



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER



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Louisiana Wildlife Federation has been a leader in wildlife conservation for nearly eight decades.

Join us to protect our natural resources for future generations.

Principles:

- Conserve Louisiana's natural resources with emphasis on wildlife and their habitat
- Protect the rights of Louisiana citizens to enjoy these resources
- Advance sound, scientifically established resource management principles
- Engage outdoor enthusiasts through education and advocacy

This newsletter is printed biannually for members and supporters. Updates on LWF activities and events can be found on lawildlifefed.org and on Facebook and Twitter.

Cover photo taken in Maurepas Swamp by Wendy Wilson Billiot

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



It is my great honor to serve another term as president of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation. I will continue to do my best to assist the Federation in striving to be the voice of Louisiana’s wildlife and natural resources.

We are doing a second year of the Edgar Veillon Conservation Leadership Corps to help selected college students learn more about how they can assist in future conservation work in the state. The program teaches leadership skills and techniques needed in policy development and provides networking with like-minded peers.

We are also maintaining our commitment to working with the legislature on sound scientific endeavors to uphold habitats necessary to maintain our state’s “Sportsman’s Paradise” motto.

Along with our affiliates, business alliance and individual members, we cover all parts of our state’s interests from coastal issues to concerns in the piney woods. We work with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) to add our voice to national issues that concern Louisiana, network at the NWF annual convention with other states sharing similar regional concerns, and address issues that come up on short notice. We also maintain strong connections with other non-profit organizations in matters close to home.

Thank you for your part in our vision to promote these efforts.

Marty Floyd

NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As you’ll see looking through this newsletter, a large portion of the work is done by volunteers along with staff. We value our members’ support and the volunteer leaders who give their time and talents to the Federation. Members are eligible to join the board of directors and serve on committees. If you’re interested in becoming more involved, consider joining one of these committees:

- Conservation Awards
- Convention Planning
- Education
- Fundraising
- Avian Conservation

- Boating and Fresh/Saltwater Fisheries
- Environmental Quality
- Forest and Upland Wildlife
- Habitat Conservation and Management
- Waterfowl

You can get to know other like-minded members from around the state who help with program development and guide our wildlife policy positions. Want to know more about these committees? Ask me! Message me at rebecca@lawildlifefed.org or call 225-344-6707.

Thanks for your continued support.

Rebecca Triche

Conservation Education, Wildlife Preservation and Coastal Protection Efforts among the Achievements Honored at Awards Banquet

The 55th Governor’s State Conservation Achievement Awards Program, hosted by Louisiana Wildlife Federation, recognized four individuals and three organizations for their significant achievements in natural resource conservation and education at a banquet held on Saturday, April 27, 2019, at Ashley Manor in Baton Rouge.

Chuck Perrodin, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority public information director, served as the master of ceremonies. Allyn Dukes, National Wildlife Federation’s Region 8 board member, and Tom Harris, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, presented the awards to each recipient.

Other honorees at the banquet included Louisiana’s 2018 female and male Youth Hunters of the Year, Kynlee Buras and Evan Alderson. Ryan Schaefer, LWF 1st Vice President, presented awards to each.



*Katherine Gividen of
Baton Rouge receiving the
Governor’s Award,
Conservationist of the
Year for 2018*



*Youth Hunters of the Year,
Evan Alderson and
Kynlee Buras with
Ryan Schaefer,
LWF 1st Vice President*

The 2018 conservation recipients celebrated at the banquet included:

Katherine Gividen of Baton Rouge
Governor’s Award, Conservationist of the Year for 2018

Sherrill Sagrera of Abbeville
Volunteer Conservationist of the Year for 2018

Audubon Nature Institute Youth Volunteer Corps
Youth Conservationists of the Year for 2018

CITGO Petroleum Corporation
Corporate Conservationist of the Year for 2018

Thomas Christian “Chris” Pearce of Many
Conservation Educator of the Year for 2018

Senator Dan “Blade” Morrish of Jennings
Elected Official, Conservationist of the Year for 2018

Baton Rouge Zoo FrogWatch USA™
Conservation Organization of the Year for 2018

The awards are presented jointly by Louisiana Wildlife Federation and the National Wildlife Federation and the program is endorsed by Governor Edwards. The selections were made from among nominations submitted from the public by a panel of independent judges with expertise in a wide range of conservation fields.

Thank you to our Sponsors!

