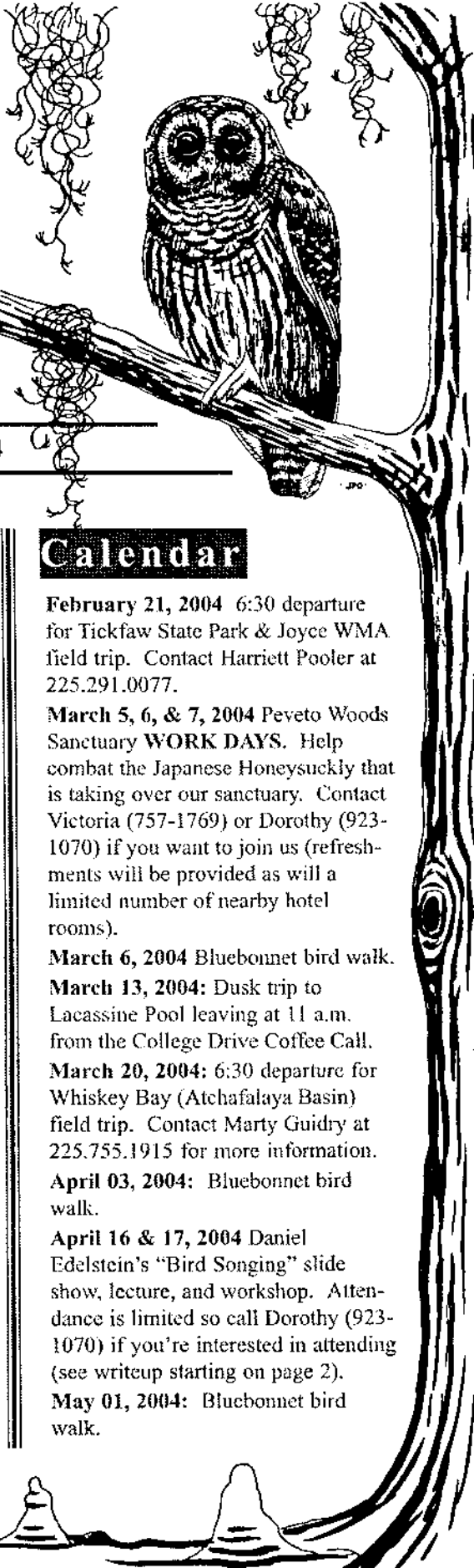


The **BARRED OWL**

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society

Volume XXX, Number 1

February / March 2004



President's Message

by Dorothy Prowell

There's lots of good news to report as 2004 unfolds. Our December Fund Raiser to protect habitat along the coast has been tremendously successful. We've raised just over \$22,000! Thanks for coming through with your generous donations. The Louisiana Nature Conservancy has located a track of land for us to consider and we're looking into that right now (see details on page 2).



BRAS is offering a Spring Program that will focus on identifying birds by their song on April 16 & 17th. We thought this topic would be of interest to many of you including advanced and beginning birders. I'm particularly weak on the migrants that we don't hear everyday. There is a detailed write-up on this starting on page 2.

December Fundraiser A *BIG* Success!

All of you received our December fundraising letter asking for donations to protect bird habitat along our LA coast. We are thrilled by the results so far. As of Jan. 6th, BRAS had received donations from 132 individuals or families resulting in a grand total of \$22,510. Many more letters have come in and we are processing them now. A big THANK YOU from BRAS to all those who made donations! A list of our donors (minus 43 others who wish to remain anonymous but who gave a total of \$8,260) can be found starting on page 5.

Calendar

February 21, 2004 6:30 departure for Tickfaw State Park & Joyce WMA field trip. Contact Harriett Pooler at 225.291.0077.

March 5, 6, & 7, 2004 Peveto Woods Sanctuary **WORK DAYS**. Help combat the Japanese Honeysuckle that is taking over our sanctuary. Contact Victoria (757-1769) or Dorothy (923-1070) if you want to join us (refreshments will be provided as will a limited number of nearby hotel rooms).

March 6, 2004 Bluebonnet bird walk.

March 13, 2004: Dusk trip to Lacassine Pool leaving at 11 a.m. from the College Drive Coffee Call.

March 20, 2004: 6:30 departure for Whiskey Bay (Atchafalaya Basin) field trip. Contact Marty Guidry at 225.755.1915 for more information.

