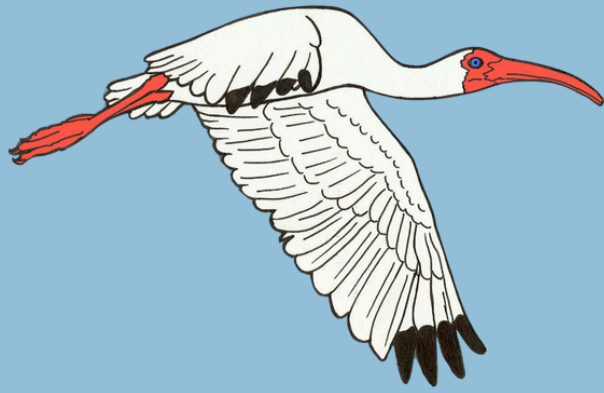


the Ibis



Newsletter of the Orleans Audubon Society
Volume: XX Issue: 1

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
September-November 2026

Fall 2026 Programs

Annual Wine and Cheese Party

Tuesday, September 15th
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur de Lis (Lakeview)



OAS's annual wine and cheese party is a great way to get to know local birders and environmentalists, visit with old friends and make new ones. Hope to see you there!

Is Life a Beach for Coastal Breeding Birds? Re-evaluating Nest Site Selection in a Changing World

Speaker: Kiara Valentine, Tulane University
Tuesday, October 20th
6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program
Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur de Lis (Lakeview)

Imagine trying to raise a family on a busy beach where predators are abundant, storms flood your home, and heatwaves threaten your unborn young. This is the daily reality for beach-nesting birds. Their already tough job is getting harder due to coastal development, increasing predators, and climate change, which brings rising seas and deadly heat. My research addresses the question: does how a bird nests determine its fate in a warming world?

Kiara Valentine earned a B.S. in Biology from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2009 and worked as a biological technician for several years before landing at St. Vincent NWR. There she worked with beach-nesting birds, marine turtles, and gopher tortoises. She is currently a PhD student in the department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Tulane University. Kiara is interested in how climate change affects nest-site selection, fitness, and conservation initiatives around the Gulf coast.



What Tropical Birds are Telling Us: Is Reforestation in Northwestern Ecuador Working?

Speakers: Donata and Ben Henry
Tuesday, November 17th
6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program
Community Church Unitarian Universalist, 6690 Fleur de Lis (Lakeview)

How do we know when conservation is working? What can we learn from the birds? In this talk Donata Henry will share the results of five years of mist-netting in an area of active forest management and restoration in the Choco Rainforest in Ecuador. And of course, you'll get a close-up look at some extraordinary tropical birds!



Marcie Blanchard Joins the Board of Directors!

Greetings fellow OAS members! As the newest addition to the OAS Board of Directors, I have been asked to tell you a little bit about myself.

The love of birds in my family goes all the way back to my grandfather, Eddie Downs, who was an avid and skilled outdoorsman. He instilled a love and respect for the natural world in my mother, and in turn, they both handed it down to me. Our family enjoyed many summers hiking, fishing, and paddling the multitude of waterways in the Adirondack Mountains of Upstate New York. We were also steady and consistent backyard bird feeders, ensuring that everyone in our yard was well fed, especially during snowstorms.

Birding took a more serious turn for me while studying Field Ornithology with Dr. Bill Shields at Cranberry Lake Biological Station in the Summer of 1987. After completing my B.S. in Environmental & Forest Biology at SUNY-Environmental Science & Forestry at Syracuse, I worked in the field for various institutions such as the Peregrine Fund, National Park and Forest Services, as well as graduate student research projects at SUNY-ESF and University of Wyoming.

In the 90's I somehow slid into a music industry career. When people ask how I wound up going from environmental biology to the madness of the music industry, I tell them, "It's all wildlife, Baby!" That career led me to New Orleans where I enjoyed serving venerable institutions such as French Quarter Festivals Inc. (Director of Operations) and Tipitina's (Box Office Manager, etc). In 2017, I pivoted to the world of accounting. My current position has me coming back full circle to my alma mater, LSU New Orleans, where I work as a Grant Administration Specialist in the Office of Research.

I'm excited to join this highly dedicated team of OAS board members. I hope to bring my skills as an accountant to help ensure our chapter's continued fiscal solvency, while bringing my experience as a wildlife biologist to assist our ongoing environmental advocacy efforts.

I look forward to seeing you out in the field!

