

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists



Nature Notes

Charter 2016

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President's Note:

Season's Greetings, Master Naturalists!

With 2017 coming to a close, I'll use this note to look back on our past year. First and foremost, nine master naturalists graduated the Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist Program in June. Our course brought us all over Southwest Louisiana to experience some of the biota that keeps our biosphere ticking along.

Sixteen SWLA master naturalists (including several who were in our 2017 program) attended the second annual Louisiana Master Naturalist Association Rendezvous at Chicot State Park in April. There we learned about citizen science, lichens, mosses, and various other topics.

Calendar Quick View

Dec 2 Bird Banding SHJS Park
 Dec 7: Tuten Park presentation on Audubon Christmas Bird Count by Irvin Louque
 Dec 9: Sparrow Workshop
 Dec 11: Calcasieu River Presentation at Riverside Park by Robby Maxwell
 Dec 16: Sabine Christmas Bird Count
 Dec 17: Lake Charles Christmas Bird Count
 Jan 3: SLAMN Meeting
 Jan 6: SLAMN Field Trip
 Jan 6: Bird Banding SHJS Park
 Jan 20: SLAMN Workshop
 Apr 4: SLAMN Meeting
 Apr 6: LMNA Annual Rendezvous



President's Note:

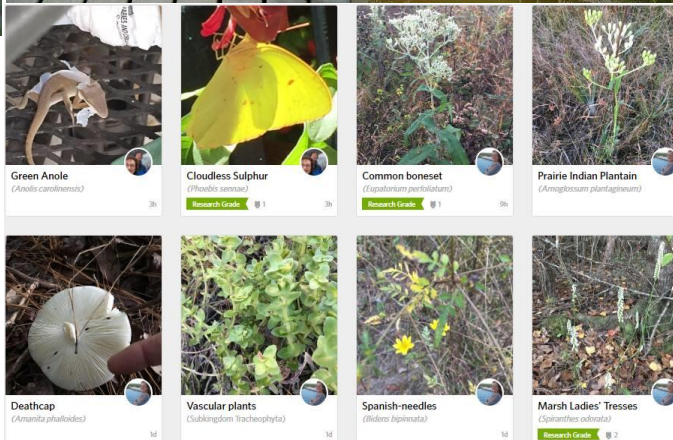
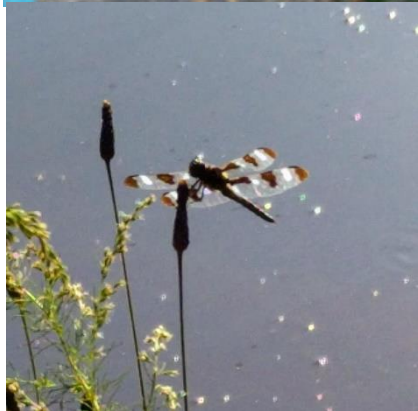
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In the summer, we established several committees for promoting our chapter at area events, volunteering in the community such as trash bashes and native plant rescues, leading field trips, and producing publications like our *Nature Notes* newsletter and website. As the year comes to a close, I look forward to what 2018 brings. We're currently accepting applicants to the 2018 course.

Be sure to tell your family and friends about us this holiday season. The SWLA Master Naturalist Program just might be a great gift for the nature lovers in your life!

Great things are happening in SWLA,

Irvin



Meeting Notes

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Upcoming Meeting Location and Date
Tuten Park, January 3th at 5:30 P.M.
All members are invited to attend.

President: Irvin Louque**Vice-President:** Tommy Hillman**Treasurer:** Robby Maxwell**Secretary:** Barbara Morris**At-large Board Members:**

Chuck Battaglia,

David Booth,

Theresa Cross,

Brian Sean Early,

Lori McGee

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

- October Meeting Highlights**
- Promotions Committee will be attending Yellow Rails and Rice Festival and Long Leaf Field Day to promote the Master Naturalist class.
 - Volunteer Committee: Tom Morris will be taking the position as Committee Chairperson
 - Election of Officers: Nominations were accepted for Board Positions. Each office was unopposed. The slate was accepted by the members as written.

President: Irvin Louque
 Vice President: Tommy Hillman
 Treasurer: Robert Maxwell
 Secretary: Barbara Morris

- Irvin discussed 2018 Rendezvous April 6-8 at Camp Hartner. He suggested that you check out the new state website.
- A lending library is now available to members. If you have any extra field guides to donate, please bring them to the next meeting.
- Guest Speaker: Phillip Vasseur, Rockefeller WLR,
 Current Status of Whooping Crane Reintroduction
- **2018 LMNA Rendezvous** will be held on **April 6-8, 2018** at [Camp Hardtner](#) in Pollock, LA.
- **Volunteers are needed for the 2018 Rendezvous.** To volunteer contact Irvin Louque, irvinlouque@gmail.com

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 2018:
 January 3, April 4, and October 3*

Reminder: SLAMN yearly membership \$15.00.