April 03, 2004: Bluebonnet bird walk.

April 16 & 17, 2004 Daniel Edelstein's "Bird Singing" slide show, lecture, and workshop. Attendance is limited so call Dorothy (923-1070) if you're interested in attending (see writeup starting on page 2).

May 01, 2004: Bluebonnet bird walk.

THE LATEST ON BIRD HABITAT PROTECTION IN CAMERON

A deal is in the works with the closing planned for the end of February. The Louisiana Nature Conservancy (LNC) is in the final stage of negotiations for a 54 acres tract of land, 28.5 of which is chenier woods and 25.5 is marsh. The property is in Grand Chenier on Highway 82, east of Cameron. BRAS is considering buying a conservation easement on the property. The easement is a perpetual (forever) lease that will be written by LNC and agreed upon by the landowners and BRAS. It will protect habitat for birds by disallowing cattle grazing, logging, hunting, and development. Birdwatching by the public will be allowed. The advantage of an easement over ownership is that BRAS will not be responsible for paying taxes, insurance, or maintenance. Another bonus in the deal is that LNC and the LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries will work together to restore a portion of the chenier by planting trees.

BRAS could not accomplished habitat protect without the help of LNC. They secured matching funds from the National Wildlife Foundation which significantly leveraged our spending power. They have been scouting out land and cultivating landowners in Cameron over 4 years, specifically to partner with BRAS. We appreciate their willingness to work on our behalf to protect habitat for birds as well as sites for birdwatchers. We hope to continue this relationship in the future and to protect additional sites as they are located and as funding allows.

Support Sought for the John Burroughs Association submitted by Gary Ross
John Burroughs (1837-1921) occupies a permanent place in American literature as the founder of the school of nature writing. Burroughs's influence on our appreciation of nature is so great that he is often regarded as "Father of Recreational Nature Study."

After his death, The John Burroughs Association (JBA) quickly formed. Headquartered in the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), New York City, the association's aims are fostering a love of nature as exemplified by Burroughs's life and work, and preserving the places associated with his life. The association keeps members informed through *Wake-Robin*, a distinguished newsletter published three times each year and named after Burroughs's first volume of nature essays (1871).

As members of the National Audubon Society and/or the Baton Rouge Audubon Society, we revel in Burroughs-style storytelling. And in our hustle-bustle, dot com society of today, it is refreshing to know that an organization supporting intellectual, emotional, and unhurried writing still exists. But JBA needs to increase its financial base to continue its programs; hence the organization is actively soliciting new members. If interested, contact information is below. (It is worth noting that since all personnel of the organization are non-salaried, 100 percent of your contribution goes to the association's programs.)

Yearly Membership, from April to April:

Student/Senior:	\$15.00
Annual:	25.00
Family:	35.00
Patron:	50.00
Benefactor:	100.00
Life:	500.00

Tax-deductible payment (to "JBA") should be sent to the SECRETARY:

The John Burroughs Association, Inc.
15 West 77th Street
New York, New York 10024-5192
e-mail: breslof@amnh.org

BRAS SPRING PROGRAM

Bird Singing: The Ecology Of Bird Songs And Identifying Them By Ear

Friday, April 16th, 7-9PM, Evening Slide Show & Lecture at Bluebonnet Swamp presented by Daniel Edelstein

Do you enjoy identifying birds by their songs and calls, but wish you could improve your listening and "singing" skills? Do you ever wonder why birds sing, how they learn their repertoires and what social and survival values lie behind their eloquent songs and calls? Would you like to learn about the different non-vocal sounds birds make that immediately reveal their identity? Would you like to record bird songs and calls in the field with professional recording devices and hear birds better by amplifying their sounds?

see Spring Program on page 3

The answers to these questions and many others will be addressed in this colorful one-hour slide show. Beginning with a basic understanding of the ecology of bird songs and calls, the program proceeds to introduce different kinds and patterns of bird vocalizations (e.g., songs, calls, sub-songs, whisper songs, repertoires, mimicry) and the reasons researchers believe they are used. Using a fun and entertaining style of audience participation, Daniel allows attendants to hear typical songs as well as distinguish difficult-to-identify songs from sound-alike birds and groups of birds. This slide show is complemented by a workshop the next day that provides more in-depth exploration of the topic.

