

# Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

## Nature Notes



Charter 2016

Vol 4 ISSUE 4 Aug 2019

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### President's Note:

## Greetings, Master Naturalists!

One of my favorite parts of the SWLA Master Naturalist community is learning from my fellow members. Just as many of our board members teach workshops, just as many of us learn from other members' different skills and topics that are outside of our areas of expertise. Like the land community, our community is made up of many interconnected members who impact each other in more ways than anyone can realize.

As an example, at the graduation/land ethic workshop in June, Christina Keathley gave a great presentation on bioacoustics and how to visualize them and identify the various calls of frogs, birds, and bats, particularly through analyzing spectrograms. Though I've been birding for half my life, I had never bothered to record and visualize bird songs and calls. I'm also not musically inclined, so I've always had a pretty hard time describing bird songs to novice birders.

### Calendar Quick View

Aug 17 Beginners Bird Course Tuten Park  
Sept 21, Sam Houston Jones State Park Beach Sweep  
Oct 2 SLAMN meeting at Tuten Park 6:00  
Oct 5 SLAMN Field trip to Pintail Loop



## President's Note:

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Spectrograms have been a really good way to improve in the audio aspects of birding, and I've started to notice parts of bird songs that I'd never noticed before. There will probably be a *Nature Notes* article detailing my experiences in bird song spectrograms in future issues!

Through presentations, *Nature Notes* articles, field trips, and conversations I've learned something about natural history from many of the members in our organization and from members of other LMNA chapters. So with that, as we enter the second half of the year and in the lead up to our next course in 2020, I encourage everyone to attend our field trips, meetings, and be active in our SLAMN Facebook group. You never know what you might learn!

Thanks,

Irvin Louque



### Parishes Served by LMNA Chapters Legend:

**Green – [Northwest Chapter](#)**

**Blue – [Northeast Chapter](#)**

**Rose – [Cenla Chapter](#)**

**Tan – [Southwest Chapter](#)**

**Red – [Acadiana Chapter](#)**

**Yellow – [Greater Baton Rouge Chapter](#)**

**Turquoise – [Greater New Orleans Chapter](#)**

## Meeting Notes

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## Upcoming Board Meeting Location and Date October 2, 2019 at Tuten Park at 6:00 P.M.

**President:** Irvin Louque

**Vice-President:**

Tommy Hillman

**Treasurer:** Clay Ardoine

**Secretary:** Barbara Morris

**At-large Board Members:**

Chuck Battaglia,

David Booth,

Theresa Cross,

Robby Maxwell

Reminder: SLAMN yearly membership \$15.00.

Mail your dues to:

**Clay Ardoine**

**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/>

### July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Meeting Highlights

#### **Committee Reports**

**Course:** Eleven people graduated from the Master Naturalist course. They were required to write a Nature Note article. Look for the publication in the quarterly newsletter.

Time to start promoting the next class. There are 20 spots to fill.

**Volunteer:** Check on Track It Forward to be sure you are meeting your volunteer and CEU hours for the year. Attending meetings gives you one CEU hour. If you need help logging your hours contact Irvin or Clay.

**Publications:** August will be the next publication. Please send pictures and stories to Arlene Cain.

**City Nature Challenge:** SLAMN ranked 69<sup>th</sup> out of 159 cities and were 2<sup>nd</sup> in Research Grade observations. Thanks to everyone who participated.

**SLAMN Handbook:** The handbook is in the editing phase. It will be ready for the New Year.

#### **New Business:**

**Committees sign-up** will be redone in January. If you would like to be a committee chairman or help with a committee, send an email to Irvin.

**Election of Officers** is held in October. Nominations need to be in by September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Let someone on the Board know if you are interested in being nominated for a position on the Board.

**Rendezvous 2021** will be held in Southwest Louisiana. The possibility of having children attend was discussed and put off to a future date. More information as details become available.

**Team Green--** Board members are needed. It will involve working with local schools and businesses educating them on how to limit their environmental impact. Encouraging single use plastics is one idea. The board meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month. Contact Irvin Louque if you are interested.

#### **Upcoming Events**

**Field trip to USGS Wetlands Research Center** at UL Lafayette is scheduled for Aug 2. Sign up on Track it Forward.

**Rendezvous 2020** is April 17-19, at Camp Hartner.

**City Nature Challenge 2020** will be held April 24-27

**Beach Sweep** at Sam Houston Park is tentatively scheduled for **September 21<sup>st</sup>**. A volunteer is needed to be the 'on the ground coordinator' the day of the event. Volunteers will be needed to help with cleanup. This is an opportunity to earn up to five volunteer hours.

#### **Program**

**Guest Speaker Micha Petty** from L.E.A.R.N., (LA Exotic Animal Resource Network), learnaboutcritters.org. Micha is a NWLA Master Naturalist, LMNA Board member, and Outreach Officer

**Topic: Innovations in Outreach: Interpreting Our Natural History to the Public**

Micha Petty gave a very informative and motivational presentation about Conservation through Education.

**Next meeting date: October 2, 2019**

**Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Chapter meetings are held quarterly on the first Wednesday of the month at Tuten Park at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.**

## Local News:

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## SLAMN's 2019 Master Naturalists Graduates

### Congratulations to our 2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists graduates!

Our 2019 SLAMN class graduated on June 29, 2019 at Tuten Park. The new graduates completed their final certification exam, and received their certificate, name tags, and T-shirts and a copy of Aldo Leopold's, *A Sand County Almanac*.

The new graduates are: **Emerald Fletcher, Casie Davis, Ellen Dyer Anthony, Pam Langley, Monica Canizares, Megg Sorensen, Martha Hoag, Adrienne Brewer Edwards, Carolyn Miller, Debbie Davis and Christine Michelle Keathley.**



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## June 29, 2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalist Graduation



Newly Certified Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists **Christina Keathley** gave a great presentation on bioacoustics. She talked about how to visualize and identify the various calls of frogs, birds, and bats by using and analyzing spectrograms.



