



Newsletter of the Orleans Audubon Society.

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

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February/March 2021

OAS ZOOM PROGRAMS

My Big Year- Birding for a Cause

Speaker: Dr. Joe Blanda

Date and Time: Tuesday, February 23, 7:00 PM

Joe Blanda is an orthopedic surgeon from Akron, Ohio who did a “big year” of birding in 2016 to raise money for cancer research after the death of his son to brain cancer. A **big year** is either a personal challenge or a friendly competition among birders who strive to observe as many bird species as possible within a calendar year and within a particular geographic area. Joe is a long-time nature photographer who will share some of his exciting bird sightings both with photographs and some captivating stories. You will learn how he used his passion for nature and birding not only to heal from his loss but also to discover a new desire to help others.

To contact Joe: Jblanda46@gmail.com

To learn more about his big year see: Birding2BlastCancer.com



Registration: To register for this Zoom program, send an email message with “Big Year” as the subject line to: OrleansAudubon@aol.com and include your full name in the body of the email. You will then receive email instructions. If participating by phone, also include your phone number. Please register as soon as possible and at least one hour prior to the start of the meeting.

Keep up with what’s happening!

Sign up for OAS email announcements at the OAS MailChimp landing page:

<https://mailchi.mp/faf69a03b4e9/orleansaudubon>

OAS’s MailChimp account offers a secure platform where you can subscribe or change your mail subscription preferences at any time.

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40 Years in Borneo: Hacking Through the Jungle in Search of Birds

Speaker: Dr. Fred Sheldon, George H. Lowery, Jr. Professorship, Director of Museum of Natural Science and Curator of Genetic Resources at LSU in Baton Rouge

Date and Time: Tuesday, March 16, 7:00 p.m.

Fred received his PhD from Yale University in Biology in 1986. He has two fundamental areas of research interest: the evolution and systematics of birds, and the natural history of the birds of the Malay Archipelago. His work in S.E. Asia is concentrated mainly in Borneo, where he is conducting a variety of studies with students and collaborators.

Borneo, a giant, rugged island in Southeast Asia's Malay Archipelago, is shared by the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak, Indonesian Kalimantan and the tiny nation of Brunei. It's known for its beaches and ancient, biodiverse rainforest, home to wildlife including orangutans and clouded leopards. In Sabah is 4,095 meter-tall Mount Kinabalu, the island's highest peak, and, offshore, the famed dive site Sipadan Island.



Registration: To register for this Zoom program, send an email message with "Borneo" as the subject line to: OrleansAudubon@aol.com and include your full name in the body of the email. You will then receive email instructions. If participating by phone, also include your phone number. Please register as soon as possible and at least one hour prior to the start of the meeting.

ZOOM: Beginning Birdwatching Course

Tuesday, March 2, 7–9:00 PM

Part I

Getting Started and Birding Resources

Instructor: Wendy Rihner

Tuesday, March 9, 7–9:00 PM – Part II

Introduction to Ornithology

Instructor: Jennifer Coulson



Watching birds can enrich your life in multiple ways. Are you looking for an activity that will teach you a skill offering lifelong enjoyment, relaxation, and exercise? Are you interested in animals and the outdoors? If so, the Beginning Bird Watching Course is for you!

Bird watching is a truly rewarding hobby, especially during the pandemic. It can be enjoyed just about anywhere including your backyard, a local park, or on vacation. This course is designed to get you started in bird watching.

The pandemic version of this course consists of two lecture-format classes. Ornithologist, Dr. Jennifer Coulson, and OAS Education Chair, Wendy Rihner, provide birding tips on everything from purchasing and using binoculars and field guides to how to identify birds by sight, sound, and behavior. Students will receive a basic introduction to ornithology and to local birding and ornithological groups. Wendy will also provide recommendations for attracting birds to your yard and Jennifer will recommend locations for local, self-guided bird watching outings.

To register, send an email request to: OrleansAudubon@aol.com with "Beginning Bird Watching" in the subject line and your full name in the body of the message. You will then receive instructions for participating the classes via Zoom.

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.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

- \$20 OAS-only membership
- \$100 membership + pelican print
- \$300 lifetime membership + egret print
- electronic version of newsletter only





Great Backyard Bird Count

February 12-15, 2021

Each February, for four days, the world comes together for the love of birds. Over these four days we invite people to spend time in their favorite places watching and counting as many birds as they can find and reporting them to us. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before one of their annual migrations.

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was the first online citizen science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real time. Birds Canada joined the project in 2009, and the project became global in 2013, when we began entering data into eBird, the world's largest biodiversity-related citizen science project.

