

The **BARRED OWL**

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society

Volume XXXIV, Number 2

2nd Quarter, 2007



LOUISIANA IDENTIFIES FIRST SIX IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

by *Melanie Driscoll*

BATON ROUGE, LA, APRIL 23, 2007 – National Audubon Society announced today that it has identified the first six official Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Louisiana. Important Bird Areas are sites that provide essential habitat for breeding, wintering, or migrating bird species.

“With this first round of IBA identification, we have recognized over 630,000 acres of habitat critical for maintaining or increasing populations of birds of conservation concern,” said Melanie Driscoll, Louisiana Important Bird Areas coordinator. “This is an important step in building public commitment to protecting these vital areas.”

The selected sites in Louisiana represent a range of habi-

tats that include upland pine savannahs, forested wetlands, barrier islands, and bald cypress-tupelo swamps.

The first six identified IBAs are:

— **Catahoula Lake and wetlands:** The largest freshwater lake in Louisiana, Catahoula Lake is a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance that supports between 40,000 and 300,000 ducks from October to January, including up to 25% or more of the nation’s recorded population of Canvasbacks. The lake and surrounding bottomland hardwoods and rice fields support tremendous biodiversity, with over 230 species of birds documented on the lake and national wildlife refuge alone.

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Greetings from Paul Kemp

Hello Baton Rouge! Barred Owl Editor-In-Chief Cathy Coates has asked me to commune with you about the wonderful world of National Audubon that I am discovering. As was dutifully reported here, though I am a long-time Baton Rouge resident, I came on board at the end of January just in time to attend a few of the functions at the National Audubon Society (NAS) Board Meeting in New Orleans. Today, in mid-May, I am on my way to a State Directors’ Meeting just outside of Salt Lake City by way of Vicksburg.

I should probably explain how Vicksburg is on the way to Salt Lake City. It happens that Vicksburg is the

nerve center from which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages the Mississippi River. It is also home to the NAS office managed by Bruce Reid and Stacey Massey-Eagle in a renovated old building a few steps from the historic courthouse. You should pay a visit if you are up this way and enjoy the view of the Yazoo River from the back veranda. If you are lucky enough to be here like I am right now, you can see and hear the Purple Martins nesting in the bird garden alongside...on the TV. Yes, they have a Martin Cam and the parents are brooding five eggs with all the attendant noise and fuss that entails!

I digress. As you probably know, I am the third NAS employee in Louisiana. Melanie Driscoll, our terrifically qualified Important Bird Areas (IBA) Coordinator, has been working in Louisiana for about a year and has just announced the first six Louisiana IBAs. See the exciting announcement in this issue. This is only the beginning.

Timmy Vincent is the longest serving NAS employee in Louisiana, having managed Audubon’s 26,000 acre Paul J. Rainey Wildlife Sanctuary south of Intracoastal City (west of Vermilion Bay) for more than a decade. One of my short-term goals is to

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Birding with the Family

With Jane Patterson and Keri Bryan

Co-sponsored by Hilltop Arboretum and the Baton Rouge Audubon Society

This is a series of classes designed to introduce the wonderful experience of bird-watching to young people and their families. The classes are recommended for children 8 to 15 with an accompanying parent (preferably one child per parent). People 16 and up may attend alone.

Each topic will include a classroom session to be held at Hilltop Arboretum on Monday evenings at 6:30pm. The following Saturday we'll have a field trip related to the class at various locations in the Baton Rouge area. The classes are as follows:

Beginning Birding - Monday, Aug. 6 and Saturday, Aug. 11

Introduction to binoculars, field guides, and how to find and identify birds. For the field trip, we'll get outside and practice what we've learned in class

Hummingbirds – Monday, Sep 10 and Saturday, Sep 15

Fascinating facts about the tiniest of our feathered friends. The field trip will take us to St. Francisville where we should see swarms of hummingbirds during migration.

More than Wal-Mart Birds – Monday, Oct. 15 and Saturday, Oct. 20

You know those little brown birds you see at Walmart, and the black birds you see hanging out in the parking lot? Yeah, we won't be talking about those. Come find out about the cool birds you can find right here in the Baton Rouge area, if you just know where to look.

