

# The **BARRED OWL**

www.braudubon.org



*Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society*  
Volume XXVIII, Number 3      September/October, 2002

## C a l e n d a r

### Membership Meetings for Fall 2002

Meetings are held at 7:30PM at BREC's Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center

**Sept. 26:** Dan Niven, Director of Important Bird Areas (IBA) Initiative of the National Audubon Society, will speak on "Audubon's Important Bird Areas Program - a site based approach to bird conservation." In addition to an overview of the program, Dan Niven and Dan Hendricks (our BRAS Vice President and Louisiana IBA coordinator) will update us on progress toward designation of IBA sites in our state.

**Oct. 24:** Emily Byram, Regional Grassroots Coordinator for NAS will speak on "Audubon's Conservation Agenda and Public Policy Activities." Emily will give us an update and some background on issues Audubon is following in Congress now and how we can help as individuals and as a chapter.

**Nov. 21:** Lynn Tennefoss, NAS Director of Chapter Services, will participate in an informal question-answer session on how our chapter can better tailor its programs to fit with the needs and desires of our local community. Lynn will provide us with examples of programs in other chapters that are working well.

### Audubon Adventures

by **Chris Carlton**  
Education Chair

Third, fourth and fifth graders in the greater Baton Rouge area have an opportunity to expand their understanding of the natural world, thanks to Baton Rouge Audubon. A set of science resource materials called *Audubon Adventures* is published by the National Audubon Society for use in elementary classrooms. Each teacher who participates receives a kit containing 32 copies of a student newsletter, a detailed teacher's guide, Audubon's "Guide to a Healthy School Yard," and a classroom certificate. Participating teachers also become members of Audubon. *Audubon Adventures* promotes environmental awareness in the classroom and enhances the students' appreciation of the need to promote ecosystem health. To enroll your elementary classroom in *Audubon Adventures*, send us a short narrative describing your philosophy of environmental education and how *Audubon Adventures* will help you achieve your environmental education goals. For more information about the *Audubon Adventures* program, go to the web site at [www.audubon.org/educate/aa/](http://www.audubon.org/educate/aa/), then send your application for enrollment to: Chris Carlton, Department of Entomology, Life Science 402, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge LA, 70803, or via e-mail to: [ccarlnt@lsu.edu](mailto:ccarlnt@lsu.edu).

**Sept. 26, Thursday. BRAS Monthly Meeting.** IBA coordinator Dan Niven discusses NAS Program, 7:30 PM, Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center.

**Sept. 28, Saturday. Field Trip: Cohn Arboretum,** North Baton Rouge. Meet at Coffee all (College Dr. at I-10) at 8:45 AM. Call Charlie Fryling at 766-3120.

**Sept. 28, Saturday. Butterfly Extravaganza,** Mizell Farms in Folsom, Louisiana. Call Donna LaFleur for more info: 892-4492.

**First Saturday each month. "Breakfast with the Birds."** Field trip starts at 7 AM. Meet at Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Cntr.

**Oct. 5-6, Hilltop Arboretum Plant Sale**

**Oct. 13, Clegg's Fall Festival.** BRAS Booth at Siegen Lane location.

**Oct. 10, Thursday. Audubon Board Meeting,** 7:30 PM at Dorothy Prowell's home, 4644 Arrowhead Street, Baton Rouge. Open to BRAS members. Call Dorothy at 923-1070.

**Oct. 19, Saturday. Field Trip: Cat Island NWR,** St. Francisville Area. Meet at Coffee Call (College at I-10) at 7 AM. Call Harriett Pooler at 291-0077.

**Oct. 24, Thursday. BRAS Monthly Meeting.** Emily Byram discusses NAS grassroots activism, 7:30 PM, Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center.