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Clint and Virginia Mouser

LWF's Edgar Veillon Conservation Leadership Corps Wraps Up Inaugural Year

LWF kicked off a brand new program for high school and college students in the fall of 2018 – the Edgar Veillon Conservation Leadership Corps (EV-CLC). Students from around the state were selected to participate in a training program focused on conservation policy and leadership development. Through this program, LWF provides the tools necessary for students to gain an understanding of Louisiana's rich conservation legacy and an appreciation for the importance of advocacy in shaping conservation policy.

The 2018-2019 class of the Edgar Veillon Conservation Leadership Corps included:

Chandler Ancar, Makayla Baham, Aimee Bajoie, Shelby Brundige, Saheba Cuccia, Sydney Finn, Shelby Francis, Priya Gilman, Natalie Lafont, Sloan Livaccari, Natalie Matherne, Tess Morton, Eduardo Paternostro, and Rosalind Remsen.

The inaugural EV-CLC class met for four training sessions in Baton Rouge where they got to hear from some of today's leaders in conservation including: Virginia Burkett (USGS), Mark Davis (Tulane Universtiy), Charles Demas (retired, USGS), Bren Haase (CPRA), Ryan Haynie (Haynie & Associates), Karen Gautreaux (The Nature Conservancy), Erik Johnson (Audubon Louisiana), Jim LaCour (LDWF), Kevin Norton (USDA-NRCS), Tim Osborne (NOAA), Bobby Soileau (LSU AgCenter), and Robert Twilley (Louisiana Sea Grant). LWF staff and board members (Barney Callahan, Bob Stewart and Rebecca Triche) also served as presenters.

Students divided into three groups with board members Zac Burson, Barney Callahan and Bob Stewart serving as group mentors. Each group focused their research on a conservation issue including plastics/pollution in Louisiana waterways, sea level rise/subsidence, and invasive species. The final session consisted of each group presenting their findings to a panel of experts, which consisted of Cynthia Duet (Audubon Louisiana), Maura Wood (National Wildlife Federation) and Rex Caffey (LSU).



During the year, students were also invited to attend LWF’s Conservation Achievement Awards banquet and Annual Convention as well as Coastal Day at the Capitol.

Students received a \$150 scholarship for completing the program during the final training session in April as well as a one-year complimentary membership to LWF.

The EV-CLC program was developed and implemented by Bob Stewart (LWF board member and committee chairman) and Stacy Ortego (LWF outreach coordinator). A volunteer committee which also includes Zac Burson, Charles Caillouet, Barney Callahan, Marty Floyd, Willie Fontenot and Larry Raymond was established to assist with the program.

Funding for the first year was provided by a portion of a bequest from the late Edgar Veillon as well as contributions from LWF affiliates Rapides Wildlife Association and the Louisiana Ornithological Society.

LWF thanks all supporters, speakers, and committee members for their contributions to the program’s first year!



#1 holiday hack:

When you buy your gifts at **smile.amazon.com**, Amazon donates.





Hunting and Fishing in Maurepas Swamp: The Sportsman's Perspective

Story by Wendy Billiot for Louisiana Wildlife Federation

Idling slowly among the cypress knees in a shallow-draft boat, one can only imagine what the Maurepas Swamp would have looked like 100 years ago—before the Great Flood of 1927, before the leveeing of the Mississippi River, and before the virgin cypress were cut down and hauled out to be milled for house and boat building. While the still-remaining second-growth cypress emanate a beauty and history of their own, what kind of story will the trees tell 100 years from now?

The Maurepas Swamp is the second largest area of forested wetland in Louisiana and encompasses approximately 140,000 acres of baldcypress-tupelo swamp southwest of Lake Maurepas. Since the Great Flood of 1927, the mighty Mississippi has been levied and dammed in order to control the river's flow and to keep it in its current lobe. Without the historical input of riverine sediment and fresh water from the Mississippi into the swamp, degradation has taken a toll on the baldcypress-tupelo forests, marshes, and water quality.

Despite a noticeable decline, sportsmen and sportswomen continue to hunt and fish in the Maurepas Swamp. The most sought-after game in the swamp are the white-tailed deer, squirrels, and rabbits. Historically, the swamp was a winter haven for migratory waterfowl, making it a duck hunter's paradise. However, local recreational hunters have witnessed extensive negative changes in the Maurepas Swamp over their lifetimes.

