

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

Nature Notes



Charter 2016

Vol 2 ISSUE 4 August 2017

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President's Note:

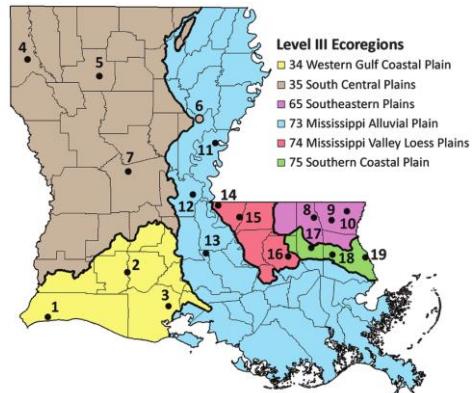
Greetings Master Naturalists

Two beliefs about Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana have driven our chapter from our very beginning:

1. Whether intentional or not, Lake Charles is located right at the convergence of several biologically diverse ecosystems, including coastal marshes, Cajun prairie, and longleaf pine savanna. These ecosystems are subdivided by three independent river drainages and their associated swamps and hardwood forests. To top it off, Southwest Louisiana is located right in the middle of the Central and Mississippi flyways and host an incredible diversity of migratory birds.
2. Lake Charles is a growing city with a bright future. There are some great nonprofits working to improve the city's quality of life, a growing small business community, and many local naturalists, birders, fishermen, and hunters.

Calendar Quick View

August 12 Bird Banding Sam Houston Jones State Park – TENTATIVE
August 18-20 Annual Lily Orchid Days
August 21 Total Solar Eclipse
August 26 Cajun Prairie Habitat Fall Meeting 8:00 am
August 26 Cajun Prairie Field Day
September 8 Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association Fourth Annual River Symposium
September 9 Feliciana Hummingbird Celebration St. Francisville
September 16 Butterfly Festival Haynesville, LA
October 4 SLAMN Meeting 6:00 pm Tuten Park Lake Charles
November 1-5 Yellow Rail and Rice Festival Jennings



In April, I found out about the City Nature Challenge, in which cities competed in a multi-day bioblitz where residents of each metropolitan area try to observe the most species through iNaturalist. Each city competes by recruiting new iNaturalist observers, hosting events to promote naturalist observation, and identifying observations through iNaturalist. Nature-related organizations sponsor each city's effort in the competition and cities compete on a national level.

Regardless of the competitive aspect, the focus is the challenge of finding as much urban nature as possible. Last year over 125,000 observations were contributed to iNaturalist by the 16 cities that competed. More observations were contributed in this one week to iNaturalist than any other week in history, and over half of the participants in 10 of the competing cities were new iNaturalist users.

The City Nature Challenge is going international in 2018 with over 80 cities from 6 continents currently interested in participating. Lake Charles will be one of these global cities competing. I'll attend a conference call on August 1 to learn more about how to organize this event, and I'll keep everyone in our chapter updated. Currently, the dates of the City Nature Challenge 2018 haven't been decided, but it'll either be in May, June, or September. As soon as the date is decided and we officially commit to the challenge, I'll begin meeting with other nonprofits and entities who might be interested in cosponsoring and co-organizing the event. Then, as a chapter, we can start putting together a game plan for the City Nature Challenge 2018.

At our last meeting, the board announced four committees (Volunteer, Promotions, Publications, and Course Planning). I deliberately left the City Nature Challenge out because it will take a combined effort of all our committees and, more importantly, all the SWLA Master Naturalists. Even if you only have time to contribute a few iNaturalist observations, we'll need all hands on deck to help our city compete with much larger metropolitan areas. We've got an interesting road ahead with lots of learning to do, but Southwest Louisiana's biodiversity and amazing people will make it easier.

Great things are happening in Southwest Louisiana,

Irvin Louque



Meeting Notes

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Upcoming General Meeting Date and Location

October 4, 2017 at 6:00 pm at Tuten Park

July 5th Meeting Highlights

- Our big expense this year so far was the Hodges Gardens with the rental and food expenses for 20 participants.
- Graduates received SLAMN T-shirt, engraved name tag, and a copy of Sand County Almanac.
- We purchased the movie “Green Fire” to show at the graduation.
- 2017 Course Graduation held at Tuten Park went well. We watched the movie “Green Fire”, which pulled everything together. All new applicants passed the written test. Pizza was served.
- 501 c3 Status Update: We are a nonprofit organization that is not politically active.
- We are a further sub of this 501c3 and we can run our business tax free. Any donations to SLAMN are tax deductible.
- Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist’s iNaturalist Project Update: Our group has over 1000 observations posted. We have 1342 observations and 598 species identifications. Go out and dip net and ID some fish or something. We are awesome.
- Four Committees were organized and everyone is encouraged to participate in a committee
- Committees are: Course Planning Committee, Publications Committee, Volunteer Committee, and Promotions Committee.
- SLAMN business cards were designed and available on the website.
- Irvin Louque discussed The City Nature Challenge and plans to get Lake Charles involved in the nationwide event with a tentative date of April 14-18 2018. This is a nature challenge multi day bio blitz in a metro area.
- Irvin discussed resources for members to use in developing programs, workshops and training people.
- Lori McGee, a charter board member, gave an explanation of the Monofilament recycling program. The cost of the metal sign to place at a fishing station is \$25.00, the receptacle at a boat launch, \$75.00 plus stickers for a total cost of \$125.00.

