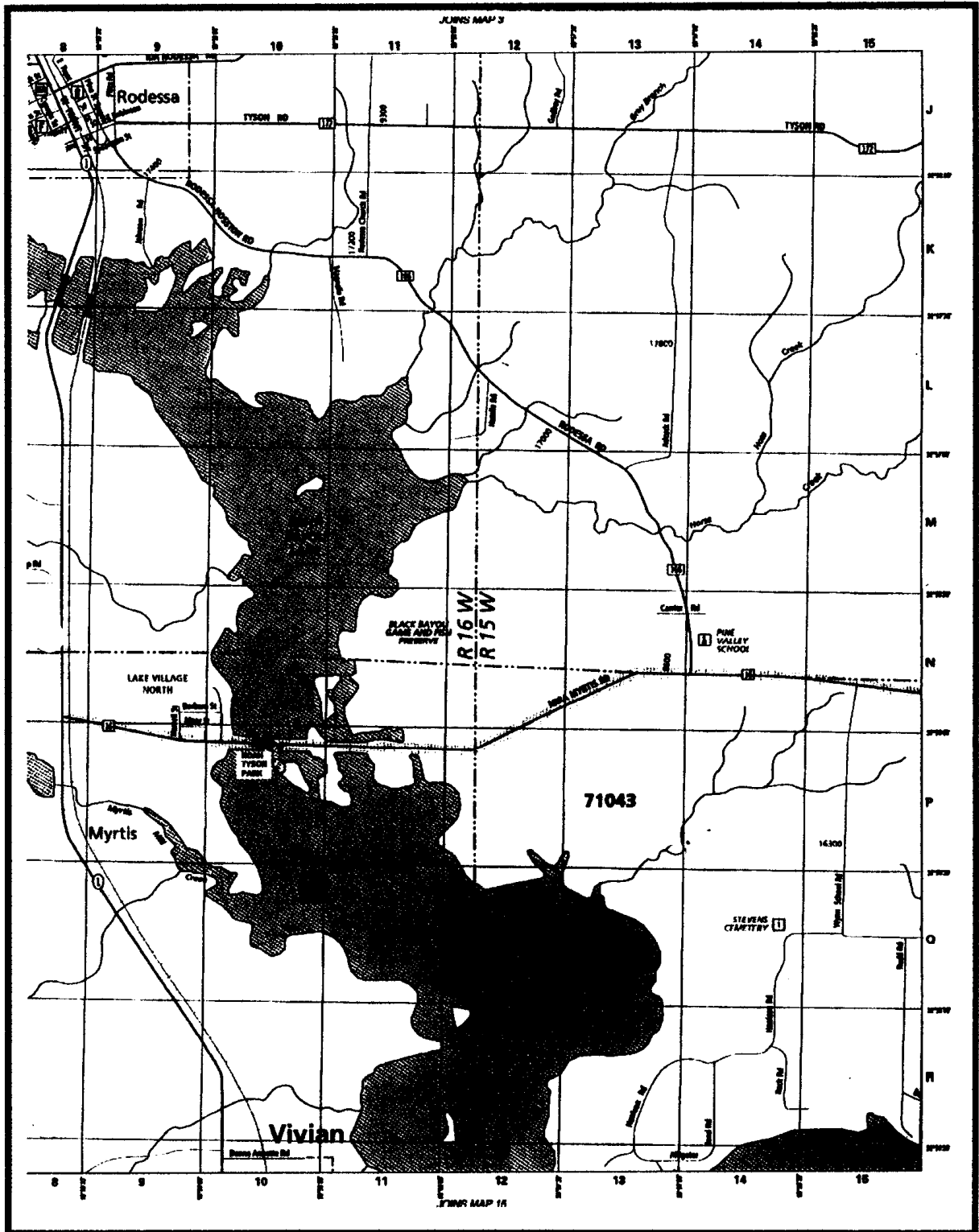
How to get there. Drive north out of Shreveport on LA 1. Pass through Oil City and Vivian. You will reach the intersection of LA 1 and Mira-Myrtis Road about 4.7 miles north of Vivian. Turn right (east) and drive 1.1 miles to Hudgens Camp Road. Turn right to enter Noah Tyson Park. There are signs directing you to the park at the intersection of LA 1 and Mira-Myrtis Road and at the entrance to the park where you turn onto Hudgens Camp Road.

From Robert Nance Park, go 0.6 mile north on Odom Road to Hosston-Rodessa Road South. Drive north 3.9 miles to Mira-Myrtis Road and turn left (west). Go 3.7 miles to the entrance at Hudgens Camp Road and turn left to enter Noah Tyson Park.

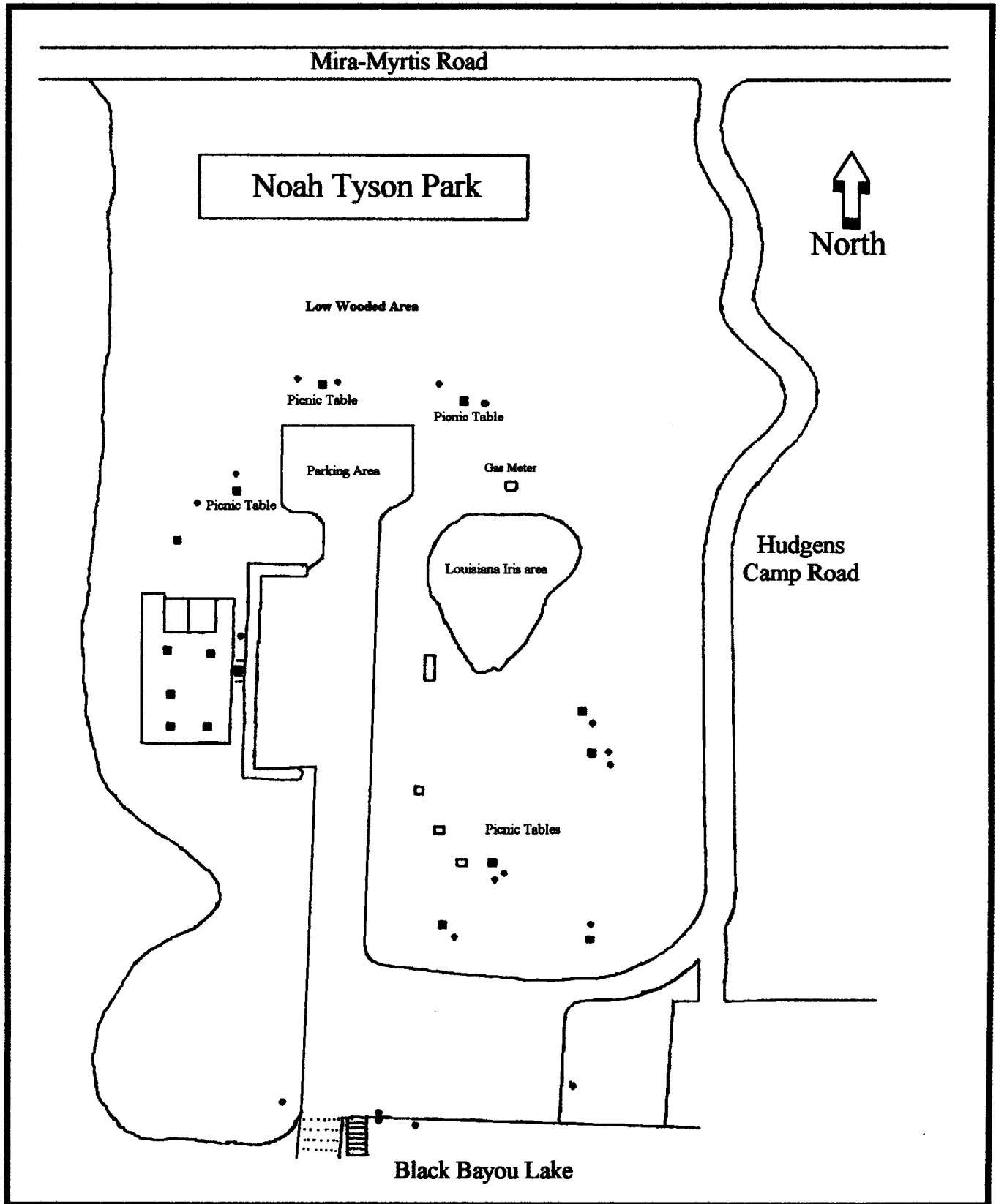
Noah Tyson Park is a nine-acre park that provides a boat ramp and dock, a pavilion with restrooms, playground equipment, and picnic tables and grills. The park is located on Black Bayou and is almost surrounded by water. The center of the park has many tall pine, sweetgum, and oak trees. **Red-shouldered Hawks** have been observed nesting in the pine trees for several years. The southern, eastern, and western sides of the park are bordered by a cypress and water tupelo swamp. Although the park provides good birding any time of the year, the best time to visit is during spring migration from the middle of March to the middle of May. The park is a good spot to observe many migrating species of birds, particularly warblers and vireos. **Northern Parula** and **Yellow-throated Warblers** nest here and may be easily observed. **Yellow-throated Vireo** is easily seen in the spring; **Pine Warbler** and **Pileated Woodpecker** can be found year-round. Be sure to bird the eastern edge of the park from the entrance at Mira-Myrtis Road to the house near the boat ramp. Continue along the edge of the water from the boat ramp to the area behind the pavilion and on to the picnic area at the end of the road.

Specialties

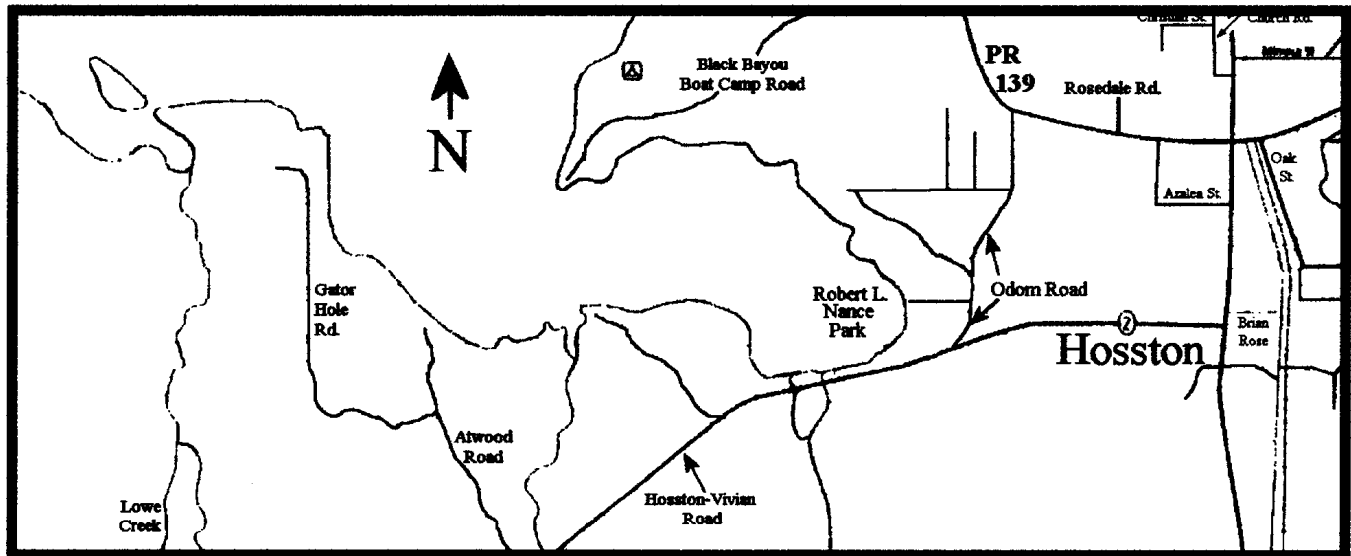
Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Pileated Woodpecker.



Noah Tyson Park



Noah Tyson Park detail



Robert L. Nance Park

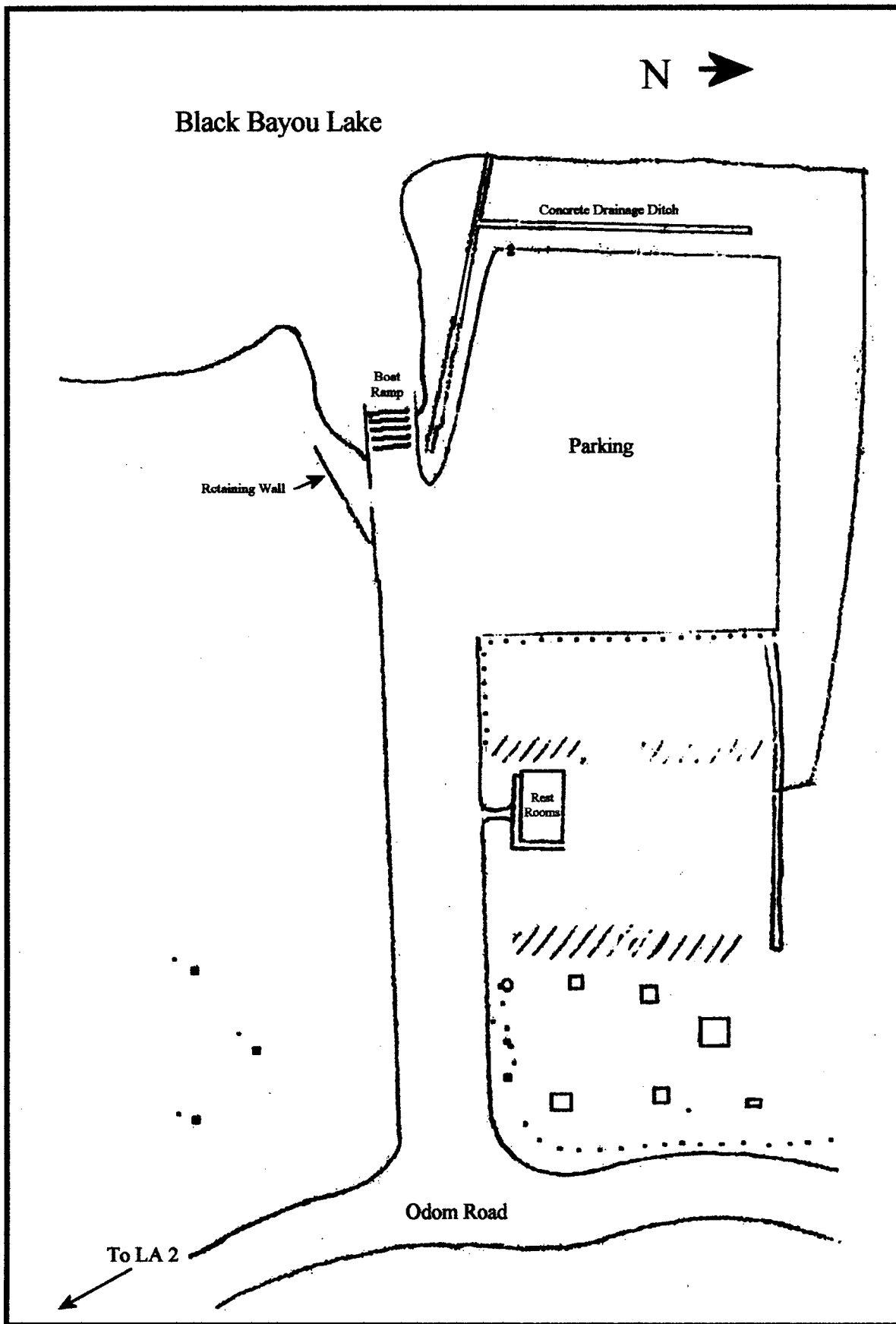
Robert L. Nance Park

How to get there: Robert L. Nance Park is located at 14770 Odorn Road, between LA 2 (Hosston-Vivian Road) and the Hosston-Rodessa Road South (Parish Road 139). From Shreveport, take U.S. 71 north to Hosston and turn west on LA 2. Proceed approximately 0.7 mile and turn right (north) on Odorn Road. A park sign is visible along LA 2 and the entrance into the park is less than 0.1 mile north of the junction of LA 2 and Odorn Road. The park is also easily accessed from Vivian via LA 2 and from Noah Tyson Park by proceeding east 3.7 miles on the Mira-Myrtis Road to the Hosston-Rodessa Road. Turn right (south) on the Hosston-Rodessa Road and proceed 3.9 miles to Odorn Road.

The park encompasses about 20 acres of open woods that drop down to the lake. A boat ramp, restrooms, playground equipment, and picnic tables with grills are available for public use. Habitats within the park include open mixed woods, with dense shrubs and aquatic grasses near the lake edge. Pine trees within the park provide good opportunities to see **Brown-headed Nuthatch** and **Pine Warbler**. Mature hardwoods along the edge of the park attract several species of woodpeckers and should be searched for warblers and vireos. Besides the expected **Anhinga**, **Double-crested Cormorant**, egrets, herons, ducks and **Pied-billed Grebe** on the lake, look for **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Belted Kingfisher**, **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, **Eastern Phoebe**, **Great Crested Flycatcher**, **White-eyed Vireo**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Red-eyed Vireo**, and **Orchard Oriole**. During the summer months, **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, **Northern Parula**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, and **Prothonotary Warbler** are commonly seen.

Specialties:

Brown-headed Nuthatch, Northern Parula, and Yellow-throated Warbler.



Robert Nance Park detail

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 3

The Red River

by *Hubert Hervey*

The Red River is accessible by boat. The shoreline can be walked in some areas, but most of those locations are covered by other accounts in this site guide. Some precautions need to be considered before you venture forth on the river. I strongly recommend you buy the Navigation Chart of the Red River that is available from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. There are two completely different types of boating experiences that will be encountered: first – the free-flowing river as encountered upriver from Cash Point Launch; second – the more lake-like waters of the pool areas.

Free-Flowing Waters

This area extends from Cash Point Launch, 3 miles north of Bossier City, northward into Arkansas and Texas. I wouldn't attempt these waters with a boat over 14 feet long or a motor over 25 horsepower, because, sooner or later, it will become necessary to pull the boat off a sandbar and it must be small enough for you to move it. The two launches for this area are both well maintained, concrete launches. LA 2 Launch, operated by the Red River Waterway Commission, is near Hosston, LA, and is free. Cash Point Launch in Bossier Parish is privately owned, with a \$5 launch fee. The trip from the LA 2 bridge to Cash Point will take about half a day. River experience will soon teach you to always take the longest part of the bend in the river. To attempt to shortcut a bend will only get you stuck on a sandbar. Always be alert for logs and limbs. The higher the water, the more debris the river carries. There are no navigation buoys or mileage markers on this part of the river. The scenery is alluring, with high bluffs and boulders. The birding can be exciting, with large concentrations of wading birds and shorebirds. There are 281 species of birds that are documented in the records of the Bird Study Group from along the Red River.

