



Field Guides Tour Report

Louisiana: Yellow Rails & Crawfish Tails 2019

Oct 31, 2019 to Nov 4, 2019

Dan Lane & Ned Brinkley

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



Louisiana's Kisatchie National Forest is an excellent place to see a variety of special birds and plants (and reptiles, in season)—and is also a beautiful and fragrant place just to stand and enjoy the early morning. Photo by guide Ned Brinkley.

What a jolly jaunt through Louisiana! In just three days of birding, we saw a remarkable variety of the species that call Louisiana home in early November, a mix of migrants and residents, U.S. endemics and cosmopolitan species, scarce and abundant birds. We began in rice country near Hayes, where the fields and woodlands along Bayou Lacassine held a great mix of geese, shorebirds, and gulls, with Sedge Wren, LeConte's Sparrow, Painted Bunting, and Vermilion Flycatcher among the notable passerines of the morning and a very late Yellow-billed Cuckoo popping out near the bayou. After lunch on Lake Arthur, we donned rubber boots to ride with rice farmers through the rice fields during harvest! We saw hundreds of rails, mostly Sora but peppered with Yellow Rails, Virginia Rails, and a few King Rails, with singles of Crested Caracara, Krider's and Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks, Peregrine Falcon (successfully hunting rails), American Bittern, and two Cave Swallows there. An exhilarating afternoon! On the second day, we made our way southward, a loop through rice country and the marsh-rich national wildlife refuges to the Gulf of Mexico. Waterfowl and rails, a raptor flight that included a surprise Golden Eagle, terns and shorebirds along the Gulf (with that fabulous Long-billed Curlew), a nice mix of Neotropical migrants including Bay-breasted Warbler and Scarlet Tanager at Peveto Woods, scarce Bronzed Cowbirds, Western Kingbird, and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Holly Beach, and a finale at Cameron, where Clapper Rail, Seaside Sparrow, and Nelson's Sparrow appeared, and Cameron Prairie, with King Rail, Wood Stork, Mottled Ducks, and Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks. Our final day saw us northbound, into the Kisatchie National Forest, where Brown-headed Nuthatch, Barred Owl, Bachman's Sparrow, and (at last!) Red-cockaded Woodpeckers were among the highlights in beautiful Longleaf Pine woodlands. In between bouts of birding, we dined rather too well on Cajun specialties at some very memorable eateries!

From Dan and last-minute-sub Ned, many thanks for coming down to the Bayou State for this quick but successful birding adventure!

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl).

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – A flock of nine came whistling by at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge at dusk.

SNOW GOOSE (*Anser caerulescens*) – Lovely flocks in the distance and overhead on our first morning along West Niblett Road in rice country. A handful of "Blue" Geese (dark-morph individuals) were mixed in with the white Snows.

ROSS'S GOOSE (*Anser rossii*) – A few Ross's were mixed in with the Snows, all in flight.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE (*Anser albifrons*) – The multi-syllabled yelping call of this species announced its presence often before we could even locate the flocks in the sky. Most were seen in flight in rice country, but two (probably a gander with goose) were on the marsh at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*) – A male and female flew by in our first few minutes on West Niblett Road.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Spatula discors*) – A few at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge among the shovelers and coots.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – Thousands were along Watkins Road, with a few more at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge and Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

GADWALL (*Mareca strepera*) – A handful at both Sabine and Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuges.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Genuine wild Mallards are uncommon in southern Louisiana in early November, so it was nice to see a few at both Sabine and Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuges.

MOTTLED DUCK (GULF COAST) (*Anas fulvigula maculosa*) – Our best looks at this species were at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*) – A few along Watkins Road with the shovelers and three at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (AMERICAN) (*Anas crecca carolinensis*) – Just a few at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – One at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, hiding among the Pied-billed Grebes, teal, coots, and shovelers.

Podicipedidae (Grebes).

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – Sabine National Wildlife Refuge had a small gathering.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Surprisingly uncommon! Just a handful around Lafayette and Scott.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) – A few pairs and singles in small towns along the route through rice country.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – A few around Holly Beach and Cameron, with first looks at Sulphur.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – Fairly common along much of the tour route, especially in rice country.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos).

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – A very late bird along West Niblett Road near the Lacassine Bayou!

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – A few quick flybys along the coast at Holly Beach.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots).

KING RAIL (*Rallus elegans*) – Very vocal (but invisible) at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, but one came out to see us nicely at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus crepitans*) – Heard along the marsh walkway at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge (on the saltwater side of the levee) and seen nicely at Cameron, where one bathed just a few feet from us!

