



L.O.S. News

Newsletter of the Louisiana Ornithological Society

www.losbird.org

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LOS SPRING MEETING

Hackberry, Louisiana

26 - 27 April, 2024

Migrate down to Cameron Parish for our Spring 2024 Meeting! We will be based in the town of Hackberry on the west side of the Calcasieu River, about 25 minutes from the coast. Our host hotel will again be the MainStay Suites Hackberry Sportsman's Lodge. A room block is available through 1 April, so book promptly to make sure you get a room at the LOS discounted rate of \$96/night. Meetings will take place at the "old" Hackberry Community Center (see address below). Meeting registration is \$15 online at www.losbird.org.

Events for Friday, 26 April 2024:

Hackberry Community Center

986 Main Street, Hackberry, LA 70645
(337) 762-9313

6:30 - 7:00 PM. Registration. Sandwiches provided by Cameron Parish Tourist Commission and Brown's Grocery. Door prizes.

7:00 PM. Welcome Members and Field Trip announcements.

7:15 - 8:00 PM. Program: "Reporting Rarities to the LBRC, and the Next Ten Species for Louisiana" by Paul Edward Conover

The Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) has been evaluating rare bird reports for almost half of a century, keeping abreast of the massive changes in technology and species distribution over that span. See what changes are in progress at the LBRC and what changes



LOS PUBLICATIONS**LOS News**Editor: **John K. Dillon**

183 Dance Rd., Athens, LA 71003;

318-243-2284 (cell)

merlin183@yahoo.com**Issue submission deadlines:****Spring: 10 February****Fall: 1 August****Winter: 1 November****Journal of Louisiana Ornithology**Editor: **Robert C. Dobbs**

105 Beechwood Dr., Lafayette, LA

70503 rcdobbs@gmail.com**LOS WEBSITE**LOS Webmaster: **Paul E. Conover**zoiseaux@lusfiber.net

The LOS website currently has space for photographs, field notes, identification discussions, and general messages regarding the birding activities of LOS members. Fine quality photographs are solicited for the BIRDS OF LOUISIANA webpage. For information regarding graphical submissions, please send an email.

LOS FACEBOOKAdministrators: **John Dillon. David****Booth and Cheryl Huner****LBRC WEBSITE**LBRC Webmaster: **Paul E. Conover**zoiseaux@lusfiber.net**LBRC Newsletter**Editor: **Donna L. Dittmann**donnaldittmann@gmail.com**LOS Committee Chairs**Awards: **James Smithers**jamesmithers.js@gmail.comConservation: **Elise Read**readelise@gmail.comEducation: **Jane Patterson**seejanebird@gmail.comField Trip Series: **Melissa Weaver**melissaweaverbird@gmail.comLBRC: **Steven W. Cardiff**scardif@gmail.comMembership: **Judith O'Neale**losbirdlady@gmail.com

LOS would like to fill other Committee Chair positions in the near future - if interested in

Hospitality, or have other ideas how you could become more involved with LOS, then please contact David Booth..

might be coming for reporters and reviewers. And speaking of rarities, what are the Next Ten (or so) species that we should be keeping an eye out for, and will we know them when we see them? We'll look at some possibilities (and some cryptic longshots) and the possible challenges in identifying them.

Paul Conover is a lifelong birdwatcher, a biologist, and a high school biology teacher in Lafayette, Louisiana. A Life Member of the LOS, he has served on the LBRC for over twenty years as a Member and Webmaster, and as an eBird Regional Reviewer for Louisiana.

Events for Saturday, 27 April, 2024:

Field trips: Field trip reservations will be made Friday night at the meeting. PLEASE be sure to give your cell phone number and your eBird user name to your trip leader. Remember to top-off your fuel tank before any field trip! Please bring along your own disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer; if a scope is shared then make sure that it is wiped down after each use. If you are feeling ill, then PLEASE stay home.

West side only trip - Trip Leader is LOS VP James Smithers. Meet in the parking lot of the MainStay Suites Hackberry Sportsman's Lodge by no later than 6:30AM. We will bird several locations all on the east side of Calcasieu Ship Channel, including Blue Goose Trail, Peveto Woods, Holly Beach area, and other locations. Bathrooms available along route. East side trip - Trip Leader is LOS Pres David Booth. Meet in the parking lot of the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center (about 2 miles north of Pintail Wildlife Drive) at 7:00AM. We will bird several good spots like Cameron Prairie NWR, Rockefeller Refuge, and Rutherford Beach/Road, cross the ferry (westbound fee is \$1.00 per vehicle), and bird a few locations on the East side like Holly Beach area and Peveto Woods.

Hackberry Community Center

986 Main Street, Hackberry, LA 70645

(337) 762-9313

6:30 - 7:00 PM: Welcome and Registration.

7:00 - 7:30 PM. Dinner is \$15/person and only available through pre-registration. Dinner will be jambalaya, cajun corn, smothered green beans, and bread pudding. Drinks: Iced tea and water. If you desire a special diet meal, you are welcome to bring your own. You may also BYOB.

Deadline for dinner reservation is 15 April, 2024.**Online registration link: <http://losbird.org/meetings.htm>**



7:30 - 9:00 PM Program: "Jewels of the Garden - Louisiana's Hummingbirds" by Dr. Erik Johnson

The combination of subtropical environments and a rich history in ornithology and garden has made Louisiana a hotspot for hummingbirds, especially in winter. Currently, 14 species of hummingbirds have been documented in Louisiana - all in yards and gardens. This presentation will provide an overview of how the winter hummingbird phenomenon started, what we have learned, and how you can contribute to the continuing study of the smallest birds in the world.

Erik joined the National Audubon Society in April 2011 as a Conservation Biologist for the Mississippi Flyway and Gulf Coast Initiative and currently serves as the Director of Conservation Science for Audubon Delta, a regional office that includes Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Before coming to Audubon, Erik's graduate work at Louisiana State University included researching the effects of forest fragmentation on Amazonian bird communities and understanding the effects of fire management on grassland birds in pine savannas of the southeastern U.S. Erik has been active in Louisiana's birding community for over 20 years and serves as Louisiana's Christmas Bird Count regional editor, a member of Louisiana's Bird Records Committee, and Director of the Louisiana Bird Observatory. Erik lives in Sunset, Louisiana.