Saturday, April 17th, 7:30-11:00AM, Hands-on Bird Song Workshop at Bluebonnet Swamp lead by Daniel Edelstein (second workshop from 11:30AM-2:45PM if there is interest). Workshop limited to 15 participants and costs \$20 per person so sign up early by emailing Dorothy at dprowe@lsu.edu or by calling 923-1070. You may also sign up at the Friday night program if there is still space.

Hands-on experiences in this unique class include watching birds, listening to and recording bird songs and calls, and analyzing field recordings. Listening devices that magnify sounds will be used on the trail, along with powerful acoustical recording devices. In the classroom, we'll analyze our field-recorded songs (and compare the "written language" of birds (sonograms) by using Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "Canary" software in addition to employing learning resources such as the latest bird song CDs, colorful slides and award-winning videos. The result you can expect is significant improvement in your ability to identify bird songs and calls. We'll focus on why birds sing and how, and you will learn about secondary song, sub-song, whisper song, repertoires and mimicry. You'll receive copies of a 200+ bird song memory phrase handout and a wood-warbler tips ID chart.

Biography of Daniel Edelstein: Daniel is a Biologist with Impact Sciences, Inc., an Oakland, California environmental consulting firm for which he conducts wildlife and birding surveys. He also develops habitat conservation plans that seek to preserve wildlife and bird populations. He has led bird walks and taught natural history classes since 1981 and he has given bird presentations in more than 20 states. In addition, he has published one nature-related book and authored articles appearing in college-level science textbooks, science and nature magazines, science Web sites, and science museum exhibitions. He teaches environmental and ornithology classes at community colleges and adult education settings. He remains a popular speaker at nationwide conferences, ornithological meetings, and environmental events.

SATURDAY MORNING WALK WITH THE BIRDS AT BLUEBONNET SWAMP Every first Saturday of the month, Bluebonnet Swamp offers a public bird identification walk through the swamp. BRAS helps out by providing leaders. If you are a moderately competent birder (birds in Bluebonnet Swamp are common ones), **please** consider volunteering to lead one of these bird walks. It's fun and an opportunity to encourage others to enjoy birds. All months are open except Feb, March, April. Send Dorothy an email (dprowe@lsu.edu) or call her (225-923-1070) if you can lead a walk. Thanks!

Bobcat Hunting Season Letters Requested

There appears to be little justification for opening a hunting season for one of our last remaining predators, the bobcat (Legislative Act 1248). BRAS wrote a piece on this when we first heard about it in the fall so we won't go into much detail now. Bobcats have recovered somewhat from previous hunting and trapping episodes but not to a level that warrants a hunting season on state lands. Please consider sending an email objecting to this action to: Mr. Terry D. Denmon, Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission chairman (Denmon_TD@wlf.state.la.us).

If you prefer to send a letter, address it to:

James Jenkins, Secretary
P.O. Box 98000
Baton Rouge, LA 70898.



Christmas Bird Count

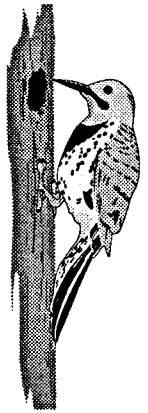
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Sunday, January 4th, 2004

by Victoria Bayless

This year the Baton Rouge Audubon Society helped sponsor the local Christmas Bird Count (CBC). There

were 43 participants not counting all the feeder watchers, (I don't have that report yet), and almost 50,000 birds were counted. Yes, a lot of those were Red-winged Blackbirds but we also had 5 Bald Eagles, over 500 Carolina Chickadees, and 146 wintering hummingbirds!. The weather was great and we had a lot of fun.



Thanks to everyone who made it a successful count.

Visit the Audubon Society Website for all the details. www.audubon.org.

Membership Renewals: Second Call

If your address label has an asterisk behind your name, our records indicate that your BRAS or National Audubon Society membership has expired.

PLEASE RENEW NOW!



Sanctuary Report by Victoria Bayless

We were down at Peveto Woods the 1st of February. The woods are beautiful in the winter BUT we have a very serious problem with Japanese Honeysuckle vines: they are literally covering our beautiful trees and taking over our chenier.

Why is Japanese Honeysuckle a pest ?