Bird Conservation – How You Can

Help – Monday, Nov. 5 and Saturday, Nov. 10

Sharing ideas about how you can make a difference in the lives of birds. We'll discuss protection of bird habitat, participation in citizen science programs, and issues that affect birds that you can help with. Our field trip will include a tour of the Hilltop Arboretum where we'll point out native plants and talk about habitats.

Attracting Birds to your Yard –

Monday, Dec. 3 and Saturday, Dec. 8

What you can do to bring all kinds of birds to your yard where you can enjoy them up close. For the field trip we'll visit yards that feature some of the elements discussed.

Fees:

\$10 per session per adult (Hilltop and/or BRAS members), \$15 per session for adult (non-members), \$5 per session for child. Non-members will be able to join either organization at the individual sessions.

For more information or to pre-register, call Hilltop at 767-6916

About the leaders

Jane Patterson is the new Education Chairman for Baton Rouge Audubon Society. Jane became an enthusiastic birder through her interest in gardening. She has learned a lot about what Louisiana has to offer for both of these wonderful hobbies. One of her favorite activities is video recording new birds and bird activities and sharing those with family and friends via her blog. She is eager to share her experiences. She hopes to create an interest in birds and raise awareness of conservation, especially in young people.

Keri Bryan just finished her junior year at u-high. She has been birding her whole life with her grandmother, Stennie Meadours. Although she first started birding at Lake Martin and around the Lafayette area, she has traveled to many places including Texas, Massachusetts, Gomez Mexico, and the Yucatan, where she helped teach younger kids about birding. She is very excited about the opportunity to share her love of birds with kids and their parents at Hilltop.

BRAS 4-1-1

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Secretary
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Peveto Woods Sanctuary Report

by Victoria Bayless

Since my last writing, thousands of migrating birds have stopped in our sanctuary. It is a pleasure to report that plants and insects were ready and waiting for them. We can't know how many visitors have been by because the log book hasn't been replaced, but there were a great number of reports. It would appear that birders are returning to So. Louisiana. The American Birding Association Convention in Lafayette had several field trips which included Peveto Woods. For this, we thank Judith O'Neal and Dave Patton, who were the field trip coordinators for the entire convention. They did a marvelous job and as a conventioner I heard many comments on how well organized the trips were, how friendly the trip leaders were and how beautiful and birdy our state was. There were many questions about Baton Rouge Audubon's work to conserve, protect and restore our chenier sanctuary. I was proud to represent you and our organization at this nationally important convention.

We have had several workdays with quite a few participants. I thank everyone for their hard work including Jay Guillory, Ron Bayless, Jane Patterson, Lainie Lahaye, Ann Ingram, Sara Simmonds, Dorothy Prowell, Chris Carlton, Melanie Driscoll, Jim and Jeanie Pousson, Terry and Lynell Hymel, and a special thanks to Hope



and Tom Norman of Alexandria for allowing us to use their "Briar Patch" camp near the Sanctuary as our base camp. Restoration wouldn't be possible without you!

The big news is that Bill Fontenot, has agreed to do the plant restoration work at the Sanctuary! Funds from the grant we received through the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory were designated for plant restoration. Bill is without a doubt the best person we could have doing this very complex work for us. Bill is the founder of the Prairie Basse Native Plant Nursery near Carencro, he is the author of *Native Gardening in the South* (1992) and *Birds of the Gulf Coast* (2001), past president of the Louisiana Native Plant Society, president of the Louisiana Ornithological Society and curator of the Acadiana Park Nature Station in Lafayette and winner of the 2002 Professional Conservationist of the Year Award by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation. You can see why

we are excited about having Bill on board with this restoration project.

Otherwise, the new sand fence and grass plantings on the beach are working and small dunes are appearing. The sandblasted redwood sign at Hwy 82 (see picture) was made and installed by Ray Parden who owns The Sign Shop in Albany Louisiana. It is beautiful and we were very happy to have it done in time for the ABA field trips. Thanks, Ray! Most of the trails have been located and cut again, more debris has been hauled out and at least 50 seedling Tallow trees have been sprayed. We hope you will plan a trip to Peveto Woods this October during fall migration and check out all our progress.

