



Mississippi River delta and channel, south of New Orleans © Bridget Besaw

PRE-TRIP ITINERARY

Louisiana

A SPECIAL NATURE
CONSERVANCY DEPARTURE
APRIL 14 - 19, 2019

- Estimated Price: \$3,940 per person based on double occupancy, \$4,610 single occupancy
- Trip cost is based on a minimum of 14 participants in shared accommodations. Final trip costs will be based on actual number of participants.

The Nature
Conservancy 

Protecting nature. Preserving life.

From Mardi Gras in New Orleans to crawfish boils in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana is synonymous with a number of unique and lasting traditions. Through 17 actively managed preserves and seven freshwater, terrestrial or estuarine projects, The Nature Conservancy is working to ensure that the state's natural wonders are also long-lived. The Conservancy has taken a 'whole systems' approach to conservation in Louisiana, which considers the larger-scale intersection of freshwater, forest and coastal ecosystems. On this trip, you will visit important conservation sites and see how local and species-level efforts are contributing to bigger-picture conservation goals. Thank you for your interest in traveling with The Nature Conservancy.

Day 1: New Orleans

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

- TBD New Orleans arrival
- Evening Cocktail Reception at Hotel Provincial
Dinner
- Overnight Hotel Provincial
<http://www.hotelprovincial.com/>

Today you will fly into New Orleans—the land of Louis Armstrong and jambalaya. Plan to arrive early enough so you can enjoy a full day of exploring and sightseeing. As you walk around, be sure and peek into hidden courtyards to discover some of the secret gems of the Big Easy. In the evening, convene in the hotel courtyard for a welcome cocktail reception and an overview of the exciting week ahead. We will dine together at Tujague’s—one of the many incredible restaurants that New Orleans has to offer.

Day 2: Breaux Bridge

MONDAY, APRIL 15

- Morning Continental Breakfast at Hotel Provincial
Check out of Hotel
Tour of Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserve
- Midday Lunch in Abita Springs
- Afternoon Drive to Breaux Bridge
- Evening Crawfish boil at Cypress Island
- Overnight Au Bayou Teche and Maison des Amis Bed and Breakfasts
<http://www.aubayoutechebedandbreakfast.com/> or
<http://www.maisondesamis.com/>

After a continental breakfast at Hotel Provincial, we’ll pack up and head for our first TNC tract of the week: the Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserve, a nearly 1,000-acre area supporting significant longleaf pine savanna habitat. As one of the most diverse and threatened habitats in North America, this preserve supports nearly 30 rare native plants and several species of rare animals, including two types of sparrow. TNC’s Richard Martin and Bill Rivers will join the group today to help you explore this beautiful preserve and learn about the importance of fire to the surrounding natural habitat.

Lunch today is in the town of Abita Springs, home to the well-known export, Abita beer. Enjoy a native pint over lunch before we make our way to the Cajun town of Breaux Bridge where we will settle into check in to one of two small, neighboring bed and breakfast inns.

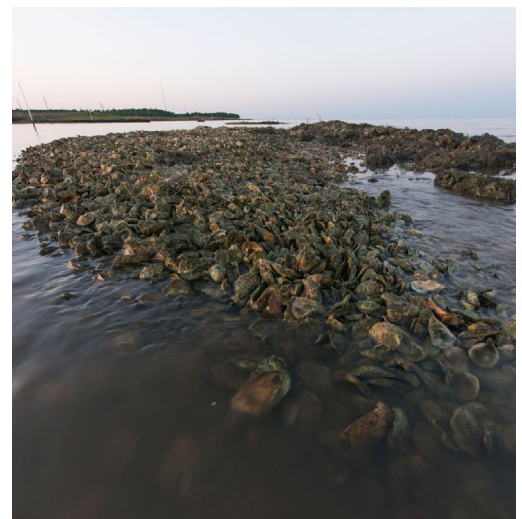
The evenings festivities will include a Louisiana crawfish boil at Cypress Island.



