

BIRD TREKS

SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

CAMERON PARISH & the GULF COAST

For coastal migrants, local specialties & just a bit of Texas!

Dates Sunday, 10 April through Sunday, 17 April 2011: 8 days and 7 nights

We'll visit **Cameron Parish**, the state's premier birding locale, with its vast marshlands and beautiful, bird-filled beaches. It is famous for migrants, rarities, and intriguing breeding birds.

Ancient wooded ridges known as **cheniers** that can abound with migrant songbirds. Because of its position in the very center of the **Mississippi flyway**, nearly HALF of eastern North America's migratory songbirds pass through Louisiana each spring. This is the Louisiana counterpart of High Island, Texas, without the crowds of people.

Sabine NWR, Holly Beach, Lacassine NWR, and Louisiana's famous **rice and crawdad fields** for shorebirds, waterfowl, long-legged waders, and rails.

You can reasonably expect **175 to 200 or more species** on this incredible tour. A complete list of the species seen on previous tours is available upon request.

SPECIAL OFFER!

You may wish to combine the Louisiana Tour with a week on **Dauphin Island** and the **Alabama and Mississippi Gulf Coasts**. The dates for Alabama are 3-9 April, immediately preceding the Louisiana tour. You will receive a **\$200 discount** if you participate in both tours. See our separate Alabama itinerary for more details.



Least Terns are common on the Gulf Coast, along with many additional tern species.

- - Tom Amico

A sampling of Cajun Specialties may include . . .

American White Pelican	Black Tern
Neotropic Cormorant	Inca Dove
Anhinga	Barn Owl
Least Bittern	Pileated Woodpecker
White-faced Ibis	Red-cockaded Woodpecker
Roseate Spoonbill	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Brown-headed Nuthatch
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	Marsh Wren
Mottled Duck	Loggerhead Shrike
Swallow-tailed Kite	Yellow-throated Vireo
Mississippi Kite	Philadelphia Vireo
Peregrine Falcon	Blue-winged Warbler
King Rail	Prothonotary Warbler
Sora	Blackburnian Warbler
Purple Gallinule	Yellow-throated Warbler
Wilson's Plover	Hooded Warbler
Piping Plover	Summer Tanager
Long-billed Curlew	Dickcissel
Gull-billed Tern	Bachman's Sparrow
Sandwich Tern	Yellow-headed Blackbird



A mixed flock of **Indigo Buntings** and **Blue Grosbeaks** may contain a **Painted Bunting**, or even a beautifully marked **Dickcissel**.

- - Tom Amico

SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

10 - 17 April 2011

Day Agenda

- 1 Meet at Lafayette, Louisiana Airport at about noon, where the tour begins. It was great to return to this beautiful area after Hurricane Rita in 2007 and 2008, and the birding was excellent. We're hoping that we can have a wonderful experience after the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and help pump some money into the local economy by our presence. Our first stop will be nearby Lake Martin for the impressive **long-legged wader rookery**, **Roseate Spoonbills**, and nesting **Prothonotary Warblers**. We may also see **Barred Owl**, **Red-shouldered Hawk**, **Anhinga**, **Northern Parula**, and our first of many **American Alligators**. We'll spend the first night in Lafayette.
- 2 This morning we'll bird our way southwest to the Gulf Coast, looking for **Wilson's Phalarope**, **Purple Gallinule**, and **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** along the way. We'll spend the full day birding in Louisiana's famed marshlands and beaches. We'll concentrate on Sabine (pronounced suh BEAN') Refuge and Holly Beach. Target species include **Neotropic Cormorant**, **Fulvous Whistling-Duck**, **Purple Gallinule**, and **Least Bittern**. Rarities in the Holly Beach area during recent spring migrations include **Masked Duck**, **Tropical Kingbird**, and **Shiny Cowbird**, among many others. On recent tours we found a **Western Grebe** swimming offshore and a small flock of **Black Scoters** migrating along the coast. Our next four nights will be in the Gulf Coast town of Cameron.

