

Newsletter of the Orleans Audubon Society.

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Volume: XXXVIII Issue: 3

February/March 2020

## Be a Part of Audubon—Keep Your Membership Current!

### Join or Renew with the National Audubon Society and OAS:

Type into your browser bar or click on the National Audubon Society link below to join or renew your membership with National Audubon Society and Orleans Audubon Society. You will receive the award-winning Audubon Magazine and support Audubon's nation-wide bird conservation efforts. If you live within Orleans Audubon's service area (Washington, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, St. John the Baptist, Orleans, Terrebonne, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, and Lafourche Parishes), you will automatically join/renew with OAS when doing so with NAS. The minimum donation is \$20.00.

<https://action.audubon.org/donate/chapter-membership?chapter=K00>

### Join or Renew with Orleans Audubon Society only:

OAS-only memberships expired on December 31. If you want all of your dues to support local conversation and education, you may select an "Orleans Audubon Society" *only* membership. In this case you will not receive *Audubon Magazine* and you will not become a member of the National Audubon Society. You will receive our newsletter *The Ibis* and may also opt to receive it electronically instead of by mail. In addition, we are currently offering a \$100 OAS-only membership and a \$300 OAS-only lifetime membership. With the \$100 option, you will receive a signed and numbered limited edition fine art giclée of a watercolor painting "Pelican in Couturie Forest" by Joan Garvey (11" x 14" with a 1" border). With the \$300 lifetime membership option, you will receive a signed and numbered limited edition fine art giclée of a watercolor painting "Reddish Egret" by Joan Garvey (18" x 24" with a 1" border).

To join or renew, clip the form below and mail it with your check, payable to "Orleans Audubon Society" to: Mary Joe Krieger, OAS Treasurer, 3623 Nashville Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125.

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Name _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 OAS-only membership
Address _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 membership + pelican print
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300 lifetime membership + egret print
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> electronic version of newsletter only

Email \_\_\_\_\_



# PROGRAMS

The Orleans Audubon Society monthly meetings occur from September through May. Meetings held at the Community Church Unitarian Universalist are free and open to the public. Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur de Lis Drive, New Orleans, Louisiana 70124, is located in Lakeview, on the southwest corner of Fleur de Lis Drive and 38th Street.



## **A Migratory Songbird Connects Forested Wetlands Across Continents**

**Speaker:** Katie Percy, Avian Biologist, Audubon Louisiana, State Office of National Audubon Society

**Tuesday, February 11**

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program

**Location:** Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur de Lis (Lakeview).

Katie Percy, Avian Biologist with Audubon Louisiana, will present the most recent results from a study of migratory connectivity in the Prothonotary Warbler. This research was initiated by the Baton Rouge Audubon Society and the Louisiana Bird Observatory, and has grown to include collaborators from across the species breeding range. Such large-scale collaboration has resulted in remarkable insights into migratory routes, stopover locations and duration, and the location of overwintering grounds.

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## **Story of Caroline Dorman, “Louisiana Pioneer Woman”**

**Speaker:** Linda Auld

**Tuesday, March 17**

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program

**Location:** Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur de Lis (Lakeview).



Linda Auld’s presentation focuses on an amazing Louisiana pioneer woman, Caroline Dormon. Discover who she was, what she accomplished, her wonderful books, and her beloved home Briarwood in Saline, Louisiana. The first woman hired by the United States Forestry Service (1921), Dorman was instrumental in establishing the Kisatchie National Forest (1930). Linda also hopes to promote awareness about the tornado that hit Briarwood last spring. The Briarwood Nature Preserve desperately needs volunteers and donations to help with restoration efforts. Learn about Caroline Dorman’s fascination with Louisiana’s forests and native plants and how you can help restore a part of her legacy.

## FIELD TRIPS



Birding trips are co-hosted by Orleans Audubon and the Crescent Bird Club. All are welcome. Bring binoculars and drinking water, wear hiking shoes or boots. A hat, sun screen, other protection from the elements and insect repellent are advisable. Call the trip leader if you have questions.