James "Goosie" Guice, who grew up fishing and hunting the waters around Maurepas, recalls experiencing some of the best duck hunting in the state within the swamp at one time. Due to the change in hydrology and invasive plant life, decreasing numbers of ducks spend time in the Maurepas Swamp during the winter months. Guice shares his opinions about reintroducing the river into the swamp: "There is no doubt that allowing the Mississippi's water into the swamp will be a shot in the arm for this environment. Done

correctly, that could not only help the water quality and forest, but the waterfowl should return to some degree along with frogs, crawfish, fish, and all other critters of the earth that require clean fresh water.” Guice looks forward to the day the ducks return and his great-grandchildren follow in his duck-hunting footsteps in the Maurepas Swamp.

Lyle Johnson, another user of the Maurepas Swamp, has a 64-year relationship with the area. While he has hunted and fished here for many years, fishing is his real passion, and from his boat, he has seen firsthand the negative impacts the lack of freshwater from the river has had on the swamp in his lifetime. As a proponent of a river reintroduction project from its inception, Johnson can’t wait for the project to get underway and looks forward to its completion. “The rich Mississippi River water has the potential not only to restore the swamp but to build it up and create new growth. Fresh water brings life everywhere it goes, so the benefit to wildlife and fish will be staggering.”

Troy Schexnayder, now 58, has been spending time at the family camp in the Maurepas Swamp since he was in diapers. “I remember when the deer camps out here were a culture all their own. They’d have 10 or 20 boats docked in front of the camp and 30 or 40 men drinking coffee early in the morning, swapping stories. Then, they’d get their dogs and go run the deer until the afternoon. That’s a thing of the past, though. The swamp has changed so much.” Of all the activities that Schexnayder still takes part in out in the swamp, fishing for largemouth bass is his favorite. It is his hope that this freshwater diversion project will restore prime habitat for his favorite game fish.

Mark Shurtz has stomped around in the Maurepas Swamp since the age of ten, when his shoes kept his feet dry almost anywhere he walked in the swamp. The most notable change he’s experienced over the past 15-20 years is the disappearance of ridges in those places where he once walked in his Keds. Nowadays, chest waders won’t even get him to those same places. His belief about reintroducing the river into the swamp is multi-faceted, but mainly he’s looking forward to the return of native vegetative species and says, “The River Reintroduction project should lead to ‘sandbar’ areas that will begin to be populated by native species such as black willow and swamp maple; and as time goes on, the hardwoods should begin to return.”

These are just a few of the stories told by folks who have spent time hunting and fishing in the Maurepas Swamp and have a desire to see it restored to its former glory. With the implementation of the Mississippi River Reintroduction into the Maurepas Swamp project, these sportsmen and women, and others yet to come, will reap the benefits of a well-managed and maintained swamp. The project will funnel much-needed nourishment from the river back into the swamp where it will ensure that future outdoorsmen and women will have many more hunting and fishing tales to share 100 years from now.

LWF Celebrated 80th Convention in West Monroe

Louisiana Wildlife Federation's 80th Annual Convention was held Saturday, August 17, 2019 in West Monroe. Thanks to our local affiliate, Friends of Black Bayou, for the hospitality to members and attendees. We appreciate our sponsors National Wildlife Federation, Michael Smith, Barney Callahan, and Clint Mouser.

Our luncheon speaker was Dana Norsworthy, biologist supervisor with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Office of Wildlife, Hunter Education, and the BOW coordinator. Dana provided an overview of the popular Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) program, which introduces women, 18 and older, to the outdoors through hands-on outdoor educational activities.



Here's a summary of resolutions approved by the General Assembly. These and past resolutions can be found at lawildlifefed.org.

Resolution 1: LIMITING MOTORIZED TRAILS ON US FOREST SERVICE LAND

Louisiana Wildlife Federation urges the U. S. Forest Service deny the construction of motorized trails as in the proposed Socia Branch Trail location in Kisatchie National Forest and instead reopen the previously proposed Livingston Trail complex.

Resolution 2: OPPOSITION TO THE ONE LAKE PROJECT

Louisiana Wildlife Federation is wholly opposed to the One Lake Project.

Resolution 3: SUPPORT FOR MAINTAINING AND ENFORCEMENT OF INCIDENTAL TAKE PROVISIONS IN THE MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT AS A SUCCESSFUL TOOL FOR BIRD CONSERVATION

Louisiana Wildlife Federation encourages the Federal Administration and Congress to maintain Incidental Take provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (Pre-December 2018) and encourages full implementation to protect this valuable resource and source of pleasure to its people.

