

*Audubon's Louisiana*  
LOUISIANA BIRD CALENDAR 2016





*American White Pelican*



# Audubon's Louisiana

**Come. Join Audubon** as he explores Louisiana, his "favorite portion of the Union" through these samples of his original watercolors from the New York Historical Society and the Houghton Library at Harvard. Listen as he tells us of his findings through his own words, taken from his 1820-1821 journal; his smaller, more complete and widely distributed *Birds of America* (Audubon 1840-1844), and his 1837 letters and advertisement. Quotes from Audubon's journal and letters are presented in italics, allowing appreciation of the unedited text. Quotes from *Birds of America* are referenced, but not in italics.

**In the first half of the calendar** we follow a recently bankrupt Audubon descending the lower Mississippi in 1820 on a flatboat headed for New Orleans. His mission is to complete and publish his life-size, drawn-from-nature images of the birds of the United States.

His field guides are a birder's memory and Turton's (1802) barely illustrated, Linnaean-based birds of the world. His equipment is not much more than a sharp-eye, a shotgun, drawing tools, and two portfolios. His laboratory is the American frontier. He wishes to study and record its avian treasures, which he has glimpsed on a previous 1819 voyage to New Orleans.



*Turton's bird illustration*

Before the end of 1821 he will have made important additions to Wilson's monumental *American Ornithology*, including the Wild Turkey, Double-crested Cormorant, and White and Brown Pelicans; identified incidentals like the Scarlet Ibis and Smew Merganser; and discovered new species including Bewick's Wren. By the end of 1821, Audubon's Louisiana stay will have allowed him to study more than 120 birds and complete at least 28 drawings which (by his notes on the originals) would appear in his *Birds of America*. Included in his Louisiana-drawings are his iconic images of the Carolina Parrot (Carolina Parakeet; undated), the Ivory-billed Woodpecker (undated), and several of our other 'monthly birds', all courtesy of the New York Historical Society and Harvard's Houghton Library.

**In the second half of the calendar** we follow Audubon when he has returned to Louisiana in 1837. He is now an internationally celebrated author, naturalist, and artist. He is gathering birds and data to complete

the first, life-size edition of *Birds of America* (Audubon 1827-1838) and formulating plans for the second edition used in the text of our calendar (Audubon 1840-1844).

At the end of 1837, Audubon issues an advertisement in London's *The Athenæum* (523:823). In it he notes that the first edition of his *Birds of America* is nearing completion years ahead of its original 16-year schedule and that time is running out to order copies. By now Audubon understands the importance of his work as a touchstone for measuring environmental change:

*...this Work... forms a complete history of the Birds of America, and will in after times be a point from which to institute a comparison for the purpose of ascertaining what changes civilization produces in the Fauna of that great continent.*

A brief outline of Audubon's travels through Louisiana follows, interspersed with additional, sequentially-ordered quotes from his journal.



*Bewick's Wren*



# Humble Beginnings in Louisiana

Audubon's flatboat lands on an island in the drift-tree filled Mississippi. It is four days before Christmas 1820. The region is filled with virgin cypress, dense cane breaks, pelicans, mating geese, teals, Ivory-billed Woodpeckers, cardinals, and Carolina Wrens. To his west, the new state of Louisiana below the Arkansas Territory. To his east, the nations of the Chickasaw and Choctaw above the new state of Mississippi, positioned for their annexation.

## *Ivory-billed Woodpecker*

12/22/1820 *The Geese where in Thousands on the Willow Bar, fighting and Mating. Mallards, Teals and Wood Ducks abundant... saw One Swan — One Redtailed Hawk, several Sparrow Hawks (American Kestrel) — Many Crested Titmouse (Tufted Titmouse) — Autumnal Warblers all through the Shaggy Beards (moss draped cypress)— The Carrion Crow (Black Vulture) plenty, and their relation the Buzzard (possibly Turkey Vulture). the Pewee Fly Catchers (possibly Eastern Wood Pewee) very busy diving at Insects and Singing Merely — saw several Bald Eagles...*



*Bald Eagle*

12/25/1820...*Great Footed Hawk (Peregrine Falcon) ...plenty on this River at this season... but allways extremetly Shy... I have often seen them after hearing their Canon Ball Like wissling Noise through the Air seize their Prey on the Wing... No doubt that the Clouds Ducks of some many Species as are found on this River, renders it a pleasant and fruitfull Winter Residence... Saw a Tell Tale Godwit (Greater Yellowlegs), the Only one seen since I Left the Ohio — but understanding the River is now considerably raised, I expect they are forced to abandon it —*

## *Great Footed Hawk*

12/26/1821 *...saw to day probably Millions of those Irish Geese or (Double-crested) Cormorants, flying Southwest... in Single Lines for several Hours extremely high... I found the Stomack of the Great footed Hawk filled With Bones, feathers, and the Gizzard of a Teal, also the Eyes of a Fish and Many Scales — it was a femelle Egg numerous and 4 of them the size of Green Peas —*



## *Mallards*

1/1/1821, *Near Baton Rouge... The Lands are flatening fast—the Orange trees are now and then seen near the Rich Planter's habitation... Expected to see some Alligators—Many Irish Geese in the Eddys—Mallards but few geese... Levees have made their appearance...*



The second day of 1821 Audubon travels from below Baton Rouge to Bayou Lafourche, giving us glimpses of plantation life, river traffic, woods filled with warblers and thrushes, and lakes covered with water birds while he draws a pair of Palm Warblers.

## *Cardinal Grosbeak*

1/3/1821 *...the Woods here have a new and very romantic appearance—the Plant Called Pamitta (palmetto) raises promiscuously through them the Moss on every tree darkens the under growth... Chirpings of hundreds of Beautifully Plumed inhabitants—*

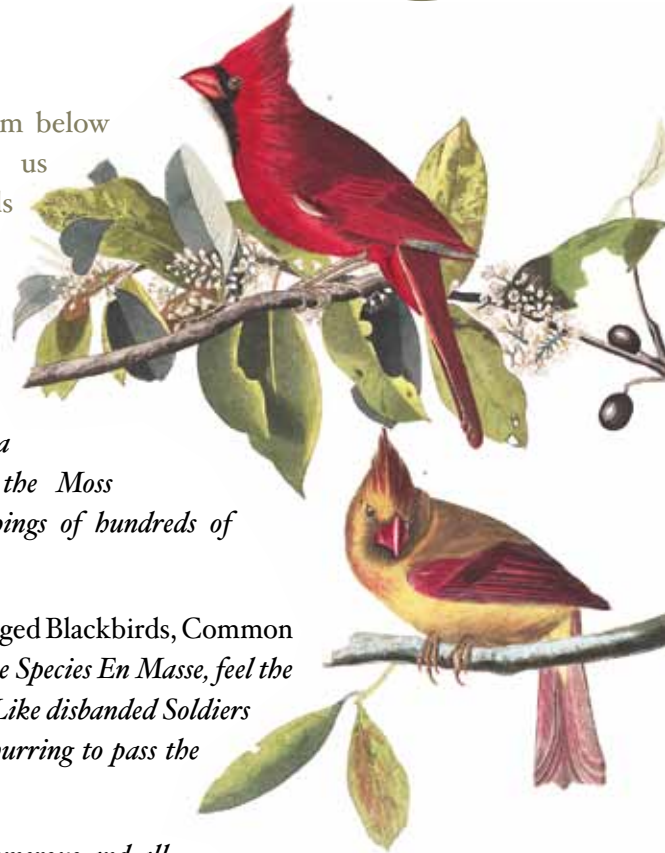
*the flocks of Blackbirds (likely some mix of Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Brown-headed Cowbirds) taking the Species En Masse, feel the air, they pass Southwest constantly; forming a Line Like disbanded Soldiers all anxious to reach the point of destination each hurring to pass the companion before him —*

*Doves are plenty, the Cardinal Gros Beak very numerous and all Species of Sparrow inhabiting the Interior are here—I remarkd great Many Brown Larks busy feeding on the Drift Wood that feeds Many Eddys—*

At Bonne Carré, Audubon becomes the first American naturalist to draw the Boat-Tailed Grackle and to describe its' elegant bearing.

