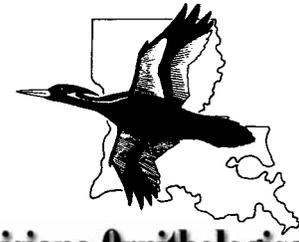


LOS

NEWS



www.losbird.org

NEWSLETTER OF THE

Louisiana Ornithological Society

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Submission Deadline
Fall LOS News is
September 1, 2009

Journal of Louisiana Ornithology
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2009 LOS SPRING MEETING

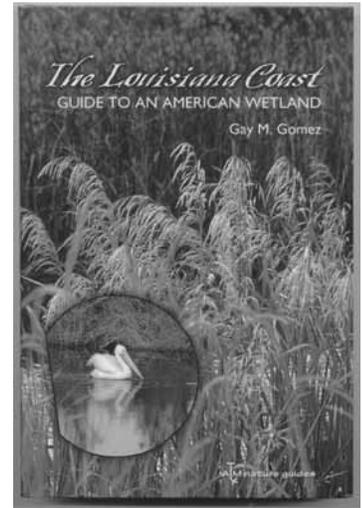
Friday, Saturday, April 17-18
Grand Isle Community Center

Spring in Louisiana, birds migrating, coastal beaches, coastal woodlands; what else could we possibly ask for? How about the fact that LOS will hold its spring meeting in conjunction with the Grand Isle Migratory Bird Festival! Check out the festival at <http://www.grandisle.btnep.org> which runs from April 16-19. Make your room reservations early and plan to see plenty of birds and pass a good time!

Friday, April 17

6:00 p.m. Registration will be at the Grand Isle Community Center. Snacks will be provided.

7:00 p.m. Meeting and Evening Program "The Albatross: International Conservation Challenge" presented by Robert Doughty. Robin teaches at the University of Texas in Austin. He has written a number of books on birds and bird conservation. His most recent interest is the global dimensions of seabird conservation through a study of one of the most endangered yet culturally interesting groups - the albatrosses. As birds of the ocean commons, albatrosses are biologically and behaviorally maladjusted to cope with industrial fishers that have expanded into the southern oceans, home for most of the twenty or so recognized species. Robin describes how birds become the incidental victims of fishing practices and discusses efforts to conserve and rehabilitate populations threatened by deep-water fleets that operate outside the jurisdiction of national sovereignty and conventional oversight.



Saturday, April 18

7:30 a.m. Field trip led by Ed Wallace, meet in the Sureway Grocery parking lot

6:00 p.m. Registration in the Grand Isle Community Center

6:30 p.m. Dinner prepared by the ladies of Grand Isle, \$20.

7:30 p.m. Meeting and Evening Program "The Louisiana Coast: Worth Seeing, Worth Saving, Worth Celebrating" by Gay Gomez. Gay, a native New Orleanian, currently serves as Associate Professor of Geography at McNeese State University in Lake Charles. A longtime birder and naturalist, she has served on the board of directors for the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and the Louisiana Ornithological Society and on the advisory board for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries White Lake Wetland Conservation Area. She will take us on a geographical journey through the Deltaic Plain and Chenier Plain coastal regions, featuring highlights from Gay's recently published book, *The Louisiana Coast: Guide to an American Wetland*. We will explore the two regions formation, similarities and differences, physical and cultural value, and efforts to stem the tide of coastal land loss. Gay will have her book available for purchase.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Spring Meeting Accommodations:

Grand Isle Tourist Commission 985-787-2997
<http://www.grand-isle.com/lodging.htm>

Lafourche Parish Tourist Commission 877-537-5800
<http://www.visitlafourche.com/accomodations.php>

**2009 LOS New Members
as of March 2009**

Mike Constant, Thibodaux
 Margaret Correro New Orleans
 Charlotte Fanz, Covington
 Mary & Dick Glenn, Abita Springs
 Celeste Louque, Paulina
 Pattie McGinnis, Mandeville
 Lynda Miller, The Woodlands, TX
 Leland & Elva Osten Lincoln NE
 Glenn Ousset, Chalmette
 Skip & Roxanne Piqué, Mandeville
 Patricia Reynolds, New Orleans
 Amy Shutt, Baton Rouge
 Chantel Villeneuve, Lafayette
 Stefan Woltmann, Abita Spring

