



Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

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LDWF ADDS ENDANGERED SPECIES INFORMATION TO WEB SITE AT WWW.WLF.LOUISIANA.GOV

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' (LDWF) Natural Heritage Program has announced that new facts sheets on rare and endangered species are now available on the LDWF Web site.

The new Natural Heritage Program web file can be accessed at <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/naturalheritage/g1andg2elements>. The information was provided at the request of the Louisiana Forestry Association (LFA) to offer a central information source for LFA members and the general public on rare and endangered wildlife. LFA members utilize the data as part of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Standard.

The LFA, the largest forest landowner association in the state, is the sponsoring organization for the SFI program that involves all the major forest product companies in the state.

This recognized certification system involves a set of principles, objectives and performance measures developed by professional foresters, conservationists and scientists to assure the perpetual growing and harvesting of trees with the long-term protection of wildlife, plants, soil and water quality.

A large part of the SFI standard is the protection of endangered species and communities ranked as G1 and G2 species and communities by NatureServe, with G1 being the most endangered and G5 the most stable.

The fact sheets generally include a species description, G1 or G2 species or community designation, threats to survival, beneficial management practices, pictures and region where the species is found within the state.

“Our partnership with LFA has helped us develop concise fact sheets that will provide educational material to the public and assist in the conservation of rare, threatened, and endangered species and natural communities in

Louisiana,” said Gary Lester, LDWF Natural Heritage Program Coordinator. “These fact sheets provide LFA members information they can use to acquire a SFI Standard certification and certification is important to ensure that endangered species and communities are here for future generations.”

LFA Executive Director Buck Vandersteen said, “The LFA is committed to the practice of sustainable forestry and thus the environment, and our members have a responsibility to manage forests in a way that will provide our grandchildren a place to hunt, fish, camp and experience wildlife.”

The LFA is a statewide, private, nonprofit association of more than 3,500 members including landowners, employees of forest products industries, wood suppliers, loggers and related industries. LFA's mission is to promote the health and productivity of Louisiana's forests for present and future generations through the practice of sustainable forestry.

For more information on LFA, please visit www.laforestry.com.

For more information, contact Gary Lester at 225-765-2823 or glester@wlf.louisiana.gov and Janet Tompkins at 319-443-2558 or jtompkins@laforestry.com.

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LOUISIANA “NO LICENSE REQUIRED” FISHING WEEKEND SET

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission officially proclaimed June 9 and 10 “No License Required” fishing days for Louisiana citizens and visitors during May 3 meeting proceedings. The promotional fishing dates are provided for novices and non-anglers as an opportunity to experience the sport of fishing.

The program provides the public with an open access fishing opportunity in an effort to attract more people into the ranks of licensed fishermen. Those license fees support LDWF's conservation efforts including habitat management.

“No License Required” fishing weekend is a part of the Seventh Annual National Fishing and Boating Week that runs from June 2 to June 10. The event was created to help reverse the trend of declining participation in outdoor activities across America.

According to a survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation, children spend 44 hours a week watching TV, playing videogames and on the computer. Research data, compiled by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation,



LDWF File Photo

shows that outdoor activities can get kids interested in nature and help with family communication.

“LDWF is encouraging licensed recreational fishermen to introduce someone to fishing on the weekend of June 9-10,” said John Sturgis, LDWF education manager. “It's an activity anyone of any age can enjoy, even without a boat. Louisiana offers some of the best bank and pier fishing opportunities in the south.”

LOUISIANA SPRING SHRIMP SEASON TO OPEN

The opening dates of the 2007 Louisiana spring shrimp season were announced at the LWFC May 3. The declaration of emergency which established the season opening dates followed a presentation of the latest biological and hydrological data compiled by the LDWF Marine Fisheries Division and public comment from shrimpers, members of the shrimp industry and other concerned citizens.

The Louisiana inshore shrimp season in Shrimp Management Zone 1 will open at noon on May 28. Zone 2 as well as that portion of the State's Outside Waters south of the Inside/Outside Shrimp Line as

described in R.S. 56:495 from the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the River Channel Buoy Line to the eastern shore of Freshwater Bayou at 92 degrees 18 minutes 33 seconds west longitude will open at noon on May 14 and Zone 3 will open at noon on May 28. Zone 1 includes state waters from the Mississippi/Louisiana state line to the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River. Zone 2 comprises that portion of Louisiana's inside waters from the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island and Zone 3 includes state waters from the western shore of Vermilion Bay

and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Louisiana/Texas state line.

LDWF Sec. Bryant O. Hammett, Jr., was given authority to close the season when biological and technical data indicate that significant numbers of small white shrimp have recruited into inshore waters or if law enforcement problems develop.

Development of LDWF management recommendations for spring inshore opening dates utilize criteria which project the date when a minimum of 50 percent of the inshore brown shrimp population sampled reaches sizes of 100 count (per pound) or larger.



BOAT LANDING BURGLAR CAPTURED BY L.D.W.F. AGENT

Jamie Francisco, 27, of Marksville, was arrested April, 24, 2007, by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division Senior Agent Doug Anderson for allegedly stealing items from a vehicle parked at the Boggy Bayou boat landing on the Spring Bayou Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

Several vehicle burglaries on Spring Bayou WMA were reported to the Avoyelles Parish Sheriff's Office starting in February of 2007. LDWF agents and Avoyelles Parish deputies worked together to set up surveillance and increase patrols in an attempt to apprehend the burglar.

On April 23, 2007, Anderson along with LDWF Agent Byron Cammack watched Francisco as he appeared to be checking several vehicles to see if any were unlocked.

