

# LOS NEWS



[www.losbird.org](http://www.losbird.org)

NEWSLETTER OF THE

**Louisiana Ornithological Society**

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**Submission Deadline**  
*Winter LOS News is*  
**December 1, 2010**

*Journal of Louisiana Ornithology*  
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## 2010 LOS FALL MEETING

**Friday and Saturday, October 29-30**  
**Cameron/Creole**

Hurricanes, tropical storms, oil, what next? What's next is the LOS fall meeting. Join us for another week-end of great birding in Cameron Parish.

### Friday Evening, First Baptist Church in Cameron on Marshall Street

#### Friday, October 29, 2010

**6 - 7 P.M.**

#### Registration:

Light snacks will be provided by the Cameron Parish Tourist Commission.

**7 - 8 P.M.**

#### Meeting and Evening Program:

#### National Audubon Society's Response to the Gulf Oil Spill

**Melanie Driscoll**, Director of Bird Conservation, National Audubon Society, will describe the view from the field for the first few months of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. She will present what we can glean about the immediate impacts on birds, and outline concerns for the future. She will discuss National Audubon Society's initial response, including work with state and federal agencies, volunteer mobilization, scientific contributions, intensive conservation planning efforts initiated by the spill and new capacity. Finally, she will describe how Audubon's efforts not only form a response to this immense threat, but also work to address one of Louisiana's greatest challenges: rapid coastal land loss caused by human manipulation of the wetlands and the Mississippi River.

#### Saturday, October 30, 2010

**7:00 A.M.**

#### Field Trip

Meet in the parking lot of the Cameron Motel. Ed Wallace will lead a field trip to the Cameron Parish hot spots.

### Saturday Evening: Creole Community Center (see directions on page 2)

**6 - 6:30 P.M.**

#### Registration at the Creole.

**6:30 - 7:30 P.M.** **Dinner- chicken/sausage gumbo dinner**

**7:30 P.M.**

#### Meeting and Evening Program:

Our speaker will be **Randy Lanctot**, executive director of the

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**Louisiana Wildlife Federation** for the past 30 years. The LWF is affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation and boasts a membership of over 10,000 throughout Louisiana. From hunting wild game with his bare hands as a child in the Chicago suburbs, to riding his motorcycle across country, eventually winding up at LSU, Randy's latest challenge is to establish a "State Seashore" along the Caminada Headlands between Caminada Pass and West Belle Pass in Jefferson and Lafourche Parishes. This challenge has been made all the more difficult by the damage done to the beaches to defend against the oil. The title of Randy's presentation is **Quest for a Louisiana State Seashore**.

***Cameron Accommodations:***

The phone number for the Cameron Motel is 337-775-5442. The Cameron Motel also has sites available for RV campers. Several eating places (in trailers) are open in Cameron. Other accommodations can be found in Sulphur or Lake Charles.

***Directions to the Creole Community Center:***

The Creole Community Center/Fire Station is approximately 15-20 minutes from the Cameron Motel. It is ¼ mile east of the only traffic light in Creole (Parish Road 1143). It is on the right hand side of the road with a big fenced parking lot.

## **Announcing 2011 LOS Winter Meeting Joan Brown**

The 2011 Winter Meeting of the LOS will be in Monroe, LA, on January 28, 29, and 30. The meeting place will once again be the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites located at 1051 US Highway 165 Bypass.

Field trips (to be announced later) will be all day Saturday and a half day trip on Sunday. We have some excellent birding sites here in and around Monroe and we hope to see everyone up here in January. Expect good birds, great food, and a good time for all!

## **MY VIEW**

Oil is no longer gushing from the tragic accident that occurred in water more than a mile deep in the Gulf. Tragically, enough of it that made it to the surface floated to the shore to potentially affect coastal habitats such as beaches and marshes. The oil that did not reach shore was burned, collected or dispersed to where we cannot observe it. What oil that now remains on the surface is collected or absorbed when found.

The fate of the enormous quantities of dispersed oil is being debated; the damage to aquatic systems could be more tragic than the damage already observed to terrestrial systems or there perhaps will be little or no effect. The effects of chemical dispersants and our clean-up efforts on the surface have not been evaluated. Hopefully, damages from them are minor compared to the damage from the original spill.