## *Hermit Thrush*

1/5/1821 *We had some Light Snow... I saw some Terns Winowing in the Eddy below us... these Birds flew Lightly with their Bills perpendicular over the Watter on which they appeared to Keep a close attention, Now & then falling to it and taking up Small fragments of Biscuits thrown from our Boat... saw Many Warblers particularly the Maryland Yellow throat . Shot an Hermit Thrush; paid a Visit to a Cottager a French Creole... their Little Garden was adorned with a few orange Trees some fine Lettuces filled the Borders; Gren Peas nearly in bloom, Artichaux... at Night I drew the Outline of*





# Audubon's Humble Louisiana Existence Continues

Red Winged Starling



the Tern I had shot and ransacked Turtons but all without effect. Yet I do not Consider this as a New Speci, until I See Willson's 9<sup>th</sup> Volume...

1/6/1821 ...opposite Monsieur St Armand's Sugar Plantation... the Slaves employed at Cutting the Sugar Cane... begged a Winter Falcon We had Killed, saying it Was a great treat for them... those Immense Sugar Plantations Looked Like Prairies early in Summer for Scarce a Tree is to be seen, and particularly here where the Horizon was bounded by Cleared Land... the Gardens were beautifull. Roses in full bloom revive the Eye of the Traveller...

1/7/1821 at New Orleans at Last... hundreds of Fish Crows hovering near the shipping and dashing down to the Watter Like Gulls for food— uttering a cry very much like the young of the Common crow when they first Leave the Nests...

1/8/1821 at Day breake, went to Market... found Vast Many Malards, some teals, some American widgeons, Canada Geese Snow Geese, Mergansers, Robins; Blue Birds; Red wing Starlings,—Tell Tale Godwits... a Barred Owl...

2/5/1821 Drew the Brown Pelican... Killed on a Lake in this Vicinity... the Common Gulls pay us regular Visits... every Morning about Sun Rise — Comming across the Land from the Lakes Barataria... the quantity of Robins or Red breasted Thrushes Killed here is astonishing, the Market abound with them... they are at present the principal Game to be found.

2/9/1821 In walking this morning about a mile below this city I had the pleasure of remarking thousands of purple martins travelling eastwardly they flew high and circling feeding on insects as they went they moved onwardly about 1/4 miles an hour...

Purple Martin

From New Orleans, Audubon sends his wife early successes from his Louisiana pilgrimage, including a study of the Wild Turkey hen.

2/19/1821 the Market is regularly furnished with the English Snipe Which the french Call Cache Cache (Wilson's Snipe). Robins Blue Wingd Teals, Common Teals, Spoon Bill Ducks (Northern Shoveler), Malards, Snow Geese, Canada Geese, Many Cormorants. Coots, Watter Hens, Tell Tale (Godwits, calld here Clou Clou) Yellow Shank Snipes, Some Sand Hill Cranes (possibly a mix of Sandhill and Whooping Cranes), Strings of Bleu Warblers, Cardinal Grosbeaks, Common Turtle Doves, Golden Wingd Wood Peckers &c



Tell-Tale Godwit

3/16/1821... I took a Walk with my Gun this afternoon to see the Passage of Millions of Golden Plovers... the Sportsmen... assembled... as a flock Came Near every man Called in a Masterly astonishing Manner... from the firing before & behind us I would suppose that 400 Gunners where out. Supposing each Man to have Killed 30 Dozen that day 144,000 must have been destroyed... some few Were fat but the Greatest Number Lean, and all that I opened showed no food — the femelles Eggs extremely small

3/25/1821 Bought a beautiful Specimen of the Great White Heron (Great Egret)... it had been sent to me by a hunter... Worked on it the Whole day and found it the most difficult to Imitate of any bird I have yet undertaken...



Golden Plover

Great White Heron

Audubon traces the cage bird trade in Painted Buntings from Louisiana's orange groves to markets in London and Paris.

From the French Market, Audubon becomes the first American author to correctly identify the Purple Gallinule.

4/23/1821 ...found in Market a Gallinule that differs much from What I call the Purple one — the Yellow Legs & feet, their Stoutness — the Blue baby Top — & all Coloring — the hunters assured me they Never saw One with red Legs — but I cannot depend on their Memory...

Tutoring at Oakley, Audubon draws the Mississippi Kite while recalling previous encounters and his desire to avoid stuffed birds and carry no skins.

7/25/1821 ...an Indian of the Chactaw Nation... brought me a femelle of the Chuck Will's Widow in full and handsome plumage... these Birds generally abundant in this part of Louisiana, and at present very scarce, Not having been able to Meet one in any of our Excursions that often are of Twenty Miles — a few Weeks previous to our arrival they were heard from all parts of the adjacent Woods loud during the day — a few have been seen and a few heard since, all of which have eluded My pursuits...

8/1/1821 Our Sparrow Hawk Was Killed to day by a Hen engaged in guarding her Brood — Nero had become extremely Temeraire, Would Fall on a Grown duck as if thinking all Must answer his Wishes when hungry — he flew at liberty about the Place, caught Grasshoppers with great ease and Would Catch in the Air any



Chuck Will's Widow







*Sparrow Hawk*

of the unfortunate Small birds Killed in our daily walks when thrown toward him for food — he regularly refused all putrid flesh, Never Would touch Woodpeckers, but dearly received Bats & Mice — he had grown handsome from an apparent parcel of Moving Cotton — sailed with the Wild Birds of his Species, returning every Night to the Inner upper part of a Sash in Mr P's Room — he seldom made use of the Note of the Old Birds but allmost constantly uttered his Cree, Cree, Cree —

9/12/1821 ...the Tall White & Red Cypress... with their thousand Knees raising Like so Many Loafs of Sugar... Deep stiff Mud & Watter... several Large Alligators Sluggishly Moving on the Surface, Not in the Least disturbd by our Approach... a White Ibis on a Log where it sat a Longtime arranging its feathers using its scythe Shaped bill very dexterously...

