



Introduction

This was a work trip but I flew out a week early and had a tour round Louisiana, there were no real targets birdwise as I have been to the USA plenty of times so only a few possible species. Mammal wise targeting any small mammals, this was more a relaxing tour with a couple of tourist stops as well.

I flew with BA which was fine and flew to time.

Car Hire with Alamo – actually very quick to get the car and no issues at all.

All accommodation was adhoc in motels.

Temperatures were warm upper 20s during the day and mid teens at night, one afternoon of heavy rain and thunderstorms apart from that hot and sunny.

The photos are hyperlinked to larger versions.

Diary

23rd March 2019

I arrived late evening and drove to Baton Rouge, some **grackles** and **starlings** at the airport the only wildlife seen.

24th March 2019

An early start at the Atchafalaya reserve, a nice selection of common birds such as **Carolina chickadees**, **cardinals** and **yellow rumped warblers**. A cracking **Protonotary warbler** the highlight and it was very co-operative for photographs. The reserve is large and I spent all morning just driving one section where **turtles**, **dragonflies** and a selection of **butterflies** including the spectacular **black swallowtail**, were seen Here the first mammal of the trip **Eastern Grey Squirrel** finally gave itself up. I drove to Lafayette for supplies and some lunch, I set my small mammal traps outside the reserve before returning to the reserve and doing some exploring on foot along some of the trails. Here **skinks**, **frogs** and plenty of woodland **butterflies** along with the common bird species. The reserve is extensive and I drove the rest of the sections stopping regularly and spotting lots of wildlife. The reserve is full of wildlife and my stops produced **white ibis**, **wood ducks**, **white eyed vireos**, **Carolina wrens**.

As it got dark I started a night drive over this extensive reserve. There were plenty of things to see a **leopard frog**, lots of **alligators** and plenty of mammals. 15+ **white tailed deer**, 13 **racoons**, 10 **Opossums**, 5 **Nine banded armadillos** and a **wild boar**. The only bird were a couple of **killdeer**. I got a couple of hours sleep before dawn after a successful night drive.



Protonotary warbler



Black Swallowtail



Alligator



Nine Banded Armadillo



White Ibis



25th March 2019

I left the reserve and checked the traps but nothing so I headed to White Lakes south of Lafayette. Here was a rather nice reserve with a nice selection of birds including a showy **Common yellowthroat**. But the park was full of dragonflies thousands of them. After a good walk round I headed to Lacassine Reserve, first stop was the park HQ here was a small area to view the lake shore from the board walk had **green anoles** and some **skinks** but the prize was some **coypu** in the weed filled lake shallows. I headed to the main part of the reserve and was very disappointed even in the wildlife area speedboats ploughed through the water spooking everything. Despite this there were a few birds about, the undisturbed ditches most productive. A flypast **American bittern** the best bird, but some showy **pied billed grebes** were nice. My next stop was at Cameron Prairie reserve and this was superb here was a vast selection of **ducks**, **waders** and other wetland birds in complete contrast to Lacassine. I headed to Cameron for some birding there but a severe thunderstorm put pay to that so I continued on and out of the storm to Sabine Reserve. This was an extensive area viewed mostly from the road but there were a couple of boardwalks and the largest was excellent. Here both **Sora** and **yellow rail** made the walk worth the effort. I headed to Lake Charles for some well-earned sleep.

26th March 2019

Sam Houston State Park was my first stop, it was early so few people about so plenty of wildlife about, **pileated woodpecker**, **northern parula** and some nice trumpet flowers. I checked the three bat boxes a single **Mexican free tailed bat** in one box, one empty and one crammed with **Mexican free tailed bats** and at least on **hoary bat**. After lunch I headed north into rice country, an area full of rice fields and plenty of waterbirds and then into some farmland and relic prairie with nice prairie birds such as **loggerhead shrikes** and **eastern meadowlarks** and a black racer on a side road. I found a nice spot to set my traps and went for a walk nearby. I saw something move, heard a squeal and investigated, a **prairie vole** had been taken by a **cottonmouth** - wow, the snake slid away, I inspected the vole and moved away so the snake could return. As dusk fell I did a night drive over quite a wide area including, prairie, rice fields and some woodland.



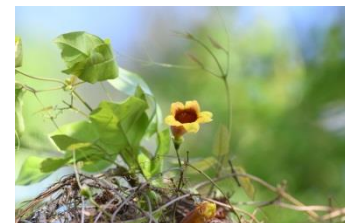
Pied Billed Grebe



Black Necked Stilt



Mexican Free Tailed Bat



Trumpet Flower



Red Shouldered Hawk

The night drive was very productive a couple of **coyotes**, **eastern cottontail**, **raccoon** but the prize for persevering was a **bobcat** which crossed a side road.