Marcie

OAS Birding Field 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. Any last minute changes will be posted on the events page of the Orleans Audubon Society website, so check <https://jjaudubon.net/events/> for updates.
- At the discretion of the leader(s), trips will be divided into groups if the number of attendees becomes too large. Please be considerate of others: if you have seen a bird, move out of the way for those behind you.
- **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.

Couturie Forest, City Park - Half Day Trip, Saturday September 26th, 7:00 a.m.

Meet at the Couturie parking lot on Harrison Ave, just east of the police stables and City Park volunteer house.

Leaders: John Keegan (504) 296-9486, keeganjohnadam@gmail.com, and Marcie Blanchard marcieblanchard@yahoo.com

Grand Isle - All Day Trip, Saturday October 10th, 8:00 a.m.

Meet at 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: Chloe St. Germain-Vermillion (337) 804-2658, chloe.sgvermillion@audubon.org, and John Nelson (504) 258-1009, johnnygnelsoniv@gmail.com

Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge - Half Day Trip, Saturday October 24th, 8:00 a.m.

Meet at the Bayou Ridge Trail entrance located on US 90 (Chef Menteur Highway) across from Recovery Road in New Orleans East. Exit I-510; go left on Hwy 90, about 4 miles to the parking area on the left.

Leader: John Nelson (504) 258-1009, johnnygnelsoniv@gmail.com

W. Ravena Road, Diamond and Fort Jackson - All Day Trip, Saturday November 7th, 8:00 a.m.

Cross the Crescent City Connection, on Westbank Exp. exit Hwy 23 (Lafayette St/Bell Chase Hwy), drive 5 miles and meet in Breaux Mart parking lot, 7902 LA-23, Belle Chasse, LA 70037, on the right just past the Intersection with Hwy 406 (Woodland Hwy). Lunch at a Subway.

Leaders: John Nelson (504) 258-1009, johnnygnelsoniv@gmail.com, and Ken Harris kenharris43@gmail.com

2026 Fall Birding Events

Ruby-throated Hummingbird Celebration!

Saturday, September 19th, 7:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Hammond Research Station, 21549 Old Covington Hwy

The Baton Rouge Audubon Society is once again partnering with the LSU AgCenter Hammond Research Station in Hammond to hold a Ruby-throated Hummingbird Celebration. The last two weeks are the peak of fall migration for the Ruby-throated Hummingbird as they move through our area on the way to their wintering grounds in Mexico and Central America.



The Hammond Research Station in Hammond focuses on plants for the home garden and grows many species of plants that are great for hummingbirds. Many will be in full bloom in September, right on time for the birds passing through. You can learn about many of these plants from Tangipahoa Parish Master Gardeners that will be on hand to answer questions.

Other activities for the day:

- Hummingbird banding by Dr. Erik Johnson. See the birds up close and *maybe* you'll be one of the lucky ones that gets to hold a hummingbird
- Learn about hummingbird plants from Wild Ones of Greater Baton Rouge and Pontchartrain chapters.
- Learn about hummingbird plants from gardening experts!
- Purchase hummingbird feeders from Wild Birds Unlimited BTR and Backyard Birds and Gardens in Covington
- Learn about the natural history of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird as well as about other hummingbirds that may visit in winter in La.
- Watch hummingbirds in action in the gardens and at the feeder observation stations

Bartram Biobash

Friday, September 25th, Saturday, September 26th, and Sunday, September 27th

Pelican Park Nature Club

Registration required for all participants!

Learn about Louisiana's diverse flora and fauna during this three-day family-friendly event! Activities include birding, herping, mothing, dip-netting and much more!

Please

visit <https://pelicanpark.recdesk.com/Community/Program/Detail?programId=3313> to view the events schedule and how to register.

visit



Joelle Finley Memorial Education Fund

2026 Report

Investing in the Future of Wildlife Research and Conservation through Youth Scholarships

Educating the next generation of conservationists and environmentalists is of utmost importance to safeguarding our natural world's future. Our youth are the nation's most vital resource to ensuring the conservation of biodiversity and to tackling the future's toughest environmental challenges. For the second consecutive year, member donations were matched by a grant from the McDaniel Charitable Foundation! This generous grant helped us stretch our dollars and reach more youths. In response to the population crisis facing North American birds, OAS focused its 2026 youth scholarships on training in birding, ornithology and bird conservation.