Dear Members,

Many of you noticed that your membership data on the last issue of the Barred Owl label was incorrect. Some of you may have received the Barred Owl late, or worse yet, not at all. Please accept our apologies! Inadvertently, an old mailing list was sent to our printer. Don't fret, our membership list was always correct and remains current. We were impressed that so many of you pay attention to your label and that you let us know about the mistake. Thank you for caring,

The Editor

LSU Museum of Natural Science Big Day

by Richard Gibbons

Excellent weather conditions, meticulous planning, judicious use of snack foods and (of course) consummate skill combined to drive the April 27, 2007 LSU Museum of Natural Science Big Day species total to 204. In the annals of Louisiana Big Days, this total is second only to the 2003 effort by another team of LSUMNS graduate students. This year, work began at midnight, with the group shuffling around in the museum driveway fighting off sleep. The first stop was the LSU clock tower where

some disoriented migrants had found their way into the floodlights. Still, identification was a challenge until we were jolted to our senses by a Common Nighthawk... "Peeent!!!"... Bird Number One! The day continued with repeated successes and surprises. Money raised from the Big Day helps finance graduate-level research projects and training in ornithology. Read more at <http://www.museum.lsu.edu/bigday.html>.

The team thanks one and all who contributed!



LOUISIANA IDENTIFIES FIRST SIX IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

(Continued from page 1)

Breton National Wildlife Refuge and Chandeleur Islands: The Breton/Chandeleur barrier island chain once housed tens of thousands of nesting terns and ducks, more than enough to meet the criteria as a global IBA for congregatory species. Despite the loss of over 50% of their habitat area as a result of Hurricane Katrina, these islands still support globally important populations of Royal and Sandwich Terns.

Maurepas Swamp: This bald cypress-tupelo swamp surrounding Lake Maurepas in southeastern Louisiana is one of the largest contiguous tracts of wetland forest remaining in the Lower Mississippi River Alluvial Valley. The site holds 17 active nests of the endangered Bald Eagle. In addition, more than 20,000 breeding pair of Yellow-throated Warblers and 190,000 breeding pair of Northern Parula and Prothonotary Warblers nest in Maurepas Swamp in any given year.

Evangeline Unit of the Kisatchie National Forest: This nearly 100,000 acre upland pine and pine/hardwood site crisscrossed with numerous riparian areas is currently being managed by the U.S. Forest Service for ecosystem restoration and recovery of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Other birds of conservation interest that benefit from the preservation of this habitat include the near-threatened Northern Bobwhite and Bachman's Sparrow, as well as wintering Henslow's Sparrows and American Woodcock.

Vernon Unit of the Kisatchie National Forest: Similar in habitat type to the Evangeline unit, the Vernon unit has more than 140 breeding clusters of endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. Both sites are also home to many raptors, including Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Mississippi Kite, Southeastern American Kestrel, Eastern Screech Owl, Barred Owl, and Great-horned Owl.

Mississippi River Birdsfoot Delta: The Birdsfoot Delta is currently the largest IBA identified in Louisiana, with over 180,000 acres of habitat, predominantly freshwater and brackish marshes. These marshes are extremely important for wintering waterfowl, wading birds, secretive marsh birds, and shorebirds, including Northern Pintails, Caspian Terns, and endangered Piping Plovers. The site also provides important nesting and brood-rearing habitat for Mottled Ducks, a Louisiana Species of Conservation Concern, and is a critical stopover habitat for many Audubon WatchList neotropical migrants.

"Good stewards, including the National Wildlife Refuge system, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, The Nature Conservancy of Louisiana, and many private landowners, have protected some of the Louisiana habitats that support such tremendous diversity and outstanding numbers of birds," said Driscoll. "Yet, as we saw during the 2005 hurricane season, land that protects birds is

also linked with human welfare, and these habitats are extremely vulnerable to both natural and man-made threats."

The IBA Program in Louisiana is sustained through generous support from a State Wildlife Grant from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, with matching funds raised by the Baton Rouge and Orleans Audubon Societies. Technical expertise for the program is provided by ornithological and habitat experts throughout Louisiana who comprise the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Members come from a wide range of agencies including the National Wetlands Research Center, the National Parks Service, the Gulf Coast Joint Venture, Ducks Unlimited, local bird clubs, and Louisiana State University, among others.

The TAC and the IBA coordinator in Louisiana evaluate data and identify the state's IBAs based on a rigorous set of standardized selection criteria. Information used to identify and prioritize IBAs can form the basis of outreach, education, or conservation action at high priority sites. The Louisiana IBA Program is continuing to work on identifying additional IBAs.

The IBA program is coordinated worldwide by BirdLife International, and Audubon is the BirdLife International partner for the United States.

