2016 LOS WINTER MEETING
Black Bayou Lake NWR, Monroe
January 29-31, 2016
http://www.fws.gov/northlouisiana/blackbayoulake/

Friends of Black Bayou will host the LOS Winter Meeting on January 29-31, 2016, at Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Monroe is fortunate to have several National Wildlife Refuges and State Management Areas within a short driving distance of the city. This affords us some great opportunities for birding close to home. We hope to see all of our old birding friends and meet many new ones.

Friday, January 29th
6:00 - 7:00 P.M.  Registration
Black Bayou Lake NWR (see directions on page 2)
7:00 - 8:00 P.M.  Meeting and Evening Program: Speaker TBA

Field Trips – All field trips depart from the Black Bayou Lake Headquarters. Field trip times and leaders TBA.

Mollicy Unit of the Upper Ouachita NWR
(all day Saturday trip departs at 7 AM)
John Dillon will lead a “hardcore” field trip to the Mollicy Unit of the Upper Ouachita NWR. Be prepared to beat the bushes and walk long distances through large fields. Birders must be physically able to last the day. There are no bathrooms, and everyone needs to have a full tank of gas and a sack lunch with plenty of water and snacks. Toilet paper and cell phone chargers are also recommended. Scopes are ideal but may be difficult to carry during long walks. Expected birds will be waterfowl (numbers depend on water levels), Bald Eagle, Merlin, Short-eared Owl (dusk only), Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Sedge Wren, LeConte’s Sparrow, Henslow’s Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, and Vesper Sparrow. Bonus species include Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Bewick’s Wren. We will stop on the way there to try for rails and shorebirds at the Prairie DeButte rice fields. Depending on conditions and weather, just about anything could show up at Mollicy. Attendees have the option to stay until dusk for Short-eared Owl, or you can leave mid-afternoon to be back for the dinner. Any trip to Mollicy could be cancelled due to road conditions. The drive to Mollicy from BBNWR should take about an hour. We will leave BBNWR at 7:00am. Contact John at kisforkryptonite@gmail.com if you are interested in joining him. Don't let that "kryptonite" part of his email address scare you! http://www.fws.gov/southeast/upperouachita/images/MollicyFacts.pdf

Russell Sage WMA: This is a state-owned management area and you must have a Wild LA Stamp, fishing, or hunting license to enter the area. Diverse habitats, good for waterfowl, sparrows, wrens, and possibly eagles http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/wma/2777

Black Bayou Lake NWR: Diverse habitats should provide good land and water birding. Note that NWR is an eBird hotspot so you can see what has been previously reported to eBird. http://www.fws.gov/northlouisiana/blackbayoulake/


LOS 2016 Meeting, Continued on page 2
Marshall “Tom” Blackwell Eyster

Marshall “Tom” Blackwell Eyster of Lafayette, LA, died peacefully on November 17, 2015, at the age of 92.

Survivors include his three children, Dr. Nancy Eyster-Smith and her husband Doug of Waltham, MA, Dr. Linda Eyster of Hyde Park, MA, and Kenneth Eyster and his wife Anita of Lafayette, LA, and 6 grandchildren (Jessica, Marshall and Kevin Eyster, Sheldon and Martin Smith, and Oliver Pechenik).

He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 62 years, Grace, by his parents Marshall A. and Viola D. Eyster, and by both of his sisters, Marcia E. Mason and Carolyn E. Thomas.

Tom was born in Toledo, Ohio. He graduated from Scott High School in Toledo and attended the University of Toledo until World War II. During the war he joined the Army Reserve and trained as a medic at the University of Chicago medical school. He later obtained his B.S. from the University of Chicago (1945). While in Chicago he met his future wife, Grace Marie Loescher. Tom and Grace together attended the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) for graduate work. Tom received both his M.S. and Ph.D. from UIUC under Dr. S. Charles Kendeigh, and in 1950 accepted a teaching position in the biology department at Southwestern Louisiana Institute in Lafayette, Louisiana, which later became the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now ULL). For 38 years, Dr. Eyster taught wildlife management, conservation, ecology, mammalogy, and ornithology courses and mentored a number of graduate students. During his tenure, he served as faculty advisor to the USL Biological Society and served as director of the Region VI Science Fair.

