



Charter 2016

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**President's Note:**

**Greetings Master Naturalists**

Fall is finally upon us, and eventually it'll feel like Fall again! Now's the time to start looking at nature's changes to get ready for winter. Acorns have started dropping, persimmons have started ripening. Some trees have started losing leaves. Look closely at the stems of your nearby trees. In the axils (where the base of each leaf stem attaches to the branch), [buds](#) are likely forming and enlarging. These buds will sit tight through the freezes of winter (however few we'll have!) and begin growth in the spring as either flowering parts or new stem and leaf growth. As counter intuitive as it seems, dormant trees make for an interesting study subject! Different species make very different-looking buds.

**Calendar Quick View**

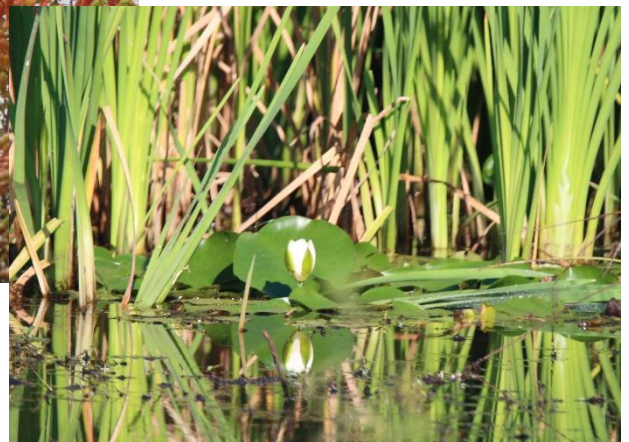
- October 3 SLAMN Meeting 6:00 pm Tuten Park Lake Charles
- October 7 Birding by Ear Tuten Park
- October 12 Guided Birding Tour Tuten Park
- October 13 Tall Grass Prairie Workshop Eunice
- October 20 Bat Seminar Tuten Park
- October 19 Guided Birding Tour Riverside Complex
- October 27 Bird Banding at Sam Houston State Park
- November 1-5 Yellow Rail and Rice Festival Jennings

Other good study subjects include the animals that greet autumn with haste. Squirrels and blue jays are busy finding and storing acorns. Birds that spend the winter in Louisiana are beginning to return. Look for the first of the season Yellow-rumped Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. No matter where you live, you're bound to see these two small, nondescript songbirds in your yard from October through April. Look for Hermit Thrushes and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in your local wooded patch.

Lastly, now's a good time to find native plants! Many of our grasses are beginning to set seed and the goldenrods and narrowleaf sunflowers are blooming. If you'd like to add some native landscaping to your yard, fall and early winter are good times to transplant native plants. Autumn is also a good time to plant seeds of native wildflowers.

Whatever brings you outside this fall, be sure to enjoy the cooler temperatures when they get here!

### Irvin Louque



## Meeting Notes

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## Upcoming General Meeting Date and Location

### January 9, 2019 at 6:00 pm at Tuten Park

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

Chuck Battaglia,

Brian Sean Early,

David Booth,

Theresa Cross,

Lori McGee

Reminder: SLAMN yearly membership \$15.00.

Mail your dues to:

**Clay Ardoin SLAMN Treasurer**

227 Fallis Rd.

Lafayette, LA 70507



**Log-in your volunteer and continuing education hours using Track It Forward**

**Set-up your account and start logging in your SLAMN CE&V hours.**

**Access Track It Forward on the SLAMN website:**

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

**September 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting Highlights**

**Election of Officers**—there are no new nominations for President, Vice President, or Secretary. Current Board Members Irvin Louque, Tommy Hillman, and Barbara Morris accepted the position for the next year. Clay Ardoin was nominated for the position of Treasurer. He ran unopposed. Clay Ardoin will be Treasurer for the next year.

**Course Committee:** Irvin Louque gave a report on the Course Committee.

- Classes will begin on February 2, 2019. The final class will be June 29.
- During the next workshop series, participants will be asked to familiarize themselves with one species from a given list. It will be their task to locate the species in the field and provide information about the animal or plant to other class members.
- Facilitators- At the general meeting in October, members will be asked to sign up as Facilitators. Facilitators will assist presenters as necessary during instructional workshops.
- Rendezvous-- A discussion was held about allowing students enrolled in the program, to use CEU's obtained at Rendezvous to count towards the hours necessary to graduate from the program. All were in favor, none were opposed.

**Promotions Committee:** David Booth--We will have a table at the Boat Show on January 18-20 and at the Fur and Wildlife Festival on January 11-12<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are needed.