[Day 3 begins on page 3]

- 3 Today we'll drive east to Oak Grove and Grand Chenier to look for **Neotropical migrants, Barn Owl, and Least Bittern**. Whenever the proper weather conditions prevail we will abandon our afternoon plans and bird the nearest chenier. Northerly winds can bring down thousands of Gulf migrants, and the trees may be alive with **warblers, vireos, thrushes, tanagers, grosbeaks, and other songbirds**. Fallouts such as these have produced first state records including **Townsend's Warbler, Hepatic Tanager, and Hooded Oriole**. Let the north winds blow!
- 4 A full day in the coastal refuges including Lacassine, Rockefeller, and Cameron-Prairie. Here we may find **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Dickcissel, Painted Bunting**, and a nice variety of **waterfowl**. Some time spent scoping rice fields could produce a few **Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, Franklin's Gull**, and many other **aquatic species**. We'll search for **Crested Caracara**, the northernmost population on the continent. Whenever we have a free hour early or late in the day, East Jetty Beach is excellent for **shorebirds, gulls, and terns**, and oak groves in and near Cameron can yield interesting **songbirds**.
- 5 This is a good day to drive into east Texas to visit Sea Rim State Park and Sabine Woods. On a recent tour we planned our visit with the mid-day arrival of a cold front and brief, heavy rain. This resulted in the fallout of hundreds of Neotropical migrants: **50 Orchard Orioles, 75 Indigo Bunting, half a dozen Painted Buntings, FOUR Cerulean Warblers, Western Kingbirds, Philadelphia and Yellow-throated Vireos, almost 20 different warblers, and many more wonderful birds**. It was quite an afternoon!
- 6 A return to Holly Beach may yield a few **seabirds** such as a **Parasitic Jaeger** or **Northern Gannet**. Sabine Lake and Blue Buck Pond are good for **Whimbrel, Long-billed Curlew**, and a variety of **waterfowl**. By now we should have seen **Inca Dove, White-winged Dove, and Eurasian Collared-Dove**. Other possibilities include **Anhinga, Summer Tanager, and Brown-headed Nuthatch**. We'll drive north and spend the night in Lake Charles, 40 miles from the coast.
- 7 Today's birding will be an inland loop through Calcasieu and Beauregard Parishes. We'll look for **Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kites** at Niblett's Bluff, **Greater Roadrunner** at Old River, and pine forest specialties such as **Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Pine Warbler, and Brown-headed Nuthatch** in Kisatchie National Forest. The river bottoms should be good for **Barred Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Swainson's and Prothonotary Warblers**. A second night in Lake Charles.
- 8 Our final morning will be open for anything we want to do. If we missed **Red-cockaded Woodpecker**, there will be more time to look for it. If our target species cooperated, then another search of the rice fields may yield an unusual shorebird such as a **Curlew Sandpiper** or **Ruff**. A return to Lake Martin for more wading birds and warblers is always a nice way to spend some time. After lunch we'll drive to Lafayette Airport, where the tour ends.

[Important details are on page 4]

For a map of the Louisiana Tour, click on this link, or cut and paste into your browser:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?oe=utf8&client=firefox-a&ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&ll=30.334954,-92.966309&spn=1.706748,3.570557&z=9&msid=117812928873209532533.00046105a1d9f64780b79>

Leader The Bird Treks Tour to **SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA** will be led by **Bob Schutsky**. Bob has lots of experience with all of the target species, having led many previous tours to Louisiana and nearby Texas, Florida, and Mexico. He knows how to time the birding with the weather for the best possible results.

Price \$1995 per person based upon double occupancy. Single accommodations are available for an extra charge of \$375. Remember the **\$200 discount** if you also go on the **Dauphin Island, Alabama Tour**, immediately prior to this tour.

Includes Expert guide service, entrance fees, all ground transportation within Louisiana and Texas, **ALL meals**, and lodging for seven nights. **ALL tips** are also included in the tour fee, except for anything that you may wish to give to your tour leader(s).

Does not include cost of airfare to and from Lafayette, Louisiana. Bird Treks will, upon request, help you obtain the least expensive air transportation. Also not included are the cost of alcoholic beverages and items of a personal nature.

Deposit A \$500 deposit will assure your space on the tour. The balance is due 10 February 2011. This tour often fills quickly; please send your deposit SOON to avoid disappointment.

Extra Services We offer the services of our exclusive BIRD TREKS travel agent, **Lori Heathcote**, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 25 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her at Bailey Travel, **1-800-224-5399**, or e-mail her at **lori@baileytravel.com**. By dealing with Lori you have the security of a 24-hour toll-free telephone number in case of any travel emergency. She can also assist you with all pre- and post-tour travel plans. There may be a fee for these services.

Refund & Cancellation Policy With written notice more than 60 days prior to the first day of the tour, 100% of your deposit will be refunded, minus a \$75 service fee. With 30-60 days notice, you will receive a 50% refund of the full cost of the tour. No refund can be made with less than 30 days notice. You will receive a full refund if you provide a replacement. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a tour. Contact **Access America** at **1-800-284-8300** and mention **BIRD TREKS (ACCAM # F021096)**. You can apply by phone or via the Internet at **www.accessamerica.com**.

We are likely to find
a Barn Owl or two.

-- Jim and Deva Burns
Natural Impacts