We all observed aspects of the tragedy through extensive coverage by the media. Images of the spewing oil, disturbed habitats, and oiled wildlife greatly affected us. The media tend to sensationalize, and the coverage often lacked balance and completeness. Consequently, some of the economic damage done to the tourist and seafood industry was due to lack of information or misinformation.

All of us were affected by the oil tragedy and the images depicting it. Who isn't affected by the image of a completely oil-soaked pelican? We all mobilized to do what we could to: (1) stop the gusher, (2) keep oil off our beaches, barrier islands, and marshes, and (3) rescue and rehabilitate oiled wildlife. A massive effort was launched to accomplish these goals. The effects of some of these efforts may not have always been positive with respect to beach-nesting birds and other wildlife in areas of the enormous cleanup effort. The future negative consequences on beaches that were not cleaned can only be speculated on, but they certainly would have been negative.

Because of our concern for birds and their habitats, many in the birding community got involved in cleanup efforts. The most public involvement was in the oiled-bird cleanup program. The program was well organized and effective for many of the birds that were captured. The effort and expense to do this was considerable, but at least 1000 birds were cleaned and released.

The response of the bird-watching community to this tragedy is gratifying. We all love the outdoors and birds. Unfortunately, there are other tragedies that are all around us and not so obvious. Habitat loss is a recurring problem that has already destroyed or modified most of the original habitats of the country. It is continuing to occur and often is not necessary to accomplish the particular goals that are stated for the modification. As the human population increases and we continue to try to grow the economy, more pressure will be put on the remaining habitats.

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The importance of habitats to a species is illustrated by the proposal to reintroduce “Whooping Cranes” into Louisiana [see article this issue – Ed.] Many of the oiled Brown Pelicans images were from birds nesting on Queen Bess Island in Barataria Bay. It was picked as a potential nesting site when the pelicans that had been extirpated from Louisiana were reintroduced into the state from Florida because the habitat there was believed to be suitable. Habitat availability was crucial.

As bird watchers, we have always been active in encouraging habitat preservation. We at times have been proactive as in the creation of the Hollyman Reserved sponsored by the Baton Rouge Audubon Society at Peveto Beach. We have often cooperated with The Nature Conservancy and others to acquire and/or protect habitats.

We must become more proactive in our support of habitat protection. Unfortunately, a picture of a cut-over forest does not have the emotional “kick” as does one of an oiled bird. We must find ways to “sell” habitat protection and development. Habitats can be forever. They are necessary for the survival of species. We need to have as much passion to protect them as we have for saving oiled birds.

Bob Hamilton, *editor*

*The opinions above are mine, and do not necessarily reflect those of others.*

## Please Report Marked Loggerhead Shrikes

Loggerhead Shrikes are declining across much of their range. In Canada, the *migrans* subspecies is considered critically endangered, with less than 25 pairs found in 2010. The vast majority of pairs now breed in Ontario. An extremely active and multi-faceted recovery program is underway for this species in Ontario, including a captive breeding and release program. This program has been releasing approximately 100 juvenile shrikes annually since 2006. While much is known and has been learned about this species, a critical piece of the puzzle is still missing: where exactly do these birds spend the winter? To maximize our chances of locating wintering areas and better define migration routes, we will be coloring the breast of released young produced from the captive breeding program, to make them more detectable by birders. Birds have been released in July and August. Birds will have an extensive area of their breast colored in green, blue or purple. All released birds, and a large proportion of the wild population, are also color banded. If you see a shrike with a colored breast and/or wearing bands, please report it to Wildlife Preservation Canada at (EM: [jessica@wildlifepreservation.ca](mailto:jessica@wildlifepreservation.ca), PH: 519-836-9314, FX: 519-836-8840). We will need details about specific location (GPS coordinates are ideal, but not essential) and color(s) (breast and/or bands) seen.

## LOS NEWS Needs Articles

LSU NRWS is published periodically to communicate with the membership of the Louisiana Ornithological Society about organization business like upcoming meetings and other membership matters. We are an organization for people interested in birds in the state. As the current editor of LOS NEWS, I would like to include some articles of general interest to our membership in every issue. Our membership varies from beginner to expert, but we all are interested in Louisiana birds and their habitats, and we like to read about them. I know many of you get your information on the internet and there is much of interest there. Not all our membership are expert users of the net and would appreciate non-net sources.