**Publications Committee:** Arlene Cain--The next newsletter will go out around October 4<sup>th</sup>. Articles and pictures are needed.

**New Business:**

Chuck Battaglia presented information about an opportunity to advertise. LARE organization is making a calendar. For a donation, the logo of SLAMN would be printed on the calendar cover and other promotional items. A discussion followed. A motion to donate \$200 was suggested. All were in favor, none were opposed.

**October 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Highlights**

**Guest Speaker: Alex Halbrook** from Big Thicket National Preserve did a presentation on **Behind the Scales: The Snakes of the Big Thicket**. Alex's presentation was to provide information about how through education we can help people overcome their fear of snakes. It was very informative.

**Promotions**

The next promotional events will be the Fur and Wildlife Festival on January 11-12 and the Boat Show on January 18-20. Members are asked to work the booth for 4 hours.

**Election of Officers and Board:**

Nominations for Officers were opened and presented.

President: **Irvin Louque** unopposed

Vice President: **Tommy Hillman** unopposed

Secretary: **Barbara Morris** unopposed

Treasurer: **Clay Ardoin** Robbie Maxwell stepped down

Board Members: **Robby Maxwell, Theresa Cross, Chuck Battaglia, and David Booth**

**Scholarship:** David Booth was contacted by an individual who would like to provide \$50 scholarships to students interested in taking the Master Naturalist Course. **Barbara Morris** will locate a Scholarship application form.

**Upcoming Events**

Rendezvous 2019: At the Board meeting, it was discussed and decided that attendance at Rendezvous will count as workshop credit for those enrolled in the course. It will also count as CE credits for current membership.

**Next Meeting:** Board meeting will be Wednesday December 5<sup>th</sup>. Location and time to be announced.

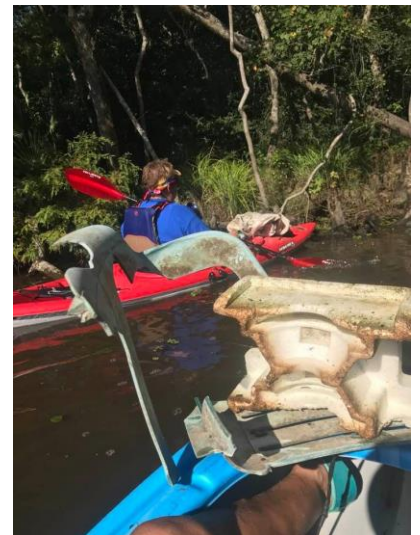
**General meeting will be Wednesday January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 6:00pm at Tuten Park**

Local News:

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### Sam Houston Jones State Park Clean-up

On September 15, 2018 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist volunteers set to work cleaning up around Sam Houston Jones State Park. The park cleanup was well attended. We had 37 people participate in our second Sam Houston Jones State Park clean up. SLAMN members participated on foot, on the water in kayaks and a small motorboat. We picked up 65 cigarette butts, 22 recyclable items, and 22 bags of trash plus chairs, inner tubes, and an inflatable raft. We picked up a lot of trash, including lots of derelict fishing tackle that was not accessible on foot.



### Southwest Louisiana LARE Sponsorship

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist are excited to support LARE, Louisiana Amphibian and Reptile Enthusiasts, by making a donation at the Silver Sponsorship level. SLAMN's logo will be printed on the LARE 2019 calendar.



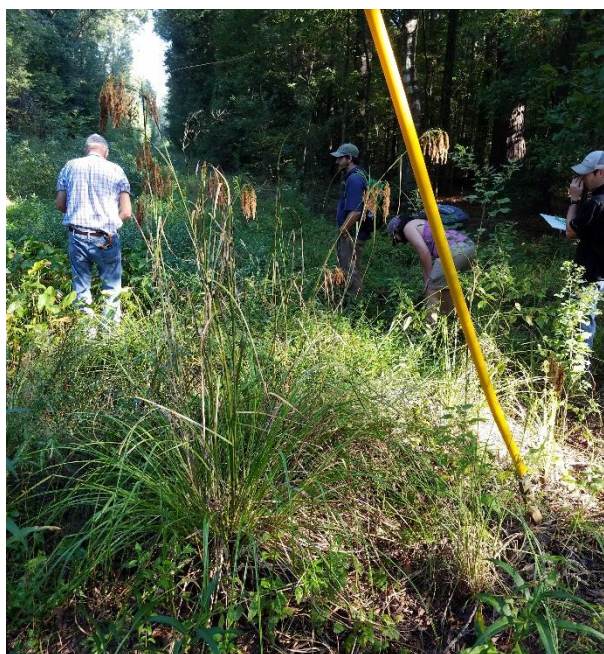
## Local News:

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## Booker Fowler Hatchery Paddlefish Lecture

September 29, 2018, Southwest Master Naturalists attended a paddlefish lecture presented by Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist **Robby Maxwell** at the Booker Fowler Hatchery. The paddlefish lecture included information about the general life history, state and drainage populations, research, and recovery in the state. The Saturday lecture was very informative. SLAMN attendees were: **Barbara and Tom Morris** and **Clay Ardoin**. After the lecture members took a short tour of the hatchery where they learned about the spawning process for both Largemouth Bass and Paddlefish. Members engaged in discussion of how important this information is to the future of fishing in Louisiana. The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, holds a workshop on Paddlefish Spawning for teachers and students statewide. Teachers and students participate in raising and releasing of Paddlefish into tributaries in their area. The Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists provides volunteers to help during the teacher/student workshop. The presentation was designed to provide knowledge about Paddlefish so volunteers can be better informed to help during the teacher/student workshop in the spring. The Director of the project stressed that SLAMN volunteers fill a much needed position. She is looking forward to our help this spring.

## Plant Identification Course



Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist **Clay Ardoin** attended **Dr. Charles Allen's** 3-day Plant Identification course September 18-20. This course was focused on wetlands plants and was extremely informative without being overly rigorous (no test). **Dr. Allen** has an encyclopedic knowledge of Louisiana plants, as anyone who has walked through the woods with him can attest. We spent the majority of our time outdoors where we observed, discussed, and photographed many woody and herbaceous plants, including graminoids.

**Clay** highly recommends these classes for anyone interested in improving their plant ID skills with a focus on Louisiana plants. For those who can't schedule three days, **Dr. Allen** also schedules one day courses.

**Graminoids (Families Poaceae, Juncaceae, and Cyperaceae) Free Download PDF**

<https://bugwoodcloud.org/CDN/floridainvasives/Graminoids.pdf>

## Call for Natural fibers, Leaves, and Pinecones for Handmade Christmas Decorations

**Theresa Cross**, Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist and Wildlife Education requests that members and friends collect the following items to be used for handmade Christmas decoration for an upcoming workshop: onion skins (used for natural dyes), pinecones and interesting leaves, rattlebox seed pods, and any natural interesting items that would make nice decorations. Contact **Theresa Cross** for more information: (337) 491-2575 x 3009 (Office), email [tcross@wlf.la.gov](mailto:tcross@wlf.la.gov)



## Continuing Education Opportunities:

[Back](#)**Continuing Education and Volunteer**

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist **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**



Conservation  
Biology Institute

**Conservation Biology Institute Webinar Series**

<https://consbio.org/newsroom/events?webinar=True>

**October 2018**

Oct 17 — SCGIS Webinar: Drones for conservation of animals and their habitat

Oct 10 — SCGIS Webinar: Bridging the gap between conservation practitioner and remote sensing science

Oct 4 — Understanding & Using Climate-Adaptation-Related Spatial Data in Regional Conservation Planning

**November 2018**

Nov 14 — SCGIS Webinar: ARSET for integrating NASA's data into conservation decision-making

Nov 8 — SCGIS Webinar: Global Forest Watch: Data and tools for monitoring forests around the world

Nov 1 — SCGIS Webinar: UMD GLAD Global Forest Monitoring: From Landsat archive mining to operational products



## Continuing Education Opportunities:

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Start with the BIRDS  
and end with a DOG  
4th Saturday each month  
**Beginners Bird Walk**  
8:00 a.m. **Gulf Coast Bird Club**  
9:00 a.m. **Le Chien Cookers**  
Dutch Oven  
Gathering (DOG)  
Demonstrations in the morning  
.... sample the pots at noon.  
Sam Houston Jones  
State Park


**Sam Houston Jones State Park Bird Walk**

Join David Booth and bird enthusiast for a great morning Beginner's Bird Walk. It takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month at Sam Houston Jones State Park. Meet at **8:00 A.M.** at Sam Houston Jones State Park at the deck overlooking the swamp across from the pavilion.