Spring Meeting Lodging Information:

LOS has reserved a block of rooms at the MainStay Suites Hackberry Sportsman Lodge for \$96.00/night plus taxes/fees if BOTH nights are booked. That includes King and Double suites equipped with a kitchenette. Single night rates will be higher and not secured by LOS. Rates are subject to applicable state & local taxes. NOTE: The room block will be held until 1 April, 2024, **Register by phone at 337-762-3128**. Continental breakfast is included and begins at 5 AM. *Brown's Market @ 620 Main Street opens at 5am and has a hot breakfast line.* **Directions to hotel:** from I-10: Take Sulphur exit 20 from I-10 to Hwy. 27/Ruth Street. Go south toward Cameron approximately 20 miles to Hackberry. In Hackberry, Hwy. 27 becomes Main Street and the Mainstay Suites Hotel is located at **700 Main Street** on the right (between Ellender and Devalle).

RV options: Island RV Park (1.3 miles from the hotel): 1230 Main Street, Hackberry, LA 70601, 337-762-3185.: <https://www.islandrvla.com>. Intracoastal Park (5.6 miles from the hotel): 7955 Intracoastal Park Rd., Sulphur, LA 70665, 337-721-3540: <https://www.sunrisereservations.com/campground/Intracoastal+Park>

Other lodging west of Calcasieu Ship Channel is available in Sulphur or Lake Charles to the north or rental houses at Holly Beach to the south.



President's Message

Well, like a lot of you, I am still coming down off the high clouds of a wonderful Winter Meeting in Houma. It was a fabulous meeting, replete with fun, fellowship, food and of course good birds. It amazes me how much a dedicated group and key persons can make such a big difference in how well programs and events are done. My personal thanks to our hosts, the Terrebonne Bird Club, and the leadership of Paul Schaub, Kathy Rhodes, and the other volunteers who made this Winter Meeting such a success. We enjoyed the "Birds and Beer" and yard events Thursday and Friday. They added so much to the entire weekend. We intend to hold the 2025 Winter Meeting in the Lafayette area. We would look to all from that area for a groundswell of support such as we experienced in Houma.

The migrants are coming, the migrants are coming! Purple Martins are here now, and early migrants are preparing for their trip to and through Louisiana. Our Spring Meeting is shaping up really well. We have some great speakers and are planning on good food and field trips. Sign up soon and reserve a spot for yourself. We will have the Book Exchange Table again. Just bring a few books you would like to share with others, and you can swap them for something you might like to take home and read. Another neat thing in the works is the Birder's Equipment Exchange. This neat idea of John Dillon's is to trade, swap or sell used birding equipment, optics, field guides, and such with others who may be in need. Details are in the works, so stay tuned.

Speaking of our Newsletter/Facebook Editor, John. He is tireless in new ideas for content. He is working on having monthly special features for our Facebook group to add to the content and give us an interesting read. This started in February with four excellent pieces of birding advice from Dr. Van Remsen and will continue throughout the year with advice from pros and newer birders. If you have ideas for articles or contributions for either the newsletter or the Facebook group, please forward them to John. He will surely appreciate it.

Please, please, please do what you can to make the LOS become what you wish it could be. As we saw in Houma, small efforts and contributions by group members all add up into a wonderful thing. No effort is too small to make a difference. No idea is undeserving. Your officers work hard to keep the organization running well. My personal thanks to each of them and to all the Board members for what they do to make LOS a great success. You reap the benefits of their labors and they work hard. Thank them when you see them again, or better yet, drop them a line and show your appreciation. Contact information is on page one of this newsletter.

Well once again, I look forward to seeing you in the field somewhere or at the meetings or to hearing from you personally. I am wishing good birds for you and yours this spring and always. Help me "Share the Birds!"

David Booth

David Booth
LOS President



Wishing a spectacular spring to our new members!

Robb Brumfield, Baton Rouge

Sarah Carline, Ponchatoula

Kristin Eldridge, Baton Rouge

Mary Eleson, Ruston

Brandon & Yi-pin Johnson, Baton Rouge

Carton Lambert, Baton Rouge

Meadow Landry, Breaux Bridge

Darnelle Mouton, Abbeville

Kelby and Amy Ouchley, Farmersville

Caleb Persia, Shreveport

Kathy Pourciau, Prairieville

Ardith Sanders, Chauvin

Johnny Authement & Kaila Theriot, Houma

Royal Tyler, Bossier City

New Life Members:

Fran Beach and Roger Kinnison, Monroe

In Memoriam:

Dr. John Sevenair

Is Wind Energy in the Northern Gulf of Mexico Good for Birds?

Erik I. Johnson, Ph.D.

Director of Conservation Science, Audubon Delta
National Audubon Society
Sunset, Louisiana

As Louisiana seeks to expand its renewable energy portfolio, the Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources (LDENR) has begun to solicit wind energy project proposals in state waters, meaning those within 3 nautical miles of land. To lease these projects, the state is using a modified version of the oil and gas process, which many experts in environmental non-profit organizations (eNGOs) feel is flawed. Although eNGOs often support wind energy projects, such projects must meet a high bar of environmentally responsible development, where the project is carefully sited, constructed, and operated to avoid and minimize impacts on birds and other wildlife.

Louisiana's new push for wind energy projects in state waters follows the Climate Action Plan finalized by the Governor Edwards administration in 2022. Louisiana has been at the forefront of experiencing climate change impacts through sea level rise, increasing tropical storm intensities, and other extreme weather. Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Ike, Gustav, Isaac, Laura, Delta, and Ida, as well as the great 2016 flood and the state's worst wildfire season in 2023, have become permanently etched in our cultural memories and legacies. The 2023 Coastal Master Plan identifies that since the 1930s, 2,000 square miles of coastal wetlands have converted to open water. That's an area almost as big as Delaware, and this number could approximately double over the next 50 years without restoration and climate action. To slow these losses, Louisiana has invested heavily in coastal restoration and is projected to spend \$1.6 billion on coastal restoration and protection projects in the 2025 fiscal year. But the state has been slow to address the underlying cause of climate change – carbon emissions. With the world working to shift to green energy infrastructure, Louisiana needs to keep up to avoid economic and environmental collapse. As such, the new Climate Action Plan outlines a vision for Louisiana to become net neutral in carbon emissions by 2050.

The powerhouse of eNGO organizations who are closely examining offshore wind energy development in Louisiana includes (but is not limited to) National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, American Bird Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Ocean Conservancy, Louisiana Wildlife Federation, and Orleans Audubon Society. As part of this coalition, Audubon recognizes that fundamentally, climate change is worse for all birds everywhere than well-sited and well-operated wind farms in the Gulf. Audubon's climate science demonstrates that about 2/3 of the species in the U.S. and Canada are at risk of losing more than half of their range by 2100 if we do not substantially curb climate emissions.