Great Number of Prothonotary Warblers on the Low Bushes of the Swamp — Many yellow throated Warblers... Moving quickly round, up and down the Limbs and trunks of the Cypress trees, fly swiftly... alighting generally low on the trunk ascending it searching nimbly for small Insects... very fat... so found of the Cypress trees is this beautifull spirited litle bird that I Was Tempted to Call it the Cypress Swamp Warbler, where it is only to be Met in this part of the Country —

*Prothonotary Warbler*

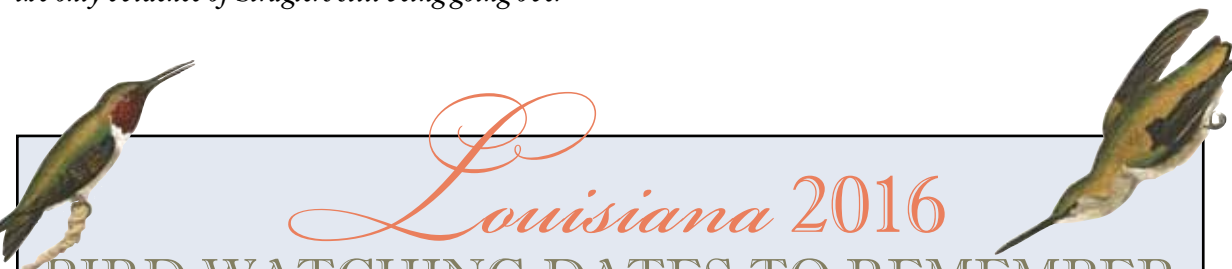
9/20/1821 I spent the Night Nearly in pursuit of the Wood Ibiss. I saw 4 Coming, sailing & flapping alternatly; their Necks & Legs strached out a little over the tops of the Trees a few Moments after sun Setting. No Note, they alighted on the Largest Top Branches of the dead trees in a Large Cotton Plantation, drew their Necks & Heads on their shoulders, Standing perpendicularly. Now & then arranging the feathers of their breast as if to put their Immense bill at Rest on it... While sitting waiting for the arrival of these curious Birds saw Several flocks of the White Ibiss and bleu Herons, Moving

*Wood Ibis*



*White Ibis*

from the Lake to this rendez-vousing place of Rest to a Large Sand Barr, at the Mouth of Thompson's Creek that empty a few Miles below Bayou Sarah — the first flew in single Waving Lines silently — the bleu Herons in acute Angles passing the Word of March from the first to the Last in a Simply Qua, these are easily Known by their drawn in Necks and Notes, the others allways Keeping their Necks at its full Length... These passages take place every Evening from about one hour before Sunset untill Dark When the Noises of the One and the Pure Whiteness of the others are the only evidence of Straglers still being going over —



## Louisiana 2016

### BIRD WATCHING DATES TO REMEMBER

#### EAGLE EXPO 2016

February 25-27, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Morgan City \_\_\_\_\_ 800-256-2931

#### THE GREAT LOUISIANA BIRDFEST

April 15-17, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Mandeville, North Lake Nature Center \_\_\_\_\_ 985-626-1238

#### GRAND ISLE MIGRATORY BIRD CELEBRATION

April 15-16, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Grand Isle \_\_\_\_\_ 800-259-0869

#### ST. BERNARD BIRD FESTIVAL

April 29 -30, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ St. Bernard, Los Islenos Museum Complex \_\_\_\_\_ 504-278-4242

#### SHOREBIRD EXTRAVAGANZA

April 27 - May 1, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Jennings \_\_\_\_\_ 225-642-5763

#### NEOTROPICAL SONGBIRD TOUR

May 7, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Sherburne Wildlife Management Area \_\_\_\_\_ 318-793-5529

#### LAFAYETTE HUMMINGBIRD DAY

September 17, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Lafayette \_\_\_\_\_ 337-993-2473

#### YELLOW RAILS & RICE FESTIVAL 2016

November 2-6, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ Jennings \_\_\_\_\_ 225-642-5763

For more information about these events, please visit [www.birdlouisiana.com](http://www.birdlouisiana.com)



Great Carolina Wren... J. J. Audubon ... 1822...



# JANUARY 2016

*Carolina Wren*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p><small>Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions &amp; enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.</small></p>	28	29	30	31	1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i>	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Just several days before Christmas in 1820, the flatboat carrying Audubon floated into Louisiana. Carolina wrens greeted him and remained an Audubon favorite. On that day he writes...

*We at last had fine weather, floated about 35 miles... Drawing nearly all day...*

*Saw in the afternoon a Black Hawk, a flock of Pelicans... Vast Many Geese seen all day, these Birds Now Pairing. Spanish Moss very abundant on all the Cypress trees — Large flocks of American Teals and the constant Cry of Ivory Billed Wood Peckers about us... Carolina Wrens and Cardinals exercising their Vocal powers all day.*

...it appears and is out of sight in a moment, peeps into a crevice, passes rapidly... stops, droops its tail, and sings with great energy a short ditty something resembling the words come-to-me, come-to-me ...so loud, and yet so mellow... During spring, these notes are heard from all parts of the plantations, the damp woods, the swamps, the sides of creeks and rivers, as well as from the barns, the stables and the piles of wood, within a few yards of the house. I frequently heard these Wrens singing from the roof of an abandoned flat-boat, fastened to the shore, a small distance below the city of New Orleans. When its song was finished, the bird went on creeping from one board to another, thrust itself through an auger-hole, entered through the boat's side at one place, and peeped out at another, catching numerous spiders and other insects all the while... So fond is this bird of the immediate neighbourhood of water, that it would be next to impossible to walk along the shore of any of the islands of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the Ohio to New Orleans, without observing several on each island. (Audubon 1841; 2:116-117)

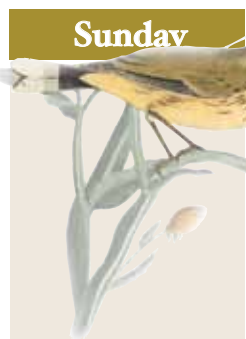


Yellow Red Poll Warbler... Drawn from Nature by J.J. Audubon Bayou La Fourche January 1, 1821... (Palm Warbler)



# FEBRUARY 2016

## *Palm Warbler*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 <i>Mardi Gras Day</i>	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
				EAGLE EXPO 2016 Morgan City 800-256-2931		
28	29	1	2	3	4	5

Audubon encounters and draws this bird and plant near Bayou Lafourche. His naming is consistent with Wilson (1808). During the early winter of 1821, Audubon writes...

*We floated all night without accident ...at day breake found ourselves about 50 Miles below Baton Rouge...*

*the Plantations increase in number... One may see the River below them by Looking across in Many Places — and from the Boat we can only have a View of the upper windows, Roofs and Tops of the Trees about them. the Whole is backed by a dark Curtain of Thickly Moss covered Cypresses — flat Boats are Landed at nearly every Plantation... travellers on horse Back or Gigg go by us full Gallop as if their Life depended on the accelerity of their movements...*

*...One Mile below Bayou Lafourche. We Came to... after Chasing the Note of What I supposed a New Bird for a considerable time, I found the deceiving Mocking Bird close by me and Exulting with the Towee Bunting's<sup>1</sup> cheep — Joseph was more fortunate he Killed Two Warblers one the Red Poll (of this We saw about a dozen) the other I have Not yet ascertained — although in Beautiful plumage; Both Male — how Sweet for me to find Myself the 1<sup>st</sup> of January in a Country where the woods are filled with Warblers, Thrushes, and at the same time see the Rivers and Lakes covered with all Kinds of Watter Birds...*

*— I drew the Likeness of Mr Dickerson the Master of the Boat — he paid me in Gold — took the Outlines of Both the Warblers by Candle Light to afford Me time to morow to finish both —*

Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.





Boat-tailed Grackles.  
*Tracula Baritta*

*Boat-tailed Grackles... Drawn from Nature by John. J. Audubon Bonné Caré's church January. 4th 1821...*



# MARCH 2016

## Boat-tailed Grackle

On January 4, 1821, above New Orleans, Audubon becomes the first American naturalist to draw and describe the Boat-tailed Grackle -- a bird which Wilson (1812, 6:viii) had wished to include in his effort.

