

Newsletter of the Orleans Audubon Society.

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Volume: XXXVIII Issue: 4

April/May 2021

ZOOM PROGRAMS

The Future Delta and Birds

Speaker: David P. Muth
Tuesday, April 20, 7:00 PM



David will focus on Louisiana's land loss: 2,000 square miles of coastal wetlands over the last century. The state is poised to lose more as the delta sinks and seas rise—in fact, all of the remaining 4,000 square miles are threatened. We will review an aggressive plan to build sediment diversions to restart the natural delta-building process. The Environmental Impact Statement for the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion is expected this spring. The implications for the health of bird populations could not be more profound.

David Muth is Director of Gulf Restoration for the National Wildlife Federation. Well known to LOS members, he's a New Orleans native who has spent a lifetime in the Mississippi River Delta and on the Louisiana coast studying its geology, ecology, plants, wildlife, history, and culture. He is an authority on the birds of coastal Louisiana, having served as President of the LOS, Chairman of the LBRC, Regional Editor for North American Birds, and Louisiana Editor for the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count. He worked for 30 years with the National Park Service at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, eventually managing its natural and cultural resource programs.

Registration: To register for this Zoom program, send an email message with “**Future Delta**” 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 two hour priors to the start of the meeting.

ECUADOR: Straddling the Equator in Search of Condors to Hummingbirds

Presenters: Jennifer Coulson and David Muth

Tuesday, May 18, 7:00 PM

Roughly the size of the U.K., Ecuador offers more bird diversity in less space than any other country in the world. This center of avian mega-diversity is home to over 1,600 species of birds!



Long-tailed Sylph

In 2018, Tom and Jennifer Coulson, David Muth, and Princeton ornithologist, Christie Riehl made a birding trip to Ecuador. They found Ecuador to be a user-friendly country for birding and eco-tourism. Join Jennifer and David as they take us on a journey exploring the eastern slope of the Andes in search of the gigantic Andean Condor, the exquisite Tourmaline Sunangel, and everything in between. Learn why Ecuador is a special place for birds and birders.



Masked Flowerpiercer

Registration: To register for this Zoom program, send an email message with “Ecuador” 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 two hours prior to the start of the meeting.

Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion

By David Muth

The Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion March 6, 2020. There will be a 60-day comment period. This would be the largest ecosystem restoration project in U.S. history, if not world history—nothing less than the reconnection of the Mississippi River to its disappearing delta. The importance for birds and wildlife cannot be overestimated. It will build and maintain tens of thousands of acres of land in the Barataria Basin, which is experiencing one of the highest rates of land loss on the planet. The public comment period offers individuals an opportunity to play an active role in the restoration process.

Following the public comment period, the Corps will issue a final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision on the project as part of the regulatory process required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group also released a Restoration Plan identifying how the project will help restore the ecosystem in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

- To read the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, visit [this page](#).
- To learn more about the Mid Barataria Sediment Diversion, visit [this page](#).
- To learn more about the NEPA, NRDA and an EIS, visit [this resource](#).

Please look at the documents and make your voice heard.



**Like what you're seeing?
If so, please support OAS...**

**GiveNOLA returns on
Tuesday, May 4, 2021!**

Make a difference for local conservation by joining us for 24 hours of giving to benefit our regional nonprofits, including **Orleans Audubon Society**. Now in its 8th year, GiveNOLA Day is a 24-hour event hosted by the Greater New Orleans Foundation. Together, let's inspire people to give generously so that we can make our region stronger and creating a thriving community for all.

OAS has many projects it is fund-raising for, including the rebuilding of the **Marguerite Moffet Audubon Sanctuary** boardwalk and observation deck in Terrebonne Parish. Sanctuary amenities were destroyed in a recent hurricane. We need private donations to use as matching funds to secure major grants.

Please visit Orleans Audubon Society's GiveNOLA profile on Tuesday, May 4th to make a donation:
<https://www.givenola.org/orleansaudubon>

Orleans Audubon Society has a new YouTube Channel!

Enjoy OAS programs any time and share them with friends. Please consider subscribing to OAS's YouTube channel. It is free to subscribe.