Mail your dues to:

Robby Maxwell SLAMN Treasurer
 20333 Bourque Rd.
 Iowa, LA 70647



Local News:

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SLAMN FIELD TRIP to Cameron National Wildlife Refuge and Rutherford Beach November 4, 2017

by Barbara Morris

It was a great day for a Field Trip. The fog hung low in the sky, not a breeze, and the temperature was in the low 70's. We packed the car with binoculars, nets, hats, bug spray, and a picnic lunch. By the time we arrived at Tuten Park, the fog had begun lifting. We rendezvoused with others and carpooled south.

Our first stop was at the Cameron National Wildlife Refuge Welcome Center. At this facility they have mounted birds and mammals. There are two animatronic figures who welcome guests and talk about the marsh. We spotted an eight-point buck walking in the marsh. It was very interesting. We talked with the volunteer who told us they are always looking for volunteers to greet visitors at the welcome center.

We then headed to Pintail Loop. By this time the fog began to lift and a breeze was blowing across the marsh. There were birders from out of state who had ventured over from the Yellow Rails and Rice festival. We took out the spotting scope and binoculars to view the waterfowl. On the walkway, we spotted butterflies, frogs, and a King Rail.

Our final stop was a Rutherford Beach. The shoreline was full of fisherman, campers, and swimmers enjoying the sunshine. We ate our picnic lunches under the newly constructed pavilion. We then hiked down the beach picking up trash for community volunteer hours. It was a great day! ***Our next Field Trip will be on January 6th.*** More details to follow.



SLAMN November 4th Field Trip Cameron Prairie NWR (31 species)			
Snow Goose	Great Blue Heron	Northern Harrier	Merlin
Blue-winged Teal	Great Egret	King Rail	Eastern Phoebe
Gadwall	Snowy Egret	Common Gallinule	Tree Swallow
Mallard	Little Blue Heron	American Coot	Marsh Wren
Green-winged Teal	Tricolored Heron	Killdeer	Common Yellowthroat
Cormorant sp.	White Ibis	Dunlin	Swamp Sparrow
Anhinga	White-faced Ibis	Wilson's Snipe	Northern Cardinal
American Bittern	Glossy/White-faced Ibis	Crested Caracara	Red-winged Blackbird
			Boat-tailed Grackle



Local News:

[Back](#)**The Yellow Rail and Rice Festival November 1-5, 2017 by David Booth**

The Yellow Rail and Rice Festival was held November 1st through the 5th in Jennings Louisiana. The Southwest Master Naturalists set-up at the Festival to introduce participants to our organization. **Arlene Cain** and **David Booth** worked at the SLAMN table. The Yellow Rail and Rice Festival was a wonderful time. It was my first time to participate, I wish I have been going for all these years. There were experts to help us at every event. The food was great, and we had the opportunity to meet fellow birders from across the nation and from other countries. It was an intense four days of plying the areas of Jennings, Thornwell, Crowley, Cameron and everywhere in between. We were able to participate in the rice harvesting and see Yellow Rails, Virginia Rails,

King Rails and other wetland species. In the mornings **Donna Ditman** and **Steve Cardiff** would take out a 'wish list' group and search for special birds most people needed to see. It was great to see them at work. The leadership was wonderful. The festival was wonderfully organized and I would love to do it again next year. You should too.

**Longleaf Pine Workshop October 19, 2017 by David Booth**

The Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists set-up a table at the Longleaf Pine Workshop to share and distribute information about our organization. The workshop and field day focused on restoring and managing longleaf pine as well as wildlife management. The event took place at the Kisatchie Ranger District in Natchitoches.

The Longleaf Pine meeting was a good opportunity to mix with others of similar interests from our region and especially the areas north of us. We had some good contacts at the table and had a couple of applications come in as a result. **Tom and Barbara Morris** were a great help in mixing with the folks and striking up conversations. We learned that having three folks is a real boost to talking with everyone who comes up to check out the Master Naturalist table and opportunities. We should definitely do this one again next year if the opportunity presents itself.



Local News:

[Back](#)**Amazon Smile Donation to Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists**

We now have an Amazon Smile account for SLAMN. **Robby Maxwell**, SLAMN Treasurer, set up the account. When you make purchases through Amazon Smile, 0.5% of the purchases will go to Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists. It doesn't cost any extra to make purchases on it, and will give us a small stream of donations. If you do any shopping on Amazon, please use the link below. Also, share it with friends and family. Every bit helps!

AMAZON SMILE

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-5541690>



You shop. **Amazon gives.**

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to **Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists** whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.
You can select a different charitable organization after signing in.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com

Tuten Park Garden Box by Barbara Morris

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists have been assigned a garden boxes at Tuten Park, box #1. The box is to the left of the stairs entering the classroom building. It is a large rectangular box. The box will need to be cleaned out and some clay based soil added. The box is in mostly full sun. We will be planting Native Prairie Plants in the box. So, we will need donated plants and help planting. I thought it would be fun to label the plants as well.

Any help you are willing to give will be appreciated. Also any suggestions for planting are welcome. Once planted, the box will need to be maintained.