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

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

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

Send the completed forms to:

Robby Maxwell SLAMN Treasurer

20333 Bourque Rd.

Iowa, LA 70647

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: October 4, 2017

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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Our New Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists for 2017



SLAMN's Master Naturalists Graduates

Congratulations to our 2017 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists graduates!

Our second SLAMN class graduated on June 24, 2017 at Tuten Park. The nine new graduates completed their final certification exam, and received their certificate, name tags, and a copy of Aldo Leopold's, *A Sand County Almanac*. The new graduates and other attendees were treated to pizza and tea cakes. After a fun time socializing, we watched the movie *Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time*. The new graduates are: Barbara Morris, Mike Dever, Tom Morris, Larry Amy, Edith Holland, Patty Palmer, Anne Hollier, Becky Click-Rex and Rachel Burns.



Local News:

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FrogWatch USA is AZA's [citizen science](#) program and provides individuals, groups, and families opportunities to learn about wetlands in their communities by reporting on the calls of local frogs and toads.



Photo by Arlene Cain

Frog Watch: <https://www.aza.org/frogwatch>

Thanks to **Stacey Scarce**, the *Curator of Natural Science* at Acadiana Park Nature Station, and **Katherine Gividen** for inviting SLAMN to participate in the Frog Watch USA volunteer training. The training took place on July 8, 2017 at the Acadiana Park Nature Station.

Frog Watch training offered at the Acadiana Park Nature Station was well attended by SLAMN members.

Arlene Cain, Linda Wygoda, Barbara Morris, Tom Morris, and Julie Amy participated in the workshop.

Why are frogs important anyway? Frogs and toads are considered indicators of environmental health, are both predators and prey, are used in medical studies, and are in our food chain. Collection of data will help in developing strategies for conservation of frogs/toads.

This training focused on the top 17 frogs and toads found in southern Louisiana. We listened to the calls and attempted to identify them by sound alone. Following the class some of the participants will sign up to collect data for the Frog Watch USA volunteer program. We each received a CD with frog/toad calls. So, if you hear an assortment of frog/toad songs in my car, don't be alarmed. Just sit back and listen for a spell. *By Barbara Morris*

Frog Watch Louisiana: <https://www.aza.org/frogwatch-usa-louisiana>

July 28, 2017 Bird Banding at Sam Houston Jones State Park



Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists and Gulf Coast Bird Club member **Irvin Louque** set-up bird banding activities at Sam Houston Jones State Park on Saturday July 28th. Several SLAMN members were there to lend a hand, Robby and Danielle Maxwell, and Deborah Frank. Also present was Samantha Louque, Dr. Lyons from MSU and his son Cody. The group netted 4 Carolina Wrens, 2 Northern Cardinals, and 2 White-eyed Vireos. Some of the birds were recaptures.

In June, the banding group caught 1 Yellow-billed Cuckoo and 2 Northern Cardinals.

Next bird banding is tentatively set for Saturday August 12th. Anyone interested helping or interested in learning about bird banding, is encouraged to contact Irvin Louque through phone or email: (225)206-0400, irvinlouque@gmail.com

Photo Provided by Irvin Louque



Local News:[Back](#)

SLAMN New Committees!

All SLAMN members are encouraged to participate in one or more committees. Contact members on the committee of your interest to join or to provide suggestions or ideas. Each committee will keep us all informed through Nature Notes, our website, and email.

We encouraged all SLAMN members to participate with time and energy for all events sponsored by the Volunteer Committee and the Promotions Committee.



Course Planning Committee

Contact Irvin Louque: irvinlouque@gmail.com

Maximum number of members: 8

Duties:

- Develop schedules, finds speakers and coordinators for each workshop in the annual course.

Promotions Committee

Contact David Booth: divid@boothenvironmental.com

Maximum number of members: 6

Duties:

- Keep SLAMN in the public eye and connect well with other affiliated groups.
- Maintain momentum of group developing interest and adding desired activities that are well attended by past graduates and new students

Publications Committee

Contact Arlene Cain: arlenevidaurri.cain@yahoo.com

Maximum members: 4

Duties:

- Produce newsletter (Nature Notes) every 2 months
- Maintain and update website
- Produce brochures, flyers, and other organization documents as needed

Volunteer Committee

Contact Robby Maxwell: robjamax@gmail.com

Maximum number of members: no limit

Duties:

- Find, plan, and execute volunteer projects that have clear ecosystem benefits and/or publicity for our chapter and the natural world
- Priorities include outreach classes, natural space improvements for local nonprofits, public space improvements and improvements to private property.