## Local News:

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## Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists General Meeting July 10, 2019 Innovations in Outreach: Interpreting Our Natural History to the Public



Our guest speaker **Micha Petty** is a Northwest Master Naturalist, a Louisiana Master Naturalists Board member, and Outreach Officer. Micha is President and CEO of LEARN, Louisiana Exotic Animal Resource Network. He is also the Public Relations Coordinator for the Society for Amphibian and Reptile Education. He is a member of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council, the Herpetologists' League, the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, and Partners in Amphibians and Reptile Conservation.

The International Herpetological Symposium selected Micha as the 2018 recipient of their Laszlo Award for his outreach and educational efforts, particularly his work creating A Primer on Reptiles and Amphibians. Micha has done over 50 news and television segments about animals and conservation.

Micha gave a very informative and motivational presentation about Conservation through Education. He emphasized the importance of Citizen Scientists as people who can interpret the natural world to the public in a way they can understand. He shared snapshots of information which get across big ideas with catchy photos and few words. The important message Micha gave us is: "Get people's attention, then you can give them a message." When do we start? Now with the people around us. Where do we start? Everywhere!

The resource, "A Primer on Reptiles and Amphibians," is great for increasing general knowledge. It is also free to copy pages and use as handouts. He donated a copy to the SLAMN library. A digital copy can be downloaded from the website for free. Check out his Facebook Page: [Live Snake ID and Discussion](#).

A Primer on Reptiles and Amphibians Authoring & Design by

Micha R. Petty (Free PDF download)

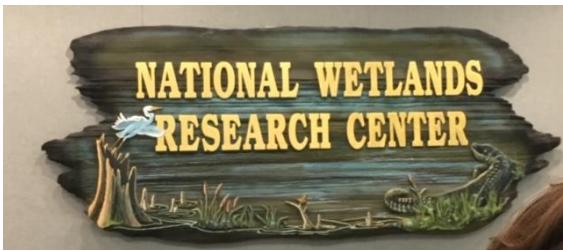
<https://www.learnaboutcritters.org/files/PRIMER-lres.pdf>



## Louisiana Exotic Animal Resource Network *Rescue Locally. Educate Globally.*

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

## Local News:

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## August 2, 2019 Field trip to National Wetlands Research Center by Barbara Morris

The purpose of the US Geological Survey's National Wetlands Research Center (NWRC) is to develop and disseminate scientific information needed for understanding the ecology and values of our Nation's wetlands and aquatic habitats and for managing and restoring these habitats and associated plant and animal communities.

The Deputy Director, Tom Doyle, gave us the tour. He presented information about the ongoing areas of research and how we can access the information. We also got a tour of the greenhouses, labs, and prairie area. It was very interesting. For online maps and other information visit <http://www.nwrc.usgs.gov>

We followed up with lunch and a visit to the home of Julie and Larry Amy. They live on the Vermillion Bayou and have done extensive landscaping with native plants. Thanks to Julie and Larry for sharing their beautiful home.



## Continuing Education Opportunities:

[Back](#)**Beginner Birding Course at Tuten Park****August 17, 2019****8:00 am – 12:00 pm**

The Gulf Coast Bird Club announces a free summertime Beginner Birding Workshop to be held at Tuten Park in Lake Charles. Southwest Louisiana is a national hotspot for birding. In this workshop, participants will explore the fascinating and fun hobby of Birding.

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

Contact **David Booth** at: 337-526-0837  
[david@boothenvironmental.com](mailto:david@boothenvironmental.com)

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**Earn Continuing Education credit. Complete eBird's free online course and learn how to use this popular citizen science bird reporting tool.**

**eBird Essentials Free online course**<https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/product/ebird-essentials/>

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This free course guides you through how to get the most out of your eBirding experiences and invites you to become a part of this worldwide project

## Volunteer Opportunities:

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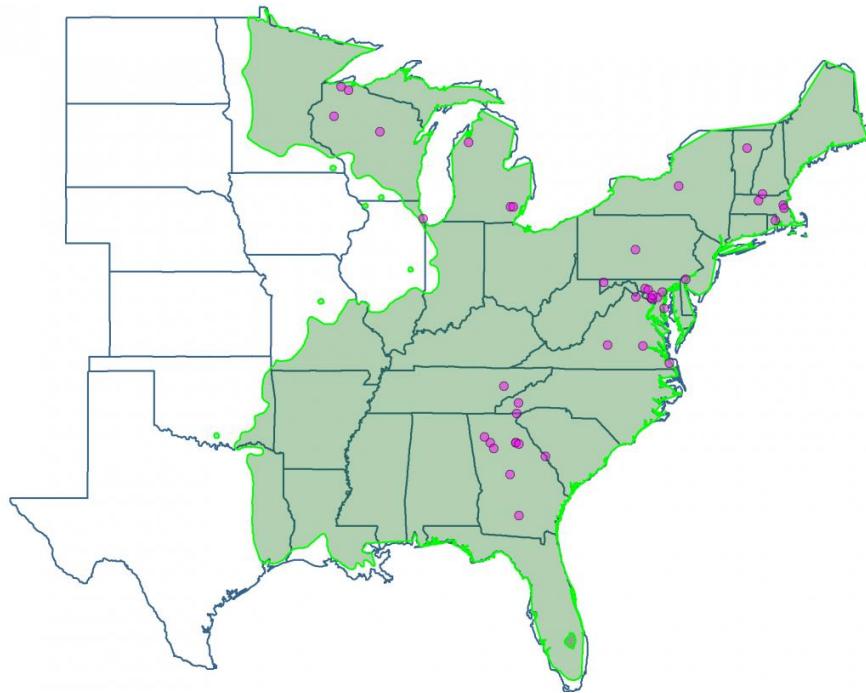
### TASpeR Traits Across Species' Ranges

**Steve Gougherty** is a PhD student at Boston University in the Department of Biology. Part of his research is a citizen science project that aims to characterize how leaf traits within species vary throughout their geographic distributions. His focus is mainly on differences in nutrient concentrations of green leaves in the summer and freshly fallen leaves in the autumn.