Like other invasive vines, it climbs over and smothers supporting plants. Once established, it grows vigorously and forms a dense closed canopy that can topple trees with their weight. Also, the dense canopies formed by the plant prevents light reaching the forest floor and thus endangers the recruitment of native species. Dense blankets of Japanese Honeysuckle can also spread across the forest floor, smothering native plant seedlings. These trailing vines produce runners that root and give rise to new plants. This type of vine covered canopy is not what our migratory birds need when they drop out of the sky after a long flight over the ocean.

We need more hands to help us with this pest so join us on March 5,6, &/or 7 (weather permitting). We have rented cabins and will supply food for everyone who wants to come down and help us fight the honeysuckle!! Please think about joining us for the whole weekend or for just a few hours; we need the help! Bring gloves, clippers or shears, and rubber boots. Please call me (757-1769) or Dorothy (923-1070) and let us know if you can come and if you want to stay the night. We intend to have fun, so bring some laughter and smiles along with your work gear (and your binoculars!).

See you there!

Victoria

Donations up to \$50

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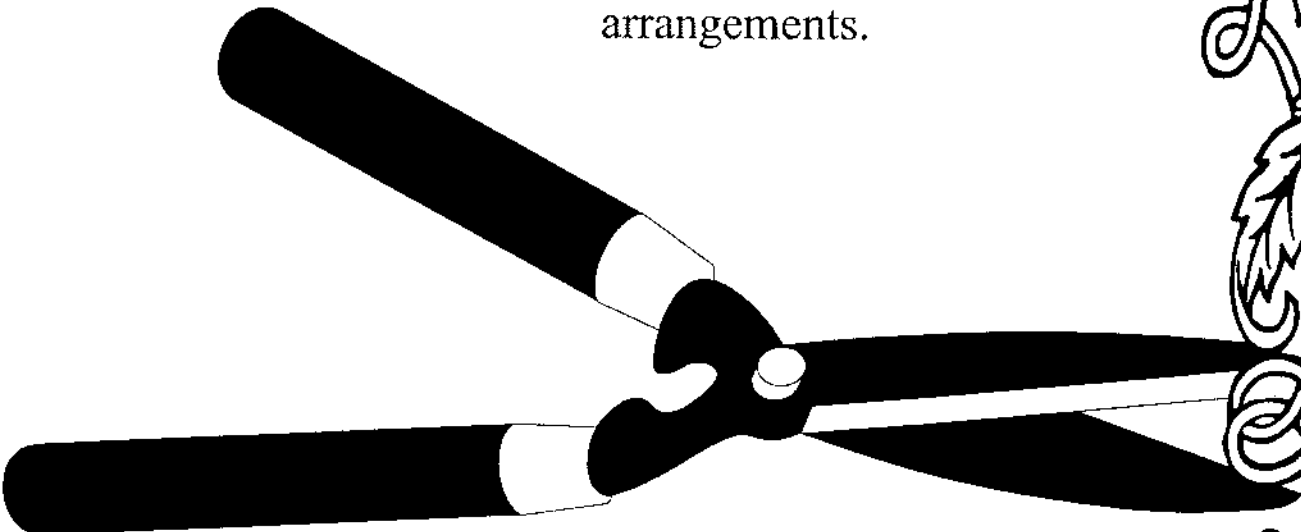
see Donors on page 7



Please Help!

Mark your calendar to join us at Peveto Woods the weekend of **March 5, 6, & 7, 2004**. We urgently need your help in combating the runaway Japanese Honeysuckle that's covering our sanctuary. We'll be working Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and need all the help we can get.

Baton Rouge Audubon is reserving a limited number of nearby hotel rooms for out-of-towners who want to stay overnight. We'll also provide food and refreshments for all who show up. Please call Victoria (225.757.1769) or Dorothy (225.923.1070) and let us know ahead of time if you want to participate so we can make appropriate arrangements.



FIELD TRIPS

by Harriett Pooler

BRAS field trips cost \$1 per person and are open to the public. Unless otherwise noted, all trips meet at Coffee Call at their new location next to Office Depot on College Drive (between I-10 and Perkins). Call Harriett Pooler, Fieldtrip Chairperson, at 291-0077 for more information.