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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All SLAMN members are encouraged to participate in one or more of the newly created committees. Contact members on the committee of your interest to join or to provide suggestions or ideas. Each committee will keep us all informed through Nature Notes, our website, and email.

We encouraged all SLAMN members to participate with time and energy for all events sponsored by the Volunteer Committee and the Promotions Committee.

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, Vermillion, and Cameron parishes. Check the website or Facebook page for location of meetings.

Friends of Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Refuges and Wetlands

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/cameron_prairie/what_we_do/about_the_friends.html

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 call: 337-598-2216

NASA Invites You to Become a Citizen Scientist

Help out by recording data during the upcoming Solar Eclipse on August 21st 2017

<https://observer.globe.gov/science-connections/eclipse2017>

How Cool is the Eclipse?

The Earth is solar-powered. So what happens when the Sun's light is blocked, even temporarily? If you measure air and surface temperature, how cool is the eclipse?

Help us answer these questions and others by collecting citizen science data using the GLOBE Observer app during the Total Solar Eclipse on August 21st, 2017.

- Observe how the eclipse changes atmospheric conditions near you
- Contribute to a citizen science database used by scientists and students to study the effects of eclipses on the atmosphere
- Provide comparison data even if you are not in the path of totality

The eclipse app button will automatically appear within the GLOBE Observer app as soon as the new protocol is released, although actual data collection will not be available until a few days before the eclipse. Need to get the app? [Learn how here.](#)

How should I make observations during the eclipse?



Upcoming Events:

[Back](#)**Friday, August 18-20 Annual Lily Orchid Days****Allen's Native Ventures**<http://www.nativeventures.net/default.asp>

Join Dr. Charles Allen to view some of Louisiana's most rare and extraordinary native plants, like the Carolina Lily, the Yellow Fringed Orchid and many more. Place, Fort Polk, LA.

Contact information - Phone: (337) 328-2252, Email: native@camtel.net

August 21, 2017 LSU to livestream Total Solar Eclipsehttp://www.lsu.edu/mediacenter/news/2017/06/23laspace_eclipse.php

The screenshot shows the LSU Media Center website with a purple header. The main content area features a headline about the total solar eclipse, mentioning NASA and the Eclipse Ballooning Project. Below the headline are several smaller news items and social media sharing options.

August 26, 2017 Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society Fall Meeting 8:00 am**Eunice, LA 70535**<http://www.cajunprairie.org/>**August 26, 2017 Cajun Prairie Field Day****Malcolm Vidrine's Garden is part of a late summer prairie garden field day**

Malcolm Vidrine will lead a tour of his amazing prairie and experimental landscape during the Cajun Prairie field day event to be held August 26, beginning at Eunice prairie restoration project at 8:00 and culminating with a tour of Vernon Fuselier's prairie gardens just around the corner from Dr. Vidrine's. See Malcolm's blog site at link: <https://cajunprairiegardens.com/>

September 9, 2017 Feliciana Hummingbird Celebration St. Francisville, LA<http://stfrancisvillefestivals.com/features/feliciana-hummingbird-celebration>

The NATIONAL WILDBIRD REFUGE will have its annual Hummingbird Festival this year on Saturday, September 9th. It will be held in the plantation country of West Feliciana Parish.

Each year, this Hummingbird celebration is held near beautiful St. Francisville, Louisiana

**September 16, 2017 Pollination Celebration**<https://tpmgblog.wordpress.com/pollination-celebration-2016/>

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Tangipahoa Parish Master Gardener Association
Hammond Research Station, 21549 Old Covington Highway, Hammond, LA 70403

**November 1-5, 2017 The Yellow Rail and Rice Festival****Jennings Louisiana**

[https://www.snowyegretenterprises.com/Snowy Egret Enterprises/Yellow Rails %26 Rice Festival.html](https://www.snowyegretenterprises.com/Snowy_Egret_Enterprises/Yellow_Rails_%26_Rice_Festival.html)



SLAMN will have a booth at the Yellow Rail and Rice Festival
Watch your email for more information.

The screenshot shows the Yellow Rails and Rice Festival website. It features a banner for the 2017 festival, a list of past festivals from 2009 to 2016, and a photo of a combine harvester in a field. To the right, there is a sidebar with the text "A festival like no other...." and a detailed description of the festival's purpose and schedule.