### **In Search of the Henslow's Sparrow**

*Date:* Saturday, February 1

*Time:* 9:00 a.m., Half-day Trip

*Location:* Horse Branch Trail at the Lake Ramsay Nature Reserve

*Directions:* Drive north through Covington on Hwy 190 from the Causeway. Turn west on Highway 190 at the intersection with Highway 25. Go west for 2 miles to Penn Mill Road (1/2 mile west of Covington High School) and turn north (right). Go 2 miles to the Horse Branch Creek Trailhead parking lot. Might need rubber boots!

*Leader:* Donata Henry (504) 432-6650

### **Winter in City Park-Couturie Forest**

*Date:* Saturday, February 8

*Time:* 8:00 a.m., Half-day Trip

*Location:* Meet in the Couturie Forest shell parking lot on Harrison Avenue between Marconi and the traffic circle in the park.

*Leader:* Claire Thomas (985) 630-3793

### **Diamond**

*Date:* Saturday, February 29

*Time:* 8:00 a.m., Half-day Trip

*Location:* Meet in the parking lot of Balestra's Associated Grocery (Town View Cafe), 7902 Hwy 23 (Belle Chasse Hwy.), 4.6 miles south of the West Bank Expressway. Take CCC to West Bank, exit Lafayette St. (Hwy 23), and proceed south towards the town of Belle Chasse.

*Leaders:* Joelle Finley and Ken Harris (504) 715-2647

### **Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge-Half Day Trip**

*Date:* **NOTE: Sunday, March 8**

*Time:* 8:00 a.m., Half-day Trip

*Location:* Meet at the Bayou Ridge Trail entrance located on the left side of U.S. 90 (Chef Menteur Highway). Take the I-510 Exit off of I-10, turn left on Chef Hwy and proceed about 4 miles.

*Leader:* Peter Yaukey (504) 400-3286

### **St. Bernard**

*Date:* Saturday, March 21

*Time:* 8:00 a.m., Half-day Trip

*Location:* Meet in the back parking lot of the Walgreens at the corner of Paris Road and Judge Perez Dr. in Chalmette.

*Leader:* Glenn Ousset (504) 495-4284



## FONTAINEBLEAU: JUST “UNUSED” WOODS?

By Andrew Wilson, OAS Conservation Chair

Fountainebleau State Park (“FSP”) located east of Mandeville in St. Tammany Parish has now been targeted by Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser for a Public Private Partnership (“PPP”) Project in the form of a massive hotel/convention center development. According to his Office’s draft Requests for Qualifications (“RFQ’s”) to be sent to would-be developers, he seeks to transform FSP from a quiet, economically viable nature preserve into a massive commercial development supposedly to generate funds for the rest of the State’s park system. In essence, FSP would be sacrificed to save the rest of the State’s under-funded parks.

His Office’s RFQ’s indicate that the plan is to proceed in two phases: (1) a 50 acre site to accommodate a 150-300 room hotel/ 15,000 sq. ft. convention center complete with a swimming pool, 24-hour gym, restaurants/catering facilities, minor retail space, and “commensurate” paved parking; and then, (2) a 500 acre extravaganza complete with a micro-brewery, a 1500-2000 seat “outdoor” (yet “enclosed” ???) amphitheater, rock-climbing walls, more retail space, “beach improvements,” “wedding venues,” zip-lines, a horse pavilion (barn?) with trail rides, and yet more “parking and other commercial uses that are economically viable.” This would mean nearly 20% of FSP would be bulldozed for this commercial venture. So far, there is no mention of a casino in the plan, but a study commissioned by Governor Edwards’ administration suggested a casino boat should be moved to “the Northshore of Lake Pontchartrain,” to raise more tax revenue. This is despite the fact that the law has changed to allow casinos to be built on land.

A core problem with this overall concept, aside from the unnecessary destruction of FSP, is that the project is **not** “economically viable.” At Mr. Nungesser’s request the St. Tammany Parish Tourist Commission had paid \$28,000 to an out-of-state consultant to conduct a “Feasibility Study.” This Study showed that hotel occupancy in St. Tammany Parish is well below the national average, meaning another hotel would simply dilute the market demand in the area, rendering all hotels at risk of failure. Undeterred by the facts, the Study attempted to suggest that hotels can still be successful in St. Tammany Parish, citing the supposed success of the Clarion Inn & Suites off of HWY 190 in Covington. The only problem with this reference was that the Clarion had been shuttered shortly before the Study issued and has now been bulldozed.

