

The **BARRED OWL**

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society

Volume XXXVI, Number 3

4th Quarter, 2009

A Message from **Eric Liffmann, our new BRAS President**

*Dear Members of the
Baton Rouge Audubon Society,*

It is an honor and a privilege to be elected as the new Baton Rouge Audubon Society President. I feel that our group's contributions have been significant over the recent past and it is my hope that this might continue, with your help, in the future. I would like to sincerely thank the outgoing members of the board; David Cagnolatti (Vice-President) and Robert McLaughlin (Fieldtrips) for all of their good work on our behalf. Luckily for us these positions will be ably filled by Richard Gibbons and Jeff Harris respectively. I also owe many thank-yous to Harriett Pooler who has and continues to give her time and talent to the endeavors of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society.

Two of my goals for the upcoming year are to increase our membership and to increase the participation of our existing members in our conservation initiatives.

"What can I do?" you might ask... Take a friend birding, bring a friend to an Audubon event, give someone a pair of binoculars, birdseed, send someone to Mrs. Jane's wonderful classes, become a "fan" of BRAS on facebook, serve on one of our committees, help at one of our events, purchase a membership/ make a donation on someone's behalf, buy mulch other than cypress, use less fertilizer, encourage friends and neighbors to keep their cats indoors, cancel your catalogs and plant some native flora to name a few.

While we don't have any fall programs yet scheduled, we are in communication with some very interesting people who will possibly speak to our group in the near future. In addition, I've been in contact with LSU ornithologist Steve Cardiff to see where BRAS might help in the new birding event, "Red Beans and Yellow Rails". This would be the inaugural year of what sounds like a great idea. Steve Cardiff and Donna Dittman have joined forces with Rice Farmers in the SW Louisiana area to maximize the chance of seeing rail species in an agro/eco-tourism opportunity from October 30th to November 8th.

If you wish to keep up with the goings-on at BRAS there are several ways to do so. If you are not already on the listserve you can join at bras-l@listserv.lsu.edu This service will not clog your inbox! You can also keep up with us via our webpage <http://www.braudubon.org/> and lastly we are now on facebook. If you are not online feel free to contact me at the number listed in the officers section. Again, I am very pleased to serve as president and look forward to seeing you at some of our events.

~ Eric ~

2010 PATCHES ARE IN!



THE ATCHAFALAYA

National and local environmental groups have formed a coalition to advance better management of the Atchafalaya River basin, which represents the largest contiguous bottomland hardwood forest and swamp in the United States—larger than the Florida Everglades. Our goal is to foster agreement between scientists, stakeholders, and the state on how to best protect and restore this diverse area. Together we are calculating how potential management scenarios may affect the people, habitats, animals, and ecosystem within the basin.

Recently, the coalition negotiated a compromise for the state's Coast Forest Initiative to provide strategic forests with permanent protection by removing a 30-year easement provision, which is not conducive to mature forest sustainability. Environmental groups will continue to work with forest area owners who are not interested in granting permanent easements. "We are excited that our coalition is bringing grassroots concerns together with science to guide management of this critical area," says Karen Westphal, Atchafalaya basin program manager for National Audubon Society.

Local-scale restoration

As plans get underway for large-scale restoration, coastal marshes continue to erode and cypress swamps fill with sediment. To get local-scale restoration started immediately, the National Audubon Society has contracted with a dredge company to build a versatile, portable dredge that can be used in areas of limited accessibility.

As proof of its effectiveness, National Audubon Society will begin restoring the marsh at its own Rainey Sanctuary this fall and will hold workshops to get the technology into the hands of neighboring landowners. "We can use this new technology to keep some areas more 'wet and wild,' while sending life-giving sediments to start rebuilding the coast now," says Melanie Driscoll, director of bird conservation for National Audubon Society. Future plans include periodic cleaning of sediment traps in the Atchafalaya Basin to use the sediment beneficially elsewhere.

**BRAS wishes to acknowledge
Downtown Kiwanis Club
of Baton Rouge
for their support of our
Education Programs**



Thank you so much!