Local News:

[Back](#)**Prairie Plant Rescue November 13, 2017**

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists undertook their first native plant rescue. We filled the bed of a pickup truck with native plants. They were all dug from a property that will be developed into a road behind A.A. Nelson Elementary School for dropping off and picking up students. The rescues were planted around the Tuten Park pond. Several species such as little bluestem, goldenrods, asters, and blue mistflower were particularly abundant. The species transplanted include little bluestem, muhly grass, Eastern gamagrass, several goldenrods, Physostegia, asters, blue mistflower, giant blue sage, and rosinweed.

iNaturalist Prairie Plant Journal by Irvin Louque

<https://www.inaturalist.org/journal/ilouque/12639-prairie-plant-rescue>

Some of the prairie plants rescued and transported to Tuten Park

Top row: Giant Blue Sage, Blue Mist Flowers, Aster

Bottom row: Little Blue Stem, Louisiana Iris, Tuten Pond



Continuing Education Opportunities:

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December 2, 2017 next bird banding at Sam Houston Jones State Park

Louisiana Bird Observatory Bird Banding

Irvin Louque holds bird banding activities at Sam Houston Jones Park on Saturdays. Volunteers are welcome! Learn how to set-up mist nets, age birds, and collect important data for conservation efforts. Please check with Irvin for dates and times. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact Irvin Louque through email or phone (225)206-0400 irvinlouque@gmail.com



January 6, 2018 is the tentative date for the next bird banding at Sam Houston Jones State Park

Sparrow Identification Workshop

Saturday, December 9th 2017 8:00AM – 5:00PM

Join Audubon Louisiana's director of bird conservation, **Erik Johnson**, for a day focused on sparrows! Did you know that there are 29 species of sparrow on the Louisiana list? This doesn't include House Sparrows, which are not "true" sparrows. Instead we will focus on the charming little brown birds that give bird watchers headaches to identify.

In this workshop, we will provide classroom and field-based lessons to help you better identify these birds by sight and sound, and to understand their habitat associations and seasonal distribution within Louisiana. All experience levels are welcome!

We will explore the refuge and surrounding birding hotspots for sparrows. We will do some walking on trails and in fields, and on uneven ground, so a minimal level of physical fitness is recommended.

Registration to participate in the workshop will be \$50, and proceeds will support Audubon Louisiana's bird conservation initiatives. To learn more about Audubon Louisiana, visit la.audubon.org.

To Register

RSVP by emailing **Erik Johnson** (ejohnson@audubon.org). Register by sending a check to Audubon Louisiana, P.O. Box 80720, Baton Rouge, LA 70898. Registration will be capped at 20 people.



Volunteer Opportunities:

The Nature Conservancy is looking for volunteers to help plant longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) at our Talisheek Preserve. Longleaf pine is the most important tree species on the preserve, and the volunteer planting event will help restore the historic structure and natural habitat to the site. Please be dressed for wet and muddy conditions. Bring: water bottle, and gloves.

Volunteer:

<https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/louisiana/volunteer/index.htm>

Annual Longleaf Pine Planting Talisheek Preserve

Saturday, January 23, 9:00 AM Location: The event will be located at the Talisheek Pine Wetlands Preserve. The entrance is at the end of Edith Road in Bush, LA 70431. Contact Bill Rivers if you need additional directions: brivers@tnc.org (985) 516-9746.

Volunteer for the Louisiana Master Naturalists Rendezvous

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

Please let us know if you are interested in joining a planning team by emailing:

lamasternaturalist@gmail.com. You can get volunteer hours!



Saturday, Dec. 16th 2017 Sabine Christmas Bird Count – Plan to volunteer for the all-day birding event of the year at the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge and neighboring spots. No experience necessary! This is a great opportunity to participate in this very important worldwide bird count. For more information about participating the Christmas Bird Count, contact Jeanie Pousson, Gulf Coast Bird Club Coordinator for the Sabine NWR sector: phone: 540-7726, or email jeanie.pousson@gmail.com

Audubon Christmas Bird Count

<http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>

Sunday, December 17th 2017 Lake Charles Christmas Bird Count Plan to Volunteer

Participate in the Lake Charles Christmas Bird Count. The Lake Charles CBC will occur on December 17, 2017. The Lake Charles CBC covers most of Lake Charles, Westlake, Sulphur, and Carlyss south to the Intracoastal Waterway and the Calcasieu Ship Channel. Last year, we 15 observers recorded 108 species. Highlights included 4 White-tailed Kites south of Lake Charles, 20 Ruddy Ducks in Carlyss, 1 Winter Wren in Tuten Park and 1 Wilson's Warbler also in Tuten Park.