The 2020 Great Backyard Bird Count was a huge success more than 250,000 participants from 194 countries counted more than 27 million birds of 6,942 species.

The Great Backyard Bird Count uses eBird, one of the world's largest nature-databases with more than 100 million bird sightings contributed each year and used by professionals for science and conservation. Contribute to eBird and become a citizen scientist.

New to the Great Backyard Bird Count or using eBird? You can identify birds with the Merlin Bird ID app and add sightings to your list or use the eBird Mobile app or enter your bird list on the eBird website (Desktop/laptop). Explore options for entering your bird lists here: <https://www.birdcount.org/participate/>

All you need is a free Cornell Lab account to participate. This account is shared with Merlin, eBird, Project FeederWatch and other projects at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. If you already have an account please use the same username and password for submitting your bird list for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Observation periods should be at least fifteen minutes long and need not be confined to your yard. Data for anywhere you observe birds on these four dates is of interest. Mark your calendar, fill your feeders and freshen up the hummingbird syrup!

Janine Robin Memorial

by Claire Thomas

Janine Robin passed away December 17 from complications of breast cancer. She was such a devoted birder that her license plate said "BIRD DAT".

Janine was active in the birding community here in Louisiana. She was quick to help those new to birding and to lend a helping hand. Many folks have said that Janine was instrumental in helping them get started birding.

Birding with Janine was a pleasure as she knew details about migration, identifying marks, and could identify birds just by song. She also participated in the LSU Bird Atlas (quadrangle) surveys and Christmas Bird Counts. She was the Treasurer of the now defunct Northshore Bird Club for many years. The Louisiana Birdfest was one of her favorite events and she was a guide for several of the field trips. She went above and beyond to make sure the participants had fun and learned about the birds of south Louisiana. She shared her knowledge easily with all attending.



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Janine mentored so many new birders, teaching them the right way to do things, and I am certainly one of them. She was a birding friend to all, always welcoming people to join us on a little afternoon trip or take a call from someone who had a birding question or to look at photos to help one identify some bird that was puzzling and didn't look like any photo in the field guides. She loved birds and created a unique observatory on her sunporch with numerous feeders in view throughout her wooded backyard. While she was content with our Louisiana birds, she also joined her friends on trips to discover places like Antelope Island in Utah, the Alabama Coast and recently ventured to see exotic birds in Columbia, Central America.

In her passing, I am sure she was escorted by a flock of songbirds and greeted by a host of avian beauties. She will be missed by so many friends and her birding tips will be sweetly remembered by those she shared them with.

Her last volunteer assignment involved the resident American Kestrel project. OAS is documenting breeding territories because kestrels are extremely rare nesters here, and our resident kestrels are of conservation concern. I also needed to find locally produced young to capture one and collect a few feathers for the Full Cycle Phenology Project conducted by our partners at Boise State University. On July 17, I was conducting an aerial survey in search of Swallow-tailed Kite nests and stopped at the Bogalusa Airport for gas. An adult male kestrel perched atop the windsock alongside the runway. I had back-to-back surveys for several days, so I called Janine to ask her to check the area for evidence of possible breeding. Two days later, Janine discovered a pair of kestrels attending a recent fledgling at a nearby industrial park. Her find was amazing! My husband, Tom, and I were both impressed with how many places she checked in locating the kestrel family.

OAS laments the loss of our volunteer and member. On a personal note, I really miss my Northshore birding pal, the person whom I'd share quirky Northshore bird observations with.

Remembering Janine Robin

By Jennifer Coulson

Janine Robin volunteered for several of OAS's avian monitoring projects. She conducted field surveys and monitored nests for the Swallow-tailed Kite, American Kestrel and Bald Eagle projects. One of the many things I loved about Janine is that she was game for anything. She would happily follow up on any Swallow-tailed Kite sighting report in St. Tammany or Washington Parish, including some wild goose chases. For Janine it was just another excuse to be outside looking for birds, and possibly contribute to bird research and conservation as well.

Janine was a student of not only bird identification but also bird behavior. Her keen powers of observation came in handy many times. For example, she found a Swallow-tailed Kite nesting neighborhood in Mandeville, and even located a nest in her friend's backyard. She enjoyed checking on nests on a weekly basis, which is part of our monitoring protocol. In her nest visit reports, Janine always noted what she saw and did a great job of photographing the adults attending their nests and nestlings.



The SE Louisiana Chapter of the
National Audubon Society

Orleans Audubon Society
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