For more information about Louisiana's Important Bird Areas, please visit www.audubon.org/bird/iba and click on the state of Louisiana, or call Melanie Driscoll at 225/938-7209.

- ON THE WEB -

Read more about the IBA program, its history and importance in Louisiana!
<http://iba.audubon.org/iba/viewState.do?state=US-LA>

Louisiana Public Broadcasting Highlights the Important Bird Areas Program! See the video at
<mms://wm.lpb.org/swi/20070209bird.wmv>



Message from the President - *Chris Carlton*

This will be my last Barred Owl communiqué as President of BRAS, though I shall continue to serve on the Board as your Past-president. Accordingly, I will now introduce the slate of new officers of BRAS who were nominated during the April Board meeting and subsequently elected, as follows: President – Harriett Pooler; Vice President – Helaine Moyse; Secretary – Donna LaFleur. Most of the current Committee Chairs will remain in their positions, though we are still seeking a replacement for the Sanctuary Chair position. A complete listing of BRAS officers and committee chairs can be found elsewhere in this issue.

Serving Baton Rouge Audubon has been a great privilege for me. The past two years have been especially dynamic in (mostly) positive and (a few) negative ways for BRAS and birding in Louisiana. The integration of Louisiana into the Important Bird Area Program, and establishment of an IBA coordinator position has provided our organization with a new focus and an opportunity to promote Louisiana as the globally significant area for birds and birding that we all know it is. Our involvement with the recently established LSU Louisiana Bird Resource Center has facilitated greater participation into statewide bird initiatives. The increasing presence of National Audubon in Louisiana is helping foster a closer relationship between the state's chapters, and has been especially instrumental in encouraging collaborations between BRAS and Orleans Audubon on several projects, most notably the shared goal of

promoting the IBA initiative. The recent establishment of the Vice-president and Director of Gulf Coast Initiatives position in Baton Rouge highlights the great importance that National Audubon places on the Gulf Coast and Lower Mississippi Valley. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita happened during a period of increasing attention to the problems of coastal land loss. Though we would have preferred not, they gave us unsolicited worst case examples of just why we must take better care of our coastal marshes and forested wetlands. The fight to end unsustainable cypress logging has gained momentum, but remains an ongoing problem that we will continue to address as advocates of better environmental stewardship. During late 2004, we finally consolidated Peveto Woods Sanctuary into a single continuous property, only to have Rita seriously challenge progress in achieving our long term sanctuary goals. Happily, those goals are getting back on track, and Peveto Woods is well on its way to recovery.

Finally, I sincerely thank and appreciate the help of past and present Officers, Committee Chairs, and our BRAS membership in keeping me on task during my tenure as BRAS President. I am a birder in only its broadest and most lenient definition. Thanks to my friends and colleagues on the Board, that has mostly been kept a secret or at least not held against me. For that and other things I am deeply grateful. Harriett, you're up! Bye.

BRAS Education Efforts - *Jane Patterson*

Audubon Adventures: This is a program produced by the National Audubon Society to help promote wildlife and conservation awareness in children. It's designed for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers to use as a part of their regular curriculum. It ties in with their other subjects while focusing on the life and habits of birds and other animals. BRAS is offering to donate this educational kit to teachers in East Baton Rouge parish and has been working to contact those who are interested in using this teaching kit in their classrooms. So far, 63 elementary school teachers have responded! We're excited to be able to provide this wonderful resource to the children! If you know of any teachers, principals, or educators that would be interested in receiving information, please have them contact me by email at Jane Patterson braseducation@cox.net or by mail to BRAS Education at our P.O. Box (see address elsewhere in newsletter).

Earth Day: Baton Rouge Earth Day celebration is always a big hit, and this year was no different! With perfect weather, great exhibits, fun music, and great food...what more can you ask for in a festival? The BRAS exhibit on Earth Walk featured education about feeding birds in the back yard. The display included various types of feeders with information about which birds preferred which feeder, different types of bird seed, as well as hummingbird plants. One of our best exhibits was a water feature, which was a "dripper" made from a disguised gallon jug filled with water and punctured with a pinhole that was dripping into a terra cotta plant saucer...easy and cheap moving water bird bath! There was a non-stop parade of passers-by who picked up information and asked lots of questions. All in all, a great success, and many thanks to those who contributed their time and effort!