The most exciting bird for me to see in this part of the river is nesting **Least Tern**. Since 1996, we have recorded the endangered interior **Least Tern** nesting on five sandy islands/sandbars in this part of the river. Remember, it is not legal to disturb nesting **Least Tern** or any other migratory bird. For more on this subject see the Summer 2001 edition of the *Journal of Louisiana Ornithology*. **Bald Eagle, Osprey, migrating hawks, Wood Stork, Roseate Spoonbill, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Snowy Plover and Piping Plover**, and most duck and geese species have all been recorded here. The dog days of summer can be made more bearable by a trip on this part of the river because sandpipers start returning by mid-July and the numbers build through August into September.

The Lake-like Pool Stages

This part of the Red River is like a lake, with a strong current through the channel. It characterizes the river from north of Shreveport/Bossier City to the Mississippi River. The channel is marked by buoys to warn boaters about rock revetments, dikes, and sandbars. Often, the buoys have been displaced by strong currents and are not reliable. So, river experience and careful boating are recommended. Larger boats are in use here, as fishermen and pleasure boaters whiz by. The occasional towboat, pushing barges of cargo to the Port of Shreveport-Bossier City, makes some large waves that could be a threat to smaller boats. A navigation channel is maintained year-round to the port. A series of five locks and dams are in place and pleasure boats routinely pass through these locks. A 40-ft.-rope is required to tie up to the capstan. A trip through each lock can take from 20 minutes to an hour. All the public boat launches are concrete and well maintained. They are located at Bossier City, Stoner Avenue in Shreveport, Clark's Marina, Bishop Point, Coushatta, St. Maurice, Boyce, and Alexandria.

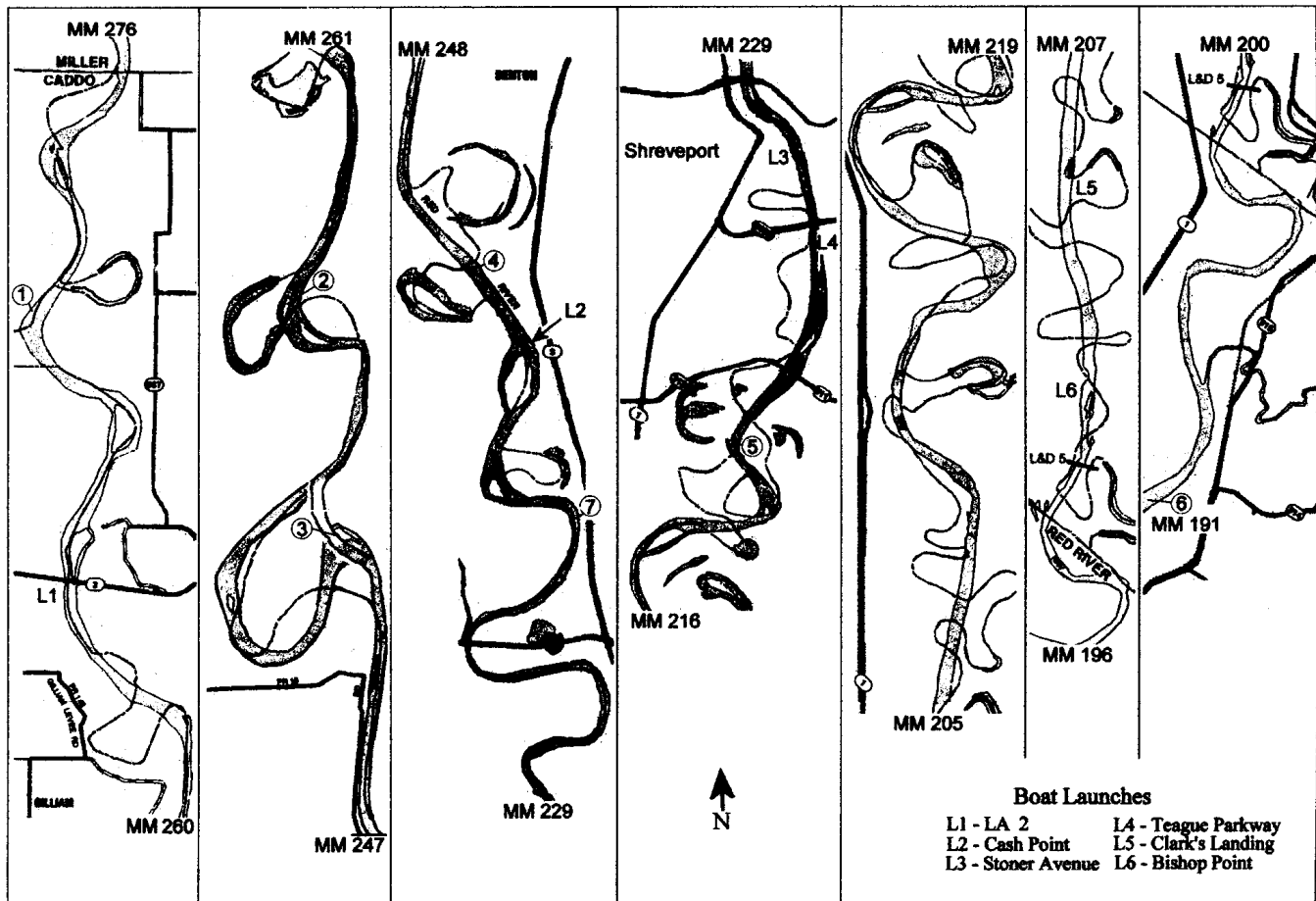
Many birds are present in the lake-like pools, including **Tricolored Heron, White Ibis and White-faced Ibis, American White Pelican**, both species of cormorants, six species of gulls, six species of terns, 33 species of shorebirds and waders, and many other migrants. Huge flocks of **Purple Martin** and swallows stage along the river prior to migrating south. **Tree Swallow** nests in dead timber in Pools 4 and 5. **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** nests in the river banks along with the occasional **Belted Kingfisher**. The thick stands of young willows hold many

warblers, vireos, flycatchers (including many empids and an occasional **Olive-sided Flycatcher**), and sparrows. The newly formed cattail marshes are attractive to rails, blackbirds (as roosts), and **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow**. **Least Tern**, **Black-necked Stilt**, and **Killdeer** nest on the islands that form near the channel behind revetments and dikes. Large numbers of both species of vultures feed and roost along the banks of the river, along with murders of **Fish Crow** and **American Crow**.

The Red River National Wildlife Refuge, with interpretive center, wildlife trails, and easily available protected areas will serve to make the Red River even more appealing to birders than it has been in the past. Also, the former C. Bickham Dickson Regional Park is now run by LSU in Shreveport as the Red River Education and Research Park and is open for scientific studies of the Red River as a unique ecosystem.

Specialties

American White Pelican, Roseate Spoonbill, Wood Stork, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Least Tern.



Red River from river mile marker (MM) 191 to the Arkansas border (MM 276). L1-L6 indicates public boat launches.

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 4

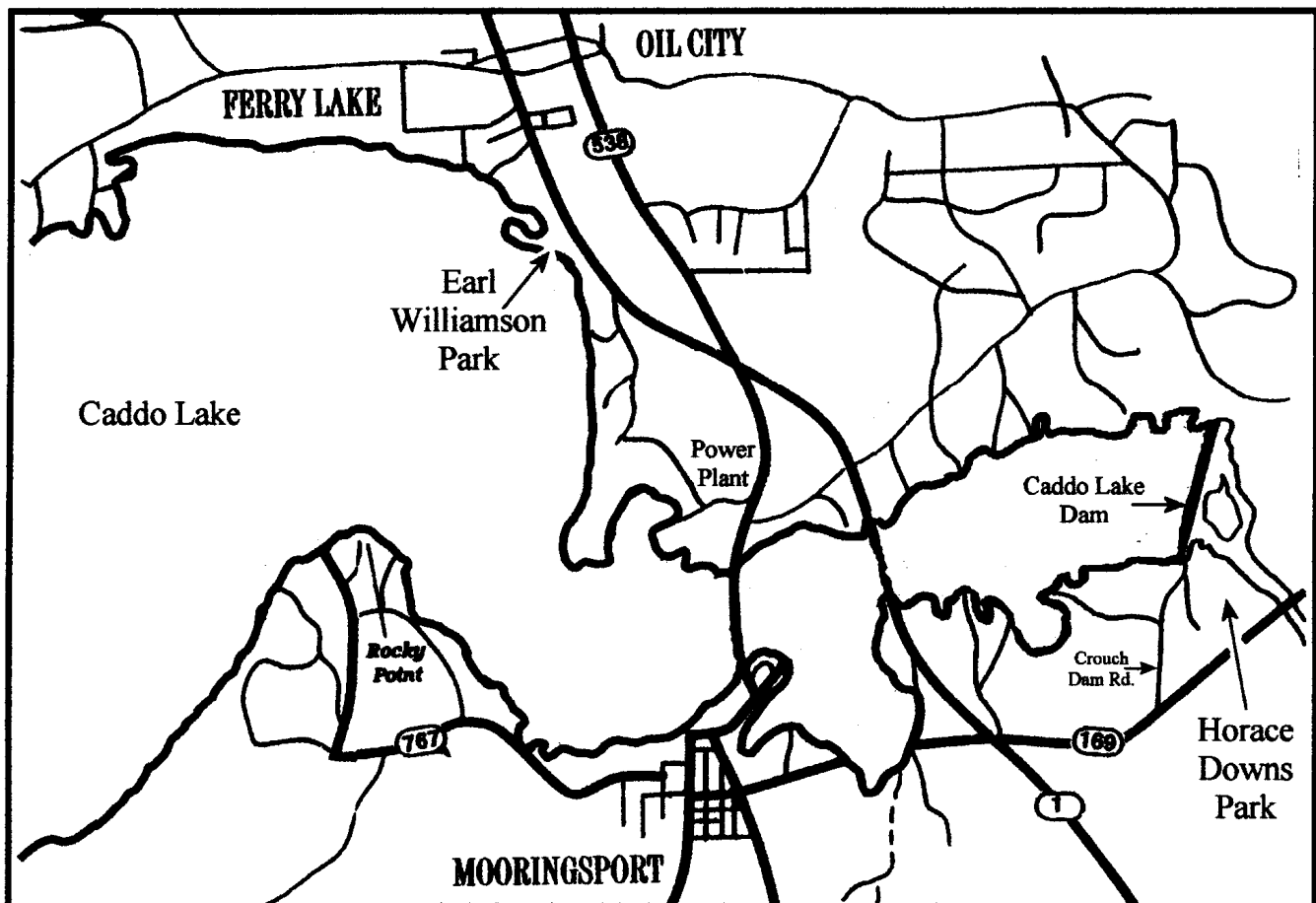
Caddo Lake

by Jeff F. Trahan and Larry R. Raymond

Sometimes called the most beautiful lake in America, Caddo Lake is considered the largest natural lake of fresh water in the south. Half in Texas and half in Louisiana, the lake covers from 26,800 acres (168.5-foot stage) to over 35,000 acres at high water stages. Two public boat ramps in Louisiana, one located in Earl G. Williamson Park in Oil City, and a second in Mooringsport adjacent to the historic Mooringsport Bridge, provide access for launching boats. Both **Barn Swallow** and **Cliff Swallow** nest under the bridge in Mooringsport (LA 538). Miles of well-marked boat roads provide boat access to all parts of the lake, including James Bayou on the Louisiana side. Commercial maps of Caddo Lake are available for purchase at many of the stores surrounding the lake.

Caddo Lake provides habitat for many species of aquatic birds, including grebes, **American White Pelican**, egrets, herons, ducks, gulls, and terns. Look for **Bald Eagle** and **Horned Grebe** in the winter and **Osprey** in the spring and fall. There are 173 species recorded in the BSG database from the Louisiana side of Caddo Lake.

The Parish of Caddo Parks and Recreation Department maintains two parks on the shores of Caddo Lake that provide access for birding the lake. One of these parks (Horace Downs) is on Crouch Dam Road, which leads to the Caddo Lake Dam.



Area of Caddo Lake showing Earl Williamson Park and Horace Downs Park.

Caddo Lake Dam and Horace M. Downs Park

How to get there: Drive north out of Shreveport on LA 1. Turn right (east) on LA 169. This highway crosses LA 1 about 12 miles north of the point where LA 1 and U.S. 71 diverge just north of Shreveport. From the intersection of LA 1 and LA 169, drive 0.9 mile to Crouch Dam Road. Turn left onto Crouch Dam Road and drive 0.8 mile where you will find the entrance to Caddo Lake Dam and Horace M. Downs Park. The two areas are adjacent to each other. You may park in Horace M. Downs Park or in the parking lot at the end of the dam road.

Horace M. Downs Park is an 8.5-acre park that provides picnic tables and grills. It is used primarily for family picnics and by fishermen. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates the Caddo Lake Dam. The dam area and park offer a variety of habitats. It is composed of open fields with brushy and wooded edges and plenty of open water behind the dam. Both the dam area and the park may be birded. The best times to bird this area are winter and spring. In winter, many types of birds including **Pied-billed Grebe**, **Northern Shoveler**, **Blue-winged Teal**, **Hooded Merganser**, and **Lesser Scaup** use the area of the lake near the dam. **Song Sparrow** and **Swamp Sparrow** may be seen along the brushy edges of the water and **Eastern Meadowlark** and **Savannah Sparrow** inhabit the open fields. **Osprey**, **Red-shouldered Hawk**, and **Red-tailed Hawk** can often be seen flying in the area. Bird the wooded and brushy edges of the dam area and the park. **Fox Sparrow** may be reliably found here along with **White-crowned Sparrow** and **White-throated Sparrow**. A pedestrian walk-through gate at the back of the park provides access to Twelvemile Bayou for bank fishermen and to trails that follow the bayou through the woods all the way to LA 169. This area is good for woodland birding and is good for migrants in spring and fall.

Earl G. Williamson Park

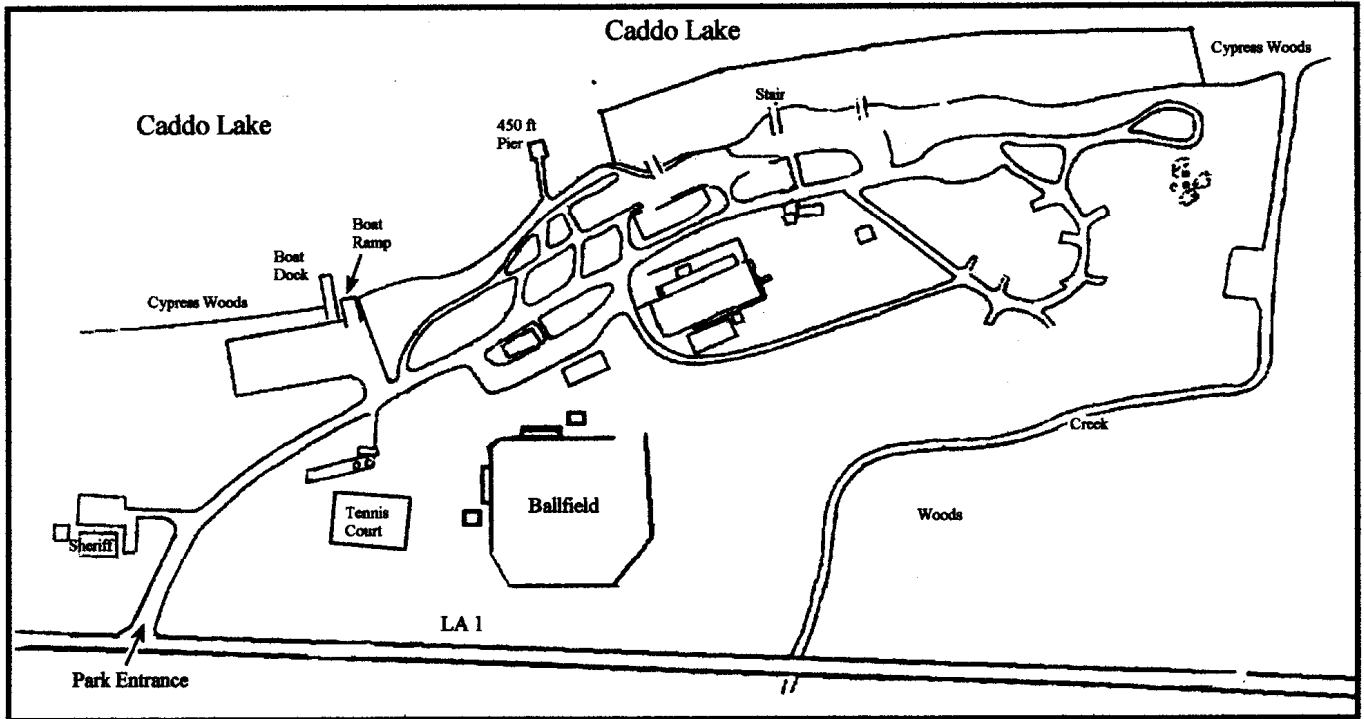
How to get there: Williamson Park is located 18 miles north of Shreveport via LA 1. It can also be accessed by taking the I-220 bypass to LA 1 (Texarkana exit) and heading north to Oil City. From Jefferson, TX, take TX 49 to LA 2, then LA 1 south for five miles. From Texarkana, take U.S. 71 south to LA 2, then west to LA 1 and head south for 10 miles.

The 40-acre Earl G. Williamson Park provides a public boat ramp, a fishing pier, paved parking areas, restrooms, camping sites for tents and recreational vehicles, and lots of picnic tables with grills. The park also has two playground areas, a lighted ball field, lighted tennis courts, and a swimming area. A park ranger lives on the park premises and provides 24-hour security.

A small creek enters the northern part of the park from the east and empties into Caddo Lake near the northwestern corner of the park. The creek is wooded on both sides and provides excellent opportunities for passerine birding. The southern end of the park, next to the boat ramp and parking area, provides great access to the lake's shoreline and should be worked for both aquatic and passerine species. Fourteen species of warbler, including **Orange-crowned Warbler**, **Northern Parula**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, and **Common Yellowthroat** have been reported in the park. **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** and **Loggerhead Shrike** are regular in the summer and **Blue Grosbeak** and **Orchard Oriole** have been recorded in the park. Shorebirds seen in the park include **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, and **Spotted Sandpiper**. In early spring, **Blue-winged Teal** can often be seen in flooded areas of the park north of the camping area. **Bufflehead** is common in this area in winter.

Specialties

Horned Grebe, **Bufflehead**, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, **Loggerhead Shrike**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Fox Sparrow**, and **White-crowned Sparrow**.