# President's Message

by Dorothy Prowell

Few things stay the same for long and the Baton Rouge Audubon Society (BRAS) as well as the National Audubon Society (NAS) are on a changing path. The BRAS Board has been revitalized with several new faces and some former players. It is an energetic group with big plans for BRAS. We are committed to spiffing up the Peveto Woods Sanctuaries and finding creative ways to protect other sites. Our plans include enhancing community outreach by actively pursuing educational initiatives. We expect to do a better job at voicing our concerns with our politicians on issues that favor bird conservation. You will be hearing about what we're up to at our monthly meetings and in the *Barred Owl*. For starters, read about our activities in the Sanctuary, Conservation, and Education sections in this issue of the newsletter.

Because so many changes are occurring at NAS in their vision and relationship to chapters, I thought it would be beneficial to hear about those changes directly from the horse's mouths. Therefore, I've stacked the fall membership meetings with directors of 3 different NAS programs. On Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>, Dan Niven will educate us on the Important Bird Areas Program (see write up below). On Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, Emily Byram will talk about issues NAS is tracking in Congress. On Nov. 21, Lynn Tennefoss will give us an opportunity to ask questions and discuss chapter planning, and enlighten us on innovative programs in other chapters. The BRAS Board will also take advantage of Lynn's visit to spend an afternoon with her

discussing short and long term planning for our chapter. By January, the BRAS Board hopes to have a plan with objectives to share with our membership.

BRAS is giving a gift of \$100 to the Important Bird Areas initiative and to the NAS advocacy program to show our appreciation to Dan Niven and Emily Byram for traveling to Baton Rouge to speak to our membership. In this *Barred Owl*, we have repeated a plea from John O'Neill for support for a threatened site in Peru that represents a hot spot for bird diversity (the zip code was missing last time-oops). BRAS is donating \$100 to this cause and we encourage you to give them some help if you can.

## **BRAS BUSINESS**

**Proposed Amendments to Bylaws:** The new officers have approved a change in our bylaws that will allow us to conduct some of our routine business over the computer. If approved by a vote of our membership at the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, this will free up time at our board meetings for more important matters, lead to quicker turn-around in decision making, and smoother operations in general. We hope you'll agree and support us. Here are the proposed changes:

No. 11.

3. All required written notifications specified in the Baton Rouge Audubon Society By-laws to the members or Board of Directors may be satisfied by posted announcements on the Baton Rouge Audubon Society Web Site.

4. Voting by the Board of Directors may be accomplished by email and results will be valid when a majority responds.

**Board Meetings in 2002** Meetings will be held at Dorothy Prowell's house, 4644 Arrowhead St. in Baton Rouge at 7PM on the following dates: Oct. 10, Nov. 14, and Dec. 12..

# Audubon Notes

by Dan Hendricks

Under the leadership of President John Flicker, the National Audubon Society has returned to its classic mission of birds and conservation. NAS sees the recreational enjoyment of birds as a popular way to present urgent environmental issues, especially the conservation of habitat upon which the health of our nation and planet depends. NAS actively assists states like Louisiana to translate the Audubon mission on the ground into concrete educational and conservation programs. Specifically, local chapters throughout the United States are urged to create state offices to spearhead and manage Audubon programs. Second, local chapters are working with NAS to establish Audubon Centers, places where birds, conservation and education are presented to the public.

Dan Hendricks of BRAS and Michael Crago of the Orleans Audubon chapter are heading up a new Audubon initiative in Louisiana called the Important Bird Area project. Sponsored by the National Audubon Society, IBA's are now found in 48 states. The mission of the Louisiana IBA's are to: identify the most essential areas for birds in Louisiana; monitor those sites for changes to birds and habitat; and conserve these areas for long-term protection. The local IBA steering committee includes Charles Fryling, Edna Silverman, Donna Dittman, Steven Cardiff, David Muth, Michael Crago and Dan Hendricks. The national coordinator for the IBA program, Dr. Dan Niven will make a presentation to BRAS on September 26.

