

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

Nature Notes



Charter 2016

Vol 2 ISSUE 3 June 2017

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President's Note:

Master Naturalists,

There have been a multitude of articles and essays written over the past few years about the decline of natural history education. In summary, natural history classes make up a smaller part of the biological and environmental science curriculums compared to what they did historically, and some universities are giving up their neglected, but important, natural history collections (UL Monroe's plant and fish collection is one example). While all of this is a serious contemporary issue, the disconnection of science from nature isn't a new issue—Aldo Leopold was lamenting the lack of formal natural history education in the 1930s.

In his essay "Natural History, the Forgotten Science," he explores the ecological awakening of Wisconsin farmers. Tamarack trees, once removed by the farmers, were now being planted along with the ladyslippers, pitcher plants, and wildflowers of the native bogs in this "revolt" against the tamed farm. In Leopold's day, laboratory biology was overtaking natural history as the "superior form of science" and crowding it out of formal education. Leopold saw the value of amateur naturalists, those with a passion but outside of academia, undertaking their own study and conservation of our natural resources. *(Continued on page 2)*

Calendar Quick View

- Jun 6: Bird Study**
- Jun 10-11: SLAMN Workshop**
- Jun 22: Beginner Birding Workshop**
- Jun 24: SLAMN Graduation**
- Jun 27: Plant Identification**
- July 5: SLAMN Meeting**



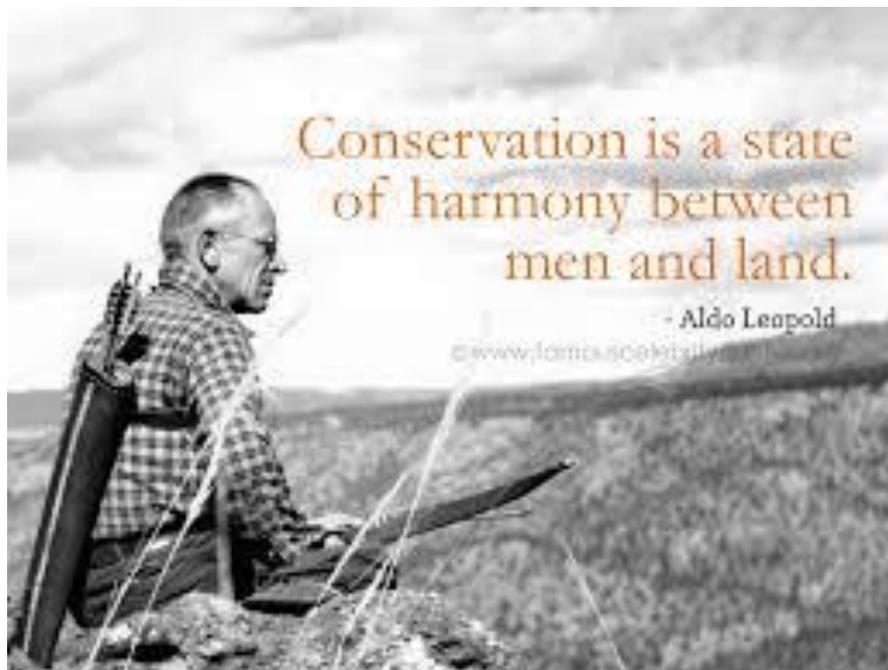
photo courtesy Aldo Leopold Foundation ©2011

Master naturalist programs developed across the country almost 50 years after Leopold's death. Thanks to many motivated and passionate leaders, the Louisiana Master Naturalist Association (LMNA) has grown from its humble beginning in New Orleans several years ago to 5 active chapters, with 2 more on the way soon, thus covering all corners of Louisiana. Each chapter spends months teaching all aspects of local ecosystems and nature study to its program participants. Many chapters work with professors or the natural history collections housed in local universities. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries helps the LMNA whenever they can. That, I think, is the future of natural history—a working partnership between amateurs and professionals.

Once certified as master naturalists, it's our duty to study and conserve our local ecosystems and to help reconnect our fellow citizens to nature. This can be as simple as going out to your local boat launch or patch of habitat to make observations for iNaturalist. Be visible and engage with passersby about why this habitat is important to you. Write about your outings in a blog. Share photos and cool observations on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. In today's interconnected world, we are more equipped than ever before to share our passions. Speak to your local parish or city parks department and offer to give a natural history presentation at a nature or community center. Speak at your local library. These venues love offering diverse programs to their patrons. When you do give a talk, be sure to promote the master naturalist program so that interested persons can find out more and maybe even become certified themselves.