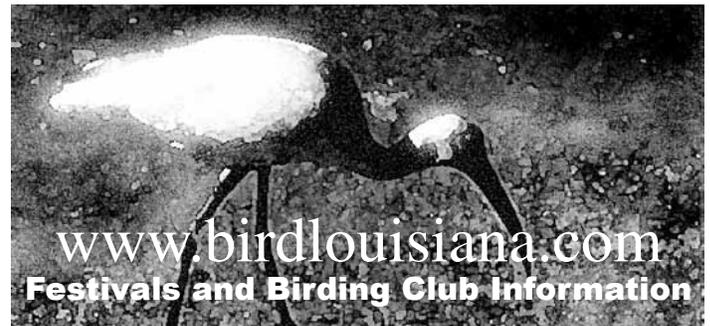
Donation in Memory of Lee Ora Daniels,
 long-time LOS member
 who died last May in Texas
 By Linda Norrell

**LOS Board Supports
Coastal Programs**

Recently the LOS board in conjunction with others wrote 2 letters in support of coastal restoration programs. Brief summaries are given below.

We wrote Chairman Dicks and Ranking Member Simpson of the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee and encouraged them to “include \$20 million for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Coastal Program in the Fiscal Year 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. This funding will help to create thousands of new jobs and stimulate local economies while enhancing public health, benefiting fish and wildlife, and improving coastal ecosystems”.

We also told Secretary Salazar of the Department of the Interior that we “are thrilled that Congress provided \$280 million for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) purposes, including habitat restoration, within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. As you begin to identify the recipients of these funds, we urge you to provide the highest possible funding for the USFWS Coastal Program. The habitat restoration projects undertaken by the Coastal Program would create thousands of new jobs in local communities, while enhancing public health, benefiting fish and wildlife, and improving coastal ecosystems.”



www.birdlouisiana.com
Festivals and Birding Club Information

Make a note ...

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Fall meeting October 23-24, 2009 TBA

Winter meeting January 29-31, 2010 Baton Rouge

DEADLINE

We welcome submission from readers and others.
 Submission deadline date for Fall LOS News is September 1, 2009

FIVE FIRST STATE RECORDS IN 2008 FROM LABIRD – Louisiana’s Listserver for Birders

What a year! Five first state records and one pending; First, a spectacularly cooperative and long-staying Gray Flycatcher found by Terry Davis and Jeff Trahan on Jan. 24th. I personally would have expected Dusky Flycatcher to be added to the state list before the Gray.

Then Dan Lane single-handedly managed to locate, identify, and get diagnostic video and digiscoped photos of an itinerant and fast-retreating (to Texas) Chihuahuan Raven on April 12. There is a previous sight record of Chihuahuan Raven, but no hard evidence was obtained.

Terry Davis then did the near impossible, coming up with another first state record just 4 months later, when he miraculously picked out a Cassin’s Sparrow song from a moving vehicle. Again, there are other western/Mexican sparrows I would have expected to be recorded here before Cassin’s. But for Dan’s interloping raven, Terry would have had back-to-back first state records. Either Remsen or Cardiff may have had back to back first state records—Anna’s Hummingbird and Blue Bunting in the 80’s, and perhaps others have as well. But the only time it happened that I remember off hand was in 1981-82 when a much younger me [David Muth] found the state’s first Great Black-backed Gull and the first Lesser Black-backed Gull in a three-month period. Exciting at the time, but given how common they’ve become and how black-backed gulls do stand out in a crowd, not quite the panache of Gray Flycatcher and Cassin’s Sparrow.

Then, out of the blue, Paul Conover and Mac Myers found a Crowned Slaty-Flycatcher in Cameron June 3rd, a first U.S. record. Incredibly, this is only the second record for North America—the first was found at Cerro Jefe in Panama on Dec. 1, 2007, just six months before the Louisiana record. This is the third first U.S. record for Louisiana in modern times—Blue Bunting (Cardiff and Remsen) and Kelp Gull (Purrington and O’Meallie) being the others. Lesser Sand Plover--Mongolian Plover—was close; I believe the first Louisiana record may have been the first for the lower 48. The Crowned

Slaty-Flycatcher has to rank as one of the most incredible finds ever in Louisiana, perhaps the most. It is right up there on a national level with the White-crested Elaenia found in south Texas in February 2008.

