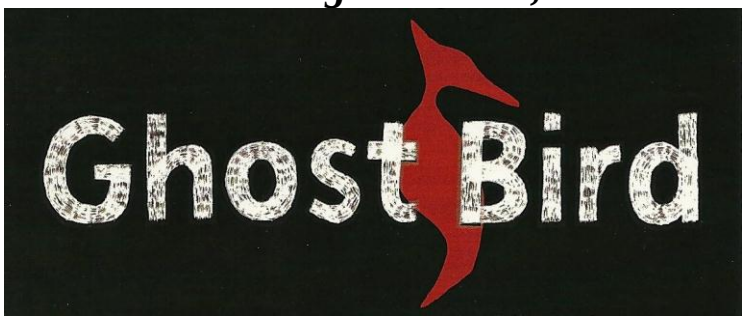
Shreveport Society for Nature Study

BIRD STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER

Volume 25, Number 10 June 6, 2011

Next Meeting – June 14, 2011



A Documentary film

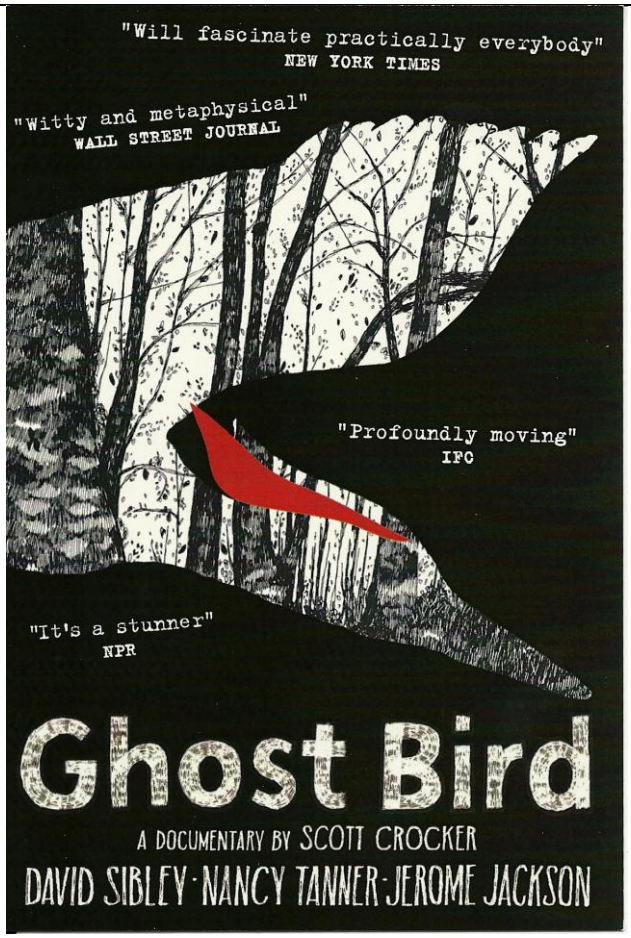
JUNE MEETING

When: Tuesday, June 14, 6:00 p.m.
Where: LSUS, Science Lecture Auditorium
Topic: "Ghost Bird," a documentary film will be shown

A documentary film, The Ghost Bird, about the recent report of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in the Cache River bottoms of Arkansas will be shown at our June meeting. Bring a friend and help spread the word. Let's try to fill the Science Lecture Auditorium on June 14. This is an interesting film that is very well done; you will probably enjoy it. See you on the 14th.

Refreshments start at 6:00 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. Come at 6 to chat with other birders!

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, including directions to the LSUS Science Lecture Auditorium, call us at 318-797-5338.



"Spellbinding...a cosmic lament for the forest primeval and man's search for environmental redemption."
Critics' Pick - NEW YORK MAGAZINE

Set in a murky swamp full of birders, scientists, and reporters, Ghost Bird explores the limits of certainty, the seductive power of hope, and how one phantom woodpecker forever changed a Southern town.

This thrilling eco-noir investigates the strange but true story of a small town in Arkansas overrun by a nation of birders all searching for the "Grail Bird" - the Ivory-billed woodpecker. Presumed extinct for over half a century, scientists announced the miraculous return of the Ivory-bill in 2005 after seeing it flying through the bayous of eastern Arkansas. Or was it?