Anyone interested is encouraged to contact Irvin Louque through email or phone (225)206-0400

irvinlouque@gmail.com

Volunteer Opportunities:

Volunteer for one or more Christmas Bird Counts. There are Christmas Bird Counts taking place around the state. Lend a hand and contact one or more of the state organizers listed below to volunteer. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Golden Triangle (East Texas) Christmas Bird Count: <http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org/>
 Johnson Bayou - Thursday Dec. 14. Contact Gary Kelley garymke@sbcglobal.net, 409-679-1616
 Turkey Creek - Saturday Dec. 16. Contact John Whittle johnawhittle@aol.com, 409-722-4193)
 Bolivar Peninsula - Thursday Dec. 21. Contact Steve Mayes in advance at sgmayes@hotmail.com
 Beech Creek - Saturday Dec. 23. Contact John Whittle johnawhittle@aol.com, 409-722-4193)
 Sea Rim State Park - Thursday Dec. 28. Contact: John Whittle johnawhittle@aol.com or 409-722-4193
 Orange County - Monday Jan. 1, 2018 Contact Gary Kelley at garymke@sbcglobal.net or 409-679-1616

Louisiana Christmas Bird Count Information 2017-18

30-Dec	BR	Baton Rouge	K Percy/R Condrey	kpercy@audubon.org/coecnd@lsu.edu
15-Dec	BC	Bossier-Caddo (Red River)	Terri Jacobson	Terri_Jacobson@fws.gov
2-Jan	CA	Catahoula NWR	Marty Floyd	Progne99@aol.com
21-Dec	CB	Claiborne	John Dillon	kisforkryptonite@gmail.com
5-Jan	CR	Creole	Erik Johnson	ejohnson@audubon.org
19-Dec	CW	Crowley	Marty Floyd	Progne99@aol.com
30-Dec	CL	C'ville-Lecompte	Marty Floyd	Progne99@aol.com
16-Dec	DA	D'Arbonne	Joan Brown	bljnbr@att.net
	FP	Fort Polk	Jim Johnson	(limited access)
20-Dec	GI	Grand Isle	Chris Brantley	chrisbrantley@charter.net
14-Dec	JB	Johnson Bayou	Gary Kelley	garymke@sbcglobal.net
15-Dec	LT	Lacassine-Thornw	Rob Dobbs	rcdobbs@gmail.com
27-Dec	LA	Lafayette	Erik Johnson	ejohnson@audubon.org
17-Dec	LC	Lake Charles	Irvin Louque	irvinlouque@gmail.com
23-Dec	NA	Nachitoches	Larry Raymond	lrraymond@aol.com
16-Dec	NZ	Natchez*	Stratton Bull	strattonbull@gmail.com
29-Dec	NI	New Iberia	Erik Johnson	ejohnson@audubon.org
23-Dec	NO	New Orleans	Glenn Oussett	goussett@bellsouth.net
26-Dec	NS	Northshore-Slidell	Thomas Trenchard	trench19@hotmail.com
2-Jan	PI	Palmetto Island	Toddy Guidry	guidrys@cox.net
4-Jan	PP	Pine Prairie	Marty Floyd	Progne99@aol.com
26-Dec	RB	Reser-Bonnet Carre	Melvin Weber	mweber@rtconline.com
16-Dec	SA	Sabine NWR	Jeanie Pousson	jeanie.pousson@gmail.com
16-Dec	SH	Shreveport	Charlie Lyons	lyon5516@bellsouth.net
30-Dec	ST	St Tammany	Chris Brantley	chrisbrantley@charter.net
18-Dec	SC	Sweet Lake-Cam Pr	Samatha Collins	Scollins@wlf.la.gov
30-Dec	TH	Thibodaux	Delaina LeBlanc	delaina@btnep.org
29-Dec	VE	Venice	Robert Purrington	danny@tulane.edu
14-Dec	WL	White Lake	Michael Seymour	mseymour@wlf.la.gov

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



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

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana upcoming events and volunteer opportunities: <http://www.crcl.org/get-involved/volunteer.html>

Dec 2, 2017
 Ten Thousand Trees for Louisiana – Lake Maurepas
 9 am – 4 pm Details:
<https://crcl.org/component/dpcalendar/event/130.html>

Dec 6, 2017 Lecture Series at the Lighthouse
 6 pm – 7:30 pm Details:
<https://crcl.org/component/dpcalendar/event/156.html>

Dec 12, 13, & 14, 2017
 Ten thousand Trees for Louisiana – Caernavon
 9 am – 4 pm Details:
<https://crcl.org/component/dpcalendar/event/139.html>

Dec 16, 2017
 Oyster Shell Bagging – Barataria Bay Reef Restoration
 9 am – 1 pm Details:

Jan 4, 5, & 6, 2018
 Ten Thousand Trees for Louisiana – Lake Maurepas
 9 am – 4 pm Details:
<https://crcl.org/component/dpcalendar/event/131.html>

Jan 25- 26, 2018
 Ten thousand Trees for Louisiana – Caernavon
 9 am – 4 pm Details:
<https://crcl.org/component/dpcalendar/event/142.html>

Feb 23, 24, & 25, 2018
 Ten thousand Trees for Louisiana – Caernavon
 9 am – 4 pm Details:
<https://crcl.org/component/dpcalendar/event/147.html>



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: Cloudless Sulphur (*Phoebis sennae*) by
 Master Naturalists **Patty Palmer**