VIRGINIA RAIL (*Rallus limicola*) – Dozens around Thornwell during our visit to rice harvesting operations, mostly seen in flight; we also heard several at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – Counters at Thornwell stopped counting at 350! We watched them flush ahead of rice combines, sometimes 5 or 10 at a time, a truly remarkable spectacle.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Sabine National Wildlife Refuge had quite a few, as did Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge; at both, we heard the trumpeting call that is so different from vocalizations of the Common Moorhen of the Old World (now split).

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – Sabine National Wildlife Refuge had our only coots!

YELLOW RAIL (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) – Superb looks at more than a dozen flying birds flushed during rice-harvesting operations (even if we didn't get award-winning photos!). This was a most-wanted bird for most of us on the tour, and with help from local rail gurus Steve Cardiff and Donna Dittmann, we had excellent encounters--while standing in the fields, riding the ATVs, and even riding on the combines themselves. Yip yip!

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets).

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – A large number (at least 88) along Watkins Road among the shovelers.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – Fairly common near the Gulf of Mexico, especially along Gulf Beach Highway near Holly Beach, but we also had one fly by along West Niblett Road.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers).

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) – Two youngsters on the offshore gapped breakwaters near Holly Beach were unexpected treats!

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – A few along the Gulf of Mexico beaches.

SNOWY PLOVER (*Charadrius nivosus*) – Good scope views of these small plovers, which were chased around by both Piping and Semipalmated plovers at times.

SEMI-PALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Two or three along the Gulf.

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*) – A dozen or so on Gulf beaches. A very attractive little plover.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – About 20 for the tour, scattered throughout rice country to the Gulf shores.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – One near Holly Beach was a pleasure to watch feeding at relatively close range! An uncommon bird at this time of year here.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – A few singles on the Gulf breakwaters.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – About 35 scattered along the Gulf shoreline.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – A dozen or so mixed with the Sanderlings.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Flocks totaling almost 40 birds in the rice harvesting area around Thornwell.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – Two on the Gulf shoreline among the Sanderlings.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – A flock of 9 flew over Niblett Road, and 45 were mixed with stilts along Watkins Road. Another was on Marceaux Road the same day.

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*) – Many of us saw one from the rice harvester or ATVs near Thornwell.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Small numbers in rice country on the first day, and one in the marsh at Cameron on the second day.

WILET (WESTERN) (*Tringa semipalmata inornata*) – Four along the Gulf beaches.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – One flew over West Niblett Road early in the morning of the first day.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Fairly common along the Gulf, with several hundred tallied.

FRANKLIN'S GULL (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) – A few flew over on our first morning, headed to the local landfill. One resting on the offshore breakwater with Laughing Gulls made a nice study on the second day.

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – A few flyovers along West Niblett Road and at Thornwell, with more on the Gulf shoreline.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – Fairly common in rice country, at the National Wildlife Refuges, and along the Gulf shores.

FORSTER'S TERN (*Sterna forsteri*) – A dozen from the Holly Beach/Cameron ferry, with a few along Gulf shores as well.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – Several hundred were loafing along Gulf shores and feeding offshore on the second day.

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One lingered among the Royal, Caspian, and Forster's terns on the Gulf shore near Holly Beach.

Gaviidae (Loons)

COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*) – Three in the Gulf of Mexico.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*) – A late bird flew over us at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge as we watched for the King Rail.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Very common throughout rice country.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Small numbers along the Gulf shoreline.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – Abundant in rice country and along the Gulf shore, where mostly seen in flight, but several flocks came quite close!

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Small numbers dotted the Gulf shores and adjacent tidal creeks and rivers.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

AMERICAN BITTERN (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) – One flushed up by a rice harvester near Thornwell, seen by most of the group.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Fairly common in rice country.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Very common south of Interstate 10, with a few recorded north of it.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Dozens in rice country.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Just a few immatures this time, seen only on the drives on the first and second days.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – Likewise just a few "Louisiana" Herons, mostly seen on the drive, but a few at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge flew by during our walk on the marsh trail.

REDDISH EGRET (*Egretta rufescens*) – One immature dark morph with lovely glaucous bloom to the slaty plumage flew by us along the Gulf shore at our first stop.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Fairly common in rice country, where we saw some riding the backs of cattle.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Twelve roosting at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, one in the Cameron marshes.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – Abundant throughout rice country.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – One pointed out to some by Steve Cardiff during the rice harvesting afternoon.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – Many thousands throughout rice country and in the National Wildlife Refuges.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – We saw dozens among the ibis flocks and some feeding, all in rice country and the National Wildlife Refuges.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Two near Fort Polk during the drive.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Small numbers, mostly along Gulf shorelines.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Five total in scattered locations along the shore and in National Wildlife Refuges.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – A great surprise was the passage of a young Golden Eagle overhead at Peveto Woods, spotted by Frank! This is quite a rare bird in Louisiana.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus hudsonius*) – Fairly common in rice country, where seen hunting slowly over the fields. A few nice adult males were in the mix.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – Normally very uncommon in southern Louisiana and outnumbered by the next species, Sharp-shinned was recorded at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge (1 bird) and in the small westward flight of raptors at Peveto Woods (6).