The LDENR process has the likely potential of resulting in poorly sited projects, especially because their two regulatory offices and processes minimally overlap. Industry submits a project idea, which includes a location for placing wind turbines, and the LDENR Office of Mineral Resources develops an Operating Agreement (OA) with the company. Only after that OA is executed does environmental review begin in the LDENR Office of Natural Resources. Thus far, OAs have been executed for two offshore wind energy projects, and more may be coming.

For birds, the primary issue with poorly sited nearshore wind energy projects in Louisiana is colonial nesting seabirds, such as pelicans, terns, and skimmers. There are limited real-world examples to know how these types of birds may be impacted by wind farms, but we know from the Leberg lab at University of Louisiana-Lafayette that Brown Pelicans regularly forage in and fly through the location of proposed wind farms. There are also Endangered Species Act concerns, with Red Knots and Piping Plovers moving along the shoreline, and transmission lines to transfer energy onshore potentially impacting Eastern Black Rail habitat. The third bird group to consider are trans-Gulf migrants. These birds will likely fly above wind farms most of the time, but when these birds descend because of weather there may be collisions with turbines, and we need to better understand that risk.

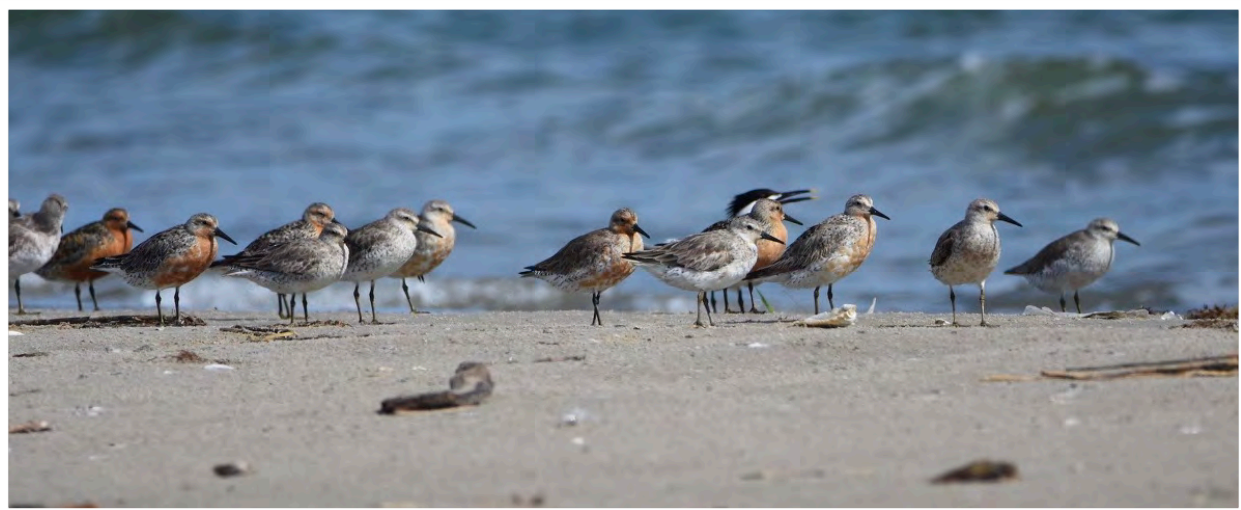
To contrast the LDENR process, the federal Bureau of Energy Management (BOEM) is considering projects 20-50 miles offshore, which align with eNGO recommendations. First, this distance will be too far offshore to have measurable impacts to colonial nesting seabirds, Piping Plovers, and Red Knots, but there are other pelagic species to consider, like Audubon's Shearwater, Black-capped Petrel, and Black Tern. To address that, BOEM did years of environmental review up



front, which included funding a multi-year seabird/pelagic bird study. This and a suite of other data resulted in choosing lease sites where there would be minimal potential impact to seabirds. BOEM then offers lease sales to recruit industry to work in those locations (their first lease sale was in August 2023). This process has been applauded by the eNGOs for resulting in well sited lease areas.

For projects in both state and federal waters, there will be trans-Gulf migratory bird issues to consider, but operations and installation recommendations can largely address those. It is also worth noting that thousands of brightly lit oil and gas platforms are estimated to kill 200,000 to 321,000 birds each spring, which is roughly 0.01% of the estimated 2.1 billion birds that cross the Gulf of Mexico. Sadly, our homes and workplaces do considerably more damage than that. Wind farms will have less lighting than oil rigs, thus less likely to attract nocturnal migrants. They will also be far less numerous at least for the coming decades.

To ensure that wind farms in the Gulf of Mexico aren't bad for birds, projects need thorough environmental consideration and review. Truly the transition away from fossil fuels will be better for all birds everywhere. But poorly sited projects could have devastating local impacts, especially in state waters, where there are many sensitive bird species to consider. I hope that you as a bird-loving community will engage with state and federal agencies to let them know we're watching. We could actually get this right, but only if we ask for it.



Audubon's Shearwater (above) and Red Knots (below); photos courtesy Erik Johnson.

Louisiana Ornithological Society

5524 Alexander Lane

Lake Charles LA 70605

David@boothenvironmental.com

Date: December 10, 2023

TO: Department of Natural Resources
Office of Mineral Resources
PO Box 2827
Baton Rouge LA 70821-2827

FROM: David Booth, President of the Louisiana Ornithological Society (LOS)

- RE: 1. DOW LA Gulf Wind LLC **Docket No. OMR 23-03**
Public Hearing and Comment on Operating Agreement/s in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes
2. Cajun Wind **Docket No. OMR 23-04**
Public Hearing and Comment on Operating Agreement/s in Cameron Parish
3. Other Comments on Louisiana's wind energy policy plans

The LOS is in opposition to the proposed operating agreements with Dow LA Gulf Wild LLC and Cajun Wind for establishing wind farms in near shore state waters of the coast of Louisiana due to avian environmental concerns.

The LOS is The Louisiana Ornithological Society (LOS) is an organization which has standing in the matter before you. Our members regularly visit Lafourche, Terrebonne and Cameron Parishes. We visit the beaches, the marshes, the waterfronts and even the specific areas which will be impacted by the proposed actions described in these actions.

The LOS was organized in 1947 to gather and disseminate accurate information concerning the bird life of the western hemisphere and of Louisiana; to promote interest in and appreciation of the value of birds, both aesthetic and economic which will ensure wiser conservation of our bird life; to promote opportunity for acquaintance and fellowship among those interested in nature; and to issue, at such times as possible or practicable, publications as a means of furthering these ends.

In pursuit of these goals, the LOS regularly meets in Cameron Parish and occasionally in the other Parishes referenced above. We hold semiannual meetings in Cameron Parish. There is one in October

and one in April of each year. We sponsor a myriad of Birding Field Trips in the state as well as the Parishes during the year, to view bird species along the beaches, the fresh, salt and brackish water marshes. We frequent water fronts, refuges, approved wooded areas and other areas impacted by the proposed actions. These areas would undoubtedly be adversely affected by the project if located where proposed.