*...Saw some Birds that I took for Large non described Cuckoos as they flew high over us, they had a new Note to me... Saw more of the Cuckoos... on the Ground and Knew them at once for ...Boat Tailed Grakles ...their Voice is Loud and Sweet and their Movements elegandy airy — a Beautifull male was very busily Engage<sup>d</sup> in carrying some straws to a Large Live Oak... through the Spanish Moss... these Birds are considerably More Shy than any other Grackle — fly very Loosely when in flocks, uttering constandy a Chuck diferent to that of the purple Grackle — Gracula quiscula — and their flight resembles that of our Cuckoos and that of the Cuckoo of Europe — While on the ground their walk is Elegant and Stately carrying their Long concave tails rather high — feed Closer to each other than Swamp Black Birds... my drawing Shews you Male & femelle, and tomorrow it being finished I will give you a description — the French here call them starlings but on all quesdons respecting them or any other birds their answer is a constant Oh Qui — the country is here richly adorned by handsome dwelling Houses, Many Sugar and Cotton Plantations running about One Mile and half to the Swamp, free from Old trees and Stumps — every house a L'Espagnole — orange trees, now hanging with their golden fruits forming avenues and Edges — the fields Well fenced in and drained by ditches running to the Swamps —*

For more information on birding St. Bernard Parish, contact the St. Bernard Parish Office of Tourism at 504 278-4242 or visit [www.visitstbernard.com](http://www.visitstbernard.com)

*Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i>	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
Easter						







*Wild Turkey*



# APRIL 2016

## Wild Turkey

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 		29 <i>Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions &amp; enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.</i>	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 THE GREAT LA. BIRDFEST Mandeville North Lake Nature Center 985-626-1238	16 GRAND ISLE MIGRATORY BIRD CELEBRATION Grand Isle 800-259-0869
17 THE GREAT LA. BIRDFEST Mandeville N. Lake Nature Cntr. 985-626-1238	18	19	20 Earth Day	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 SHOREBIRD EXTRAVAGANZA Jennings 225-642-5763	29 ST. BERNARD BIRD FEST. St. Bernard, Los Islenos Museum Complex 504-278-4242	30

Audubon was the first American naturalist to extensively describe the ecology of the Wild Turkey, relying chiefly on his observations in Kentucky and Louisiana. On February 15, 1821, Audubon writes...

*...List of Drawings Sent My Beloved Wife... Common Galinule — Not Described by Wilson... Boat Tailed Grakles Male & femelle — Not Described by Wilson... Brown Pelican Not Described by Wilson... Turkey Hen — Not Described by Wilson...*

The Turkey is irregularly migratory, as well as irregularly gregarious... About the beginning of October, when scarcely any of the seeds and fruits have yet fallen from the trees, these birds assemble in flocks, and gradually move towards the rich bottom lands of the Ohio and Mississippi. The males ...associate in parties of from ten to a hundred, and search for food apart from the females; while the latter are seen either advancing singly, each with its brood of young, then about two-thirds grown, or in connexion with other families, forming parties often amounting to seventy or eighty... all move in the same course... When they come upon a river, they betake themselves to the highest eminences, and there often remain a whole day, or sometimes two, as if for the purpose of consultation... At length... the whole party mounts to the tops of the highest trees, whence, at a signal, consisting of a single cluck, the flock takes flight for the opposite shore. The old and fat birds easily get over, even should the river be a mile in breadth; but the younger and less robust frequently fall into the water, — not to be drowned, however, as might be imagined. They bring their wings close to their body, spread out their tail as a support, stretch forward their neck, and, striking out their legs with great vigour, proceed rapidly towards the shore... (Audubon 1842, 5:43)



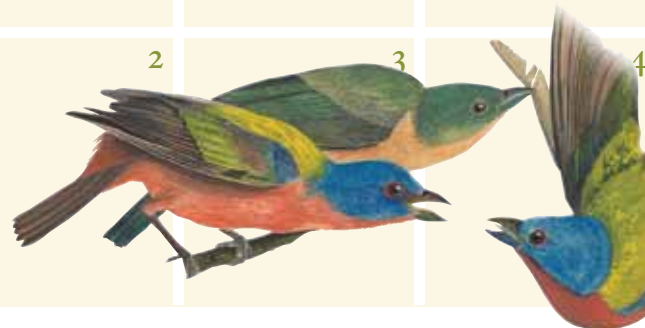


*Painted Buntings... Drawn from Nature by John J. Audubon City of New Orleans April 9th 1821...*

# MAY 2016

## Painted Bunting

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 SHOREBIRD EXTRAVAGANZA —Jennings— 225-642-5763	2	3	4	5	6	7 NEOTROPICAL SONGBIRD TOUR —Sherburne— Wildlife Management Area 318-793-5529
8 <i>Mother's Day</i>	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 <i>Memorial Day</i>	31	1	2	3	4



Audubon describes the then legal use of Painted Buntings in the cage-bird trade of the first half of the 1800s.

*April 5th 1821... Although these Birds are taken now and quite tamed in a few days, so much so as to sing as if at Large, when Caught Next Month they Die in a few hours, and shew dejection from the Instant they are caged — they are fond of Nesting in Live Oaks, Wild plum trees, Briars, Orange Groves — when domesticated are fed on Rice — Breed Twice...*

About the middle of April, the orange groves of the lower parts of Louisiana... are abundantly supplied with this beautiful little Finch. But no sooner does it make its appearance than trap-cages are set, and a regular business is commenced in the (New Orleans) market...

Few vessels leave the port of New Orleans during the summer months, without taking some Painted Finches, and through this means they are transported probably to all parts of Europe. I have seen them offered for sale in London and Paris... which converted the sixpence paid for it at New Orleans to three guineas in London... (Audubon 1841, 3:93-94)

For more information on birding Calcasieu Parish, contact the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau at 800-456-7952 or visit [www.visitlakecharles.org](http://www.visitlakecharles.org)

*Above image is from the Collection of the New York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.*