His life-time passion was ornithology, and he was a member of many birding societies. In 1966-68, he served as President of the Louisiana Ornithological Society. For over two decades, he coordinated and hosted the Audubon Wildlife Films Series on the USL campus. He had a federal permit to catch and band birds for academic study. For many years, Tom served as state coordinator for the state Breeding Bird Survey and for the North America Nest Record Card Program, and recorded bird abundance data for numerous annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts in Louisiana.

Tom enjoyed camping and traveling with his family every summer, especially to Colorado and to National Parks throughout the western United States. In later years he traveled with Grace and friends to over 25 countries. Tom lived a very full life and will be remembered with great fondness.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Louisiana Ornithological Society. LOS Treasurer, 504 Whitebark, Lafayette, LA 70508. Services will be private.
As we close out 2015, let’s take a moment to remember the 2015 American Bird Association “Bird of the Year.” Did you remember that it was the Green Heron? This could arguably be one of the most beloved herons in North America for its striking combinations of greenish, bluish, and rusty-colored plumage contrasting against bright orange legs. Famous for dropping lures into the water to attract unsuspecting minnows, this expert fisherman would make Hemingway’s Santiago proud.

Audubon Louisiana’s biologists teamed up with LSU-Shreveport graduate student Molly Folkerts to learn more about these migratory birds starting in 2013. Green Heron populations have been quietly declining for decades. The Breeding Bird Survey data suggest that at least 50% of the population has disappeared in the last 50 years. This is all the more staggering when considering many of other populations of heron and egret species have recovered impressively after DDT and other organophosphates were banned in 1972. So we set out to answer some questions about how successfully they are nesting along Louisiana’s Chenier Plain.

After three years of tracking 630 nest sites and banding 501 nestlings, we have started to develop an understanding of some of the things that are limiting their success. Most interestingly, when Green Herons nest along man-made navigation canals, they are about half as likely to be successful compared to when they nest along natural winding bayous. The spoil banks along navigation canals appear to help predators get around, leading them directly along a buffet of nests.

Sadly, the Green Heron isn’t alone in experiencing declining populations. A recent study in the journal Science showed that among 1500 migratory bird species, only 9% are receiving appropriate protections in habitats they depend on throughout the year. When Green Herons depart the U.S. for winter, they head for mangroves and wetlands in Central America and the Caribbean. To put things in perspective, about 23% of Central American mangroves were lost between 1980 and 2005, a decline not all that dissimilar from rates of Green Heron declines.

The good news is that there are still lots of Green Herons. No one is suggesting that they are at immediate risk of extinction. Furthermore, by 1998 all seven Central American countries had ratified the Ramsar Convention, which provides incentives for protecting and preserving wetlands. Currently, there are 52 Ramsar sites and although not all have legal protections, their recognition on this international list ratified by 160 countries is a substantial disincentive for conversion. Wetland protection is not always easy, and tremendous pressures remain, but an increase in awareness and appreciation of their importance to wildlife and human health is growing.

2016 will bring a new American Bird Association “Bird of the Year,” but before we switch out our calendars, take a moment to anticipate the return of Green Herons next spring when they’ll fill our wetlands with their familiar “kop kop” calls. Remember to reflect on where they’ve been and what they’ve seen. If they could, I’m sure they would share a legendary fishing tale with you.