OAS's 2026 youth scholarship program activities included sending Ezra and Oliver Garber to a birding camp in the Chiricahua Mountains. OAS also provided support for the Minden High School Nature Club. Lastly, as a shining example of how these scholarships make a lasting difference, OAS's 2025 scholarship recipient, Juniper Falterman, returned to the Washington Youth Summit for the Environment in 2026, but this time as an intern! Now let's hear from some of OAS's youth scholars about their experiences!



If you want to invest in the future of conservation and make a difference in young peoples' lives, please consider donating to the Joelle Finley Memorial Education Fund. Make checks payable to "Orleans Audubon Society" and note "Joelle Finley" on the memo line. Mail to: Mary Joe Krieger, OAS Treasurer, 3623 Nashville Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125. Donations may also be made using the PayPal "Donate" button on the OAS website: <https://jjaudubon.net/donate/> . If using PayPal, reference Joelle Finley, or send an email note to OrleansAudubon@aol.com. Thank you to all who have contributed thus far!

Young Birders' Camp in the Chiricahuas **By Ezra Garber**

Waking up every morning to the sounds of the Chiricahuas at a remote research station and stepping out into one of the country's premier birding locations was something I'll never forget. This summer, I received a scholarship from the Orleans Audubon Society to attend a young birders camp based out of the Southwestern Research Station (SWRS) in the Chiricahua Mountains of Arizona, one of the most renowned birding locations in the U.S.



The SWRS is a remote research station in the Chiricahua Mountains, where we stayed. It was amazing to wake up to the sound of all the birds singing. Most mornings, I would wake up early, and one of the other campers and I would go down to the feeder station, mostly hummingbird feeders. I don't think I've ever seen so many hummingbirds in my life. Then we went on early-morning field trips, and we would eat breakfast before the main field trip, which we usually got back from a little after noon. Then we had classes and presentations in the afternoon, went owling for an hour or two at night, and did it all over again the next day.

We had a great time and saw so many amazing birds I'd been dreaming of seeing all my life. The Flame-colored Tanager might have been my favorite—it's hard to say. We were at South Fork in Cave Creek Canyon when I found it. We were somewhat spread out at the time, and I was by myself when I heard a bird I didn't recognize, but I had a feeling it was something exciting.

There had been a Flame-colored Tanager seen at this location in May, but it hadn't been seen for about two weeks, so you can imagine how excited I was when I finally found the bird I had been hearing, and it turned out to be a Flame-colored Tanager! I quickly started taking as many photos as I could, and after I got several good pics, I ran back to tell the others what I had found. It was such an amazing feeling to finally see this bird after dreaming about it all my life and studying it in my field guides.



Flame-colored Tanager, photo by Ezra Garber

With 44 lifers, it was a trip I'll never forget. Thanks to OAS, my older brother, Oliver, and I were able to attend the camp. We had a great time and saw so many amazing birds. I'm grateful to the Orleans Audubon Society for making this trip possible.

Intern for Washington Youth Summit on the Environment

By Juniper Falterman

Two summers ago, I attended the Washington Youth Summit on the Environment (WYSE) as a National Youth Delegate from Mandeville, Louisiana. Orleans Audubon helped me participate with a partial scholarship grant, and this summer I attended as an intern. WYSE is an intensive six-day-long conference that fosters leadership in environmental issues, sustainability, and conservation in high school juniors and seniors across the country. Throughout the week, 300 delegates have the opportunity to meet like-minded individuals, visit national monuments and museums, and listen to guest speakers from a variety of different fields.

As an intern, I discovered the behind-the-scenes workings for such a large and influential program. It was eye-opening to see how much effort goes into the logistics and creation of the conference. My specific role was one of two Speaker Interns, and I helped write the introductions, thank yous, and biographies for the 23 speakers (the speakers come from many disciplines, and you can read more about them on the WYSE website at wyse.gmu.edu under the “Content” tab). Within this role, I was also lucky enough to introduce myself after most of the talks. Emerson Smith (Speaker Intern, Montana), Nicole Johnson (Missouri, Social Media), and Cora Toner (California, Logistics) were the other interns throughout this mission, and we were a fantastic and productive team. The week before the delegates arrived, we were able to take the metro into D.C., explore, and get dinner together after work. It was exciting to meet and learn about them.

In addition, since I had attended as a delegate the previous year, I was able to nominate environmentally conscious high schoolers from my community. I suggested Mandeville High School rising senior Lucille Robert, who attended the conference and had as much of an influential experience as I did.