Resolution 4: SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CATAHOULA LAKE

Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the State of Louisiana's historic ownership of Catahoula Lake and citizens' rights to access and enjoy the lake as they have for generations.

Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports continued management of the lake by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as has been the case since 1969.

If the Louisiana Supreme Court overturns the lower courts’ decisions and restores the lake to unambiguous public ownership, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, with policy guidance from the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, should take immediate steps to assert control and management of water levels (subject only to input from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as required by previous agreement), vegetation, hunting and fishing activity, and enforcement of the mid-lake refuge in order to assure that this resource achieves its maximum potential as a wetland and a recreational resource.

If the Supreme Court maintains the lower courts’ decisions, Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports immediate action by the State of Louisiana to purchase the privatized water bottoms and thereafter manage the ecosystem for waterfowl and shorebird conservation, hunting, fishing and other public recreational activities under policy direction of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission.

Resolution 5: ATCHAFALAYA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION PROJECT IN EAST GRAND LAKE

Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the implementation of the components of the East Grand Lake Project described in Corps permit application “MVN-2016-01163-CM LDNR East Grand Lake.”

Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports The Nature Conservancy’s community-based conservation efforts, on-going monitoring and other scientific efforts that are contributing to a greater understanding of the Atchafalaya Basin and how to better conserve it into the future.

Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority’s role in integrating the management of the Basin into the management of the Louisiana coastal ecosystem, recognition of their efforts to include public meetings and meetings with Basin stakeholders, and acknowledges the foundational work of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources when the Basin Program was housed in that agency.



Charles Williams received the President’s Cup award from Marty Floyd for his outstanding service to Louisiana Wildlife Federation in the past year.



Eduardo Paternostro, Sydney Finn, and Rosalind Remson represented the inaugural group of the Edgar Veillon Conservation Corps members at convention.

Business Alliance Partners

This January, LWF started a new program to strengthen the connection between Louisiana business leaders and our natural resources stewards. Corporate support has been and always will be essential for the promotion and protection of our sportsman’s paradise. Quality outdoor opportunities make Louisiana a desirable place to live and work, and adds to our economic well-being. Business Alliance members join other outdoor-oriented citizens who believe in constructive conservation and protection of our natural resources. **We would like to thank them for their support and belief in the mission of LWF.**

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If you own a business or know a business that might be interested in joining our Business Alliance, please contact Rebecca Triche at 225-344-6707.



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Legislative Report 2019

By Rebecca Triche, Executive Director

There were more than 50 bills of interest in the 2019 Regular Legislative Session. It was a fiscal-only session, which created fewer bills for LWF staff and volunteers to track regarding wildlife management, conservation and protection of our natural resource. Here are some highlights that may be of interest to our members.

We worked with Representative Zeringue to introduce and pass HCR 42 requesting an independent, comprehensive report on the Wetland Assimilation Program at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and a moratorium on new projects until a review of this program can be provided. We look forward to seeing the report prepared for the Legislature. A 2017 report by Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation outlined concerns that the Federation shares related to the long-term impacts on natural wetlands permitted to receive treated wastewater. Several organizations have been commenting on new permit applications to raise questions about negative impacts of prolonged or excessive inundation of small areas of wetlands receiving continuous flow of municipal wastewater. Concerns include observable wetland habitat deterioration over time that may not meet the program's goal to benefit wetlands.

The Annual State Integrated Coastal Protection Plan for Fiscal Year 2020 was approved. This year it included the annual Atchafalaya Basin Program plan due to the Basin Program being moved to management by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) last year.

Budget surplus funds of \$55 million were allocated to the Coastal Trust Fund for specific flood protection and restoration projects and also served to repay funds swept in previous years to balance the budget. Only a few State funds are eligible for budget surplus dollars, including transportation and coastal.

A resolution urging CPRA and the Department of Transportation and Development to report what monies, state or federal, are available for flood control projects in the coastal zone or outside of the coastal was approved.



The report would include a list of flood protection projects and sources of funding. This could help explain why there is little money available to move around because most of the dollars the State can use come from grants or disaster funds tied to projects or specific uses.

Senator Morrish's SCR 93 requests that CPRA form a subcommittee to coordinate the state's involvement in the National Flood Insurance Program. After numerous flood events around the state in the past few years, flood protection and planning is a hot topic. If you haven't heard about the Louisiana Watershed Initiative, you should take a moment to look into that effort.