Erik I. Johnson, Ph.D.
Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon Louisiana
National Audubon Society
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2-Jan  BR  Baton Rouge  Dan Mooney  dan.mooney@birdnerds.com
2-Jan  BC  Bossier-Caddo (Red River)  Terri Jacobson  Terri_Jacobson@fws.gov
29-Dec CA  Catahoula NWR  Marty Floyd  Progne99@aol.com
14-Dec CB  Claiborne  John Dillon  kisforkryptonite@gmail.com
14-Dec CR  Creole  Erik Johnson  ejohnson@audubon.org
15-Dec CW  Crowley  Marty Floyd  Progne99@aol.com
15-Dec CL  C’ville-Lecompte  Marty Floyd  Progne99@aol.com
19-Dec DA  D’Arbonne  Joan Brown  bljnbr@att.net
16-Dec GI  Grand Isle  Chris Brantley  chrisbrantley@charter.net
14-Dec JB  Johnson Bayou  Ken Sztraky  berriesheepfarm@att.net
18-Dec LT  Lacassine-Thornw  Rob Dobbs  rcdobbs@gmail.com
28-Dec LA  Lafayette  Erik Johnson  ejohnson@audubon.org
2-Jan  LC  Lake Charles  Irvin Louque  ilouque@yahoo.com
26-Dec NA  Nachitoches  Charlie Lyons  lyon5516@bellsouth.net
19-Dec NZ  Natchez*  Stratton Bull  strattonbull@gmail.com
3-Jan  NI  New Iberia  Erik Johnson  ejohnson@audubon.org
26-Dec NO  New Orleans  Glenn Oussett  goussett@bellsouth.net
29-Dec NS  Northshore-Slidell  Thomas Trenchard  trench19@hotmail.com
4-Jan  PP  Pine Prairie  Marty Floyd  Progne99@aol.com
26-Dec RB  Reser-Bonnet Carre  Melvin Weber  mwebber@rtconline.com
19-Dec SA  Sabine NWR  Jeanie Pousson  jeanie.pousson@gmail.com
20-Dec SH  Shreveport  Charlie Lyons  lyon5516@bellsouth.net
30-Dec ST  St Tammany  Linda Beall  lbeall@minilogic.com
20-Dec SC  Sweet Lake-Cam Pr  Dan O’Malley  domalley@wlf.la.gov
2-Jan  TH  Thibodaux  Delaina LeBlanc  delaina@btnep.org
2-Jan  VE  Venice  Robert Purrington  danny@tulane.edu
14-Dec WL  White Lake  Michael Seymour  mseymour@wlf.la.gov

*part of this count is in LA
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Fall 2015 LOS meeting

We had a fairly good turnout at the meeting considering the weather forecast with approach of Megastorm Patricia. We had a total registration of 60 people attending the meeting. We had two great programs – Joelle Finley and Ken Harris talked about visiting “SE Arizona in the Monsoons of July!” and Matt Brady provided “Insights from the Louisiana Bird Atlas Project.” A special thanks is in order to our speakers.

High water provided very narrow to non-existent beaches and pushed other species closer to higher ground. The total list Saturday in Cameron Parish netted 174 species.

As we did last year, we divided up into three groups lead by Ed Wallace, Donna Dittmann/Steve Cardiff, and Marty Floyd. This was to reduce the possibility of a large caravan with the last car often not seeing what was observed by first car. Of course, many decided to explore on their own.

Members discussed the potential construction of LNG facilities in Cameron. One is proposed for Monkey Island and a lot of design, etc. still needs to be done. The other project is adjacent to the East Jetty Observation Tower. Plans for this one include closure of Davis Road. Global Ventures has suggested providing a water taxi for access in lieu of the previous design of moving the road to the east of facility. LOS first provided funding for this observation tower and therefore has a vested interest in access to this important viewing area.

Looking forward to the next meeting scheduled for Monroe in January 29-31, 2016. Hopefully we will find some interesting birds in north Louisiana.

Marty Floyd

In Memoriam
Life Members
David Dauphin, Mission TX
Past President 1966-68
Marshall “Tom” Eyster, Lafayette LA

LOS NEW MEMBERS
James Bozeman, Baton Rouge, LA
Arlene V. Cain, Lake Charles, LA
Meagan Cooper, Baton Rouge LA

Call for Nominations for LOS Awards
Please send your nominations for the George H. Lowery, Jr. Award to the selections committee chair, Marty Guidry, guidrymartin@gmail.com. Each April LOS is proud to present an award to an individual who has made a contribution to Louisiana birding. In addition LOS awards President’s Awards to deserving individuals.

LOS Grant Deadline
The deadline for applying for an LOS grant is January 15, 2016. All proposals must be based on Louisiana Birds and the study should be a situation unique to Louisiana. Priority is given to studies addressing current problems and issues in Louisiana ornithology or bird conservation in Louisiana habitats. The researcher must be a member of the Louisiana Ornithological Society. Further Details can be found on the LOS website http://losbird.org/bulletin/grant.htm. Email your grant to Joelle Finley, LOS Secretary, joelle_finley@bellsouth.net.
Name(s): _____________________________________________________________________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip: ________________________________________________________________________________
Phone: _______________________________________________________________________________________
Email: ________________________________________________________________________________________
Number registering for meeting _________ at $10.00/person  =  $ _____________
Number registering for Saturday dinner _________ at $13.25/person  =  $ _____________
Membership Dues enclosed  +  $ _____________
Donation enclosed  +  $ _____________
$ _____________  Total enclosed

Please complete form and mail with check payable to LOS to:
Judith O’Neale,
504 Whitebark Drive, Lafayette LA 70508
jloneale@aol.com