Through master naturalists, natural history is becoming more relevant, despite its apparent decline in formal education. Natural history has never been a field that one entered to become wealthy; it's always been about sharing that passion. Share away!

Thanks, Irvin



Meeting Notes

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Upcoming General Meeting Location and Date

April 12th Meeting Highlights**President:** Irvin Louque**Vice-President:** Tommy Hillman**Treasurer:** Robby Maxwell**Secretary:** Julie Amy**At-large Board Members:**

Chuck Battaglia,

Brian Sean Early

David Booth,

Theresa Cross,

Lori McGee,

Deborah Frank

- Four of the new SLAMN candidates attended to LMNA Rendezvous at Chico State Park, March 31-April 2.
- At the Rendezvous, Speaker Bob Thomas suggested supporting members that paid dues and receive a newsletter only. This would assist in bolstering membership.
- Irvin has had email contact with interested people who stopped by the SLAMN booth at the Garden Expo 2017

Improvements for Public Event booths:

- Theresa suggested we purchase some good LA field guides, 1 per year to develop a small library. Some of these books would be used at the booth for discussion/ public education.
- Magnets with the logo and website on them, to hand out at the booth.
- Daniel suggests purchasing a table cloth with our logo to place at the table, or for the set up at an event.
- Leave our brochures at specific places that get a lot of traffic i.e.; Allen Acres, Hodges Gardens, state parks.
- Have a booth at the Beauregard Parish Fair which is always the second weekend in October every year.
- A long term goal, make up "protected species" magnets to hand out at our booth, during events.
- Chuck suggested a portable feather flag to place near an event or outside a class to advertise.

Reminder: SLAMN yearly membership \$15.00.

Mail your dues to:

Robby Maxwell SLAMN Treasurer

20333 Bourque Rd.

Iowa, LA 70647

Check the SLAMN Website for documents to record your continuing education and volunteer hours.

<http://www.swlamasternaturalists.org/nature-notes--docs.html>

Send the completed forms to:

Robby Maxwell SLAMN Treasurer

20333 Bourque Rd.

Iowa, LA 70647

2017 LMNA Rendezvous at Chico State Park

- David Booth's kitchen coordination and food prep for the meals was a success.
- The arboretum rooms were comfortable and inviting for the lectures. Perfect size and great acoustics/ visuals.
- The speaker line up was wonderful. Bob Thomas, spoke to a possible Naturalist leadership training program in the future. Bryophytes, (Dale Kruse & Karin), Geologic History of Louisiana, (Jackie Richard), and How to Look at Spiders in Nature, (Aimee Thomas). All of whom were just a few of the awesome lectures/speakers over the 3 day event.
- Meeting the diverse naturalist from around our state.

2017 LMNA Rendezvous Room for improvement

- The parking was inadequate near the dining hall. Suggestion bring bikes for travel between classes, etc., and car pool.
- The dining hall meeting room was too noisy during the post meal lectures, due to kitchen clean up. Also there was too much light from the windows that caused glare or the inability to see the power point presentations.
- Suggestions have cleaning crew finish after the lecturer and apply block out material on the windows, prior to the beginning of the Rendezvous. It was suggested to move the presentation screen closer to the entrance door, as far away for the kitchen area as possible, to decrease the noise distraction.

New Business

- For graduation ask the new members to bring in 3 names of people who might be interested in joining this chapter.
- It was suggested to have active members assist in teaching a class, as a team leader alongside the presenter/instructor, for volunteer hours.

*Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Chapter meetings are held quarterly on the first Wednesday of the month at Tuten Park at 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.
Chapter tentative meeting dates for 2017 are July 5, and October 4, 2017*

Local News:

[Back](#)**Volunteers save lives, no experience needed – by Irvin Louque**

On May 13, Audubon Louisiana held volunteer days at Holly Beach and Elmer's Island to install protection for beach-nesting birds. Katie Barnes, Audubon Louisiana's coastal bird technician, led the installation of signs and rope fencing to protect a Least Tern colony that stretched for a half mile. My wife Sam and I were part of the group that installed this protection, just a short walk from the town of Holly Beach. Least Terns, Wilson's Plovers, and Common Nighthawks (all beach-nesting species in Southwest Louisiana) are especially vulnerable to vehicle traffic on our beaches, which this fence should protect against. As volunteers, we weren't allowed to walk through the main colony so that we wouldn't accidentally step on nests or disturb the nesting birds since they are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Once we finished setting up the signs and roping the area off, we embarked on phase two of our beach-nesting bird protection trip. At a restoration site a couple of miles east of Holly Beach where sand is being pumped onto the beach to build it up and extend it, construction workers had reported a Least Tern nest. If the terns nest in the construction site, they'll need to stop construction until the fall. Katie led us to the site, where we placed several dozen plywood Least Tern decoys in a fake colony to try to lure nearby terns to nest among the decoys instead of the construction site. Once we finished placing the decoys, we came across a Least Tern nest, so hopefully more will follow!

The beach-nesting volunteer day was a great day to learn about Least Terns and their many challenges. Whether you are into birds or not, there are a multitude of volunteer projects going on around Southwest Louisiana and across the region. Volunteering in conservation projects has the dual benefit of physically benefiting a local ecosystem and learning more about that ecosystem. Audubon is just one of many organizations that need volunteers to benefit the environment. As the SWLA Master Naturalists board finds out about volunteer projects, we'll let you know through our website (www.swlamasternaturalists.org/events), Facebook, email, and this newsletter.



Local News:

[Back](#)**SWLA Master Naturalists Plant Louisiana Irises at Tuten Park by: Irvin Louque**

On April 19, Theresa Cross, Patty Palmer, Chet St. Romain, Dan Guillory, and Irvin Louque planted 35 giant blue Louisiana irises (*Iris giganteaerulea*) around the pond at Tuten Park. The irises were donated by Gary Salathe of the Greater New Orleans Iris Society and picked up from New Orleans by my parents, Irvin and Celeste Louque, at the Louisiana Iris Rainbow Festival. Norman German also donated 10 Louisiana irises of an unknown cultivar that were planted around the pond as well.

The Greater New Orleans Iris Society will likely make as many as 500 Louisiana irises available for us to plant later this year through a project to rescue irises from land slated for sale and development. I'll notify the chapter when I find out more information.

Chet, Dan, and Norman were all certified Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists in 2016. Patty is a student in the ongoing class of 2017. Theresa has served as board member since 2015, and Irvin has served as president since 2015.

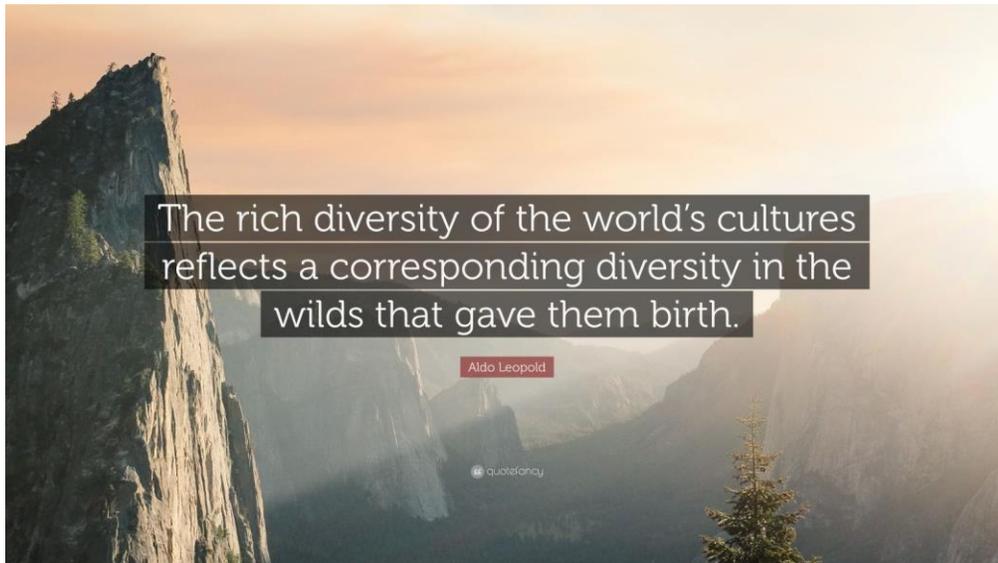


Local News:

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Our SLAMN Candidates participating in the Aquatic Invertebrates Class June 3, 2017





Continuing Education Opportunities:

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Continuing Education and Volunteer

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists **Irvin Louque** holds bird banding activities at Sam Houston Jones Park on Saturdays in collaboration with the **Louisiana Bird Observatory**.