WYSE Interns (from left to right): Cora Toner, Nicole Johnson, Juniper Falterman, Emerson Smith

In short, I had an amazing summer in D.C., and I am forever appreciative to the Orleans Audubon Society for helping me to attend the WYSE in 2025, which led to the 2026 internship. Even though WYSE is short, the schedule is packed, and you meet people from all over the country, those moments stick with you for a long time.

Book Review: Feather Wars

By Wendy Rihner

What do the Black Hand, women's hats and John Burroughs all have in common? They all play a prominent role in the early days of bird conservation, and all contributed in no small part to the creation of today's National Audubon Society. James H. McCommons' *The Feather Wars and the Crusade to Save America's Birds* is a fascinating retelling of perhaps one of the most important battles in American environmental history: the fight to save birds with the establishment of Audubon as the logical, if not hotly contested, goal. McCommons deftly weaves the stories of familiar heroes- John Burroughs, George Bird Grinnell, Frank Chapman, and important women advocates - Florence Merriam and Harriet Hemenway - in with those of less enlightened and dark impulses. McCommons takes us from the mid-19th Century with its "shotgun ornithologists" shooting birds for identification purposes and rabid duck hunters - to the 1930s with stars like Jay "Ding" Darling and Roger Tory Peterson.

But the points in between in this trajectory are often not as familiar as the personages of Roger Tory Peterson or Frank Chapman. For instance, McCommons writes of the xenophobia that often drove bird conservation as numbers of southern European immigrants, most often Italians, arrived on our shores. One conservationist, William T. Hornaday, the first director of the New York Zoological Park, believed "the lower classes of southern Europe are a menace to our wildlife". Of course, the nationwide slaughter of songbirds for food was quite common before the 20th Century, but unfortunately, so was the xenophobia of birds' early advocates. It also cannot be disputed that immigrants targeted game wardens hired to protect birds, thereby increasing xenophobia and anti-Italian sentiment. For instance, in 1906, Rocco Racco a leader in the Black Hand, an extortion and blackmail racket preying on successful Italian immigrants, murdered a Pennsylvania game warden, Seeley Houk.

Slaughter is the main theme throughout *The Feather Wars*. Readers will wince at the many incidents of bird massacres, from the fate of the Passenger Pigeon to the Big Lake Duck Wars where thousands of ducks were killed by hunters allowed to take up to 25 ducks a day. How much money will a barrel of pickled Baltimore Orioles bring in? So commonplace was the slaughter of birds that wealthy women promenading in hats decorated by Egret feathers or taxadermied songbirds made no waves. Fortunately, a few of those wealthy women put an end to the ridiculous millinery trend.

These wealthy women, often considered pesky by male ornithologists, made invaluable contributions that readers will not want to overlook. Florence Merriam was the first to use the term "birding". According to McCommons, the publication of Merriam's book, *A-birding on a Bronco*, indicated that bird study was no longer the sole property of academics and ornithologists. Hoping to ignite a "bird hat" boycott, Hemenway and her cousin Minna B. Hall scoured a registry that listed the names and addresses of the women of Boston's wealthy and middle class private clubs, targeting those who were known to wear feathers (and even some who they only suspected of such poor fashion taste). Along with William Brewster and other prominent ornithologists of the American Ornithology Union, these women formed the first Audubon Society in Massachusetts.

The Feather Wars, though gruesome in parts out of necessity, is a well-researched book that is quite relevant today as we face a biodiversity crisis fueled by the age-old wanton greed and carelessness of tech robber barons and the politicians who cower before them. Some readers may find his thorough discussions a bit too detailed, but these discussions do not lessen the quality of McCommons' work. The scope of American bird conservation history is expansive and requires a treatment equally expansive.

The Stamms' Purple Martin Update

By Andrew Wilson, OAS Conservation Chair, (JD, LLM Env. Law, Tulane Law School)

In March of this year, Andrew and Carol Stamm, a retired couple in Harahan, Louisiana, were convicted of the misdemeanor of creating a nuisance after a few neighbors complained that their 38-year tradition of hosting a purple martin colony created a public nuisance due to excessive bird droppings. Each year, the Stamms have put up three poles featuring 52 specialized nesting gourds approved by the Purple Martin Conservation Association to support the migratory birds from February to June without any complaints whatsoever. As with other Purple Martin “landlords” around the country, the Stamms are simply trying to provide nesting areas for purple martins whose numbers in Louisiana and elsewhere are rapidly dwindling due to loss of nesting habitat, mostly hollow trees..



