

Shreveport Society for Nature Study
BIRD STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER

Volume 26, Number 4
February 3, 2012

Next Meeting – February 14

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

Presented by Pat Stinson, Refuge Manager

FEBRUARY MEETING

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

Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

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

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

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

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

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



Sandhill Crane Field Trip

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

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

New Information about Area Birding Sites

By Hubert Hervey

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Remember me?



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

Calliope Hummingbird

A winter vagrant in Louisiana.

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

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

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

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

NWLA WINTER HUMMER WATCH

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

WILD BIRD CENTER EVENTS BEGINNER BIRD WALKS

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

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

NOTICE Regarding BSG Membership Dues

The payment schedule for the membership dues for the Bird Study Group has changed, effective immediately(1/6/2012).

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

Benefits of Membership in the Bird Study Group

1. You are a part of one of the most active birding groups in Louisiana.
2. Memberships support conservation efforts that affect birds in Louisiana.
3. Memberships support student research and study of bird biology.
4. Memberships provide for a small honorarium for out-of-town speakers.
5. Memberships support the widely acclaimed web site of the BSG (www.birdstudygroup.org).

6. Memberships support the refreshments for the BSG meetings.
7. Members participate in the Christmas Bird Counts, the North American Migration Count, the North American Hawk Watch, the Backyard Bird Count, and the Big Sit.
8. Memberships support the bird library at the Museum of Life Sciences
9. Members can easily participate in the online Bird Alert email List Server (to sign up email: birdalert@birdstudygroup.org).
10. The BSG Newsletters are online and access is not restricted.

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

VOLUNTEER NEEDED TO ENTER BIRD RECORDS

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

Any Suggestions for the BSG?

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



BSG Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons
BSG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice-president – Mac Hardy (3).....687-6738 (H), 797-5338(W)
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Numbers in parentheses are years remaining of a 3-year term.

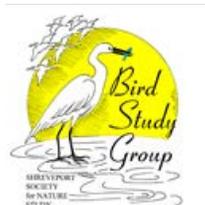
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Beginning Birders – Dennis Forshee.....797-2473 (W)
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Direct inquires to the Editor, Amanda Lewis, at (318) 797-5215.



Join/Renew the BSG!

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

Name(s) _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (Home) _____ Work _____

Yes, please add me to the email Bird Alert Leave me out of the BSG member directory
Membership Levels: Regular (\$15.⁰⁰) Sustaining (\$35.⁰⁰) Family, *One Newsletter/ One Address* (\$20.⁰⁰)
Names of Family Members:

Donations: Library Refuges Refreshments General

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



BIRD STUDY GROUP PHONE NUMBERS AND MORE

Bird Study Group meets the second Tuesday of each month, September through June, 6:00 p.m. To be placed on the list to send & receive emails, email birdalert@birdstudygroup.org.
Contact the BSG by email: lhardy@lsus.edu or phone (318) 797-5338.
Visit us on the web at <http://www.birdstudygroup.org>