



Bayou Birds



*Cultural Wetlands Scenic Byway:
Grand Isle Loop*

985-537-5800
www.louisianatravel.com/lafourche
 or
 800-688-2732
www.houmatourism.com

Part of The Great American Trails Network 

America's
Wetland
Birding Trail
On Louisiana's
Great Gulf Coast



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GRAND ISLE LOOP

Originally populated by descendants of the pirate Jean Lafitte's crew, this intriguing 7.5-mile long barrier island is blessed with an almost overwhelmingly diverse and beautiful bird community. The town folk are friendly and always seem to have time to talk with tourists, so don't be bashful about starting up a conversation!

Hard-core birders would do well to make a point of detouring on Fourchon Road (LA 3090), located 10 miles west of Grand Isle. The large shallow bay on the west side of that road is often crowded with wading birds, seabirds, and shorebirds representing dozens of species.

Grand Isle itself offers a diverse array of bird habitats, from quiet pockets of salt-marsh and shallow bays to deeply shaded live oak forests, moist, grassy meadows, and of course, miles of beach. Visit all of the areas, particularly during the winter months and during spring and fall migration, when the island is overflowing with birds. Summer birders should peruse the beach and nearshore waters for gulls, tern, pelicans, and other seabirds.



Fourchon Road Complex

Site 9-1



Site access: Free, Daily

GPS coordinates: N 29.15734; W 90.17876

Site contact: Greater Lafourche Port Commission;
985-396-3911

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 50.7 miles to LA 3090. Turn right (south) onto LA 3090. Good birding begins within 0.5 miles on the right (west) side of the road in Bay Tartellon. To reach Fourchon Beach, continue southward on LA 3090 for another 3.0 miles. Bear right after crossing the Bayou Tartellon Bridge and follow signs to Fourchon Beach.

Description: This hotspot of both fishing and oilfield interests is located where Bayou Lafourche finally splits into two streams, less than a mile before it reaches the Gulf of Mexico. The two specific birding habitats within this complex are: 1) Bay Tartellon, which runs for several miles along west side of LA 3090, and 2) Fourchon Beach, which lies at the terminus of LA 3090.

During low water periods, Bay Tartellon is dotted with exposed shoals and mudflats. This creates prime foraging habitat for shorebirds which often congregate here by the thousands, especially during migration and winter periods. Pull off onto the shoulder of LA 3090 to get a more leisurely look at the shorebirds, pelicans, seabirds, wading birds, waterfowl, and others which utilize this system for feeding and loafing. Scan the horizon for Peregrine Falcons in the fall, winter, and early spring.

Wildflowers almost constantly bloom along the backbeach/dune areas, and seabirds and shorebirds abound, especially during spring, fall, and winter. Keep an eye out for flycatchers and songbirds within the scrub vegetation between the Bayou Tartellon Bridge and the beach.

Gulf Stream Marina

Site 9-2



Site access: Free, Fee for boat launch, Daily

GPS coordinates: N 29.20969; W 90.03282

Site contact: Joseph Arnona; 985-787-3566

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and follow south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge, continuing about 0.7 miles on LA 1 to Gulf Stream Lane. Turn left (north) and go about 0.1 miles to the marina.

Description: Seabirds and shorebirds are the main attraction of this site nestled on the northern edge of the island at Caminada Bay. The salt marsh/flats on the right (east) side of the entrance road often contain gulls, terns, and sandpipers. Common species to look for include Laughing and Ring-billed (fall, winter) gulls, Forster's Tern, Black-bellied and Semipalmated plovers during migration and winter, Killdeer, Black-necked Stilt, and Least and Western sandpipers.

A pier system extends from the marina to the rock breakwaters several hundred feet into the bay. These breakwaters often host Neotropic and Double-crested (winter) cormorants, Brown and American White (winter) pelicans, Laughing, Ring-billed (winter) and Herring (winter) gulls, Forster's, Sandwich (summer), Caspian and Royal terns, and Spotted Sandpiper.

During low tide periods, extensive mud flats emerge between the shoreline and breakwaters, offering exceptional views of wading birds, seabirds, and shorebirds. Additionally, the observation lounge in the Gulf Stream Marina store offers visitors viewing opportunities, especially when the weather prevents outside birding.