Our understanding is that establishing these operating agreements will allow developers to bypass or short circuit the State's new formal wind energy leasing laws altogether, including their environmental protections, without any environmental risk siting assessment being done beforehand. Considering these sites are in the path of three of the largest bird migratory flyways in North America, the impact could be devastating. And it is not only migratory birds, but also our fragile nesting birds, including our own state bird, the Brown Pelican, that could be negatively affected by near shore wind farm construction. Other birds, such as the federally threatened Piping Plover and Red Knot whose populations are already tenuous could be impacted. Recommendations developed by NOAA and BOEM modeling experts provide that there should be no Gulf of Mexico offshore wind farms sited within 20 nautical miles of Louisiana's coast due to concerns for **population-level impacts** on coastal bird species. This translates to potential threatening or extinction of entire species! The federal government undertakes detailed environmental studies before choosing wind energy sites that are well offshore, as do other states for their near shore wind farm projects. No siting decisions should be made for the Louisiana coast until a body akin to the Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for OffShore Wind which was established for developments along the Atlantic coast, be established in the least for Louisiana's coast, if not all of the north coast of the GOM.

We urge the state decision makers to:

- Abandon the "Operating Agreement" approach and implement a lease program in accordance with the new state law;
- If the State will not abandon the "Operating Agreement" approach, then insert language in the agreement requiring environmental oversight;
- Gather environmental data and conduct risk/vulnerability assessments PRIOR to site selection;
- Work closely with Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries on the environmental assessment, addressing the Department's concerns;
- Consider the NOAA and BOEM recommendations that no wind farms be developed within 20 nautical miles of Louisiana's coast due to concerns for **population-level impacts** on coastal bird species;
- Consider the American Bird Conservancy's Wind Risk Assessment map before allowing wind energy developers to propose project sites.

Wind energy is most certainly a part of the energy picture of the future, but it's imperative that the siting of these wind farms be the result of a careful, thoughtful, and scientifically sound process.



After all, our birds and other wildlife are part of our natural resources as well, and in need of our protection. We must only develop wind and solar energy if there is not a serious impact on our fragile ecosystems.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these Notices and the Operating Agreement template as well as the general policy for wild farm development.

Sincerely

David Booth

President, Louisiana Ornithological Society

Are you proud of the work LOS is doing to promote conservation? Show us off every time you go birding!

Due to the heroic efforts of LOS' own Crystal Johnson, we now have car magnets featuring our Ivory-billed Woodpecker logo! The magnets are 12 inches in diameter, big enough to answer the eternal questions every birder faces when parked on the side of the road in the middle of nowhere: You broke down? What you doing? You okay?

This is merchandise that doubles as outreach! Suitable for sticking to your car door, hatch, or trunk lid.

Available at the spring meeting in Hackberry at only \$10 each. Buy some for your friends who can't make it!



Do you know someone whose hard work should be recognized?

Consider nominating someone for an LOS award today!

LOS President's Award: The LOS President's Award was instituted to recognize persons, families, companies, and organizations who support birding in Louisiana, who enhance or take special measures to conserve wildlife habitat in Louisiana, or who promote birding in Louisiana through their writing, lectures, or other avenues.

LOS George H. Lowery Award: Nominees for the George H. Lowery Award can include person(s) who have made a significant contribution to Louisiana birding and/or habitat or who have had a major positive influence on ornithology in Louisiana.

You can look at how list of past recipients here to see who has won an award previously: <http://www.losbird.org/losAwards.php>

Introducing our new LOS Gear Exchange program!

Thanks to LOS member Lawrence Datnoff who has agreed to oversee our new gear exchange program. Do you have used birding gear like tripods, binoculars, field guides, cameras or camera accessories? Would you rather donate it or sell it to an LOS members instead of throwing it out letting sit in your closet? Good news!

You will soon be able to list your gently used birding gear with Lawrence, who will coordinate the program. LOS will advertise the gear along with your contact information, and other LOS members who are interested can make arrangements with you to get it. How the exchange is made is to the discretion of the members.

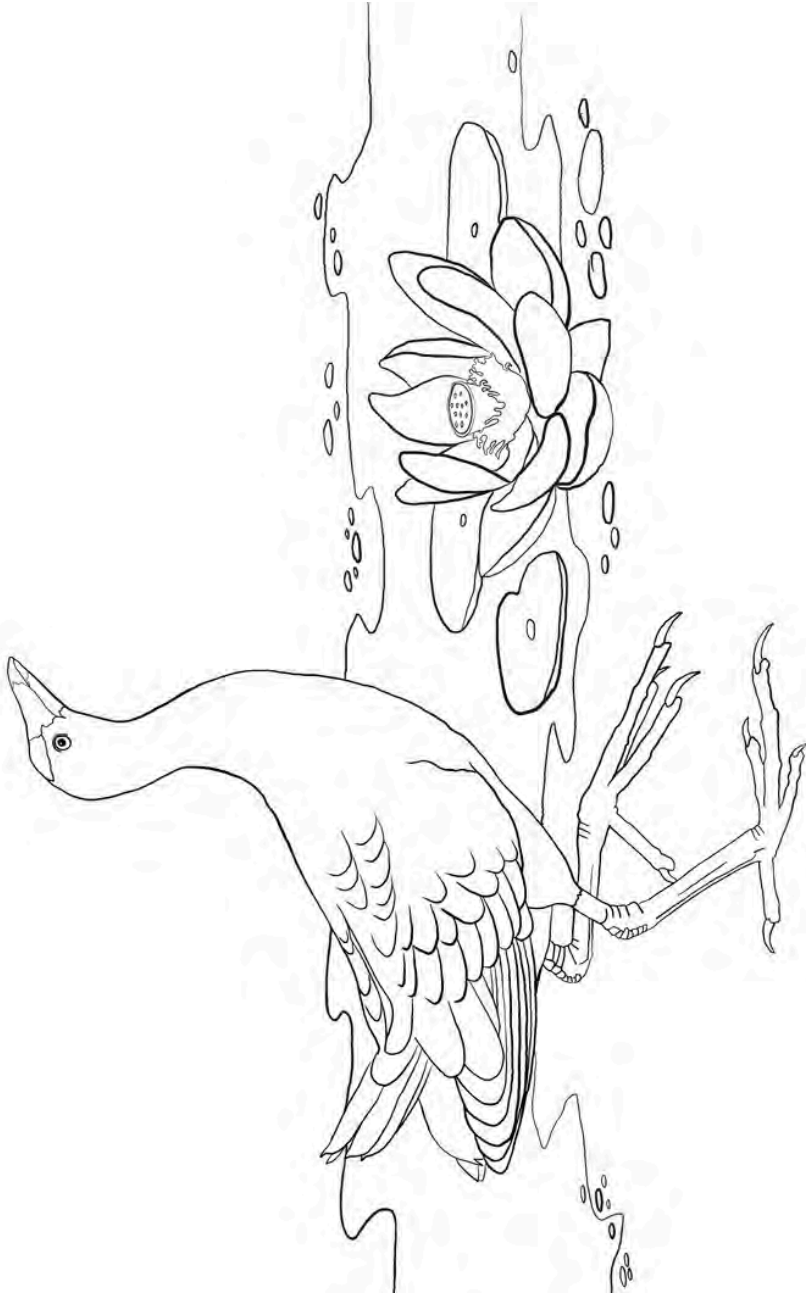
The goal of the program is to create a point of contact between experienced members and newer members who may be in need of their first real birding binoculars or a quality scope or camera but may not yet be ready to buy a new one. Think of it birding gear mentorship! We'll announce a start date for this new program very soon, so use the mean time to begin thinking of extra gear you have that could benefit a newer birder!