Meet at 6:30 AM at the Red Trail parking lot at Sam Houston Jones State Park. The banding station is located at the first parking lot on the right and additional parking and restrooms is located on the left of the road. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact Irvin Louque through email or phone (225)206-0400 irvinlouque@gmail.com

Volunteer Opportunities:

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services Southwest Louisiana NWR Complex

<https://www.fws.gov/swlarefugecomplex/volunteers.html>

Volunteers and student interns provide much needed assistance with refuge projects. They are often able to complete work that the refuge would be unable to do. The hours, work assignments, et cetera are tailored to meet the needs of both the refuge and the volunteer or intern.

Refuge housing may be available to qualified interns and volunteers. Volunteer projects include conducting biological surveys, providing clerical assistance in the office, general maintenance of facilities and equipment, photography and art work, habitat restoration activities, and environmental education just to name a few.

Please contact the SW LA refuge complex headquarters for additional information regarding openings and how to apply.

SW LA NWR Complex Headquarters
Attn: Volunteer Coordinator
1428 Hwy. 27
Bell City, LA 70630
337-598-2216

Diane Borden-Billiot

Volunteer Opportunities:

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Check out the Chenier Plain Coastal Restoration and Protection Authority website (<http://www.cpcrpa.org/>) and Facebook page. Attend a meeting and learn about the efforts to protect and conserve our coastal plains. Citizen participation is welcome. Meetings are held monthly (3rd Tuesday from 6 to 7:30 pm) between Calcasieu, Vermilion, and Cameron parishes. Check the website or Facebook page for location of meetings.

Friends of Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Refuges and Wetlands

Friends of Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Refuges and Wetlands is a non-profit organization of volunteers, committed to supporting the mission of the U.S. FWS Refuge System, especially the Southwest Louisiana NWR Complex. Volunteers and student interns provide assistance with refuge programs including helping at the visitor centers, facilities maintenance, general grounds maintenance, and program assistance. For applications and more information contact: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/cameron_prairie/what_we_do/about_the_friends.html

Upcoming Events:

[Back](#)**Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist certification workshop June 10 - 11**

Nocturnal Wildlife and Riverine Ecology Kisatchie Hodges Gardens.

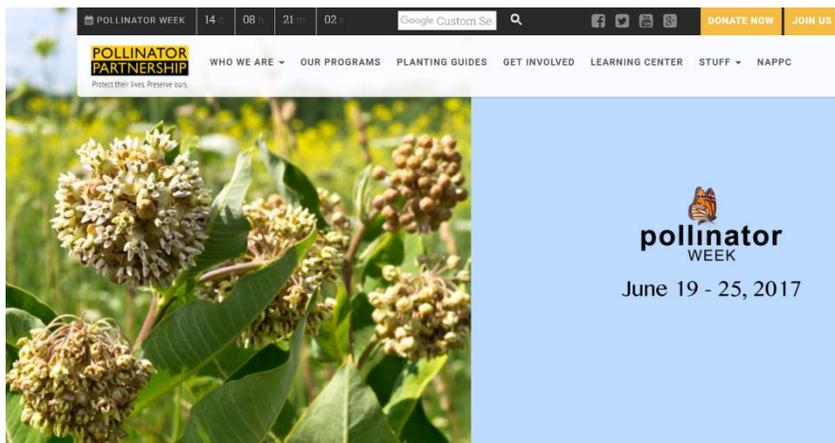
The Nocturnal and Fish classes will be held at Hodges Gardens (Sabine Parish) on June 10-11. The nocturnal class will be Saturday afternoon and night. Sunday morning lecture in the bunkhouse and then venture out for the field portion in nearby streams. Please be sure to RSVP to Robby Maxwell.