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

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

Changing Attitudes: Balloon Launches by Linda Wygoda

The purpose of this article is to provide master naturalists with information and resources to aid them in influencing the public's attitudes toward balloon launches in which large numbers of latex, helium filled balloons are released into the atmosphere as a part of a memorial or celebratory event. Balloon launches became very popular during the 1980's, but with increasing awareness of their detrimental environmental impact, they are prohibited by law in some cities and states around the U.S. However, in southwest Louisiana, balloon releases are still relatively common as part of school celebrations, memorials, fund-raisers, and charity events. I know that in the last year, I have seen at least 5 balloon releases reported by our local news, and there were probably many more. An elementary class reads a hundred books, and they release balloons to celebrate their accomplishment. A family member dies, and their surviving relatives and friends release balloons to memorialize them. A group wants to bring awareness to a problem such as domestic violence, or a disease such as cancer, and we release balloons as a part of our fund raising activities.

So, why are balloon releases a problem? These balloons are filled with helium, a finite resource. Helium is formed by alpha decay in rocks and cannot be manufactured. Helium is important in lasers, MRI machines, ventilators, and other emerging technologies. So when we release it in a balloon it is not recoverable. ⁽¹⁾ Noble prize winner, Robert Richardson, has warned that our supplies of Helium are being depleted at such a high rate that they could be gone within a generation. And the other obvious problem with balloon releases is that balloons eventually fall back to earth, either after bursting or from gradually deflating. These balloons contribute to litter and pose threats to wildlife. For example, more than a hundred balloons were collected at a New Jersey wildlife refuge during a beach cleanup at a single beach!



The US Fish and Wildlife Service discourages using balloon releases. Dolphins, whales, turtles, and many other marine species as well as terrestrial animals such as birds, cows, sheep, and horses have been killed or hurt by balloons. These injuries or deaths have usually occurred from the balloon blocking the digestive tract, resulting in the animal slowly starving to death. Animals also become entangled in the string or ribbon making them unable to swim, fly, or eat. ⁽²⁾ Sea turtles are especially at risk of ingesting balloons because burst balloons often resemble their natural prey: jellyfish.



Sometimes balloons are labeled as biodegradable and consumers are misled into thinking that makes them safe. Balloons take years to break down, and even those that are called “biodegradable” are still present in the environment for a long enough time (24 to 36 months or longer), to be ingested by wildlife.

Master naturalists can help to discourage balloon releases by informing the public of their dangerous impacts and the offering alternatives. Keep in mind that butterfly releases and dove releases are not good alternatives! Butterfly releases, are discouraged by the North American Butterfly Association because: they can enable diseases and parasites to spread to wild populations; released butterflies are often unable to migrate correctly; and this practice encourages wild populations of butterflies to be targets for poachers (especially in California).⁽³⁾ Doves and homing pigeons are also not a good option because these birds are often unable to survive in the wild.⁽⁴⁾ Chinese paper lanterns, luminaries, and sky lanterns are not appropriate because they are a fire hazard. The organization, [Balloons Blow Don't Let Them Go](#), offers several single page fact sheets aimed at adults and children that can help them to make better decisions regarding balloon releases. An example of a fact sheet follows this article.



It is also important to offer alternative activities for celebrations and memorials. Some ideas include planting a memorial tree or a garden, using streamers, blowing bubbles, making giant bubbles⁽⁵⁾, making pinwheels, flying kites, or using garden spinners. Pinwheels or streamers can be decorated with artwork or photos making them personalized.⁽⁶⁾ One Louisiana organization using pinwheel gardens is Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana, whose website also contains unique ideas for a kid-friendly alternatives to balloon releases including pinwheel memorial gardens.⁽⁷⁾





References:

1. Balloons Blow
<https://balloonsblow.org>
2. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
<https://www.fws.gov/news/blog/index.cfm/2015/8/5/Balloons-and-Wildlife-Please-Dont-Release-Your-Balloons>
3. North American Butterfly Association
<http://www.naba.org/releases.html>
4. Pigeon Rescue
<http://www.pigeonrescue.org/2015/07/21/why-dove-releases-are-cruel/>
5. How to Make a Giant Bubble Wand
<http://myfrugaladventures.com/2015/07/how-to-make-a-giant-bubble-wand/>
6. Easy Origami Pinwheel
<https://www.thespruce.com/easy-origami-pinwheel-tutorial-2540974>
7. Pinwheel Challenge
<https://pcal.org/news-and-events/the-pinwheel-challenge/>



BALLOONS BLOW... DON'T LET THEM GO!



- When a balloon is let go, it will blow away, only to burst or deflate & return to pollute the Earth.
- Balloons can travel thousands of miles, polluting the most remote & pristine places. Once they do, they become a danger to any animal that comes in contact with it.
- Birds, whales, sea turtles, bighorn sheep, & other wild & domestic animals have been killed by balloons.
- When an animal swallows a balloon, it can block its intestinal tract, leading to starvation.
- Sea turtles & other marine creatures are known to confuse balloons as jellies.
- Ribbons & string that are sometimes attached to balloons can cause entanglement & death.