Thanks again to Louisiana artist Jennifer Heard for her time and donation of LOS kids' coloring pages!

The last issue of LOS News contained coloring pages of Northern Bobwhite and Ruby-throated Hummingbird alongside native Louisiana wildflowers. This issue showcases a Yellow-billed Cuckoo in a Southern Magnolia and a Purple gallinule with a blooming Lotus flower.

Please print the coloring pages for your kids or grandkids or other birders-to-be today!





Purple Gallinule with Lotus flower. Gallinules are marsh birds, and their name in Latin means “little chicken,” which is exactly what these curious birds sound like. Their colors are beautiful and vibrant, and they’re often seen next to the elegant Lotus flowers and their lily pads.

No.



Yellow-billed Cuckoo with Southern Magnolia.

You might think of a cuckoo clock when you think of cuckoos, but our Yellow-billed Cuckoo doesn't say "cuckoo." It gives a loud series of clicks and other calls that sound almost like doves. Here's it's pictured on a branch of a blooming Southern Magnolia, one of the South's favorite native trees.



In Memoriam Hubert Calvin Hervey, Jr.

by Larry Raymond

Longtime LOS and Shreveport Bird Study Group member Hubert Hervey (age 88) passed away in November 2023 after finally succumbing to his third courageous battle with leukemia. Hubert was born in Dallas, Texas, but lived most of his life in DeSoto Parish where he spent his adult life as a dairy farmer. He also proudly served his country in the United States Army.

Hubert received a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture (dairy science) from LSU Baton Rouge. He was also proud of the time he spent at LSU volunteering to help record data during Dr. George Lowery's classic nocturnal bird migration studies. Hubert loved nature, and birding was his passion. He spent as much time as he could studying birds and turned up several unusual species on his dairy farm over the years. He was an integral participant in the Christmas Bird Counts in northwestern Louisiana and an important member of the Shreveport Bird Study Group. He served in every capacity of the BSG, from board member to president, and he provided many BSG programs and led many BSG field trips. He hosted the BSG for an annual hawk watch on his dairy farm for many years. His nocturnal field trips to record owls were always memorable and enjoyed by all participants. He also served as a board member of the Friends of the Red River Refuge and the Ouachita Mountains Biological Station, making valuable contributions to both organizations.

Hubert was well known in the BSG for his rule of "40." He refused to end a field trip until at least 40 species were recorded. Several BSG members can recall times in the field with Hubert trying our best to get that last bird or two so we could go home. He is best known for his dedication to studying the interior Least Tern on the Red River. He made annual excursions on the Red River with the Corps of Engineers and Fish and Wildlife Service to inventory the number of adult and juvenile terns, as well as nests and eggs, if present on sand bars. He published the results of his study entitled "Nesting Success of Least Terns on the Red River of Louisiana" in the Journal of Louisiana Ornithology 5(1) Summer 2001. (http://www.losbird.org/documents/journals/jlo_vol_5_1.pdf) His annual trips down the Red River continued for decades after his study was published and he reported his inventory results of the Least Tern to the BSG every year.

Hubert was preceded in passing by his first wife Betty Jean Hervey, son Stephen Hervey, and second wife Patricia Hervey, who joined him on many of his birding excursions later in life. He is survived by his son David, two grandchildren, a stepdaughter, three stepsons, and several step-grandchildren, as well as two brothers and their families. Hubert loved his family and his friends and will be sorely missed by the birding community.



Hubert Calvin Hervey, Jr.
MAY 18, 1935 – NOVEMBER 21, 2023

LOSBIIRD.ORG



In Memoriam John (Jack) Palmer Sevenair, PhD

by Joelle Finley

John Sevenair (known as Jack to his family) was born in Somerville, New Jersey, on October 12, 1943, and grew up in North Bellmore, New York. He received his undergraduate degree from MIT and his Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Notre Dame. Following a post-doctoral fellowship at Georgia Tech, he arrived in New Orleans where he spent his professional career at Xavier University in the Department of Chemistry achieving the rank of Professor and Chairman of the department. John was a philanthropist who would loan Xavier students tuition money for medical school. Upon retirement he was awarded the rank of Professor Emeritus. John loved Xavier, teaching and his students. He was deeply committed to student success and pioneered an innovative learning system that resulted in outstanding achievement for students of Organic Chemistry, a system that has long been mimicked by other departments as well as other universities across the nation. John coauthored seven publications in peer reviewed journals related to educating minorities in STEM fields. He also wrote nine books during his tenure at Xavier University.

Once in New Orleans, John immersed himself in the New Orleans Group of the Sierra Club, the Louisiana Ornithological Society, and the Orleans Audubon Society. He was an adventurer, a birder, a backpacker, a spelunker, a history buff, an astronomer (chasing solar eclipses across the country), a scuba diver, and a world traveler. He once joined a group and drove from the tip of South Africa to the Mediterranean telling wild stories of the transit of the Central African Republic rivers with no bridges. He lost a tremendous amount of weight on that trip. He crawled into most of the caves in Louisiana and elsewhere. He traveled the world in search of birds and saw almost 6,000 of the birds of the world. He enjoyed searching for mammals around the globe, especially whales and dolphins. He gave marvelous slide shows of his adventures.

John was able to sleep whether lying down, sitting down or standing up. As Gwen Smalley explained "John had such a high IQ that his batteries would run down frequently and needed recharging!" John enjoyed many meals at the home of Gwen and Al Smalley, along with the home of Ann Duffy among others. Gwen always called John "an eager eater." He often "napped afterwards" in a living room chair.

