

The **BARRED OWL**

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society

Volume XXXVI, Number 2

2nd Quarter, 2009

BRAS Spring Program to be held at new NAS Offices

Meet the NAS Staff, Tour the Atrium

by Lindsay Seely

We will be hosting our Spring Program on Thursday, May 7th from 6:30-8:30 p.m., in conjunction with an Open House at the new National Audubon Society "Gulf Coast Initiative" office in Baton Rouge.

Our very own Paul Kemp, along with his staff, will be sharing and describing their vision for what can be accomplished with the new state office. Paul will introduce the NAS staff, which now includes three new members in addition to Melanie Driscoll, Timmy Vincent and himself, and allow each of them to talk about what they are doing.

They will also be discussing Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative and the evolution of the collaborative work that they are doing with Environmental Defense Fund, National Wildlife Federation and The Nature Conservancy, and the opportunities for local involvement. They are looking to explore the regional vision of what is currently being done and what lies ahead for coastal restoration efforts.

Come join us for *hors d'oeuvres* and drinks and to celebrate the opening of the new NAS state office. The meeting and open house will be held at the Quail Oaks Atrium, 6160 Perkins Rd, near the LSU Credit Union.

We hope to see you there!

Bayou Birding Bon Temps

by Richard Gibbons

Louisiana has a long tradition of nature study with ornithological giants such as Catesby, Wilson, and Audubon exploring the Louisiana Purchase. The Pelican State is rich in bird abundance and diversity with a stalwart community of birdwatchers. Louisiana's birding largesse primarily is enjoyed by residents whereas neighboring states have promoted their natural heritage successfully as a tourist draw.

In the last few years, birding trails were developed for Louisiana. This is an excellent resource for both residents and visitors. The *Bayou Birding Bon Temps* will promote our birding trails with residents and visitors with a statewide birding competition. Further, we will use eBird to enter checklists by birding trail site. These checklists will provide valuable information for visitors curious about

what has been seen where and when. This is precisely the information birders want to know while planning a birding trip.

For Louisiana birding trail information, see http://www.louisianatravel.com/play/louisiana_birding.cfm

In addition to the birding trails, Louisiana's Wildlife Management Areas (1.4 million acres) and U.S. National Wildlife Refuges (600,000 acres) are included as event locations.

The Bayou Birding Bon Temps is a new statewide birding event with the objective of promoting bird watching in Louisiana and developing checklists for birding sites.

Who: Any birder in good standing is encouraged to participate

When: April 24-May 3, 2009

Where: Birding trail sites and WMA's

(Continued on page 4)



President's Chip Notes

I went birding yesterday and saw/heard many Northern Parulas in addition to other migrants such as Black and White Warblers and White Eyed Vireos.

Spring is here!

Its also time for our spring program/annual meeting where we elect officers for the next year. Officers nominated for the 2009-10 term are:

President: Eric Liffman
V-President: Richard Gibbons
Secretary: Donna LaFleur
Treasurer: Jay Guillory

Nominations will also be taken from the floor. In addition, we will announce this years' recipient for the annual Baton Rouge Audubon Society Volunteer of the Year Award. If you would like to submit someone for consideration, please contact me at harriett.pooler@gmail.com. After conducting elections and business we will turn it over to our speaker, Paul Kemp. Refreshments will follow his talk.

I want to thank Cathy Coates for her years of service and hard work on the BRAS board. Cathy is rotating off the BRAS board to continue her duties as Hilltop President. Jeff Harris, a research entomologist, has agreed to join BRAS as a board member at large. Welcome, Jeff.

The next President's article will be written by the newly elected president. It has been my pleasure and privilege to be BRAS President these past two years. We have accomplished many things but have much more to do. Thank you for your involvement and support.

Happy Birding,

Harriett



Baton Rouge Audubon

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The Barred Owl

is published quarterly by the Baton Rouge chapter of the NAS. Submissions should be emailed to brasnews@earthlink.net

Changes of address and other official correspondence should be sent to:

Baton Rouge
Audubon Society
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Bird Education Network – A National Gathering

by Jane Patterson

Over 100 people from 30 states and 3 other countries dedicated to bird conservation participated in a national gathering in Jekyll Island, GA in February of 2009. Thanks to a sponsorship by BRAS, I was able to attend and represent Louisiana at this gathering. This conference was an opportunity for folks with an interest in bird education to share and explore ideas. One of the highlights of the conference was a tag-team presentation by Kenn Kaufman and his wife Kim on "Building a Bird Literate Society". Kenn and Kim emphasized a need to break stereotypes of birders in order to get some younger folks involved, and most of all, show them how much fun it can be! The Ohio Young Birders Club is a great example of a successful effort to get kids involved in birding. This club is run by kids and has members from all over the state of Ohio – adults can be non-voting members! It has served as a successful model for other similar clubs in 5 other states to date. Folks from several other organizations also presented examples of successful youth birding programs – from a Christmas Bird Count just for kids to urban bird camps where even inner city kids learned to appreciate the avian life around them.