27th March 2019

The very last trap was tripped and a **Southern short tailed shrew** was inside very nice. I headed off the first stop was a little drive south. Rips Rookery is a nice rookery of **egrets**, **roseate spoonbills** and **anhingas** close to the road. I headed to Lake Martin where the first snake of the trip a **Western ribbon snake**, a nice **barred owl** and then more snakes, **brown banded water snake** also seen. After lunch I headed to Baton Rouge and to a small park, Blackwater, a nice selection of insects and a few common birds. As dusk fell I headed to the Forest Community park, I was looking for **Southern flying squirrels** and I got a brief view but it was a little disappointing not to have more and as the park closes at 10pm I had to leave.

28th March 2019

I visited Baton Rouge for tourist stuff all morning before heading to off to Lake Ponchartrain. Here were lots of reserves which I visited over the afternoon, here was a nice selection of **terns** along with **pelicans** and **common loons**. A sounder of **wild boar** and a **white tailed deer** of mammal interest and some nice plants such as **spider lily** as well, plenty of **butterflies** and **dragonflies** as well. I found an area to set some traps near a petrol station and then after some food did a night drive. It was a little hard work but eventually got a **swamp rabbit**, **opossum**, **raccoon** and a **least sandpiper**.



Common Loon



Kildeer



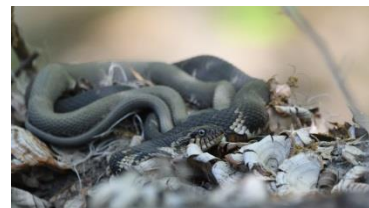
Neotropical Cormorant



Roseate Spoonbill



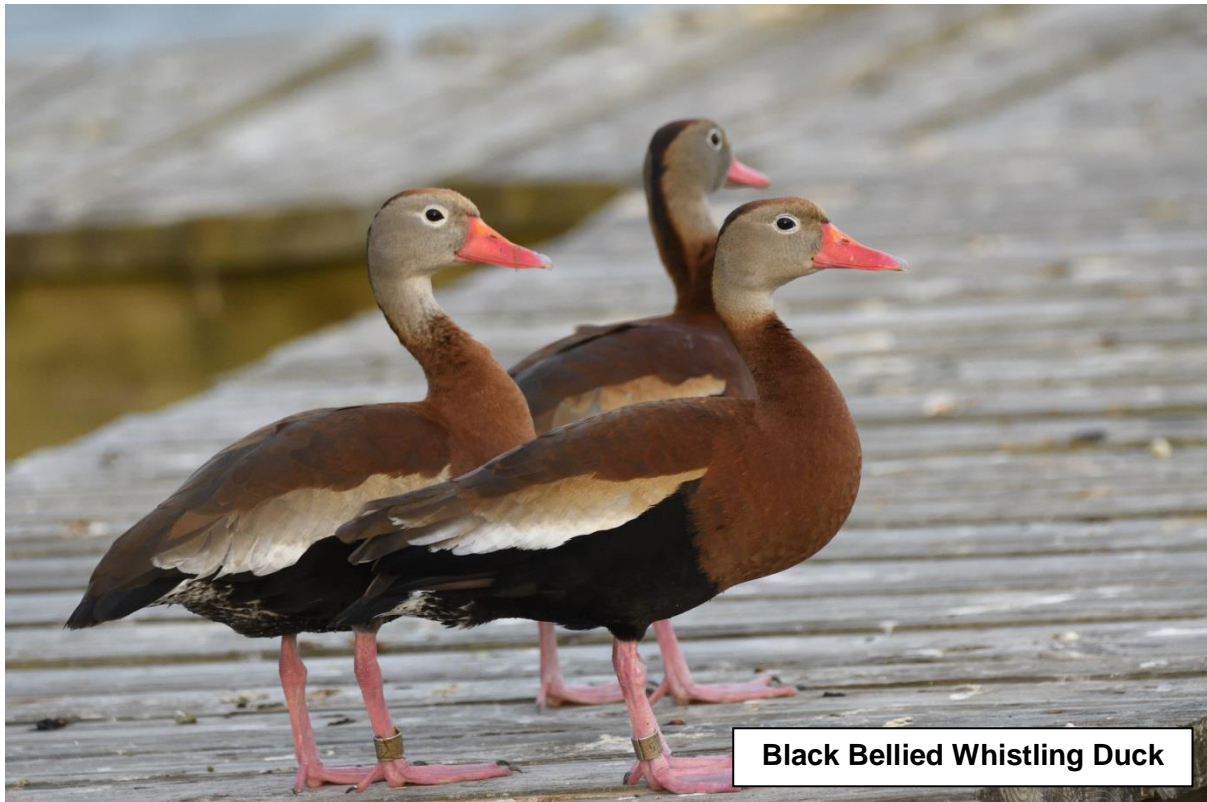
Alligator



Brown Banded Water Snake



Wild Boar



Black Bellied Whistling Duck

29th March 2019

The traps produced a **cotton deermouse** and an **Eastern woodrat**. I headed to Bogue Chitto and met some crayfish fishermen but not many other things of note on the drive through the first part of the reserve. I headed to another part which was much better with plenty of birds and some **water moccasins** by a boardwalk. After some touristy stuff I headed to Bayou Savage reserve which had several areas to stop and walk and I took advantage of these. A nice heronry had a good selection of species and I found a site near some houses for my traps. I headed for some accommodation and food finding some nice **black bellied whistling ducks** on the way.