Go to YouTube and type in "Orleans Audubon Society" to find us or go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKG2zcfKetX7MV19hSpDaA>

If you have difficulty locating a particular program, links are posted on the OAS website under the "Events" and "Birding" menu tabs. Recent uploads include:

Beginning Birding – Part 1: Getting Started and Birding Resources

by Wendy Rihner: <https://youtu.be/-GFImLBDzAY>

Beginning Birding Part 2: Introduction to Ornithology

By Dr. Jennifer Coulson <https://youtu.be/kZOXa50SKEs>

My Big Year - Birding for a Cause

By Dr. Joe Blanda: <https://youtu.be/GdrrXwA48x0>

Madagascar: A Place Like No Other

By Joelle Finley and Ken Harris

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0ACK4Qv41Q>



Attention, Pollinators! Dinner is served!

-Nine fantastic native plants with nine gardeners' favorite picks-

 <p>Wild Bergamot <i>Monarda fistulosa</i></p>	 <p>Spotted Bee Balm <i>Monarda punctata</i></p>	 <p>Jacob Cline Bee Balm <i>Monarda didyma</i></p>
 <p>Clustered Mountain Mint <i>Pycnanthemum muticum</i></p>	 <p>Slender Mountain Mint <i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i></p>	 <p>Whiteleaf Mountain Mint <i>Pycnanthemum albescens</i></p>
 <p>Phlox: Robert Poore <i>Phlox paniculata</i></p>	 <p>Phlox: John Fanick <i>Phlox paniculata</i></p>	 <p>Woodland Phlox <i>Phlox divaricata</i></p>

Monarda and More

by Linda Barber Auld, NOLA BugLady

Baumgarten, Tammany - Horticulturist and Owner of BaumGardens Landscape & Design, Master Gardener and current President of the Native Plant Initiative of GNO

I have always been terribly fond of *Monarda punctata*, which I learned and grew years ago as one of my first natives. I knew it as Horsemint, another common name for this plant. The leaf-like bracts that form the colorful parts of this plant are just so beautiful and interesting, very different looking. They seem pretty versatile in any well drained, sun to part shade garden, but don't seem to persist more than a few years for me. Of course 'Jacob Cline' is such a rich red color, it's hard not to love and don't even get me started on the Phloxes which bloom for such a long period of time and are such butterfly favorites! Good thing I can have them all!

Biundo, Mary.- La Master Gardener, Project Chairman, New Orleans Botanic Garden's Butterfly Garden at City Park, Louisiana Certified Habitat Garden in Metairie

I have two favorites on this list, *Pycnanthemum albescens* and *Phlox divaricata*, and if I have to pick one, it would be *Phlox divaricata*. The butterflies like it, as do the hummingbirds and bees. It is attractive, fragrant and makes a nice edging and/or ground cover. *Pycnanthemum albescens*, a close second, is a lovely part shade plant with a silvery leaf and minty aroma, also attractive to pollinators. There is a lovely one in the Shade Garden at the New Orleans Botanical Garden.

D'mello, Dionne - New Orleans Botanical Garden: Pelican Greenhouse Manager

My favorite of these nine native plants is the Louisiana Phlox or *Phlox divaricata*. The lovely blue flowers tell us spring has sprung as they are one of the first to bloom every year. The blooms are slightly fragrant, long lasting for a perennial, and attract butterflies, hooray! This is one of the most carefree plants I have ever grown. Besides perhaps an annual shearing if you like a tight and tidy garden, they require no pruning, pinching, or deadheading. And I have never had to treat LA phlox for any pest or disease at Pelican Greenhouse. Plant this butterfly-friendly, reliable, native ground cover under deciduous trees in the landscape, in a woodland garden, or in any garden bed that gets some shade in the summer. To top it all off, Louisiana Phlox is easy to propagate by division or cuttings taken almost any time of year!

Elliott, Mary - Fronderosa Nursery - Owner

I think my favorite is *Monarda fistulosa*. It is one of the first bee balms to bloom, is attractive to pollinators and hummingbirds, easy to grow, and also edible for humans. You can use the blossoms (pull the petals from the heads) for garnishes and salads, the leaves for tea, and the plant as a potherb. Native Americans used it medicinally. It seems to like full sun and a drier site than some of the other monarda species.