He is recruiting volunteer citizen scientists and thought that individuals involved with the Southwest Chapter of the Louisiana Master Naturalist Association would be interested in participating in this project. In total he is in need of at least 150 citizen scientists throughout the United States to collect red maple (*Acer rubrum*) leaves from a tree in their local areas, once when the leaves are green and again at leaf fall. Leaf samples will then be sent to Boston University for processing and analysis.

Currently he has about 50 citizen scientists signed up throughout the country, but is lacking participants from Louisiana (see attached map)! For more information and to sign up as a citizen scientist for this project, individuals are invited to visit the website <http://sites.bu.edu/tasper/>.

Please feel free to contact Steve Gougherty with any questions directly via email [gouger@bu.edu](mailto:gouger@bu.edu)



## Volunteer Opportunities:

[Back](#)**Louisiana Bat Colony Monitoring**

**Nikki Anderson**, a Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries biologist, is monitoring bat colonies across the state for White-nose Syndrome. If you know of any bat colonies, please contact her ([nanderson@wlf.la.gov](mailto:nanderson@wlf.la.gov)) so that she can monitor them for this awful disease.



**BE ON THE LOOKOUT**

Bat illustration by Roger Hall

**WHY DO BAT COLONIES MATTER?**

Bats are important for pest control, seed dispersal, and pollination world-wide. A disease discovered in New York in 2006 threatens their long term survival. White-nose syndrome, caused by a fungus, is responsible for more than 6 million bat deaths in United States since 2006. The fungus has been detected in Texas, Arkansas, and Mississippi, increasing the potential of spread into our state. To date, the fungus has not been detected in Louisiana. In Louisiana bats will roost in man-made structures due to a lack of caves. Knowing colony locations and sizes allows us to more effectively monitor the potential for disease spread into Louisiana.

**BAT COLONY MONITORING**

**NO SPECIAL SKILLS REQUIRED!**

A citizen-science initiative encouraging Louisiana residents to count bats at local roost sites

If you know the location of a roost or want to participate in bat monitoring, please contact

**Nikki Anderson**  
[nanderson@wlf.la.gov](mailto:nanderson@wlf.la.gov)  
225-765-5030

[WWW.WLF.LOUISIANA.GOV/WILDLIFE/BAT-COLONY-MONITORING](http://WWW.WLF.LOUISIANA.GOV/WILDLIFE/BAT-COLONY-MONITORING)



## Volunteer Opportunities:

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To date, the disease is responsible for more than 6 million bat deaths in United States. In some locations infection has resulted in 90 to 100 percent mortality in a hibernaculum. Drastic declines in bat populations threaten some species to regional extinction, such as the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), which was one of the most common species of bat in North America. The spread of WNS over the last decade can potentially lead to diminished ecosystem services as a result of declining population numbers. Bats aid in seed and pollen dispersal as well as insect control. Insectivorous bat species feed largely on arthropods and airborne insects. They can consume hundreds to thousands of insects per hour, many of which are known vectors of disease to humans and other mammals. Additionally, they help control agricultural crop pests and aid in ecosystem stability.

Louisiana is on the geographical leading edge of *Pd* disease spread. *Pd* was first detected in Arkansas and Mississippi in 2013-2014 and Texas in 2016-2017. Since those first detections, *Pd* has continued to spread closer to Louisiana borders, increasing the potential for spread into the state.

*E. fuscus*, *M. austroriparius*, *M. septentrionalis* and *P. subflavus* have been confirmed with diagnostic symptoms of WNS in other locations. *Pd* has been detected but without diagnostic sign of WNS in *C. rafinesquii*, *L. borealis*, *L. noctivagans* and *T. brasiliensis*.

In Louisiana bats typically roost in culverts and man-made structures due to a lack of available cave hibernacula. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is working to monitor known bat hibernaculum and roost locations. To date *Pd* and WNS have not been detected in Louisiana. For additional information, visit [www.whitenosesyndrome.org](http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org). To see current WNS and *Pd* detection locations, visit [www.whitenosesyndrome.org/where-is-wns](http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/where-is-wns).

