



Newsletter of the Orleans Audubon Society.

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Volume: XXXVIII Issue: 3

March/April 2023

OAS PROGRAMS

In the Footsteps of Audubon

Speaker: Denis Clavreul

Tuesday, March 21

6:30 PM social, 7:00 PM program

Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur De Lis Drive, New Orleans, LA 70124 (Lakeview).

Denis Clavreul will tell us about his new book *In the Footsteps of Audubon* and his journey following John James Audubon across a great diversity of regions in the U.S. and Canada -- from the coasts of Louisiana and the Florida Keys to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and the cliffs of the Yellowstone River.

In the Footsteps of Audubon invites us see the world as Audubon saw it – and to see it as it is now. Clavreul created hundreds of drawings and watercolors of the landscapes in which Audubon had worked, and of the plants and birds that Audubon saw and painted. These are complimented by a small selection of Audubon's paintings as well as passages from Audubon's journals. Clavreul also documents his own encounters with modern people who live each day with nature, many of whom are engaged in preserving nature, reflecting the artist's training as a biologist as well as a painter. To quote the author: "In light of the huge ecological disruptions that we humans face, I realized shortly after beginning this project that sketching and painting nature was no longer enough for me. This is why I go beyond pictures that simply evoke the beauty of landscapes and of birds to show the lives, dreams and worries of people who live in contact with nature--and their attempts at improving their understanding and preserving of their

environment. My goal is to make this book not only a part of today's reality, but to also link the past, present and future."



Denis Clavreul is considered one of the best French naturalist artists, having published more than 30 books. In the forward to Clavreul's latest book, David Allen Sibley writes, "Denis's watercolors are extraordinary, atmospheric and immediate, eliciting emotion and recognition with deceptively simple patterns of color. I think of paintings like these as the visual equivalent of poetry. A few carefully chosen lines and colors capture the essential features, just enough to suggest a place, a mood, a slant of light, and we are transported to the scene." *In the Footsteps of Audubon*, is available from Princeton University Press. For more about the artist, visit:

<https://www.denisclavreul.com/>

Roseate Spoonbills on nests



Homegrown National Park

Speaker: Wendy Rihner, OAS Education Chair

Tuesday, April 18

6:30 PM social, 7:00 PM program

Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur De Lis Drive, New Orleans, LA 70124 (Lakeview).

The national park system is incredibly important, but we cannot rely on these islands to preserve biodiversity. And in the face of climate change, we do not have the luxury of time. To increase biodiversity *outside* of parks, Doug Tallamy, author of *The Nature of Oaks* and *Nature's Best Hope*, offers all of us the Homegrown National Park program where regular people can "regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function" in their yards. Come learn about how you can turn your yard into your personal national park, where you can purchase native plants, and why invasive plants must be removed to boost biodiversity.

After 30 years of teaching English at Delgado Community College, Wendy Rihner retired to garden and bird! In addition to being the Education Chair of the Orleans Audubon Society, Wendy is the vice-president of Wild Ones Pontchartrain Basin Chapter (St. Tammany and Washington Parishes), a national organization which advocates for native plants and eco-restoration. She is also a member of the Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans, a non-profit that also advocates for native gardening in yards throughout the Greater New Orleans area.

OAS Spring Banquet

Birding Ecuador: the Napo River watershed from the Andes to the Amazon

Speakers: Jennifer Coulson and David Muth

Tuesday, May 16

6:30 p.m. cash bar; 7:00 p.m. dinner

Augie's Restaurant, Elmwood Oasis Center, 6005 Jefferson Hwy, Harahan, LA 70123

Cost: \$35.00 per person. Reservations required by May 1; see reservation form on page 8.