September 8, 2017 Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association

Fourth Annual River Symposium

<http://www.bayouvermilionpreservation.org/>**September 16, 2017 Butterfly Festival****Haynesville, LA**<http://haynesvillela.org/attractions.html>**For Butterfly Festival Information Contact:**

Loice Kendrick-Lacy at (318) 624-1929

or City Hall (318) 624-0911

1937 Bailey Avenue, Haynesville, LA 71038

E-Mail Address: loicelacy@gmail.comWebsite: www.haynesvillela.org

Butterfly Festival
 The annual butterfly festival for Louisiana is held on a Saturday in mid September at the Claiborne Parish Fairgrounds in Haynesville, the Butterfly Capital of Louisiana. The Haynesville Celebration of Butterflies will be a festival focused on nature: butterflies, other insects, butterfly gardening, native plants, herb gardening, conservation, nature craft vendors, and include food, fun, and music.

**November 3, 2017 Yellow Rails and Rice Festival 2017****Banding Workshop, Jennings Louisiana**

[https://www.snowyegretenterprises.com/Snowy Egret Enterprises/Banding workshop files/banding%20workshop%20brochure2017.pdf](https://www.snowyegretenterprises.com/Snowy_Egret_Enterprises/Banding_workshop_files/banding%20workshop%20brochure2017.pdf)

Aug 12: Nature's Notebook Workshop at Barataria Preserve

<https://www.nps.gov/jela/planyourvisit/event-details.htm?event=61009210-1DD8-B71B-0B0C7248B21AE1C9>

Sept 23: Camp Salmen Bio Inventory, Slidell; Linda Auld, "BugLady", at: nolabuglady@gmail.com.

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

Oct 20-21: Southern Garden Symposium, St Francisville

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

Allen Acres Plant ID Classes

<http://www.nativeventures.net/default.asp>

Sept 12-14: General Plant ID class Allen Acres

Sept 19-21: Wetland Plant ID Class Allen Acres

Sept 26-28: Graminoid plant ID class Allen Acres

Sept 29-Oct 1: Butterfly Blast, Allen Acres

Oct 2-4: Sunflowers, Legume, and mint family plant ID classes Allen Acres

Oct 10-12: Wetland Plant ID Class Allen Acres

Oct 30-Nov 1: Graminoid plant ID class Allen Acres

Nov 6-8: General plant ID Class Allen Acres

Woodlands Conservancy

<http://www.woodlandsconservancy.org/projects-events/>

Nov 10: 1 pm Edible Plant Walk, Woodlands Conservancy, Belle Chasse

Nov 11-12: General plant ID Class, Woodlands Conservancy, Belle Chasse



iNaturalist Spotlight and Photos:

[Back](#)**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.**

[iNaturalist.org](#)

Observations ▾ Species ▾ Projects ▾ Places Guides People

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Welcome to Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

« Projects Terms & Rules | Leave this project

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

Naturalists Notes:

[Back](#)**iNaturalist Growth in Louisiana and an Uplifting Outlook by Irvin Louque**

I find myself paying more attention to my surroundings since I started using iNaturalist last year. iNaturalist is a great tool for crowdsourcing the identification of our sightings, keeping track of your sightings, and sharing what you see with other naturalists and the scientific community. Fortunately, more people are constantly finding out about this wonderful platform. iNaturalist is growing by leaps and bounds, and Louisiana is keeping up!

Observations reported on iNaturalist and the number of observers using iNaturalist has grown exponentially in our state (Figures 1 & 2). Louisiana surpassed 30,000 total observations this month and is nearing 1,000 total observers. The number of species observed has continued to rise, though not exponentially—typically this number levels off over time as the majority of species are observed and the number of species in an area is relatively fixed (Figure 3).

As long as we continue making people aware of the platform and the nature around them, the exponential growth of iNaturalist should continue into the near future. Additionally, the growing Louisiana master naturalist community is probably related to the growth of Louisiana's iNaturalist community.

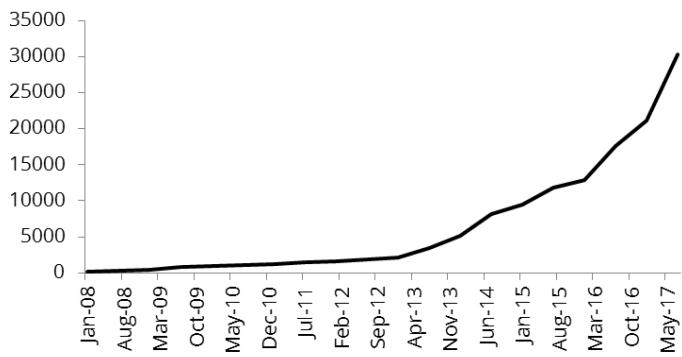
Louisiana's iNaturalist Observations

Figure 1. Cumulative iNaturalist observations in Louisiana.