Earl Williamson Park

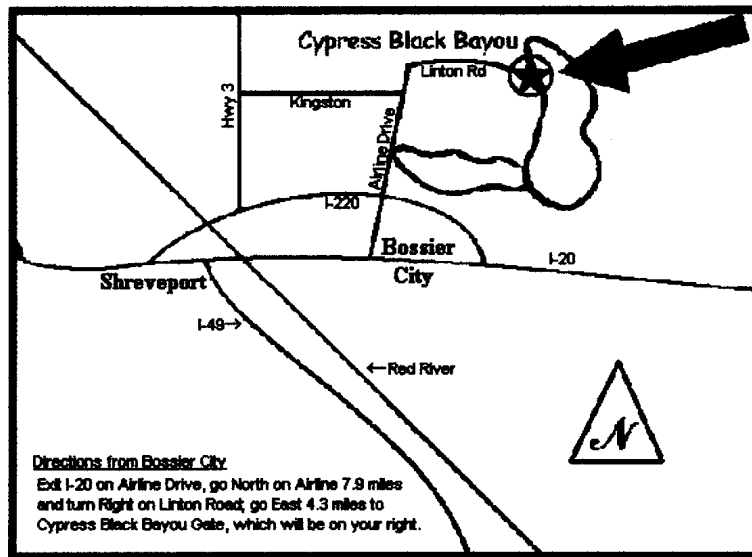
Notes

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 5

Cypress Bayou Reservoir and Black Bayou Reservoir Recreation Area

by *Hubert Hervey*

How to get there: Take I-220 around the north side of Bossier City; turn north on Airline Drive. After a few miles, watch for Linton Rd. on the right. At the "Y" take a right and the Park is on the right. Watch for signs along the route.



General area map of the Cypress Lake-Black Lake region

The bird list for the Park and the area around the lakes is at 160 species. Many of these will be seen inside the Park, which is operated by the Cypress Black Bayou Recreation and Water Conservation Commission. A small fee is charged for entry. The main feature is a pair of nesting **Bald Eagle**. They are generally present from December through May and most years they have fledged one juvenile. The young bird can usually be seen in the branches near the nest in May. This is the third nesting location for this pair of eagles and is within the Park boundaries. After a tornado destroyed the first nest, a nesting platform was erected in its place; however, the two birds have minds of their own and have always nested in mature loblolly pine trees. The adult birds moved the 2002 nest site to a location farther from the walking trail. A scope is helpful in observing details, but binoculars are sufficient for seeing the birds at the nest. The young bird or birds have usually fledged by Memorial Day.

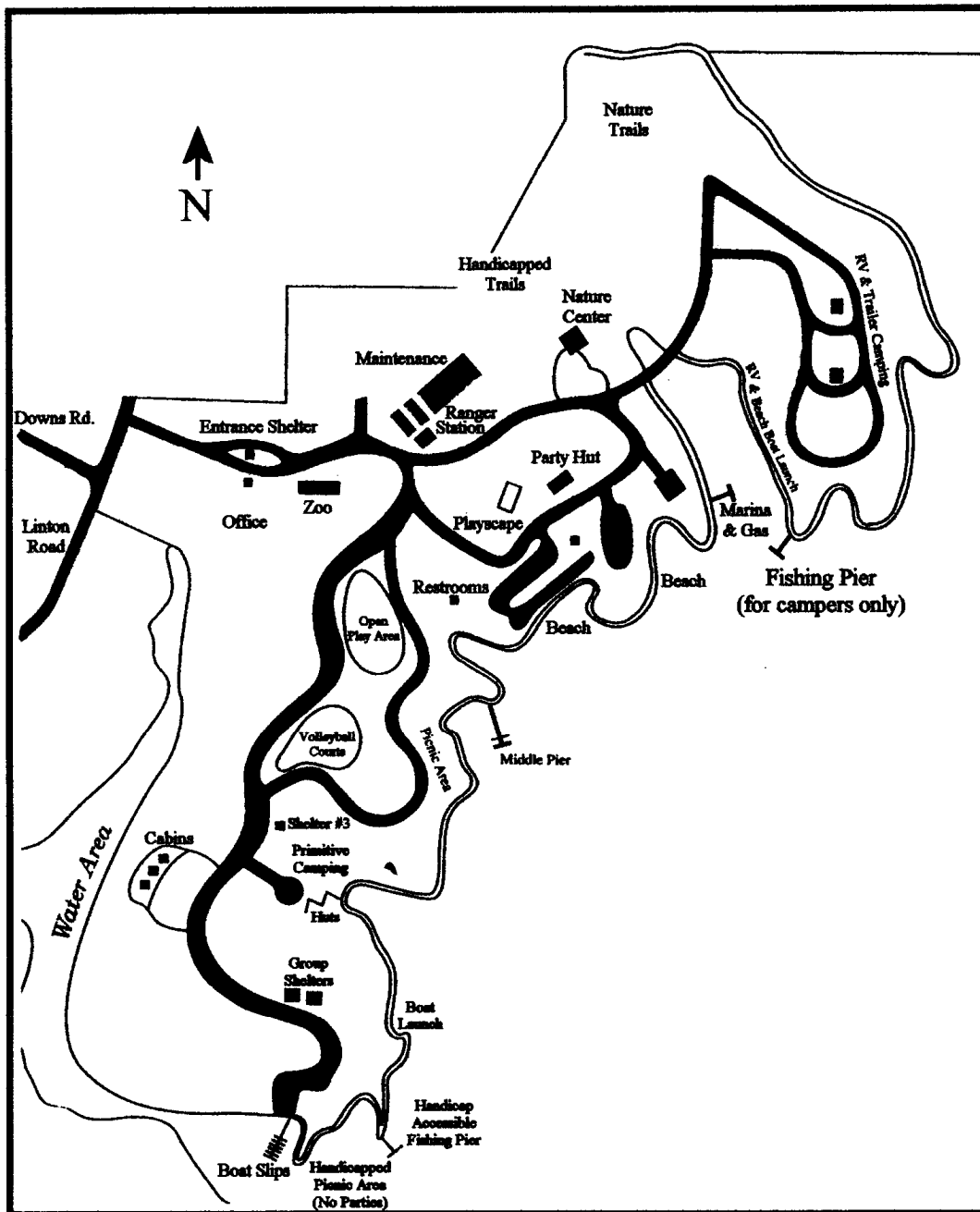
The park has a naturalist on duty that can direct you to the eagles' nest. The Nature Center has a good display of nature-related objects and a "world class" waterfowl exhibit. Birds are attracted to feeders that are located near the Nature Center and most of the trails start here. The most likely area to see **White-breasted Nuthatch** is in the camping area north of the Nature Center. The camping area is also a good location to scope the lake for **Horned Grebe** and many duck species. The habitat is pine and oak woodlands with grassy fields.

It is possible to drive around the lake by driving north from the Park on Linton Rd. to LA 162. Cross the upper end of the lake and turn right into the boat launch. Nesting **Tree Swallow** has been seen in the dead trees north of this area. Continue to Crouch Rd. and turn right. Observe birds as you drive along. Parks Rd., to the right, will take you to Cypress Lake Dam. An extensive cypress swamp below the dam has **Northern Parula**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Barred Owl**, and other woodland species. Boats can be launched into the lake here, in the Park, or at the northern end of the lake.

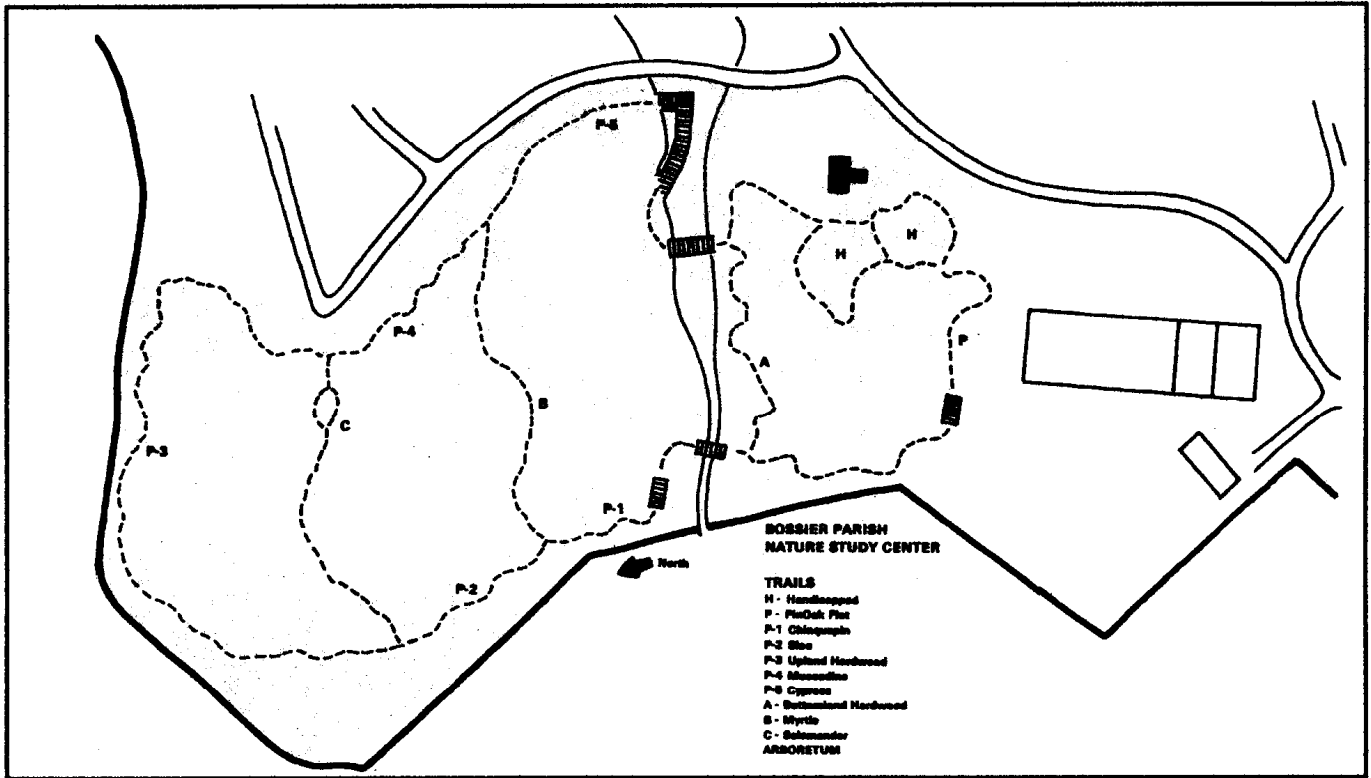
Black Bayou Lake is a separate lake that can be seen to the south as you complete the circle around Cypress Lake. It is surrounded by houses and does not have as much to offer the birder as Cypress Lake.

Specialties

Bald Eagle (nesting), Osprey, Horned Grebe, Eastern Phoebe (nesting), Brown-headed Nuthatch, and White-breasted Nuthatch.



Cypress Black Bayou Recreation Area



Nature trails of Cypress Black Bayou Nature Center

Notes

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 6

Soda Lake

Wildlife Management Area/Waterfowl Refuge

by *Laurence M. Hardy*

How to get there: Take LA 1 north out of Shreveport to LA 173. Go north on LA 173 to the bridge over Twelvemile Bayou. Park on the right side by the gate before crossing the bridge. Fill out an entry form (self-clearing permit) from the kiosk near the gate. You will have to walk in from here. Go through the gate and follow the road toward the bayou, left under the highway bridge, and continue along the road. Bird everywhere.

If you want some good exercise along with good birding, this is the place for you. Even though this is a walk-in area only, some of the trails are well maintained; others are primitive and not well marked and provide good hiking for the adventuresome. From the main entry area at the bridge follow the road toward the water control structure (w.c. on map by Stop 1). As you approach that area you will see a road to the left that enters the woods. This is an excellent area. Walk the road around the southern edge of the WMA between Stops 1 and 3. There is a grove of pawpaws (*Asimina triloba*) on the left shortly after entering the woods. At Stop 3 you can walk maintained roads (trails) to Stops 2 and 9. Also, from Stop 1 go north-northwest from the water control structure and you will see the right-of-way for a water line that heads north. This is an excellent walking area between Stops 1 and 2 and on to 9. This might be wet in wet weather. Watch for the pond between the right-of-way and the levee and north of Stop 2.

The map shows 14 stops (described below) for the most complete birding of this interesting area. The 14 stops are indicated by the circled numbers on the map. This area is for walk-in birding only and is a very interesting birding area.

The Bird Study Group bird records show 162 species that have been seen in this area during the past few years, including 12 species of ducks, 26 species of warblers, and 10 species of sparrows. Thus far, it has been visited infrequently by only a few birders. The potential for this area is great, considering the wide variety of habitats (open water, bayous, marshes, old fields, woods, large open areas).

STOP 1: To get to Stop 1 go to the bridge over Twelvemile Bayou via LA 173 (from LA 1 to west or Dixie to east). Park near the bridge and walk into the refuge to the northwest. An old road follows the bayou through the woods, eventually ending at a large open area, water control structure, and some open water (depending on the season). This is a good place to see ducks, raptors, wading birds, and to listen and look for owls.

STOP 2: From here to the edge of Twelvemile Bayou watch for ducks and raptors soaring over large open spaces. **Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Hooded Warbler** have been recorded in the brush along this levee.

STOP 3: Near here watch for **Belted Kingfisher, Pileated Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, and Eastern Kingbird.**

STOP 4: There are woods and a small cattail marsh east of the road. Watch for **Winter Wren, Acadian Flycatcher, Gray Catbird, and Red-winged Blackbird.**

STOP 5: Excellent birding can be enjoyed on this steep hill. **Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Towhee, and Spotted Towhee,** and various sparrows have been observed here, although it is now developing into a small forest. At the road junction, walk north to Stops 6-13.

STOP 6: Mixed forest is on both sides of the road. Less bird activity is evident, but watch for forest species.

STOP 7: There is an old field north of the road. **Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, and Red-shouldered Hawk** may be near the forest edge; watch for **Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow,** and other sparrows in the old field.

STOP 8: Hackberry woods on both sides of the road are sometimes flooded; watch for migrating warblers.

STOP 9: An open area is at the edge of Twelvemile Bayou. **Belted Kingfisher, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, and Painted Bunting** are frequently found near the water.

STOP 10: Study the water to the west between Stop 9 and the observation tower. Watch for egrets, ducks, other aquatic birds, such as **Black-crowned Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, and Wood Duck.**

STOP 11: From the observation tower, watch for **Hooded Merganser** at the north edge of any open water. Seven other species of ducks have been seen here. Watch for **Pied-billed Grebe, Osprey, and American Coot.** Then walk toward the bayou and turn left on the trail between Twelvemile Bayou and the reservoir.

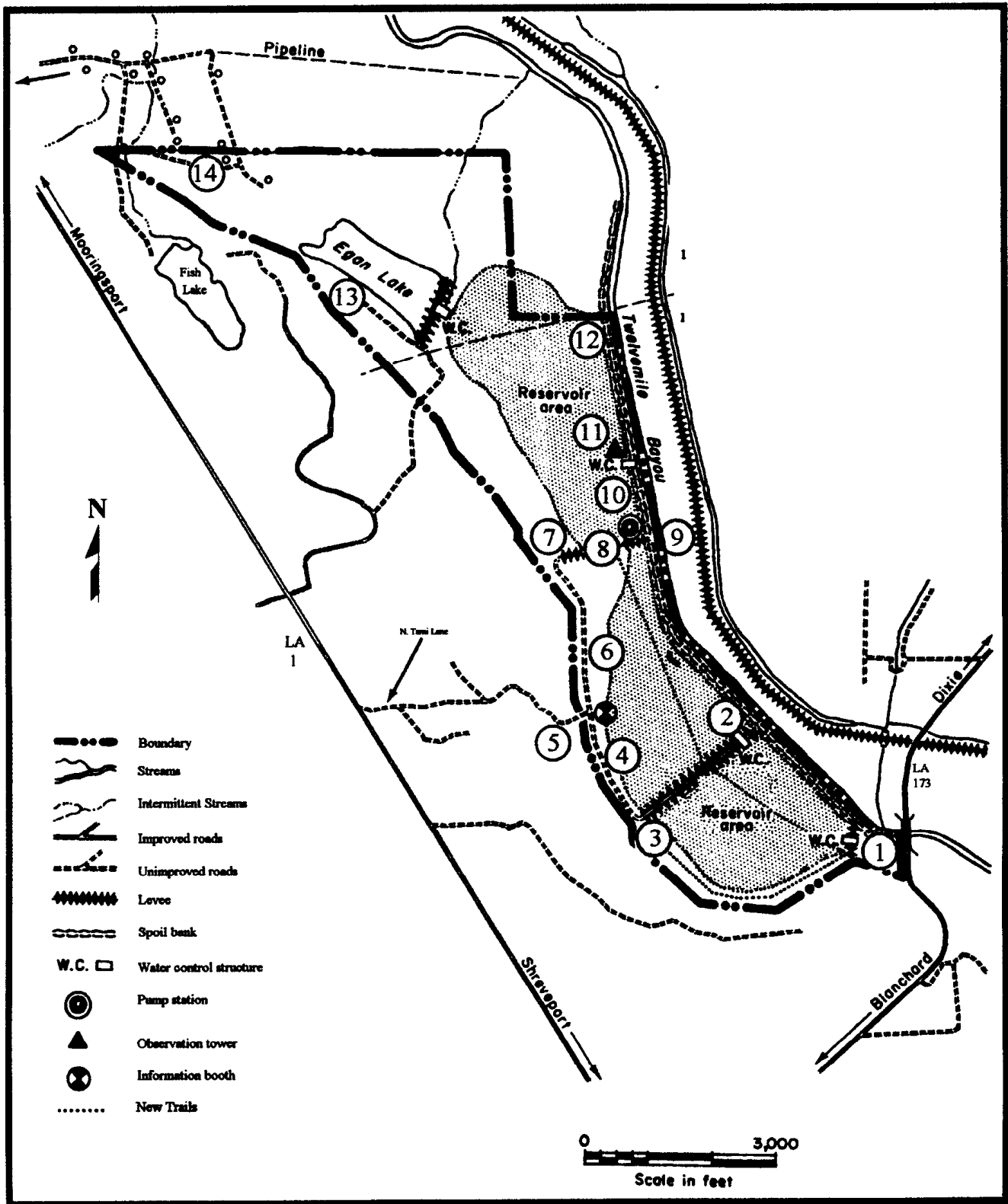
STOP 12: Follow the trail along the edge of the bayou through hackberry woods and tall weeds. **White-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat,** and another 15 species of warblers have been seen here, as well as night-herons at the woods' edge. After about 0.3 mile, the obscure trail forks. The left fork, through the woods, is often wet and does not connect easily to the main trail. The right fork, which is better, follows the spoil bank. This is easy walking but, in season, there are many head-high weeds. When you come out into the open, cross the small ditch and follow the trail on the north side of the ditch. **Black-crowned Night-Heron, Indigo Bunting,** and, in the winter, several species of sparrows can be seen here. From here on, you are on your own. This trail plays out eventually but provides access to some good bayous and sloughs. **CAUTION** – To walk to this area and return to Stop 1 is at least 11 miles of intense hiking (via Stops 9, 10, and 11).