Graham, Amy - Longue Vue house & Garden - Director of Horticulture- www.Longuevue.com

Monarda fistulosa, or bee balm, is a dramatic, aromatic, dependable addition to your pollinator garden! Multiple light purple crown-shaped bloom clusters of this plant open throughout the day, providing a cycle of nectar for butterflies, many species of bees, hummingbirds and even sphinx moths. Look for tiny holes in the side of the flowers which were made by short-tongued bees, to allow themselves and other small insects access the nectar, amazing! *Monarda* will thrive in various well-drained soils and full sun. Give your bee balm space to breathe to prevent powdery mildew from forming and leave the spent flowers to go to seed for the little sparrows. Please visit Longue Vue House and Gardens to see this plant in action.

Hopkins, Lees - Delta Flora Nursery - Owner

Pycnanthemum tenuifolium. I'm a big fan of Slender Mountain Mint for use in urban landscapes. It's a hardy, low-growing shrub with a lovely texture and scent. The abundant, long-lasting little blooms entice many insect pollinators.

Howard, Nell - Current Vice-President of the Native Plant Initiative of GNO, Louisiana Master Gardener, MGGNO Urban Natives Project Leader and native plant grower, LA Certified 'Gold level' Habitat Garden in New Orleans.

Phlox divaricata is a favorite because I'm always looking for ways to put color in the shade of a live oak or a gathering of magnolias. Anything with the name 'woodland' evokes a serene, cool feeling, and this dainty perennial never fails to perform. Spring has sprung when these little blue flowers erupt, lightly scented, and the more the merrier – which happens every year when they send out more shoots. They make a nice ground cover under an adjacent *Chionanthus virginicus*, (Native fringe, an understory tree), surrounded by *Tradescantia bracteata* (spiderwort) and *Phyla nodiflora* (frogfruit). Swallowtail butterflies and bees are constantly hovering over the springtime blooms. I'm glad I used my own front yard as a test garden for these years ago!

Russell, Jim - LA Certified Habitat Garden in Mandeville - "Gold" level, LA Master Naturalist, LA Master Gardener

Pycnanthemum muticum and *P. albescens*. They take care of themselves, smell great, have culinary and medical uses, and attract huge numbers of solitary, native pollinators. I've seen *P. albescens* in the wild in Northlake Nature Center and off Hwy 190 in southern Covington area.

Last but not least! Auld, Linda - Owner Barber Laboratories Pest Control Supplies store, LA Certified Habitat Garden "Gold" level and Monarch WayStation in Harahan, plus NOLA BugLady Books, LLC

Not sure which is my favorite because I love them all! Years ago during a butterfly survey at Honey Island Swamp, I cast my eyes on *Monarda punctata* for the first time and instantly fell in love with its beauty. Last year, Ken Bosso and Charles Allen each gave me some plants from their gardens. They are fantastic "Passalong Plants" (as author Felder Rushing would say). It's amazing how large they grew. I was delighted watching four different species of bees collecting nectar, including a new one to me, the Two-spotted Longhorn Bee. This helps prove the theory of "*Plant it and they will come!*" All three mountain mints will draw a wide variety of pollinators. Observing the activity of bees, wasps and butterflies on the buffet stand of *Pycnanthemum muticum* at Charles Allen's Allen Acres Bed & Breakfast is always exciting and enjoyable. When planting the Clustered Mountain mint in my office garden and before I could even spread the dirt over the roots, I was surprised by a hungry Horace Duskywing butterfly that swooped down and landed on a blossom about a foot from my eyes! The best place to see the Slender Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*) in action is in the Gloster Arboretum's wildflower patches. The American Painted Lady, Common Buckeye and an array of skipper butterflies can be found enjoying the nectar banquet. The beautiful flowers of Whiteleaf Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum albescens*) also serve up an excellent enticement. My Phlox obsession was spawned by my good friend, Diane Lafferty. As soon as I discovered this scrumptious plant, I became obsessed with planting it all over my garden. That's why they call me "Phloxy Lady". Every time I walk up my front steps, I can smell its delicious fragrance. From my bedroom window I see hummingbirds and butterflies taking turns fueling up on the blossoms. In Springtime stands of Woodland Phlox can transform a landscape into a fairyland of Nature's beauty. Then, *Robert Poore* Phlox begins showing its pink splash in the garden followed later by the two-toned pink *John Fanick* which can provide a long bloom season through the end of October! Each year these plants will grow bigger and more beautiful. Remember Doug Tallamy's words, "Native insects recognize native plants as *"real food"*". Pollinators need our help all year long and adding any of these will assist in enhancing your botanical invitation for Nature's pollinators to accept. *Geaux Grow Natives!*



REVERSAL OF FORTUNE: THE ORIGINAL INTERPRETATION OF THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT HAS RETURNED!