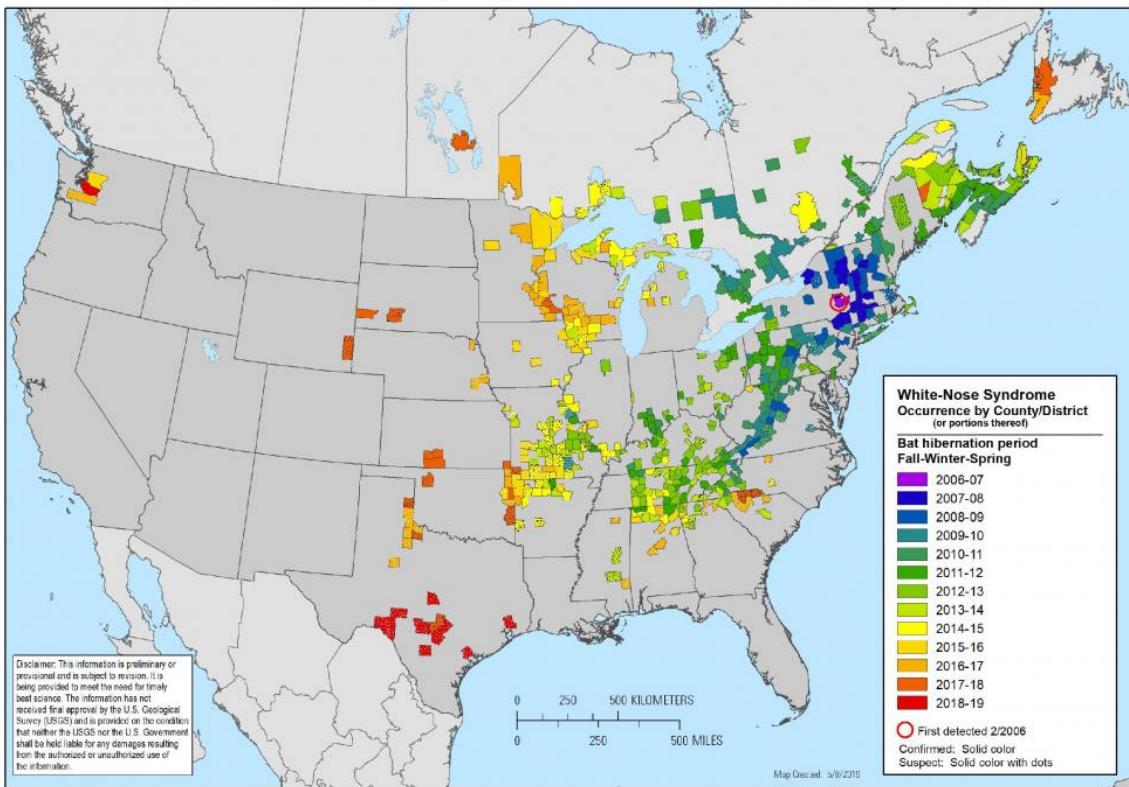
## BAT SPECIES IN LOUISIANA

- Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat (*Corynorhinus rafinesquii*)
- Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)
- Eastern Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*)
- Southeastern Myotis Bat (*Myotis austroriparius*)
- Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)
- Tricolored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*)
- Mexican Free-tailed Bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*)
- Gray Bat (*Myotis griseus*)
- Horay Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)
- Silver-haired Bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)
- Evening Bat (*Nycticeius humeralis*)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

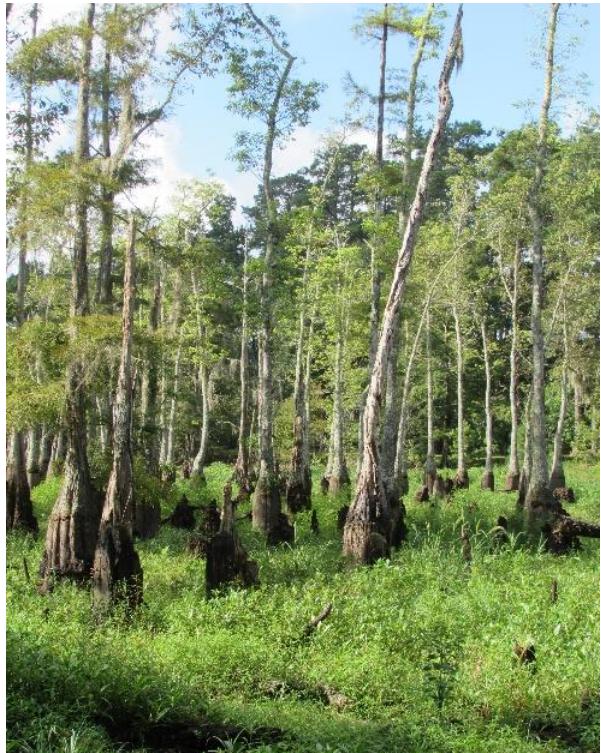
If you observe bats exhibiting signs of *Pd* or WNS please report it to Nikki Anderson (NAnderson@wlf.la.gov) or Dr. Jim LaCour (JLaCour@wlf.la.gov).

## SPREAD OF WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME



Citation: White-nose syndrome occurrence map - by year (2019). Data Last Updated: 5/8/2019. Available at: <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/static-page/wns-spread-maps>.

## Volunteer Opportunities:

[Back](#)**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED****Pickup the Park****Sam Houston Jones State Park****September 21, 2019****8:00 am – 11:00 am Pickup the Park**

In conjunction with Beach Sweep events, you are invited to participate in the Annual Sam Houston Jones State Park Cleanup.

A volunteer is needed to be the 'on the ground coordinator' the day of the event.

Meet at the Overlook Platform. Bring gloves, trash bags, boots, bug repellent, nets for getting trash in ponds, and drinks.

*For more information contact Barbara Morris:  
[tblsjm5@yahoo.com](mailto:tblsjm5@yahoo.com)*

**Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau**

The Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau is recruiting some additional tour guides to accompany visitors on the Creole Nature Trail. This is a wonderful opportunity for Master Naturalists to share your knowledge and love of Southwest Louisiana with visitors from around the world. The bureau provides the training and there is a small stipend for serving as guides. If interested, please contact Jamey Kadim, Group Services Coordinator for the Convention/Visitors Bureau at [jkadim@visitlakecharles.org](mailto:jkadim@visitlakecharles.org) or by telephone 337.436.9588 or 337.240.5780.



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 Casie Davis****Resh Cicada - *Megatibicen resh***

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.**

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

The screenshot shows the iNaturalist.org website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Observations', 'Species', 'Projects', 'Places', 'Guides', and 'People'. To the right of the navigation bar are two small icons: an envelope labeled '0' and a speech bubble labeled '0'. Below the navigation bar, a yellow header bar says 'Welcome to Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists'. On the left, there is a link '» Projects'. On the right, there are links 'Terms & Rules' and 'Leave this project'. The main content area features a photograph of several people walking through a sandy, open landscape under a blue sky with clouds. A red button in the bottom right corner of the photo area says 'ADD OBSERVATIONS'. In the bottom left corner of the photo area, there is a small logo for 'Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists' and the text 'Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists'.

## Naturalists Notes:

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**Cattails by Pam Langley**  
**2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists**

Cattails, which are sometimes called bulrushes or cat o' nine tails, are found on all continents except Antarctica. The genus name is *Typha* which is from the Greek word *typhē* meaning cattail. There are several different species of cattails, two of which are native to our area.

The southern cattail, *Typha domingensis*, is found throughout the southern U.S. and is reportedly found in 23 parishes of Louisiana. *Typha latifolia* or broadleaf cattail is also native to our area and is found in just about all parishes in the state; there are no reported occurrences in Beauregard, Avoyelles, St. Landry and Assumption parishes. Both of these species of *Typha* grow in marshy areas and withstand moderate salinity.

*Typha* are herbaceous, meaning non-woody, plants that grow from rhizomes. They reproduce both from rhizomes and from seed, but mostly from spreading rhizomes. The leaves are long, slender, and strap-like. Leaves of the southern cattail tend to be less than 1 inch in width, whereas the broadleaf cattails have leaves that are wider than an inch.

