

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

Volume 26, Number 6  
May 7, 2012

*Next Meeting – May 8<sup>th</sup>*

**"The Future of the BSG"**

Discussion led by Larry Raymond

**MAY MEETING**

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

**Where:** LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium

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

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

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

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**Field Trips**

**North American Migratory Bird Count, NAMC**

*Saturday, May 12, 2012*

Contact: Jim Ingold, 797-5236

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

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**International Migratory Bird Day Celebration**

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

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

Sponsored by the Friends of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge

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

Directions to the Headquarters Unit & Visitor Center:

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

## Schedule of Activities:

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

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

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

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

[www.friendsofredriver.org](http://www.friendsofredriver.org) or Contact Nancy Menasco at [nmenasco@friendsofredriver.org](mailto:nmenasco@friendsofredriver.org) or 868-3255.

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### **RRNWR Sunday Bird Walks with Bill Wood**

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

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

Sponsored by the Friends of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge

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

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

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

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### **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 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Destinations vary according to local sightings and may include local parks, country roads or a private backyard. Loaner binoculars are available. Be sure to bring a field guide.

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

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## **REPORT ON THE LEAST TERN CONFERENCE**

By Hubert Hervey

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

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

Several new terms are now part of my vocabulary:

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

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

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

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

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## CHANGED AND IMPROVED BIRDING AREAS

By Hubert Hervey

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

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

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

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

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## NOTICE Regarding BSG Membership Dues

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

### Benefits of Membership in the Bird Study Group

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

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## 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.

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### The BSG Listserve (Bird Alert) is coming.

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



**BSG Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons**

**BSG BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**OFFICERS**

*President – Larry Raymond*(1)..... 929-3117 (H), 929-2806 (W)  
*Vice-president – Mac Hardy* (3).....687-6738 (H), 797-5338(W)  
*Secretary – Silviera Hunt* (1).....220-0098 (H), 676-7156(W)  
*Treasurer – Jim Ingold*(1).....742-5067 (H), 797-5236 (W)

**MEMBERS AT LARGE**

*Amanda Lewis* (1) .....861-5294 (H), 797-5215 (W)  
*Bill Hall* (2).....797-1727 (H)  
*Clyde Massey* (1).....868-9537(H), 424-4167(W)  
*Cran Lucas* (3).....797-1524 (H), 797-5086(W)  
*Dennis Forshee* (3).....797-2473(W)  
*Hubert Hervey* (2).....925-9249(H)  
*Jerry Bertrand* (3).....868-3255 (H/W)  
*John Dillon* (2).....243-2284 (H)  
*Nancy Menasco* (2).....868-3255 (H/W)  
*Roy Henderson*(3).....861-7449(H)  
*Terry Davis* (2).....934-2133(H/W)

*Numbers in parentheses are years remaining of a 3-year term.*

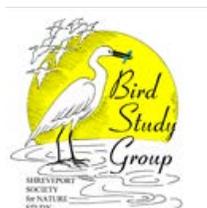
**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

*Beginning Birders – Dennis Forshee*.....797-2473 (W)  
*Bird Alert Service – Rosemary Seidler*..... 424-2972 (H)  
*Bird Hot Spot – Larry Raymond*.....929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)  
*Bird Records – Mac Hardy*.....687-6738 (H) 797-5338 (W)  
*Field Trip Coordinator –open*  
*Fund Raising – Jerry Bertrand*.....868-3255 (H/W)  
*Hospitality – Amanda Lewis* ..... 861-5294 (H) 797-5215 (W)  
*Library – Silviera Hunt*.....220-0098 (H), 676-5457 (W)  
*Membership Secretary – Mac Hardy*.....687-6738 (H), 797-5338 (W)  
*Newsletter Editor – Amanda Lewis* ..... 861-5294 (H) 797-5215 (W)  
*Programs – Larry Raymond*.....929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)  
*Publicity – Rachel Demascal*.....929-2806 (W)  
*Website – Jerry Bertrand*.....868-3255 (H/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.<sup>00</sup>)  Sustaining (\$35.<sup>00</sup>)  Family, *One Newsletter/ One Address* (\$20.<sup>00</sup>)

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](mailto:birdalert@birdstudygroup.org).

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

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