Another hot issue has been public access to waterways in Louisiana. Representative Pearson's HB 231 seeking to better define access to waterways was vigorously debated but ultimately voluntarily deferred. Also voluntarily deferred was Representative Gisclair's HB 315 to require that agreements between an acquiring agency and a landowner for integrated coastal protection projects ensure public recreational access to waterways in the reclaimed lands. Another bill involuntarily deferred in committee was Representative Amedee's bill that would have required proof of private ownership of the bed or bottom of the river, stream, lake, or waterway as an element of the offense if someone were charged with trespass.

Many people are looking to the Public Recreation Access Task Force that has been meeting since 2018 to offer recommendations to address this issue that could affect private property rights and designation of navigable waters. More bills in future are likely.

Also heavily debated but ultimately failing to pass out of the House of Representatives was HB 510 that became HB 615 by Representative Stuart Bishop to allow industrial facilities to choose voluntary health, safety and environmental audits subject to monitoring by DEQ and provide some measure of immunity to civil fines and penalties. Long-time monitors of the legislature recall a similar idea was introduced some years ago and failed to pass. The House did pass HR 231 that requests DEQ to study the establishment of a voluntary compliance audit program for industries regulated by DEQ.

A bit more latitude in managing feral hog populations comes from Senator Allain's bill SB100, now Act 53, that allows on private property, outlaw quadrupeds may be taken with an automatic-loading or hand-operated repeating shotgun capable of holding more than three shells when using buckshot or rifled slug ammunition. It also allows on private property, outlaw quadrupeds may be taken while riding or standing in or upon a moving land vehicle. Why this change? Farmers and land managers were coming across feral hogs and unable to shoot the whole sounder due to the 3 shell limit and the time it took to reload. Also if they saw outlaw quadrupeds while on a tractor or ATV by the time they exited the vehicle, the animals had moved out of range.



Regarding crab harvesting, Representative Gisclair's HB 355, which became Act 74, limits incidental take of immature female crabs to 5% of the catch and retains the present law of limiting incidental catch of 2% for berried crabs. Penalties were increased for violations. Many people have commented to us that the crab population has dropped and sampling

and harvest reports are showing this as well.

Speaking of seafood, Gisclair also sponsored the bill (HB 335) that became law to require Louisiana restaurants to label shrimp and crawfish with country of origin labels on the menu. In the absence of menus, a restaurant must post somewhere visible whether the seafood is foreign-sourced or local.

With HCR 32, the Legislature reaffirmed its support for working with other states on the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan to reduce the hypoxic zone off the state's coast, which is expected to cover a larger area off the shoreline of Louisiana due to the historic flooding of the Mississippi River this year.

The Louisiana Aquatic Invasive Species Council was abolished.

The Louisiana Environmental Education Commission was transferred to the Department of Education from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. This fits the Commission's primary focus on education.

Reminder: every year brings changes to commercial and/or recreational licenses and regulations so be sure to check the latest information online at wlf.louisiana.gov if you're hunting, fishing, trapping, paddling, or accessing a state wildlife management area or wildlife refuge for recreational use.

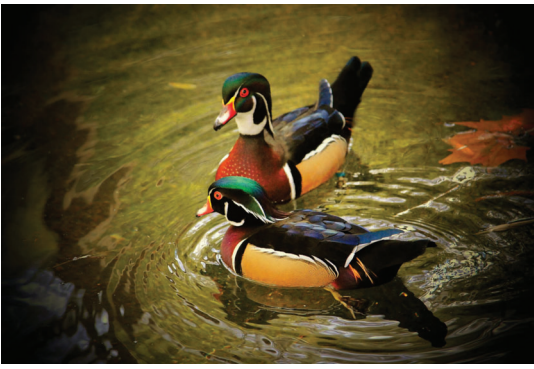
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LWF Following Court Case that Challenges State Ownership of Catahoula Lake, Filed Amicus Brief

On September 4, 2019 the Louisiana Supreme Court heard testimony in their review of the case *Steve Crooks and Era Lea Crooks v. The State of Louisiana*, which

challenges public ownership of much of Catahoula Lake. The Louisiana Attorney General filed a writ application seeking the Louisiana Supreme Court's review of the case and we anxiously await the decision.