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist certification workshop**June 24 SLAMN Graduation**

11:00 am – 3:00 pm
Tuten Park

National Pollinator Week June 19 – 25, 2017

<http://www.pollinator.org/index.html>

**Summer Plant Identification Class**

Mr. Robert Turley will be conducting a summer Plant Identification Class as a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) for all Master Gardeners. The class will be open to anyone that is interested in plant ID's. The class will be similar to the first part of the MG training class, except it will be nothing but plants, nomenclature and culture - raising the bar up a little. Those who enjoy and love plants and would like to learn more will find this class a joy.

You will learn 400 plants, their Family, Genus, Species and variety/cultivar name. Participants will bring plants to each class with information such as Common Name, Family, Genus, Species and variety/cultivar with brief culture comment.

There will be 17 class periods and the Registration Fee is \$25.00.

Dates & Times

First class - Wednesday, June 27 - 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Days: 6/27; 7/11; 7/18; 7/25; 8/1; 8/8; 8/15; 8/22; 8/29; 9/5; 9/12; 9/19; 10/31; 11/7; 11/14; 11/28; 12/5.

For more information contact: <http://swlmg.weebly.com>

Upcoming Events:

[Back](#)**June 22, 2017 Tuten Park Beginner Birding Workshop**

The Gulf Coast Bird Club announces a free summertime Beginner Birding Workshop to be held at Tuten Park in Lake Charles. Southwest Louisiana is a national hotspots for birding. In this workshop, participants will explore the fascinating and fun hobby of Birding. Three classroom sessions will be held from 6 pm to 7:30 pm on June 22, July 6 and July 20. Two field trip sessions will be held at Sam Houston Jones Park on Saturday June 24 and July 22 from 8 to 9 am. The price of admission will be one package of sunflower seeds for the birds.

This is a family friendly activity. All are welcome and school aged children are welcome with an adult participant. Bring your binoculars and a bird field guide if you have them. Activities and drills will help participants focus on the enjoyment of birds and their identification by size, shape, color and behavior. This will be a great workshop for those new to birding as well as experienced birders.

For the Field Trip Sessions: participants will meet at the Sam Houston Jones State Park's Riverside Pavilion at the picnic area and walk from there to do birding via the swamp, board walk, along the river and other open areas to view as many habitats as possible. Birding by ear will be stressed as well as by sight. Come and join us this summer for the fun of it.

For more information contact David Booth at 337-526-0837 or david@boothenvironmental.com. For online information visit the website, <http://sites.google.com/site/gulfcoastbirdclub/> or like us on Facebook.

Tuesday June 6, 2017 Carnegie Library Gulf Coast Bird Club Special program offering – Bird Study

Bird Study Group offered for those who wish to learn more and go deeper into birds, birding and any related topics.

Location will be the Meeting Room at the Carnegie Library at 4:30 pm. This library is in downtown Lake Charles. It is at or near 411 Pujo Street. I believe that the meeting room is on the west side and has a separate entrance. I do hope that all who are interested can make this first organizational meeting or provide input.

Agenda for the first meeting: time 4:30 – 6:00 pm

1. Introductions as may be needed
2. Discuss the purpose of the meeting
3. Brainstorm possible topics, interests or directions for the Study Group
4. Select top interests
5. Decide on path forward
6. Discuss and set dates and times for future summer time meetings.
7. Dismiss by 6 pm (library closes at 6).

Additional Info: The Bird Study Group will be a special program which will be for the summer-time as an initial trial period. All options are open as to what the group will focus on. It will depend on interests the attendees express. Possibilities will include the following:

- How to ID or separate difficult, similar birds
- Learning Bird Sounds and Songs
- Owls and nocturnal birds
- Read and discuss interesting books on birds, bird life etc.
- Research and review national birding hotspots for future trips
- Study the 10-15 hardest to identify birds in our area
- Study Birds of the World
- Hummingbirds of the USA or World
- Conduct service projects
- Build nest boxes
- Life histories of particular birds or families of birds
- Other common topics of interest

For more information, please contact David Booth at david@boothenvironmental.com or cell: 337-526-0837



iNaturalist Spotlight and Photos:

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iNaturalist.org's Journal Official Blog