Four additions to the Louisiana list by June 3, but despite the fact that no one looks for first state records in summer, it was not over. On July 31, Michael Seymour and Josh Sylvest found a Jabiru near South Farm. When I started birding, the idea of such a record would have seemed beyond the pale. But steady increases in the tiny population in Belize and Mexico over the last 30 years, the up-tick in Texas records, and recent outlier records for Oklahoma and (especially) Mississippi, indicated it was not completely out of the question. And, of course, Jabirus are big, obvious birds. It is therefore not too surprising that four days before the Sylvest/Seymour sighting a non-birder, Bill Stelly, photographed a mystery giant in his cane fields near Charenton, presumably the same bird.

A sixth first state record is pending. Charlie Lyon spotted and got one distant and somewhat blurry photo of a Common Black-headed Gull on Cross Lake in Caddo Parish. This is surely the most overdue bird for Louisiana—I doubt any other state does not have a record, and it has been recorded numerous times on man-made lakes in e. Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi. Unfortunately, Charlie, working from a boat, was only able to squeeze off the one shot of the bird sitting on the water behind other gulls. Because the world has a few other black-headed gulls that might not be ruled out by the photo, it remains to be seen what the LBRC will do.

But five first state records in one year ain’t bad. Add to that two-second state records in 2008—the cooperative Fork-tailed Flycatcher in Plaquemines and the Red-footed Booby at Cameron, the first in 68 years, and it adds up to an unprecedented year.

David Muth, New Orleans, Check out the 2008 LRBC report at <http://losbird.org/lbrc/lbrc.htm>

The Next Ten Species for Louisiana

Paul Conover, 501 Adrienne Street, Lafayette, LA 70506

I recently asked the readers of LABIRD to revisit an old game and update or submit their predictions for the next ten species that will be added to the state list. Twelve birders took the challenge and sent their lists in. I compiled the lists and sorted the picks first by frequency, then by alphabetical order.

There were some obvious favorites, and some different selection strategies were evident among participants. The slowdown in pelagic trips probably limited the deepwater picks this time around, and recent trends from outside the state seem to have played a role. Some birders seemed to go for higher probabilities, others for unbroken ground. Whatever the case, I hope the list will open some eyes and field guides.

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BIRD SPECIES	EJR	SWC	DB	NLN	EIJ	MJM	JS	PEC	CS	PW	BMM	DPM	TOTAL
Pacific Loon	1	1	1	1		1	1		1		1		7
Snow Bunting	1	1	1			1							4
Green-breasted Mango	1		1	1					1				4
Common Redpoll	1		1		1								3
Piratic Flycatcher		1	1		1								3
Elegant Tern		1				1	1						3
Prairie Falcon			1		1		1		1				4
Northern Shrike	1				1								2
Garganey		1					1				1		2
Costa's Hummingbird		1		1									2
Great Cormorant			1			1							2
White-eared Hummingbird				1		1					1		2
Rufous-crowned Sparrow				1	1								2
Bohemian Waxwing					1	1							2
Black Phoebe						1	1						2
Violet Green Swallow						1	1		1				3
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	1												1
Slaty-backed Gull	1												1
Lewis' Woodpecker	1												1
Red-necked Stint	1												1
Long-billed Murrelet	1												1
Tufted Duck		1											1
Black-tailed Gull		1											1
Black-headed Gull		1											1
Roseate Tern		1							1				1
Dusky Flycatcher			1										1
Pyrrhuloxia			1										1
Black Noddy			1										1
Northern Jacana				1									1
Spotted Redshank				1									1
Southern Lapwing				1									1
Northern Lapwing				1									1
Melodious Blackbird				1									1
Barrow's Goldeneye					1								1
Sooty Shearwater					1								1
Short-tailed Hawk					1								1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper						1			1		1		1
White-collared Swift						1							1
Green Kingfisher							1						1
Long-billed Murrelet							1				1		1
Greater Pewee							1						1

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

BIRD SPECIES (Cont.)	EJR	SWC	DB	NLN	EIJ	MJM	JS	PEC	CS	PW	BMM	DPM	TOTAL
Large Elaenia							1						1
Yellow-billed Loon					1								1
Ross's Gull								1					1
Dusky-capped Flycatcher								1					1
Ruddy Ground Dove								1					1
White-crowned Pigeon								1					1
Common Poorwill								1					1
White-throated Swift									1				0
Lucifer Hummingbird								1					1
Phainopepla								1					1
Black-capped Petrel								1					1
Clay-colored Thrush								1					1
Mountain Plover									1				
Yucatan Vireo									1				
Black-throated Sparrow									1		1		
Pacific Golden-Plover											1		
Mew Gull											1		
Band-tailed Gull											1		
Swainson's Flycatcher											1		
Northern Jacana				1									1
Northern Lapwing				1									1
Pacific Golden-Plover											1		1
Phainopepla												1	1
Pyrrhuloxia			1										1
Red-necked Stint	1												1
Ross's Gull								1					1
Short-tailed Hawk					1								1
Sooty Shearwater					1								1
Southern Lapwing				1									1
Spotted Redshank				1									1
Streak-backed Oriole								1					1
Surfbird												1	1
Swainson's Flycatcher											1		1
White-collared Swift						1							1
White-tailed Tropicbird												1	1
White-throated Swift									1				1
White-tipped Dove								1					1
White-winged Crossbill										1			1
Yellow-billed Loon					1								1
Yucatan Vireo									1				1