For more information contact David Booth – phone 337.526.0837, email: [david@boothenvironmental.com](mailto:david@boothenvironmental.com)

**Upcoming Education Programs at Tuten Park**

Tuten Park 3801 Nelson Road, Lake Charles

Sign up for any upcoming programs at: [bit.ly/TutenEd](http://bit.ly/TutenEd) or by email or phone:

[Irvin.louque@cityoflc.us](mailto: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.us](mailto:Irvin.louque@cityoflc.us)



**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.



## 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. 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

Diane Borden-Billiot phone: 337-598-2216

### Friends of Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Refuges and Wetlands

[https://www.fws.gov/refuge/cameron\\_prairie/what\\_we\\_do/about\\_the\\_friends.html](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

The screenshot shows the website for Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. The header includes the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service logo and the text 'Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge | Louisiana'. A navigation bar contains 'Visit', 'Wildlife & Habitat', and 'About the Refuge'. The main content area is titled 'About the Friends' and features a photograph of a group of people sitting around a table. To the left of the photo is a green sidebar with the text 'GET INVOLVED TODAY' and a list of links: 'SWLA Friends Group', 'Friends Group Support and Accomplishments', 'Volunteer Application', and 'Friends Group Application'. To the right of the photo is a 'Print | Share' section and a 'FOLLOW US ONLINE' section with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and RSS. Below that is a 'MAPS' section with a map icon and a 'MULTIMEDIA' section with a camera icon. At the bottom right, there is a 'WHAT WE DO' section with links for 'Resource Management', 'Conservation', 'Get Involved', 'Partnerships', and 'Science'.





## Upcoming Events:

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

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**October 12 Guided Bird Walk Tuten Park 9:00 am**

**October 19 Guided Bird Walk Riverside Park Complex 9:00 am**

**October 20 Theresa Cross Bat Seminar Tuten Park 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**October 27 Bird Banding Sam Houston Jones Park**

**October 6, 2018, Saturday BioBlitz University of Louisiana at Monroe Biological Station**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/479024075929624/>

ULM Biology students and faculty, as well as the ULM Biology Honors Society (TriBeta), will host it's 6th annual BioBlitz!

This event will showcase and document the biodiversity of the ULM Biology Department's outdoor classroom and Biological Station: the Dr. Charles Allen Nature Preserve (located near Columbia, LA). Experts will lead hikes as participants identify as many life forms as possible!

For more info, please contact Dr. Joydeep Bhattacharjee at [joydeep@ulm.edu](mailto:joydeep@ulm.edu) or 318-342-1946.

**Allen Acres Plant ID Classes**

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

**Oct 6: Butterfly Count Allen Acres - meet at 9:30 am, count led by Craig Marks, author of "Butterflies of Louisiana, a guide to identification and location"**

**Oct 6: Plant ID class Allen Acres**

**Oct 16-18: Graminoid and Composite plant ID class**

**Oct 2-4: Plant ID classes Allen Acres**

**Oct 9-11: Plant ID class Allen Acres**

**Nov 3: Plant ID class Allen Acres**

**October 31-November 4, 2018 The Yellow Rail and Rice Festival Jennings Louisiana**

[http://www.snowyegretenterprises.com/Snowy\\_Egret\\_Enterprises/Yellow\\_Rails\\_%26\\_Rice\\_Festival.html](http://www.snowyegretenterprises.com/Snowy_Egret_Enterprises/Yellow_Rails_%26_Rice_Festival.html)

**Oct 19-20, 2018: Southern Garden Symposium, St Francisville**

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

**October 27, 2018, 9:00 am – 2:30 pm Acadiana Native Plant Project Yard-to-Habitat Workshop**

Acadian Village, Lafayette LA

\$20 for ANPP members, \$40 for non-members

For more info or to sign up, email [mail@greauxnative.org](mailto:mail@greauxnative.org)

Lake Charles City Nature Challenge 2019: April 26-29



## iNaturalist.org's Journal Official Blog

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

Check out the "Observation of the Week" post.

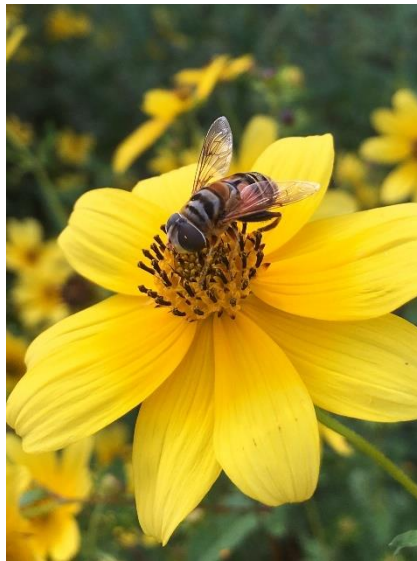
iNaturalist Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Project

Observation of the Month by **Beau Gregory**

Genus *Palpada* A member of Drone Flies Subfamily Eristalinae

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

« Projects

Terms & Rules | Leave this project



Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

## Benefits of Becoming a Master Naturalist by Brittany Manuel



I am a 2014 graduate in Biomedical Engineering from Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, LA and 2018 SLAMN graduate. I currently work as an Avian Telemetry Receiver Station Technician in Baton Rouge, LA with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. In addition to my degree program, I have a technical and biological background filled with numerous hours of volunteer work, volunteer research, and various courses from Louisiana Tech's Biological Sciences department. Although degree-wise I seem to have taken an indirect path to a pursuit in a wildlife career, I have gained on-the-job experience unattainable in a classroom setting, applied my skills, and targeted any professional or volunteer opportunity in this field. In this article, I share how the SWLA Master Naturalist Program offered me

opportunities to obtain the experience that prepared me to obtain a position with the Department.