Plum-throated Cotinga]

Ecuador's Napo River provides easy access to the Amazon Basin. Napo's moist forests are among the richest in species biodiversity in the entire Amazon Basin, ranking among the most diverse in the world. In 2021, Tom and Jennifer Coulson, David Muth and Becky Lloyd, birded the Napo River watershed from the headwaters in the Andes Mountains to the flooded forests of the Amazon Basin. We encountered more than 390 species of birds with many Amazonian specialties. Our lifer list topped 100 and included nesting Hoatzins hissing and grunting their alarms, and Bare-necked Fruitcrows, a cotinga, dominating the skies like our crows back home. The canoe afforded quiet transport to sneak up on Silvered Antbird, Orange-crowned Manakin and Cream-colored Woodpecker. We mustered the courage to traipse across a 940 feet long boardwalk suspended in and above the canopy at 94 feet high. From this vantage Plum-throated Cotingas, Turquoise Tanagers, Yellow-bellied Dacnis, and Black-headed Parrots preened and flashed their feathers and foraged at eye level while Slate-colored Hawks and Slender-billed Kites stoically took in the morning sun. As the air warmed, Greater Yellow-headed Vultures glided by, some almost within reach. From a motorized boat on the vast Napo River we spied enormous Amazonian Umbrellabirds perched in trees along the north bank while Swallow-winged Puffbirds launched from dominant bare twigs to sally straight up into the air. On the Napo's successional islands we found specialists of this unique habitat such as the bright yellow and black Oriole Blackbird, the skulking and hard to see White-bellied Spinetail and a very cooperative Olive-spotted Hummingbird. A thrilling Ladder-tailed Nightjar also flushed at our feet and returned to rest on the island sand. Non-bird lifers included caiman lizards basking on vines over the canoe and giant otters swimming up to the lodge's outdoor restaurant. Our first mucky hike was rewarded with two families of night monkeys peering sheepishly from high crevices in rainforest giants. Join us to share in our Andes to Amazon adventure.

OAS Birding Trips



Bring binoculars, field guides, bug spray, rain gear, sunscreen and refreshments. Boots and cell phones may be useful. Snacks and drinks are recommended. Contact the trip leader if you have questions. eBird users, please share your eBird account email address with the trip leader and the trip leader or designee will keep the trip list to share with participants.

Audubon Park and the Fly - Half Day Trip

Date: Saturday, March 4

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Meet in the parking lot off Magazine St. (St. Charles side of Magazine) near the golf club house.

Leader: Peter Yaukey (504) 400-3286, pyaukey@uhcno.edu

City Park-Couturie Forest - Half Day Trip

Date: Saturday March 18

Time: 8:00 a.m.

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

Leader: Claire Thomas (985) 630-3793, claire@clairedthomas.com

Grand Isle - All Day Trip

Date: Saturday, April 1

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Meet at defunct Moran's grocery/gas station on the corner of Hwy. 1 and Hwy 3090 (Fourchon Rd.) right where you come off of the new bridge. Note: The new bridge across the Intracoastal Waterway is a toll bridge.

Leaders: Ken Harris and Joelle Finley (504) 715-2647, jjf1946@gmail.com

Big Branch National Wildlife Refuge - Half Day Trip

Date: Saturday, May 13

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Meet at Boy Scout Road parking lot. Take Hwy 190 2.7 miles east of Lacombe to Transmitter Rd; turn toward Lake Pontchartrain and drive to T-junction; turn right and go to the second parking lot on the left.

Leader: Holly Morales (985) 264-4406, holly@moralesmusic.com

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, Barataria Unit - Half Day Trip

Date: Saturday, May 20

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Meet in the Bayou Coquille Parking Lot. Take the Crescent City Connection, about 5 miles after reaching the West Bank, take Exit 4B, the Barataria Boulevard Exit. Follow the signs for the National Historic Park

Leader: Peter Yaukey (504) 400-3286, pyaukey@uhcno.edu

Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge and Honey Island - Half Day Trip

Date: Saturday, May 27

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Meet at the entrance to Honey Island Wildlife Management Area, Exit 5B (Honey Island Swamp) off of I-59. Good chance to see Swallow-tailed Kite and 10 species of breeding warblers including Swainson's.

Leader: Glenn Ousset (504) 495-4284, gousset@bellsouth.net

Spring Birding Festivals

Grand Isle Migratory Bird Festival

Dates: April 14-15

<https://www.townofgrandisle.com/events/grand-isle-migratory-bird-festival/>

St. Bernard Bird Festival

Dates: May 5-6

<https://www.visitstbernard.com/events/st-bernard-bird-festival>



Special Thanks to Ariel Kay!