Times Picayune/The Advocate

The nuisance charges were filed against the Stamms after a small group of neighbors filed complaints starting in 2023, citing heavy bird droppings on cars, sidewalks, patios and other areas. The Harahan City Ordinance under which the Stamms were charged requires only that the Stamms remove the droppings left by the purple martins; they have no responsibility for droppings from other birds. Yet, the Stamms offered to pressure-wash neighbors' exteriors every two weeks regardless of the birds involved, and also to provide unlimited car washes during nesting season, but the offer was declined. The disgruntled neighbors, instead, demanded removal of some or all of the nesting structures, despite the fact that neither the Mayor nor the City of Harahan has injunctive power under the law to order the removal of the structures. Moreover, removal of the structures would cause great harm to the birds since they have high site fidelity, meaning they return to the same nests each year, and would have nowhere to go if their homes were taken away.

Eventually, in March 2026, a trial was held before a packed Harahan court room full of neighbors and others who support the Stamms and their efforts to save Purple Martins. The trial took place in the Mayor's Court before the Mayor's personal attorney who presided as Magistrate. Previously, at a public hearing, the Mayor had stated that if it were up to him he would have "fed them Alka-Seltzer," resulting in a slow, painful death for the birds. So, not surprisingly, the Magistrate convicted the Stamms and fined them \$50, so the Stamms appealed



to the 24th Judicial District Court in Gretna, where the case was assigned to Judge Stephen Enright, Jr. A non-jury trial de novo (a "do-over") is set for December 2, 2026 at 9am, and a hearing date for pre-trial motions is set for September 23, 2026 at 9am, where the Stamms will attempt to have the case dismissed. Since this case is now a national concern due to the possibility of an adverse precedent, the Stamms welcome all supporters to appear at the motion hearing, or, at the trial if it takes place,, wearing their Purple Martin t-shirts, if possible, available here: <https://www.bonfire.com/purple-martin-support160>.



Purple Martin shirt available for sale to support the Stamms at <https://www.bonfire.com/purple-martin-support160>.

NEW BIRD PRINTS!

Available through OAS-Only Membership!

When you join as an Orleans Audubon Society-only member, all proceeds go toward OAS and local conservation efforts. Using this option, you will not become a member of National Audubon or receive Audubon Magazine.

Join/renew at the \$150.00 donation level and receive a fine art glicée of an American Avocet or a Limpkin. Both prints fit into an 18" x 24" frame and have a 1" border. PLEASE REMEMBER TO SPECIFY YOUR CHOICE OF PRINT.



American Avocet by Joan M. Garvey



Limpkin by Joan M. Garvey

If you become a lifetime member of OAS, by joining or renewing at the \$300.00 donation level, you will receive both of the new fine art glicée prints: American Avocet and Limpkin.

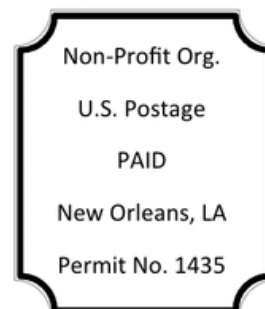
All prints are signed and numbered limited edition fine art giclée of watercolor paintings by artist, Joan M. Garvey. Additional OAS-only membership fine art print of local birds are available on the OAS website: <https://jjaudubon.net/join/>

To join or renew by check, please make your check payable to "Orleans Audubon Society" and mail it to: Orleans Audubon Society Attn: Mary Joe Krieger, Treasurer 3623 Nashville Avenue New Orleans, LA 70125. Please also provide your name, mailing address, email address, and choice of print.

Or join by making a donation using PAYPAL by clicking on the "Donate" button what may be found here: <https://jjaudubon.net/join/>

The SE Louisiana Chapter of the
National Audubon Society

Orleans Audubon Society
3623 Nashville Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70125



To join or renew by check, 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.

Please also provide your name, mailing address and email address.

To join or renew using PayPal, please visit: <https://jjaudubon.net/join/>

Name

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- ☐ \$20 OAS-only membership
- ☐ \$100 membership + pelican print
- ☐ \$150 membership + Swallow-tailed Kite print
- ☐ \$150 membership + avocet print
- ☐ \$150 membership + Limpkin print
- ☐ \$200 membership + heron print
- ☐ \$300 lifetime membership + egret print
- ☐ \$300 lifetime membership + avocet & Limpkin print
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