Spring is right around the corner and with it, the bi-annual bird migration phenomenon arrives, as thousands of species travel thousands of miles to return to their northern hemisphere homes. They face every obstacle imaginable—predation, extreme weather, glass-covered buildings and starvation, not to mention the many other man-made hazards. Fortunately, this spring, they have one less thing to worry about. On March 8, the Biden administration signaled a policy change to increase the scope of protection for these species under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, reversing a detrimental legal opinion and related regulatory rule issued by the Trump administration.

HISTORY

In 1918, [The Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) (“MBTA”), initially a treaty with Canada, was passed into law to prevent both the incidental as well as the purposeful “take,” or poaching and killing of over 1,000 migratory bird species. In the past 100 years, there has been controversy over whether the MBTA criminalizes only the *intentional* killing of a bird, or *any* killing, intentional or not.

[In 2017](#), the Department of the Interior (“DOI”) under the Trump administration issued a legal opinion (“Opinion”) limiting the scope of the act to intentional killings, thus decriminalizing the actions of developers, farmers and ranchers, as well as oil, energy, and other companies that incidentally kill birds. The Opinion sought to protect “otherwise lawful and productive actions” from penalties. Large companies, responsible for incidents like the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill (2010), or the Exxon Valdez Alaskan oil spill (1989), once criminally prosecuted with fines over \$100 million, would now no longer be held accountable simply due to a lack of intent. Not surprisingly, [this interpretation received support](#) from oil industry lobbyists like the American Petroleum Institute. Subsequently, the Opinion was transformed or “codified” into a proposed rule “as is” in early 2020.

However, in August 2020, a federal district court vacated the Opinion, as contrary to the MBTA (*Natural Resources Defense Council v. U.S. Department of the Interior*, No. 18-CV-4596 (VEC), 2020 WL 4605235 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 11, 2020)). Similarly, the Opinion received severe opposition from environmental non-profit organizations across the nation, as well as treaty partner, Canada. Canada’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change [expressed concern](#) over the detriment the law would have for the countries’ shared migratory bird species. He claimed the new interpretation lacked adequate analysis and was inconsistent with the former understandings between the two countries citing concern over de-criminalizing “unintentional but predictable killing of birds.”

But rejection of the Opinion did not derail industry efforts to repeal the migratory bird protections because in the last days of the Trump administration, DOI still formalized the final rule. As a result, in late January 2021, two new lawsuits were filed that challenge the legal basis for the final rule: *Nat’l Audubon Soc’y v. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Serv.*, 1:21-cv-00448 (S.D.N.Y. filed Jan. 19, 2021); *State of New York v. U.S. Dep’t of the Interior*, 1:21-cv-00452 (S.D.N.Y. filed Jan. 19, 2021). So, the fate of the Rule then lay in both the Courts and in the hands of incumbent President Joe Biden’s administration.

REVERSAL

Even before a decision issued from the courts, the Biden administration [reversed the deadly opinion](#) on its own on March 8th, so that the concept of “intent” will favor migratory birds once again. Under the revised rule, both purposeful killing and unintentional killing, whether committed by an individual or corporation, would be criminally prosecuted. Those charged with either intentionally or unintentionally “taking” a bird [could face penalties](#) of up to 6 months in prison and a \$15,000 fine, 2 years and \$250,000 if commercialized, and organizations could face up to \$500,000. Actual finalization of the new rule will take time, such that until then, migratory birds will still be at risk, not only from increasing climate change events, but [industrial causes of mortality](#) like oil spills, gas flares, communication towers, and power lines. However, the administration has taken a major step in the right direction.



IMPLICATIONS FOR LOUISIANA'S MIGRATORY BIRDS

Louisiana is not only a sportsman's, but a birdwatcher's paradise as well. Many of our local birds are [protected by the MBTA](#) in particular whooping cranes, Mississippi and swallow-tailed kites, prothonotary warblers, wood storks, snowy egrets, sandhill cranes, and spoonbills. These birds will once more be protected from intentional poaching or accidental killing by industries and individuals alike.