Baton Rouge Audubon thanks



**for their sponsorship of
our education programs!**

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The Barred Owl

is published quarterly by the Baton Rouge chapter of the NAS. Submissions should be emailed to newsletter@braudubon.org

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

**Baton Rouge
Audubon Society
P.O. Box 67016
Baton Rouge, LA 70896**



BRAS EDUCATION IN ACTION

The kids in Mrs. Andrews third grade class had a good time getting their hands dirty putting in their own Hummingbird and Butterfly garden. On a warm day in April, the kids prepared the old garden beds by pulling out the weeds and turning the soil. Each child had a hand at planting a particular type of plant -- each chosen to be attractive either to hummingbirds or to butterflies. Birdfeeders were hung with feeders that would accommodate different types of food. The kids were proud of their work and overjoyed to see birds visit the garden and enjoy their treats. Baton Rouge Audubon appreciates the Cooperative Funding from National Audubon that made this garden possible.



A new bird identification game gave kids and their parents an opportunity to develop their skills at Earth Day and Step Outside Day 2009.

Kids Who Bird (www.kidswjobird.org)

...a club for kids aged 9 through 16 who are interested in learning about birds and birdwatching will meet on the third Wednesday of the month at the Audubon offices at 6160 Perkins Rd, Suite 215, Baton Rouge. Each meeting will have a particular theme (hummingbirds, raptors, etc) and the group will learn bird identification skills. Field trips to various locations in the Baton Rouge area will also be scheduled.



Forty-five Species of Hummers! Oh, My!

By Carol Foil

That (the 45 species) may not have been the most amazing result for everyone in the group of Louisiana birders whom Karen Fay led to Peru in July, but for me it was! Others may have been more impressed by the mountain road that led us into the Manu National Park (which involved mud, steep drop-offs and two-way traffic on a one lane road). Others may have been wowed by the total of 429 bird species we counted as a group in our ten days of birding!

As many BRAS members know, Karen, often with the help of her Ecuadorian friend Juan Carlos Calvachi, occasionally organizes groups of friends to go off hunting bird experiences in Latin America. For her Peru trip of July 17 – 26, Karen and I were joined by BRAS members Linda Stewart-Knight, Harriett Pooler, Peggy & John McConnell, Dave Cagnolatti (his first overseas birding, I think!), and LOS members Mike Musumeche, (plus his friend Louis Debetaz from Texas), and Joelle Finley and Mary Joe Krieger. Joining us were Karen's sister Carol Newmyer... from Arizona and birders from Massachusetts, Al and Lois Richardson.... Juan Carlos had arranged for us some extraordinary local guides: Ramiro and Virgilio Yábar are the sons of the owners of the very first Manu birding lodge, Amazonia Lodge (a bit more about that later). They grew up showing the first and best birding guides and ornithologists around their property and absorbed EVERYTHING from those who first led birding tours to that part of Peru. Now they are grown and are full-fledged and first-rate birding guides with a unique combination of local know-how and much received and hard-studied bird knowledge.

Our itinerary began in the highlands around Cusco (Huancapay Lakes and the road to Abra Malaga, for those who have been there). We enjoyed Puna Teal, Cinereous Harrier and Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, amongst many other birds. Of course, my favorite was the hummer, Bearded Mountaineer!

From there we did the obligatory and well-received trip to Machu Picchu, staying at a wonderful garden lodge in Aguas Calientes. On the grounds of the very luxurious El Pueblo Hotel there we were wowed by Gould's Incas and Long-tailed Sylphs, amongst other hummers, and tons of tanagers at their feeders. After that side trip we set off VERY early from Cusco to avoid being hemmed in by a national strike (which made us feel SO Peru-wise) to bird the famous Manu Road.

Birding the road involved our fearless leaders spotting foraging flocks and all of us jumping out to work the flock until it disappeared into the mist up or down in the forest. We birded from above tree line into the cloud forest and to the lowest stop of our Manu experience – starting at the pass at 3900m and ending at Amazonia Lodge on the upper Rio Madre de Dios at 735m. A long and wondrous day! The road itself kept our attention better than it might have otherwise because our luxurious 20 seat coach was just a tad bit 'challenged' by some of the low-water bridges. Ha!

