

The **BARRED OWL**

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society

Volume XXXVII, Number 1

1st Quarter, 2010

Each year at this time....

....the **Baton Rouge Audubon Society** reaches out to its members and friends to ask for their financial support to continue our chapter's activities. We are very fortunate to have an extremely active chapter with many exceptional members donating their time, talent and treasure. We offer much to our members and the community through a wide array of activities. Because we at BRAS are wholly volunteer based, your donations to our chapter are used wisely and conservatively in our endeavors.

It is with pleasure that I can write of the accomplishments of Melanie Driscoll, Dave Patton and Jane Patterson. As many of you know, Melanie was hired as the Important Bird Area (IBA) coordinator for Louisiana. Since her hiring Melanie has suc-

ceeded in identifying and recognizing 2,495,529 acres of habitat for globally important bird areas and 406,397 acres of continentally important sites. IBAs will serve as targets for conservation planning, coastal restoration efforts, and may receive conservation dollars for land purchases or conservation easements. Melanie has been promoted to Director of Bird Conservation for Louisiana.

Our sanctuary in Cameron parish, under the ever-diligent Dave Patton, continues its' recovery from Hurricane Rita. This coastal oak forest (Chenier) is exceedingly rare, imperiled and critically important for the survival of a phenomenal number of birds. In the spring approximately 100 species of birds will use these woods to forage for life-sustaining food before they continue their migration. With your continued pledge we can add to our holdings and add to the lands we protect. We can also continue sanctuary by replanting native trees and shrubs and removing invasive species such as the Chinese Tallow.

Although Baton Rouge Audubon has a healthy membership, there is still an opportunity and need for our conservation and education programs which have been tirelessly and expertly led by Jane Patterson. In order to prepare for the future, I would like to reach out and ask you, our very generous membership for monetary help. Many thanks in advance for you continued support in the future.

Sincerely, Eric Liffmann

2010 LOS Winter Meeting

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

January 29, 30 & 31, 2010

Holiday Inn Baton Rouge

College Drive I-10

Baton Rouge, LA 70808

The Baton Rouge Audubon Society welcomes all members to join us in East Baton Rouge Parish for winter birding! Our meeting room for Friday and Saturday night will be in the Tiger Room on the first floor of The Holiday Inn in Baton Rouge. A variety of field trips led by some of the area's best birders will highlight the winter birding in and around the greater Baton Rouge area.

(See pages 4 & 5 for more information on this great weekend!)

BRIAR PATCH FOR SALE

by Dave Patton

Briar Patch is the affectionate name given to their camp by Hope and Tom Norman. It is located in Little Florida Subdivision only a few blocks from our Peveto Woods Sanctuary in Cameron Parish. The Normans have been generous supporters of Baton Rouge Audubon and always offer use of the camp when we have work weekends in the sanctuary. They have also offered the use of facilities to many LOS birders on the meeting weekends. The Norman family has grown up and some have moved away from Louisiana. Hope and Tom can no longer use it as much as they wish and have decided to sell the camp. The camp sits on two lots, and the property includes another 3 adjoining lots. The facilities are modern and very comfortable. It has two bedrooms, two baths, and a large deck across the south side. It sits high above the ground on piers and has survived the storm surge and winds of both Hurricanes Rita and Ike. Among the attractive features are the large Live Oaks and other habitat that has been maintained for the benefit of wildlife as well as protection for the camp. The Normans would love to find a new owner that shares that same love of nature and realizes the importance of habitat around the camp. The asking price is \$200,000 for the camp and five lots. Pictures of Briar Patch are posted on this photo web site:

www.pbase.com/pattonpix/briarpatch



Anyone interested should contact:
Hope & Tom Norman
51 Rosalie Road
Alexandria LA 71302
318/443-2420
hopenorman@me.com

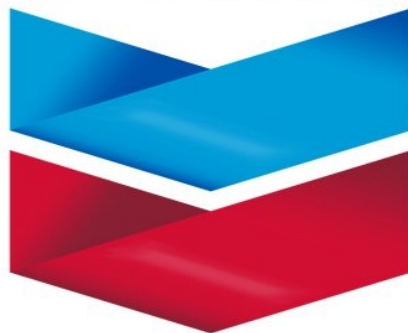
BRAS wishes to acknowledge
Downtown Kiwanis Club
of Baton Rouge
for their support of our
Education Programs



Thank you so much!