On January 28, 2019 Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Delta Waterfowl, and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers jointly filed an amicus brief to support the writ application filed by the State of Louisiana with the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Here's some background. The presiding judge of the Ninth Judicial District Court sided with the plaintiffs' expert testimony in his decision to declare that Catahoula Lake was a flooded river basin and a man-made lake and therefore not a publicly owned waterbody. The lower court's decision that declared most of the area of Catahoula Lake privately owned was upheld by the Third Circuit Court of Appeal. The Louisiana Attorney General's office filed a writ application seeking the Louisiana Supreme Court's review of the case.

The amicus brief filed on behalf of the three organizations did not focus on aspects of private property rights but asked the Louisiana Supreme Court to consider the important natural resource values of Catahoula Lake that have been consistently managed for the betterment of the ecosystem and in accordance with the Public Trust for decades. The brief described concerns about what will happen to the management of Catahoula Lake and the public's natural resources if the lower court decision is upheld and Catahoula Lake is declared privately owned.

The amicus brief also outlined contradictory or unclear aspects of the lower court decision and the Third Circuit's analysis. Key points made in the brief included inconsistencies from the courts' decisions on how to define the boundaries of public and privately held lands in Catahoula Lake and confusion around the courts' methodology for determining that the body of water was a "river" and not a "lake." The amicus brief asked for the Supreme Court's guidance around conflicts with previous court decisions that affect interpretation of the law.

Catahoula Lake has been called "the most important inland wetland for water birds and shorebirds in Louisiana" by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It serves as a critical piece of the Mississippi Flyway for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Catahoula Lake is recognized as a Ramsar wetland of international importance for its unique example of a lower Mississippi River wetlands providing critical migratory bird and freshwater fisheries habitat.

Honorary and Memorial Gifts

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- In Memory of Russel Wade Landry from DeEtte Spence
- In Memory of Thomas J. Tobin III from Gregory Jr., Laura, Hailey, Zoey, and Teddy Tobin



What Will Your Legacy Be?

Since 1940, the Louisiana Wildlife Federation has worked to protect Louisiana's wildlife, habitat, water resources and your right to enjoy this Sportsman's Paradise. Including LWF in your estate planning is one of the most important ways you can protect our abundant natural resources and public access for future generations.

The benefits of planned giving are available at any income level and you don't have to be wealthy to participate.

For more information, call Barbara Caldwell at LWF at 225-344-6707 or email barbara@lawildlifefed.org



Introducing Garden for Wildlife Program



Louisiana Wildlife Federation is partnering with National Wildlife Federation’s Garden For Wildlife program to increase habitat for backyard wildlife species and protect pollinator populations in Louisiana. The Garden for Wildlife program provides education and certification for gardens that improve habitat for birds, butterflies, frogs and other wildlife by providing essential elements needed by all wildlife – natural food sources, clean water, cover and places to raise young.

Yards, schools, businesses, places of worship, campuses, parks, farms and other community-based landscapes can apply to be a Certified Wildlife Habitat® garden through the program. A Certified Wildlife Habitat® garden is also part of the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge, a national effort to create a million gardens that provide habitat for declining pollinator insects, like butterflies and bees.

“Over the last 40 years, more than 200,000 wildlife gardeners have joined NWF’s Garden for Wildlife movement and these individuals have helped restore wildlife habitat right in their own yards and neighborhoods,” said David Mizejewski, naturalist with the National Wildlife Federation. “Whether you garden in a suburban yard, an apartment balcony or a 10-acre farm, a schoolyard or a business park, everyone can create a home for local wildlife. Turning your space into a Certified Wildlife Habitat is fun, easy and makes a real difference for neighborhood wildlife,” he added.

“People are increasingly aware of declines in some species’ populations and the need for habitat for bees, butterflies, other insects that play a crucial role in ecosystem health,” said Rebecca Triche, executive director with Louisiana Wildlife Federation. “We encourage more people in Louisiana to get engaged in gardening for wildlife through this program that makes it easy to see how they can help.”

NWF’s Garden for Wildlife program encourages responsible gardening that helps pollinators and other wildlife thrive. It encourages planting with native species like milkweed and discouraging chemical pesticide use.

For more information on gardening for wildlife and details on becoming certified in Louisiana, go to lawildlifefed.org or call 225-344-6707.



LWF is an affiliate organization of National Wildlife Federation and together we form a powerful network for wildlife conservation locally and nationally.

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