SAVE OUR CYPRESS CAMPAIGN UPDATE

by Dan Favre, Campaign Organizer, Gulf Restoration Network

April 27th was National Arbor Day, and throughout the Gulf, student groups and citizen activists celebrated by taking part in the **Save Our Cypress Arbor Day of Action**. From those who spoke to customers outside the stores to folks who dropped off letters to the store managers on their way home

from work, the event was a huge success. People were out in force to educate consumers and stores about the dangers of cypress mulch.

Swamp ecosystems are being lost and cypress trees are being ground up to be sold in the garden departments of Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Lowe's. The product can be found as far as Chicago, Baltimore, and even California.

These cypress forests, our best natural storm defenses and an important habitat for migratory birds, are literally being sold off for two dollars a bag.

The **Save Our Cypress Coalition** has presented Lowe's, Wal-Mart, and Home Depot with extensive evidence of the destruction that is caused from cypress mulch. To date, they claim their suppliers only use sustainable sources. There is no system to certify those claims. Communication is ongoing, but meanwhile the problem continues.

Cypress mulch is an unsustainable product. Customers outside the stores on Arbor Day were pleased to learn that there are plenty of sustainable mulch alternatives, like pine straw and melaleuca mulch. Now, we just need to convince the companies who sell it.

Please take a moment on your next shopping trip to tell the store manager that you don't want the company to sell cypress mulch, and visit www.saveourcypress.org to send a message directly to the CEO's of Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Lowe's.

(BRAS is a member of the Gulf Restoration Network. You can visit their website www.healthygulf.org to learn about this and other environmental initiatives in our area.)

How Is Baton Rouge Audubon Society Funded?

by J. D. Guillory, Treasurer BRAS

The short answer to this question is through dues and donations. The long answer follows.

BRAS divides its funds into three categories.

A. General Fund

These funds come from dues and donations paid directly to BRAS, and \$1400 per year from the National Audubon Society (NAS). The \$1400 is calculated using a complicated formula related to the number of NAS members in the Baton Rouge area. Every dues paying member of NAS automatically becomes a BRAS member. A person who joins BRAS-only does not become a member of NAS. In our area, there are 446 NAS-BRAS members and 228 BRAS-only members. We also count 85 non-paying BRAS "members" including NGO's, libraries, politicians, news organizations, etc. The General Fund is used primarily to publish and mail the Barred Owl to all members alike. While we loose money on the newsletter due to the low participation per member from NAS, we hope to make it up in donations from our valued NAS members.

Also from the General Fund, we are beginning an ambitious education program this year which will focus on introducing birding to grammar school children.

We very much appreciate members who pay dues and make donations directly to BRAS. Anyone who would like to receive the glossy Audubon magazine and support the important environmental work of National Audubon is encouraged to join both organizations.

B. Sanctuary Fund

This includes donations made specifically for the sanctuary which has been strongly supported by our membership. We are now in a positive financial position as a result of our fundraising efforts to purchase the camp and land, and the proceeds from flood and other insurance when the building was destroyed by Hurricane Rita. Our mortgage is paid. We are planning to rebuild the small pond in the wooded area and eventually create a shelter with restrooms.

C. Important Bird Area Program

Funds for the IBA program come from the joint fundraiser between BRAS and Orleans Audubon Society (OAS) (25% together) and from Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (75%). The 25% for BRAS and OAS comes to \$9,000 per group per year. We are in the second year of a three year program that may be extended for another two years.

Greetings from Paul Kemp

(Continued from page 1)

make sure that any Louisiana Auduboner who has the desire can get down to see this magical and unique part of Louisiana. It is isolated, which is good for the birds, and has limited accommodations – particularly since Hurricane Rita -- but Timmy is a very knowledgeable and amiable host when an outing is organized. So, please get your calendars together...we'll have at least one bird monitoring trip this fall, and another in the winter.