Perhaps this national policy decision may also signal changes in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's "[Special Rule](#)" in Louisiana, which protects the whooping cranes here. At present, the small, resident flock of whooping cranes in southwest Louisiana does not, as a practical matter, enjoy the greater protections of the full Endangered Species Act ("ESA"), and has only the limited protection under the MBTA due to certain "Special Rules" which consist of regulations with limited protection that were necessary to reduce local opposition to the establishment of the flock back in 2011.

In addition, the protections afforded Louisiana's whooping cranes are further watered down because the U.S. Department of Justice ("DOJ") applies its inexplicable "*McKittrick* Policy" which bars prosecution under the ESA with its greater penalties unless "specific intent," (i.e., the perpetrator specifically intended to kill the particular endangered species at the time of the act or shooting), can be proven. This is despite the fact that the ESA's plain language requires only "general intent" much like strict liability—if one "knowingly" shoots an endangered animal, the requisite burden of proof has been met. The *McKittrick* directive issued without explanation as a result of a concession by the U.S. Solicitor General in a 1998 brief filed in the U.S. Supreme Court following a successful prosecution using general intent jury instructions in *United States v. McKittrick*. It remains in effect to this day and for whatever reason, this remains the current DOJ policy.

Consequently, although the rule as interpreted still prohibits the intentional killings of whooping cranes as a protected species under the MBTA, the illegal shooting of whooping cranes has continued to plague Louisiana for years with very limited punishment meted out. Maybe this policy will change too, now, as we turn our binoculars to the returning migratory species this spring, with more confidence in their protection from senseless individual and industry actions.

-Ingrid von Kleydorff Tulane Law School, 1L



[Take action today and let your members of Congress know you support the Migratory Bird Protection Act.](#)

A MISTAKE BY THE LAKE ?

Many of those who enjoy the peace and quiet associated with the Lakefront's 100-year-old West End Park as well as the historical ambience of the New Basin Canal, or just being able to escape from the City to the shores of Lake Pontchartrain may not be aware all of that may end soon. A Washington DC developer, Oceana USA, LLC, has obtained permits from both the US Army Corps of Engineers (the "Corps") and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources ("LDNR") to proceed with a huge 15 story, 52 unit condominium Project with 52 parking spaces which will dwarf all other structures in the area. Unless members of the public raise strong objections at this time, the Project will soon proceed to the last stage of development before officials of the City of New Orleans, including the City Council. But there still may be some opportunity for public input to stop this Project right now.

The first question to address is how this Project reached this stage. In short, the public received no effective notice of the Project. The Project officially began when Richard Sackett, Oceana's principal who is a former member of the Orleans Levee Board and now a Florida resident, somehow obtained a dock lease along the west side of the Canal from the Orleans Levee District and then convinced OLD to remove the restrictive use as a dock with no requirement to conform to existing zoning regulations. This is significant since the Project is supposed to measure a minimum of 166 ft. in height, over 100 feet in excess of existing zoning requirements. Significantly, he also has obtained a dock lease on the east side of the Canal and it is unclear as to whether he eventually intends to proceed with additional projects directly across the Canal if this one is approved.

Once he obtained the unrestricted lease from the OLD, he then submitted a Joint Application for a Coastal Use Permit with DNR and for Section 404 (dredge and fill) and Section 10 (for structures in navigable waterways) Permits from the Corps. The latter were necessary because the project requires the placement of 800 yd.³ of fill in the Canal to build a foundation which will jut out into the Canal some 60 feet. This projection will greatly reduce the area and turning space available for the constant yacht and recreational boat traffic in the Canal from the nearby marinas. This is significant since there are two fuel docks located next to the proposed Project area such that the Project as designed may be creating a safety hazard.

Because the footprint of the proposed Project is located on the Canal as well as OLD lands and other State lands, notice was only published by the State in Baton Rouge and on the websites for the two agencies, and then for only a brief period of time. In addition, Oceana's permit application indicated OLD as the only adjacent landowner and made no mention of nearby businesses such as the fuel docks or of Southern Yacht Club ("SYC"). So no notice was ever sent to any of those neighbors or any of the citizens' organizations in the area. Not surprisingly, no one from the public commented on the state and federal permits given the lack of effective notice and the permits were granted.