STOP 13: This is the west edge of Egan Lake. Ducks can be seen on the open water of the lake and woodland species at the woods edge. Stop 13 is best approached by walking the pipeline right-of-way that crosses the road between Stops 7 and 8. Walk north in the right-of-way until you get hungry. This is a long walk! Watch for Egan Lake on the right. When finished, retrace your path in order to stay off private property.

STOP 14: This is an excellent area with woods, water, and cattail marshes. This area is poorly explored but has great potential. It is only accessible by walking on old oil field roads (several rigs are still standing). This location is about a ½-mile walk from Stop 13, depending on how much exploring you do. This area has open water, woods, marshes, and excellent walking on the old roads. Much wildlife is here. **CAUTION** – To walk to this stop and return to Stop 1 is approximately 14 miles of rough hiking (via Stops 7 and 13).

Specialties

Tricolored Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Wood Stork, Hooded Merganser, and Painted Bunting.



Soda Lake Wildlife Management Area/Waterfowl Refuge

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 7

Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park

by *Larry R. Raymond*

How to get there: It is accessible from Shreveport via the Shreveport-Blanchard Highway (LA 173) north to Blanchard. The nature park is located on the Blanchard Furrh Road, 2.8 miles west of Blanchard. In Blanchard, turn west next to the post office, one block south of the stop light. The park is also accessible from the east via I-220 to LA 173 and from the west via I-20 to LA 169 north to Longwood. In Longwood turn right (east) and proceed 2.7 miles to the entrance.

The park is open to the public free of charge from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. The park is closed on Monday, Tuesday, and holidays. Call one of the park's naturalists at 318-929-2806 for information or visit www.caddoparks.com/memorial.cfm. Six nature trails that range from ¼ mile to 2½ miles long offer numerous birdwatching opportunities. In addition to mixed pine-hardwood forest, the park offers two natural creeks, an open meadow, a right-of-way for an electric power line, and numerous temporary ponds. More than 120 species of birds have been reported from the park and about 35 of these are permanent residents in northwestern Louisiana.

As you enter the park, stop and listen for **Brown-headed Nuthatch**, often heard in the pines west of the entrance road. A little farther down the entrance road, a gravel road to the left will take you to the park's covered pavilion. In the winter, feeders near the pavilion are covered with occasional **Purple Finch**, **American Goldfinch**, and, in some years, **Pine Siskin**. Also present are the ubiquitous **Carolina Chickadee**, **Tufted Titmouse**, **Northern Cardinal**, and usually **American Crow** and **Blue Jay** looking for handouts. **White-breasted Nuthatch** frequently comes to the feeders as well.

When you come back to the entrance road and continue toward the Interpretive Building, a gravel road, closed to vehicular traffic, heads north (right) past the park's tree growing station. Dense growth of eastern baccharis and Japanese honeysuckle along this road provide excellent cover for sparrows and **Mourning Dove** in the winter. This is a great spot to squeak for warblers and other migrants during spring and fall.

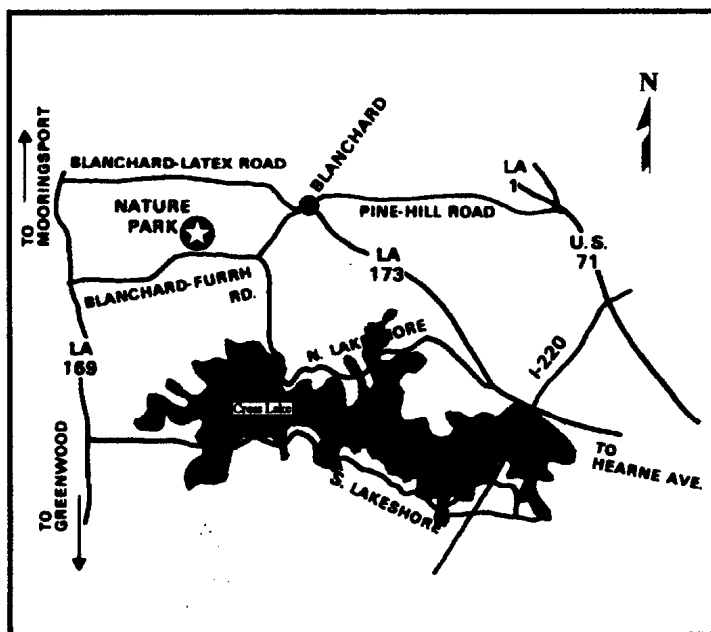
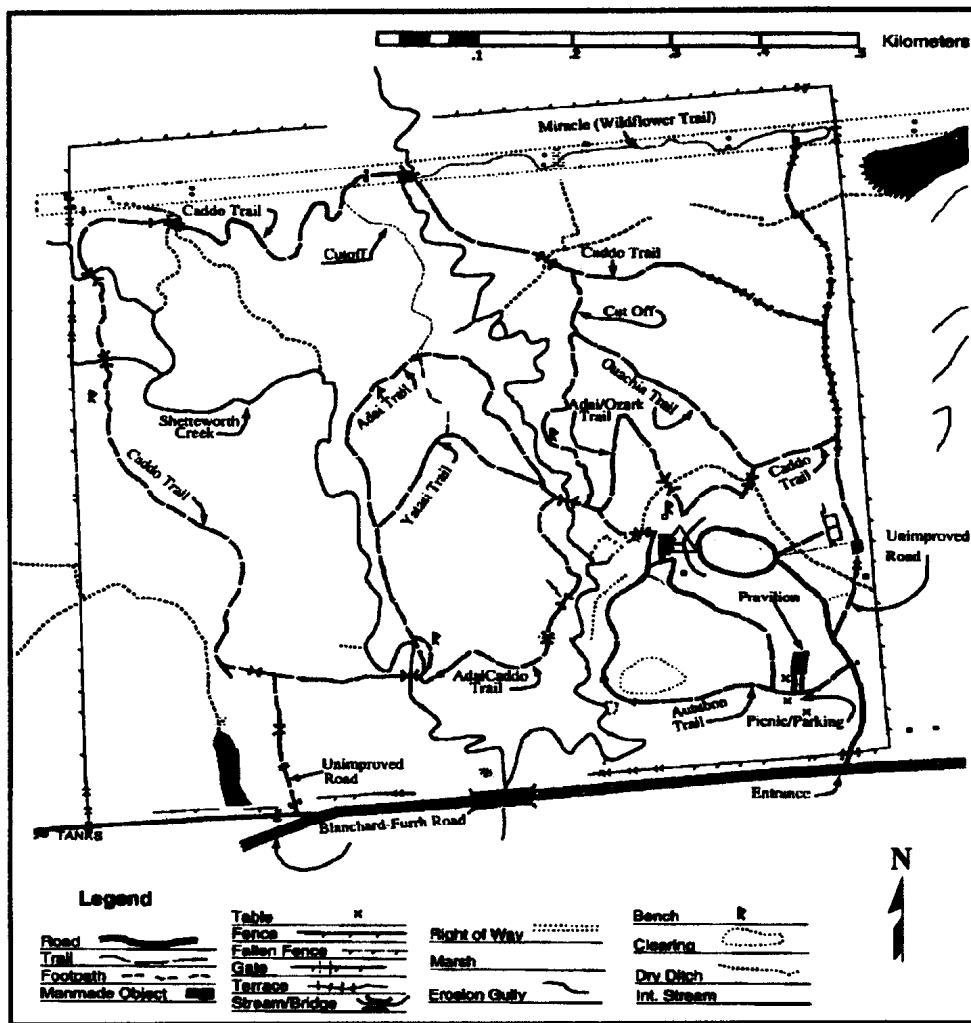
At the Interpretive Building, feeders provide more good views of the birds listed for the pavilion. The Audubon Trail, which begins at the building, will take you through a small meadow surrounded by post oaks and cedar elms draped with old-man's beard lichen. **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, **White-eyed Vireo**, **Northern Parula**, and others commonly nest here in the summer.

The 2½-mile Caddo Trail will take you around the periphery of the park and through several types of habitats. Woodland birds can be seen all along the trail and sparrows, buntings, and grosbeaks may be seen at appropriate times in the power line right-of-way. As you walk the trails along the creeks in spring and summer, look and listen for **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Kentucky Warbler**, and **Hooded Warbler**. **Swainson's Warbler**, which used to nest in the park, has not been seen for several years.

Common woodland species observed include **Red-shouldered Hawk**, **Acadian and Great Crested Flycatcher**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Red-eyed Vireo**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, and **Summer Tanager**, among others.

Specialties

White-breasted Nuthatch, **Blue-headed Vireo**, **Northern Parula**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Purple Finch**, and **Pine Siskin**.



Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park. Trail system (above) and directional map (below)

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 8

Cross Lake

by *Hubert Hervey*

How to get there: Cross Lake is located on the western side of Shreveport. It can be reached in many ways. The easiest is via I-220, which passes over the eastern end of the lake. Exiting on Lakeshore Drive will take you to all points on the southern side of the lake. Blanchard Road (LA 173) exit will take you to North Lakeshore Drive. This route is more difficult to locate for the newcomer. Go north on Blanchard Road beside Cross Lake dam until you can exit left under a railroad underpass. Then take a right at the "Y." Turn left, just past the railroad tracks, at a blinking light. This is North Lakeshore Drive. After birding the areas numbered on the map, continue west on North Lakeshore Drive and you will reach West Lakeshore Drive. Richard Fleming Park is located on West Lakeshore Drive, which has good birding all the way until it ends in the lake.

This 8,575-acre lake is excellent for grebes, herons, ducks, gulls, terns, and other waterbirds. The high-quality drinking water of Shreveport comes from Cross Lake. A permit to operate a boat is required and may be obtained from the Cross Lake Patrol, which is located near Stop 4. A municipal pier and public boat launch are nearby. For best results, birding by boat is recommended. The Bird Study Group has records for 263 species seen on and around Cross Lake. More unusual birds include **Red-throated Loon, Western Grebe, Tricolored Heron, Surf Scoter, Merlin, Common Moorhen, Willet, Pomarine Jaeger, Parasitic Jaeger, Black-legged Kittiwake, Black-billed Cuckoo, Ringed Kingfisher, Bewick's Wren, House Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, White-breasted Nuthatch, Rusty Blackbird, Warbling Vireo, Tropical Parula, and Blackpoll Warbler.**

Cross Lake is mostly open water except on the west end, yet it is difficult to bird from shore because of a shortage of access areas. Most of the lake can be scoped by going to the following places. South side: 1) Progressive Men's Club Area (or a yellow building near it) on Dilg League Drive, 2) Smith's Cross Lake Inn and Restaurant, 3) Buzzard Island and Willow Ridge Drive, 4) Municipal pier, 5) public boat launch, 6) Ford Park, 7) Barron's Landing (ask permission!), 8) South Lakeshore Drive Refuge, 9) below the dam and I-220 pool, 10) Mallard Bay, 11) Pine Island, and 12) Richard Fleming Park.

The Bird Study Group has boat trips each year on Cross Lake. This popular trip is one of the best ways to see the complete birdlife show of winter. We usually see **Horned Grebe, Red-breasted Merganser, Canvasback, Common Loon, American White Pelican, and Bald Eagle.** Birds sometimes seen include **Red-throated Loon, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Brown Pelican, Greater Scaup, Redhead, Common Goldeneye, Osprey and Franklin's Gull.** Counted in the hundreds or thousands are **Ring-billed Gull, Ruddy Duck, American Coot, and Double-crested Cormorant.** Spring and fall birding can be worthwhile and may yield unexpected results including shorebirds and raptors. Summer is generally routine, but sandpipers may return from northern nesting grounds as early as mid-July.

CROSS LAKE (Stops are numbered) – SOUTHERN SIDE

Stop 1 – PROGRESSIVE MEN'S CLUB AREA. Reach this site by traveling east on Lakeshore Drive into Shreveport. Turn left on Dilg League Drive. As the road bends hard to the right, a wooden building, currently called "The Cove" is on the left. Drive to the rear and scope from the pier. This overlooks the only major mudflat on the lake at normal water levels. Shorebirds may be numerous, depending upon the time of the year. The secluded cove is also a safe haven for nearly all the other birds that frequent the lake. This is a *must stop*. The Progressive Men's Club is only a short distance farther and some of the same area of the lake can be seen from there. **Ringed Kingfisher** was observed at this location.

Stop 2 – SMITH'S CROSS LAKE INN AND RESTAURANT. Drive past the building to parking area overlooking the lake. This spot is good for **Bufflehead** and sometimes a **Bald Eagle** is in the trees across the bay. Many of the birds seen on Cross Lake can be seen from this location.

Stop 3 – **BUZZARD ISLAND AND WILLOW RIDGE DRIVE**. This is the highest vantage point overlooking the lake. The **Great Blue Heron** and **Great Egret** rookery in the treetops of Buzzard Island can be viewed with a scope. A no parking sign has been placed here and could cause a problem.

Stop 4 – **MUNICIPAL PIER**. Public fishing is allowed from the pier. You may also set up your scope here. The city-owned fish hatchery is on the left of the road and sometimes is worth a look. Shreveport Yacht Club is on the right. Bird Study Group barge trips often leave from the yacht club. Cross Lake Patrol headquarters is beside the pier. Boat permits must be purchased here.

Stop 5 – **PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH**. This is a free public boat launch. It also provides a view of Buzzard Island.

Stop 6 – **FORD PARK**. Ford Park is a large city-owned park on South Lakeshore Drive. The trees are mostly mature loblolly pine with birds such as **Pine Warbler** and **Brown-headed Nuthatch** being common. Cypress trees line the lake shore with **Prothonotary Warbler** nesting in the numerous cavities. A boardwalk over a marshy area is worthwhile for aquatic life study. A small sandy beach sometimes attracts shorebirds and sandpipers. Recently improved security measures have made the park safer.

Stop 7 – **BARRON'S LANDING**. This commercial enterprise furnishes boat and barge rentals and boat launching facilities. Bait and fishing supplies are available. Ask permission before birding anywhere on this property. There is a small heronry of **Great Blue Heron** near here.

Stop 8 – **SOUTH LAKESHORE DRIVE REFUGE**. This area is almost impossible to see into because of increased vegetative growth. It is a favorite owling locale with **Barred Owl**, **Eastern Screech-Owl**, and **Great Horned Owl** usual. Cross Lake also has had **Barn Owl** nesting in duck blinds and the north shore was the winter abode of a **Snowy Owl** and a **Long-eared Owl**. That is six owl species! We should do more owling around the lake. The refuge is a good **Wood Duck** and **Hooded Merganser** spot.

CROSS LAKE – NORTHERN SIDE

Stop 9 – **BELOW THE DAM AND I-220 POOL**. Sometimes the water rises below the dam and ducks settle here to avoid hunting pressure. **Common Goldeneye**, **Redhead**, **American Wigeon**, **Blue-winged Teal**, **Green-winged Teal**, and **Hooded Merganser** may be seen here. Cattails at the I-220 bridge catastrophic spill collection basin have yielded **Marsh Wren** (rare here) and sandpipers have been seen in the concrete basin. Be careful to watch for traffic here and anywhere around the lake. It is illegal to stop on or near any bridge. You may set up a scope on either end of the dam and you may walk along the dam up to the spillway.

Stop 10 – **MALLARD BAY**. This undeveloped subdivision is our winter sparrow mainstay. We hope it never develops. **LeConte's**, **Fox**, and **Swamp Sparrows** keep company with **Sedge Wren** and other tall grassland species. **Pileated Woodpecker**, **Blue-headed Vireo**, and **Purple Finch** can be expected along with other woodland species.

Stop 11 – **PINE ISLAND**. It is possible to find Passeriformes and those birds that favor shallow water covered with moss, waterlilies, and buttonbush.

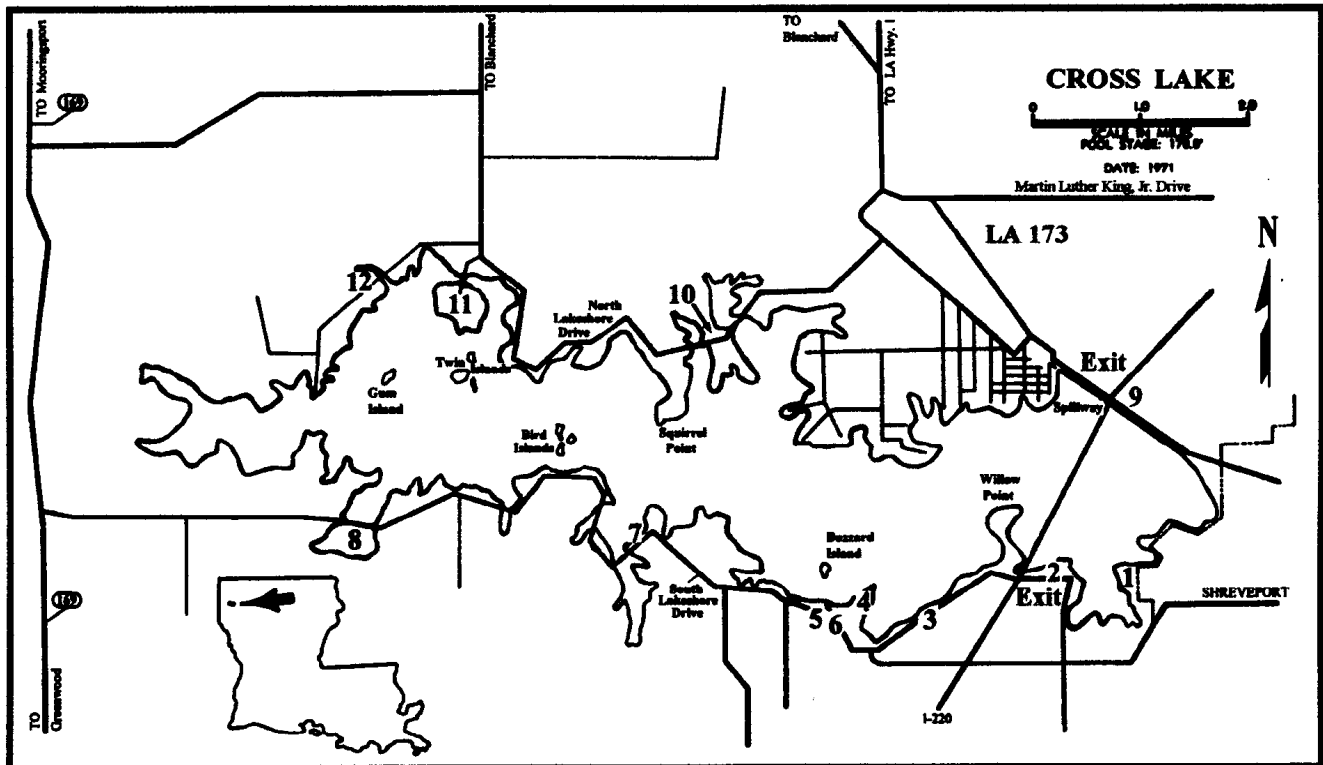
CROSS LAKE – WESTERN SIDE

Most of the western end of Cross Lake is in the hands of hunting clubs. Most duck blinds are in this part of the lake also. It has been birded during the Shreveport Christmas Bird Count for over 50 years, most of them by the writer. The following directions to Richard Fleming Park provide the only public access to the western end of Cross Lake.