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – Two singles in the raptor flight along the Gulf.

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – Two along West Niblett Road interacting in the air.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – Eight light morphs in the raptor flight along the Gulf, and one small dark Buteo that was probably this species (dark-morph Broad-winged are rather rare in Louisiana).

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – A few in the area around Thornwell and Lake Arthur.

RED-TAILED HAWK (BOREALIS) (*Buteo jamaicensis borealis*) – Many of the birds we saw in rice country and north of Interstate 10 were of this widespread species.

RED-TAILED HAWK (HARLAN'S) (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*) – One dark-morph adult at Thornwell, with another potential Harlan's (juvenile light morph) at our last stop on the last day.

RED-TAILED HAWK (KRIDER'S) (*Buteo jamaicensis kriderii*) – A few around rice country seen well, including a beautiful adult or two.

RED-TAILED HAWK (FUERTESI) (*Buteo jamaicensis fuertesi*) – This pale subspecies of the Southwest reaches the eastern edge of its range in Louisiana. We saw several in rice country.

Strigidae (Owls)

GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus*) – Two duetting in the distance near Cameron. [*]

BARRED OWL (*Strix varia*) – Two calling in the Kisatchie National Forest, one of which flew in to see us, spotted by Linda.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – A dozen or more spotted in rice country, mostly while driving, but a few in the National Wildlife Refuges.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus varius*) – Four in Kisatchie National Forest.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) – One at Sulphur and two along the drive toward Kisatchie National Forest, all immatures.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes carolinus*) – One in Kisatchie National Forest.

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Dryobates pubescens*) – Singles along West Niblett Road and in Peveto Woods.

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER (*Dryobates borealis*) – Hurray! After much poking around, we found a group of 8 in the Kisatchie National Forest. This is the only National Forest in Louisiana and the most extensive stand of Longleaf Pine in the state.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Dryobates villosus*) – One calling near Government Lake in Kisatchie National Forest. [*]

PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus pileatus*) – Two flybys during our drives.

NORTHERN FLICKER (YELLOW-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus auratus*) – Several in the Kisatchie National Forest area.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Fairly common around Thornwell and toward the Gulf shores, where we saw one perched next to the road.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Common along the roadways in rice country; a few were among the migrating raptors seen on our second day.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – One hunting along West Niblett Road.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – One hunting above the rice harvesters captured a rail (apparently a Sora) as we watched! Another passed westward over Peveto Woods.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – One at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, one along the Gulf at a stop in chenier habitat, and at least four in Peveto Woods.

EASTERN PHOEBE (*Sayornis phoebe*) – Rather common throughout.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – One nice male performed for us along West Niblett Road.

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – One at Holly Beach, very near the next species.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – A beautiful bird perched on the ground, street signs, and utility wires at Holly Beach.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*) – One bird in the chenier east of Peveto Woods.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) – A big surprise was to see this species at Peveto Woods, where it was a late migrant. Lynette found another that had perished here, regrettably, but it made a beautiful in-hand study and will become a specimen in the collection at LSU.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*) – Several seen nicely at Kisatchie National Forest; Frank also found singles at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge and Peveto Woods.

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – A very late migrant came out briefly at Peveto Woods.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – Still a fairly common bird in southern Louisiana, where we saw dozens along the wires during our drives and several very nicely on our walks.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*) – A few in Kisatchie National Forest.

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) – The most common crow on this tour, with small groups scattered throughout.

FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*) – Just a few around Scott and at the airport in Lafayette for some.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice).

CAROLINA CHICKADEE (*Poecile carolinensis*) – Fairly common along West Niblett Road.

TUFTED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus bicolor*) – One calling in Kisatchie National Forest. [*]

Hirundinidae (Swallows).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – A few in the masses of swallows near the coast.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – Many thousands in rice country, with the most impressive spectacle being the gathering at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge at dusk.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Dozens still among the Tree Swallows.

CAVE SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon fulva*) – Two near Thornwell and about five in the masses of swallows at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

Regulidae (Kinglets).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) – A few came in to see us in Kisatchie National Forest.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – A remarkably common bird throughout the tour route, except in the rice fields!

Sittidae (Nuthatches).

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH (*Sitta pusilla*) – Several family groups around Kisatchie National Forest. An attractive little species with a distinctive call, endemic to the mainland United States.

Poliopitilidae (Gnatcatchers).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliopitila caerulea*) – Wow! Louisiana has a lot of gnatcatchers in late fall! We saw dozens just about everywhere we went, with the exception of the rice fields, of course.

Troglodytidae (Wrens).

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – A smattering of singles from rice country to Kisatchie National Forest.