<https://www.inaturalist.org/blog>

Check out the "Observation of the Week" post.

iNaturalist Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Project Observation of the Month by Irvin Louque

Add your observations to the Southwest Louisiana master Naturalists Project

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/southwest-louisiana-master-naturalists>



**Join the Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists project.
Add your observations and photos to our group project.**



Welcome to Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

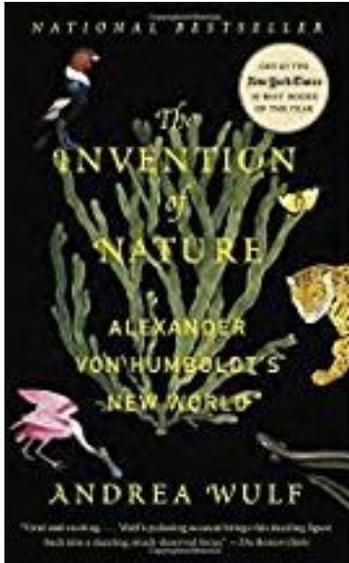
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A Book Review by Linda Wygoda

The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World by Andrea Wulf



This award winning book is about the life of Alexander von Humboldt, a Prussian naturalist who lived from 1769-1859. If you are like me, you may only have heard of him because of the naming of the Humboldt Current off the coast of South America, Humboldt penguins, or in references to him in the study of biogeography. In this book, Andrea Wulf brings his life back into focus through her entertaining descriptions of his explorations of South America; his collections of plants, rocks, and animal specimens; his extensive cartography of the regions he visited; his travels to Siberia; and his measurements of mountain elevations as he climbed some of the highest volcanoes in the world. Her descriptions of his life and work are vivid and exciting. Her extensive research into his life and influence make this book an important addition to your naturalist's library.

The first part of the book is about Humboldt's early life, his travels to Latin America and his descriptions of the journey from a scientific viewpoint. Humboldt published comprehensive books about his travels and included maps, natural history descriptions, anthropological observations, and climatology. He promoted a holistic, unified view of the natural world and was one of the first to describe human-induced climate change. He achieved worldwide notoriety. In 1869, his fame was so great that he was celebrated throughout the world, including many U.S. cities with festivals. However, in most of the English-speaking world, he is now a more marginalized figure. The author attributes this to a specialization within different scientific disciplines, as well as anti-German sentiment following two World Wars.

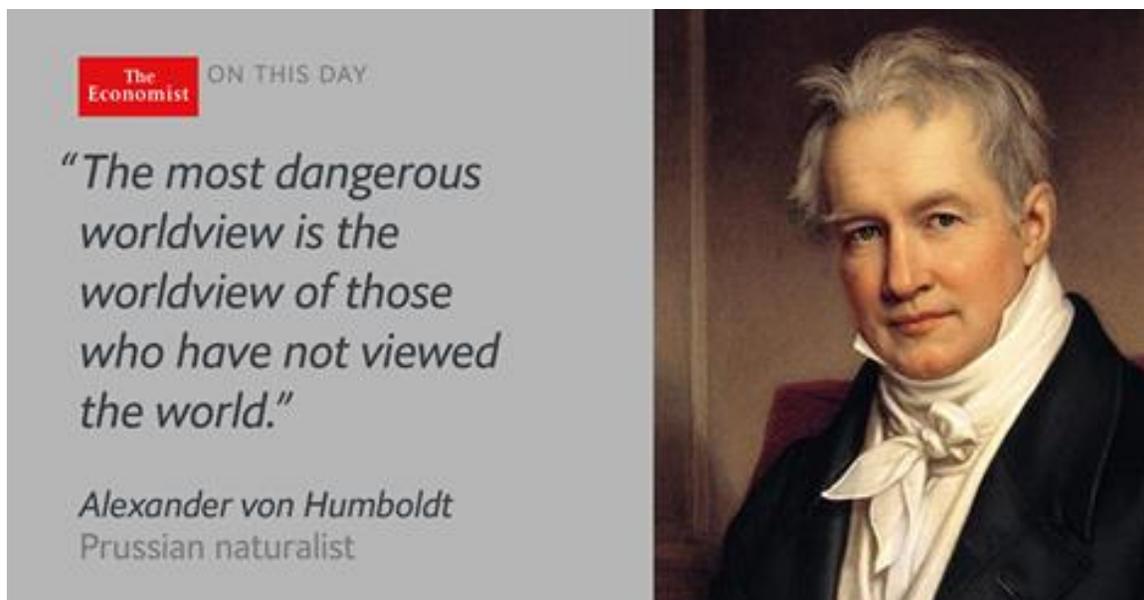
One of Humboldt's unique contributions was his idea of isotherms (lines of similar temperature) and isobars (lines of similar pressure) which revolutionized our understanding of meteorology and climate. Previously temperatures and pressures were listed in extensive charts. By plotting these temperatures and drawing lines between similar temperatures on maps, our understanding of weather and climatology changed dramatically allowing us to see patterns in weather systems. Humboldt made extensive measurements and divided plant distribution into tropical, temperate, and arctic vegetative zones. He was able to demonstrate that these vegetative zones varied in a similar way by latitude and also by altitude and was one of the first to make comparisons from different continents. Based on his extensive plant collections and measurements, he was one of the first to suggest that South America and Africa were once connected together.