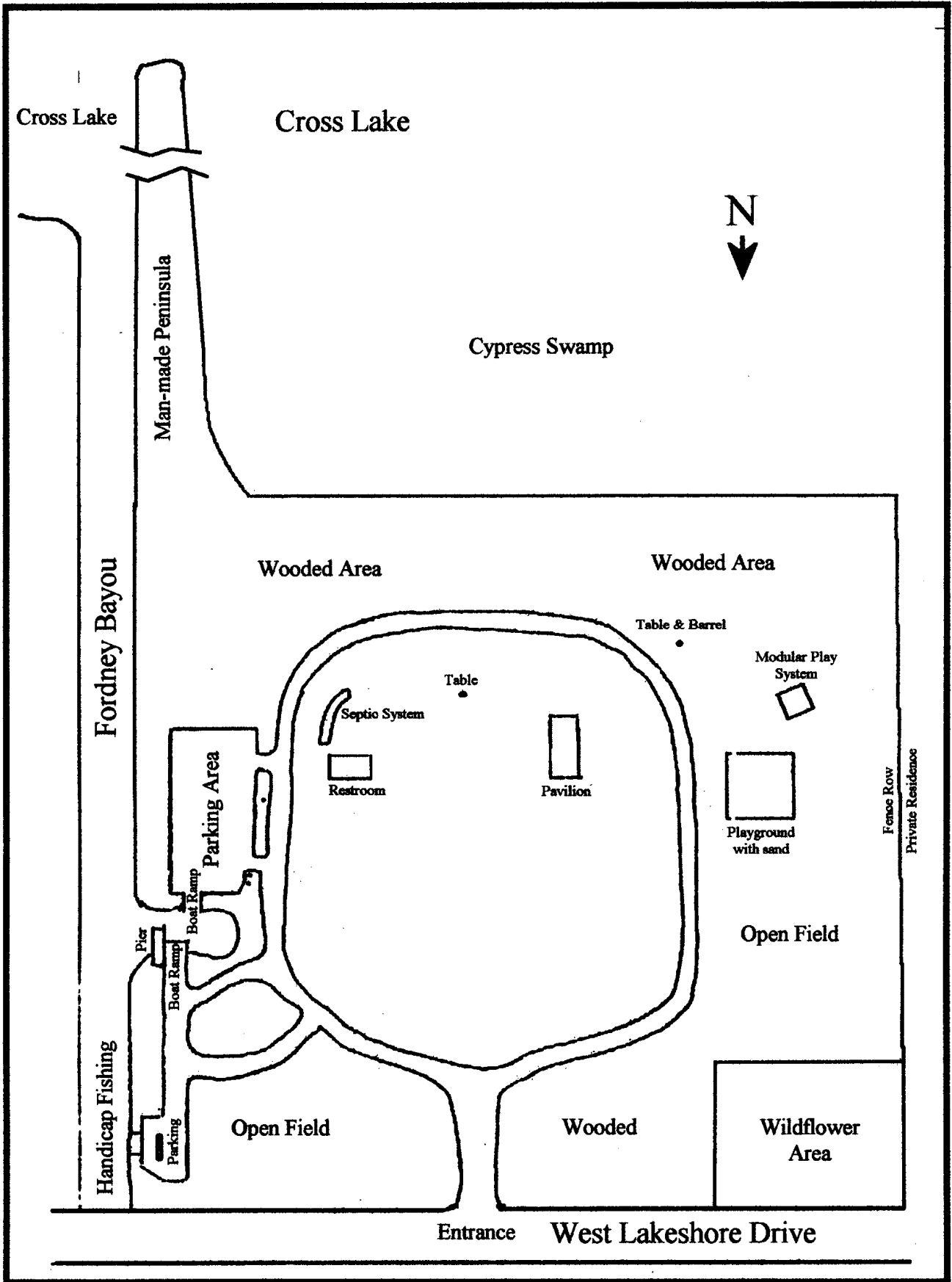
Stop 12 – RICHARD FLEMING PARK. This small park on West Lakeshore Drive offers one unique feature of interest to birders. A finger of land on the south side of a bayou extends into the western end of Cross Lake. The vegetation here appeals to a variety of migrants and could well be considered a migrant trap. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was recorded here in the spring of 1995 and a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was seen here in the fall of 1996. **Osprey, Bald Eagle, Ring-necked Duck,** and puddle ducks can be seen from the end of the trail, if you are lucky. **Marsh Wren** can be found at the end of the peninsula in winter. **Red-headed Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch,** and **Prothonotary Warbler** are easily seen in the park. West Lakeshore Drive continues past the park and is worth taking a drive to the end of the road.

Specialties

Common Loon, Horned Grebe, American White Pelican, Anhinga, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Red-breasted Merganser, Bald Eagle, Bonaparte’s Gull, Forster’s Tern, White-breasted Nuthatch, Sedge Wren, and LeConte’s Sparrow.



Cross Lake



Richard Fleming Park

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 9

Clyde Fant Parkway

by *James L. Ingold*

How to get there: From C. Bickham Dickson Park (Hot Spot No. 10) travel east on 70th St. (LA 511) and follow the signs to Clyde Fant Parkway at the Jimmie Davis Bridge. From I-20 or downtown Shreveport, go north on Spring St. and then make a right turn onto any of the following streets: Lake, Crockett, or Caddo. Go one block to Clyde Fant Parkway and turn right. Clyde Fant Parkway runs along the Red River from downtown Shreveport to the Jimmie Davis Bridge at 70th Street.

While driving the parkway in spring and summer, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** can be seen on fences and on street signs; during the winter months **Eastern Meadowlark**, **American Kestrel**, and **Red-tailed Hawk** are quite common in the tall trees and along fences.

Park at the Charles and Marie Hamel Memorial Park (Stop 2) near the Jimmie Davis Bridge (Stop 1). Do not cross the fence along the river! The bank is falling into the river at a furious pace! In the park, look for **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, April to October, and **American Pipit** in winter. All Louisiana swallow species have been seen here. **Cliff Swallow** were discovered nesting under the Jimmie Davis bridge in the summer of 1994 and **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** nests along the river bank. At the pond, in winter, look for **Spotted Sandpiper** and **Solitary Sandpiper** as well as **Great Egret**. The cottonwoods are home for **Baltimore Oriole** and **Orchard Oriole** and **Warbling Vireo**. **Lark Sparrow** has been observed in May. Looking out to the river you may spot any of the herons and egrets as well as **Ring-billed Gull** and **Belted Kingfisher**. The construction of the lock and dam system along the Red River south of Shreveport has resulted in a series of temporary sandbars. **Least Tern** and **Black Tern** were seen in this area in the summer of 1994 and **Least Tern** nested on sandbars north and south of this location in 1996 and 1997. **Least Tern** has been found nesting on the Red River by Hubert Hervey every year since 1997. Changing river patterns have also increased use of the river by wintering and migratory ducks. Migratory songbirds are always a possibility in the thick vegetation along the river. **Wood Stork** may be seen flying overhead during September.

A walking/biking path leaves the park on the north end towards downtown. Walk the path and look for migratory birds along the river. You will soon come to Preston Street which has a fenced hayfield (Stop 3). In May, look for **Dickcissel** and **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**. In winter this is the best spot for large numbers of meadowlarks; look and listen for an occasional **Western Meadowlark**. Winter also finds at least one wintering **American Kestrel** and **Red-tailed Hawk** in this area. In summer, walk under the bridge over Preston Street to see many **Barn Swallow** and **Cliff Swallow** nests. A side trip west on Preston brings you to an area of wetlands. This area is under birded and may produce some wonderful surprises.

Continue your walk north birding the area along the river where, in the proper season, you may see **Blue Grosbeak**, **Vesper Sparrow**, and **Loggerhead Shrike**, as well as many migrants.

Stoner Avenue forms the southern boundary of Veterans Park, which has wintering **Red-tailed Hawk**. **Barn Swallow** and **Cliff Swallow** nest under the Stoner Avenue Bridge in large numbers.

A boat ramp (Stop 4) at the east end of Stoner Avenue was completed in the summer of 1996. This area is wooded and has produced some good birds including **Green Heron**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Swainson's Thrush**, **Gray Catbird**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Tennessee Warbler**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Magnolia Warbler**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Bay-breasted Warbler**, **Wilson's Warbler**, **Canada Warbler**, **Ovenbird**, **American Redstart**, **Northern Waterthrush**, and **Lincoln's Sparrow**.

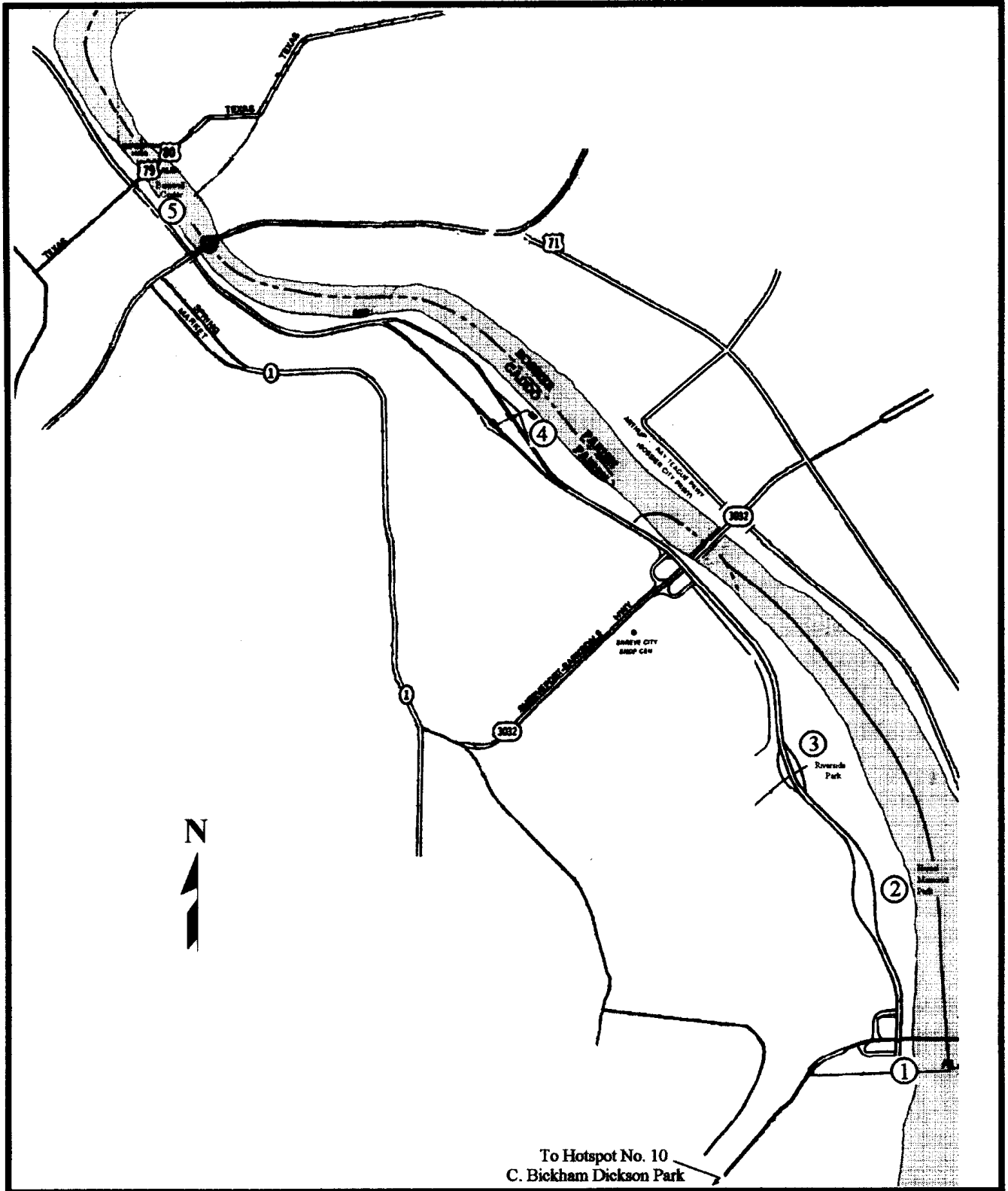
This hot spot ends at the Barnwell Center (Stop 5) in downtown Shreveport. In summer look for multitudes of **Purple Martin** nesting in the martin houses. Check the gardens at the center for migrants. September through May, be on the look out for migrating **Peregrine Falcon**.

Other birds seen in this area include **Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Mourning Dove, Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Blackpoll Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Summer Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak**. There are 210 species from the Clyde Fant Parkway area in the BSG database.

Specialties

Wood Stork, Least Tern, Spotted Sandpiper, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Warbling Vireo, Dickcissel, and Eastern Meadowlark.

Notes



Clyde Fant Parkway

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 10

Red River Education and Research Park (C. Bickham Dickson Park)

by *Jeff F. Trahan*

How to get there: In southeastern Shreveport the Red River Education and Research Park, also known as C. Bickham Dickson Park, is located near the intersection of the Bert Kouns Industrial Loop (LA 3132) and East 70th St. (LA 511). If you are traveling on I-49, take exit 199 and the Bert Kouns Industrial Loop east to the entrance of the park.

The Red River Education and Research Park is the largest park in the city of Shreveport. Its 585 acres consist of a lowland area adjacent to the Red River, a 200-acre, relatively shallow oxbow lake, a number of shallow ponds, open fields, and wooded areas. Bottomland hardwoods consist mainly of cottonwood, willow, hackberry, and sycamore trees. The park is used primarily for picnicking, fishing, horseback riding, and hiking. It is open from 7:30 a.m. to dusk. The park is managed by LSU in Shreveport.

After entering the park, take the first right turn to the observation pier. The pier is a good place to get a view of a large portion of the lake. In winter, **Double-crested Cormorant**, **Bonaparte's Gull**, **Ring-billed Gull**, and **Forster's Tern** are common. In the summer, **Baltimore Oriole** nests in the cottonwoods near the pier. Check the picnic and recreational areas along the road between the entrance and the barn and along the road on Sunflower Point for yellowlegs, **Wilson's Snipe** and **American Pipit**. In the spring, however, shorebirds can be seen from the loop drive on Sunflower Point. Birding along the shores of the lake and in the wooded areas adjacent to the roads is sometimes very good. **Vermilion Flycatcher** and **Western Kingbird** have been seen along the road. Do not drive off of the paved roads.

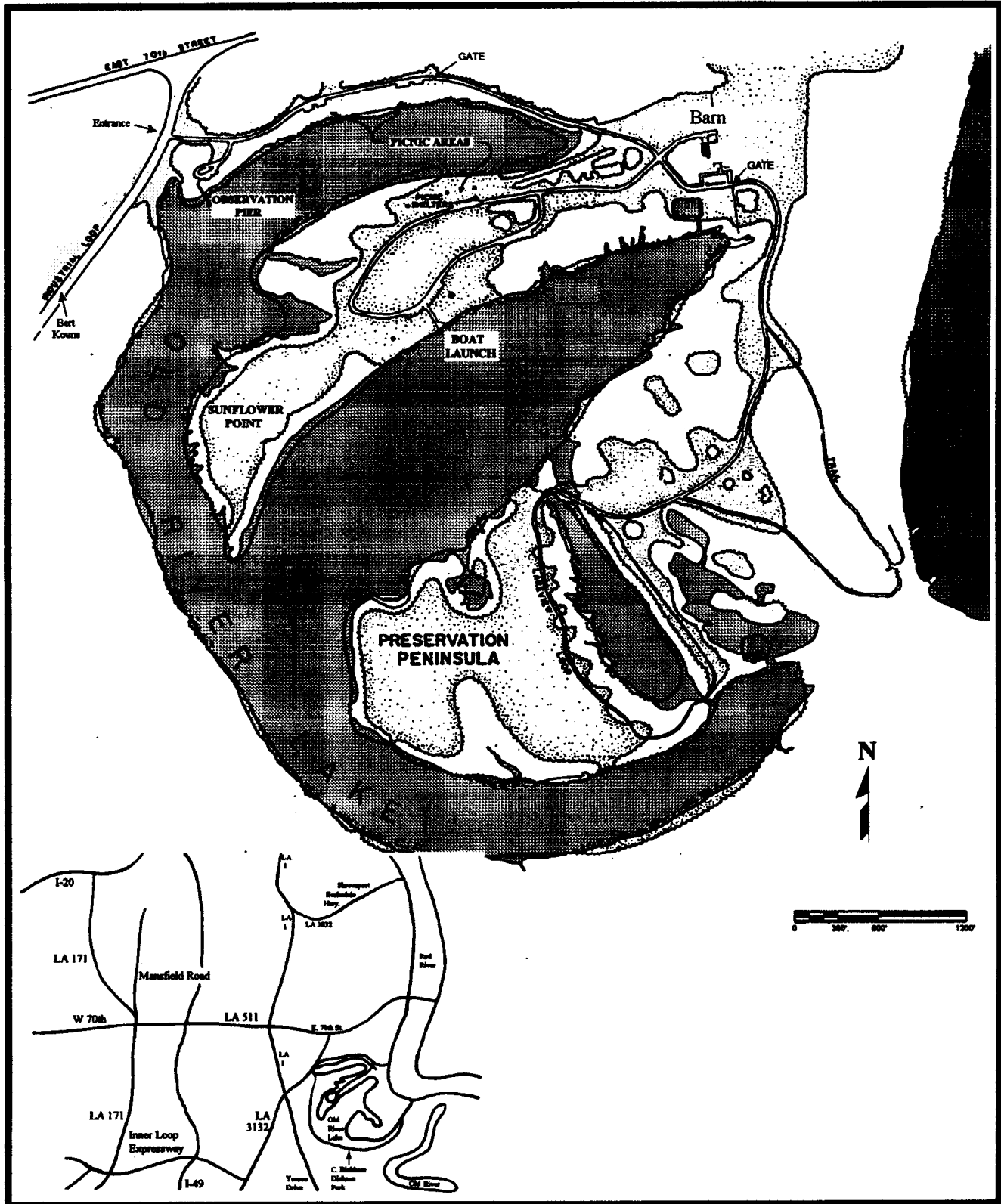
The best birding is in the back of the park. This area can be accessed on foot after parking at the barn. Beyond the gate, which blocks the road at the barn, you can walk miles of trails and dirt roads. Here you have access to hardwood bottomlands, open fields, ponds, and the Red River.