It should also be noted that Mr. Nungesser has an interesting track record with PPP’s; for example, he secured \$13,000,000 in taxpayer funds to build a luxury marina in Plaquemines Parish near the mouth of the Mississippi River at Port Eads, named after the engineer who figured out how to control siltation in South Pass to maintain its navigability. But, ironically, the marina is now shuttered because of- **you guessed it**- siltation! Plaquemines Parish has now been stuck with a bill for security alone (aside from insurance, maintenance, etc.) in the amount of \$15,000 per month. This fiscal disaster begs the question: how can Mr. Nungesser be allowed to proceed with **another** fiscal disaster in FSP?



The answer lies in Act 190 which he was able to convince the Legislature to pass in 2017. This Act gutted nearly all of the laws related to public notice, comment, publication, approval, and bid requirements for PPP's in the State's Parks. This means the Lt. Governor's Office now has free reign to proceed with whatever he wishes in the State's Parks. At the 2017 Senate hearing on SB 143 which became Act 190 when passed, Mr. Nungesser and his then Director of Parks made it clear that that they viewed FSP as "low-hanging fruit" since it is fiscally solvent due to its use and popularity, and therefore would be his first target, with no mention of public approval before he proceeded. More recently, Mr. Nungesser then made it clear to the overflowing crowd at a recent public meeting on January 8, 2020, at Mandeville Community Center, that unless the people "as a whole" (unanimously?) and elected officials were against it, he intends to proceed. This answers the "how" question. Until Act 190 is repealed users of FSP should enjoy it while they still can.

Still, this leads to the "why" question. Even the casual observer of the situation recognizes the importance of maintaining parks including FSP in their natural state, to preserve habitat for wildlife, including the 27 species in FSP subject to the State's special conservation concerns, and also to allow generations of users to have the opportunity to observe and appreciate nature's beauty. But it appears Mr. Nungesser has a "blind-spot" for nature. In a 2019 interview with Fox8 he explained why he had no qualms about bulldozing FSP's stately live oaks, towering pines and other native vegetation. As he said: "It's unused property at this point that's woods that is not being utilized for anything." Seriously?

**Save  
Fontainebleau  
State Park  
from  
development!**

**Say NO to hotel  
and conference  
center**

**Sign the petition!**

**Give a hoot!**





# The Big Sit and the Golden Bird

By Wendy Rihner

Football fans have tailgating. Birders have the Big Sit. Indeed, sitting and watching birds is my idea of a good time. So when the opportunity to start a Big Sit in Orleans Parish presented itself, how could I refuse? On October 13, 2019, 16 of us gathered in a grove of trees in the middle of the Wisner Tract in City Park equipped with binoculars, chairs and ice chests. After the morning sun chased away the clouds, low humidity and bright sunshine comforted us as we tallied 55 species.

The Big Sit, the creation of *Birdwatcher's Digest* magazine and the New Haven, Connecticut Bird Club, takes place all over the world each October. The rules are simple: create a circle 17-feet in diameter, preferably in an area with various habitats, and just count every bird you see and hear. Participants can come and go as they please, especially if they bring back food to enjoy!

The sponsor of the Big Sit, Swarovski Optics, funds a \$500.00 award called the "Golden Bird." Each December, the New Haven Bird Club designates a target species, or the "Golden Bird." In 2018, that species was the Black-and-White Warbler. In 2019, the Acadian Flycatcher got top billing. Each team that finds the Golden Bird in its circle has its name put into a hat for a drawing.

And the winner of the 2019 Golden Bird Award? None other than the Big Sit team of City Park, New Orleans, Louisiana! Orleans Audubon's team was the ONLY group to have found the Acadian Flycatcher, rendering a drawing unnecessary!

The prize money will be used to promote National Audubon's campaign "Plants for Birds" and Orleans Audubon's educational programs relating to it.

Congratulations to the inaugural Big Sit team in City Park! And if anyone is interested in participating this October, please contact Wendy Rihner.

## Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count, February 14-17, 2020

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at <http://www.birdcount.org>. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world.

Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them. Last year, more than 160,000 participants submitted their bird observations online, creating the largest instantaneous snapshot of global bird populations ever recorded.

There is also a photo contest which celebrates the beauty and diversity of wild birds seen during the count from around the world. All images must be taken during the current Great Backyard Bird Count.

### How to Participate

1. Create a free GBBC account if you have never participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count or any other Cornell Lab citizen-science project, or have not participated in the GBBC since 2013. If you already created an account for the GBBC in the past, or if you're already registered with eBird or another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing user name and password.
2. Count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the GBBC. Submit a separate checklist for each new day, for each new location, or for the same location if you counted at a different time of day. Estimate the number of individuals of each species you saw during your count period.
3. Enter your results on the GBBC website by clicking the "Submit Observations" tab on the home page. You may also download the free eBird Mobile app to enter data on a mobile device. If you already participate in the eBird citizen-science project, please use eBird to submit your sightings during the GBBC. Your checklists will count toward the GBBC.

For questions please contact the National Audubon Society or Cornell Lab of Ornithology. National Audubon Society: [citizen-science@audubon.org](mailto:citizen-science@audubon.org), Cornell Lab of Ornithology: (800) 843-247, [gbbc@cornell.edu](mailto:gbbc@cornell.edu)



# Book Reviews for Reading Birders

By Wendy Rihner

Two men stand as points on a continuum of bird conservation and bird study. Separated by decades, the latter may not be who he is today if it were not for the work and dedication of the former. I have met and birded with one of these men and have studied and admired the other, posthumously, of course. Two books published in 2019 demonstrate each man's significance to bird study and conservation.

George Bird Grinnell has been an idol of mine for a few decades. I have had the great fortune of spending summers in Glacier National Park, the second national park that Grinnell fought diligently to create, the same park that bears his name in several places: Grinnell Mountain, Grinnell Lake and Grinnell Glacier. John Taliaferro's *Grinnell, America's Environmental Pioneer and His Restless Drive to Save the West* is a well-researched and thoroughly readable biography of one of the Audubon Society's founding fathers. Having read 40,000 pages of Grinnell's journals and correspondence, Taliaferro offers us a glimpse into the anguish Grinnell felt at the slaughter of birds by the millinery trade. "We must realize how important this matter is, and must realize it now," Grinnell wrote in *Forest and Stream* in 1884. "When we consider the enjoyment they [small birds] have given us and the good they are constantly doing, should we not make some effort to prevent their extermination," he asked his magazine readers.

Though we live in a time when historical figures are seen as either good or bad and not the complicated humans they were, Taliaferro handles Grinnell's complexities with none of the scolding or revisionist thinking that many writers fall prey to today. While Grinnell admired and fought for the rights of the Blackfeet, for instance, his words revealed a paternalistic thinking that would make many of us today recoil. Nevertheless, Taliaferro admires his subject, treats him honestly and praises the undeniable triumphs of one of this nation's greatest advocates for wilderness and the species that inhabit it.

Of course, Kenn Kaufman, like many of us, has been the beneficiary of Grinnell's tireless efforts. However, for many of us, Kaufman's conservation work may be more familiar to us. His latest work *A Season on the Wind, Inside the World of Spring Migration*, interweaves discussions of the science of spring bird migration with his work and experience at the Black Swamp Observatory in northwestern Ohio, where his wife, Kimberly, is the director. In fact, if you have ever experienced The Biggest Week in American Birding, much of this book will strike you as familiar.

As a former Buckeye who has birded northwestern Ohio fairly extensively, I found his laments about the loss of land to agriculture very sad, for I remember childhood trips to Sandusky and the wide open spaces that would whiz by as my father drove the two-lane highways. Soybean farms have eaten up habitat. But what great joy I found in reading when Kaufman shares his winter excursions into those same flat, empty fields in the deep of winter to find Horned Larks, Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs. In fact, he tells us, the numbers of Larks may have actually increased because agriculture drained the swamps and ripped up the woodlands.