Baton Rouge Audubon thanks

Chevron



for their sponsorship of
our education programs!

Baton Rouge Audubon

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The Barred Owl

is published quarterly by the
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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



KIDS WHO BIRD

by Jane Patterson

The first annual Yellow Rails and Rice Festival was held in south Louisiana this year. Yellow Rails are a particularly elusive birds, and not present in great numbers in Louisiana -- relative to other rail species. But they are predictably found in agricultural settings -- especially rice fields. This event allowed birders and

other interested folks to observe rice harvesting from the cab of the harvesting combine and observe the birds as they flee from the combine and take cover in other parts of the fields. Cooperative effort from the generous rice farmers and the birding community -- in particular, organizers Steve Cardiff and Donna Dittman -- made this an enjoyable and very successful event. KidsWhoBird member Alex Haun and his dad George attended the event, and both were thrilled to ride on the combine as it rumbled through the muddy rice fields, cutting rice and kicking up birds as it went. They both saw several rail species from the combine. Alex was also excited to see the huge flocks of geese, ibis, shorebirds, and blackbirds that were present in the area the day of the field trip. And, of course, the Bald Eagles were a favorite!

excited to see very large flocks of White Pelicans, Cormorants, and Egrets fishing together on the lakes. The Pelicans and Cormorants fish in large groups and "herd" the fish toward the shore, where they are snapped up by the eagerly awaiting egrets. Perfect cooperative effort! In many years, a Peregrine Falcon takes up residence on the Capitol building for the winter so it can keep any eye on the wintering ducks, and this year is no exception. Though difficult to see, we did find the Peregrine as it lazily observed the surrounding area from its lofty perch.

Upcoming field trips for the KidsWhoBird Club will include a visit to the new Wings of Hope Rehabilitation Center (<http://www.wingsofhoperehab.org>) Education Center, as well as a behind-the-scenes look at the extensive bird specimen collection at the LSU Museum of Natural Science hosted by Dr. Van Remsen.

The location for the KidsWhoBird meetings has changed, due to the expanding size of the group (which is great!). The monthly meetings will be held on the 3rd or 4th Wed of the month at the LSU Museum of Natural Science in Foster Hall on the LSU campus. Notice of meeting dates, times, and subjects are sent out via email each month. Contact Jane Patterson at Education@braudubon.org for more information about the club.

The transition to fall in Louisiana may not come with spectacular leaf color, but we do have changes. In particular, many of our summer and breeding birds leave the state and are replaced by groups of birds that over-winter in our more temperate climate. There are many great places in the state to find examples of this, but if you're looking for something close to home, the lakes near LSU and the Capitol provide such an opportunity. The KidsWhoBird met at the Capitol Lakes early one Saturday morning to see birds have arrived and were so

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!

Sept. 1, 2009 - Dec. 31, 2009

CERULEAN WARBLER (\$1000)

J. D. Guillory, Baton Rouge, LA
John C. Stovall, Baton Rouge, LA

PAINTED BUNTING (\$500)

Peter Monrose, New Orleans, LA
John Turner, Baton Rouge, LA

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (\$250)

Lisa Head, Saint Gabriel, LA
Wayne & Becky Watkins, Alexandria, LA

ROSEBREASTED GROSBEAK (\$100)

Cathy Coates, Baton Rouge, LA
Ruth Little, Rockford, IL
Robert Morris, Sulphur, LA

WOOD THRUSH (\$50)

Michael J. Caire, West Monroe, LA
John & Cindy Hartgerink, Baton Rouge, LA
Dominique Homberger, Baton Rouge, LA
Sara L. Simmonds, Alexandria, LA

What Our Friends Are Doing

Hilltop Arboretum

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

Hilltop's 2010 Symposium:
"Gardens...the Spirit of Your Home"
Sat., Jan. 23, 8a-12:30p

Episcopal High School auditorium
3200 Woodland Ridge Blvd.