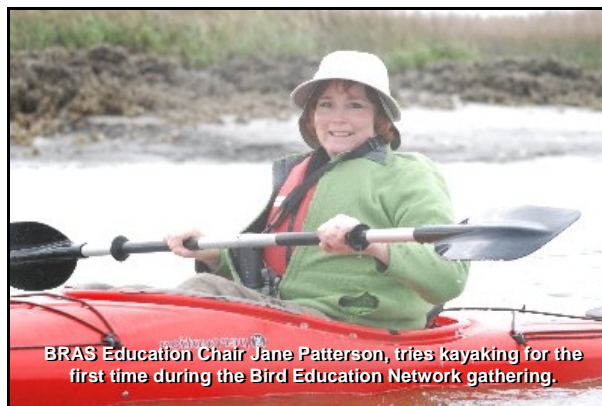
Kenn also worked with Dwight Cooley of the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama to present ideas about how to make our wildlife refuges and similar places into birder-friendly destinations. Improving relations between the "hook and bullet" crowd and the birding crowd was a recurring theme at the conference. Since both groups have a similar interest in habitat conservation, it makes sense that we work together. One of the easiest things we can all do in this area is to buy our Migratory Hunting and Conservation Bird Stamp or "Duck Stamp." Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar spent on the stamp is used to purchase additional lands to expand our national refuge system.

Audrey Peterman of Earthwise Productions spoke of the need to diversify the sport of birding, expounding on the theme from "Black & Brown Faces in America's Wild Places" by Dudley Edmondson.

There were many other interesting sessions, and for those that might be interested, many of the presentations that were given at the conference are available for download from the Bird Education Network website (www.birdeeducation.org). You might also check out the draft of the National Strategy for Bird Education that the group has developed. The group welcomes input and suggestions.

And by the way, if you've never visited the Georgia coast, I highly recommend it! Georgia only has 100 miles of coastline – and no mainland coastline – only barrier islands. Apparently these islands were historically owned by the very wealthy and have escaped the mass development of practically all of our other coasts. There are miles of open sandy beaches, coastal forests, and BIRDS! Lots and lots of birds! Several of the barrier islands are owned by either state or federal government and are preserved as parks and wild places. What a treasure! I was able to try kayaking for the first time and it absolutely amazed me how close we were able to get to the birds without spooking them.

As is common with most conferences, the most significant value was the people networking aspect. It was a joy to meet folks from all over who are as excited as I am about spreading the word about birds to kids and anyone else that will listen. Now I have friends from Canada to Panama that I can visit with both virtually and literally to see birds and share great ideas about bird education. I offer my gratitude to BRAS for assisting me with the opportunity to attend this conference.



BRAS Education Chair Jane Patterson, tries kayaking for the first time during the Bird Education Network gathering.

BRAS FIELD TRIPS



Join Jeff Harris on a field trip to Whiskey Bay in search of nesting spring migrants. We will meet at Coffee Call at 6 a.m. on Saturday, April 25th and we will carpool to the birding site. Target birds include Prothonotary Warbler, Indigo and Painted Buntings, Summer and Scarlet Tanagers and Swallow-tail Kites. Please pre-register by calling Robert during business hours at 926.2223 or by e-mail at 20legend@cox.net.

Come join Melanie Driscoll on Saturday, June 13th for a field trip to Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was established on October 27, 2000 as the 526th refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The refuge was established to conserve, restore and manage native forested wetland habitats for migratory birds, aquatic resources and endangered and threatened plants and animals. High water can be a problem at the refuge at this time of the year. If the water is high our backup plan is to explore the refuge by canoe. Please pre-register by calling Robert McLaughlin during business hours at 926.2223 or by e-mail at 20legend@cox.net.