The bloom of a cattail is the long brown spike that we generally associate with cattails. That spike actually has two different parts. The slender part at the tip of the spike is where the male flowers and pollen are produced. The wider part below is where the female flowers and seeds are produced. This flower spike makes it easy to distinguish between the southern and broadleaf cattails. In the southern cattail, there is a space of bare stem between the male flowers and female flowers. In the broadleaf cattail the male flowers are adjacent to the female flowers.

In areas where the different species overlap, there has been cross pollination making the resulting plants difficult to identify.



*Typha domingensis*, Southern Cattail

All parts of cattails are edible. The rhizomes are high in starch content making them a good source of flour. The young shoots may be cut, cooked and eaten like asparagus. The bottom parts of the leaves may be eaten in a salad. Yellow pollen may be collected and added to batters and breads to add nutrition. Pollen may also be used as a thickener when cooking. Young unpollinated female flowers can be roasted or boiled and eaten like corn. Cattails are a source of nutrition in many parts of the world today. In addition to being a food source, cattails have historically been used in many other ways.



*Typha latifolia*, Broadleaf Cattail

Native Americans used the leaves to make mats and baskets. They also used the flower stem to make arrows and dipped flower spikes in fat to create torches. A paste made from the rhizomes was used to patch leaky canoes. Acadians used the leaves to cane chair seats and the seed fluff to stuff pillows and mattresses. During World War II, the downy seeds were used to fill life jackets when other materials were scarce.

Cattails also serve an important ecological function in our marshes. They help provide habitat for many of our aquatic wildlife. Waterfowl, waders, other species of birds, and mammals such as muskrats, otters, and others all benefit from

the habitat provided by cattails. Cattails also grow rapidly and produce many flower spikes, thus making them heavy users of nutrients from water and sediment. This helps in alleviating nutrient loading. We are familiar with nutrient loading as being the high concentrations of fertilizers and nutrients from runoff that promotes rapid and excessive algae growth. When the algae die, decomposition depletes the surrounding water of oxygen making it hard for fish and mollusks to survive creating what is known as a dead zone.

In summary, cattails are an important plant species that has supported humans in years past and continues to support us today. Not only do they provide food and building materials, but they provide a habitat for our marsh wildlife and help alleviate the dead zone.

#### References:

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services; Plant Database: <https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov>

USDA NRCS Plant Guide "Southern Cattail", by Michelle Stevens and Chris Hoag, May 2006.

USGS Plants of Louisiana: <https://warcapps.usgs.gov/PlantID/Species/Details/1195>

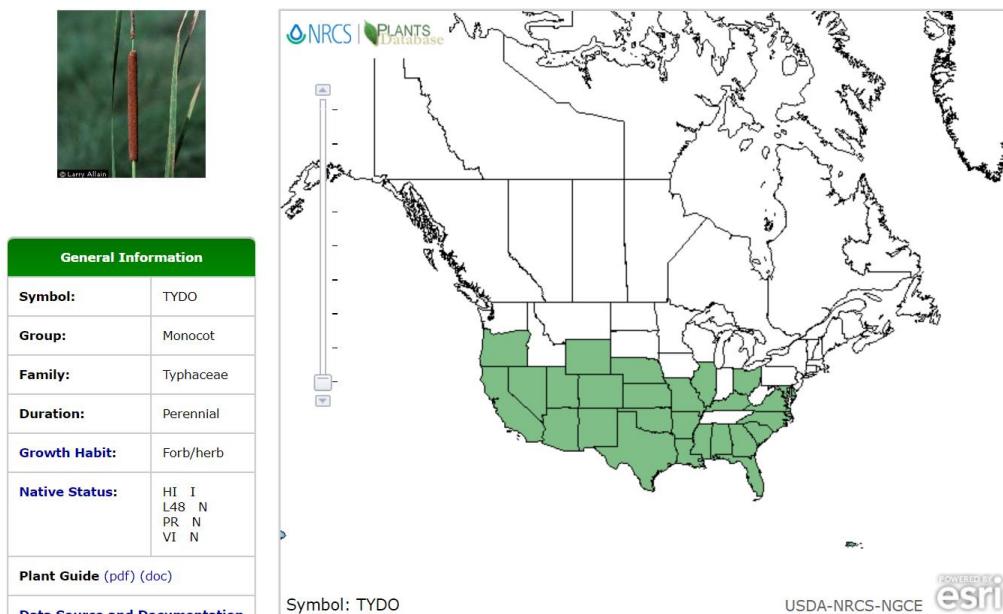
Edible Wild Food: <https://www.ediblewildfood.com/cattail.aspx>

USDA Fire Effects Information System:

<https://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/graminoid/typlat/all.html#INTRODUCTORY>

Net Industries, "Cattails": <https://science.jrank.org/pages/1282/Cattails.html>

Photo credit: Larry Allain, U.S. Geological Survey.



## Naturalists Notes:

[Back](#)**LET'S GO NATIVE by Carolyn Thibodeaux**  
**2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists**

There is an awakening of what native plants can do for our environment. The theme for the 2019 Louisiana Garden Club Federation, Inc. is "Plant Louisiana". The theme for the District VII Diggers & Weeders Garden Club for 2019 is "Let's Go Native".

Native plants can be less work in the home garden once you learn about the plant and identify the right environment you introduce them to. If the plant is in the right place, the plant will practically take care of itself. Some things to consider are soil, drainage, sunlight, and plants that grow in your community. You cannot plant moisture loving plants on a sandy slope or drought tolerant plants in a bog.

Native plants are hardy because they have adapted to the local conditions. Once established, native plants do not need pesticides, fertilizers or watering. Planting native plants is good for the environment and saves time and money. This is necessary as the value of water is being realized. Landscaping with native wildflowers and grasses helps return the area to a healthy ecosystem. Native plants can help prevent erosion by reducing water runoff and some flooding. Native landscapes do not require mowing and can remove pollutants from the air.

If your goal is to bring native wildlife around where you live, planting native plants will provide a favorable habitat for small animals and birds. Native wildlife need food, water, cover, and space to raise their offspring. Wildlife need food and habitat during all four seasons. Plant a variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers that bloom or bear fruit at different times of the year.

Always be aware of invasive exotic species such as the Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*) and Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), which can overtake native plants and be nearly impossible to eradicate.