- Falsely-marketed as "biodegradable", latex balloons contain chemicals & can take years to break down.
- Mylar/foil balloons can cause dangerous power outages & spark fires. They also can take several years before breaking down.
- Balloon releases are becoming popular with charitable events, memorials, or to bring 'awareness.
- Balloons used in advertising are often let go – a wasteful practice for any business.
- There are laws concerning balloon releases in several states in the US, also in the UK & Australia.
- Helium is a non-renewable resource & experts warn it should be conserved for more important applications.



- There are many alternatives that will not pollute the Earth or harm animals. We can opt for reusable banners, flags, ribbon dancers, pinwheels. For memorials & fundraisers, we can plant trees, gardens or build birdhouses – actions that promote life. Perhaps organize a clean-up in a loved one's honor or blow bubbles.
- Please choose sustainable products & be mindful of the simple choices we can make to protect the planet we all share.

For more alternatives, facts & photos, visit:

BalloonsBlow.org



Upcoming Events:

[Back](#)**Monday December 11th 6:00 P.M to 7:30 P.M. Riverside Park, Fitzenreiter Road**

Robby Maxwell, U.S. Wildlife and Fish, Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists, will give a presentation about the Calcasieu River. Emphasis will be on ecological and biological aspects that exemplify this system. The talk will be held at the Riverside Park Education Building located on the west end of Fitzenreiter Road along the Calcasieu River. It will be from 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. Monday December 11th. Anyone interested in attending can contact **Irvin Louque** at: Irvin.louque@cityoflc.us or 337 481 8770

April 7-9, 2018 LMNA Rendezvous

Louisiana Master Naturalists will hold its annual Rendezvous at Camp Hardtner in Pollock, LA. The Louisiana Master Naturalists Association will host an annual Rendezvous where members meet to learn, volunteer, and get to know their fellow Louisiana Master Naturalists.

LMNA: <http://www.louisianamasternaturalist.org/>

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Workshop Dates and Description for 2018. (Times and dates are subject to change.) **Application and registration for New Members is required.**

Apply at: <http://www.swlamasternaturalists.org/apply.html>

Date	Title	Time	Location	Coordinator
1/20/2018	Overview - Naturalist Skills	9am-3pm	Tuten Park	Irvin Louque, Danielle Maxwell
2/3/2018	Citizen Science	9am-3pm	Riverside Park	Irvin Louque
2/17/2018	Longleaf Pine	9am-3pm		Chuck Battaglia
3/3/2018	Coastal Ecology/Geology	9am-3pm	Rockefeller SWR	Brian Sean Early
3/1/2018	Backyard Science and Applying Citizen Science	8am-2pm	Tuten Park	Theresa Cross
4/6-8/2018	LMNA Rendezvous		Camp Hardtner	
4/7/2018	Birds	7am-1pm	Johnson Bayou Library Peveto Woods	David Booth
4/21/2018	Amphibians and Reptiles	8am-4pm	Sam Houston Jones State Park	Chuck Battaglia
5/5/2018	Cajun Prairie	8am-4pm	Eunice	Tommy Hillman
5/19/2018	Pollinators	8am-4pm	Gray Ranch	Chuck Battaglia
6/2/2018	Aquatic Invertebrates	8am-4pm	Tuten Park, Calcasieu River	Danielle Maxwell
6/9/2018	Nocturnal Animals (Overnight)	4pm-10pm		Theresa Cross and Robby Maxwell
6/9/2018	Riverine Ecology (Overnight)	8am-2pm		Theresa Cross and Robby Maxwell
6/23/2018	Graduation Overview of iNaturalist	11am-3pm	Tuten Park	Irvin Louque

Upcoming Events:[Back](#)**Upcoming Education Programs at Tuten Park**

Tuten Park 3801 Nelson Road, Lake Charles

Sign up for any upcoming programs at: bit.ly/TutenEd or by email or phone: Irvin.louque@cityoflc.us , 337 491 8770

Keep informed about what's happening at Tuten Park, sign up for the Tuten Park monthly newsletter by contacting Irvin Louque at: Irvin.louque@cityoflc.uc

December 1, 2017 First Friday of the Month Tuten Park Bird Walk

December 7, 2017, Thursday Christmas Bird Count: Audubon's Oldest Citizen Science Project, 6:00-7:00 P.M.

Saturday, December 9th 2017 8:00AM – 5:00PM

Sparrow Identification Workshop

RSVP by emailing Erik Johnson (ejohnson@audubon.org). Register by sending a check to Audubon Louisiana, P.O. Box 80720, Baton Rouge, LA 70898.

December 16th Sabine Christmas Bird Count

To volunteer, contact Jeanie Pousson

<http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>

For more information about GCBC participation, contact Jeanie Pousson, GCBC Coordinator for the Sabine NWR sector: phone: 540-7726 or email: jeanie.pousson@gmail.com

December 17th Lake Charles Christmas Bird Count

To volunteer, contact Irvin Louque through email or phone (225)206-0400 irvinlouque@gmail.com

January 13, 2018, Saturday 8:00 am to 1:00 pm

Louisiana State Horticulture Society Annual Meeting

At the LSU AgCenter – Calcasieu Parish, 7101 Gulf Hwy., Lake Charles, LA 70607-7414. You are cordially invited to attend. There is a \$10.00 registration fee.