John wrote and edited The Sierra Club Guide to the Delta Country, Trail Guide to the Delta Country, and Guide to Louisiana Trails and the Delta Country which included maps and details to SE Louisiana for birding, cycling, hiking, camping, and canoeing. He worked along with the New Orleans Group of the Sierra Club to establish Jean Lafitte National Park. He did a scientific survey of Monk Parakeets in the New Orleans area and successfully fought to get the bird listed on the Official Louisiana Bird List. John also wrote several unpublished science fiction novels.

John is survived by his brother and sister-in-law Peter and Becky Sevenair of Rhode Island, a cousin Joan Lillvand of California and long-time great friends Lydia Guillot and Gwen Smalley and a plethora of friends who loved and respected him.

John's ashes will be spread across the Gulf of Mexico where he enjoyed many hours on a boat searching for sea birds and mammals as well as diving among the coral reefs of the Flower Garden in the southern Gulf.





John "Jack" Palmer Sevenair
OCTOBER 12, 1943 – JANUARY 20, 2024

"Trail Guide to the Delta Country" by John Sevenair, available here for free download: <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/sce/delta-chapter/publications/Delta%20Trail%20Guide%201997-1.pdf>

LOS "Birds and Beer!"

*6:00pm Thursday, March 21
in Ruston, LA, at The Dawg
House!
Enjoy 50% margaritas!*

*email John Dillon at merlin183@yahoo.com if
interested.*

*LOS encourages responsible
drinking! DON'T drink and drive!*


 An illustration of a hummingbird with iridescent green and brown feathers, hovering over a glass of beer with a white head of foam. The background is a dark teal color.

If you're interested in attending, please email host John Dillon at merlin183@yahoo.com . Check out The Dawg House Sports Grill, including their excellent food menu, here: <https://www.dawghousesportsgrill.com>.

LOS "Birds and Beer!"

*11:00am - 1:30pm, Saturday,
May 18 in Lake Charles, LA, at
Crying Eagle Brewery.
1165 McNeese St.*

*Email David Booth at david@boothenvironmental.com
if interested. With a short birding trip in the morning
from 8 to 11. See details under LOS Field Trip Series.*

*LOS encourages responsible drinking!
DON'T drink and drive!*


 A cartoon illustration of a turkey with a white head and neck, a yellow beak, and dark grey body feathers. It is holding a glass of beer with a white head of foam in its right wing. The background is a light grey color.

If you're interested in attending, please email host David Booth at david@boothenvironmental.com. Check out Crying Eagle Brewery, including their excellent food menu, here: <https://www.cryingeagle.com>

As always, LOS encourages responsible drinking. Do NOT drink and drive!



2024 Winter Meeting Highlight Photos!!



Those of you who know Rosemary well also know the flak I'm going to catch for putting this photo in the newsletter. Totally worth it!

Happy face! Party at Roselie's!



Why not host your own LOS "Birds and Beer?" The only thing better is birding!



Recent field trip highlight photos!!

A big "thank you" to Suzanne Laird-Dartez and her dogs Wren and Gator for putting members up close and personal with American Woodcock for two years in a row! Wren flushed one bird three times, so everyone in the group got great looks! I think LOS needs a furry, four-legged mascot!



Don't forget the "Bird the Parishes" Challenge

The LOS has had or supported a number of events and parish birding projects over the years, but not in a while. So we have decided to have some more fun. The objective to this challenge is to gather more seasonal data in a number of under-birded parishes across the state. LOS member Jay Huner suggested the following 10. We would love to get each of these numbers up to more accurate levels.

1. Saint Helena currently 167 species
2. Winn currently 173 species
3. West Carroll currently 185 species
4. Caldwell currently 190 species
5. East Feliciana currently 191 species
6. Bienville currently 194 species
7. Tensas currently 197 species
8. Franklin currently 201 species
9. Webster currently 207 species
10. Assumption currently 212 species

Competition is easy. To get points, just complete any or all of the following tasks and report your progress to LOS VP James Smithers (jamesmithers.js@gmail.com) by the end of the challenge. Tasks may be repeated with no limits for more points. Prizes will be awarded for the top three point gatherers. Essentially, the more we bird, the more we will find. All activities must be completed in one of the above listed parishes for proper credit. We will use eBird as our basis, so all observations must be submitted to eBird. Participants will keep their own points on a provided spreadsheet. It will be on the honor system, as usual. The contest will begin upon publication. It will continue through Spring and end on June 1, 2024. This should be a lot of fun and full of good experiences for participants. All data gathered will be very helpful for the birding community. Please join us!!

- Complete a complete eBird checklist for one of the listed Parishes.
Minimal 20 minute duration, with all usual data included. 5 points
- Add photos to the checklist. 2 points.
- Add sound recordings to checklist. 3 points.
- Bird a new Parish for you. 5 points.
- Organize and lead a field trip for 3 or more people into the listed Parishes. 20 points.
- Submit a Handicapped Checklist Assessment form to Birdability for a birding site
(see related article in this newsletter), 25 points
- Find a new Parish bird. 50 points.
- Document the 200th bird for a Parish. 75 points.
- Document the 225th bird for a Parish. 75 points.
- Document a new State bird, accepted by the LBRC. 200 points.

The Louisiana Bird Records Committee wants your rare bird reports!!

If you have unsubmitted records of any Review List species, please submit them to LBRC Webmaster Paul Conover at: <http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/submitreport.html>.

The Current State Review List - Do you have unsubmitted reports of these species?