We made it to our first destination at the floodwater port of Atalaya with some daylight to spare for enjoying a canopied boat ride across the big river to Amazonia Lodge. There we were greeted with Pisco Sours and in the waning minutes of light by several species of hummingbirds feeding on the lodge's 15-year-old Vervain bushes. That night there were

dreams of our first forest trail birding in the early morning to come.

Amazonia Lodge is a magical place. On the ridges and trails of the family property and the riverfront itself, birders and ornithologists have recorded an amazing 615 species of birds between 1983 and 2008! Ramiro Yábar keeps that list current and up-to-date taxonomically and it can be found on the web at the Amazonia website. <http://www.amazonialodge.com/> Our group was there for 3 ½ days of birding and we managed to see or hear, by my own reckoning, 231 species! We saw 4 species of monkey as well and were told that was a sign of a really healthy forest. Really!

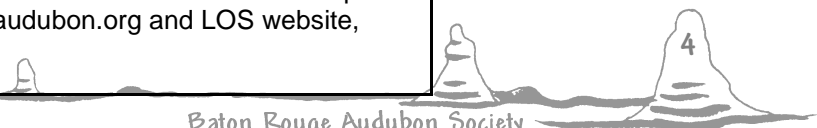
Our next stop, after a brief morning visit to a parrot and macaw clay lick on the river, was back up the road at Cock-of-the-Rock Lodge ((1600m) where there is a blind set up at a long-standing Andean Cock-of-the-Rock lek. We got spectacular photos: See some of my photos and links to Dave's and Mike's photos at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dermoidhome/collections/72157621895386660/> The feeders there were teeming with tanagers and hummers. We were all sad to have to leave to bird our way back up Manu Road (and some a little fearful, too). Once back in Cusco, after a wonderful farewell dinner, our last official itinerary item involved a guided tour of some of the Inca ruins above the city, but we managed to turn that into a birding outing (our guide was very understanding) and got great looks at Giant Hummingbirds and three species of Sierra-Finch, amongst other great birds. A history lesson lost on us!

We finally had to fly back to Lima but Juan Carlos even had some lagniappe arranged for us for our long stop-over at the Lima airport before final departure; he had a van and guide take us to San Isidro beach for a look at Inca Terns and Peruvian Boobies and Pelicans to round out our final species count.

What a great trip! Contact Juan Carlos at calvachi@uio.satnet.net if you are interested in a Peru trip or to visit his lodge, El Jardin B&B in Quito.

BRAS to host 2010 LOS Winter Meeting

The Baton Rouge Audubon Society will host the winter LOS meeting in Baton Rouge on January 29, 30 & 31, 2010. It will be held at the Holiday Inn Select on Constitution Ave. and there will be a block of rooms (at a discounted price) available for LOS members. Some of the fieldtrips include visiting Richfield Riversilt for wintering sparrows, Backyards for wintering hummingbirds, Oakley Plantation and Mary Ann Brown Preserve in St. Francisville, and the LSU Museum of Natural Science to see specimens/ Capital Lakes for wintering waterfowl. More details to follow soon on speakers and times at BRAS website, www.braudubon.org and LOS website, www.losbird.org



John L. Borom
Alabama Coastal BirdFest

October 15-18, 2009

The John L. Borom Alabama Coastal BirdFest includes walking, boat and bus trips into the habitats of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, Weeks Bay, Gulf Shores, Orange Beach and more! These include the mudflats of the Mobile Bay, the sand dunes and sea oat grasses, swamps, maritime forests and wetlands. BirdFest offers nearly 20 birding tours with expert guides to great spots on the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail, evening speakers, dinner events and a free day-long Bird & Conservation Expo with exhibits, speakers, vendors, films children's activities and more. Join us for the John L. Borom Alabama Coastal BirdFest and enjoy four days of beautiful scenery, expert-guided tours, rare birds and educational speakers.