Several speakers including our own Bill Fontenot will discuss the special place of gardens. There will be plants and books for sale



2010 LOS Winter Meeting

at Holiday Inn Baton Rouge College Inn I-10,
4848 Constitution Avenue, Baton Rouge
(see www.losbird.org/meetings.htm for more information and directions)

Friday, January 29, 2010

6:00 pm Registration - Tiger Room at Holiday Inn (first floor)

(Cash bar and snacks provided)

7:00 pm Meeting and Program - Dave Cagnolatti is the Manager of State Government Affairs for ConocoPhillips, the third largest oil company and the largest private owner of wetlands in the United States. Dave is a former board member of the Baton Rouge Audubon Society and a lifetime member of the Louisiana Bluebird Society. He took up the hobby of bird photography in 2001 and will be speaking on the art and science of such photography. His photographs have been published in various calendars, web sites, and periodicals. He donates his photographs for educational or non-profit uses.

Saturday, January 30, 2010

6:30 pm Registration - Tiger Room at Holiday Inn (Cash bar)

7:00 pm The Banquet - Reservations MUST be received by January 21st.

8:00 pm Meeting and Program - Robb Brumfield, Ph.D, of Louisiana State

University, is the Curator of Genetic Resources at the LSU Museum of Natural Science and Associate Professor of Biology in the Department of Biological Sciences. Robb got hooked on birding when he spent 2 months in the jungles of Peru as an undergraduate field assistant at LSU. Robb then went on to receive his MS in ornithology at Illinois State University and his Ph.D at the University of Maryland. Robb will discuss the Museum's Collection of Genetic Resources and its role in recent new discoveries about how birds evolved.

Field Trips

Reserve your fieldtrip spot with Jeff Harris at Jeffrey.Harris@ars.usda.gov.
Please car pool if at all possible

Saturday (Jan. 30, 2009)

There will be two field trips offered for LOS participants during the morning hours. Hummingbird enthusiasts will want to join Dennis Demcheck for a tour of gardens and feeder locations in the Baton Rouge area to view wintering hummingbirds. Species should include Black-chinned, Buff Bellied, Rufous/Allen's, Broad-tailed, and Calliope. If we are lucky, a Broad-billed or an Anna's (which have been in the area in recent years) might be encountered. We will meet at 8:00 AM in front of the Holiday Inn and arrange carpools for traveling to the various homes. The tour should end before noon to allow time for lunch.

The second option will be a guided tour of the St. Francisville area led by Richard Gibbons. We will depart the Holiday Inn at 6:30 AM and drive 30 minutes to the Mary Ann Brown Preserve where we will bird the 1.3 mile loop trail that takes us by ancient beech and magnolia trees. Next, we'll visit the Audubon State Historic Site. Here we will bird in the footsteps of John James Audubon. We'll work sparrow flocks, woodland winter birds, and visit the home where Audubon finished many of his best works. If time permits, we will stop by Arsenal Park and Capitol Lakes for diving ducks and water birds. Expected arrival back to the hotel is 1:00 PM, so participants should bring a bagged lunch, especially if they wish to attend the LSU Museum tour (see below) later that afternoon. There is a \$2 charge to enter the Audubon State Historic Site for visitors 12-61 years of age.