Brant	Iceland Gull	Black-capped Vireo
Canada Goose (wild only)	Slaty-backed Gull	Cassin's Vireo
Trumpeter Swan (Q/FO)	Glaucous Gull	Plumbeous Vireo
Tundra Swan	Great Black-backed Gull	Yellow-green Vireo
Baikal Teal	Kelp Gull	Black-whiskered Vireo
Eurasian Wigeon	Brown Noddy	Clark's Nutcracker
American Black Duck	Arctic Tern	Chihuahuan Raven
King Eider	Red-billed Tropicbird	Brown-chested Martin
White-winged Scoter	Red-throated Loon	Rock Wren
Long-tailed Duck	Pacific Loon	Northern Wheatear
Common Merganser	Yellow-nosed Albatross	Mountain Bluebird
Masked Duck	Leach's Storm-Petrel	Townsend's Solitaire
Greater Prairie-Chicken (e) American	Cory's Shearwater	Varied Thrush
Flamingo	Sooty Shearwater	Curve-billed Thrasher
Least Grebe	Great Shearwater	Sage Thrasher
Red-necked Grebe	Manx Shearwater	Scaly-breasted Munia (FO)
Western Grebe	Audubon's Shearwater	White Wagtail
Band-tailed Pigeon	Jabiru	Evening Grosbeak
Smooth-billed Ani	Red-footed Booby	Cassin's Finch
Mangrove Cuckoo	Golden Eagle	Red Crossbill
Lesser Nighthawk	American Goshawk	Lesser Goldfinch
Antillean Nighthawk	Harris's Hawk	Chestnut-collared Longspur
Vaux's Swift	White-tailed Hawk	Smith's Longspur
Mexican Violetear	Zone-tailed Hawk	Thick-billed Longspur
Green-breasted Mango	Rough-legged Hawk	Cassin's Sparrow
Rivoli's Hummingbird	Ferruginous Hawk	Lark Bunting
Blue-throated Mountain-gem	Flammulated Owl	Brewer's Sparrow
Lucifer Hummingbird	Snowy Owl	American Tree Sparrow
Anna's Hummingbird	Burrowing Owl	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Broad-billed Hummingbird	Long-eared Owl	Baird's Sparrow
Black Rail	Northern Saw-whet Owl	Green-tailed Towhee
Lesser Sand-Plover	Ringed Kingfisher	Spotted Towhee
Mountain Plover	Williamson's Sapsucker	Hooded Oriole
Black-tailed Godwit	Red-naped Sapsucker	Scott's Oriole
Ruff	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Shiny Cowbird
Curlew Sandpiper	Prairie Falcon	Lucy's Warbler
Purple Sandpiper	Dusky-capped Flycatcher	Virginia's Warbler Connecticut
Red-necked Phalarope	Brown-crested Flycatcher	Warbler MacGillivray's Warbler
Red Phalarope	Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher	Tropical Parula Black-throated Gray
Long-tailed Jaeger	Crowned Slaty Flycatcher	Warbler Townsend's Warbler
Razorbill	Tropical Kingbird	Hermit Warbler Golden-crowned
Ancient Murrelet	Couch's Kingbird	Warbler Red-faced Warbler
Black-legged Kittiwake	Cassin's Kingbird	Painted Redstart
Sabine's Gull	Gray Kingbird	Hepatic Tanager
Black-headed Gull	Fork-tailed Flycatcher	Pyrrhuloxia
Little Gull	Western Wood-Pewee	Blue Bunting
Mew Gull	Hammond's Flycatcher	Lazuli Bunting
Western Gull	Gray Flycatcher	Varied Bunting
California Gull	Western Flycatcher	Red-legged Honeycreeper

The Big Year

By Ezra & Neva Garber

We live in the country close to our family sweet potato farm in rural Iota, Louisiana, and spend many hours out of doors, running out to play in the shallows of our pond or seeing who can climb the highest in the cypress and oak trees on our property. We began studying plants and birds as part of our schoolwork several years ago, learning a bird or plant every week. We spent a lot of time with the arboretum staff at Chicot State Park and were inspired by the skills of the rangers who could easily identify many birds by sight or sound alone. We watched the movie "The Big Year" and decided to do our own version in a "Big Week." Our mom posted pictures of our bird lists on the LOS Facebook page, and David Booth reached out to us afterwards, saying he liked what we were doing and offered to come bird with us in our yard. It was a cool experience to bird with him; he was very enthusiastic about what we were doing and taught us how to estimate the number of a flock of birds, and how to tell the difference between the call of a Brown Thrasher and Northern Mockingbird.

Ezra recently joined The ABA Young Birder Mentoring Program and chose to organize a Big Year for his Conservation and Community Project. We reached out to family and friends and now have 14 participants and 10 sponsors ages 4 to 72 from Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma! We recruited sponsors to pledge a certain donation for the year or an amount per species observed. The funds raised will go to a birding organization or nature education program of the birder's choice at the end of the year. With our current sponsors, we may raise \$2000! Ezra wrote guidelines for participants such as finding sponsors, reporting

sightings on eBird, counting only live birds with sustained populations in the wild, organized a prize for the top birder and other fun prizes. We plan a field trip every month with frequent spontaneous trips locally. In January we enjoyed field trips with the LOS winter meeting group around Houma and White Lake Birding and Nature Trail. In February, we visited the Lacassine Wildlife refuge and the Jeff Davis Landfill. We are currently planning a repeat trip to White Lake and a trip to Pine Island Road in Vermillion Parish. Other places we hope to visit in the coming year are Grand Isle, Peveto Woods, and Kisatchie National Forest. Each month we send out a monthly email with birding highlights from the previous month, information on the next fieldtrip, and sharing current bird totals. At the conclusion of The Big Year, we will host an event to announce the winner, award the grand prize and many others - and have a swell time! And of course, see a few birds! If you are interested in supporting us, we are still open to more participants and sponsors! You can also help with field trips, offer items for prizes, or drive these eager birders to chase down some rare birds!



Ezra Garber spoke at the winter meeting on his ABA Young Birder Mentoring Program and his Big Year for 2024.

The LOS Field Trip Series

LOS Members can sign-up for trips by sending an email request to: melissaweaverbird@gmail.com. Trip registrations will be on a first-received email basis; *Melissa will confirm your registration, so if you don't hear back then check the spelling of her email address.* The trip leader will contact you before the trip to review details. If you register and are a no-show then you will not be allowed to register in the future. Please make sure you cancel at least 24 hours in advance so that your space may be filled by someone on the Wait List. Also, please do not bring unregistered guests. Access to any Louisiana Wildlife Management Area (WMA) requires a Basic Hunting or Fishing License OR a WMA Access Permit. So, please ensure that you have one if your field trip visits a WMA (or want to support LDWF!): <https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/page/wmas-refuges-and-conservation-areas>. Watch the LOS Website for additional offerings, changes to listed trips, or pop-up trips. If you would like to lead a LOS field trip, or suggest a destination for a field trip, then email Melissa.