Grand Isle Port Commission Property

Site 9-3



Site access: Free

Site contact: Grand Isle Port Commission;
985-787-2229

GPS coordinates: N 29.23640; W 89.99971

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge and continue 3.6 miles to Ludwig Lane. Turn left (north) for 0.75 miles, veer left and follow into the parking lot on the right. Walk north to the path at the back of the property to enter the Port Commission Boardwalk Area.

Description: This charmingly isolated site is accessed by walking west on a 1000-foot levee which leads to a 281-foot boardwalk that juts out into the salt marsh north of the levee. A tree-lined canal borders the left (south) side of the levee. En route to the boardwalk, keep an eye out for songbirds such as vireos, warblers, buntings, and orioles in the oaks and hackberries lining the canal, and for rails and wading birds in the canal itself.

A small salt marsh along the north side of the levee provides excellent views of the year round Clapper and the wintering Sora and Virginia Rail, in addition to Great and Snowy egrets, Great Blue, Green and Tricolored herons, White Ibis, and Roseate Spoonbill. Resident Mottled Ducks are joined in winter by additional ducks such as Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged and Blue-winged teal, and Northern Pintail. Resident Laughing Gull and Forster's, Royal and Caspian terns are joined in summer by Least and Gull-billed terns.

Bobby Santini Property

Site 9-4



Site access: Free, Daily

Site contact: Bobby and Joann Santini; 985-787-3157

GPS coordinates: N 29.23595; W 89.99840

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south for about 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge, continue 3.8 miles on LA 1 and turn left (north) on Coulon Rigaud Lane. Follow about 0.3 miles to the Santini residence, which is the last house on the right side of the road.

Description: A south Louisiana legend, Bobby Santini is known as “The Bird Man” in Grand Isle. This is because he’s been an avid birdwatcher long before it was considered “cool.” If he is around when you visit, chances are he’ll regale you with birding tales gleaned from decades of experiences on the island.

Bobby and his wife Joann keep their seed feeders well-stocked on a year round basis, attracting numerous species including Indigo and Painted buntings, Blue Grosbeak, various sparrows, and the occasional “super-rarity” such as Yellow-headed Blackbird and Shiny Cowbird. Also, the mulberries, oaks, and Japanese plums in their backyard are often loaded with warblers, tanagers, and orioles, particularly during the spring and fall migration periods.

Cultural/Historical Attractions

WETLANDS ACADIAN CULTURAL CENTER, JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK & PRESERVE

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, located in Thibodaux, LA, features extensive exhibits and artifacts which tell the story of the region’s Acadian population, known today as the Cajuns. The Center interprets the origin, migration, settlement and contemporary culture of Acadians who settled along the bayous and in the swamps and wetlands of southeastern Louisiana. In addition to the 200-seat theater, the Center also features a variety of video and film presentations as well as a wide assortment of publications, recorded music, children’s books and craft items. For more information about the center and its programs, call 985-448-1375 or visit www.npw.gov/jela/jelaweb.htm.

The Nature Conservancy Lafitte Woods–Grillette Tract

Site 9–5

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Site access: Free, Daily

GPS coordinates: N 29.23236; W 89.99587

Site contact: Program Manager;

985-787-2514, 985-787-2997

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge, continue about 3.7 miles on LA 1 to the Nature Conservancy sign and split-rail fenced parking area on the left.

Description: This 13-acre wooded tract, located in the heart of Grand Isle annually hosts myriads of spring and fall migrating neotropical songbirds. In fact, it has become a literal centerpiece for visiting birders. The forest is comprised mostly of live oak and hackberry trees, dotted with red mulberry, black willow, and yaupon holly as well. Also abundant is the aptly-named American beautyberry, a deciduous shrub which produces gorgeous clusters of magenta-purple berries in late summer and early fall. Numerous birds feed on the berries, including Wood, Hermit, Gray-cheeked and Swainson's thrushes, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, and Summer Tanager.

Although spring and fall are the prime seasons for birding this site, good concentrations of nearctic species such as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed Vireo, American Robin, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned kinglets, as well as Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped warblers reside here during the winter months.