## Sanctuary Report

by Victoria Moseley

After a long absence from being involved with our wonderful Peveto Woods Sanctuaries, I was offered the opportunity to be Sanctuary chair by president and friend Dorothy Prowell. I feel a great fondness and respect for the importance of our sanctuary. I have gotten off to a slow start but thanks to the dedicated efforts of our volunteers and the sanctuary grounds keeper, Al Heath, things are going well. My plans are to have things in shape by fall migration and the Louisiana Ornithological Meetings in late October. I am in the process of making new signs to replace those at the highway and at the gate to the sanctuaries. This summer Al replaced the roof on the kiosk and removed fallen branches and trees from the trail system. The trees that were planted several years ago are doing well but need to be remarked so they can be seen more easily when mowing. I will have a more complete report when I can get down there this fall and see what needs to be done. If you want to help work at the sanctuary, email me at [vmosele@lsu.edu](mailto:vmosele@lsu.edu) or write me: Victoria Moseley, Dept. of Entomology -LSU, 402 Life Sciences Bldg. Baton Rouge, LA 70808 with your name and phone number and I will call you when we plan to go down and work. I welcome the chance to work with all of you and to get our sanctuaries in top shape for birds and for birders around the country.



## Baton Rouge Audubon Field Trips

**NOTE: All BRAS field trips are open to the public.  
A \$1.00 fee is charged per person.**

**Saturday, September 28, 2002 (Easy, Walking Trails)**

### **Cohn Arboretum**

#### **North Baton Rouge**

Meet at Coffee Call (College Drive @ I-10) at 8:45 AM  
Join Charlie Fryling, LSU Landscape architect on an outing to the Cohn Arboretum in North Baton Rouge. A collection of Japanese maples, sassafras trees, various oak species and blooming bedding plants are a few of the things to be seen. Meet at Coffee Call on College Drive at 8:45 AM to carpool or meet Charlie at 9:15 at the arboretum. No admittance is required for the arboretum, \$1 required for BRAS. Call Charlie for further details at 766-3120. The trip should take approximately 2 hours. Directions from B.R.: I-10 North to airport, Right on Harding, left onto Plank, right on Comite and it is at the corner of Comite and Foster.

**Saturday, October 19, 2002 (Easy to Moderate, mostly trailside birding)**

### **Cat Island NWR**

#### **St. Francisville Area**

Meet at Coffee Call (College Drive @ I-10) at 7 AM  
Meet Harriett Pooler at Coffee Call at 7 AM and carpool to West Feliciana Parish to see one of the few remaining unleveed sections of floodplains along the lower Mississippi River. It contains the world's largest bald cypress tree. Some estimates put the tree between 700-1500 years old. Virginia Rettig, wildlife manager will take us along the trail to see early fall migrants. Pack water, lunch, insect repellent. We should be finished by noon. Call Harriett at 291-0077 for more info.

**Saturday, November 2, 2002**

### **Bonnet Carre Spillway**

Between Baton Rouge and New Orleans

Meet at Coffee Call (College Drive @I-10) at 6:30 AM

Join Marty Guidry on a trip to see wintering hummingbirds as well as Bonnet Carre Spillway birds. Meet at Coffee Call to carpool at 6:30 AM. Plan to see American bittern, osprey, redhead, canvasback ducks, sedge wrens and possibly Leconte's sparrow. Call Marty at 755-1915 for more details.

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## ***Barred Owl T-Shirts for BRAS***

Baton Rouge Audubon T-Shirts are available for purchase. These shirts are a heavyweight blend of 50% cotton/50% poly, and feature a flying Barred Owl logo on the front with the words *Baton Rouge Audubon*.

The t-shirts are available in two colors, natural (ivory), and jade (green/teal). Sizes from Adult Large to XXL (Sorry, we're out of Mediums). Each shirt is \$15. You may buy t-shirts at any Audubon monthly meeting, or call Donna LaFleur at 892-4492 to arrange for purchase. We will mail your purchase for an additional \$2. per shirt. Send a check or money order made out to: Baton Rouge Audubon Society, P.O.Box 82525, Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2525.