January 13 - 14, 2017 Festival of the Cranes Decatur Alabama

<http://alabama.travel/upcoming-events/festival-of-the-cranes>

January 22-26 Gulf Coast Soil and Water Conservation District Seedling Sale

<http://gulfcoastswcd.org/>

The Gulf Coast Soil and Water Seedling sale is scheduled for January 22nd -26th at the USDA Service Center located at 5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive Lake Charles, LA 70607. The sale will run from 8:30 am – 3:00 pm each day.

The following species will be available for sale: Bald Cypress, Eastern Redbud, Flowering Dogwood, Green Ash, Live Oak, Mayhaw, Native Sweet Pecan, Nuttall Oak, Persimmon, River Birch, Sawtooth Oak, White Oak, and Wild Pear.

January 26-28, 2018 Louisiana Native Plant meeting at the Wesley Center in Woodworth, Louisiana.

<https://www.lnps.org/>

Feb 7, 2018 to Feb 10, 2018 Laredo, Texas [6th Annual Laredo Birding Festival](#)

Come bird on the border! We invite you to join us for our 6th annual Laredo Birding Festival, as we bird Laredo hotspots along the Rio Grande and riparian creek systems, as well as thousands of acres of brush land at dozens of scenic South Texas ranches.

The Laredo Birding Festival offers birders an opportunity to explore and observe hundreds of species of birds, with a professional field guides. Contact 956-718-1063, laredobirdingfestival@rgisc.org

Upcoming Events:

Feb 22, 2018 to Feb 25, 2018 Port Aransas, Texas [22nd Annual Whooping Crane Festival](#)

The Coastal Bend is the only spot in the United States where the endangered Whooping Crane can be viewed at close range, and the Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce celebrates this astonishing natural wonder with an annual festival honoring these grand birds. In addition to the Whooping Crane, an awesome array of wintering migratory birds flock into the wetlands and onto the Texas shorelines of Mustang Island in and around Port Aransas. Birding tours by land and sea are highlights during the festival. Visitors of all ages will enjoy the many festivities during the celebration.

Feb 22, 2018 to Feb 24, 2018 Morgan City, Louisiana [13th Annual Eagle Expo and More](#)

The American Bald Eagle is a common visitor on the Cajun Coast. Join us to view these majestic birds perched in a tree, soaring overhead, tending their young, or hunting for food. Our annual Eagle Expo includes boat tours into various waterways to view eagles, a Birds of Prey educational program, presentations on wildlife, a walking/hiking trail, photography workshop, and keynote addresses. Admission and registration required. Contact: info@canjuncoast.com 800-256-2931, or 985-380-8224.



March 23-24, 2018

Southwest Louisiana Garden Conference & EXPO 2018

Vendor set up is Thursday March 22, 2018

April 7-9, 2018 LMNA Rendezvous

Louisiana Master Naturalists will hold its annual Rendezvous at Camp Hardtner in Pollock, LA

April 7, 2018, Saturday 9am – 2pm <https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/hilltop/>

Hilltop Spring Fling Plant Sale Ready, set, GROW!!!

Hilltop Arboretum, 11855 Highland Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Apr 19, 2018 to Apr 22, 2018 [South Texas Birdiest Festival in America](#)

South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center, 8545 S. Staples St., Corpus Christi TX 78413

Named "Birdiest City in North America" for a decade, Corpus Christi's location in key spring migration pathways draws birders nationwide and around the world. General admission to the festival is included with Botanical Gardens Admission (\$8 for vendors, Raptor Project, and Botanical Gardens self-guided tour). Education Upgrade (\$20) allows access to all seminars and guided nature walk. Separately-priced field trips available with Premium Upgrade (\$35) including seminars, Thursday BBQ Dinner, and Tour registration access. Contact: wmwomack@stxbot.org 361-852-2100 x225.

Apr 19, 2018 to Apr 22, 2018 Galveston Island, Texas [16th Galveston FeatherFest](#)

Galveston is one of the top locations in the country for birding because it hosts a wide variety of habitats in a small geographical area where some 300 species make their permanent or temporary home throughout the year. Contact: Julie Ann Brown, GINTC, 832-459-5533, FeatherFest@gintc.org

Apr 20, 2018 to Apr 22, 2018 49 Ludwig Lane, Grand Isle, Louisiana 70358 [Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration](#)

See songbirds in oak-hackberry woods, shorebirds and waders on beaches and in the marshes, and raptors overhead.

Grand Isle is an essential stop for songbirds during their spring and fall migrations across the Gulf of Mexico. The celebration is held annually to correspond with peak bird migration in April. Contact: 985-787-2229, email: jlandry@tnc.org

Apr 27, 2018 to Apr 29, 2018 [Wings Over the Hills Nature Festival](#)

Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, Fredericksburg, Texas

A variety of lecturers and birding field trips to many Hill Country hotspots with the opportunity to see Texas' two endangered species: Golden-cheeked Warbler and Black-Capped Vireo. Contact: Jane Crone, 218-912-5920.

Apr 27, 2018 to Apr 29, 2018 [18th Annual Balcones Songbird Festival](#)

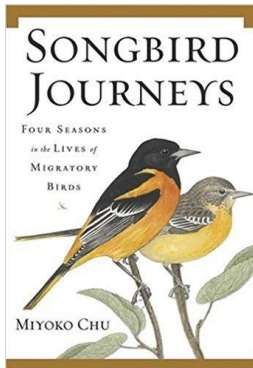
Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge, 24518 FM, 1431, Marble Falls, TX 78654

Migrating birds consider the Texas Hill Country a sort of freeway rest stop. Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge provides critical habitat for two endangered songbird migrants—the Black-capped Vireo and the Golden-cheeked Warbler. Contact: 512-965-2473, Friends@friendsofbalcones.org

Resources for the Naturalists:

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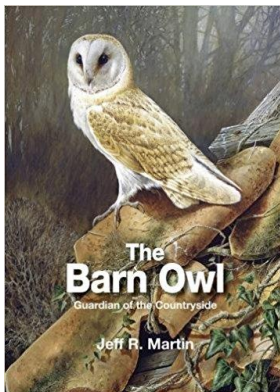
Books:



**Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds – March 2006
by Miyoko Chu (Author)**

Amazon Books: https://www.amazon.com/Songbird-Journeys-Seasons-Lives-Migratory/dp/0802714684/ref=pd_cp_14_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=YPP96D5D7SE73APFXF8B

Explores the remarkable lives of migratory birds and answers such questions about songbirds as where do they go, how do they get there, and what do they do in the places that they inhabit throughout the year.



**The Barn Owl: Guardian of the Countryside October 23, 2017
by Jeff Martin (Author)**

Amazon Books: https://www.amazon.com/Barn-Owl-Guardian-Countryside/dp/1873580894/ref=as_li_ss_tl?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1512007217&sr=1-1&keywords=the+barn+owl+jeff+martin&linkCode=sl1&tag=theowlpages&linkId=fc4cf5238df413ff221a68b9587c533e

The briefest glimpse of this beautiful bird swooping across a field reassures us that all is well in our beloved countryside-but is that really the case? With its universal appeal, it is no surprise that the barn owl is one of the most studied birds in the world. In this book Jeff Martin has compiled both his own research findings and those of the world's leading experts to give a detailed insight into the barn owl's fascinating lifestyle and behaviors.

Apps:

Natures Notebook by USA National Phenology Network

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/natures-notebook/id508465801?ls=1&mt=8>



Description:

Nature's Notebook is a citizen science program for observing and recording plant and animal life cycle events, like flowering and bird migration (also known as phenology). We recommend that you create an account, and register your location, as well as the plants and animals you'll observe online at www.usanpn.org first, and then use this app for going out into the field to record your observations through the seasons. Find out more at www.usanpn.org/participate/observe.



Resources for the Naturalists:

[Back](#)**Websites of Interest:****Drawing Nature with Val Webb – Free Printables**

Would you like to develop your artistic skills by learning to draw natural history subjects such as birds, shells, seeds, fruit, and insects? Check out some step by step instructions by natural history artist Val Webb. She offers online courses and free downloadable, printable, step-by-step instructions on a variety of topics.

<https://valwebb.wordpress.com/free-printables/>

EdX Drawing Nature, Science and Culture: Natural History Illustration 101**Free Online Class**

<https://www.edx.org/course/drawing-nature-science-culture-natural-newcastlex-nhi101x-0>

Home > All Subjects > Art & Culture > Drawing Nature, Science and Culture: Natural History Illustration 101

**Drawing Nature, Science and Culture: Natural History Illustration 101**

Learn how to see and draw nature like an illustrator. Build observational and visual interpretation skills in an interactive and enjoyable way.

USGS Plants of Louisiana

<https://warcapps.usgs.gov/PlantID/>

Check out a great tool for Louisiana plant identification. Larry Allain and Chris Reid have produced this great product. You are able to input plant characteristics, narrow your choices and get an ID for your plant. The site includes plant photos and species information.

**Guide to the Plants of Louisiana**

This guide to the vascular plants of Louisiana includes a database of plant characters, a search engine and plant images. Photographs include images of leaves, fruit, flower, stem, bark and other key identification features. Information about plants can be accessed by searching plant lists either by scientific name or common name. However, the best use of this application lies in identification of unknown plants.

Technical and non-technical characters can be selected in the "Character Search" feature resulting in a list of matching species with thumbnail images. Selecting a thumbnail image will take the user to information and images useful in verifying a plants identity. A wealth of additional information such as wetland status, habitat, cultural information, wildlife (or animal) use, ethnobotany, distinguishing field characteristics, etc. are included for each species.

1,701 Available Species

[Search by Scientific Name](#)

[Search by Common Name](#)

[Character Search](#)



Happy Holidays!



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

Visit our website:

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists
<http://www.swlamasternaturalists.org/>

Like us of Facebook:

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.

Board of Directors

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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