Streetcar on Canal St., New Orleans © Erika Nortemann



Aerial view of Mississippi River delta © Erika Nortemann



Oyster bed restoration © Carlton Ward Jr.

Day 3: Cypress Island Preserve

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

- Morning Breakfast at Joie de Vivre Cafe
Cypress Island Preserve
- Midday Lunch at Café Sydnie Mae
- Afternoon Lake Martin Boat Tour
Leisure Time
- Evening Dinner at Blue Dog Cafe
- Overnight Bayou Teche Bed and Breakfast, Maison des Amis Bed and Breakfast

After breakfast, you will head north through the marshes of southern Louisiana, to our next TNC conservation site, Cypress Island Preserve. Overflowing with alligators, egrets, turtles and the ubiquitous migrating birds, the preserve will be sure to entertain and educate. Kacy King, Cypress Island Program Manager, will meet you here and share her work with this beautiful preserve.

Back in Breaux Bridge, we will enjoy lunch and then you can spend the afternoon in the way you choose. Hop on an optional boat tour for a different view of the Cypress Island Preserve, paddle a kayak out on the water or spend some time antiquing in town.

We will reconvene for dinner at a local favorite, Blue Dog Cafe, for a fun evening.

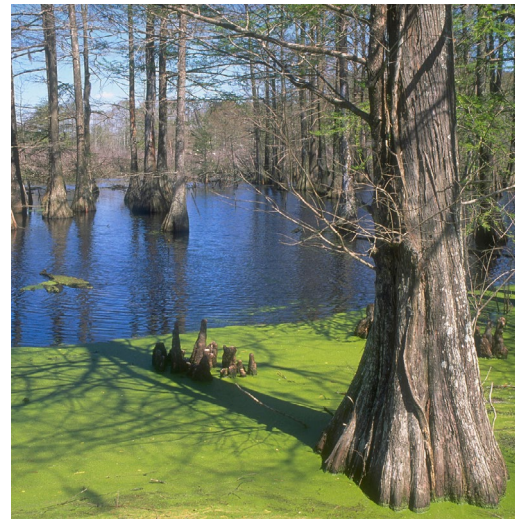
Day 4: Atchafalaya River Basin

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

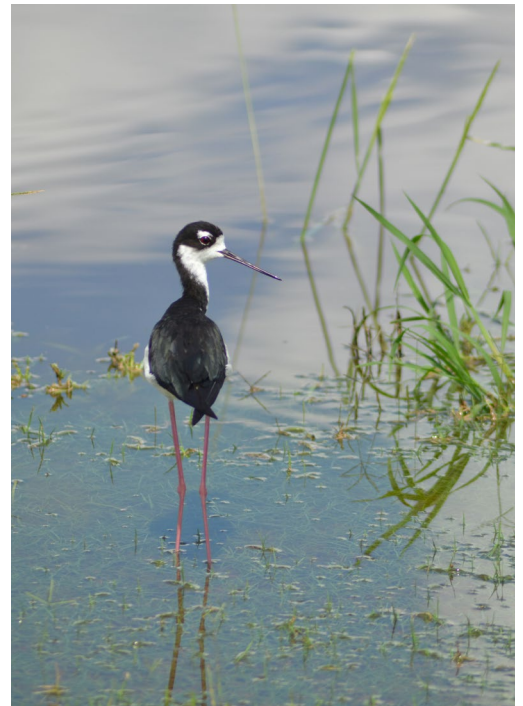
- Morning Breakfast at Joie de Vivre Cafe
Atchafalaya River Basin (Canoeing, bird watching)
- Afternoon Picnic Lunch at Atchafalaya Conservation Center
- Evening Drive to Baton Rouge
Dinner at a Baton Rouge Restuarant
- Overnight The Watermark in Baton Rouge
<http://www.watermarkbr.com/>

Our explorations today will take us into the heart of the Atchafalaya River Basin, the largest wetland and swamp in the United States. You will drive into the basin to our starting point, where you will board TNC skiffs and spend the day on the water. The Atchafalaya River Basin contains the largest remaining contiguous block of forested wetlands in the lower Mississippi River valley, and is well-known for its cypress-tupelo swamps. It is another prime viewing area for migratory birds. We will enjoy a picnic lunch at the Conservation Center.