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## **2003 Bird Patches Are In**

This year's bird is a Blue Grosbeak. Murrel Butler was kind enough to do the painting for us, and we appreciate his generosity and dedication to conservation. Patches can be ordered by filling out our Membership Form and remitting with check or money order, or using the form on our web site: [www.braudubon.org](http://www.braudubon.org) and using PayPal.

# CONSERVATION ISSUES

Greetings! I'm Mark Skinner, the new BRAS Conservation Chair. If you have concerns about bird conservation or public policy that degrades bird habitat or diminishes bird populations, please contact me at [mkskinner@po.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:mkskinner@po.nrcs.usda.gov) or call me at home : 201-0078. Keep in mind that the Louisiana Audubon Council is also an advocate for birds and healthy habitat, and they are working on a number of matters of conservation concern. In this column I'll typically provide briefs of the conservation issues we've been following below, and for more information about the issue and how to help please see the BRAS web site: [www.braudubon.org](http://www.braudubon.org)

**Recent logging in Compartment 8 at Sherburne Wildlife Management Area** (St. Martin and St. Landry Parishes) occurred near nesting swallowtail kites and degraded the area near Whiskey Bay Road that is heavily used for birding. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has approved additional logging in winter of 2003. Thankfully, no logging will be conducted during bird breeding season or in wet weather. Nevertheless, *the BRAS Board opposes Department of Wildlife and Fisheries logging in Sherburne Wildlife Management Area*. Only about 15% of presettlement bottomland hardwood forest remains in the Lower Mississippi Valley, and Sherburne represents one of the largest extents of unbroken forest in this region. On the other hand, there is no shortage of secondary habitat such as is produced by logging, and more is created constantly on private timberlands and by natural disturbance within our public lands system. Let Sherburne mature into one of the best examples of old growth bottomland forest in the region so that it can support plants and animals like the ivory-billed woodpecker that require these habitats. For more information and how to get involved, send me a note or visit the web site.

**Presidential Healthy Forests Initiative.** Legislation to be introduced in the U.S. Senate would loosen environmental restrictions on logging to attempt to minimize forest fires. President Bush's "Healthy Forests" initiative calls on Congress to pass laws that would "expedite procedures for forest thinning and restoration projects" and "ensure the sustainable forest management and appropriate timber production." This initiative is widely viewed by

environmentalists as a shallowly justified attempt to capitalize on this year's devastating fire season to "up the cut" in our national forests, and permanently hamstringing environmentalists in their forest protection activities. It would:

- \* Remove our most basic environmental and wildlife laws and protections while giving the logging industry unprecedented access to the oldest and largest trees from our most sensitive and undisturbed national forests, including forests in the Pacific Northwest.

- \* Eliminate or significantly restrict citizens' rights to appeal and bring lawsuits challenging forest restoration programs.

- \* Focus on fire-prevention efforts in back-country forests, rather than on neighborhoods and communities where people would be most affected by fires.

The Healthy Forests Initiative has the potential to unfavorably change the way the Kisatchie National Forest is managed, but its nationwide implications are of even greater concern since most forest management would occur out west. *The BRAS Board opposes President Bush's Healthy Forests Initiative* in favor of balanced ecosystem health approaches, so ask your representatives to do likewise. Find out how at your web site at [www.braudubon.org](http://www.braudubon.org).

**Federal Freedom to Fish Act.** The Freedom to Fish Act (FFA) would open Federal marine sanctuaries and parks to recreational fishermen, and foreclose the use of limited closures as a fisheries management tool. National Audubon is on record as opposing the FFA because it limits fishery manager's options and places the national marine sanctuary system at risk. *The BRAS Board also opposes the FFA* because it sets a dangerous precedent of incompatible consumptive use in parks, and is an attack on nature. We fishermen already have access to 99% of the ocean; isn't that enough? For more background and an opposing point of view, visit the FFA home page at [www.freedomtofish.org](http://www.freedomtofish.org). Our Senator John Breaux is the Senate sponsor of this legislation and needs to hear from you about it. Please voice your concern over the regressive Freedom to Fish Act now being considered in both the House of Representatives (H.R.3104, H.R.3547) and the Senate (S.1314). Details at the Society web site!