WINTER WREN (*Troglodytes hiemalis*) – A lovely serenade and show by a territorial wintering bird at Kisatchie National Forest.

SEDGE WREN (*Cistothorus platensis*) – Good views along West Niblett Road, with many more flushed in rice country during harvesting operations. The distinctive calls of this species were often heard as we watched other birds.

MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*) – Also rather common in the rice fields (at least 17 among the Yellow Rails!), but our best views were probably at the National Wildlife Refuges.

CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) – A pair showed pretty well in Kisatchie National Forest.

Sturnidae (Starlings).

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Small flocks in fields and urban areas, with a few in mixed blackbird flocks. Great to see this declining species in fresh plumage!

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – Singles along West Niblett Road, at Peveto Woods, and at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – Very common throughout, including in cities and towns.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – One west of Lake Arthur; another calling in Kisatchie National Forest.

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – Singles mostly in Kisatchie National Forest and at Peveto Woods.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows).

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – A common bird in towns and along highways, usually recorded at rest stops!

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies).

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH (*Spinus tristis*) – One flyover at Peveto Woods. [*]

Passerellidae (New World Sparrows).

BACHMAN'S SPARROW (*Peucaea aestivalis*) – We heard more than a dozen at Kisatchie National Forest, but we were able to see only two of this beautiful U.S. endemic species.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – One at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, one in Kisatchie National Forest.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) – Six along Niblett Road.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) – A few along Niblett Road and in Kisatchie National Forest.

LECONTE'S SPARROW (*Ammospiza leconteii*) – One was somewhat cooperative along West Niblett Road, seen by most.

SEASIDE SPARROW (*Ammospiza maritima*) – A great look at one in the marshes near the Cameron/Holly Beach ferry!

NELSON'S SPARROW (*Ammospiza nelsoni*) – Also near the ferry landing on the Cameron side of the Calcasieu River, a beautiful Nelson's Sparrow came out in our final hour of coastal birding.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – Fairly common in rice country along the field edges.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – Rather few! One seen fairly well at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*) – One appeared briefly in chenier habitat east of Peveto Woods.

SWAMP SPARROW (*Melospiza georgiana*) – Scattered singles in the freshwater marshes.

EASTERN TOWHEE (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) – One calling in Kisatchie National Forest. [*]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies).

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*) – Relatively common in rice fields and a few in saltmarsh habitat.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Large flocks throughout rice country. So nice to see fresh plumage in perfect autumn light!

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – One adult and two young males in the mixed blackbird-grackle flock at Holly Beach. An uncommon species in Louisiana.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*) – Fairly common in rice country.

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*) – A few small flocks in towns.

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus major*) – Very common in coastal areas and adjacent rice country.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Plenty of flyby birds, but we saw them well perched in Sulphur.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Leiothlypis celata*) – Remarkably common and confiding in cheniers and brushy edges and woodlands in the south.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – A few peeked out at us from dense marsh, woodland, and thickets.

HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) – At least one chipping at Peveto Woods. [*]

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – Marta spotted our first along West Niblett Road, and another appeared in the warbler mix at Peveto Woods.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – One in chenier habitat east of Peveto Woods, another in Peveto Woods proper.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*) – Dan spotted one right above our picnic at Peveto Woods, a rather late migrant!

PALM WARBLER (*Setophaga palmarum*) – A cooperative little bird at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge.

PINE WARBLER (*Setophaga pinus*) – Rather common in the Longleaf and Loblolly pine woods of Kisatchie National Forest.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE) (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – A few singles here and there, with many flyovers heard calling. One spotted by Dan gave a Myrtle chip note but seemed to have a head pattern more typical of Audubon's (possibly an intergrade).

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – Three still at Peveto Woods, a beautiful warbler.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*) – Most unexpected was a late bird at Peveto Woods, right over our picnic spot!

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – Small numbers in brushy woodlands and towns.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – A late bird was in Mulberry trees along the marsh walkway at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – One calling in chenier habitat. [*]

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – Small groups were seen along West Niblett Road.

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – A female was out sunning in oak trees among Orange-crowned Warblers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers on West Niblett Road.

MAMMALS

SWAMP RABBIT (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*) – One hopped up to us at Peveto Woods.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*) – A few in towns and woodlands throughout.

FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus niger*) – One in Kisatchie National Forest.

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – Several hunting fish in the tidal bore up the Calcasieu River, seen from the Cameron marshes, and a few more in the Gulf of Mexico.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In addition to a nice raptor flight along Gulf shores, we witnessed the migration of Monarch butterflies, with hundreds flying westward along the beaches, some pausing to alight to rest on goldenrod or oak trees. We also saw a fair few road-killed creatures, sadly, the most notable being a Graham's Crayfish Snake (*Regina grahamii*) at our first stop along West Niblett Road.

Totals for the tour: 171 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa