

## LBRC Report Form

1. English and Scientific names: Snail Kite - *Rostrhamus sociabilis*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):  
1 - male
3. Parish:  
Ascension Parish, Louisiana
4. Specific Locality:  
Hwy 3140 Sorrento, La - in the McElroy Swamp Area
5. Date(s) when observed: July 5, 2024
6. Time(s) of day when observed: 8:06:06 am
7. Reporting observer: Jeff Hebert
8. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):  
Mona Hebert - wife
9. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):
10. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light):  
Overcast skies - decent light conditions
11. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Photographed with Sony A7R V, with Sony FE 600mm f/4 GM OSS lens
12. Distance to bird(s): Approx. 120 ft.
13. Duration of observation: 20 minutes
14. Habitat: Cypress swamp area with mix of wooded and some open fields. This swampy area has a huge apple snail population and many Limpkins that dwell/feed there. I learned the Snail Kite feeds upon Apple Snails, so it makes sense that there was food availability.

15. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): My wife and I frequent this particular area regularly for bird/wildlife photography.

It is a pipeline/oil & gas operation with private access only. We have permission to photograph there.

On the morning of Friday July 5, 2024, I first observed a large dark raptor perched upon a small dead tree about 6 ft. above a swampy area. It was facing away at first. I wasn't sure what it was due to its unfamiliar appearance.

I used AllaboutBirds.org website on my phone to get an ID. Found a match and confirmed it was a Snail Kite after photographing it both perched and in flight.

My wife got photos of the same. Once this Kite flew away, we never saw it return to that area. We also went back to the location on July 7, 2024 but never saw another sign of this one or any other Snail Kites.

16. Description (include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species):

I have photographs that clearly show this raptor's features. The bright orange curved-downward bill confirmed the ID.

17. Voice: As it flew over us, this Snail Kite also made calls that matched what I found recorded on the AllaboutBirds.org site.

18. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

I am familiar with Mississippi Kites and there are numerous kinds of hawks in the area.

19. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):

Yes. my wife and I both photographed this Snail Kite both perched and in flight.

See one example of this encounter on my Flickr account (Jeff Hebert) page as follows:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/119420324@N04/53838394474/in/dateposted/>

I can also provide digital photos upon request. I am completing this report on my work computer. My home computer has the digital photographs.

20. Previous experience with this species: None at all. First time encounter with this Federally Endangered Species.

21. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

AllaboutBirds.org site accessed with my iPhone only. Confirmed when returned home with National Geographic Birding manual and Audubon Society.org website.

22. Identification aids used when?

At time of sighting, After observation

23. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

100% positive. The matching call that it made also confirmed its ID.

24. Date report completed:

07-09-2024

25. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

Yes

26. If yes, may we include your name with the report?

Yes