## LAC Notes

New officers were elected at the Louisiana Audubon Council's September 2002 meeting. Serving for the 2002-03 year are President, Barry Kohl of New Orleans; Vice-President, Donna

LaFleur of Baton Rouge; Secretary, Doris Falkenheiner of Baton Rouge; and Treasurer Clyde Mattison of Pineville.

The LAC is joining in the National Audubon Society's Important Bird Areas project to help determine the priority bird

habitats in Louisiana. All Audubon members are encouraged to contact their chapter leaders and discuss the areas being spotlighted, and see that their favorite birding sites are considered.

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## Membership Changes, an explanation:

National Audubon Society has changed membership rules and is allowing chapters to offer **CHAPTER ONLY** memberships. BRAS only members will receive our *Barred Owl* Newsletter and a 2003 bird patch if desired (Check "YES" on the form; see our web site for patch information and color photo). Dues will support only local programs. These memberships will run on a calendar year cycle (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) to simplify our book-keeping. Membership in BRAS is now coupled with the patch. Thus, if you want a patch, you have to join BRAS and the "Chapter Only" option is the cheapest way to go. (In reality we were sending out *Barred Owls* to everyone who bought a patch before so the only thing that's changed is that we've gone up \$5 on the patch, our first price increase in nearly 10 years).

National Audubon Society memberships for continuing members will be handled by NAS as they always have been. NAS members are automatically BRAS chapter members and will receive Audubon Magazine, our *Barred Owl* Newsletter, and a 2003

bird patch for an additional fee of \$10 (checked on the form). Members are tracked by NAS and begin the day you pay your dues. Your dues support both national and local programs.

National Audubon is offering a discounted rate to "New Members Only" as indicated on our membership form. All of these dues go to our chapter for the first year. Members receive Audubon Magazine, the *Barred Owl*, and a patch if desired (check "Yes" on form).

To summarize, we encourage you to join NAS. They pursue bird conservation, habitat protection, advocacy, and educational issues with vigor and on a broader level than your chapter. If you join National Audubon, you get the added bonus of a first class magazine. However, if you prefer to support only local causes, or if you are already a member of National Audubon in an area outside of the Baton Rouge chapter area, or if you just want to keep up your collection of patches, please check the BRAS --"Chapter Only" option.

## BRAS Directory

### Officers

President	
<b>Dorothy Prowell</b>	923-1070
Vice-President	
<b>Dan Hendricks</b>	
Secretary	
<b>JoAnn Fryling</b>	766-3120
Treasurer	
<b>Fred Sheldon</b>	763-6113
Immediate Past President	
<b>Donna LaFleur</b>	892-4492

### Committee Chairs

Conservation	
<b>Mark Skinner</b>	201-0078
Education	
<b>Chris Carlton</b>	344-9635
Field Trips/Activities	
<b>Harriett Pooler</b>	291-0077
Legal	
<b>Doris Falkenheiner</b>	346-8761
Membership	
<b>Elaine Kilgore</b>	667-3206
Publicity/Newsletter	
<b>Donna LaFleur</b>	892-4492
Sanctuaries	
<b>Victoria Moseley</b>	578-1838

### LAC Representatives

Doris Falkenheiner	346-8761
Charles Fryling	766-3120
Donna LaFleur	892-4492

Please send this form and your check made out to **Baton Rouge Audubon Society** to:

**Baton Rouge Audubon Society**

P.O. Box 82525

Baton Rouge, LA 70884

### BATON ROUGE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership Type	Cost	2003 Patch	Total Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> National Audubon Society - New Members Only	\$20	Yes__ No__	
<input type="checkbox"/> Baton Rouge Audubon Society - Chapter Only	\$20	Yes__ No__	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continuing National Audubon Members - BRAS Patch Option (must be a paid member of NAS)	\$10	Yes__	
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra 2003 patches (for members only)	\$10 ea	#_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution			
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			
Name _____ Phone _____			
Address _____			
City _____ State _____ Zip _____			
Email _____			
Local Chapter Code: 7XCH8 K01			