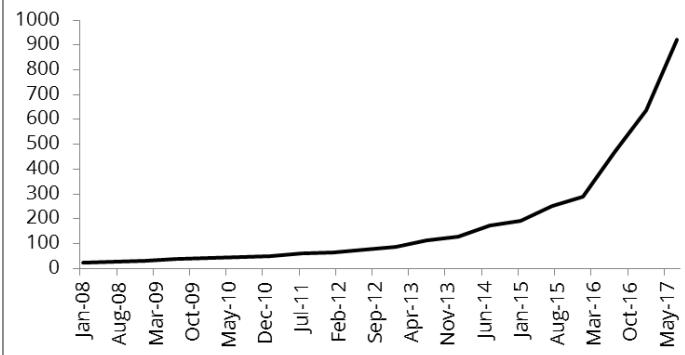
Louisiana's iNaturalist Observers

Figure 2. Cumulative observers using iNaturalist in Louisiana.

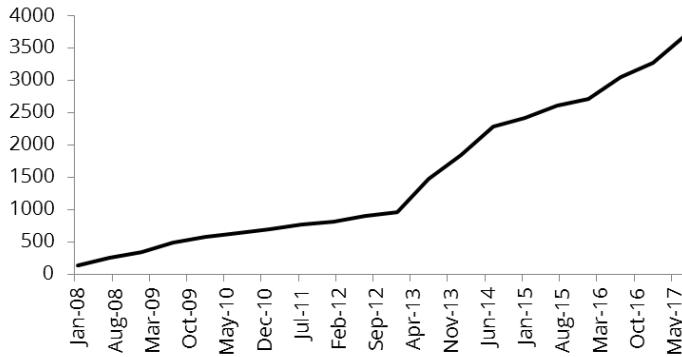
Louisiana's Species Observed in iNaturalist

Figure 3. Cumulative species observed in Louisiana on iNaturalist.

iNaturalist.org

Naturalists Notes:

[Back](#)**Listening to Wildlife by Chuck Battaglia**

Many animals have vocalizations that can help identify them to species. When scientific surveys are being done, these vocalizations can be used to determine which species are present or absent in a given area. It is especially useful when the study involves cryptic species that are rarely seen but can be heard. The drawback to using these vocalizations is that they require the observer to be present at the study site in order for them to be documented. This can be very costly in time and effort; fortunately, there are audio recording devices that can take the place of the listener and record the calls for later use.



Scientific recording devices are often referred to as Frog Loggers, Bat Loggers, Song Meters, and a number of other names. They are waterproof and deployable in remote areas with limited access for months at a time; all the while, it is recording data on the animals present via vocalizations, using a variety of settings to meet the researcher's needs. If one were wanting to record nocturnal animals, the device can be set to start recording 30 minutes after sunset and stop recording 3 hours before sunrise. Sampling can be set to occur for 'X' number of minutes out of every hour for the entire day to reduce the amount of information being recorded. Four D batteries and a SD cards housed in the body provide power and storage. Programs are available or creatable by the listener that will go through the audio recordings and pick out the vocalizations of the animals the observer is specifically interested in, reducing the time required to listen to each recording.

This autonomous research tool helps ease the burden of collecting data on a small scientific workforce. The simplicity of the system and plethora of knowledge that can be gained from using this technology add greatly to the worth of an already valuable tool.

Frogloggers

<http://www.frogloggers.com/>

Wildlife Acoustics

<https://www.wildlifeacoustics.com/>



World Listening Project

<http://www.worldlisteningproject.org>



Soundcloud App

<https://soundcloud.com/itswildlife>

An iPhone and Android App that can be used to record the sounds of Wildlife in the field.

Naturalists Notes:

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What Is That Thing? Field Guides for the Prairie Part I: Plants by Robby Maxwell

I always tell people that you really don't have to know all that much if you just know where to look and who to ask. Opening your eyes to a new ecosystem or group of organisms can be overwhelming with the amount of information that you are presented with.

"What's this, what's that, where that come from did, is that supposed to be here?" is pretty much the constant internal monologue playing out in my head. With some practice and experience, I'm at, *"that looks like something I know..."*

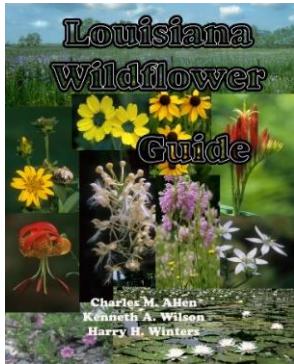
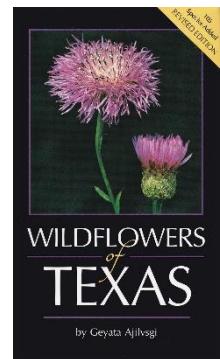
There are a couple of ways to approach a field guide. One is the basic blind-flipping through the pages hoping you'll stumble upon what you're looking for. If you really have no idea about the taxonomy of a group of organisms, this is what you're left with if you don't have the time or resources to "key it out." Also, many field guides are organized without the slightest nod to taxonomy (flower guides are the prime offender), so that's what you're left doing. The scientific way to get at an ID is to use a dichotomous key, and I think the best field guides at least have a key down to a family, or at least a level that is easy to navigate by page flipping. Being a *field guide*, I think the key should be feasible to work through in the field with pictures and thorough descriptions (scientific keys have language analogous to legalese, and can be tricky to the uninitiated). Whether using a key or standard field guide description, the end result should be the ability to identify a few traits that make the subject unique and separate it from other similar species.

I've compiled a list of some of my favorite guides that I use in the prairie reconstruction at the house and out and about, locally. I like to keep guides as local as possible, but sometimes you have to cast a broader net, or look outside of the region entirely. I often use guides in conjunction with one another, and also utilize the internet to really hone in and confirm what I'm looking at. Here are some of the plant books I use regularly in the prairie:

Wildflowers of Texas by Geyata Ajilvsgi (2003)

This is one that I brought over with me from Texas. It's as relevant in Western LA as it is in TX, so it still gets plenty of use. Flowers are divided by color, so if you have a yellow unknown, there's a lot of flipping to do. Texas, as a whole, probably has the most ecosystem diversity of any state due to its size and position on some dramatic geologic and precipitation transitions. Any field guide for something as diverse as flowering plants in TX will be incomplete (otherwise, it'd be an encyclopedia). This is no exception, but is very good at getting you looking in the right direction. To help out, occurrence by ecoregion is listed for each entry. If the exact wildflower you're looking at in SW LA isn't in here, a near relative is. (Sold by Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/Wildflowers-Texas-Geyata-Ajilvsgi/dp/0940672731>



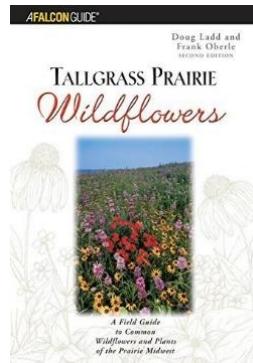
Louisiana Wildflower Guide by Charles Allen, Kenneth Wilson, and Harry Winters (2010) The LA Wildflower Guide is a great book for LA flowering plants. It is arranged differently than the TX guide, and does rely on some taxonomic knowledge to avoid a bunch of page flipping. It's separated into monocots and dicots (which are fairly easy to tell apart), and then further, alphabetically, by family and genus. There are excellent pictures and descriptions including bloom times, distributions, and listing species found within the state. Though there aren't pictures of every species, it provides enough information to generally have an easy time narrowing it down to what you want to know. (sold by Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/Louisiana-Wildflower-Guide-Charles-Allen/dp/0971862532>

Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers by Doug Ladd and Frank Oberle (2005)

Utilizing this guide is casting a net way beyond SW LA, as it focuses on Midwestern prairies. However, SW LA is a tallgrass prairie, and has many of the exact same species, if not close relatives, as the prairies all the way up to the Great Lakes and beyond. This book, like the TX guide, is organized by color. The pictures and descriptions are great. It has habitat descriptions, largely based on mesic or xeric affinity, which translate well to SW LA. One key aspect of the book be aware of is the bloom times will probably be different (earlier and/or more prolonged) in LA since we have a much longer growing season.

(Sold by Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Tallgrass-Prairie-Wildflowers-Common-Midwest/dp/0762737441/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=S9FJKDFXC1KVA7K0W9G8

**Identification of Milkweeds (*Asclepias*, Family Apocynaceae) in Texas**

by Jason Singhurst, Ben Hutchins, and Walter Holmes

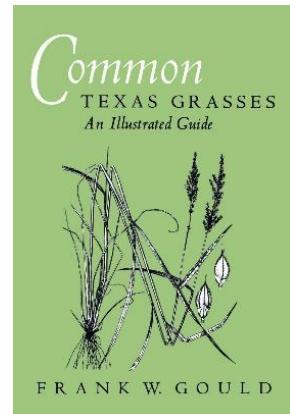


This compilation is another Tex-centric guide I use. It was created by a partnership between TX Parks and Wildlife and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and is available at no cost online. As stated above, due to the ecosystem diversity of TX, LA has a lot in common with the eastern portion of the state, but very little in common with the western reaches of TX. This guide has picture of leaves and flowers coupled with relevant bloom times, descriptions, and habitats. There are also distribution maps across the range of each species, beyond TX, which are great (I usually have to go online for these). Since it's available online, I only printed out the introductory pages and species found in LA. This trimmed out the majority of the packet, and makes it much easier to work with.