Kaufman's focus on migration, not surprisingly, comes from a Lake Erie perspective, more specifically a western Lake Erie perspective. Needless to say, many pages are devoted to Magee Marsh and what I call the "Warblerpalooza" that happens every spring. Indeed, he titles one chapter "Boardwalk People" for the thousands of birders and photographers that come for the easy views of migrating warblers. (One year I saw 27 species, including the Kirtland's, in half a day with very little walking.) In that same chapter Kaufman gives a shout-out to my good friend Paula, who leads walks for Spanish-speaking youth from a local Hispanic resource center!

The book also tackles very difficult topics such as the dangers climate change creates for migrating birds. Especially prominent is the controversy over the Camp Perry wind turbine project that was to be built on Erie's shoreline by the National Guard until a hearty campaign against it halted the project.

If you have read *Kingbird Highway*, you are familiar with Kaufman's accessible style. His prose is not "too" scientific or ornithologically obtuse. While *A Season on the Wind* is not as lyrical as *Kingbird Highway*, the fluid prose makes for a quick read.

I had the great pleasure of going birding with Kaufman in Milwaukee when I attended the National Audubon Society's annual conference this past summer. I told the author how I enjoyed his latest book, and his humble, unaffected "thank you" made me hope that another book was coming.



## The Catahoula Hummingbird & Butterfly Garden by Linda Barber Auld, BugLady

Lepidopterists all know that we need specially selected plants to attract the specific butterflies and moths that we desire to observe living in their wild habitats. I enjoy visiting different gardens in all corners of our state to witness these plants in action while studying which ones they prefer and select to use in varying situations. The Catahoula Garden, full of activity and surprises, is one for your "must see" list.

Bentley, Louisiana, is an unincorporated community in Grant Parish with a population of only 722 people. Just twelve miles north of Pineville, Bentley is located off State Highway 167. Positioned inside the Kisatchie National Forest on U.S. Forest Service land, the Catahoula District station can be found on the corner of Louisiana Highway 8 and Forest Service Road 147. It overlooks the oasis garden residence of an array of birds, butterflies and important life-giving native plants that support this interesting ecosystem. A Forest Service team of employees in cooperation with a local group of volunteers, driven by the selfless mission of creating this super special place, worked together to begin building the garden in 1994. It's divided into smaller sections which in the last few years have also been tended by some local Louisiana Master Gardener volunteers. They continue to enhance the nature smorgasbord by introducing more native plants. On October 20, I did a plant inventory and the totals were 45 nectar, 38 caterpillar host and 9 non-native. Of course, each season would produce more additions for my list. Multiple Eagle Scout projects have improved the garden by helping to lay out the beds with posts and also constructing the Bat House.

The first quadrant contains a beautiful stand of Longleaf pine trees where rare Red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCW) call it home. The woodpecker cluster site was there before the garden was established. RCWs now occupy a much smaller portion of their original range and are federally listed as endangered. They have a preference for longleaf pine forest habitats that have diminished across the South due to fire suppression and intensive logging. Many of these cut areas were replaced with other pine species that grow faster. The other limiting factor is they prefer "park-like" stands of pine trees so they need old trees in open areas. The birds are rarely seen except perhaps during breeding season. The male has a small red streak on each side of its black cap called a cockade, hence the name. The common name came into use during the early 1800's when 'cockade' was regularly used to refer to a ribbon or other ornament on a hat. The RCW plays a vital role in the intricate web of life of the Southern pine forest because they are 'primary' cavity nesters, meaning they are responsible for the construction of cavities. In the Southern pine ecosystem, there are many 'secondary' cavity users that benefit from the RCW's work. RCWs are considered a 'keystone' species because use of their cavities by these animals contributes to the species richness of the pine forest. At least 27 species of vertebrates have been documented using RCW cavities, either for roosting or nesting.

Drizzling rain and fog this morning had me wondering what butterflies we might see. Fluttering around the red Turk's cap flowers, a Cloudless Sulphur was using its long tongue to probe and slurp up pollen. The sprawling lantana growing in the middle of the garden was beaconing Clouded and Ocala skippers. A beautiful freshly-hatched Red Admiral was flitting around the flower clusters and repeatedly evading my camera lens. Shimmering green Long-tailed Skippers were zooming about visiting and tasting a variety of blossoms.