Landry House B&B

Site 9–6

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Site Access: Free, Fee for overnight guests

GPS coordinates: N 29.23720; W 89.99300

Site contact: Pat and Jean Landry, Owners;

504-787-2207

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge and continue about 4.0 miles on LA 1 to Hector Lane. Turn left (north) and go 0.2 miles to the B&B.

Description: This 8-acre site has been occupied by the Landry family for several generations. The 1931 house, which now serves as the B&B, was built by current owner Pat Landry's parents. The grounds contain beautiful gardens, filled with native and tropical plants which attract Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in spring, summer, and early fall, along with songbirds such as Carolina Chickadee and Tufted Titmouse.

The grounds of the Landry House also contain numerous mature live oaks which have decorated the property for more than 200 years. These historic trees fill with neotropical songbirds, especially during the spring, fall, and winter months. Spring and fall migration bring a plethora of flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, and orioles. Winter brings hordes of nearctic migrants such as American Robin, Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped warblers, along with occasional "lingering" neotropical migrants like Black-and-White, Yellow-throated and Prairie warblers. During migration periods, be sure to check the salt-meadow behind the B&B for Indigo and Painted buntings, Orchard and Baltimore orioles, and other grassland/scrub-dwelling songbirds.



To raise awareness of the impact Louisiana's wetland loss has on the state, nation and world and to increase support for efforts to save coastal Louisiana, the State launched America's WETLAND: Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana, the largest, most comprehensive public awareness initiative in its history.



The Nature Conservancy Lafitte Woods—LSU Tract

Site 9-7



Site access: Free, Daily

GPS coordinates: N 29.23703; W 89.98994

Site contact: Program Manager;

985-787-2514, 985-787-2997

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge, continue 4.2 miles on LA 1 and turn left (north) on Minnich Lane. After about 0.1 miles, look for The Nature Conservancy sign on east side of the lane.

Description: This 4.5-acre tract is owned by Louisiana State University and operated by The Nature Conservancy. Managed as migratory stop-over habitat for vireos, thrushes, warblers, tanagers, orioles, and other neotropical woodland species, this tract is dominated by red mulberry and live oak trees.

During spring and fall migration periods (March-May/August-October) hordes of species such as Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Least Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, along with numerous warblers such as Golden-winged, Tennessee and Prairie warblers are drawn to the site. On occasion, the rare Black-whiskered Vireo has been spotted here, especially during late spring and early summer. Be on the lookout for this rare find!

Bradberry Property

Site 9-8



Site access: Free, Daily

GPS coordinates: N 29.24384; W 89.97935

Site contact: Gloria and Thomas Bradberry,

Owners; 985-787-3263

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge and continue about 5.1 miles on LA 1 to Willow Lane. Turn left onto Willow and follow north to Orleans Avenue and the residence on the right.

Description: The Bradberry's residence has long been known as "the" place to go for certain local rarities, especially Yellow-headed Blackbird and Shiny and Bronzed cowbirds. Their property is mostly open, and they put out lots of seed feeders and water features, attracting many open country birds, especially buntings and sparrows.

The yard contains a number of mature red mulberry trees, which load up with fruit in spring – just in time for the arrival of northbound neotropical migrants, most of which have just completed an arduous, energy-draining trip across the Gulf of Mexico. The list of avian mulberry-eaters that might appear in the Bradberry's trees includes White-eyed, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed vireos, American Robin, Wood, Hermit and Swainson's thrushes, Veery, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-breasted Chat, Scarlet and Summer tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Orchard and Baltimore orioles.



Exxon-Mobil Fields and Pond

Site 9-9



Site access: Free

GPS coordinates: N 29.24786; W 89.97303
(LA 3151 X Candies Road)

Site contact: Program Manager;
985-787-2514, 985-787-2997

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge, continue 5.5 miles on LA 1 and turn left (north) on Candies Road. The shorebird fields extend from this point north 0.5 miles to Bunkhouse Road, west to Willow Lane, and east to the intersection of LA 1 and Admiral Craig Drive.

Description: Long known as a prime site for shorebird viewing, any number of shorebirds might blanket the open, grassy/weedy fields within the complex at one time. While there is no telling what might turn up or when, migration periods (for shorebirds, March-May/July-October) are almost always good, as are the winter months (November-February).