So back to why I am in Vicksburg today. It happens that your NAS is about to launch one of the most ambitious environmental restoration projects ever, anywhere. Emboldened by the change in heart that has taken place in Louisiana about the coastal wetlands, due in no small measure to the tragic 2005 hurricanes, NAS wants to take this spirit up the Mississippi River – all the way to the headwaters at Lake Itasca. And the key to success is bringing the Corps of Engineers on board as an agent of change – hopefully this time in the right direction for the environment. Audubon will be one of several non-governmental organizations, NGOs for short, sponsoring a meeting with the Corps team planning the Category 5 hurricane protection system. Independent scientists,

engineers, economists and environmental organizers will be converging this evening on Audubon's office in this sleepy river town to begin an unprecedented collaboration, so that our coastal wetlands will get more than just levees, but also the diversions and other restoration projects that are needed to save the coast for the whole ecosystem. Then I'm on to Park City, Utah, to get NAS Board approval for our grand Mississippi River plan. More about that next time.

Great expectations, but we must not let progress in one arena divert us from saving the planet for the birds in another. Dean Wilson, the Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, delivered a somber message to the BRAS board last week when he reported on the continued clear-cutting of the second-growth cypress forests. The united efforts of all of the Cypress Coalition organizations, including NAS, have not yet achieved success in getting Wal-Mart, Lowes, and Home Depot from selling whole-tree mulch made from Louisiana cypress. More challenges for all of us. As Dean says, don't grow a flower by killing a tree! Until next issue, so long from your new NAS Vice-President. If you have any questions, be sure to drop me a line at pkemp@audubon.org, or call 772-1426.

BRAS TRIPS PAST AND FUTURE

by Robert McLaughlin

MAY 12 TRIP REPORT

Christine Kooi led a group on May 12th to Whiskey Bay in search of nesting migrants. The group included Sybil McDonald, Harry Moran, Lindsay Seely, Robert McLaughlin, Kathy Webb, Tommie Tuttleton and Jay Guillory. Sherburne WMA was sponsoring a songbird tour at Whiskey Bay, so we were joined by many fellow birders. Saturday was a warm and sunny day, and thankfully free of mosquitoes. The birding was pleasant and the activity was quite brisk. Some of the many birds that were seen include Roseate Spoonbill, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Mississippi Kite, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Prothonotary Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager, Indigo Bunting and Orchard Oriole. Later in the morning we visited a banding site that was sponsored by Sherburne WMA. Among the birds we saw banded were 2 Carolina Chickadees, a Red-eyed Vireo and an Acadian Flycatcher. The trip was very successful. Many thanks to Christine for leading the group.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS --- NEXT TRIP

Come join Kenny Kleinpeter, local "martineer", on Wednesday, June 20 for a trip to the Lake Ponchartrain Purple Martin roost in Metairie, LA. where each year as many as 100,000 martins descend nightly under the Causeway to roost. For up to a month, thousands of them at a time, join and leave this roost for their South American wintering grounds. We will meet at 5:30 PM at the Kleinpeter Activity Center on the St. George Church Campus. Please pre-register by calling Robert McLaughlin during business hours at 926.2223 or by e-mail at 20legend@cox.net.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PEAK DAY, WHICH HAS BEEN JUNE 20th, IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. BE SURE TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR ANY CHANGES!

Thanks to our Members!

Baton Rouge Audubon is appreciative of one and all who make it possible for us to send you this publication, maintain our sanctuaries, and the other projects we undertake on behalf of conservation and birds. We can't do it without you!

February 1, 2007 - April 31, 2007

ROSEBREASTED GROSBEAK (\$100 -249)

J. A. Bennett, Monroe, LA
Herbert Dyer, Baton Rouge, LA
Mary Guthrie, New Orleans, LA
Jay Huner, Boyce, LA
Mary Louise Life, Baton Rouge, LA
Ann McMahan, Baton Rouge, LA
Peter Monroe, New Orleans, LA
Tom & Hope Norman, Alexandria, LA
Chad Phillips, Baton Rouge, LA

WOOD THRUSH (\$50 - 99)

Beth Baldrige, Prairieville, LA
Phillip Brown, Baton Rouge, LA
W. E. Godfrey II, Natches, MS
Louise M. Hanchey, Lake Charles, LA
Dominique Homberger, Baton Rouge, LA
Catherine J. Kidd, New Orleans, LA
Dave Patton, Lafayette, LA
Fred Sheldon, Baton Rouge, LA

What Our Friends Are Doing

Hilltop Arboretum, June 23: Field trip to Sara Gladney's Gloster Arboretum in Gloster, MS led by Neil Odenwald. This will be the height of blueberry season and picking is in the plans. Call Hilltop for more information 767 6916.