First off, the position I have with the Department is a technician position in the Natural Heritage Program. The main objective of this position is to construct and maintain a network of VHF receiver stations, and to retrieve data. This technology uses very high frequency radio transmitters, used to track organisms as small as dragonflies, affixed to mobile animals. Based on the highly successful Motus Wildlife Tracking System of Bird Studies Canada, the Louisiana effort, called the Statewide Passive Detection for Organismal Research (SPDOR) VHF Network, seeks to create a digital wall of detection for these organisms as they travel through our state. The Department has partnered with the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program with significant funding from ConocoPhillips, USFWS Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, and the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation to make this a reality. This VHF network will address data gaps that currently hinder effective, on the ground conservation. I feel that a scientist responsible for wildlife data collection and its technology requires not only technical experience, but a drive to promote citizen science, an ability to efficiently communicate with environmental professionals, and an understanding and concern for ecological processes that affect our land, people, and natural resources.

The Master Naturalist program is an effective tool, which directed and tuned these three factors that I believe were requirements for successful employment at the Natural Heritage Program. Throughout the six months of the Master Naturalist program, I was able to practice and learn more about citizen science in a relaxed, yet focused, way. Citizen science is the practice by nonprofessionals of collecting data that can aid in the studies

of professional scientists. Citizen scientists who collect data on our flora and fauna have been key factors in our understanding of the state's natural history. Combining my technical skills in electronics with that of my roles in citizen science, undoubtedly, will assist the SPDOR VHF Network as it attempts to address conservation data gaps. Possessing a strong drive to collaborate and advance citizen science prior to employment helped to demonstrate my commitment to the field and the confidence in my skills, and I believe that the Master Naturalist program offered numerous opportunities in citizen science.

While in the field with other Master Naturalists, I was able to practice my communication skills with my fellow conservation-oriented colleagues, some of whom are environmental professionals. This rare opportunity to socialize with like-minded experts provided real world, hands-on training rarely offered by degree programs. Master Naturalist classroom and field sessions are valuable resources that have both directed me, and maximized my determination to work for a conservation organization.

Lastly, the content of the curriculum and the message delivered from the instructors about Louisiana's land and resources, has not only informed me, but has established a heartfelt connection to the concerns of our land today. With this group of individuals and instructors, I was able to attend bird banding sessions and volunteer, participate in birding and simulated activities of bird migration behavior, and learn in-depth information on pollinators and their importance and survival. My favorite and most important concept I learned in one of the courses is how important the pollinators are for the production of almost all of our nation's resources. Connecting these concepts have helped me to understand and be more concerned about the movement of birds species across the nation, especially since we share the same land and resources, and that our economy can be affected if the birds are affected.

I highly recommend that anyone who desires a career in environmental science, wildlife, ecology, botany, etc., to become a member of your local Master Naturalist program, so that he/she can expand his/her experiences, knowledge, skills, and network prior to seeking employment in this field.



## The Deep Blue by Theresa Cross

As nature enthusiasts it seems like most people focus on a particular thing whether it be flowers, butterflies, certain bird families, or even specific ecosystems. If we have a close affinity for a particular animal group, we often will learn the details of their habitat by default, though we all have our favorites even when we diversify. The thing so many of these interests have in common is that they are focused on terrestrial species. Aquatic ecosystems are usually the focus of those who like to fish, crab and shrimp, their exposure to animals living in the water being a few, select species. And others who enjoy exploring aquatic ecosystems using jon boats or kayaks are mostly looking at things above water. We are lucky in our Master Naturalist chapter to have people with diverse interests, including some with in-depth knowledge of aquatic ecosystems and their species. Therefore, we have expanded our exposure and interests to include these aquatic plants and animals.

With our established interests, a little help from others and our inherent desire to learn more, we go out to explore, build on our knowledge and share it with others. After hanging out with a fun group of bio-nerds, many of us have expanded our nature experiences to include looking under leaf litter and in ponds, streams and ephemeral puddles. But there is more out there than even these enhanced explorations can uncover. Most of us forget that over 70 percent of the earth is covered with water, and most of that is salt water. Our oceans are vast and deep and we only get a small glimpse of what they hold.