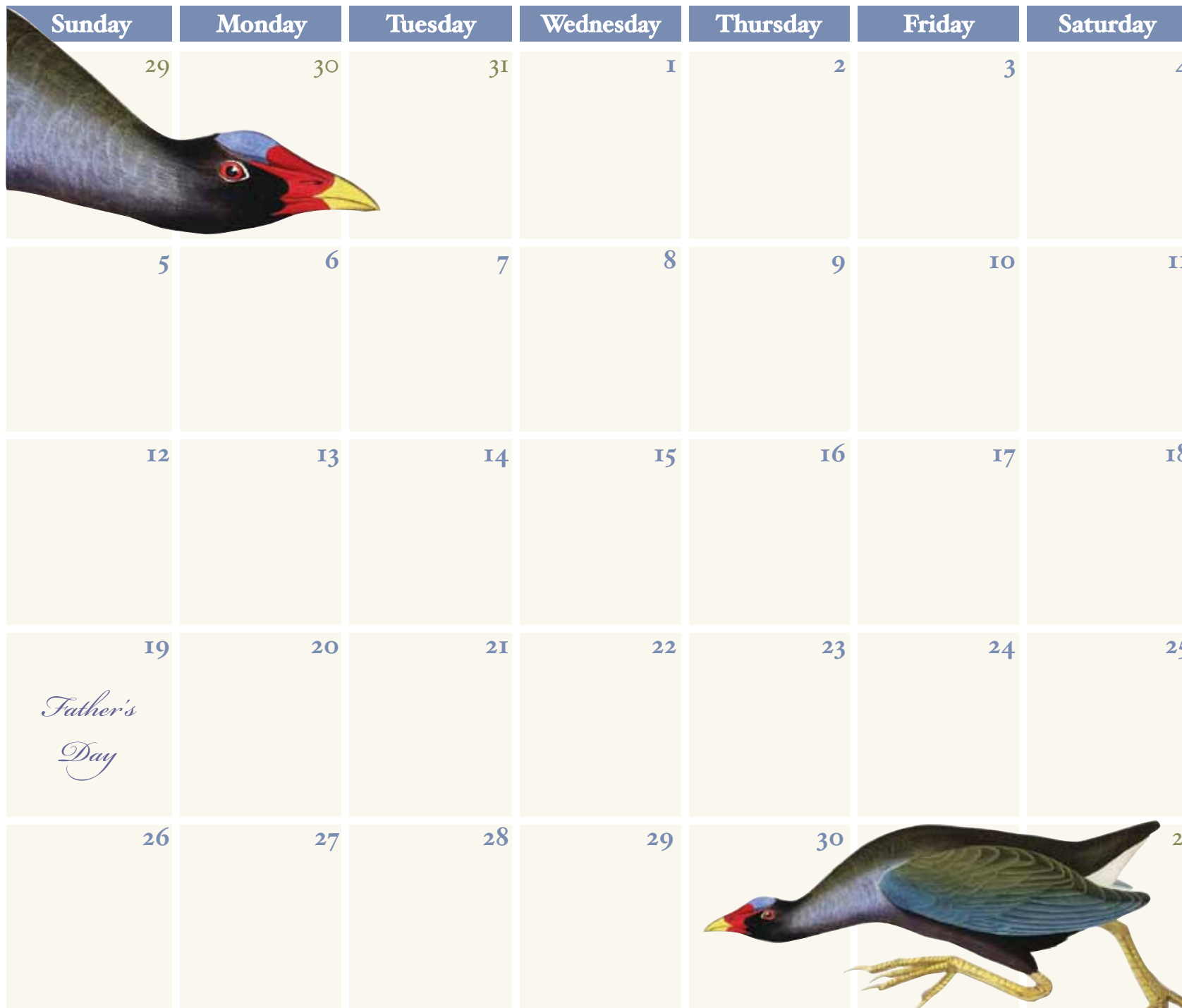




*Purple Gallinule... Drawn from Nature y John. J. Audubon New Orleans April 23, 1821*

# JUNE 2016

## Purple Gallinule



Audubon's illustration of this elegant and abundant water bird with a "Blue baby top" and yellow legs and feet predated its correct identification in the published literature.

...I have experienced a thousand times more pleasure while looking at the Purple Gallinule flirting its tail while gaily moving over the broad leaves of the water-lily, than I have ever done while.. gazing on the flutterings of gaudy fans and the wavings of flowing plumes. Would that I were once more extended on some green grassy couch, in my native Louisiana, or that I lay concealed under some beautiful tree, overhanging the dark bayou, on whose waters the bird of beauty is wont to display its graceful movements, and the rich hues of its glossy plumage! Methinks I now see the charming creature gliding sylph-like over the leaves that cover the lake, with the aid of her lengthened toes, so admirably adapted for the purpose, and seeking the mate, who, devotedly attached as he is, has absented himself, perhaps in search of some, secluded spot in which to place their nest. Now he comes, gracefully dividing the waters of the tranquil pool, his frontal crest glowing with the brightest azure. Look at his wings, how elegantly they are spread and obliquely raised; see how his expanded tail strikes the water; and mark the movements of his head, which is alternately thrown backward and forward, as if he were congratulating his mate on their happy meeting. Now both birds walk along clinging to the stems and blades, their voices clearly disclosing their mutual feelings of delight, and they retire to some concealed place on the nearest shore, where we lose sight of them for a time. (Audubon 1842, 5:128)

*Above image is from the Houghton Library at Harvard & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.*





*Mississippi Kite... Drawn from Nature by John J. Audubon. Louisiana parish of Feliciana James Pirrie's Esqu Plantation — June 28th 1821...*

# JULY 2016

## Mississippi Kite

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4 <i>Independence Day</i>	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Caught without his drawing equipment, Audubon did not collect his first Mississippi Kite. In 1821, he again encounters kites as he ascends the road from the landing at Bayou Sara to Oakley Plantation, where he will later draw this illustration. His reference to Johann Kaspar Lavaters recalls Audubon's interest in physiognomy.

*December 6, 1821... I first saw the Mississippi Kites: ascending in the Steam Boat Paragon in June 1819... Busily employed in Catching small Lizards off the Bark of Dead Cypress Trees, this effected by Sliding Beautifully by the Trees and suddenly Turning on their Side and Grapple the prey — having At that time no Crayons or Paper, did not Draw one, and determined Never to Draw from a Stuffed Specimen, Carried No Skins—*

*June 16, 1821... We Came to our Landing at the Mouth of Bayou Sarah of a hot sultry day...*

*We Walked slowly on... the Aspect of the Country entirely New to us distracted My Mind... the Rich Magnolia covered with its Odoriferous Blossoms, the Holy, the Beech, the Tall Yellow Poplar, the Hilly ground, even the Red Clay I Looked at with amazement such entire change in so Short a time appears often supernatural, and surrounded once More by thousands of Warblers & Thrushes, I enjoyd Nature My Eyes soon Met hovering over us the Long Wished for, Mississipi Kite and Swallow Tailed Hawk, but our Guns Were packd and We could only then anticipate the pleasure of procuring them shortly — the 5 Miles We Walked appeard Short We Arrived and Met Mr Perrie at his House Anxious to Know him I Inspected his features by Lavaters directions, — We Were received Kindly.*

For more information on birding St. Mary Parish, contact the Cajun Coast Visitors and Convention Bureau at 800 256-2931 or visit [www.cajuncoast.com](http://www.cajuncoast.com)

Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.





*Carolina Parrot... Louisiana — December — J.J. Audubon*





# AUGUST 2016

## Carolina Parakeet

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3



*...The upper Specimen was Shot near Bayou Sarah and appeared So uncommon... that I drew it more to exhibit one of those astonishing fits of Nature than any thing else – it was a female... The Green headed is also a singular although not uncommon a Variety as the above one... (Audubon, n.d., facing image)*

The flight of the Parakeet is rapid, straight... when impediments occur... they glance aside... merely as much as may be necessary. They are quite at ease on trees or any kind of plant, moving sidewise, climbing or hanging in every imaginable posture, assisting themselves... with their bills. They usually alight extremely close together... woud an individual, its cries are sufficient to bring back the whole flock, when the sportsman may kill as many as he pleases...

...At dusk, a flock of Parakeets may be seen alighting against the trunk of a large sycamore or any other tree, when a considerable excavation exists... the birds all cling to the bark, and crawl into the hole to pass the night. When such a hole does not prove sufficient... those around the entrance hook themselves on by their claws, and the tip of the upper mandible, and look as if hanging by the bill...

They are fond of sand in a surprising degree... alight in flocks along the gravelly banks about the creeks and rivers, or in the ravines of old fields in the plantations, when they scratch with bill and claws, flutter and roll themselves in the sand, and pick up and swallow a certain quantity of it...

