

## Second Quarter Report to Members



Our LMN-NE board met on Saturday May 23, 2026 (**World Turtle Day**) at 11:37 am for our in-person Second Quarter members' meeting at Black Bayou Lake Conservation Learning Center.

We recorded thanks to Jim for making the wonderful facilities available to us, Kelby for his excellent guided Arboretum walk and Catrina for her fascinating presentation.

Board Members in Attendance: Suzanne Laird (Secretary), Kim Paxton (Membership Chair), Charles Paxton (President), David Hoover (Immediate Past President). Apologies for absence from Susan Hoover, Anne Frazer, Bette Kauffman (Treasurer) and Nathan Green. Bette and Nathan were volunteering at a NABA Butterfly Count in Pitkin. LMNNE Members and Others in attendance: Roselie Overby, Sharon Crooks, John Carr and George Gehrig, who assisted with the 2026 Nature Cities Challenge collection projects for The South Central Plains Ecoregion ( [2026 Spring South Central Plains Biodiversity Challenge \(SCPBC\) · iNaturalist](#)), [Northwest](#) (to which Bette, Charles and Kimmie contributed from Briarwood), and a practice project for us in the [Northeast](#)).

### Some news from the State Board:

- **Focus on documenting LMNA History.** Dr. Bob Thomas (LMNA Founding President) is leading an initiative to document the history of the LMNA. It would be good for us to prepare

information about our Chapters' history for our website. We might wish to key milestones with some nice anecdotes and photographs. This is an ongoing project that we can expand over time.

- The LMNA approved a **program of extra learning events organized by chapters** to be delivered online and recorded in the vein of Greater Baton Rouge LMNGBR's Nature Notes series.
- The LMNA allowed that the new **Louisiana Bat Working Group** has a dedicated page on our main site: <https://www.louisianamasternaturalist.org/louisianabatworkinggroup.html> to serve while organizing.

Please see this page to contact LBWG for ways to help bat conservation efforts in Louisiana. Searching on Google and Bing and visiting the page helps boost its popularity / visibility.

- South West SWMN's Barbara Mouton want us to share info on **liability coverage**. Bette is now kindly managing our insurance from State Farm.
- Greater New Orleans LMNGNO's President Janna Wisniewski wants to collect **chapters' membership requirements**. I said we'd circle back after our June 28th Bylaws Retreat with pizza, at St. Thomas' on the Bayou (ST. Thomas' 13:00-16:00).

### III. Chapter Business:

This was our second meeting this year without quorum, thus unfortunately it was informational rather than transactional.

- **Approval of previous draft minutes** (They look good but no quorum so no vote)
- **Treasurer's Report:** Our funds total \$3,726.02. Our current PayPal balance is \$1,908.79 increased due to Birds Workshop fees paid in May. Treasurer's Cash remains \$72, our bank balance is \$1,745.23. In the coming week, Bette plans to complete two Treasurer tasks: 1) Reimburse Paxtons \$12 for the poster expense, 2) Transfer some funds from PayPal to Origin.

Charles has also requested that we send Catrina a donation of \$100 to support her research into Gray Foxes.

- **Membership Report:** Kim reports 27 members (this includes individuals and families). Benefits of being a member include: supporting our work through education, service and financial contributions, access to certification, email updates and google calendar.
- **Meeting reports** Suzanne has agreed to share minutes with any member that requests them and to work with Charles to publish meeting reports on our website to inform the membership.

● **President's Report:** Series of interesting events and Charles plans to call for agenda items from members as well as our board and feedback news from meetings to membership.

**Carver MacDonald Branch Library Fungi talk** April 9th, 35 enthusiastic people attended.

**Love the Boot Litter Pick at Black Bayou Lake NWR** (April 19th) Nathan, Kimmie, Bette, Charles collected 10 bags of Trash and observed a Pipevine Swallowtail and Western Ratsnake!