The world under the surface is fascinating, beautiful, and full of life. Many people get to see pieces of this world through displays at their state's aquaria (there is at least one aquarium of note in each state of the U.S.). But there is something special about being in the water watching a sea turtle, shark or ray swim by, to be in the middle of a school of Sargent Majors, or to be still enough to see the coral polyps come out to feed. Most corals feed at night, but you can often see the polyps extend past their hard bases during the day, though they quickly retract if disturbed. Although the vast majority of Earth's ocean depths are unreachable by us, there are shallower areas across the globe that are teeming with life. Coral reefs and sandy sea beds play host to a variety of vertebrate, invertebrate, algal and aquatic plant life. The reefs themselves are actually part of that life and are in water shallow enough to allow us to safely visit and explore. Many people take up self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) diving to experience these new places, though in shallower waters snorkeling is an option as well. A mask is important in these endeavors, since it allows us a clearer view of underwater wonders; everything else is lagniappe. The snorkel just enables us to look below the surface while still being able to breathe, the SCUBA gear allows us to go deeper (up to 130 ft under recreational diving guidelines) and stay for longer periods of time. Whatever method you choose to use or how deep you choose to go, the reward in new experiences and the variety of life you experience makes the journey well worth the work to get there.

### Relevant Links:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_aquaria\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_aquaria_in_the_United_States)

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/group/corals/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SG4BIMme1hk>

<https://flowergarden.noaa.gov/>

Photos:

TJC Cozumel by Ellen

Cozumel Corals

Cozumel Corals and Sponges

Barracuda & Diver (me)

Corals and a French Grunt

Barrel sponges & var. corals

By Ellen Bradley

By Theresa Cross

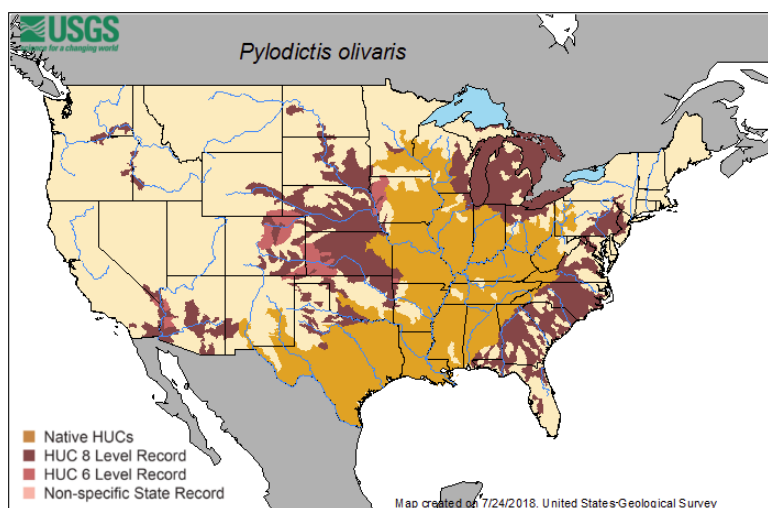
By Theresa Cross



## Invasive Species, Defined By Robby Maxwell

Lately, I've noticed that there is some confusion over what an invasive species is. Especially in the gardening world, I've seen the term "invasive" used for any aggressively spreading plant no matter its origin. Seeing the term "invasive" used to describe a native species can feel like nails on the chalkboard to naturalists, biologists, and ecologists. That's because the first part of the *legal* definition (as per Executive Order 13112) is that the organism in question must not be native to the ecosystem it is inhabiting. The full definition of an invasive species is as follows: 1) *non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and 2) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.*

The definition is very well written, and contains some nuance since an organism must meet both parts of the definition to be considered "invasive." In part one, the term "ecosystem" is used. If we just consider the United States, there are invasive species found in the U.S. which originate from another part of the country. This can be said at regional and state levels, too. Humans are the only organisms on the planet who show any consideration for political boundaries. Flathead Catfish (*Pylodictus olivaris*) are a good example of an invasive species in the U.S. that is native to the U.S. It's defined as both native and invasive in many states, depending on which watershed it's found in.



Flathead Catfish range showing watersheds where it's native (orange) and introduced (red).



Obedient Plant (*Physostegia digitalis*) may be an aggressive plant in gardens, but this is a native that must be aggressive to compete for resources in biodiverse prairies.

A native organism which aggressively spreads, if given a chance, is usually either subjected to intense competitive pressures in its natural habitat, or is a pioneer species that is often the first to appear in a system that's experienced disturbance or upheaval. We often mimic these conditions in gardens as we wipe the slate clean, and sparsely plant a few hand-picked species. If the species spreads, it's because a niche has been created for it to move into. In its natural habitat there would be limiting factors.