## BASIN EVENTS

**Experience Atchafalaya Days** will take place on October 12-13, 2002. Area events include a Festival in Henderson, La., Canoeing, Boat Tours, Nature Walks, and multiple Birding Trips. For information, call the Cajun Coast Visitors and Convention Bureau 1-800-256-2931, or

[www.cajuncoast.com](http://www.cajuncoast.com)

## A Plea from John O'Neill and Others to Save a Peruvian Bird Diversity Hotspot

A new species of gnatcatcher is in danger of becoming extinct before being formally described, and 4 other recently discovered bird species are also threatened. The gnatcatcher is known only from a small area of white-sand forest in the Allpahuayo-Mishana Reserve, a natural area close to the city of Iquitos in Peru's Amazon basin. These species and many others are threatened by a recent land invasion precipitated by land speculators. Allpahuayo-Mishana, created in 1999, encompasses 57,600 hectares. The Reserve contains one of the highest biodiversities known in the Amazon basin. Over 460 species of birds have been recorded. Due to its proximity to Iquitos, protection of the reserve is challenging. Demographic pressures are having a negative impact and limited resources are available for park maintenance and protection. Donations are urgently needed to hire more park guards, for policing operations, to replace signs, and to erect fences around vulnerable borders of the reserve. All monetary gifts, no matter how small, will be greatly appreciated and can be sent as a tax-deductible charitable donation to:

**Rainforest Conservation Fund**  
**2038 North Clark Street**  
**Suite 233**

**Chicago, Illinois 60614-4713**

Write "Allpahuayo-Mishana Fund" on the memo line of your check. For more details see the web site:

[www.peruecologico.com.pe/areas\\_alpahuayomishana.htm](http://www.peruecologico.com.pe/areas_alpahuayomishana.htm).

## LAC Notes...continued

The LAC continues to examine conservation issues, included in these the threat of chip mills harvesting our cypress swamps. More public awareness is needed about the issues associated with using cypress mulch in landscaping. In this case, the mulch is not a byproduct of the lumber industry; chip mills grind up the ENTIRE tree for mulch. This mulch rots just as fast as pine mulch and the concept many people have of insect protection is false. Chip mills in Louisiana could clean out a lot of beautiful cypress swamps. Targeted harvesting areas include the west shore of Lake Maurepas where Julia Sims book was photographed. Earthjustice, representing several environmental groups, sent a 60-day notice of intent to sue, and currently awaits responses.

The LAC is filing an amicus suit (along with the Sierra Club and others) to join with Senator Joe McPherson's lawsuit against the Governor concerning the management of White Lake, which was donated to the state. LAC opposes management of the White Lake Preserve in Vermilion Parish by any entity other than the state of Louisiana.

The Council is preparing a letter opposing the Sabine/Neches River Channel dredging project as it is currently proposed. Together with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, we feel this project has the potential to be harmful as it changes the hydrology of the area (our Peveto Woods Sanctuaries are very close to this area).

Other LAC actions include: voicing opposition to the U.S. Department of Defense Exemptions to the Endangered Species Act, and opposing the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Project.

**TRINIDAD/TOBAGO** - The LAC is organizing a trip to the Asa Wright Nature Center, planned for May 21-31, 2003. These dates will offer the possibility of seeing Leatherback turtles nesting on the beach. The cost is \$2,300 complete, based upon double occupancy. Call Barry Kohl at (504) 861-8465 for more information.

The next LAC meeting will be held January 11, 2003 in the Alexandria area. Any Audubon member is welcome to attend, call Doris Falkenheiner at (225) 346-8761 for date confirmation and directions to the meeting.