LOS has several sources of information, The LOS NEWS, “The Journal of Louisiana Ornithology”, a peer-reviewed source of original work about Louisiana birds, and our web site, [www.losbird.org](http://www.losbird.org).

The LOS NEWS is an excellent place to publish information of interest to Louisiana birders and others interested in Louisiana birds. We are fortunate to have many very-active birders in the state who regularly make observations and analyze their meaning. Perhaps they could share some of their observations and expertise through articles in LOS NEWS. I have not been proactive enough in soliciting articles, but I am starting now.

The gulf oil crisis is an event that was followed by the national media and has had a great influence on Louisiana birds, their habitats, and the waters of the Gulf and the surrounding beaches. This truly has been an economic disaster for many in the region. I optimistically expected some articles would have been submitted about some aspect of this disaster. To their credit many Louisiana Ornithologists participated officially and unofficially in evaluating the effects of this tragedy and in trying to help correct some of the damage done. I am interested in the observations of some of these participants and I expect the readership would be too. For instance, I have no idea how much damage was done to our marshes and their vegetation. I do not know the extent of damage to coastal nesting sites and the likely long-term consequences of the spill. Some of these questions did not draw the attention of the media.

Submitted articles should be of interest to our readership. They should be clearly written. They are not expected to be of the rigorous quality expected in “The Journal of Louisiana Ornithology.” I will work with authors to help improve their manuscripts and publish them.

Please do not be hesitant to submit any manuscript that you write about Louisiana birds; they will also interest others.

Bob Hamilton, Editor LOS NEWS,  
[bob\\_hamil@yahoo.com](mailto:bob_hamil@yahoo.com)

## **L.D.W.F. Announces Proposed Reintroduction of Non-migratory Whooping Cranes into Southwest Louisiana [August 19, 2010, Press Release]**

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will attempt to establish a non-migratory flock of whooping cranes that lives and breeds in the wetlands, marshes and prairies of southwestern Louisiana. If this proposal is approved, the reintroduction effort could begin during early 2011.

The process began today with an announcement in the Federal Register seeking public comment on a proposed rule to reintroduce the endangered whooping crane into habitat in its historic range on the state-owned White Lake Wetland Conservation Area in Vermilion Parish, Louisiana.

LDWF Secretary Robert Barham praised this lofty proposal to reintroduce whooping cranes back into the wetlands of the Chenier coastal plain. "Crane species around the world depend on coastal wetlands, and the proposed efforts would reunite this indigenous species back into some of the most productive and expansive coastal freshwater wetlands left in America," he said.

The reintroduction is being proposed as part of an ongoing recovery effort for this highly imperiled species, which was on the verge of extinction in the 1940s and even today has only about 395 individuals in the wild (550 worldwide); none in Louisiana. The only self-sustaining wild population of whooping cranes migrates between Wood Buffalo National Park in the Northwest Territories of Canada and Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas and, like those in the eastern populations, remains vulnerable to extinction from continued loss of habitat or natural or man-made catastrophes. Multiple efforts are underway to reduce this risk by increasing populations in the wild, including ongoing efforts to establish a migratory population in the eastern United States.

"With just under 400 birds in the wild, the vast majority of which winter along the Texas coast, whooping cranes are among our nation's most threatened species. Our proposal to reintroduce a population in Louisiana would not only help protect this iconic species from extinction but would also help us take another big step in our campaign to restore the Gulf Coast's wildlife, marshes, and coasts to health," said Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior.

USFWS proposes the new, reintroduced, non-migratory population of whooping cranes be designated as a non-essential, experimental population (NEP) under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act. This proposed designation and its implementing regulation are developed to be more compatible with routine human activities in the reintroduction

area. The designation allows for take of whooping cranes when such take is accidental and incidental to an otherwise lawful activity, including agriculture practices, recreation, and hunting. The intentional take (including killing or harm) of any NEP-designated whooping crane would still be a violation of federal law punishable under the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

"LDWF's wildlife biologists have decades of experience restoring wildlife and have led several successful wildlife restoration efforts including the American alligator, the brown pelican and the bald eagle," said Robert Love, LDWF Coastal and Non-game Resources Division Administrator. "These are examples of coastal wildlife species which have been successfully restored, additional to white tailed deer, wild turkey and black bear populations, all upland species which have been, or are currently being restored."