OAS extends our heartfelt thanks to Ariel Kay for her many years of service to the Society. Ariel will be stepping down from the OAS Board of Directors in March because she and her family are moving to Vermont. Ariel joined the OAS Board of Directors on August 20, 2013 and has served continually for the last 9.5 years. She helped with OAS Education and Outreach. Ariel proposed building a bird banding program, planning for which is ongoing. She also served on the Community Outreach Committee, OAS's equity and diversity committee. Ariel has also been particularly helpful in advising OAS about how to provide technical comments to federal agencies, instructing us in what is most relevant. She shared her expertise about investment strategies when serving on OAS's Investment Committee. She also assisted with organizing the membership lists and mailings. Everyone really enjoyed learning about her Master's Thesis work in the Shenandoah River system studying the effects of mercury on Belted Kingfishers and other birds when she spoke at an OAS meeting.

We are truly grateful for all of Ariel's talents and contributions, and we will miss her bright and cheery smile! We wish Ariel, her husband Adam, and daughter Aeowyn all the best in Vermont and hope they are greeted by the songs of Cape May Warblers! We also hope they will return to New Orleans soon to visit!

Looking Forward to April Wendy Rihner

Springtime cannot get here soon enough! Migration will be upon us, roadways will blush with the blooms of Pink Evening Primrose, and crawfish boils will beckon. Orleans Audubon will join in on some very important spring festivities, and we hope you can attend!

On Wednesday, April 19, Orleans Audubon will participate in the Earth Day celebration hosted by the University of New Orleans. This event will take place in the breezeway of the library, from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Various groups will also exhibit and offer freebies. After your visit, you can walk over to the woodlot that Orleans Audubon and the Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans have been restoring with native trees, shrubbery, and wildflowers.

Second, on the following Friday and Saturday, April 21 and 22, Wendy Rihner will be selling native plants at the Northshore Garden Show and Plant Sale to raise funds for Orleans Audubon. This northshore event takes place at the St. Tammany Parish Fairgrounds in Covington. In keeping with the Earth Day theme, Rihner hopes folks new to natives will come and shop and learn about National Audubon's Plants for Birds mission and why natives play an important role in bird conservation.

Chickadee Natives will also be selling natives at the Northshore Garden Show and Plant sale, but proceeds will not go toward Orleans Audubon.

If you wish to help volunteer with either of these activities, please contact Wendy Rihner at wrihner@gmail.com

The Metairie Eagles: August 2021 to Present, February 2023

A pair of Bald Eagles had nested in an oak tree in the backyard of a home at the corner of Cleveland and Kawanee. They became known as “The Metairie Eagles” as nearby residents observed several years of expert nest building and the wonder of eaglets hatching, fledging, and departing.

The morning after Hurricane Ida in August of 2021, bird lovers in Metairie woke to the unmistakable evidence of disaster: the eagles’ oak tree had fallen into the nearby house, and with the nest tree gone, many assumed the Metairie Eagles would seek safer climes.

However, like so many displaced by the storm, the Metairie pair relocated not too terribly far away and quickly began to build a new nest there, this time, in a pine tree.

They hatched and reared one eaglet in the spring of 2022, and that eaglet successfully fledged.

In the fall of 2022, the Metairie eagles returned to their new home, and they began to build up their nest even more.

Despite more severe weather, this second nest has survived, as they made efficient use of neighborhood debris to protect it from the elements. Like so many Metairie buildings, it sports a piece of tarp a full year and a half after the storm.

As of mid-February, 2023, there are two eaglets in the nest, and both adults take turns standing guard and providing food to the new family.

The nest is easily seen in its new location. It is on private property, and I have not had any interaction with the owners of the home where the tree is located.

Photos are graciously provided by Claire McDonnell, who has been following and photographing the eagles at their new location.



It's so wonderful to see this pair return, and all of us monitoring the nest are hoping for a successful fledging of the new brood.

Happy Birding!