Our Parakeets are very rapidly diminishing in number... twenty-five years ago... they could be procured... as far north-east as Lake Ontario... along the Mississippi there is not now half the number that existed fifteen years ago. (Audubon 1842, 4:307 - 309)

*Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.*






*Blue Winged Teal... Drawn by John J. Audubon from Nature - New Orleans February - 1822...*

# SEPTEMBER 2016

## Blue-winged Teal

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 	29	30 <small>Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions &amp; enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.</small>	31	1	2	3
4	5 <i>Labor Day</i>	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 LAFAYETTE HUMMINGBIRD DAY —Lafayette— 337-993-2473
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

In a letter of March 29, 1837, from below New Orleans, Audubon mentions his son Johnny's use of a technology that will facilitate the second, smaller, and more widely distributed Birds of America and alligator hunting with his friend and benefactor, Ed Harris. In that same ***Birds of America***, Audubon records the Blue-winged Teal ecology of our vanishing coast.

*My dear Bachman,*

*...about 2 miles below New Orleans, anchored on the western side of the great river... Johnny is in the swamps outlining cypress trees with the camera for Victor(.) We took Harris on an alligator hunt on a fine bayou. We killed about 20 of these beautiful creatures... made a grand dinner of the "tail end" of one... Sandhill Cranes are yet here — blue wings and green wings...*

The mouths of the Mississippi, surrounded by extensive flat marshes... and having in the winter months a mildness of temperature favourable to almost all our species of Waders and Swimmers, may be looked upon as the great rendezvous of the Blue-winged Teals...

They are the first Ducks... frequently making their appearance in the beginning of September, in large flocks, when they are exceedingly fat... Toward the end of February... the males are very beautiful. During their stay, they are seen on bayous and ponds, along the banks of the Mississippi, and on the large and muddy sand-bars around, feeding on grasses and their seeds... they are very fond of the wild pimento. Many remain as late as the 15th of May, in company with the Shoveller and Gadwall Ducks, with which they are usually fond of associating.

On my reaching the south-western pass of the Mississippi, on the 1st of April, 1837, I found these birds very abundant there, in full plumage, and in flocks of various sizes. On the 11th of the same month, when about a hundred miles to the westward, we saw large and dense flocks flying in the same direction. On the 15th, at Derniere Isle, the Blue-wings were very plentiful and gentle. Two days after, they were quite as numerous round Rabbit Island, in the bay called Cote Blanche... (Audubon 1843; 6:288 - 289)





*Brown Pelican...*

# OCTOBER 2016

## Brown Pelican

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 <i>Halloween</i>					

In a letter to John Bachman from Grande Terre, Audubon provides us with a glimpse of the island's ecology, the remains of John Lafitte's stronghold, and a desire to possess his lost journals.

*... We anchored safely under the lee of Barataria Island and have been here ever since, shooting & fishing at a proper rate... 4 White Pelicans... a great number of different Tringas (i.e., Yellowlegs and sandpipers), Terns, Gulls &c... We intend to proceeding to Cayo Island... said to be a great breeding ground. Not a bat on our island, and only raccoons, otters, wild cats and a few rabbits.... Have killed 5 Tringa himantopus (Long-legged Sandpipers). Marsh tern (Gull-billed tern) abundant. Cayenne and Common Terns as well. Larus atriculla (Laughing Gull) also. White & Brown pelicans and a good variety of Ducks and Florida Cormorant. Few Land birds. Saltwater Marsh Hens and Boat-tailed Grackles breeding. But enough, as I have noted every incident worth notice, which you will read from the journal...*

*This island... was Lafitte's (the pirate) stronghold. The remains of his fortification... are yet discernable. Some say that much money is deposited thereabouts...*

*The island is flat, and in 1830 it was overflowed by the waves of the Gulf impelled by a hurricane to the depth of 4 feet above the highest ground...*

For more information on birding Lafourche Parish, contact the Bayou Lafourche Area Convention and Visitors Bureau at 877 537-5800 or visit [www.visitlafourche.com](http://www.visitlafourche.com)

Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.





*Blue Heron... Drawn From Nature by John J. Audubon New Orleans March 20th 1821...*

# NOVEMBER 2016

## Little Blue Heron

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 <i>Above image is from the Collection of the New-York Historical Society. Digital image created by Oppenheimer Editions &amp; enhanced by BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.</i>	31	1	2 <b>YELLOW RAILS &amp; RICE FESTIVAL 2016</b> Jennings 225-642-5763	3	4	5
6 <b>Y R &amp; R FEST.</b> Jennings 225-642-5763 <i>DS Time Ends</i>	7	8 <i>Election Day</i>	9	10	11 <i>Veterans Day</i>	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 <i>Thanksgiving</i>	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3



Audubon's observations on the Little Blue Heron remind us of the loss of Cayo Island to coastal erosion, lingering controversy over climbing rattlesnakes, and the role Audubon's legacy played in the protection of southern rookeries.

...While on Cayo Island... I observed large flocks of the Blue and Green Herons... They flew at a considerable height, and came down like so many Hawks, to alight on the low bushes growing around the sequestered ponds; and this without any other noise than the rustling of their wings as they glided through the air towards the spot on which they at once alighted. There they remained until sunset, when they all flew off, so that none were seen there next day...

The situations which they choose for their nests are exceedingly varied. I have found them... on the islands in the Bay of Galveston ...in nests placed amidst and upon the most tangled cactuses, ...on ...which the climbing rattlesnake often gorges itself with the eggs of this and other species of Heron, as well as with their unfledged young. In the lower parts of Louisiana, it breeds on low bushes of the water-willow... Wherever you find its breeding place, you may expect to see other birds in company with it, for like all other species, excepting perhaps the Louisiana Heron, it rarely objects to admit into its society the Night Heron, the Yellow-crowned Heron, or the White Egret.

The heronries of the southern portions of the United States are often of such extraordinary size as to astonish the passing traveller. I confess that I myself might have been as skeptical... had I not seen with my own eyes the vast multitudes of individuals of different species breeding together in peace... (Audubon 1843, 6:150-153)