The Nature of Agritourism

by Jay V. Huner

DeWitt, Arkansas was the venue for the 8-12 February 2009 Nature of Agritourism Workshop organized by Ms. Kathy Radomski, Director of Business and Industry Training at Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas. Agritourism has varied definitions but generally refers to nature tourism associated with agricultural and forestry properties, especially those in private ownership. Birding, as a source of income in public and private situations, was strongly emphasized.

Approximately 30 participants hailed from Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Missouri. Well informed instructors came from Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas. A discussion of the topics and their presenters follows. Participants and instructors were housed in private hunting lodges associated with Arkansas County's intensive waterfowl and deer hunting industry. Lodge managers and owners are evaluating ways to extend their offerings to cover periods outside the fall-winter hunting seasons. Field trips were made to various lodges ranging from high end to modest, the White River National Wildlife Refuge of Ivory-billed Woodpecker fame and the Stuttgart, Arkansas community museum.

Participants learned about topics such as how Texas has been so successful with its Nature Tourism industry, wildlife management, liability, hospitality, marketing, understanding birders, interpretation, photography, Dutch oven cooking, youth involvement, asset mapping, business and financial planning, technical resources, and partnerships.

Agritourism is a form of business and needs to be treated as such. That is why topics like insurance, business plans, and marketing have to be addressed. The bulletins, guides, and printed materials provided to participants cover basically all aspects of developing successful agritourism ventures. Persons interested in learning more about agritourism and the workshop may contact Ms. Kathy Radomski at: Phillips Community College; P. O. Box 427; DeWitt, Arkansas 72042. kradomski@pccua.edu
870 946-3506

MORE MULCH MUSINGS

PALMDALE, Fla. (March 31, 2009) – 7L Brands, LLC, a division of Lykes Bros. Inc., recently opened a new manufacturing facility in Palmdale, Fla.

7L Brands will be manufacturing and promoting a line of truly sustainable eucalyptus mulch as the perfect environmentally friendly alternative to cypress mulch. Eucalyptus regenerates from the stump, matures quickly, and can be harvested four times over 25-30 years. All mulch produced at the plant is 100 percent pure virgin wood, free of any construction, demolition, pallet or other waste-wood materials. And recently, an aged heartwood eucalyptus was introduced.

"Our heartwood eucalyptus mulch has an all natural, rich, earthy red tone without a chemical color additive," noted Alan Shaffer, vice president of sales and marketing. "That's exciting!"

And in a boost for the local economy, the new mulch manufacturing facility has provided jobs for staff living in Lee, Hendry, Glades and Highlands counties of Florida.

For more information, visit www.7LBrands.com.

BAYOU BIRDING

(Continued from page 1)

Regions

Because Louisiana is a large and diverse state, the *Bayou Birding Bon Temps* will be divided into three regions: Northern Interior, Southern Interior, and Coastal.

Northern Interior parishes: Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, Union, Morehouse, West Carroll, East Carroll, Madison, Richland, Ouchita, Jackson, Lincoln, Bienville, Red River, De Soto, Natchitoches, Catahoula, Concordia, LaSalle, Grant, Winn, and Sabine

Southern Interior parishes: Acadia, Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Livingston, Point Coupee, Rapides, St. Helena, St. James, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Vermillion, Washington, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana

Coastal parishes: Cameron, Iberia, Lafourche, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Vermilion

Event categories

Big Louisiana Day (species count) adult and youth divisions

This is a big day with a stipulation. Participants must enter data by location. Species must be recorded at locations, so observations between locations do not count and should not be added to a location. Determine location boundaries before you bird if you're

unsure. If there are questions about location boundaries, let's try to answer them ahead of time to avoid confusion.

Big Sit (species count in 17' diameter circle) Pick a 17' diameter circle at any location and record species. Circle with the most species wins.

Big Location (species count) Single day and total period divisions. This category will certainly be the most beneficial to developing location checklists.

Most Locations (total period location count) This category is for the explorers. Participants or teams (must be consistent through period) who enter data for the most locations win.

Lagniappe Award (Random birding trail location, all entries from location eligible for drawing) A little something extra.

Rules

We're still working out the rules and details, so save the date and check the website (www.lsu.edu/birdcenter) for more information.