A total of 247 species of birds have been seen at the park according to the Bird Study Group records. The park is a very good place to see egrets and herons, including **Snowy Egret**, **Green Heron**, **Little Blue Heron**, **Great Blue Heron**, and **Great Egret**. The most often reported species in the park is **Great Egret**. Twenty-seven species of warblers have been reported! The most often reported species of warbler is the **Yellow-rumped Warbler** followed by **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Tennessee Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, and **Yellow Warbler**. **Prothonotary Warbler** nests in the park and can often be found during the breeding season along the edge of the water on the southeastern tip of Preservation Peninsula. **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Hairy Woodpecker**, and **Red-bellied Woodpecker** are often reported and the observant visitor can expect to see **Pileated Woodpecker**.

Note that the park is occasionally closed because of flooding caused by high water levels in the Red River.

Specialties

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Eastern Bluebird**, **American Robin**, **Loggerhead Shrike**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, many other warblers, and **Baltimore Oriole**.



Red River Education and Research Park (C. Bickham Dickson Park), trail system (above) and directional map (lower left)

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 11

Red River Research Station

by *Bill Wood*

NOTE: Although the Red River Research Station (RRRS) is state property, permission is required each time you go there to bird and you **MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A STATION EMPLOYEE**. The Director has been kind enough to allow birders use of the station and will continue to do so as long as birders comply with the following guidelines: 1) Call the station at 318-741-7430 to receive permission before your planned visit (no one is in the Red River Research Station offices on weekends and holidays). 2) Do not drive on the roads that surround the fields. Park in front of the offices and walk the roads. 3) **DO NOT WALK INTO THE FIELDS**. 4) Do not drive on the roads to the personnel living quarters or disturb the station personnel.

How to get there: On U.S. 71, drive south 3.4 miles from the intersection of U.S. 71 and LA 511 (Jimmie Davis bridge) in Bossier City. Turn right just past the station sign and before the barn. Park in the parking lot in front of the office.

The habitats at this location vary, but are mostly open fields. There are several long fence rows and a small section of riparian habitat. The RRRS is on the banks of the Red River, a migrational route for ducks and shorebirds. You may want to make a loop by walking the outside roads that divide the fields. You can spend as little as two hours or as much as half a day. Most records at this location come during the winter months. There are 62 species from the Research Station in the BSG database.

Check the pecan grove and the bushes around the office for woodpeckers, warblers, and finches. Up to eight species of sparrows may be found along the fence rows. The trees around the bayou on the western side of the property often yield woodpeckers, flycatchers, warblers, **Gray Catbird**, egrets, herons, and hawks. In short, grassy areas look for meadowlarks and **Mourning Dove**. This is a good place to see migrating hawks and shorebirds in spring and fall.

WINTER – In the open fields look for **Horned Lark**, **American Pipit**, **Lark Sparrow**, **Lapland Longspur**, and meadowlarks. **Eastern Meadowlark** is most common; however, **Western Meadowlark** has been seen as well, so be familiar with both songs and calls. You may also find large flocks of **Common Grackle**, **Brown-headed Cowbird**, and possibly **Brewer's Blackbird**. Winter sparrows can be observed along the fence rows. Look for **Savannah Sparrow**, **Song Sparrow**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, **Vesper Sparrow**, **Fox Sparrow**, **White-throated Sparrow**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, **Swamp Sparrow**, and an occasional **Harris's Sparrow**. Along the small bayou on the western edge of the station, look for **Eastern Phoebe**, **Red-tailed Hawk**, **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, **Pied-billed Grebe**, and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**. **Double-crested Cormorant** may be seen in good numbers as they fly to and from the river.

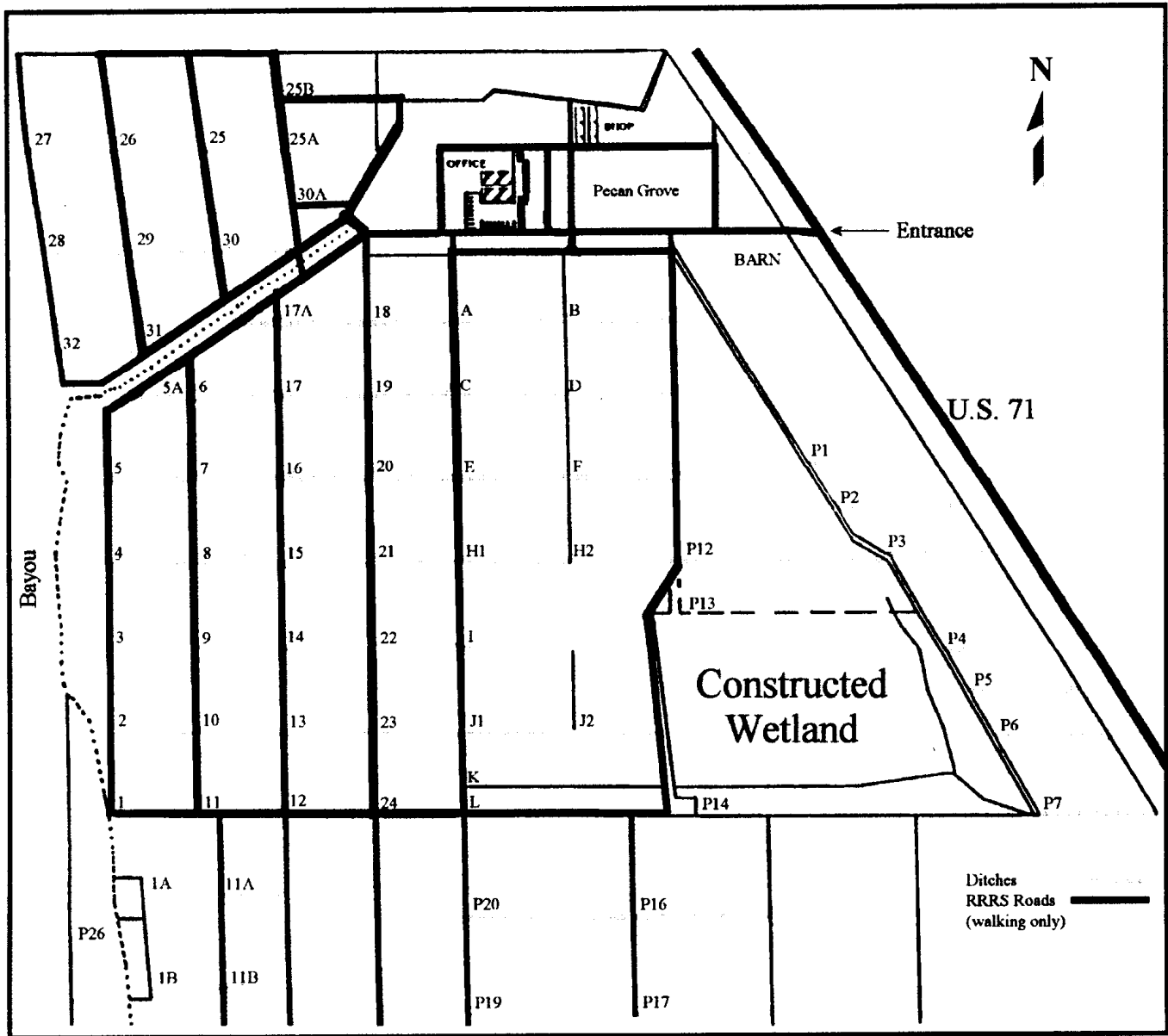
SPRING – Several late winter species may still be found in early spring. You may hear **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** and several species of sparrows singing. Scan the fields for migrating shorebirds such as **Western Sandpiper**, **Least Sandpiper**, **White-rumped Sandpiper**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, and **Solitary Sandpiper**, especially after rains. Also look for migrating hawks, especially **Broad-winged Hawk**. The fence rows may yield **Indigo Bunting**, **Painted Bunting**, **Blue Grosbeak**, and **Orchard Oriole**. Migrating warblers such as **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Nashville Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, as well as **Yellow-breasted Chat**, can be located in the trees along the bayou.

SUMMER – Few records are available during the summer months. Look for **Lark Sparrow** which may nest and flocks of **Red-winged Blackbird** and **Common Grackle** in the open fields. Along the fence rows you may find **Blue Grosbeak** and **Indigo Bunting**. **Baltimore Oriole**, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, and **Wood Duck** are species that may be discovered along the bayou. During late summer there is an abundance of immature egrets and herons.

FALL - Look for migrating shorebirds and ducks. Many of these species use the Red River as a migration route. Watch for flycatchers, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Gray Catbird, and migrating warblers along the small bayou.

Specialties

Fish Crow, Horned Lark, American Pipit, Lark Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, and Western Meadowlark.



Red River Research Station

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 12

Loggy Bayou Wildlife Management Area

by *A. Bradley McPherson* and *James L. Ingold*

How to get there: The Loggy Bayou Wildlife Management Area is located in the southern end of Bossier Parish, east of U.S. 71. It is recommended that you begin birding along Poole Road, which intersects U.S. 71 about 16.0 miles south of the junction of U.S. 71 and LA 511 in Bossier City. The map shows 11 numbered Stops where birding is usually good. Stops 9 and 11 can be used for parking.

Birding is good along the parish roads leading into the wildlife management area as well as in the wildlife management area. You may begin birding just after you turn onto Poole Road from U.S. 71 (mile 0.0). Just north of the road, there is a small lake with dead trees (Stop 1, circled number on map). Check the lake for **Mallard**, **American Wigeon**, **Wood Duck**, and wading birds. Stop 2, on the south side of the road, is a tall grass field. After crossing the railroad tracks, continue east on Poole Road. This is Stop 3 along a small bayou at the edge of a large pasture. Search the trees in the distance for hawks and vultures. It is common to see large mixed flocks of vultures in this area. Examine the fields for meadowlarks, sparrows, grackles, crows, cowbirds, **European Starling**, **Killdeer**, and longspurs.

Although other wrens are more common in this area, there are several locations along the road where **Bewick's Wren** has been spotted. After crossing the railroad tracks on Poole Road, pass a barn and some old buildings on the right (mile 1.2 from U.S. 71). Search the forest along the stream to the left (Stop 3) for about a quarter mile. There is an old barn to the left where **Bewick's Wren** has often been spotted (**Bewick's Wren** is also often spotted at the house and barn just before crossing Red Chute Bayou into the wildlife management area near Stop 9). Just after a bend in the road to the southeast are open water, houses, and a cypress-lined bayou and pastures (Stop 4). Stop 5 (mile 2.1) is a road junction with bayou and pasture habitat; go left to Stop 6 (large bayou and end of public access at bridge; mile 2.9) or go right to Stops 7-11 and the wildlife management area.

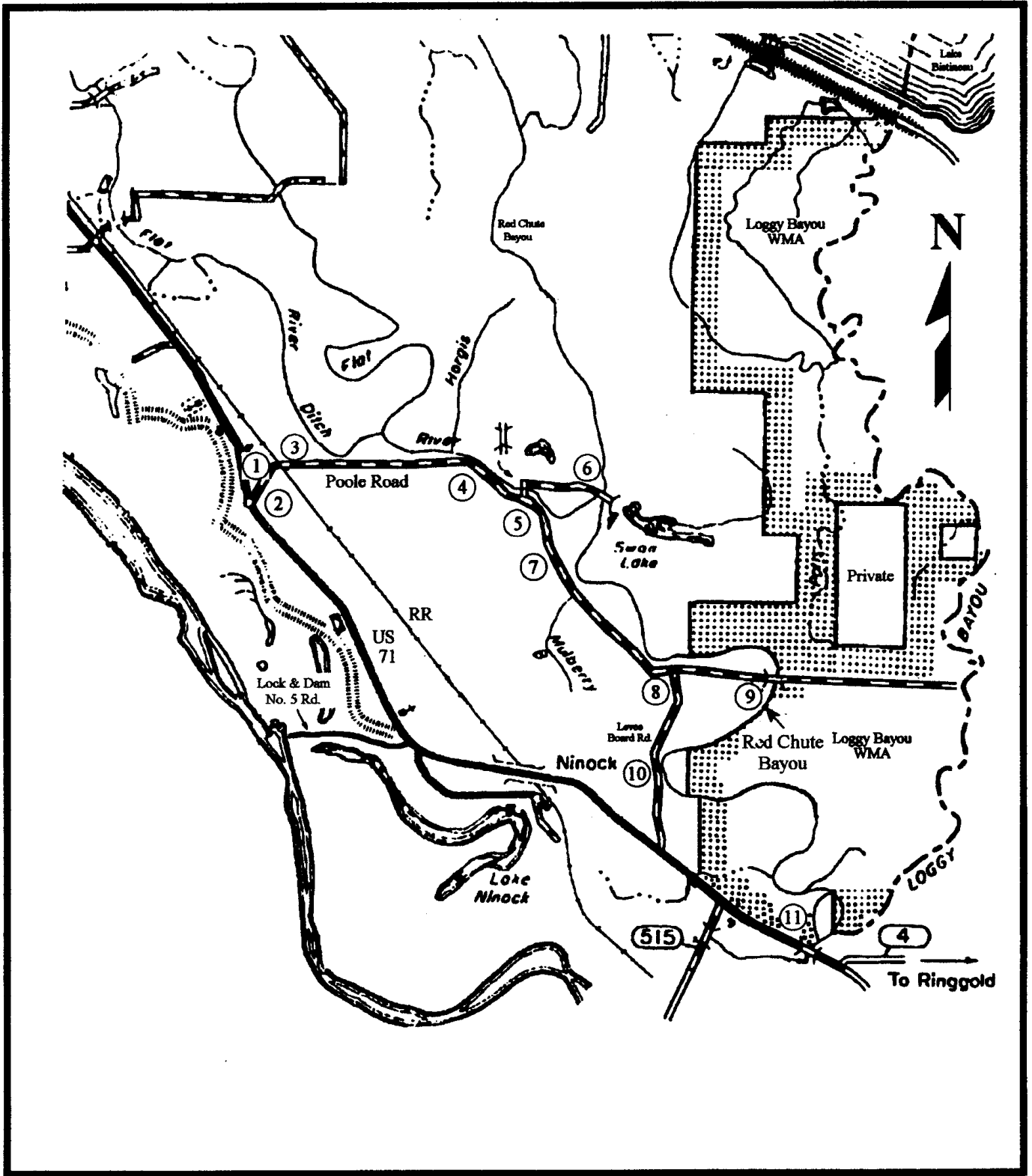
On the right fork from Stop 5 a large hayfield and pasture (Stop 7) is on the right before crossing Mulberry Bayou (mile 2.0). The next road junction is Stop 8 (mile 3.8), a large sapling thicket. The left fork goes into part of the WMA (Stop 9; mile 4.2). Just across the bridge over Red Chute Bayou you will see a kiosk. You can obtain a map of the wildlife management area at the entrance. Continue on the main road (straight ahead) 1.3 miles to a parking area at Loggy Bayou (mile 5.6, good birding potential). ATV trails provide excellent walking and birding access to both the north and south along the bayou. This is an excellent avenue for birds during migration.

The right fork off of Poole Road, near Stop 8, is Levee Board Road and goes back to U.S. 71 and crosses a small bayou (Stop 10; mile 4.4) that feeds into Loggy Bayou. Stop 11 is a mowed parking area for the Loggy Bayou WMA; it is 0.25 miles south of the Levee Board Rd. on U.S. 71 (not well marked).

The predominant birds in Loggy Bayou WMA are those species typical to northern Louisiana second-growth forests. These include towhees, woodpeckers, kinglets, wading birds, robins, and sparrows. You may also hear or see **Wild Turkey**. The most likely species of owls are **Great Horned Owl**, **Barred Owl**, and **Eastern Screech-Owl**. In spring, migrating warblers greatly enhance the birding experience. In April, 1976, a pair of **White-tailed Kite** attempted to nest in the wildlife management area. There are 116 species from the Loggy Bayou WMA in the BSG database.

Specialties

Mississippi Kite, Wild Turkey, Great Horned Owl, Bewick's Wren, Gray Catbird, White-crowned Sparrow, and Harris's Sparrow.



Loggy Bayou Wildlife Management Area

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 13

Eddie D. Jones Park

by *Larry R. Raymond*

How to get there: From the I-49 and I-20 intersection, take I-49 south (Exit 17B). Merge right onto Inner Loop LA 3132 west. Travel 2.2 miles. Take the US 171/Mansfield Road exit, Exit 5. Travel 0.2 miles. Turn right onto US 171 south. Travel 2.0 miles. Turn right onto LA 525. Travel 9.9 miles. Turn left onto LA 169. Travel 1.1 miles. Turn left onto LA 789. Travel 2.0 miles. Turn right at Mike Clark Road (next to Macedonia Baptist Church). Follow Mike Clark Road to the visitor center next to the silo.

You can also take I-20 west out of Shreveport and turn south on Industrial Loop. Turn right onto Woolworth Road and continue until the intersection with LA 525 (Colquitt Road). Turn right and travel to LA 169. Turn left at LA 169 and travel 1.1 miles to LA 789. Turn left on LA 789 and travel 2.0 miles to Mike Clark Road. Turn right on Mike Clark Road (next to Macedonia Baptist Church) and follow the road to the visitor center next to the silo.

The park is open to the public free of charge 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. The park is closed on Monday, Tuesday, and holidays. Call the parks department main office (318-929-2806) for more information.

Eddie D. Jones Park opened in March 2003. The park is managed as an adventure park, with over 10 miles of challenging mountain biking trails, more than five miles of horseback riding trails, and a 1½-mile hiking trail. A park ranger is on duty during open hours to help orient visitors and provide assistance. Restrooms and a small visitor center are maintained by the parks department. Visitors are advised to come prepared for a wilderness type experience. Proper clothing, insect repellent, and plenty of fluids to drink are recommended.

In addition to the trails maintained by the Parish of Caddo Parks and Recreation Department, the park is the site of Chimp Haven, a 200-acre chimpanzee sanctuary that is being developed by the non-profit group known as Chimp Haven, Inc., and an 82-acre Veterans Cemetery that will be operated by the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs.