Saturday, February 21-Tickfaw State Park & Joyce WMA

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Wal-Mart shopping center (meet near garden entrance) off O-Neal & I-12. Join Harriett Pooler on a trip to Tickfaw State Park and then Joyce Wild-life Management Area. Tickfaw State Park is in Springfield, LA and has a cypress/tupelo swamp and bottom-land hardwood forest. We should see plenty of woodland winter migrants as well as waterfowl. Entrance fee to the park is \$2 per car so we'll want to carpool. Bring water and lunch as well as binoculars and bug spray.

Saturday, March 13- Dusk at Lacassine Pool

Be at Coffee Call by 11:00 a.m. to join Joe Kleiman on a trip to the rice fields around Rayne. We will reach Lacassine Pool in time to explore a little and see many waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds moving out to feed or roost as the sun sets; it's quite a spectacle. Target bird will be American Bittern though many raptors should also be around. Bring snacks and something to drink since it will be late before we return. Insect repellent and a spotting scope are good to bring as well. There will be limited walking. Call Joe at 751-8716 if you have any questions.

Saturday, March 20-Whiskey Bay Road

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Coffee Call. Join Marty Guidry as we explore the Atchafalaya Basin and experience the beginning of migration and the nesting season. We'll bird Whiskey Bay Road and do a little walking, mostly along the roadside. Target birds include Prothonotary, Kentucky & Hooded Warbler, N. Parula, White-Eyed & Yellow-throated Vireo, Summer Tanager, Orchard Oriole, Mississippi Kite, and possibly an early American Swallow-tailed Kite. Bring binoculars, something to drink, and lunch. If all folks have either a Louisiana hunting license, fishing license, or Wild LA stamp (or are 60 or over), we'll bird also on Sherburne WMA. Call Marty at 755-1915 with any questions.

Month of April, 2004

April is spring migration and Louisiana has several birding festivals. In lieu of a specific April fieldtrip for BRAS, I encourage you to participate in the trips planned for the different birding festivals where you can bird in new areas, meet fellow birder, and have fun (www.birdlouisiana.com).

Donors continued from page 5

Donations of \$500

Doris Falkenheiner Baton Rouge, LA
Margaret S. Fontaine Shreveport, LA

Donations of \$1000

Kermit & Betty Cummings Pineville, LA

Donations of \$5000

Curtis & Helen Sorrells Kenner, LA

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Donna LaFleur 892-4492

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Victoria M. Bayless 757-1769

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LAC Representatives

Doris Falkenheiner 346-8761

Charles Fryling 766-3120

Donna LaFleur 892-4492

The Barred Owl

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January 15 for the Feb/March issue
March 15 for the April/May issue
May 15 for the June/July issue
July 15 for the August/September issue
September 15 for the Oct/Nov issue
November 15 for the Dec/Jan issue.
Submissions may be sent via e-mail to vbayless2@cox.net or mailed to:

Editor, *Barred Owl*

Baton Rouge Audubon Society
P.O. Box 82525

Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2525

Changes of address and other official correspondence should be sent to the mailing address shown above.

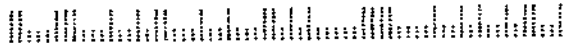
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4644 ARROWHEAD ST
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Chapter (BRAS) and National Audubon Membership

Join NAS by going to their website (www.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 bi-monthly BRAS newsletter. The Barred Owl. Sanctuary patches (sew or iron-on bird patches) are \$10 extra and can be received by mailing in this form and checking the NAS member Patch Option.

BRAS Only Membership

Join BRAS if you want all of your dues to support local conservation and education. You will receive The Barred Owl newsletter every other month, first priority for field trips and educational programs, and a sanctuary patch if desired (check off options on form). To join BRAS, make checks payable to Baton Rouge Audubon Society and send this form along with your check to:
BRAS, P.O. Box 82525, Baton Rouge, LA 70884.

Local Chapter Code: 7XCH8 K01

Baton Rouge Audubon Society (BRAS)

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

- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$30 Family Membership
- \$100 Rose-breasted Grosbeak Membership
- \$250 Louisiana Waterthrush Membership
- \$500 Painted Bunting Membership
- \$1000 Cerulean Warbler Membership
- \$_____ Additional Contribution

_____ # of patches (1 free with BRAS membership, additional patches @ 10 each, NAS member patches @ \$10 each)

Name: _____ Ph: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____