After a full day of exploration, we'll head to Baton Rouge to check in to our hotel before dinner.



Lake Martin in Cypress Island Preserve © Harold E. Maide



Black-necked Stilt © Seth Blitch



Alligator in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve © Erika Nortemann

Day 5: Mississippi River

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

- Morning Breakfast at The Watermark Hotel
 Check out of Hotel
 Aerial tour of Mississippi River
- Midday Picnic lunch at Grand Isle
- Afternoon Visit restored oyster beds
- Evening Dinner at The Fallout
- Overnight Grand Isle Camps

Enjoy a continental breakfast in our hotel before leaving the city for an adventure in the bayous of Louisiana. A short shuttle ride will transport us to Belle Chasse, where we board a seaplane bound for aerial views of marshes and the mighty Mississippi River. We will follow the winding river southward and observe the levees that safeguard its banks.

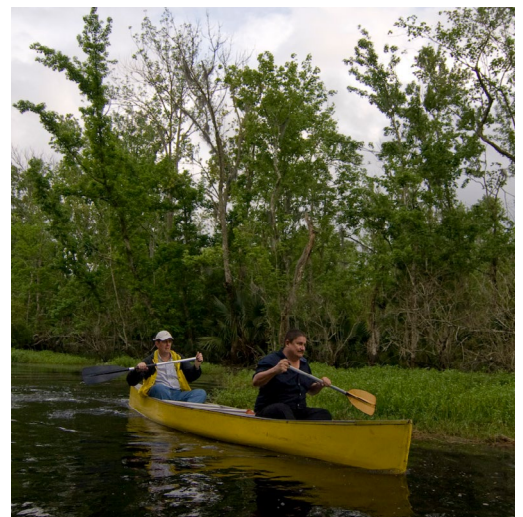
Landing on the windward side of Grand Isle, you will meet up with Seth Blitch, Director of Coastal and Marine Conservation, Bryan Piazza, Director of Fresh-water and Marine Science, and Jean Landry, Director of the Grand Isle Program, before enjoying a lovely picnic lunch. You will head out on the water in a skiff this afternoon to see how the Conservancy is working to reestablish healthy oyster beds. Keep a lookout for dolphins in the water and migrating birds overhead. Later on, you might choose to head back out on the boats to go fishing, or simply relax by the water. This evening, enjoy a farewell catered dinner featuring the seafood bounty of Grand Isle at The Nature Conservancy's Camp, "The Fallout."



Great Egret © Seth Blitch



Sunset at Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserve © Lana Gramlich



Canoeing in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve © Erika Nortemann

Day 6: Grand Isle

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

- Morning Bird-watching at The Fallout
- Breakfast at Grand Isle Camps
- Check out
- Flight home or other arrangements

Any guesses why TNC's camp is named "The Fallout"? You will awake early this morning to discover the answer. As the first major point of land on northward migration routes, migratory birds might literally fall out of the sky with fatigue, taking refuge in the trees of The Nature Conservancy's reserve. Our trip is timed specifically to overlap with peak migration. Have your binoculars and field guides ready!

After breakfast at the camp we will bid each other farewell. Two shuttles to the airport will be offered for those departing today.

Thank you for traveling with The Nature Conservancy!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please do not hesitate to contact Joe Solomon with Iconic Adventures if you have any questions or needs regarding trip logistics.

Email: tnc@iconicadventures.com
Phone: (800) 329-4930



Garter snake © Erika Nortemann



Close-up of an alligator © Seth Blitch



Heron © Seth Blitch