Partners

These partner organizations are making the *Bayou Birding Bon Temps* possible:

- ◆ Louisiana Office of Tourism
- ◆ Baton Rouge Audubon Society
- ◆ Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology
- ◆ National Audubon Society
- ◆ Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
- ◆ Louisiana Ornithological Society

BRAS EDUCATION IN ACTION

BRAS Education participated in Istrouma Council Boy Scouts Merit Badge Day on LSU Campus in February. Instructors in various disciplines offer classes and the scouts can potentially earn multiple merit badges in a single day. Twelve scouts signed up for Bird Study. The boys received some basic bird biology instruction, information about binoculars and field guides, and then participated in a bird walk across LSU campus. The morning group found 24 species birds, with a Forster's Tern being the highlight. Things were tougher in the afternoon but we managed to find a singing Northern Parula in the Spanish moss in the live oaks among the 21 species on our list.

BRAS Education conducted a Birding Basics class through the LSU Leisure Class program. Ten students participated in the class, which consisted of lecture on Monday nights with field trips on the Saturday following each class. Highlights for the class were the great looks at the Barred Owl at Bluebonnet Swamp (nesting pair there) as well as good looks at the mate of the nest-

ing Bald Eagle near Sherburne South Farm and a bright pair of Roseate Spoonbills highlighted against a brilliant blue sky. Ain't Spring grand!

BRAS will feature an activity for kids at Step Outside Day on May 9, 2009 at Sherburne NWR Headquarters near Krotz Springs on Hwy 975. This event is co-sponsored by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, the National Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers – the 3 organizations that jointly own and manage the Atchafalaya Basin refuge systems. This great event for kids introduces them to many aspects of outdoor activities. Plus there's free food and tons of free door prizes! For registration information, call 337-585-0853.

As always, this event coincides with the annual Neotropical Songbird Tour, also on the Sherburne WMA, which starts with assembly from 7 to 8 a.m. at the Whiskey Bay (Sherburne WMA) Exit on Interstate 10. Look for a gravel pull-off just after turning onto LA Hwy. 975. The Sherburne WMA offers one of the highest densities of

nesting neotropical songbirds in North America.

NOTES:

Kids Who Bird, bird club for kids 9-16, meets the 3rd Wed of each month and holds periodic field trips. Contact Jane Patterson at education@braudubon.org for more information if you know a kid who might like to bird!

Want to keep up with BRAS field trips and activities? Subscribe to our email list to receive notices. Send a request to education@braudubon.org

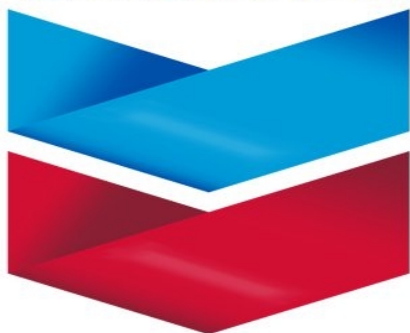
Louisiana Earth Day is April 19 in downtown Baton Rouge. Bring the kids to the Baton Rouge Audubon booth in the Earth for Children area.

Join BRAS for these great events!



Baton Rouge Audubon thanks

Chevron



for their sponsorship of
our education programs!

What Our Friends Are Doing

Louisiana Birders Anonymous (LABA)

April Field Trip – 26th Cameron Parish

Please note that we have changed to the fourth Sunday in April because of the LOS spring meeting and the Grand Isle Migratory Festival conflict with our normal 3rd Sunday.

We will be heading to Cameron Parish which is always good during spring migration. We'll stop at the McDonald's in Sulphur (Cameron Exit 20) and then head south. Sabine NWR will be our 2nd stop. We'll go through Holly Beach and swing over to the Peveto Woods to check for warblers. We'll come back through Cameron and bird as much as time allows. Meet at Beckie Hariu's home at 6:50 a.m. Bring LUNCH, snacks, water, insect repellent and sun screen, and a chair is always good. Hopefully we will be able to check out our new table at the sanctuary.

Check with Judith to meet at other places. PLEASE let Judith know if you plan to attend. Please make sure that she has your cell phone number. jloneale@aol.com 337-981-1011 337-280-4193 cell.

Baton Rouge Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Baton Rouge Audubon Society

P.O. Box 67016

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70896

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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. The month and year in which your membership expires are indicated after your membership organization (e.g., BRAS DEC 09 for BRAS-only members and NAS DEC 10 for NAS members).

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 Membership
- \$100 Rose-breasted Grosbeak Membership
- \$250 Louisiana Waterthrush Membership
- \$500 Painted Bunting Membership
- \$1000 Cerulean Warbler Membership
- \$ _____ 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.)

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

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