**Alligator Snapping Turtle Transect Surveys** ULM Prof. Emeritus of Biology, Dr. John Carr has conducted studies of Alligator Snapping Turtles (*Macrochelys temminckii*) at Black Bayou Lake for decades. This year he was kind enough to allow our voluntary assistance on his transects for over a month. The cool weather extended the laying season. ULM Postgrad researcher Austyn Becker, Nathan Green, Kimmie Paxton, Nathan and Isabella Tremaine, David Hoover, and Charles Paxton participated and we garnered some great documentary evidence in the form of data, video and stills. It was fantastic to accompany John and learn from him about their nesting behaviours and about the extremely heavy depredation of their nests by raccoons. 117 eggs were rescued to be incubated in the ULM Biology Lab. We noted a lot of other interesting wildlife too. Including a possible Black Bear scat May 7<sup>th</sup>. We also picked some ugly trash. ULM Professor of Biology Dr. Ross Couvillon patrolled other transects and found nests there. Spiny Softshell laying season has started! These creatures' nests are also extremely depredated.

**City Nature Challenge April 24-27:** Thanks to George Gehrig for setting up projects: Northeast test umbrella: 279 Observations. Northwest project: 1256 9.

**Shady Grove Elementary Nature Walk.** April 29th, Kimmie and Charles Paxton guided 45 very keen pre-K and K kids + staff around Restoration Park. We had a blast and saw a lot of wildlife. The single pair of binoculars were in very high demand!

**Prairie Walk and Talk with ACE volunteer researchers.** May 2nd, we had a wonderful experience. We recorded a new Parish Record for the White M Hairstreak. WFS Interns with American Conservation Experience program: Karen and Camryn studying refuge's pollinators. We'll join their Pollinator Week Bioblitz date tbd (June 22nd-28th). Informal walk and talk around Black Bayou Lake NWR's Prairie Trail added observations to <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/prairie-trail-at-black-bayou-lake-nwr> (Thank you, Kimmie)

**Advanced Birds Workshop** May 16th, 33 bird observations (see [Blog](#)), mostly audio. Practical introductory focus on trapping and banding birds in the field with speedier treatment of physiology and taxonomy and the university's research projects into bird strikes on buildings and plastic ingestion in the presentation phase.

**Phenology Trail Signage Project update:** [ULM Professor Joydeep Bhattacharjee](#)'s Graduate students have completed the GIS Data for The Black Bayou Phenological Trail. It remains now to

mark blobs for the individual plants on the trail and then to export this data layer for incorporation into users' apps to try out and to prepare the interpretation. The trail will only feature plants naturally occurring locally. Joydeep's team will add the points to the map data layer. We plan a numbered key with QR codes to aid data entry.

**Refuge Volunteer Training** Ann Smith can deliver any Saturday after June 11.

**Public Invasive Plants Training from Chris Foster** – this will be a joint LMNNE FoBB meeting, we need to pick a weekday evening other than Wednesdays. We might ride the wave with Volunteer training delivered by Ann Smith after June 11.

5. Forthcoming Events & Workshop Schedule

<https://louisianamasternaturalistsnortheast.com/about/events/>:

- Please register for [Watershed Dynamics & Flooding](#) 5/30 (Workshop 1 of 5th Cycle)
- **Richland Parish Libraries: 3 Events** Bette at Delhi on July 13th, Kimmie and Charles at Rayville on July 15th, David and Susan (awaiting confirmation?) on July 17th at Mangham.
- **Plants (Core) Workshop** June 13th with Dr. Charles Allen in Kisatchie National Forest
- **Bylaws Retreat with pizza**, June 28<sup>th</sup> at St. Thomas' on the Bayou 13:00-16:00
- **Pollinator Week Bioblitz and Jasmine Marshall Presentation** dates tbd.
- **Basic Field Skills (Core) Workshop** July tbd
- **Scouts Restoration Park Tour** Sept 26th & Suzanne's Birthday
- **Herpetofauna (Core) Workshop** October 10<sup>th</sup> TBC
- **Butterflies WS + NABA Count** September 5th TBC
- **Geology Workshop: Fossil Whales** with Dr. Gary Stringer date TBD 2027
- **Birds (Core)** Jan TBD 2027
- **Soil Health Workshop** Mar 2027
- **Aquatic Life / Forestry / Geology Workshop** TBD 2027