Native plants provide multiple benefits to people and wildlife, while contributing greatly to healthy soil and water in urban and rural areas.

1. **Native plants help you use less fertilizers.** Fertilizer run off into waterways causes excessive growth in local waterways. This depletes oxygen in the water, harming aquatic life and interfering with recreation use.
2. **Native plants help you use less pesticides.** People and wildlife can come in contact with chemically treated lawns and be exposed to pesticides.
3. **Native plants use less water.** Deep roots of native plants increase the soils capacity to store water. Native plants can greatly reduce water runoff and some flooding.
4. **Native plants help keep the air around you cleaner.** Natural landscapes do not require mowing or much maintenance.

5. **Native plants provide shelter and food for wildlife and support pollinators.** Native plants attract a variety of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife by providing diverse habitats and food sources.
6. **Native plants promote biodiversity and stewardship of our natural heritage.** In the US, approximately 20 million acres of lawn are cultivated, covering more land than any single crop. Natural landscaping is an opportunity to reestablish diverse native plants here by inviting the birds and butterflies back home.
7. **Native plants have been shown to save money in many different ways.** One study by Applied Ecological Services of Brodhead, WI estimates that over a period of 20 years, the cumulative cost of maintaining a prairie or wetland cost \$3,000.00 per acre versus \$20,000.00 per acre for nonnative turf grasses.

Why plant native trees? Properly placed shade trees can reduce temperatures on the south and west walls of a house. In the winter, these trees can allow sunlight to heat the house. Trees help clean the air by removing particles such as dust and pollen. Trees and other landscape plants help slow surface water runoff and reduce soil erosion. Trees can help intercept and store rainwater, reducing the possibility of flooding. Shade from trees reduces overall temperatures so plants and turf require less water. Planting trees in the environment can help restore the natural cycle of plant growth, reproduction and decomposition. Planting native plants and trees contribute to community pride, instill a feeling of relaxation and tranquility and add natural beauty and character through a variety of forms, colors, and texture.

#### References:

1. The East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD): <https://emswcd.org/>
2. Dozier, H., Mills, B., and Kilpatrick, R.L. (2005). Native Tree Growing Guide for Louisiana. LSU AgCenter: [https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/lawn\\_garden/home\\_gardening/trees\\_shrubs/native-tree-growing-guide-for-louisiana](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/lawn_garden/home_gardening/trees_shrubs/native-tree-growing-guide-for-louisiana)
3. U.S. Forest Service: <https://www.fs.fed.us/>



## Naturalists Notes:

[Back](#)**Old Prairie Digger by Casie Davis  
2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists**

How do you enjoy your *Fallicambarus macneesei* prepared? Boiled? Steamed? Chances are, your momma isn't using this mudbug in her etouffee. Commonly referred to as Old Prairie Digger, this crustacean is a freshwater aquatic invertebrate found only in Texas and Louisiana and is not the typical crawfish farmed in rice fields along roadsides and eaten during family boils and events.

One of nineteen species of this genus (4), its life is spent predominantly in a capped-burrow sometimes extending 2 to 3 feet in the ground; although, some rogue *F. macneesei* have been found to reside in large tree roots. This burrowing lifestyle separates this genus from its crawfish cousins found in streams. *F. macneesei* generally grazes at night after a heavy rain and can be singled out among other crawfish by

its smaller sized abdomen and carapace as well as most possessing a pale middorsal stripe. *F. macneesei* is closer to brown in color versus red (5). It is closely related to its cousins, *Fallicambarus (C.) fodiens* (found as far north as Canada) and *F.(F.) dissitus* (3, 5).

One of four types of crawfish native to Louisiana, and one of three found in Texas (3), the *Fallicambarus macneesei* primarily reside within 50 miles of the Gulf coast in Texas and Louisiana (1), but have been located as far north as Dallas; as far west as the Brazoria Country, TX ; and as far east as Lafayette Parish, LA. Although not endangered, there is growing concern for this crawfish on the global list of threatened species. In general, species with such a small habitat range face a higher risk of endangerment, and therefore, are generally considered a "vulnerable species". In 2015, a report issued by the SWLA Economic Development Alliance and Louisiana Economic Development (LED) listed the crustacean as a "rare animal" having found only 6 communities of the species in Calcasieu Parish. *F. macneesei* are primarily found in ditches with sandy-clay soils (2), the oil and gas industry as well as urbanization and agricultural chemical runoff threaten the natural habitat of this Louisiana native (1,2). The introduction of seeded crawfish in the aforementioned rice ponds also destroy the habitat of the *F. macneesei* and contribute to wetland depletion (3). A study has not yet been conducted on whether these seeded crawfish are destroying the *F. macneesei* through competition and conflict. As urbanization increases in southwest Louisiana, we sadly may see a further decline in this native species. Although we visited many areas of this crawfish's habitat over the past six months, we did not see any *Fallicambarus macneesei*.

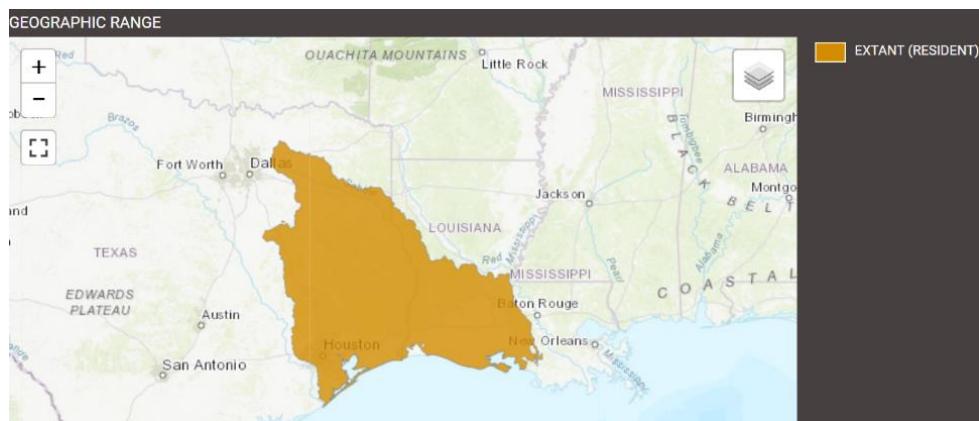
Photo Credit: iNaturalist photo

*Fallicambarus macneesei*. iNaturalist's citizen scientist, Melissa Casarez, posted this research grade picture in July 2014 in Anahuac, Texas. The site also indicates the majority of sightings take place between June and October.