Giant Blue Iris



Brown Pelican

30th March 2019

My last Day and nothing in the traps, I visited North Lake reserve to see some rare iris, copper and Nelson's and the white form of giant blue. I did some touristy stuff then spent a few hours in the Houma area but nothing of real note just plenty of common species and I headed to the airport to meet my colleagues.



Red Tailed Hawk

Checklists

Mammals - 20



Eastern Woodrat	Southern Short Tailed Shrew	Cotton Deer Mouse
Prairie Vole	Marsh Rice Rat	White Tailed Deer
Coyote	Nutria / Coypu	Bobcat
Racoon	Opossum	Armadillo
Eastern Pipistrelle	Mexican Free Tailed Bat	Hoary Bat
Wild Boar	Southern Flying Squirrel	Swamp Rabbit
Grey Squirrel	Eastern Cottontail	



Virginia Opossum

Eastern Cottontail

Cotton Deermouse

Southern Short Tailed Shrew

Birds - 118

House Sparrow	Starling	Collared Dove
Mourning Dove	Common Ground Dove	Cardinal
Red Winged Blackbird	Northern Mockingbird	Blue Jay
Barn Swallow	Great Egret	Brown headed Cowbird
Eastern Bluebird	Laughing Gull	Carolina Chickadee
Carolina Wren	Common Grackle	White Eyed Vireo
Northern Rough Winged Swallow	Yellow Crowned Night Heron	Ruby Throated Hummingbird
Snowy Egret	Tufted Titmouse	Kildeer
Great Blue Heron	Cattle Egret	Grey Catbird
Common Yellowthroat	Tree Swallow	Blue Winged Teal
Little Blue Heron	White Throated Sparrow	Turkey Vulture
Boat Tailed Grackle	Fish Crow	Eastern Kingbird
Lesser Black Backed Gull	Double Crested Cormorant	Black Bellied Whistling Duck
Protonotary Warbler	Tricoloured Heron	Cedar Waxwing
Blue Grey Gnatcatcher	White Ibis	Black Necked Stilt
Loggerhead Shrike	Willet	Brown Pelican
Lesser Yellowlegs	Forster's Tern	Wood Duck
Savannah Sparrow	Black Vulture	Royal Tern
Eastern Meadowlark	American Coot	Belted Kingfisher
Pileated Woodpecker	Mottled Duck	Red Shouldered Hawk
Greater Yellowlegs	Black Bellied Plover	American Crow
Ring Billed Gull	American Herring Gull	Swamp Sparrow
Purple Martin	Least Sandpiper	Rock Dove
Red Tailed Hawk	Roseate Spoonbill	Pied Billed Grebe
Anhinga	Yellow Rumped Warbler	American Robin
White Winged Dove	Moorhen	Caspian Tern
Osprey	Neotropical Cormorant	White Faced Ibis
Marsh Wren	Chipping Sparrow	Barred Owl
Great Tailed Grackle	Sora	House Wren
White Pelican	Broad Winged Hawk	Mallard
White Crowned Sparrow	Short Billed Dowicher	Long Billed Dowicher
Northern Shoveler	Northern Harrier	Canada Goose
Coopers Hawk	Bank Swallow	Fulvous Whistling Duck
Wilson's Snipe	American Kestrel	Great Horned Owl
Gadwall	Common Loon	Swianson's Hawk
Glossy Ibis	Green Winged Teal	American Bittern
Sharp Shinned Hawk	Field Sparrow	American Widgeon
Northern Parula	Yellow Rail	Golden Crowned Kinglet
Caspian Tern	American Golden Plover	Wood Thrush
Orange Crowned Warbler		

Selected Others



Brown Banded Water Snake

Alligator	Red Eared Slider	Green Anole
Brown Anole	Water Moccasin	Greenhouse Frog
Southern Painted Turtle	Spiny Softshell Turtle	Red Eared Slider
Common Five Lined Skink	Brown Banded Water Snake	Western Ribbon Snake
Coal Skink	American Bullfrog	Pig Frog
Leopard Frog	Black Racer	
Common Buckeye	Cloudless Sulphur	Monarch
Pearl Crescent	Delaware Skipper	Gemmed Satyr
Carolina Satyr	American Painted Lady	Giant Leopard Moth
Blue Dasher	Common Sanddragon	Common White Tailed Skimmer
Eastern Pondhawk	Slaty Skimmer	Familiar Bluet
Broad-Striped Forceptail	Common Checkered-Skipper	Dusky-blue Groundstreak
Southern Skipperling	Twin Spot Skipper	

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