Lisa Norman and I spent some time attempting to determine whether the six Monarchs we were excitedly watching glide about were males or females. All were females except for one. Supposedly, this weekend is the middle of Monarch migration and this is definitely an excellent fueling station. Master Gardener Jacalyn Duncan had reported to me that they have been trying to establish native milkweeds in this space. The plants were there but we couldn't find them because they had probably been chewed down by Monarch caterpillars.

The next sighting was a gorgeous Red Spotted Purple, its iridescent blue wings were glistening as it was pumping them. Its tongue was thrusting into the lantana blossoms gathering pollen. A Pipevine Swallowtail swooped in to challenge territorial rights. It is easy to confuse these two butterflies because the adults look very similar. The Pipevine caterpillar eats the pipevine plant (*Aristolochia*) which is toxic and therefore makes the butterfly taste bad to predators. The flashy colors are the message, "Don't eat me!" The Red Spotted Purple caterpillar eats willow and cherry which tastes good, so the adult Red Spotted Purple mimics the adult Pipevine as its self-preservation technique.



The two Hackberry (Sugarberry) trees not only provide tasty berry food for the birds but also caterpillar food for four butterflies even though none of them were seen today. I feel sure the Hackberry and Tawny Emperor, Question Mark and the American Snout all reside here in other times of the year. They could have been there and just were not spotted.

The rarely seen *Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*, also known as Hercules club or Toothache tree, is one of the native alternatives to citrus for feeding Giant Swallowtail caterpillars. However, unlike evergreen citrus, the toothache tree will lose its leaves in Autumn which could pose a problem to the third generation Giant caterpillar who might run out of food if it takes too long completing its life cycle. Swallowtails usually overwinter in the pupa or chrysalis stage.

Almost at the garden's center stands a stately Catalpa tree with its long seed pods. It offers a bounty for hungry *Ceratomia catalpae*, the Catalpa Sphinx hawkmoth caterpillar, which is just one of the 58 Louisiana sphinx moths that have been studied and documented by Vernon Antoine Brou, Jr.

As we walked around the little pond, we were surprised by a green heron when it burst out of the bushes, flew to the island in the pond's center, then landed at the water's edge. A line of *Callicarpa* (Beauty Berry) loaded with pretty purple berries down its stalks provides a feast for a variety of birds.

Lisa and I quietly stood gazing at the endless acres of bright, golden *Helianthus angustifolia*. All you could hear was the wind in the swaying pine trees and the trickling sound of the little waterfall on the pond's island. Suddenly motion caught my eye. It is a beautiful Buckeye coaxing us to enter the wildflower patch. A two-foot wide path invited us to explore and follow the Buckeye. There before us we see liatris, blue lobelia, aster, and agalinis, the Buckeye caterpillar host plant. The Buckeye landed on my shoe (which has trod many a trail) and quickly began sucking fluids. Lisa and I laughed out loud as its wings began to tremble! We guessed that the mineral concoction it was siphoning must have tasted really good. Lisa observed that the plants looked beaten down and we deduced that deer must be bedding down in this area. All of their needs are met here: food, water and a quiet place to live.

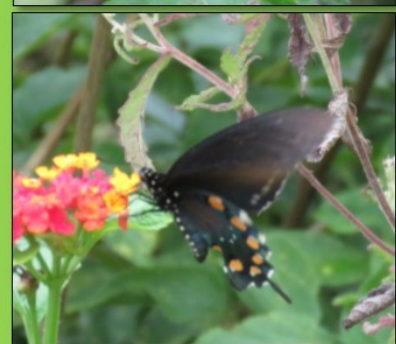
The next two quadrants are more pine trees to the left and to the right are two more wildflower fields that measure ten acres each. As we were discussing the wonderful sporadic wildflower assortment growing amidst this yellow gorgeousness, I spied something on one of the sunflower centers. My heart beating a bit faster, I exclaimed, "It's a caterpillar I've never raised, and I don't know what it is!" The caterpillar was positioned on the dark brown center packed with seeds. It appeared to be eating the seeds and not the flower petals. This larva is a yellow-brown mix which perfectly matches the flower colors. A row of fleshy thorns down its back resembles the seed textures. I checked my best caterpillar guide without success. After downloading the pictures later on Facebook, I received the identification within a few minutes, "Yellow Sunflower Moth", *Stiria rugifrons*. Well, that certainly makes sense.