There are approximately 1.3 million acres of marsh, open water, and Chenier habitat in southwestern coastal Louisiana. The cranes would be reintroduced to the White Lake area and are not expected to be affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Whooping cranes historically occurred in Louisiana in both a resident, non-migratory flock and a migratory flock that wintered in Louisiana. The proposed release area is the location where whooping cranes were historically documented raising young in Louisiana.

"This reintroduction of a new non-migratory flock would not only restore the whooping crane to part of its historic range but also would provide another geographically distinct population," said Cindy Dohner, USFWS Southeast Regional Director. "We look forward to continued work with our partners at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to aid in the recovery of this magnificent bird."

Today's Federal Register announcement includes the proposed rule. USFWS has drafted an environmental assessment (EA), which evaluates several alternatives for establishing a new non-migratory population of whooping cranes. USFWS is seeking comments on both documents, and also specifically the following: (1) the geographic boundary for the NEP; and, (2) effects of the reintroduction on other native species and the ecosystem.

To allow adequate time to conduct this review, USFWS requests that information be received on or before October 18, 2010. You may submit information by one of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

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## LOS New Members

Gerry Click, Ruston, LA

Tim Domingue, Breaux Bridge, LA

Ronnie Fontenot, Ville Platte, LA

Ruth Griffin, Minden, LA

Jan Starks, Natchez, LA

### In Memoriam

W. Cannon Matthews

*Sept 2009*

*Pineville Life Member*

## Treasurer Report

Judith O'Neale, Treasurer

### Account Balances

### August 2010

Cash Accounts	\$5,142
Ted Parker Youth Scholarship Fund	\$2,000
Bank CD	\$9,506
Life Member Restricted Fund	<u>\$10,000</u>
Total	<u>\$26,648</u>

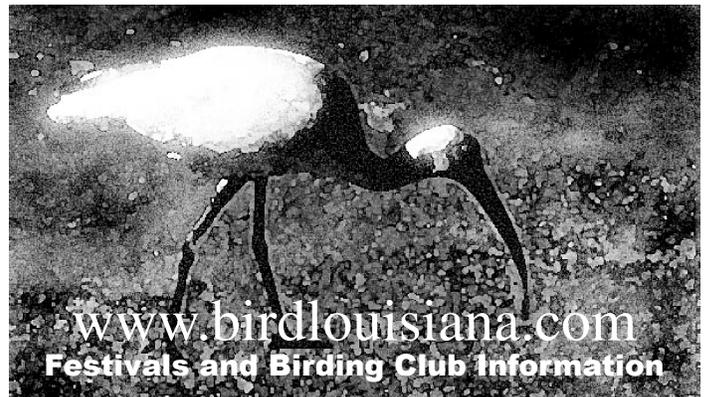
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U.S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R4-ES-2010-0057; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

E-mails or faxes will not be accepted. All comments will be posted on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that any personal information provided will be posted.

LDWF and USFWS will hold public hearing at the following locations: Gueydan, Louisiana, on September 15, 2010 at the Gueydan Civic Center, 901 Wilkinson St., Gueydan, LA 70542; and in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on September 16, 2010 at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70808. **[Already held. Ed.]**

Each public hearing will last from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Before each hearing, an open house will be held to provide an additional opportunity for the public to gain information and ask questions about the proposed rule. All comments received at a public hearing, both verbal and written, will be considered in making a final decision. **[Already held, Ed.]**



**Louisiana Ornithological Society**

**[www.losbird.org](http://www.losbird.org)**

## *Make a note ...*

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Fall meeting ..... October 29-30, 2010 ..... Cameron, LA

Winter meeting ..... January 28-30, 2011 ..... Monroe, LA

### DEADLINE

We welcome submission from readers and others.

Submission deadline date for Winter LOS News is December 1, 2010.



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**- REGISTRATION FORM -**  
**LOS 2010 FALL MEETING – CAMERON / CREOLE, LA**  
**FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29-30, 2010**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number registering for meeting \_\_\_\_\_ at \$10.00/person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number registering for Saturday's dinner \_\_\_\_\_ at \$6.00/person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

= \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 2010 Membership Dues

= \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total enclosed**

**Complete form and send with check payable to LOS to:**  
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