After entering the park on Mike Clark Road, look for **Eastern Bluebird** near the trail of bluebird houses on the south side of the road. This is also a good place to flush large flocks of **Chipping Sparrow** and to spot soaring vultures and hawks. Follow the signs and park in the designated area near the Visitor Center and silo. Search the open areas around the Visitor Center for **Chipping Sparrow**, **Eastern Bluebird**, **Eastern Phoebe**, and others. **Eastern Phoebe** has nested in the equipment barn near the Visitor Center. **Rock Pigeon** is usually near the silo. Areas of heavy second-growth at the edge of the surrounding woods should be searched for sparrows, wrens, and warblers, such as **Common Yellowthroat** and **Yellow-breasted Chat**, during appropriate times of the year.

The miles of trails through the forested areas of the park offer unlimited opportunities for woodland birding. All of the expected common resident woodland birds can be found in the park. **Northern Parula**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, **Pine Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Kentucky Warbler**, **Hooded Warbler**, **Yellow-breasted Chat**, and other summer residents have been recorded in the park. Increased birding effort may produce other breeding birds such as **Swainson's Warbler**. Both **Wild Turkey** and **Northern Bobwhite** occur in the park and can occasionally be seen or heard.

Two large tributaries of Cypress Bayou that traverse the park have extensive stands of giant cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) that need to be extensively birded and explored. **Hooded Warbler** and **Kentucky Warbler** probably nest here and this may be a good area in which to look for **Swainson's Warbler**.

From the Visitor Center, birders can take the service road or hiking trail in a southeasterly direction to a couple of small lakes just below a 75-acre landfill that is no longer in use. The lakes have produced **Great Blue Heron**,

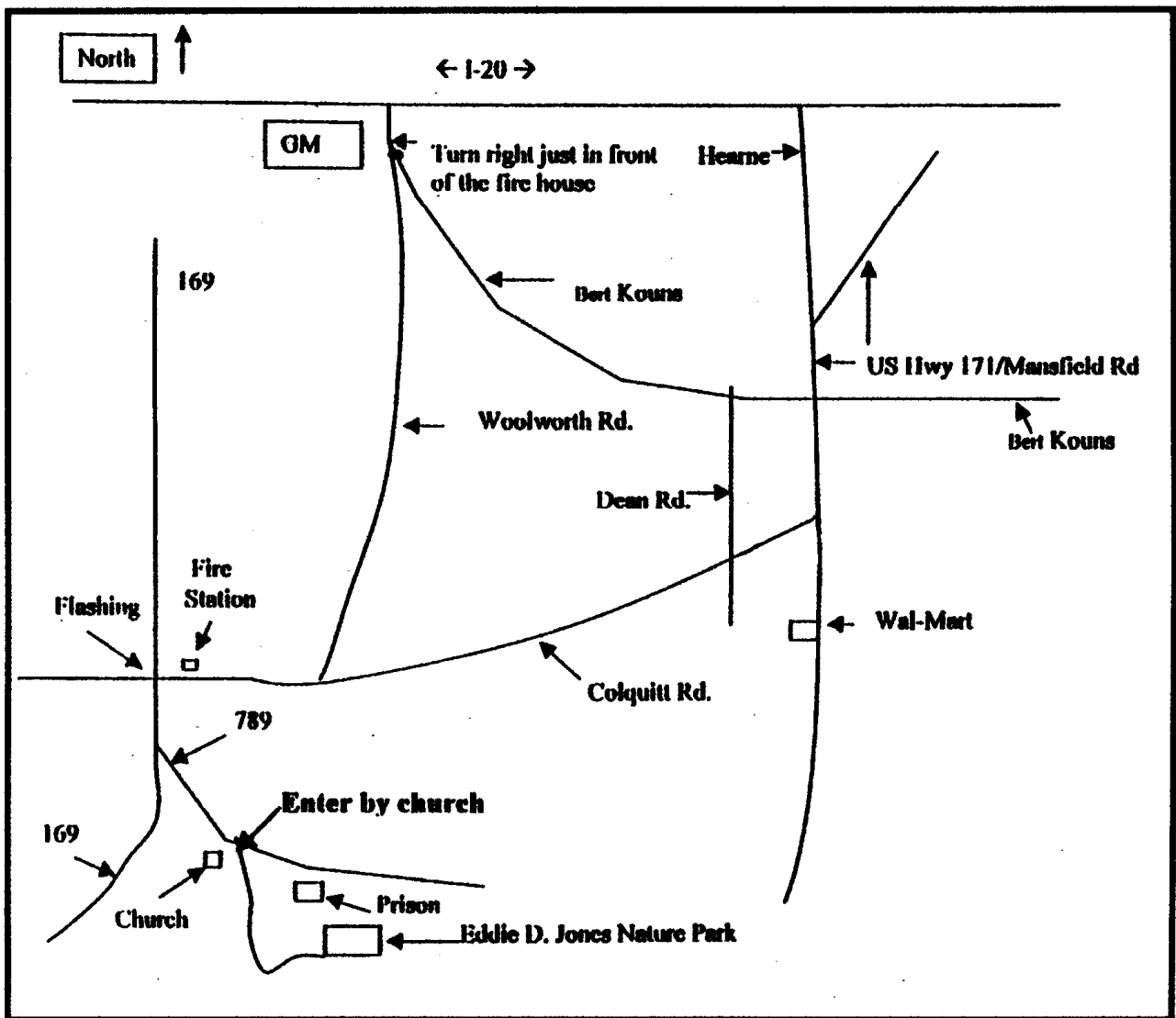
Great Egret, Little Blue Heron, Pied-billed Grebe, Wood Duck, and Green-winged Teal. The list of birds should continue to increase with additional birding effort. The cattails and other vegetation around the lakes have produced both Sedge Wren and Marsh Wren. Red-winged Blackbird nests around the lakes.

Proceed uphill to the old landfill for a variety of grassland species. Sedge Wren and LeConte's Sparrow can be found on the landfill and Vesper Sparrow has been seen here in the past. Blue Grosbeak nests around the landfill in the summer and several species of hawks and an Osprey have been recorded soaring over the landfill and lakes.

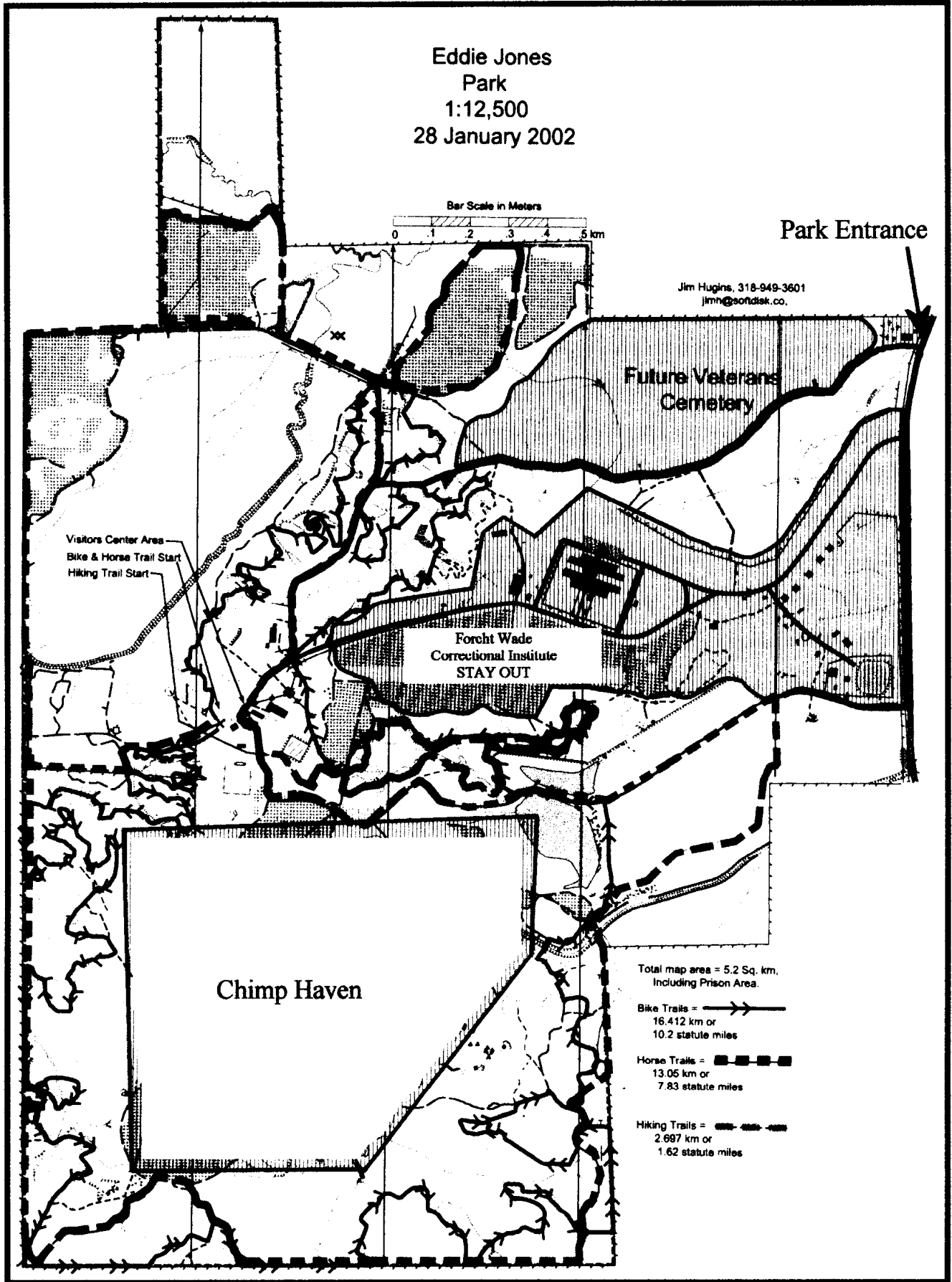
With increased birding effort, Eddie Jones Park should become one of the better publicly accessible birding areas in southwestern Caddo Parish. There are presently 115 species from Eddie D. Jones Park in the BSG database.

Specialties

Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Hairy Woodpecker, Sedge Wren, Marsh Wren, Louisiana Waterthrush, LeConte's Sparrow, and Blue Grosbeak.



Directions to Eddie D. Jones Nature Park



Eddie Jones Park

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 14

Bishop Point Recreation Area

by *Nancy Menasco and Paul Dickson*

Bishop Point Recreation Area is located at Lock and Dam No. 5 and includes a boat ramp, a pavilion with picnic tables, and barbecue grills. The gravel road to the point runs along the river for 1.7 miles from the lock. This road is a startlingly diverse and rich birding route. The elevated road gives marvelous scoping opportunities and easy foot access to sandy soil grassland, cattail marshes, beaver ponds, a mudflat-style pond, riverbank woods of various ages, the open river, and the lake-like lower area of Pool No. 5 of the Red River Lock and Dam system. Just across from the boat ramp is a predator-free island covered in live oak. This used to be a favorite spot accessible only by boat or a long walk and largely devoid of people. Now it is about as easy to bird this area from the car as any area in our region. At least 211 species of birds have been reported by Bird Study Group members in the years since the recreation area opened in 2001. Put this site on your list of places to bird, especially during spring migration.

How to get there: Go south on LA 1 approximately 18 miles south of LSU in Shreveport. Turn left (east) at the sign to Lock and Dam No. 5 and Bishop Point Boat Launch and Recreation Area. At this turn is Martins' Grocery, a small white building just barely marked enough to be recognizable as an open business. A very nice couple has operated this store for over 50 years. They still have their original cash register. They sell soft drinks, a few snacks, and will make burgers and sandwiches. They also sell some bait and fishing supplies. **Eurasian Collared-Dove** and **Western Kingbird** nested around this store in the summer of 2002.

Continue down the blacktop road almost to the lock control building where you will see a large sign directing you left 1.7 miles to Bishop Point Recreation Area via a gravel road. Turn left here; on the river's side of the road is a large area of grass. A short walk over to the river bank gives a good view of the river as it enters the spillway. We have found this to be a good place for waterfowl, **American White Pelican**, gulls, and terns, despite the boat traffic. To the left of the road is a dewberry thicket and weedy field that stretches for most of way. The mudflat and shallow pond in the curve on the left is very good for shorebirds and is easily scoped from the road. Farther along the road the long pond on the left is frequented by shorebirds and waders. **Black-necked Stilt**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Tricolored Heron**, **White Ibis**, and **Roseate Spoonbill** have all been seen here. **Red-tailed Hawk** and, in winter, **Northern Harrier** are regularly observed over the fields and **American Kestrel** hunts from the utility wires on both sides of the road.

As you continue down the road, you will find cattail sloughs on the left and a great beaver marsh and ponds on the right. The beaver lodge was huge and freshly constructed in 2002. The area to the left (west) is posted, but it's no matter as it is all visible from the road. Bird along both sides of the road. A late March BSG field trip discovered four species of wren, **Carolina Wren**, **Bewick's Wren**, **House Wren**, and **Winter Wren**, in one area on the western side of the road. **Marsh Wren** has also been found here. In winter, look for **Pied-billed Grebe** and ducks, such as **Gadwall**, **Ring-necked Duck**, **Wood Duck**, and **Mallard** in the ponds. In spring and fall, look for migrating warblers. **Red-headed Woodpecker** can be found year-round working the snags in the pond on the left by the short road leading to the gated levee.

Upon reaching the boat ramp area, you will find woods, shoreline edge habitats, and a great open water vista across the lower end of Pool No. 5. When you finish scoping the open water, there are walks in two directions. The shoreline to the west is marshy and choked with cattails. Posted private property lies a short distance from the parking area, but there are good views. To the east is the old levee. Here you can walk a long way as it all belongs to the Red River Waterway Commission. It is a convenient walking route along some tall woods to the main river channel.

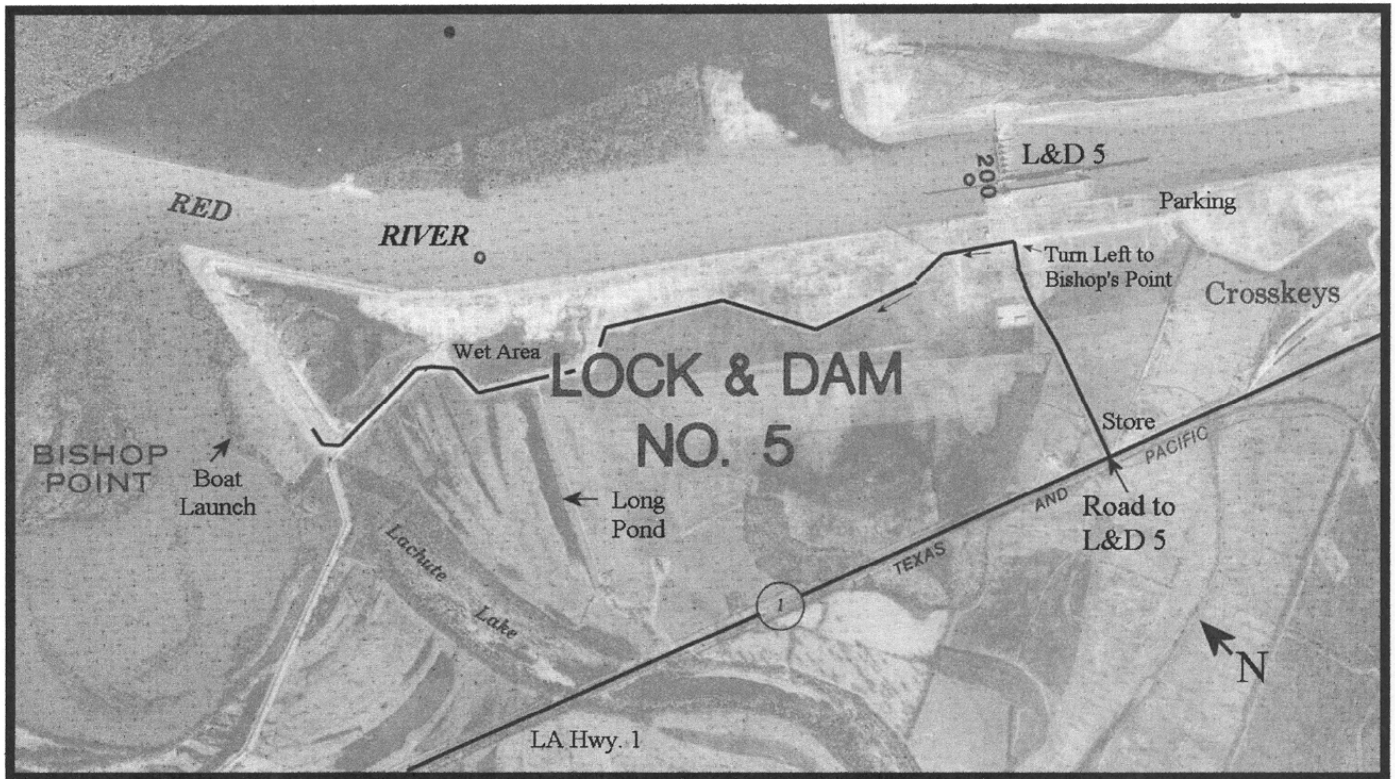
Belted Kingfisher is common in the boat launch area. In summer, or during migration, swallows, including **Purple Martin**, **Tree Swallow**, **Northern Rough-winged Swallow**, **Bank Swallow**, **Cliff Swallow**, and **Barn Swallow**, can be seen flying over the water or sitting on the wires all along the road. We have seen **Common Tern**

here in migration. In early evening, listen for **Eastern Screech-Owl** in the woods around you and look for **Great Horned Owl** in the tall trees along the shoreline, on the island across from the boat launch, or even on the utility wires.

The list of possible birds here equals our region's list; this is a very diverse area. In migration, just about everything is possible in one of the various habitats at Bishop Point. The areas are not extensive; this is a small, roadside style birding spot, but in migration the habitats are sufficient and the vistas are wide. There is no end to the potential wetland bird list here. In summer and winter, expect river bottom birds. Perhaps the greatest opportunity, though, is the view of the sky over the Red River on migration days. There is no better spot on the river to view migrants flying upstream or downstream and no better place in northwestern Louisiana to view flying migrants than the Red River.

Specialties

Waders, shorebirds, **Black-necked Stilt**, **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, **Eastern Screech-Owl**, **Great Horned Owl**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, and **Western Kingbird**.



Bishop Point and Lock and Dam No. 5

Notes

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 15

Yearwood Road Area

by *Hubert Hervey*

How to get there: Go south of Shreveport on LA 1 (Youree Drive). Yearwood Road joins LA 1 about 15 miles south of LSU in Shreveport and 2.5 miles south of Caspiana.