Feliciana Hummingbird Celebration, St. Francisville, LA, July 27-28: The event will include a speaker, the opportunity to see hummingbirds being banded at 2 private homes, and lots of binocular-ready hummingbirds. For more information, see audubonbirdfest.com or call 225 635 6502.

Feliciana Nature Society, St. Francisville, LA, September 15, 10am: "Birds, Butterflies, and Botany Walk" at The Bluffs nature trail. For more information, contact Tracey Banowetz at banowetz@bellsouth.net.

Hilltop Arboretum, Highland Rd. between Siegen and Bluebonnet: The arboretum's Hodge Podge collection of plants is for sale on the honor system daily. Visitors are welcomed to browse the inventory and wander the property. If someone is in the office, you may come in to pay, or follow these instructions: tear off half of the plant tags and total your tab, add 9% tax, find an envelope for the tags and your payment on the back porch at the top of the ramp, and leave it in the mailbox at the foot of the ramp. You may also donate plants which are taking over your yard or you no longer want for Hodge Podge to sell. Please leave your name and the plant I.D. Hilltop Arboretum is a worthy cause to support!

Save Our Cypress Coalition: A coalition was formed last year consisting of local environmental groups including BRAS, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, Sierra's Delta Chapter, Gulf Restoration Network, and several others. It has rallied efforts to hold major press conferences, earning excellent coverage on the issue; organized groups to give out information in front of area stores, and won a meeting in Louisiana with Walmart corporate buyers with whom they are in ongoing communications. Communications with other big box retailers have also been opened. But, the logging continues in our wetlands, much of it without permits and therefore illegal. You can help! Go to saveourcypress.org to learn more. And remember, never buy cypress mulch!

Black Bear Conservation Committee: In 1992, the Louisiana black bear (*Ursus americanus luteolus*) was listed as a threatened subspecies under the Endangered Species Act. Since 2001, a cooperative coalition of public and private groups, the Black Bear Conservation Committee, has been working to help connect the disjunct bear populations in Louisiana through a reintroduction project. The project moves bears out of dense subpopulation areas to suitable habitat in other areas. Over one million acres of bottomland hardwood habitat has been planted back to trees since 1992 in the historic range of the Louisiana black bear which is good for the bears and good for the birds. To find out more about the Louisiana black bear and how to help support their recovery, visit bbcc.org.

Baton Rouge Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Baton Rouge Audubon Society

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Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70896

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Permit No. 29

Keep Your Membership Current!

If your membership expires, you will no longer receive *The Barred Owl!* Well, eventually we take your name off the list. It is expensive to produce and membership dues help to cover that cost. Please see the expiration code on the first line of the label above your name. BRAS-only subscriptions will identify the month and year in which your membership expires (e.g. BRAS Dec. 2006). We are working on updating NAS memberships to show the same (e.g. NAS Dec. 2006).

Keeping your membership current is important!

BRAS and National Audubon Membership

You may join NAS by going to their website (audubon.org) and you automatically become a member of both NAS and BRAS. You will receive the quarterly award-winning *Audubon* magazine as well as the quarterly BRAS newsletter, *The Barred Owl*.

Patches Extra sanctuary patches or patches for NAS members are \$10 each and can be ordered by mailing the form below. If you are joining BRAS and want a free patch, you must put "1" in the blank.

BRAS Only Membership

If you want all of your dues to support local conservation and education, join BRAS only. You will NOT receive the *Audubon* magazine. You WILL receive *The Barred Owl* and a free sanctuary patch. You may join on-line at any level by visiting our website www.braudubon.org, or send this form with your check to: BRAS, P.O. Box 67016, BR LA 70896.

Baton Rouge Audubon Society (BRAS)

Please enroll me as a member of BRAS! Enclosed is my check for:

- \$25 Individual Membership
- \$30 Family Membership
- \$50 Wood Thrush Donation
- \$100 Rose-breasted Grosbeak Donation
- \$250 Louisiana Waterthrush Donation
- \$500 Painted Bunting Donation
- \$1000 Cerulean Warbler Donation
- \$ _____ Additional Contribution
- # _____ of patches (indicate 1 which is free with BRAS membership; additional patches \$10 each; NAS member patches @ \$10 each; no patch will be sent if there is no indication.)

Name: _____ Ph: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

MAIL COMPLETE FORM TO:
Baton Rouge Audubon Society; PO Box 67016; Baton Rouge, LA 70896