I was delighted to see my "Geaux Grow Natives!" project plants, both spring and fall selections, growing and thriving here. My showcase of nectar plants are Buttonbush, Garden Phlox, Cardinal flower, Slender Mountain mint, Purple coneflowers and Ironweed. The caterpillar host plants are Agalinis, Partridge Pea and Passion flower vine.

The butterfly population of the Catahoula Hummingbird & Butterfly Garden is surveyed each year for the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) by Marty Floyd, who also has the huge task of recording all of the Region 10 count data for the NABA annual report publication. Count data are also available on their website. Last year's count totals are: Pipevine Swallowtail 8, Black Swallowtail 1, Cloudless Sulphur 110, Little Yellow 298, Sleepy Orange 1, Gray Hairstreak 20, Red-banded Hairstreak 6, Gulf Fritillary 132, Variegated Fritillary 5, Silvery Checkerspot 1, Phaon Crescent 10, Pearl Crescent 97, Common Buckeye 67, Carolina Satyr 19, Long-tailed Skipper 60, Funereal Duskywing 2, Common Checkered Skipper 12, Tropical Checkered Skipper 3, Swarthy Skipper 1, Clouded Skipper 8, Fiery Skipper 24, Whirlabout 3, Dun Skipper 2, Eufala Skipper 1, Ocola Skipper 2. Totals: 25 species, 893 individuals. Immatures: 20 Gulf Fritillary caterpillars on passion flower vine.

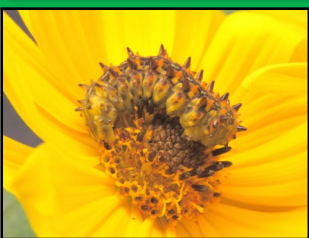
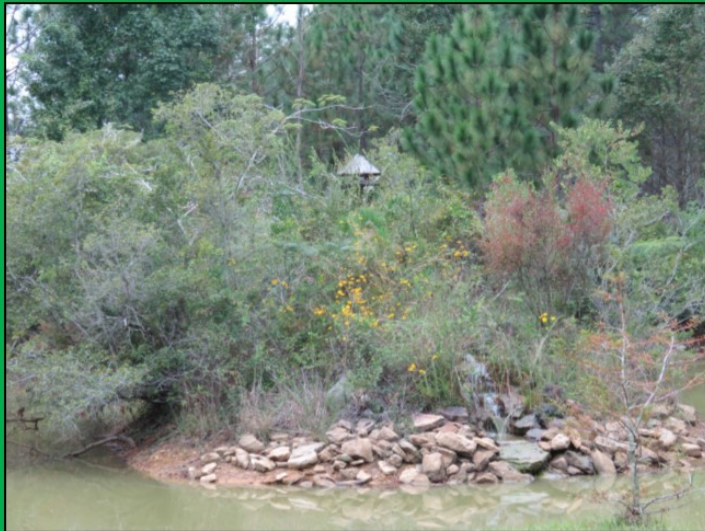
The Catahoula Hummingbird and Butterfly Garden offers a place for visitors to view hummingbirds and butterflies as well as other wildlife. It also provides an opportunity for volunteers to get involved in creating and maintaining a special place in their National Forest that attracts wildlife as well as tourists. The garden is an ever-growing project and the Forest Service team is always looking for new people to get involved. Interested folks can contact Emlyn B. Smith at [emlyn.smith@usda.gov](mailto:emlyn.smith@usda.gov)





Butterfly pictures below are on right from top to bottom: Cloudless Sulphur, Red Spotted Purple, Pipevine Swallowtail, Monarch, and Common Buckeye. Photos are by Linda B. Auld.





*Stiria rugifrons*

Yellow sunflower moth



The SE Louisiana Chapter of the

**National Audubon Society**

Orleans Audubon Society

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New Orleans, LA 70125

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