*Common Nighthawk*

# DECEMBER 2016

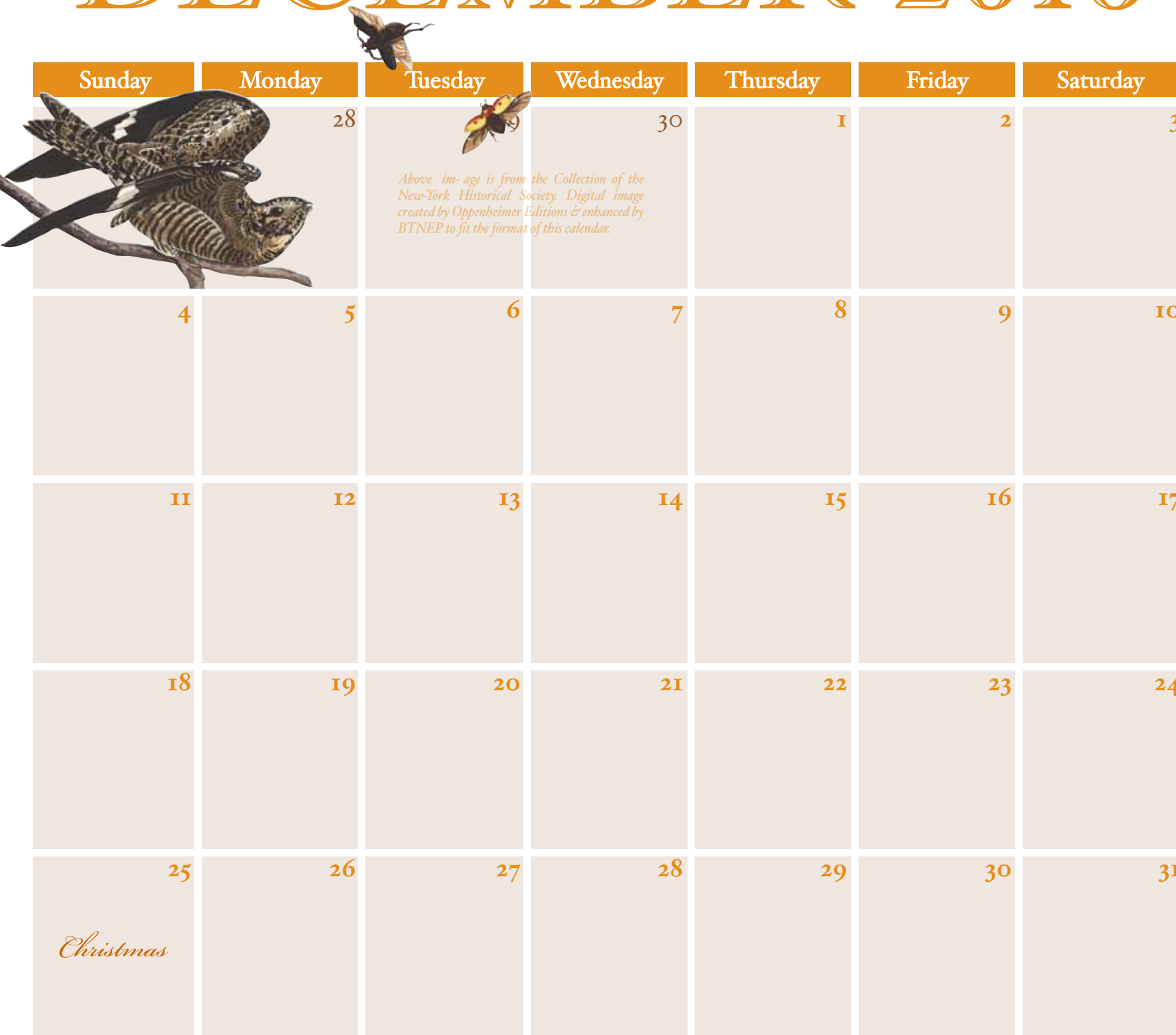
## Common Nighthawk

Snugly anchored in Cote Blanche Bay, mid-way in his 1837 voyage, an ecstatic and unshaven Audubon continues his coastal correspondence with William MacGillivray. Below he gives us a last view of the vast offshore oyster reefs which were building our coast when Spain arrived in 1500s, followed by a pastoral close for this calendar.

*On Board the Crusader, Cote Blanche... 18<sup>th</sup> April 1837*

*...we made our way... by a narrow and somewhat difficult channel... The shores around us are entirely formed of a bank, from twenty to thirty feet high, of concrete shells of various kinds, among which the Common Oyster, however, predominates... so white that it might well form a guiding line... even in the darkest nights.*

*The crossing of large bays, cumbered with shallow bars and banks of oyster-shells, is always to me extremely disagreeable, and more especially when all these bars and banks do not contain a single living specimen of that most delectable shell-fish... But now in single file, like culprits or hungry travelers, we proceed along the margin of the canal. Ah, my dear friend, would that you were here just now to see the Snipes innumerable, the Blackbirds, the Gallinules, and the Curlews that surround us... listen, as I now do, to the delightful notes of the Mocking-bird, pouring forth his soul in melody as the glorious orb of day is fast descending... watch the light gambols of the Night Hawk, or gaze on the Great Herons, which, after spreading their broad wings, croak aloud as if doubtful regarding the purpose of our visit to these shores! ...As we approached the (coastal) mansion I observed... a fine garden, and a yard well stocked with cattle, together with a good number of horses and mules, just let loose from labor. A mill for grinding corn and making sugar ...some women milking the cows... The short twilight of our southern latitudes had now almost involved every object in that dim obscurity so congenial to most living creatures after the toils of the day, as allowing them to enjoy that placid quiet which is required to restore their faded energies...*







# Come, Bird in Louisiana.

Baltimore Oriole



**Come bird with us in Louisiana** where the pace of life is often like a bayou's flow, slow and steady. Our tranquil and serene landscapes include thousands of acres of cypress swamp, marshes, lakes, bays, and extensive barrier islands. The productive nature of these habitats, our geography, and the influence of the mighty Mississippi make Louisiana a birding paradise. In just the Barataria-Terrebonne system ~400 different species of birds have been identified. Nearly 200 of these are considered common to abundant. While 64 are cherished residents, others are exciting migrants or incidentals. All are ready to increase your life list. Audubon noted White and Brown Pelicans; Great Blue, Little Blue, and Green Heron; Clapper Rail; Blue and Green-winged Teal; Northern Shoveler; Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs; Gull-billed, Royal, and Common Terns; sandpipers, snipes, gallinules, curlews, warblers, and blackbirds in his 1837 letters. Your lists could easily be fuller when you visit Louisiana.

Select an area from our *America's Wetland Birding Trail* map and plan your trip. Consider one of our birding festivals, such as the *Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration* where you can join tours of cheniers, marshes, beaches and mudflats, and nearby islands. If a fall-out of migrating birds has occurred you may see a red mulberry tree filled with a kaleidoscope of birds, including blood-red Summer Tanagers, velvety-red Scarlet Tanagers, orange



Baltimore Orioles, burnt-orange Orchard Orioles, deep-blue Indigo Buntings, and multi-hued Painted Buntings. Intent on feeding and drinking, fall-out birds often seem unconcerned with the attention of birdwatchers, and allow close study. Learn more at <http://birds.btnep.org/BirdsHome.aspx>.

Marsh Wren

Bring your calendar. Retrace all or a portion of Audubon's path. Ponder how his insights add to the following lessons from the past for a present generation desperately trying to restore its coast for the future. Though the Delta is changing, it remains awe inspiring.

*"The productive nature of these habitats, our geography, and the influence of the mighty Mississippi make Louisiana a birding paradise."*

**In 1820 Audubon entered the Mississippi at its convergence with the Ohio.** Below him, the River was generally free to occupy a vast plain as it approached the Gulf of Mexico in a seasonal flood fed by runoff from 40% of North America. This portion of the Mississippi Valley was a vast, swampy wilderness filled with cranes, swans, pelicans, geese, cormorants, anhinga, raptors, woodpeckers, warblers, wrens, ancient cypress, and promise for its new owners, the United States. As he entered Louisiana, the wilderness gave way to plantations and towns, many the result of French, Spanish, and English rule. This wilderness-to-civilization transition was most apparent near the headwaters of the Atchafalaya, the first branch of the River as it approached the Gulf of Mexico through a set of interconnected, distributaries. Before Europeans arrived, these distributaries had been free to feed and built the Mississippi River Delta Plain .

The United States was rapidly transforming the Delta. Boats -- steam, keel and flat -- navigated the River, always on the lookout

for sandbars, islands, drift-trees, and landings. Towns such as New Orleans were blossoming into cities. Plantations and settlements were spreading north, accompanied by construction of artificial levees to contain the annual flood of the Mississippi. Further modification of the River and its distributaries would be made in preparation for the Battle of New Orleans and, beginning in 1831, in the removal of log jams along the Red and Atchafalaya. All of these efforts reduced the River's ability to build and maintain the Delta. As a result, salinity along the coast increased.