The Yearwood Road area is agricultural, with crops of cotton, soybeans, grain sorghum, corn, and winter wheat. Cattle pastures, hay meadows, set-aside areas, abandoned fields, and bayous all contribute to a rich environment for birds. With the exception of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries property (Bayou Pierre WMA, 1,337 acres) at the western end of the area, all this land is privately owned. Birders have a good relationship with landowners. Please respect the farmers' rights and help us keep the area open for all birders to enjoy. Yearwood Road provides excellent winter birding, much of which can be done from your vehicle. The road forms a 26-mile loop drive; 20 miles on Yearwood Road and 6 miles on LA 1. Little walking is necessary unless you want to bird the Bayou Pierre Wildlife Management Area.

During migration many birds linger here. A partial list includes hawks, kites, **American Golden-Plover**, sandpipers, swallows, thrushes, **Gray Catbird**, vireos, warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, buntings, and **Bobolink**. Nesting species include **Red-shouldered Hawk**, **Mourning Dove**, **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, **Barn Owl**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Northern Flicker**, **Eastern Wood-Pewee**, **Eastern Kingbird**, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, **Horned Lark**, **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, **Loggerhead Shrike**, **White-eyed Vireo**, **Northern Parula**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Blue Grosbeak**, **Indigo Bunting**, **Painted Bunting**, **Dickcissel**, and **Lark Sparrow**.

In winter, notice the birds of prey; **Northern Harrier**, **Red-tailed Hawk**, **American Kestrel**, and **Loggerhead Shrike** abound. Several subspecies of the **Red-tailed Hawk** (*fuertesii*, *harlani*, *krideri*, and *calurus*) may be observed. **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, **Cooper's Hawk**, and **Merlin** are sometimes present.

It is possible to see thirteen species of sparrows in a day! Your list could include **Chipping Sparrow**, **Field Sparrow**, **Vesper Sparrow**, **Lark Sparrow**, **Savannah Sparrow**, **LeConte's Sparrow**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Song Sparrow**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, **Swamp Sparrow**, **White-throated Sparrow**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, and **Harris's Sparrow**. **Harris's Sparrow** is often seen with flocks of **White-crowned Sparrow**.

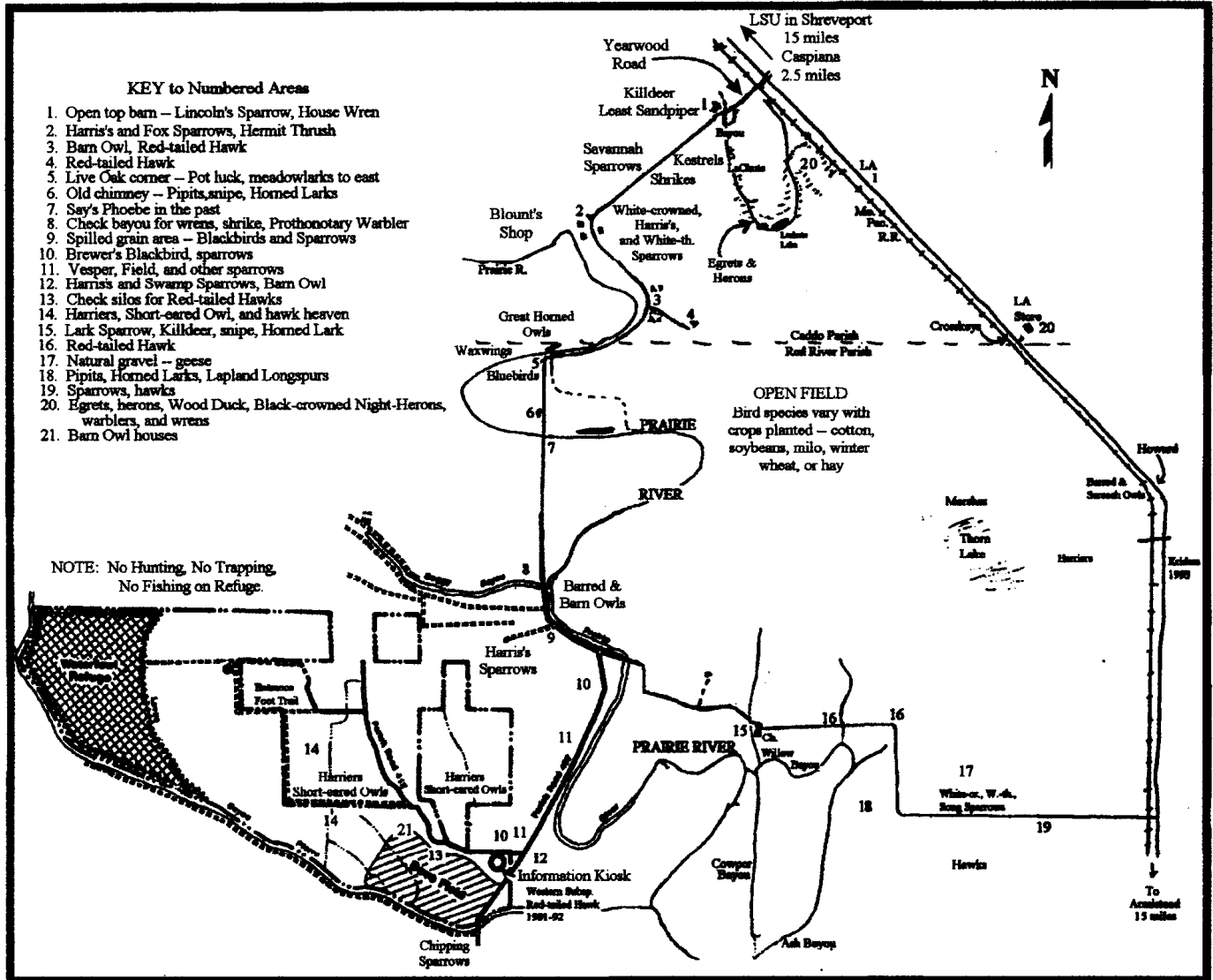
Wrens include **Carolina Wren**, **Bewick's Wren**, **House Wren**, and **Winter Wren**. Open country birds often seen include **Wilson's Snipe**, **Killdeer**, **Horned Lark**, and **American Pipit**. An occasional **Western Meadowlark** can be heard singing in flocks of **Eastern Meadowlarks**. **Brewer's Blackbird** is common in fields where cattle have been fed hay. You may have to scope through other "blackbirds" to find them. One recent spring a single male **Great-tailed Grackle** was noted displaying. A **Common Ground-Dove** has been seen in winter on the road to the WMA.

An attraction of the area is its owls. **Barn Owl** is common in abandoned buildings. Be sure to notice the two **Barn Owl** nest houses. **Short-eared Owl** can be found all winter in tall grass areas. You will need a spotlight. It is possible to see five species of owls (**Barn Owl**, **Short-eared Owl**, **Great Horned Owl**, **Barred Owl**, and **Eastern Screech-Owl**) and be back in Shreveport before 8 p.m.

The following map shows the entire area with numbered Stops at locations that have been productive in the past. The species list contains 205 species.

Specialties

Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk (many recognizable subspecies), Barn Owl, Short-eared Owl, Vesper Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Harris's Sparrow, and Brewer's Blackbird.



Yearwood Road area

Notes

BIRDING HOTSPOT No. 16

Red River Lock and Dam No. 4 (Red River Parish)

by *Jim Ingold*

How to get there: Take LA 1 south out of Shreveport. The entrance road to Lock and Dam No. 4 is 44.8 miles from the Youree Drive entrance of LSU. Alternatively, take I-49 south from Shreveport to Exit 155/LA 174 (Lake End/Ajax). Turn left and take LA 174 until it meets LA 1 (approximately 4.75 mi). Turn left on LA 1 and the entrance to Lock and Dam No. 4 is less than a half a mile on your right.

The first bird observations from this Hot Spot were by Hubert and Pat Hervey on September 13, 1997. Since then it has become a favorite birding area for local birders. The Bird Study Group database contains records for 186 species from this area. Since this spot has become available to us for birding, the various areas discussed below have gone through many changes, mainly due to ecological succession.

As you enter the area and pass over the railroad tracks, you come upon two ponds, one on each side of the road. Each pond has its own special birds. In the pond on your right, you will notice a line of shrubs that come into the pond from the direction of the railroad tracks. In the summer these shrubs hold a fairly large **Green Heron** rookery. Also in the summer look for **Common Moorhen** and **Pied-billed Grebe** with their babies in tow. Both the moorhens and the grebes can be seen at all times of the year. During 2003 this pond became surrounded with tall willows that make viewing the birds more difficult.

The pond on the left side of the road also may have **Common Moorhen** and **Pied-billed Grebe** as well as **Wood Duck** in the back among the shrubs that ring the pond. Look carefully in late summer and you might find a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** or a **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**. **Sora** has been seen and or heard among the water lilies in this pond. Both ponds in fall - spring may hold a variety of ducks including **Gadwall**, **Blue-winged Teal**, and **Lesser Scaup**. The weeds and shrubs surrounding the ponds can hold many different songbirds depending upon the time of year.

As you continue toward the lock and dam, you will come to a small, swampy area on the right just past the pond. Depending on the season, it often holds various herons and **Pied-billed Grebe**.

The next good birding area is about 0.3 miles ahead on top of a levee. As you are driving to it, there will be some open fields on both sides. This is a good place to see **Northern Harrier** or **American Kestrel** in winter and blackbirds and meadowlarks at most times of the year.

Once on the levee, you will see a pond on the left and a large wet area ahead on the right with dead trees. The pond once held a variety of diving ducks but, in recent years, it has started to fill in and has become choked with water plants. In the winter you can still see large numbers of **Gadwall** and **American Wigeon** as well as **Pied-billed Grebe** and **American Coot**. In spring and summer, this is a good area to observe a variety of waders. The tall, dead trees that line the rear of the pond are a good place to search for raptors, such as **Red-tailed Hawk**, mainly in winter and during migration.

Across the road from this pond is an area of dead trees that has also gone through a major change since the Lock and Dam was opened to the public. This pond was once thick with dead trees; however, most of them have either fallen down or they may have been removed. This is a good area to see **Wood Duck** and **Red-headed Woodpecker** during all seasons. The woodpeckers nest here as well as **Great Crested Flycatcher**. In winter, **Gadwall** uses it as a refuge and in summer you can find **Cattle Egret**, **Snowy Egret**, **Little Blue Heron**, and **Green Heron** hiding among the dead trees. In late June of 2001, a **Killdeer** nest was found, with four newly hatched young, along the road at this area.

As you leave the pond and continue east to the lock and dam, there are cow pastures on both sides of the road. In spring watch the fences for **Dickcissel**, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, and **Eastern Kingbird**. In the winter **American Pipit** and **Savannah Sparrow** are common in this area and are frequently found sitting on the posts or on the barbed wire. **Eastern Bluebird** is common here at all times. In the grass it is possible to see large numbers of **Cattle Egret** in summer and fall. This area allows you to see the river to your left, especially with a spotting scope. You are very likely to see, in season, **Anhinga**, **Double-crested Cormorant**, **American White Pelican**, **Great Egret**, and **Great Blue Heron**.

Eventually the pastures end at an area of shrubs, small trees, and large trees. Within this area on the left is a small inlet from the river. In spring and summer this area can sometimes hold a myriad of songbirds such as **Common Yellowthroat**. You might also see a variety of waders and, occasionally, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** nests in a large dead tree at the river's edge.

Continuing east to the lock and dam, the habitat just described gives way to the river bank and the river appears on your left. On the right is a narrow strip of cow pasture bounded in the back by tall scrub and trees. The best way to bird this area is by birding along the guardrail that parallels the road on the river side.

The river is really best for birding during winter and migration! Like every other part so far described, major changes have taken place since this area was opened to the public. As you approach the river, there is an area of cattails, trees, and open space. This area holds a variety of birds such as **Double-crested Cormorant**, **Mallard**, **American Coot**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Blue-winged Teal**, as well as the usual waders. In season, this is a good place to see an **Anhinga** sitting in the trees. The open river from here until the road enters a cut in a hill has been host to many species: **Canvasback**, **Greater Scaup**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Ring-necked Duck**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Double-crested Cormorant**, **American White Pelican**, **Great Egret**, **Great Blue Heron**, **Bonaparte's Gull**, **Ring-billed Gull**, **Sabine's Gull**, **Caspian Tern**, **Forster's Tern**, **Least Tern**, **Sooty Tern**, and **Black Tern**. During fall and spring migration, **Sora** can quite often be found by using recorded calls at patches of cattails along the riverbank.

On the south (right) side of the road is an inlet (mile 2.4) from the river that is best known for the shorebirds it attracts. The area itself is on private property and separated from the road by a fence. Birds seen there, mainly in late summer, include **Semipalmated Plover**, **Black-necked Stilt**, **American Avocet**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Willet**, **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, **Western Sandpiper**, **Least Sandpiper**, **White-rumped Sandpiper**, **Baird's Sandpiper**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Dunlin**, **Stilt Sandpiper**, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, **Long-billed Dowitcher**, **White Ibis**, **Tricolored Heron**, and **American White Pelican**, as well as the typical waders.

While standing on the road in the area of the open river various observers have seen **Osprey**, **Bald Eagle**, **Red-tailed Hawk**, **Broad-winged Hawk**, and **Mississippi Kite**, and on August 21, 1999, the author, along with Terry Davis, had the opportunity to watch a juvenile **Swallow-tailed Kite** catch and devour grasshoppers as we stood on the road just beyond the shorebird area discussed above. In winter, the road that bounds the open river attracts **Savannah Sparrow** and **American Pipit**.

As you drive to the parking lot of the lock and dam, the road ascends through a cut in the hill. In the summer this area holds **Dickcissel**. In winter, the typical winter sparrows might pop up from the grass and weeds.

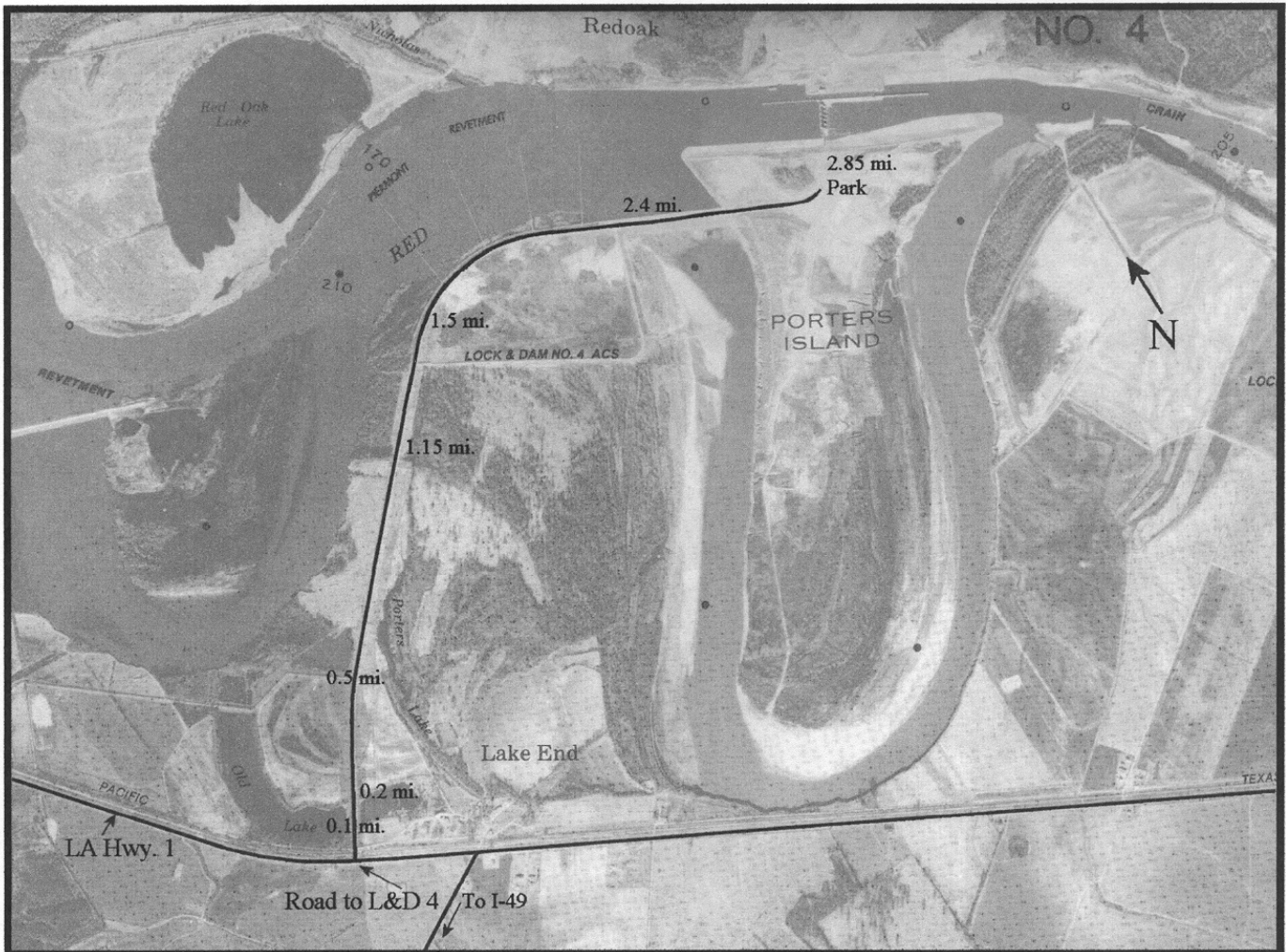
Once reaching the parking lot, there are various places to see birds. The grassy area that surrounds the parking lot is good for pipits in winter and spring. **Lark Sparrow** often sings from clumps of trees near the parking lot in summer. You might also see **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** there as well. To your right is a small fenced-in woodlot where a variety of birds may be seen.

Finally, if you walk to the edge of the hill and look toward the lock and dam, you can get a closer look at many of the birds seen from a distance earlier. In summer, **Barn Swallow** and **Cliff Swallow** nest on the lock and dam structures. In summer through late fall, most of the waders (**Snowy Egret**, **Little Blue Heron**, **Great Egret**, and **Great Blue Heron**) can be seen sitting on the concrete that sticks out from the dam on the downstream side as well

as along the river's edge or on other parts of the lock and dam. In late fall and winter, the two smaller waders are replaced by **Double-crested Cormorant** and **American White Pelican**. **Spotted Sandpiper** may also be seen on various areas of the lock and dam from late fall through late spring.

Specialties

American White Pelican, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Sora, Common Moorhen, Caspian Tern, Black Tern, Red-headed Woodpecker, American Pipit, and Lark Sparrow.



Lock and Dam No. 4

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Place the Hot Spots on your dashboard with the back cover showing to alert others that you are a harmless birder.

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