March, 2024

- ✿ **Sandy Hollow WMA with Jane Patterson.** 30 March. Come bird with Jane! Jane Patterson will lead LOS members to the Sandy Hollow WMA to explore this nice upland habitat in Tangipahoa Parish North-east of Amite, La. Jane is the No. 1 birder for that hot spot with 84 species. This 4,500 acre area is mostly rolling, piney hills with hardwoods in a few creek bottoms. Jane says that it is one of the very best places in SE Louisiana for Bachman's Sparrow. There are three tracts. The LDWF manages this area for upland game birds such as quail and dove. It is a valuable research area for the LDWF. What a great way to explore Tangipahoa Parish! A WMA map may be seen here: [https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Conservation/WMA's Refuges Conservation Areas/Files/Sandy_Hollow.pdf](https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Conservation/WMA%20Refuges%20Conservation%20Areas/Files/Sandy_Hollow.pdf). Starting and ending points will be determined and will be sent out to all registered participants. Bring your binoculars and plenty of water and snacks for a day trip. There will be some walking so boots, hat, bug spray and the usual to keep you comfortable as may be needed. **Registration opens on 8 March at 8am through Melissa Weaver at melissaweaverbird@gmail.com. Maximum number of participants is: 12.**

April, 2024

- ✿ **"No Man's Land" Western Parishes Tour with David Booth.** 5-7 April. Come explore five under-birded western parishes for a three days. This area is known historically as "No Man's Land" because it was dually claimed by the Spanish and the US for a number of years. We will be focused on finding spring migrants and building parish bird lists. We will be stopping at out of the way locations as well as hot-spots. There will not be any long walks planned. It will be mostly car birding. Contact David Booth if you are interested in knowing more. He can be reached at 337-526-0837 or david@boothenvironmental.com. Trip will begin and end in Natchitoches. Lodging will be in a nice home in the downtown Natchitoches area. There are two king beds, two queen beds, two twin XL beds upstairs and a pull out couch bed. All meals will be on your own. Bring your drinks and snacks for the field. Dinners will be in Natchitoches at some of the many restaurants. **Registration through Melissa Weaver will open on 8 March. Maximum number of participants: 8.**

Plans are subject to changes which may be needed as the birds or weather dictate.

Itinerary, Day One (April 5th): We will bird through Vernon, Natchitoches, and Sabine parishes in a large loop. We will be starting from the town of Leesville. We will meet at noon at the Market Basket parking lot. We will try for the Greater Roadrunner, Wild Turkey, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and other piney woods birds as well as search open fields lake sides and other terrain. We will end at our trip home in

Natchitoches and have a group dinner about 7 pm. For anyone arriving late, please try to join us for the dinner.

Day Two (April 6th): We start from Natchitoches and drive up I-49 to spots in Red River Parish, DeSoto Parish, and Caddo Parish. Highlights include Red River NWR, Bayou Pierre WMA, and the locks along the Red River.

Day Three: We will bird the remaining areas around the western parishes picking up more migrants and filling in gaps in our parish lists. We will return to Natchitoches around noon and disband there to return home.

Cost: The housing cost is \$150 per person total for two nights. Costs should be paid in advance to LOS treasurer Mark Pethke via check or electronically. A reservation with Melissa will not be confirmed without payment to Mark.

- ✿ **Southeast Texas Gulf Coast with Charlie Lyon and Melissa Weaver.** 6-7 April. Explore the coast of SE TX for a plethora of passerines and shorebirds. Smith Oaks Sanctuary has potential for superb early spring migrant birding and if you have never experienced Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary, then you are in for a treat watching thousands of various shorebirds concentrated in one area. We will meet at 7 am on Saturday at the Hampton Inn in Winnie and carpool to designated sites for the day. Dinner will be at Tia Juanita's Fish Camp in Winnie. We will meet again at 7 am on Sunday at the Hampton Inn and everyone will drive their own vehicles to Rollover Pass and Bolivar Flats. Amendments to this schedule are possible at a moments notice if any rarities appear in the area. Recommended lodging in Winnie, Texas. **Registration opens 8 March at 8:00 am through melissaweaverbird@gmail.com Maximum number of participants: 8.**

- ✿ **LOS Spring Meeting Field Trips.** 27, April. Please see field trip details on page 2.

April, 2024

- ✿ **Dauphin Island Weekend with Marybeth Lima and Kathy Rhodes.** 2-5 May. Come explore Dauphin Island, Alabama, for three days with two great trip leaders. Dauphin Island is well known as a great migrant trap for both the spring and fall. There are many well-known spots to enjoy the birds, and Marybeth and Kathy will guide you to all of them. Marybeth and Kathy are long time island birders and know the island well. Kathy has even written a guide to birding the island, which will be provided to all participants. **Registration opens 22 March at 8:00am through melissaweaverbird@gmail.com Maximum number of participants: 12.**

Starting and ending points: Rental Camp on Dauphin Island. Address and other information will be provided to approved participants. Lodging will be in a VRBO camp with ample bedding spaces. Participants must be willing to share a room. Two rooms have king beds and are perfect for couples.

Cost: Estimated housing cost for three nights is a total of \$220 per person. Final cost may vary depending on number of participants. Estimated cost should be paid in advance to LOS treasurer Mark Pethke via check or electronically. A reservation with Melissa will not receive final confirmation without payment to Mark. Daily plans subject to change based on weather and other conditions.

LOS MEMBERSHIP FORM
RENEWAL___ NEW MEMBER___

NAME_____ PHONE_____

ADDRESS_____ E-MAIL_____

- All membership categories require annual renewal - except LIFE memberships. Renew or JOIN NOW!
- Regular - \$20.00/yr.
 - Family - \$25.00/yr.
 - Junior (16 and under) - fee waived
 - Student (>16) - \$10.00/yr.
 - Senior (>65) - \$15.00/yr.
 - Senior Family - \$20.00/yr.
 - Contributing - \$50.00/yr.
 - Sustaining - \$100.00/yr.
 - Life - \$300.00
 - Family Life - \$500.00 (installment plan available)

To renew or register for memberships online visit <http://losbird.org/join.php>

Please add \$2.00 for foreign subscriptions
Make checks payable to the "LOS" and send to:

Mark Pethke, LOS Treasurer
5655 Hickory Ridge Blvd
Baton Rouge, LA 70817

Don't forget to visit LOS Sales online!

From left to right: 75th anniversary cloth patch, oval decal, and of course, bird checklists for Louisiana! We are now SOLD OUT of LOS mugs!





Mark Pethke
Louisiana Ornithological Society
5655 Hickory Ridge Blvd
Baton Rouge, LA 70817

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Dues are payable in January of each year; please check your mailing label.



LOS Spring 2024 Pre-registration Form - Must be received before 1 April, 2024

Name(s) _____

Address(s) _____

Email: _____

Number registering for meeting @ \$15.00 per person = \$ _____

Number registering for meeting @ \$5.00 per student = \$ _____

Number registering for Sat. dinner @ \$15.00 per person = \$ _____

(See p. 2 for menu info)

Meeting total = \$ _____

Additional donation = \$ _____

Dues enclosed = \$ _____

Make check payable to LOS and mail to: Mark Pethke, LOS Treasurer
 5655 Hickory Ridge Blvd., Baton Rouge LA 70817 mdpethke@gmail.com

Online registration: www.losbird.org