#### References:

1. NatureServe. (2019). *Fallicambarus macneesei*. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Retrieved from: [http://explorer.natureserve.org/servlet/NatureServe?searchSpeciesUid=ELEMENT\\_GLOBAL.2.113327](http://explorer.natureserve.org/servlet/NatureServe?searchSpeciesUid=ELEMENT_GLOBAL.2.113327)
2. Crandall, K.A., and Johnson, D. (2010). *Fallicambarus macneesei*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2010: e.T153889A4559162. Retrieved from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2010-3.RLTS.T153889A4559162.en>
3. Guiasu, R.C. (2007). Conservation and Diversity of the Crayfishes of the Genus *Fallicambarus* Hobbs, 1969 (Decapoda, Cambaridae), with an Emphasis on the Status of *Fallicambarus fodiens* (Cottle, 1863) in Canada. *Crustaceana* 80(2): 207–223. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20107797>
4. Ainscough, B.J., Breinholt, J.W., Robison, H.W., and Crandall, K.A. (2013). Molecular phylogenetics of the burrowing crayfish genus *Fallicambarus* (Decapoda: Cambaridae). *Zoologica Scripta* 42(3): 306-316.
5. Walls, J.G. (2009). *Crawfishes of Louisiana*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.



## Upcoming Events:

[Back](#)

### Upcoming Education Programs at Tuten Park 3801 Nelson Road, Lake Charles

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

**Aug 23-25, 2019 Annual Lily Orchid Days at Allen Acres, in Cravens, Louisiana; 5070 Hwy 399; Pitkin, LA 70656, 337-328-2252, [native@camtel.net](mailto:native@camtel.net)**

**September 7, 2019 Cajun Prairie Society Meeting, Eunice, <https://www.cajunprairie.org/>**

**September 14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 Gulf Coast Bird Observatory Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza 299 Hwy 332 Lake Jackson, Texas [www.gcbo.org](http://www.gcbo.org)**

**September 21, 2019 Tentative Beach Sweep cleanup at Sam Houston Park contact Barbara Morris [tblsjm5@yahoo.com](mailto:tblsjm5@yahoo.com)**

**September 21, 2019 Haynesville Butterfly Festival, <http://haynesvillela.org/attractions.html>**

**September 21, 2019 New Orleans Botanical Garden, New Orleans, Louisiana – Collecting Seed from Louisiana Native Plants by Marc Pastorek <https://marcpastorek.com/2018/11/10/wild-garden-talks-by-marc-pastorek-2019/>**

**September 19-22, 2019 Rockport-Fulton Hummingbird Celebration  
<http://www.rockport-fulton.org/>**

**Sept 27-29, 2019 Butterfly Blast, Allen Acres, in Cravens, Louisiana; 5070 Hwy 399; Pitkin, LA 70656, 337-328-2252, [native@camtel.net](mailto:native@camtel.net)**

**October 2, 2019 SLAMN meeting at Tuten Park 6:00**

**October 5, 2019 Field trip to Pintail Loop contact Barbara Morris [tblsjm5@yahoo.com](mailto:tblsjm5@yahoo.com)**

**October 14, 2019 International Plant Propagators Society Southern Region Conference – Baton Rouge, Louisiana – Botanical Landscapes by way of Seed by Marc Pastorek <https://marcpastorek.com/2018/11/10/wild-garden-talks-by-marc-pastorek-2019/>**

**October 18-19, 2019 Southern Garden Symposium 31<sup>st</sup> year St. Francisville, Louisiana  
<http://www.southerngardensymposium.org/>**

**October 19-20, 2019 Ding Darling Days Birding and Eco-Festival Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island Florida  
<https://www.dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/ding-darling-days>**

**October 17-20, 2019 Florida Birding and Nature Festival Tampa Hillsborough Community College  
<http://www.floridabirdingandnaturefestival.org/>**

**October 30 – November 3, 2019 Yellow Rail and Rice Festival Hampton Inn & Suites Jennings, Louisiana  
<https://www.yellowrailsandrice.com/>**

**November 6, 2019, 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival  
Harlingen MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM COMPLEX 1204 FAIR PARK BLVD. • HARLINGEN, TEXAS <https://www.rgvbf.org/>**

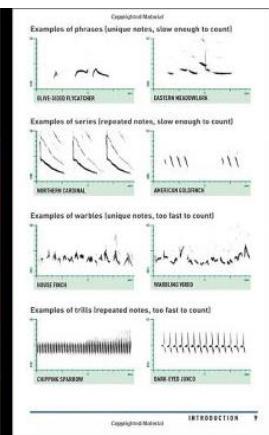
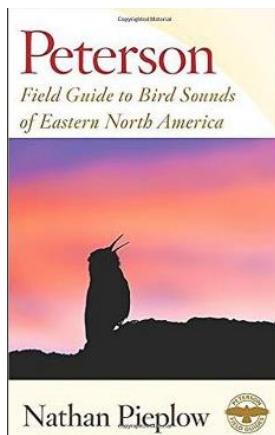
**Save the date for LMNA Rendezvous 2020!**

**April 17 - 19, 2020 at Camp Hardtner, Pollock, Louisiana. We have ordered great weather for exploring the Kisatchie National Forest! New this year: The camp staff will be providing our meals for us.**

## Resources for the Naturalists:

[Back](#)

## Books:

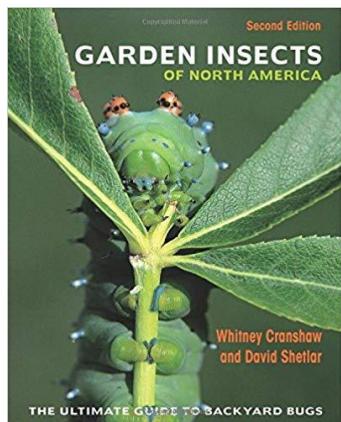


**Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Eastern North America  
by Nathan Pieplow, 2017**

<https://www.amazon.com/Peterson-Sounds-Eastern-America-Guides/dp/0547905580>

**The first comprehensive guide to the sounds of eastern North American birds, featuring an innovative visual index that allows readers to quickly look up unfamiliar sounds in the field.**

At the core of this guide is the spectrogram, a visual graph of sound. With a brief introduction to five key aspects—speed, repetition, pauses, pitch pattern, and tone quality—readers can learn to visualize sounds, without any musical training or auditory memorization. Picturing sounds makes it possible to search this book visually for a bird song heard in the field.