**As early as 1828, Audubon was aware of the rapid nature in which the American wilderness was being transformed** and regretted the inability to capture prime avian habitat as two deminsional images before it was altered:

*I would have liked to raise an everlasting monument... by adding to each drawing of a single species a vignette exhibiting corresponding parts of the country where the specimen is most plentifully found; but... I have relinquished the idea... with hopes that... some one... may still engage in the undertaking. Sorry... that as time flies Nature loses its primitiveness, and that pictures drawn in ten, or twenty, or more years, will no longer illustrate our delightful America pure from the hands of its Creator!*

Fortunately, his written and illustrated legacy often fulfills that desire as with the Carolina Parakeet, the Passenger Pigeon, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker... and the Delta.



Whooping Crane

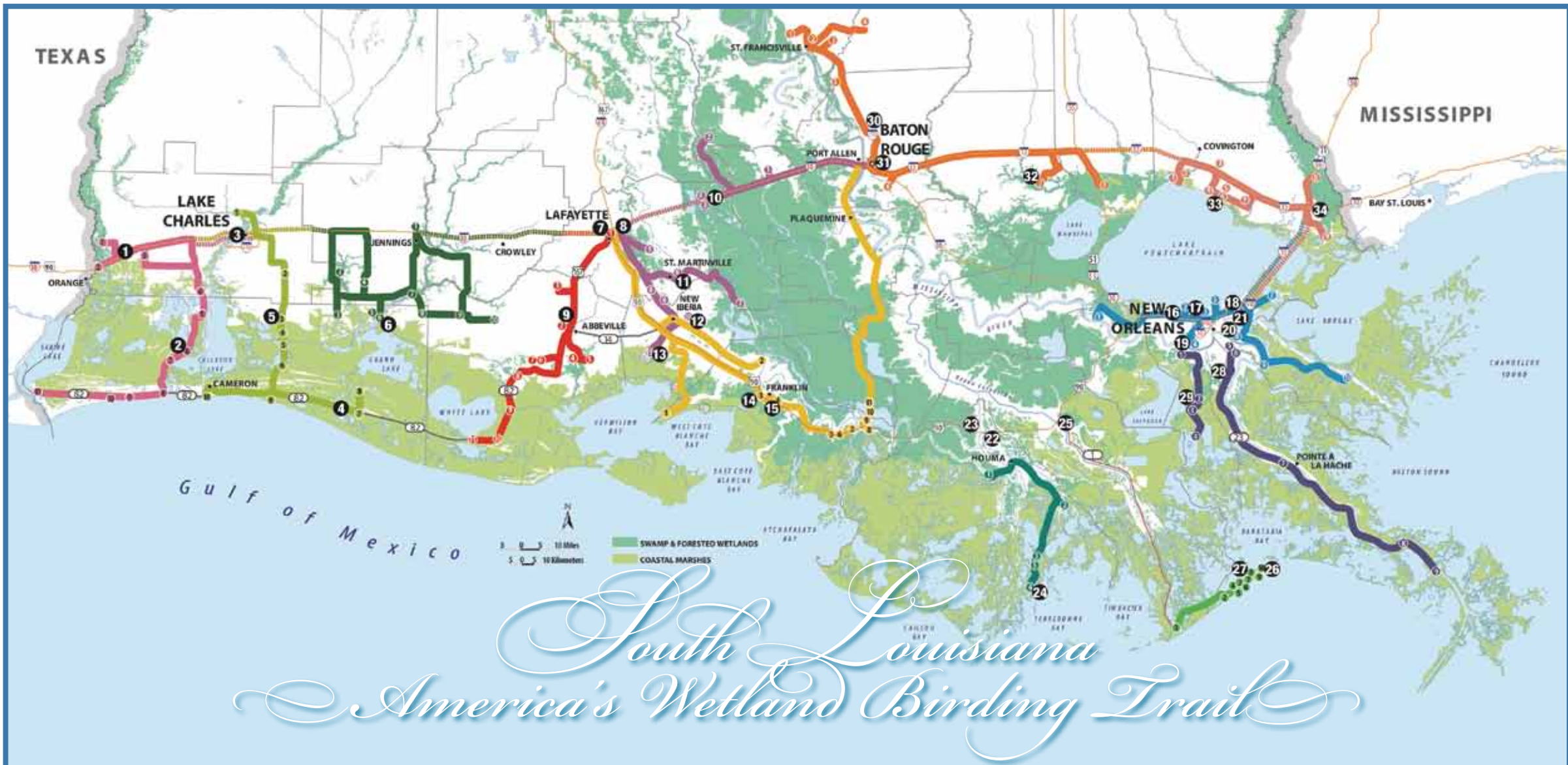


10. Atchafalaya Welcome Center  
337-228-1094
11. Lake Fausse Pointe State Park Visitor Center  
888-677-7200
12. Iberia Parish Convention & Visitors Bureau  
888-942-3742
13. Tabasco® Pepper Sauce Factory  
337-365-8173
14. Cajun Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Franklin, LA 70538 • 337-828-2555
15. Cajun Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Morgan City, LA 70380 • 800-256-2931
16. Louis Armstrong International Airport  
Kenner, LA 70062
17. New Orleans Metropolitan Convention  
& Visitors Bureau  
504-566-5011
18. Audubon Louisiana Nature Center  
504-861-2537

19. Audubon Aquarium of the Americas  
800-774-7394
  20. Audubon Zoo  
866-487-2966
  21. St. Bernard Parish Tourism Commission  
888-278-2054
- 
22. Houma Area Convention & Visitors Bureau  
985-868-2732
  23. Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center  
985-448-1375
  24. W.J. DeFelice Marine Center LUMCON  
985-537-5800
  25. Lafourche Parish Tourist Commission  
985-537-5800
- 
26. Grand Isle State Park Visitor Center  
985-787-2559
  27. Grand Isle Tourist Information  
985-787-2997

28. Plaquemines Tourism Center  
Belle Chasse, LA 70037 • 504-394-0018
29. Barataria Preserve Visitors Center Jean Lafitte  
504-589-2330
30. BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo  
225-775-3877
31. State Capitol Welcome Center  
225-342-7317
32. Tickfaw State Park Nature Center  
888-981-2020
33. Fontainebleau State Park  
888-677-3668
34. I-10 Slidell Welcome Center  
985-646-6451

This public document was published at a total cost of \$27,725.00. 25,000 copies of this public document were published in this first printing at a cost of \$27,725.00. The total cost of all printings of this document, including reprints, is \$27,725.00. This document was published by the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, NSU Campus, P.O. Box 2663, Thibodeaux, LA 70310, to provide the public with environmental information under the authority of LA R.S. 30:2011. This material was printed in accordance with standards for printing by state agencies established pursuant to R.S. 43:31.





# SPECIAL THANKS



*Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program* thanks the generous underwriters  
for their contributions in producing this inspirational calendar.



## BTNEP

BARATARIA-TERREBONNE  
NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

This document was published by:

BARATARIA-TERREBONNE  
NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM  
Nicholls State University Campus  
P.O. Box 2663  
Thibodaux, LA, 70310

1-800-259-0869 • [www.btnep.org](http://www.btnep.org)

&



BARATARIA-TERREBONNE  
ESTUARY FOUNDATION  
P. O. Box 1336,  
Thibodaux, LA 70302

985-447-0871  
[www.supportbtnep.org](http://www.supportbtnep.org)

*Stilted Sandpiper image is from the Collection of  
the New-York Historical Society. Digital image  
created by Oppenheimer Editions & enhanced by  
BTNEP to fit the format of this calendar.*