Common migration species include Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover in early spring, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Black-necked Stilt, Greater and Lesser yellowlegs, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Western, Least, Pectoral and Stilt sandpipers, Dunlin, Long-billed and Short-billed dowitchers, and Wilson's Snipe.

The various areas containing thin stands of rattle-box, prickly ash, red mulberry, and hackberry often host Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Palm Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat during fall and winter. Look also for Song and Savannah sparrows here.

The marsh pools at the far (northern) end of Candies Road are often occupied by Least Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Mottled Duck, Northern Shoveler in winter, Sora in winter, and Clapper Rail.

Grand Isle State Park

Site 9-10



Site access: : Fee

GPS coordinates: N 29.25818; W 89.95681

Site contact: Park Manager; 888-787-2559

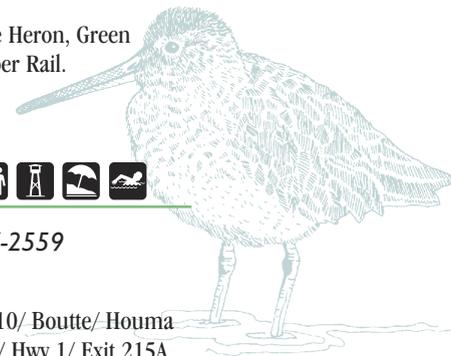
Website: www.lastateparks.com

Directions: From the intersection of I 10 and I 310/ Exit 220 in New Orleans, take the ramp onto I 310/ Boutte/ Houma and go south on I 310 for 10.8 miles to the US 90/ Houma Exit. Go west on US 90 for 17.4 miles to LA 1/ Hwy 1/ Exit 215A. Turn right onto LA 1 and go south 57.0 miles to the bridge over Caminada Pass at Grand Isle. Cross the bridge, continue 6.5 miles on LA 1, and veer right onto Admiral Craig Drive for 0.7 miles to the park.

Description: Situated on the extreme eastern end of Grand Isle, visitors should begin their tour of Grand Isle State Park by climbing the observation tower located at the visitor's center on the southeastern end of the park. An interpretive nature trail encircles the lagoon area at the center of the park.

Remember to grab a park map so you can quickly orient yourself with all of the park's amenities: bath houses, swimming areas, fishing piers, and a lagoon.

Seabirds, especially gulls and terns, are year round fixtures here. Common summer species such as Laughing Gull and Royal, Caspian, Sandwich and Least terns, are augmented by Ring-billed, Herring and Bonaparte's gulls, and occasionally Common Tern during the winter months. Year round Brown Pelicans are joined by American White Pelicans during the fall, winter, and spring months. Magnificent Frigatebirds can be seen soaring high above the beach during the summer months. The beach, rock jetties, and lagoon edges hold numerous shorebird species like Wilson's and Semipalmated plovers, Black-necked Stilt, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, and Sanderling.





Convention and Visitors Bureaus and Chambers of Commerce

The Chamber of Lafourche and the Bayou Region
 107 W. 26th St.
 Larose, LA 70373
 Phone: 985-693-6700
 Fax: 985-693-6702
www.lafourchechamber.com

Houma Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
 114 Tourist Dr. (U.S. Hwy 90 at Hwy 24)
 Houma, LA 70359
 Phone: 985-868-2732
 Toll Free Consumer: 800-688-2732
www.houmatourism.com

Grand Isle Tourist Commission
 La. Hwy. 1
 Grand Isle, LA 70358
 Phone: 985-787-2997
www.grand-isle.com

Lafourche Parish Tourist Commission
 4484 Hwy. 1
 Raceland, LA 70394
 Phone: 985-537-5800
www.visitlafourche.com



Cultural Wetlands Scenic Byway

The Cultural Wetlands Scenic Byway covers territory dominated by a vast network of swamp and marsh lands leading south to the Gulf of Mexico. This fertile ecosystem developed through millions of years of silt deposits from the Mississippi River. Follow the Byway as it traces the path of Bayou Lafourche, which is known to residents as “the longest street in the world.” After passing through several historic communities including Raceland, Larose, Golden Meadow, and Leeville visitors will eventually reach Grand Isle, considered to be one of the top ten fishing spots in the world.