E. J. Raynor (EJR) • Steve Cardiff (SWC) • Devin Bosler (DB) • Nancy Newfield (NLN) • Erik Johnson (EIJ)
Mike Musumeche (MJM) • Jacob Saucier (JS) • Paul Conover (PC) • Curt Sorrells (CS)
Phillip Wallace (PW) • B. Mac Myers (BMM) • David Muth (DPM)

Trumpeter Swans on our Horizon?

Paul Conover, 501 Adrienne Street, Lafayette, LA 70506

In the modern era, swans have been rare visitors to Louisiana, with all positively identified birds having been confirmed as Tundra Swans. Due to the small population size of Trumpeter Swan as well as the fact that these birds rarely wandered far from their nearest nesting locations in Montana and Wyoming, the chance of a wild Trumpeter Swan reaching Louisiana on its own was remote. The last documented record of a Trumpeter Swan in our state dates back almost a century.

However, events have taken place within the past several decades that have made the possibility of Trumpeters once again reaching Louisiana very real. Reintroduction programs designed to restore the species to some of its historic range have greatly increased the overall number of these birds and have narrowed the distance between Louisiana and the nearest regularly occurring Trumpeter Swans.

The 2005 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Trumpeter Swan survey estimated the Interior Trumpeter Swan population at over 4,500 birds. These Interior birds are the results of reintroductions in South Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Ontario. Although many of these swans are non-migratory, reports of Trumpeters south of their Midwest breeding grounds have begun to accumulate in states neighboring Louisiana over the past twenty years.

The largest and most regular group of Trumpeters in our area spends the winter in Magness Lake, Arkansas, a little over 150 miles north of Louisiana. Beginning in 1991, a small group of swans wintered at Magness. In subsequent winters, the number of wintering swans that migrated to Magness Lake increased to over 150 birds, with birds from the Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin flocks known to have been represented.

Another possible Arkansas source of Trumpeters has emerged, as well. Arkansas has recently partnered with Iowa to attempt to stimulate migratory behavior in swans of the Iowa flock. In January 2008, 18 young birds from Iowa were transported to Holla Bend, Arkansas in hopes that they would return to Iowa the following spring, setting in motion a migratory cycle. These birds instead wandered widely within Arkansas with known movements of over 100 miles. Arkansas reportedly has plans to release a total of 100 Iowa Trumpeters over several years.

Elsewhere, the first modern record of Trumpeter Swan for Tennessee was a banded bird found dead in 2001. This bird had been released in Iowa. There have since been a handful of sightings including a record of a wild-born bird from Wisconsin where the species is currently considered established. Thus, this Tennessee record involves a bird that is ostensibly "countable."

Mississippi experienced its first modern Trumpeter Swan record in 1990. There have been several subsequent records. Bolivar County, site of the first report, is roughly 50 miles from northeastern Louisiana.

The first known Texas record of Trumpeter Swans that definitely originated from a reintroduced population was a 1989 record of seven neck-banded Minnesota birds in the Dallas area. There are now seven documented modern records, including a 2002 record from Brazoria NWR on the Gulf Coast south of Houston.

Additionally, there is a winter 2009 report from Dublin, Texas that may pertain to unbanded adult Trumpeters.

The presence of unbanded birds presents another aspect of this story. The origins of many of the earlier records of reintroduced swans were easy to track due to the presence of auxiliary markers such as neck bands. Because many of the reintroduced flocks are now considered established, marking of swans is no longer as widespread as before. Many of the recent Trumpeters seen south of the breeding grounds have lacked any markers, and as such, their origins are subject to debate.