Terri Skelton

MetairieEagles by ClaireMcDonnell



Please Support Orleans Audubon Society on GiveNOLA Day - May 2, 2023

Like what you're seeing? If so, please support OAS on GiveNOLA Day. OAS needs to raise \$5000 for a variety of important local conservation projects:

Filing fees in our ongoing legal battle challenging St. Tammany Parish for its lack of public input in developing the "New Directions – 2040" economic development plan. (The plan proposes large-scale rezoning and development of enormous warehouses for several sites along the I-12 corridor without proper attention to the impact on watersheds, drainage, and other environmental concerns. See the December 2022-January 2023 issue of *The Ibis* for details.)

Tracking data expenses for the Swallow-tailed Kite GPS-satellite tracking project.

Reimburse its Directors for travel expenses in their work to conserve the Eastern Black Rail, Whooping Crane and Rusty Blackbird. In the case of the former, OAS is opposing the siting of a liquefied natural gas facility at the mouth of Calcasieu Pass in southwestern Louisiana, on top of what we believe to be the most important Eastern Black Rail habitat in the entire state.

Resurfacing the boardwalk and repairing the observation deck and eagle-osprey nest platforms at the Marguerite Moffett Audubon Sanctuary in Terrebonne Parish. The wooden boardwalk was badly damaged in several storms and the new plan will involve decking materials that will survive storm surges.

Now in its 10th year, GiveNOLA Day is a 24-hour event on Tuesday, May 2nd, hosted by the Greater New Orleans Foundation. In addition to drawings for prizes, GiveNOLA also provides lagniappe, partial matching funds, which at the very least cover transaction fees, but often contribute more to your cause. Your donation to OAS will help birds and the environment. Together we can make our region stronger and create a thriving community for all. Visit Orleans Audubon Society's GiveNOLA profile at: <https://www.givenola.org/orleansaudubon>

Mail-in donations are always welcome as well. Please make your check payable to "Orleans Audubon Society" and mail it to: Mary Joe Krieger, OAS Treasurer, 3623 Nashville Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125.

NOLA Rooftop Nesting Program Kick-Off

The 2023 breeding bird season is almost here, and the National Audubon Society (Audubon Delta) and Orleans Audubon Society are partnering to build-out an urban coastal bird stewardship program which will identify, monitor, and protect rooftop nesting birds in the New Orleans area. Beginning in early May of our pilot year, Audubon Delta staff will make routine visits to historical nesting locations to identify active rooftops with focal nesting species, including Least Tern, Black Skimmer, Gull-billed Tern, and Common Nighthawk. Once active rooftops are confirmed, Audubon Delta will work with local building management and community stakeholders at these sites to develop best stewardship and monitoring guidelines for nesting birds on rooftops. We anticipate implementing intensive monitoring and stewardship practices by 2024.

We look forward to having OAS members become involved in this work! If you know of any locations in or around New Orleans where you have observed coastal bird species nesting, please contact our Southeast Louisiana Coastal Technician, Chloe St. Germain-Vermillion at chloe.sgvermillion@audubon.org to report your sightings! We are thrilled to have the support and partnership of OAS, and we are very excited to see where this program takes us. Please keep your eyes and ears out for these species this spring and summer and stay tuned for ways you can be involved in helping these birds succeed in the future.



2023 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, 2023, to be counted. Call Glenn if you have questions regarding the election: (504) 495-4284.

OAS 2023 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)

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 _____ ☐ \$20 OAS-only membership
Address _____ ☐ \$100 membership + pelican print
_____ ☐ \$200 membership + heron print
_____ ☐ \$300 lifetime membership + egret print
Email _____



The SE Louisiana Chapter of the
National Audubon Society

Orleans Audubon Society
3623 Nashville Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70125

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BANQUET RESERVATION FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 1

Clip and mail with check payable to Orleans Audubon Society to: Mary Joe Krieger, 3623 Nashville Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125 Phone: 504-258-3396 maryjkrieger@gmail.com

ABSOLUTELY NO RESERVATIONS TAKEN AFTER MAY 1

Banquet: _____ persons @ \$35.00 \$ _____ TOTAL \$ _____

Names and email addresses of Attendees _____

For each person attending, choose one of the following entrées:

Catfish Pecan _____ Chicken St. John _____ Vegan _____

Veal Parmesan _____ Catfish Lafitte _____ Gluten-free _____