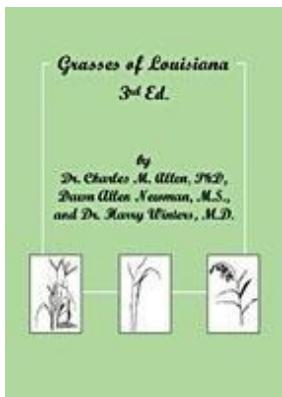
(This is a free downloadable PDF: <https://www.wildflower.org/plants/TPWD-Identification-Milkweeds-Texas.pdf>

Common Texas Grasses, an Illustrated Guide by Frank Gould (1978)

Here's another TX guide. This is also a book I brought over from my home state, and thankfully it's still relevant. It has all the limitations of the other TX field guides. It's fairly easy to use with excellent drawings and descriptions, but is lacking in terms of Louisiana species. I use this book to at least get close to what I'm looking for, and to ID fairly common species. Grasses are tough to ID, even in their "easy" stage with seed heads. Be sure you have a hand lens or microscope and plenty of patience when starting out. (Sold by Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Common-Texas-Grasses-Illustrated-Natural/dp/0890960585>)



Grasses of Louisiana 3rd Edition by Charles Allen, Dawn Allen Newman, and Harry Winters (2004)



This is a very thorough and scientific field guide, with in depth species descriptions, dichotomous keys, occurrence by parish, and line drawings. Where the TX grasses book is a page flipper, this one is best used sitting at a table with some samples (and time) in hand. One thing I've noticed in many grass guides (the TX one included) is a focus on agricultural uses of each species, which leads to a focus on economic importance. This book does not do that, and I'd say it's the most scientifically pure example of the list compiled here.

(Sold by Almost Eden: <https://almostedenplants.com/shopping/products/9552-grasses-of-louisiana/>)

A Couple of Online Resources

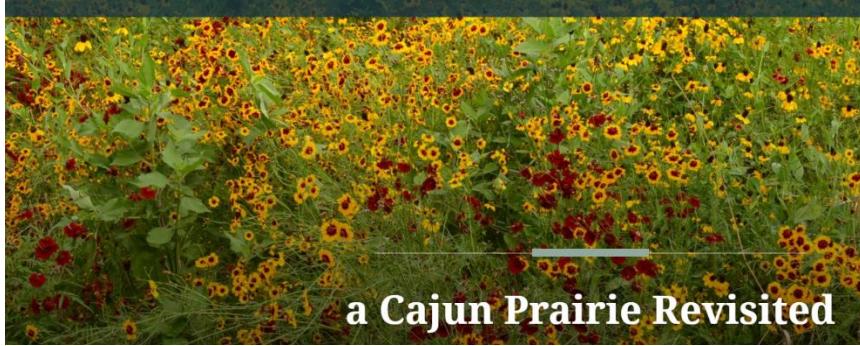
I don't consider any one source as a stand-alone, and always use them in conjunction with one another, if possible. **The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Native Plant Guide** <http://www.wildflower.org/plants/> is an excellent resource with many search filters and loads of information. I love range maps, and check them frequently. I look at the **USDA Plants Database** <https://plants.usda.gov/java/> all of the time. It has a wonderful feature attached to the zoom function to visualize statewide records down to parish/county level, including the native/introduced status. There is also other useful information imbedded into the site.

That wraps it up for this installment. My next "Nature Notes" entry will cover the guides I use to figure out what kinds of bugs are creeping and buzzing around the prairie. Until then... go ID some plants!

Maxwell Micro Prairie Blog

<https://maxwellmicroprairie.wordpress.com/>

Maxwell Micro Prairie



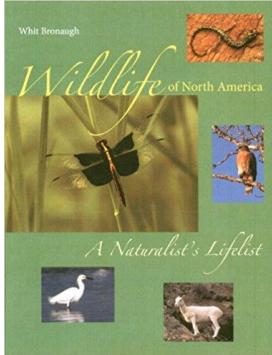
Resources for the Naturalists:

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Books:

Wildlife of North America: A Naturalist's Lifelist

December 31, 2006 by Whit Brionaugh

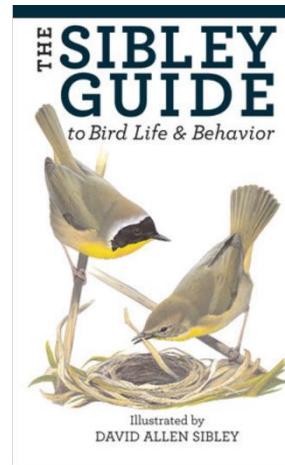
<https://www.amazon.com/Wildlife-North-America-Naturalists-Lifelist/dp/0813030129>

Unlike all other "lifelist" books, which cover only one geographical area or one type of fauna, *Wildlife of North America* is the first volume to present a checklist of all 4,000 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, freshwater fish, butterflies, dragonflies, and damselflies found in the United States and Canada. Each species listing includes the common and scientific name, conservation status, a checkbox for sightings, and ample space to record the place, date, and details of the sighting. The listings are based on the most-recent scientific findings and include hundreds of changes not found in current field guides, as well as 150 species recently described as new or elevated from a subspecies level.