There are also introduced species with no measurable impacts listed in the second part of the definition. These species are often called "naturalized." One plant I've heard called "naturalized" by a botanist is the Silk Tree or Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*). It's an introduced species that can be found all over Louisiana, but does

not display much negative impact at all. Many exotic garden plants that are considered “well behaved” would fall into this category if they escape the confines of cultivation.

Most exotic organisms introduced in an environment never spread much beyond the point of introduction. If the ecosystem surrounding them is strong and in good health, there are often no easy niches for an introduced species to fill. Extremes, such as heat, cold, drought, flood, fire, etc., are often limiting factors for introduced species which have not evolved in a specific area. The environment might be perfect for an exotic species 98% of the time, but the 2% of the time that they’re not adapted to is often enough to wipe them out, or at least limit the invasion. That being said, there are very similar habitats found in different continents and hemispheres where exotic organisms from those areas have no problem making themselves at home in our native ecosystems.

Invasive species are a huge problem in the U.S. and the world. Many of our treasured Louisiana native species, like Bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*) and Red Swamp Crawfish (*Procambarus clarkii*) are devastating invasives in other parts of the U.S and the world. Unfortunately, Louisiana has habitat types and ecological issues that make it a prime target for many invasive species. A few notable invasives in Louisiana include Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*), Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*), Giant Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*), and the Channeled Applesnail (*Pomacea canaliculata*). These species, and many more, are devastating to the local ecosystems that they’ve invaded. Nationwide, invasive species cost over \$120 billion in damages and losses, according to Pimental et al. (2005). When it comes to invasive species, the old saying “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” rings true.



Asian Clams (*Corbicula* spp.) are invasive species which rob scarce nutrients from native mussels.

Pimental, D., R. Zuniga, D. Morrison (2005). Update on the Environmental and Economic Costs Associated with Alien-Invasive Species in the United States. *Ecological Economics*. 52, pp. 273-288.

Invasive species resources:

National Invasive Species Information Center: <https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/index.shtml>

Introduced, Invasive, and Noxious Plants List: <https://plants.usda.gov/java/noxComposite>

Nonindigenous Aquatic Species: <https://nas.er.usgs.gov/>

Louisiana Invasive Species: <http://is.cbr.tulane.edu/index.html>



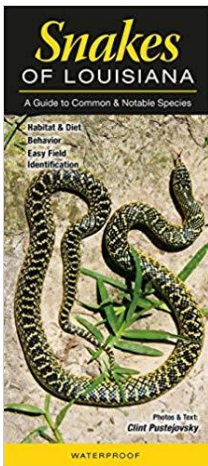
## Resources for the Naturalists:

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## Books:

**Snakes of Louisiana: A Guide to Common & Notable Species Pamphlet**

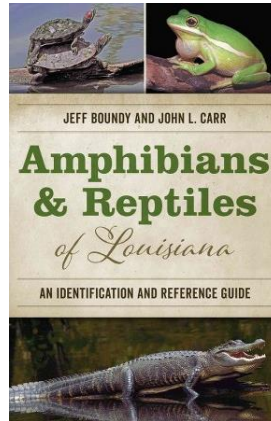
by Cliff Pustaiovsky October 25, 2012

<https://www.amazon.com/Snakes-Louisiana-Common-Notable-Species/dp/1936913453>

This guide's six laminated, double-sided panels fold up into a handy narrow packet which is sized to fit in your back pocket yet sturdy enough to stand up under repeated use. It describes over 50 species of snakes found in Louisiana, including 7 venomous snakes. The guide also features color photos that make it ideal for field use. Common and scientific names, average adult size, habitat, diet, and behavior are described.

**Amphibians and Reptiles of Louisiana: An Identification and Reference Guide by Jeff Boundy, John L Carr**

Available April 10, 2017

<http://www.target.com/p/amphibians-and-reptiles-of-louisiana-an-identification-reference-guide-paperback-jeff-boundy/-/A-51701502>

This guide provides a means of identifying the 147 amphibian and reptile species currently known in Louisiana, as well as information on their natural histories (behavior, geographic range, populations, food and feeding habits, reproduction, and habitat). Written in a style that will be useful for both laypersons and experts, it will help those interested in the amphibians and reptiles of Louisiana appreciate our biodiversity heritage.

## Apps:

**Regional Reptiles**<https://itunes.apple.com/US/app/id1015209006?mt=8>**Description**

Identify reptiles more quickly than ever! Regional Reptiles shows you reptiles that have been seen at your current location, preventing you from having to scroll or flip through dozens of reptiles that aren't relevant to where you are. The reptiles are organized by category and ordered by how common they are at your location. It's like a location-based field guide.