The second part of the book concerns Humboldt's wide-ranging and broad influences on other scientists and writers. Through her research, Andrea Wulf, demonstrates the connections between Humboldt and many scientists, historical figures, and authors. One of Humboldt's most important ideas was that nature is a complicated and interconnected global force, and that humans are a part of this connection. Humboldt influenced Simon Bolivar, Thomas Jefferson, Johann Goethe, and William Wordsworth. Humboldt's writings especially inspired Charles Darwin, who took Humboldt's books with him on his voyages on the H.M.S. Beagle and extensively referenced them in his later writing of The Origin of Species.

Humboldt's ideas about the unity and interconnectedness of nature also was used in the research of Ernst Haeckel in his development of the definition of ecology and his research on radiolarians. Haeckel discovered and described thousands of new species often in beautiful drawings. Haeckel's drawings would later influence an area of art called Art Nouveau, which was inspired by natural forms and structures. Humboldt's ideas of the interconnectedness of natural systems would provide a foundation for our current understanding of food webs, biogeochemical cycles, succession, and evolution.

Humboldt's writings made science accessible and popular. His ideas influenced many important thinkers, scientists, and artists who in turn inspired each other. He was a major influence on Henry David Thoreau and John Muir and provided an intellectual framework for their writing combining emotionality and poetry with their scientific writing. This would become what Muir would describe in a poetic way as the "breath of Nature" and "pulses of Nature's big heart". It is in this way that Humboldt is bale to "invent" our concept of Nature.

Although perhaps marginalized in the past, Humboldt is very relevant to the challenges we face now. His story helps us to understand why we view nature the way we do today. Humboldt was one of the first to recognize the interplay of our economic, social, and political systems with the environment. The study of climate change requires the interdisciplinary, international approach he advocated. His belief in the free exchange of information between scientists, and his concept that nature involves global patterns is important in our study of climate change, and our consideration of the preservation and conservation challenges in our future.



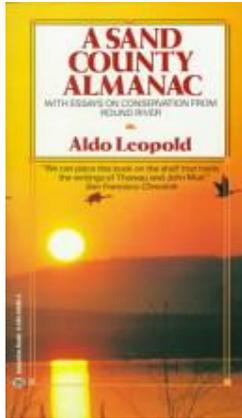
Resources for the Naturalists:

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Books:

A Sand County Almanac: With Other Essays on Conservation from Round River

By Aldo Leopold

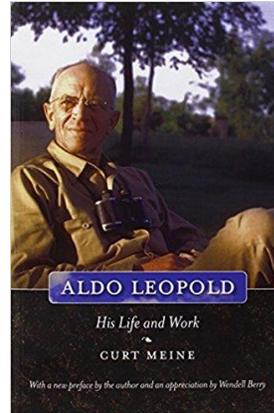
https://books.google.com/books/about/A_Sand_County_Almanac.html?id=Gxq72yz1z6EC

"We can place this book on the shelf that holds the writings of Thoreau and John Muir." San Francisco Chronicle

These astonishing portraits of the natural world explore the breathtaking diversity of the unspoiled American landscape -- the mountains and the prairies, the deserts and the coastlines. A stunning tribute to our land and a bold challenge to protect the world we love.

Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work by Curt D Meine, and Wendell Berry (Contributor)

October 2010

<https://www.amazon.com/Aldo-Leopold-His-Life-Work/dp/0299249042>

This biography of Aldo Leopold follows him from his childhood as a precocious naturalist to his profoundly influential role in the development of conservation and modern environmentalism in the United States. This edition includes a new preface by author Curt Meine and an appreciation by acclaimed Kentucky writer and farmer Wendell Berry.

Apps:

Plantifier by TrendsCo.bvba<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/plantifier/id524938919?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>**Description**

Plantifier is a free crowdsourced plant recognition tool. It allows you to upload a photo of an unknown plant. The users of the MyGarden.org community behind it will try to recognize it as soon as possible and give you an answer to your question! Easy and free of charge!

Check also the web version via <http://www.plantifier.com>

iPflanzen by Andreas Garzoto GmbH<http://www.ipflanzen.ch/pages/en/home.php?lang=EN>**Description**

Pflanzen allows you to identify more than 1500 garden, park, and forest plants using a simple identification key with traits such as flower structure, leaf shape, flower colour or fruit colour. Depending on the season or visibility of plant parts, additional identification traits are available to classify a plant.

Identified plants are shown with images as well as common and scientific names.

To access detailed information about a plant, you can directly switch from iPflanzen to iForest or iGarten if those applications are installed on your smartphone. iPflanzen also shows you an example of information that is available in iForest and iGarten. It is the connecting App between iGarten (garden plants) and iForest (trees and shrubs). All three applications together form an ideal instrument for identifying plants or selecting plants for your plantings as well as looking up species or practicing your plant knowledge.

Websites of Interest:

Songs of Insects

<http://songsofinsects.com/>

Louisiana Wildlife Insider
Free PDF download

http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pagehunting/41031-2017-summer-wildlife-insider/2017_wildlife_insider.pdf

Aldo Leopold

<http://www.wilderness.net/NWPS/Leopold>

All About Birds

Learn to identify birds by listening to their songs. The Cornell Lab offers tips for beginners for identifying birds through their song,

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/how-to-learn-bird-songs-and-calls/>

Our Mission Statement:

The mission of the Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists is to promote awareness, understanding, and respect of Louisiana’s natural resources using unbiased, accurate, scientific information provided by a trained corps of volunteers. These volunteers provide education, outreach, and services dedicated to the conservation and management of our ecosystems

Board of Directors

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President	Irvin Louque	irvinlouque@gmail.com
Vice President	Tommy Hillman	tommyhillman@att.net
Treasurer	Robby Maxwell	robjamax@gmail.com
Secretary	Julie Amy	Jed101060@gmail.com
LDWF	Chuck Battaglia	cbattaglia@wlf.la.gov
LDWF	Theresa Cross	tcross@wlf.la.gov
SOWELA	Lori McGee	lori.mcgee@cpsb.org
Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society	Brian Sean Early	briansean.early@gmail.com
Gulf Coast Bird Club	David Booth	david@boothenvironmental.com
LMNA Representative	Deborah Frank	debrfrank@yahoo.com
3801 Nelson Road, Lake Charles, LA 70601 225 206 0400		

IT’S YOUR NEWSLETTER!

We welcome contributions of original writing of observations on nature in our area of Southwest Louisiana. We also welcome reports, reviews, poems, sketches, paintings and digital photographs. Please type “Newsletter” in the subject line of the email. When you send a digital photograph, please include in the email the subject, your name, location, date and any interesting story or information about the photograph. Please send your email to: arlenevidaurri.cain@yahoo.com

Visit our website:

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

<http://www.swlamasternaturalists.org/>

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Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

<https://www.facebook.com/SWLAMasterNaturalists/>



iNaturalist.org is a place where you can record what you see in nature, meet other nature lovers, and learn about the natural world.



From hikers to hunters, birders to beach-combers, the world is filled with naturalists, and many of us record what we find. What if all those observations could be shared online? You might discover someone who finds beautiful wildflowers at your favorite birding spot, or learn about the birds you see on the way to work. If enough people recorded their observations, it would be like a living record of life on Earth that scientists and land managers could use to monitor changes in biodiversity, and that anyone could use to learn more about nature.