A unique feature of this wildlife journal is the wealth of information Whit Brionaugh provides on biodiversity, zoogeography, extinct species, and current taxonomy. For nature lovers of all ages and all levels of expertise, this volume offers a complete checklist and diary to record a lifetime of observations.

The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior

July 28, 2009 by David Allen Sibley

<http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/166636/the-sibley-guide-to-bird-life-and-behavior-by-david-allen-sibley/>

Designed to enhance the birding experience and to enrich the popular study of North American birds, *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* combines more than 795 of Sibley's beautiful full-color illustrations with authoritative text by 48 expert birders and biologists.

Introductory essays outline the principles of avian evolution, life cycle, body structure, flight dynamics, and more. The 80 family-by-family chapters describe

the amazing range of behavior dictated by birds' biology and environment.

Apps:

NASA CITIZEN SCIENCE The Globe Program<https://www.globe.gov/globe-data/data-entry/globe-observer>

GLOBE Observer invites you to make observations about the Earth around you. Observations you collect and submit with this app are used by scientist to validate, interpret, and understand satellite data collected by NASA from space. Use Globe app to collect data during the upcoming solar eclipse!

Follow NASA Globe Observer on Facebook<https://www.facebook.com/nasa.globeobserver/>**Mushroom ID North America**<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/mushroom-id-north-america-fungi-identification-guide/id913987701?mt=8>

Description

- A stunning guide to fungi of North America.
- Mushroom Id will help you quickly and easily identify species of the USA and Canada.
- Mushroom Id has been created by professional

published ecologists, and uses images selected with the specific aim of aiding identification. Anatomical, ecological and taxonomic information is also included.

- The app does not need an internet connection, all content is downloaded when the app is purchased.
- The app is intended for the general interest user with a love of the natural world. The app is not intended for use when foraging for wild foods and we strongly recommend you do not handle or eat wild mushrooms, many are extremely poisonous and easily misidentified.

Resources for the Naturalists:

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Websites of Interest:

FrogWatch Louisiana

<https://www.aza.org/frogwatch-usa-louisiana>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the FrogWatch Louisiana website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'ABOUT US', 'ACCREDITATION', 'ANIMALS & CONSERVATION', 'AZA SAFE', and 'AZA SERVICES'. Below the navigation is a large banner image with the text 'FROGWATCH USA: LOUISIANA'. To the right of the banner, there's a sidebar with a section titled 'In this Section' containing links to 'FROGWATCH USA: ALABAMA', 'FROGWATCH USA: ALASKA', and 'FROGWATCH USA: ARIZONA'. The main content area below the banner contains text about frogs and toads found in Louisiana, with links to learn more about each species.

BirdNote

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

The screenshot shows the homepage of the BirdNote website. It features a large image of a burrowing owl with the text '... and never miss a story!'. Above the image is a call-to-action button 'Sign up for Weekly Email'. To the right, there's a 'TODAY'S SHOW' section for Thursday, July 20, 2017, featuring 'Aldo Leopold and the Field Sparrows'. The page also includes a search bar and links for 'SHOWS', 'BLOG', 'GALLERY', and 'RESOURCES'.

USGS Frog call lookup and quiz

<https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/frogquiz/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.lookup>

The screenshot shows the 'Frog Quizzes' section of the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center website. It features a large image of a toad and a green frog. The 'Frog Call Lookup' section has fields for 'Common Name' and 'Scientific Name' with 'Submit' buttons. Below these are dropdown menus for 'State/Province Name' and another 'Submit' button. A note says 'Please note not all states are available. The image below displays in green the available states.' There are social media sharing icons on the left.

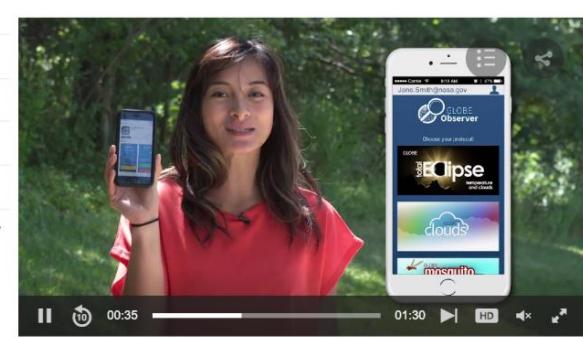
Goddard Media Studios

<https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/12653>

SPACE since 1958 NEWS TECH SPACEFLIGHT SCIENCE & ASTRONOMY SEARCH FOR LIFE SKYWATCH

NASA Wants YOU to Be a Citizen Scientist for the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse

By Doris Elin Salazar, Space.com Staff Writer | July 24, 2017 05:34pm ET



A new NASA app will allow folks across the United States to become citizen scientists and collect data for an interactive map.

Follow NASA Globe Observer on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/nasa.globeobserver/>

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

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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 the Newsletter Editor: arlenevidaurri.cain@yahoo.com

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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.