In fact, SYC's Commodore received the first notice of the Project only *after* the LDNR and Corps permits had already issued when Oceana was in the process of pursuing a second round of permits and zoning variances for the Project from the City of New Orleans. Oddly, the City gave Oceana full responsibility for obtaining comments from the public on the variances and the project as a whole, and for summarizing them for the City, essentially placing Oceana in charge of its own permitting process. Not surprisingly, Oceana sent the notice required by City ordinances to neighbors in late 2020 amidst the distractions of the Thanksgiving holiday weekend when no one would be paying attention. Even more "curiouser" as Alice in Wonderland might have said, the notice was dated November 16, postmarked November 24, and received by recipients such as SYC on Saturday, November 28, leaving just one business day for any recipients to comment. Yet comment they did, bombarding Oceana's website to such an extent that Oceana temporarily abandoned its efforts with the City.

What is particularly surprising if not disappointing is the lack of scrutiny from all of the governmental officials involved who should have taken a more active role in analyzing this project. For instance, OLD approved the elimination of the dock lease restrictions with little fanfare and failed to include language requiring the Project to comply with existing zoning requirements. Consequently, although the height of the proposed Project is nearly three times the allowable height under applicable city zoning restrictions for the area, Oceana has no limitations in the OLD lease which would prevent Oceana from pursuing zoning variances with the City.

Perhaps the most disturbing if not bizarre avoidance of responsibility was that of the United States Coast Guard which took no active role in the permit process despite the fact that the project would create an obvious obstruction if not a hazard to navigation in the Canal. Reportedly, this was because the USCG believes the Canal is not a “navigable waterway” despite the constant traffic involving mega- yachts, sailing yachts and recreational vessels, and the Canal’s historical role as a highway of commerce into downtown New Orleans before it was mostly filled in beginning in the late 1930’s. Equally concerning was the willingness of both LDNR and the Corps to accept Oceana’s cursory answers to important questions regarding vehicular traffic studies, overburdening of existing infrastructure, and changes in hydrology or flow-rates in the Canal which present significant issues regarding drainage and flooding for the area. Lastly, no governmental officials addressed the significant environmental concerns associated with migratory bird deaths resulting from collisions with the massive amount of glass surfaces associated with the proposed 15 story Project.

All hope is not lost, however. Because of the public opposition to Oceana’s pursuit of zoning variances for the height of the Project as well as other delays, Oceana has not been able to proceed with construction within the deadlines set by the LDNR permit. As a result, Oceana was required to apply for a renewal of its Coastal Use Permit with LDNR, a process which allowed for public comment as well as input from other governmental entities. As the public has finally become aware of this Project, many comments were submitted, mostly in the form of objections to the Project, and several requests for a public hearing were made. If LDNR agrees to schedule a public hearing, this would be the time for significant public participation. This Project may be the first of many towering structures along the Canal, so if you are opposed to such development, please monitor for notice of that public hearing and make your voices heard.



Natives to Plant in Spring

By Wendy Rihner

Walt Whitman may have written that April is the cruelest month, but indeed, April is a glorious month for gardeners working with native plants. Half-way through March as I write, local native plant aficionados prep beds, choose plants, and some like me, propagate natives. You, too, can join in on this gardening frenzy and help attract more insect life, and consequently, more bird life into your backyard. Reliable pollinator-pleasing natives are now available at outlets in New Orleans and beyond.

But what should you purchase? Very reliable pollinator species easily obtained locally are any one of the *Rudbeckia* species. Brown-eyed Susan (*R. triloba*) is offered at the Pelican Greenhouse sales every Friday, Saturday and Sunday (2 Celebration Drive, New Orleans). Delta Flora Nursery also sells *Rudbeckia hirta*, (Black-eyed Susan), at 2701 Touro Street, New Orleans. Both of these *Rudbeckia* species with their spent blooms have seeds that seed-eating birds can enjoy. And of course, they are a food source for nectar-seeking insects.

Another sure-fire pollinator attractant are the Goldenrod species. Please note: Goldenrod does NOT cause allergies! For too long, this wonderful plant has suffered because of what RAGWEED does to those with allergies. However, Goldenrod species do well in New Orleans, and therefore, are found easily both at Delta Flora, Pelican Greenhouse and at Linda Auld's business Barber Laboratories (6444 Jefferson Hwy, Harahan). A few varieties that I have grown are Sweet Goldenrod and Seaside Goldenrod, both purchased locally.