Because of the probability of Trumpeter Swans reaching Louisiana, range and probability no longer make Tundra Swan the fallback ID. With the building number of records in neighboring states, Trumpeter Swans might well be the more expected swan in our state. If Trumpeters haven't yet reached Louisiana—and it seems unlikely that they haven't—they should soon. As such, it seems reasonable that any reported swan needs to be documented with photographs for verification.

[I thank Dean Edwards, Jeff Wilson, and Mark Lockwood for providing valuable information for this article.]

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337-257-3096

Paul Conover is a lifelong birder and current member of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee. He is a former biologist who now teaches elementary school in Lafayette Parish. [ed.]

LOS Ted Parker Youth Scholarship Fund

In 1994, Roger Breedlove, then President of LOS, announced the establishment of a Youth Scholarship Fund. Several generous donations were received to set up the fund. Students, age 11-17 who wished to attend the Victor Emanuel Nature Tours Camp Chiricahua could apply for scholarships to help fund the trip. Since its inception, Nancy Newfield has been the overseer of the project and has mentored many young birders during the intervening years.

The first recipients of the scholarships were James Beck and Eric Guidry. James is now working at the Acadiana Nature Station, in Lafayette, and is still a birder although he is now leaning more toward "bugs."

As a memorial to one of LSU's outstanding birders, the name was changed to the Ted Parker Youth Scholarship Fund.

If you know of any young birders who are interested in attending Camp Chiricahua or other camps, please contact Nancy Newfield at nancy@casacolibri.net

The American Birding Association also has scholarships available to young birds. <http://www.americanbirding.org/yb/camps.html>

BOOK REVIEW

BIRDWATCHER

The Life of Roger Tory Peterson

Birdwatcher, *The Life of Roger Tory Peterson*, written by Elizabeth J. Rosenthal (www.petersonbird.com) is the most complete biography I have ever read. I don't imagine there is much known about Peterson that is not included in this work. His life and interests were much broader than I had imagined.

This is a book about one of the best-known birders of all time, but ironically it is not a book about bird identification. You can go to Peterson's books and those of others for that information. This is a book about a man who almost single-handedly is responsible for the beginning of the popularity of bird watching—in large part due to his revolutionary field guides. Now, there are many other bird identification guides, as well as various Internet and other electronic resources. But Peterson's contributions are much broader and are well documented in Ms. Rosenthal's book. Peterson also greatly influenced the development of interest in the environment that has now developed into the "green" movement.

Born in 1908, Peterson was known to have always been interested in birds. Many of his acquaintances have also been very influential in the development of bird interest and conservation. He became involved with the Audubon Society at an early age and greatly influenced its development. He worked with throughout his life.

Peterson's training in art allowed him to illustrate his publications, but his knowledge of birds and his insight was what made the development of his revolutionary system for bird identification. His original field guide, published, in 1934, led to a whole series of Peterson guides, many of which he illustrated himself and was otherwise involved. Peterson was a world traveler and influenced ornithology and conservation throughout the world. Many of his acquaintances, American and foreign, were famous themselves.

Peterson was interested in all of nature, but he became especially interested in penguins and referred to himself as the "King Penguin".

Peterson remained active until his death in 1996. Some information about his life can be found by googling his name on the Internet, but to really understand Peterson, the man, and his significance, it would be well to read *Birdwatcher*. The book is well written, well documented, and unbelievably detailed.

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LOS Membership Renewal Time

Membership renewals are due January 2009 for the coming year.

Please check your label. If it says Dec 2007 - you owe for both 2008 and 2009 (this will be your last newsletter if you do not renew this month). If it says Dec 2008, your 2009 membership is due.

Thank you for renewing your LOS membership.

LOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Send to: Judith L. O'Neale, LOS Treasurer

504 Whitebark Drive, Lafayette, LA 70508-6362

Louisiana Ornithological Society

www.losbird.org



Judith O'Neale
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504 Whitebark
Lafayette, LA 70508

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Dues are payable in January of each year; Please check your mailing label.

- PRE-REGISTRATION FORM -
LOS 2009 SPRING MEETING – GRAND ISLE, LA
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, APRIL 17-18, 2009

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Number registering for meeting _____ at \$10.00/person = \$ _____

Number attending banquet _____ at \$20.00/person = \$ _____

Reservations MUST be RECEIVED by April 10!!!

2009 Membership Dues = \$ _____

Total enclosed = \$ _____

Complete form and send with check payable to LOS to:
Judith O'Neale, 504 Whitebark Drive, Lafayette, LA 70508-6362
337-981-1011 or jloneale@aol.com