For example, if you see a mysterious snake, you can click on one of the snake categories to see a list of all of the snakes that have been seen at your location, ordered by how often they're seen. You'll quickly identify that pesky snake. You can also search for terms like "kingsnake" to see a more targeted list.

Each reptile has dozens of photos and videos, as well as information about appearance, habitat, behavior, taxonomy and more, via Wikipedia. Regional Reptiles includes all species and types of reptiles, including lizards, snakes, turtles, tortoises, alligators, crocodiles, and more.

**Regional Amphibians**<https://itunes.apple.com/US/app/id1020952449?mt=8>**Description**

Identify amphibians more quickly than ever! Regional Amphibians is a location-based field guide. It shows you amphibians that have been seen at your current location, preventing you from having to scroll or flip through dozens of amphibians that aren't relevant to where you are. The amphibians are organized by category and ordered by how common they are at your location.

For example, if you see a mysterious frog, you can click on one of the frog categories to see a list of all of the frogs that have been seen at your location, ordered by how often they're seen. You'll quickly identify that pesky frog. You can also search for terms like "bullfrog" to see a more targeted list.

Each amphibian has dozens of photos and videos, as well as information about appearance, habitat, behavior, taxonomy and more, via Wikipedia. Regional Amphibians includes all species and types of amphibians, including frogs, toads, salamanders, newts, caecilians, and more.

Resources for the Naturalists:

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Websites of Interest:

Louisiana Amphibian and Reptile Enthusiast

<http://www.louisianaherps.com/louisiana-amphibian-and.html>

**Amphibians and Reptiles of Louisiana**

*A guide to the natural history and identification of herptiles in The Pelican State*

Amphibians and Reptiles of Louisiana Photo Galleries L.A.R.E. Links Ask Me! Curriculum Vitae About Me

Louisiana Amphibian and Reptile Enthusiasts (L.A.R.E.)



**Mission Statement**

To bring together all those interested in the search for and conservation of Louisiana's wild amphibians and reptiles through the sharing of discussions, questions, pictures, and trip reports on Facebook, guided field trips, and citizen science projects, while also seizing every opportunity to educate others in order to foster an appreciation for, and thus, promote conservation of Louisiana's amazing diversity of amphibians and reptiles.

Facebook

Louisiana Amphibian and Reptile Enthusiast

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LouisianaHerps/>



YouTube

Louisiana Amphibian and Reptile Enthusiast

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEIMbNf5MUivO5zrGQ0Jpyg>



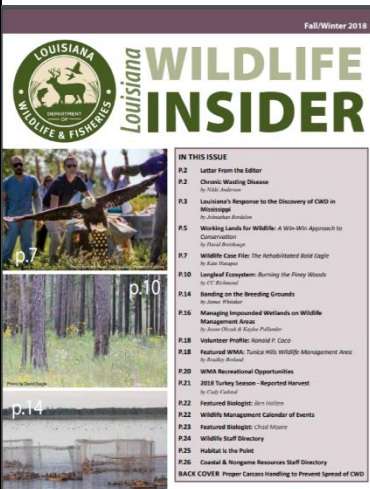
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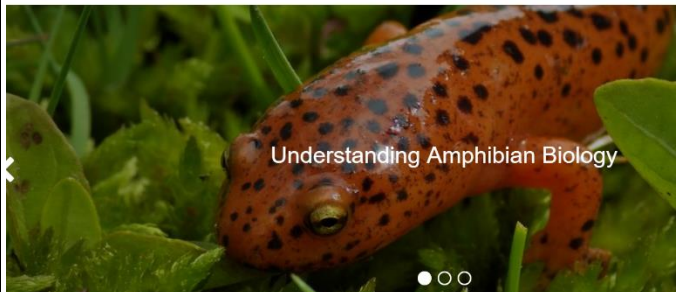


[http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pagehunting/41031-2017-summer-wildlife-insider/2018\\_fall\\_winter\\_-\\_wildlife\\_insider\\_newsletter.pdf](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pagehunting/41031-2017-summer-wildlife-insider/2018_fall_winter_-_wildlife_insider_newsletter.pdf)

**USGS Amphibians**

[https://www.usgs.gov/centers/pwrc/science/amphibians?qt-science\\_center\\_objects=0#qt-science\\_center\\_objects](https://www.usgs.gov/centers/pwrc/science/amphibians?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects)

Amphibians



**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/>



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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](mailto:arlenevidaurri.cain@yahoo.com)



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