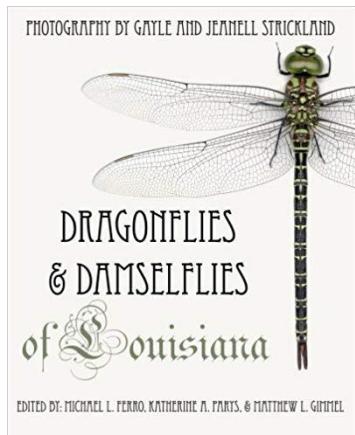


**Garden Insects of North America: The Ultimate Guide to Backyard Bugs**

**By Whitney Cranshaw, David Shetlar**

[https://www.amazon.com/Garden-Insects-North-America-Ultimate-dp-0691167443/dp/0691167443/ref=mt\\_paperback?\\_encoding=UTF8&me=&qid=](https://www.amazon.com/Garden-Insects-North-America-Ultimate-dp-0691167443/dp/0691167443/ref=mt_paperback?_encoding=UTF8&me=&qid=)

This second edition of *Garden Insects of North America* solidifies its place as the most comprehensive guide to the common insects, mites, and other “bugs” found in the backyards and gardens of the United States and Canada. Featuring 3,300 full-color photos and concise, detailed text, this fully revised book covers the hundreds of species of insects and mites associated with fruits and vegetables, shade trees and shrubs, flowers and ornamental plants, and turfgrass—from aphids and bumble bees to leafhoppers and mealybugs to woollybears and yellowjacket wasps—and much more. This new edition also provides a greatly expanded treatment of common pollinators and flower visitors, the natural enemies of garden pests, and the earthworms, insects, and other arthropods that help with decomposing plant matter in the garden.



**Dragon flies and Damselflies of Louisiana by Michael L Ferro, Katherine A Parys, Matthew L Gimmel, Gale Strickland Photographer, Jeanell Strickland Photographer**

[https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Dragonflies+and+Damselflies+of+Louisiana&i=stripbooks&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Dragonflies+and+Damselflies+of+Louisiana&i=stripbooks&ref=nb_sb_noss)

Celebrate the beauty and diversity of nature with this field guide to Louisiana’s dragonflies and damselflies. This level of detail can’t be found in any other guide currently available; it provides both top and side high resolution scanned images of 118 species of dragonflies and damselflies known from the state of Louisiana and adjoining states. All species are represented by life-sized images, and smaller species are shown as both life-sized and enlarged images.

## Resources for the Naturalists:

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## SpectrumView iPhone

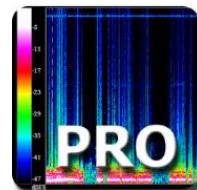
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/spectrumview/id472662922>



Visualise, in real time, the frequencies that you can hear around you and even those you cannot. SpectrumView provides a high-quality, real-time spectrogram and spectrum analyser display, with a configurable sample rate and frequency resolution for the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch. This is a useful tool to record bird songs and other nature sounds.

## SpectralPro Analyzer Android Phone

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=radonsoft.net.spectralviewpro&hl=en\\_US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=radonsoft.net.spectralviewpro&hl=en_US)

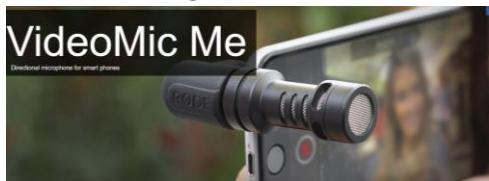


Pro version of the spectral audio analyser. Selectable bandwidth up to 24 kHz, flexible amplitude and frequency mapping through touch and scroll, different update speeds and colour mappings. Accurate display of high-pitch or even ultrasonic tones, environmental noise or rumble. Accurate real-time measurement feature allows detection and analysis of live audio. Spectrograms can be saved as png or jpg files to sd-card. This is a useful tool to record bird songs and other nature sounds.

## VideoMic Me

<http://www.rode.com/microphones/videomicme>

The VideoMic Me is a compact and lightweight, high-quality directional microphone that connects directly to the iPhone TRRS microphone/headphone socket. Its flexible mounting bracket accommodates a wide range of smartphones and allows the microphone to be fitted for primary camera or front camera. This is a useful tool to record bird songs and other nature sounds.

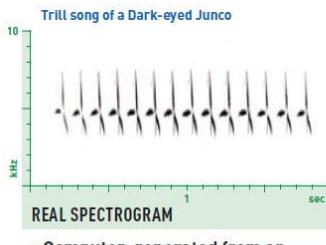


## Audubon - Start Using Spectrograms to 'Read' Bird Songs and Calls

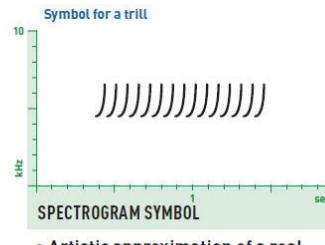
<https://www.audubon.org/news/start-using-spectrograms-read-bird-songs-and-calls>

## Earbirding Recording, Identifying and Interpreting Bird Sounds

<http://earbirding.com/blog/archives/category/spectrograms>



- Computer-generated from an audio recording
- Shows fine details, even some not audible to the human ear
- Used in the species accounts



- Artistic approximation of a real spectrogram
- Emphasizes basic patterns rather than details
- Used in the visual index

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



**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.