The next day Anderson observed Francisco returned to the boat landing and removed items from a parked vehicle. Anderson arrested Francisco



while he was attempting to leave the area. During the arrest, a large amount of suspected crack cocaine and several stolen items were recovered from his vehicle.

Francisco was booked into the Avoyelles Parish Jail on 10 counts of simple burglary, eight counts of simple criminal damage to property, three counts of attempted burglary, possession of crack cocaine with intent to distribute, illegal possession of stolen things and failure to abide by WMA rules and regulations. Judges William Bennett and Mark Jeansonne of the

12th Judicial District set Francisco's bond at \$150,000.

The penalty for simple burglary and attempted burglary is a fine up to \$2,000, imprisonment with or without hard labor for up to 12 years or both. Simple criminal damage to property is punishable by a fine up to \$10,000, imprisonment with or without hard labor for up to 10 years or both. The penalty for possession of crack cocaine with intent to distribute is a fine up to \$50,000, imprisonment at hard labor for two to 30 years or both. Illegal possession of stolen things is punishable by a fine up to \$3,000, imprisonment with or without hard labor for up to 10 years or both. The penalty for failure to abide by WMA rules and regulations is a fine of \$100 to \$350, or jail for not more than 60 days, or both plus court cost.

Lt. Eric Stokes, Sgt. Rusty Perry, and Avoyelles Parish Sheriff's Detective Jeffery Carmouche also participated in the case.

For more information, contact Keith LaCaze at 225-765-2988.

THREE MEN CITED IN TERREBONNE PARISH

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division agents cited three men on April 25 for alleged oyster violations near the Deer Bay area in Terrebonne Parish.

Samuel Dobson, 27, from Houma, Toby McCoy, 31, from Covington, and Juan Rivera, 29, from Taft, Texas were all cited for taking oysters from unleased state water bottoms. Responding to complaints near the Deer Bay area, agents saw the vessel dredging for oysters on unleased water bottoms. The area in question contains private leases and unleased state water bottoms. Utilizing the department's GPS, agents marked the location before boarding the ves-

sels. The locations were found to be on unleased state water bottoms. Agents seized and returned 20 sacks of oysters to the water and placed two oyster dredges and the boat under seizure order.

The penalty for unlawfully taking oysters from state water bottoms is a fine of up to \$750, imprisonment for not more than 120 days, or both, plus courts costs.

Agents participating in the case were Lt. Stephen McManus, Sgt. Bryan Marie, and Sr. Agent Mike Garrity. *For more information, contact Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze at klacaze@wlf.louisiana.gov or 225-765-2988.*



SAFE BOATING WEEK EMPHASIZES SET FOR MAY 19-25

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) is pleased to announce that Governor Kathleen Blanco has proclaimed May 19-25 as Safe Boating Week in Louisiana. The announcement came during the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission May meeting.

In Louisiana and across the nation, May 19-25 will be recognized as Safe Boating Week to remind boaters to practice safe and responsible boating by always wearing a life jacket and remaining alert on the water. Statistics show that nearly 70 percent of the boating fatalities in Louisiana are due to drowning and nearly 80 percent of those victims were not wearing life jackets.

“Maintaining a safe and enjoyable atmosphere on our state waterways is a major goal of the Enforcement Division,” said LDWF's Colonel Winton Vidrine. “We encourage the boating public to wear their life jackets while participating in activities on the water.”

Enforcement agents across the state will be highlighting safe boating activities as the summer boating season begins. The Louisiana Wildlife Agent's Association has also partnered with LDWF to hand out free t-shirts to kids wearing life jackets when agents make random safety inspections on the water. The t-shirts are sponsored by businesses across the state and are inscribed with the slogan: “I Got Caught Wearing My Life Jacket.”

LDWF encourages all boaters to enroll in a boating education course. Boating knowledge and skills are important in reducing human error and improving judgment. Those completing the course are more aware of the risks involved during time spent on the water and understand the need for precautionary measures that protect themselves, their friends, family and others.

For more information on safe boating practices, regulations, or boating education courses, please visit LDWF's Web site at www.wlf.louisiana.gov.

NEOTROPICAL SONGBIRD TOUR SET FOR MAY 12

Birding enthusiasts can experience the wonder and variety of migrating songbirds at the annual Neotropical Songbird Tour, held at the Sherburne Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on Saturday, May 12. Participants should arrive between 6:45 and 7:15 a.m. at the intersection of Exit 127 on Interstate 10, located halfway between Lafayette and Baton Rouge, and La. Hwy 975. Look for a gravel pull-off just after turning onto La. 975.

The Neotropical Songbird Tour will take birders on one of the leading breeding bird survey routes in North America. Participants will be introduced to bird identification through

their songs and chirp notes. These vocalizations, originating from the dense understory or the tall canopy of deciduous bottomland hardwood forest, are usually the first clues to the area's wealth of bird species. Sherburne WMA offers one of the highest densities of nesting neotropical songbirds in North America.

Tour participants will be guided to two sites where facilitators will be available to assist them in bird identification. At each site it may be possible to hear as many as 15 species of birds. Some birds are easily seen whereas others are elusive, so binoculars may be useful. The bird tour will conclude around 11 a.m.

After the bird tour ends at around 11 a.m., participants are encouraged to attend the LDWF-sponsored Step Outside Day also on the Sherburne WMA. Step Outside Day is aimed at introducing outdoor activities to people with disabilities and children.

The Neotropical Songbird Tour is sponsored by LDWF, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Basin Ranger District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources Atchafalaya Basin Program.

For more information, contact Tony Vidrine at 337-948-0255 or tvidrine@wlf.louisiana.gov.