Despite years of searching, the bird's fate remains a mystery. This witty, insightful documentary brings the Ivory-bill's blurry rediscovery into focus, revealing our uneasy relationship with nature and the increasing uncertainty of our place within it.

Featuring music by The Black Keys, The Pixies, Under Byen, Black Heart Procession, Hazmat Modine and original score by Zoë Keating.

Ghost Bird

For local screening times contact screenings@ghostbirdmovie.com

www.ghostbirdmovie.com

MATSON FILMS

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BSG Summer Hiatus Notice:

The BSG will not meet in July or August.
Monthly meetings will resume in September.

Have a great summer!

WILD BIRD CENTER EVENTS
BEGINNER BIRD WALKS

The Wild Bird Center conducts field trips the first and third Saturday of every month, weather permitting. Meet at Wild Bird Center in the University Place Shopping Center (Target Shopping Center) at the corner of Youree Drive and East 70th Street. Destinations vary according to local sightings and may include local parks, country roads or a private backyard. Loaner binoculars are available. Be sure to bring a field guide.

For more information on any Wild Bird Center event, please call Dennis or Janice Forshee at the Wild Bird Center, 318-797-BIRD (2473).

BSG Board and Officers

We still have a few places to fill on the BSG Board for 2011-2012. If you would like to serve the Bird Study Group with your ideas and leadership please let Mac know as soon as possible. The board for 2011-12 will not meet until August or September.

Cicadas and Birds

In the last issue of Birdscope an article by Laura Erickson pointed out that when cicadas emerge in their 13 or 17 year cycles in the northeast bird populations are reduced (except cuckoos, which increase). The question is asked – Are bird numbers regionally lower in emergence years? It could be important to know if any bird populations in our area undergo any change in population size during cicada emergence.

Cassin's Sparrows

The discovery of Cassin's Sparrows in Caddo Parish by Terry Davis has once again expanded our knowledge of northwestern Louisiana birds. Since the last newsletter Terry has observed possible breeding activity and the presence of at least three birds. If Cassin's Sparrow is breeding in our area it would be very important to have that fact documented. If you have time go to the site and observe. Watch for nesting activity or adults carrying insects to feed young. We need to find a nest and get as much nest record data as possible, all the way through successful fledging.

Rats! Where?

A recent study published in The Condor (2009) reported that introduced rats (*Rattus*) were a serious cause of winter mortality of Bicknell's Thrushes in the Dominican Republic. The surprise was that the rats were going into the forest canopy to catch roosting adult birds. This is another example of a surprising discovery about a well-studied bird (item from Birdscope, Spring 2011). Anytime you are birding in our area be alert to sightings of anything that seems unusual to you (for example, birds feeding on different plant materials or animals, birds using different nest materials, foraging in strange habitats, bird predation activity, birds as prey, etc.). There is much that we do not know about the lives of even the common birds in our area.

Rosetta Stone for Warblers

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology has assembled a catalog of the brief flight calls made by all 48 species of North American wood warblers during their nocturnal migrations. Below is a sample of two of the species that sometimes grace us with their presence. Note the distinctive difference in the flight calls shown in the spectrogram (in pink and yellow). See more at: http://tinyurl.com/CLO-technology.

Albino House Finch

The photograph below is reported to be of an albino House Finch in a nest with four normal coloration siblings. The nest was located in a hanging fern basket on the front porch of the home of Mrs. Audry Wibker of the South Broadmoor subdivision, just south of the LSUS campus.

House Finches had nested in the basket last year and apparently returned this year. The albino youngster was the first to fledge the next day (May 23) after this photo was taken. The others fledged the same day and all appeared to be healthy.

The albino has red eyes, suggesting that it is a pure albino rather than partial. On the enlarged photo note the red eye.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED TO ENTER BIRD RECORDS

We would like to have a volunteer to enter current and backlogged records into the BSG Bird database beginning as soon as possible. We have many valuable records to be entered. The process is very easy and a volunteer will receive complete instruction at the museum. We would like a volunteer for a few hours a day or week on a regular schedule so that we can get as many records entered. At this time it contains 59 years of observations, from 1952 to the present, a total of 268,989 records.

FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR NEEDED

John Dillon, our field trip coordinator, has resigned after three years of dedicated service. We greatly appreciate the effort and enthusiasm that John gave to the BSG. We would like to fill this vacancy as quickly as we can so the members of the BSG can continue to benefit from the engaging and educational field trips, especially in our local area. Anyone who would like to help the BSG by accepting this important position please contact Mac Hardy or any other member of the Board (the complete list is in each Newsletter). Being an expert birder is NOT a requirement. The primary responsibilities include: 1) scheduling a local half-day or day field trip to some local area (such as listed in our Hot Spots) as least once a month; 2) arranging for a leader for the field trip; and 3) get publicity information to Rachel Demascal (Publicity), Jerry Bertrand (webmaster), or announce the field trip at the regular meeting.

Any Suggestions for the BSG?

Your Board of Directors is trying very hard to improve the Bird Study Group and make it more attractive to new birders. Give us your suggestions about how to grow the BSG.

BSG Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons

BSG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President – Mac Hardy (1)……687-6738 (H), 797-5338(W)
Vice-president – Larry Raymond(2)…… 929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)
Secretary – Silviera Hunt (2)……220-0098 (H), 676-7156(W)
Treasurer – Dennis Forshee (1)……797-2473 (W)

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Jerry Bertrand (1)……868-3255 (H/W)
Rachel Demascal(1)……929-2806 (W)
Bill Wood (1)……458-2930 (H)
John Dillon (3)……243-2284 (H)
Bill Hall (3)……797-1727 (H)
Jim Ingold (2)……742-5067 (H), 797-5236 (W)
Amanda Lewis (2) ……861-5294 (H), 797-5215 (W)
Nancy Menasco (3)……868-3255 (H/W)
Hubert Hervey (3)……925-9249(H)
Terry Davis (3)……934-2133(H/W)
Clyde Massey (2)……868-9537(H), 424-4167(W)
Numbers in parentheses are years remaining of a 3-year term.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Beginning Birders – *Dennis Forshee……797-2473 (W)*
Bird Alert Service – *Rosemary Seidler…… 424-2972 (H)*
Bird Hot Spot – *Larry Raymond……929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)*
Bird Records – *Mac Hardy……687-6738 (H) 797-5338 (W)*
Field Trip Coordinator –*open*
Fund Raising – *Jerry Bertrand……868-3255 (H/W)*
Hospitality – *Amanda Lewis …… 861-5294 (H) 797-5215 (W)*
Library – *Silviera Hunt……220-0098 (H), 676-5457 (W)*
Membership Secretary – *Mac Hardy……687-6738 (H), 797-5338 (W)*
Newsletter Editor – *Amanda Lewis …… 861-5294 (H) 797-5215 (W)*
Folding/Mailing Committee – *George Dean*……
Programs – *Larry Raymond……929-3117 (H) 929-2806 (W)*
Publicity – *Rachel Demascal……929-2806 (W)*
Website – *Jerry Bertrand……868-3255 (H/W)*

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Direct inquires to the Editor, Amanda Lewis, at (318) 797-5215.

Join/Renew the BSG!

The Bird Study Group of Shreveport invites you to become a member.
Renewals, please update information below.

Name(s)_____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (Home) _____ Work _____

☐ Yes, please add me to the email Bird Alert ☐ Leave me out of the BSG member directory

Membership Levels: ☐ Regular ($15.00) ☐ Sustaining ($35.00) ☐ Family, *One Newsletter/ One Address* ($20.00)
Names of Family Members:

Donations: Library ☐ Refuges ☐ Refreshments ☐ General ☐

Make check payable & mail to: SSNS- Bird Study Group
Museum of Life Sciences, One University Place,
Shreveport, LA 71115-2399

BIRD STUDY GROUP PHONE NUMBERS AND MORE

Bird Study Group meets the second Tuesday of each month, September through June, 6:00 p.m. To be placed on the list to send & receive emails, email birdalert@birdstudygroup.org.
Contact the BSG by email: lhardy@lsus.edu or phone (318) 797-5338.
Visit us on the web at **http://www.birdstudygroup.org**