Every fall the birding community of all ages and levels descends on the Eastern Shore region of the Mobile Bay to attend the John L. Borom Alabama Coastal BirdFest. The BirdFest attracts professionals, veteran and amateur enthusiasts, photographers, nature lovers, and collegians from across the country and beyond. BirdFest provides the opportunity to experience the prime birding habitats contained in the Alabama Coastal ecosystem. The entire event raises money to protect and preserve birding habitat on the Alabama Gulf Coast.

All trips and events require advance registration and depart from 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center.

For more information see
www.alabamacoastalbirdfest.com

What Our Friends Are Doing

Fall Orleans Audubon Society and Crescent Bird Club 2009 Field Trips

Bring binoculars, field guides, bug spray, rain gear, sunscreen and refreshments. Boots and walkie talkies may be useful. Snacks and drinks are recommended. For trip information, contact the leader. A Wild Louisiana Stamp is required for field trips to LA Wildlife Refuges. The stamp can be purchased at Walmart, Puglia's Sporting Goods, 1925 Veterans Blvd., 504-837-0291 or directly from the LA Wildlife and Fisheries.

Sat. Oct. 3
Grand Isle (all day trip)
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Leader: Dan Purrington
504-717-3283

Sat. Oct. 17
Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge (half day trip)
Time: 7:30 a.m.
Leader: Phillip Wallace
504-822-0483

Tues. Oct. 27
CBC/OAS Banquet
Cash bar, buffet & program
Presented by Joelle Finley
joellefinley@bellsouth.net
504-866-3996

Sat. Nov. 7
Bayou Segnette State Park
Time: 7:30 a.m. (half day trip)
Leader: Jean Aldrich
504-343-1673

Sat. Nov. 21
Big Branch National Wildlife Refuge
Time: 8:00 a.m. (half day trip)
Leader: Ed Wallace
504-343-1433

Sat. Dec. 12
Bonnet Carre Spillway
Time: 8:00 a.m. (half day trip)
Leader: Chris Brantley
504-234-4560

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!

March 2009 - August 2009

CERULEAN WARBLER

(\$1000 & up)

Paul Dickson, Shreveport, LA
Curtis C. & Helen Sorrells, Kenner, LA
Brent Wood, Covington, LA

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH

(\$250)

G. Paul Kemp, Baton Rouge, LA

ROSEBREASTED GROSBEAK

(\$100)

Dave & Tracy Banowetz, Weyanoke, LA
Mary Benson, Baton Rouge, LA
Rosemary & Joan Seidler, Shreveport, LA
Beverly Smiley, Baton Rouge, LA

WOOD THRUSH

(\$50)

C. Russell Allor, Baton Rouge, LA
Beth Baldrige, Prairieville, LA
Roger & Barbara Breedlove, Alexandria, LA
Bradley Currier, Baton Rouge, LA
Dennis Demcheck & Kay Radlauer,
Baton Rouge, LA
Mohamed & Joyce El-Mogazi,
Lake Charles, LA
Tom & Jean Hickcox, Baton Rouge, LA
Randy Lanctot, Baton Rouge, LA
E. V. Tiny Moore, Alexandria, LA
Joseph G. Simmons, Baton Rouge, LA
Barry & Teri Tillman, Natchez, MS

What Our Friends Are Doing

Hilltop Arboretum

sponsored by
Friends of Hilltop Arboretum
www.lsu.edu/hilltop - 225 767 6916

Sat., Oct. 3 & Sun., Oct. 4

PlantFest!

Sun. Oct. 18

Fall Garden Tour

Thurs., Nov. 12

"Sustainable Pond Management"

Mon., Nov. 23 and Wed., Nov. 24

Junior Master Gardener Fall Day Camp

Sat. Dec. 5

Year end Plant Sale

Baton Rouge Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Baton Rouge Audubon Society

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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.)

Name: _____ Ph: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

MAIL COMPLETE FORM TO:
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