When planting natives, gardeners do well to plant species that bloom at various times of the year, so that pollinators always have a food source. Goldenrod will brighten your autumn garden, and *Rudbeckia* will bloom in the heat of summer when many of the non-native garden varieties nearly give up.

One plant which blooms nearly year-round that I am quite fond of is the Gulf Coast Penstemon. The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds that visit my yard are happy to have it! Mine survived the February freeze! Visit a local native plant garden, and you would most likely find another Penstemon, Mississippi Penstemon (*Penstemon digitalis*). Bees and other insects love it! Both of these species are available at Pelican, Delta Flora and Barber Laboratories.

Oh, the opportunities we have to include native plants into our gardens! I have tried to mention only a few easily obtained and non-fussy natives for anyone starting out. I will guarantee that if you provide these species with their needed conditions (soil, light, water), you will be quite happy along with the wildlife in your yard.

**Please select
Orleans Audubon Society
when Shopping with AmazonSmile**

Please select Orleans Audubon Society as your designated charity when shopping with AmazonSmile. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to OAS. You can also sign in using OAS's direct charity link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7169988>.

Thank you for supporting OAS!



A BEGINNER'S ZINE TO BIRDING

THE PARKS, STREET CORNERS, AND
BACKYARDS OF
NEW ORLEANS



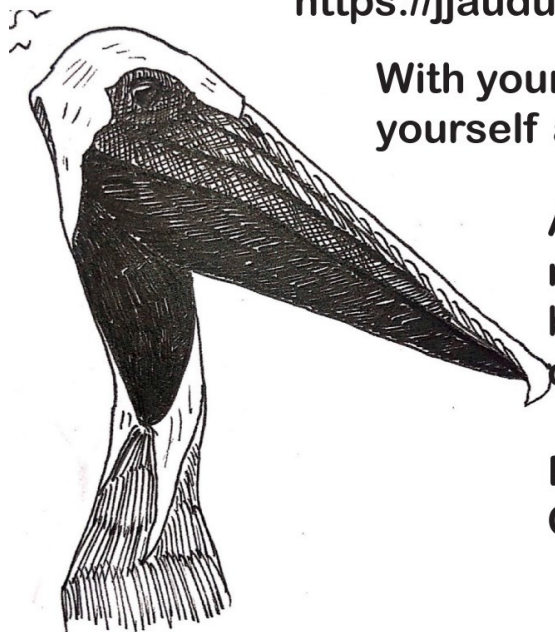
Learn about bird watching around New Orleans with this 28 page booklet!

Print copies now available for \$10 suggested
donation from Orleans Audubon Society at
<https://jjaudubon.net/beginners-birding-zine/>

With your donation, you'll buy one copy for
yourself and another for an area student.

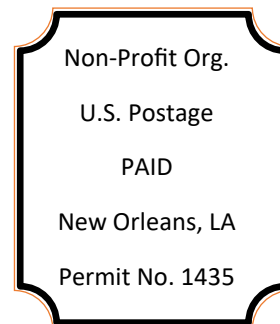
Are you an Orleans area teacher,
mentor, supervisor interested in
bringing some bird-centered
curriculum to your students?

Please contact us at
OrleansAudubon@aol.com



The SE Louisiana Chapter of the
National Audubon Society

Orleans Audubon Society
3623 Nashville Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70125



2021 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

It is time to elect the Orleans Audubon Society's officers for the upcoming 2-year term. You must be a member of the National Audubon Society or the Orleans Audubon Society to vote. Please complete the ballot below and mail it to:

Glenn Ousset, OAS Nominating Committee Chair, 71205 Barque Place, Abita Springs, LA 70420. You may also scan and email it to: gousset@bellsouth.net. Ballots must be mailed by April 30, 2021, to be counted. Call Glenn if you have questions regarding the election: (504) 495-4284.

OAS 2021 ELECTION BALLOT

Directions: **Circle** the candidate's name or write in a name for each office.

OFFICE	CANDIDATE	
PRESIDENT	Jennifer Coulson	_____ (write in)
VICE-PRESIDENT	Joelle Finley	_____ (write in)
SECRETARY	Sherry DeFrancesch	_____ (write in)
TREASURER	Mary Joe Krieger	_____ (write in)