At 2:00 PM we will join Dr. Van Remsen, renowned LSU ornithologist, for a tour of the LSU Museum of Natural History. He will give us a behind the scenes tour of LSU's extensive collection of birds and bird skins. LSU's collection is the fourth largest University-based collection in the world behind Harvard, Berkley and Michigan. The Museum has been a particularly important repository for birds that are endemic to Peru and other South

(Continued on page 5)

2010 LOS Winter Meeting

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(Continued from page 4)

American countries. We will assemble for carpooling at 1:30 PM in front of the Holiday Inn. This tour will be limited to 15 participants because of space limitations within the Museum. It is expected to last 1.5 -2 hours with a bathroom break.

People who are unable to attend the Museum tour will have the option of birding around the LSU campus lakes. Please bring your spotting scopes for this outing. Those fortunate enough to attend the Museum tour, will also be given the opportunity to re-convene for a similar bird walk around lakes (either joining the existing group, or starting a new tour). We should find wintering ducks, coots, gulls and terns, herons and cormorants, and American White Pelicans.

Sunday (Jan. 31, 2009)

Two alternatives will be offered on Sunday morning. Please join Eric Liffmann on a field trip to Richfield Riversilt property, which is adjacent to the Mississippi River on Duncan's Point a few miles southeast of Baton Rouge. The trip should last no longer than 4 hours. This site is a highly disturbed area with habitat that supports wintering sparrows, warblers, and other passerines, and its many water pools can be attractive to shorebirds, waders, raptors and some ducks. The Mississippi River will be in full view for a large section of the trip, and some gulls, terns, cormorants and other birds can be seen in and around the river. We will meet in front of the Holiday Inn at 6:30 AM to arrange carpools to the location.

The second option will be a trip led by Jeff Harris to Sherburne WMA's South Farm, which is a system of retired crawfish ponds located about 25 miles west of Baton Rouge along the east side of the Atchafalaya River system. Wintering birds include ducks, raptors, shorebirds and some waders. Attendees should expect to walk about 3 miles or more. If you are 16-60 years old, please remember that a Louisiana Wildlife Stamp or a valid fishing license is required to enter all WMA's. Also, remember to bring snack food, water and insect repellent for the duration of the hike. Some likely rarities include Vermilion Flycatcher and Western Kingbird. We will meet in front of the Holiday Inn at 6:00 AM to arrange carpools to the location.

Accommodations:

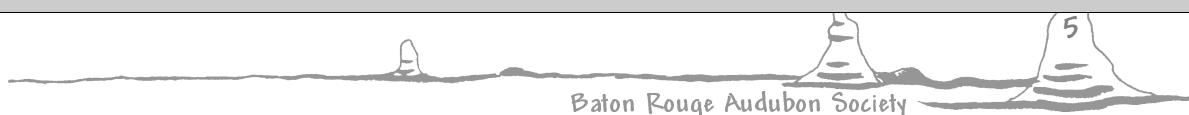
We've reserved a block of 20 rooms at Holiday Inn Baton Rouge College Drive I-10, 4848 Constitution Avenue, Baton Rouge, 225-448-2030 or 1-800-345-8082. The hotel is located off College Drive on the Interstate 10 interchange (see map and directions below). To get the special rate of \$99 per night you must make your reservation before January 5th and mention the group name "LOS". Please specify either the type of room needed-it is the same rate for single or double occupancy or for king or queen size bed.

There are many fast food places and family restaurants in the general vicinity. Additionally, here is a list of other hotels nearby:

Comfort Inn, 4924 S. Acadian Thruway, 866-969-8065
Hampton Inn BR, I-10/College Drive, 225-926-9990
Cambria Suites BR, I-10/College Drive, 225-925-1005

Directions to Holiday Inn Baton Rouge, LA:

Take I-10 East into Baton Rouge. Take exit 158 (College Drive). Cross College Drive onto Constitution Avenue (parallels the Interstate). Hotel is approximately 2 blocks down on the right.



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*.

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

Join BRAS on-line!

You can become a member of BRAS or donate to the cause at www.braudubon.org/join.asp

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.

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:
Baton Rouge Audubon Society; PO Box 67016; Baton Rouge, LA 70896