

# STAMP

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boxes, and on the ground, and have the propensity to be prolific nest parasites, laying eggs in the nests of other individuals, even other species.

Once considered a tropical species, black-bellies have expanded their range broadly in the last two decades. Before the end of the 20th century, the species spanned northern South America, Central America, and Mexico up through southern Texas and were occa-

sionally observed in southwestern Louisiana. Since that time, their range has expanded both northward and eastward to include observations in Mississippi and every Atlantic Flyway state and parts of southeastern Canada. Successful breeding populations now range as far north as Tennessee.

### About the Louisiana Waterfowl Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp)

The Louisiana Legislature authorized the Louisiana Waterfowl Conservation Stamp program in 1988. The program

was created to generate revenue for conservation and enhancement of waterfowl populations and habitats in Louisiana. During the last 25 years, more than \$15 million has been generated for wetland conservation with approximately \$6 million spent on land acquisition. In addition, revenue has supported wetland development projects on Wildlife Management Areas and the Louisiana Waterfowl Project, a cooperative endeavor between LDWF, Ducks Unlimited, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service to provide habitat for waterfowl and other wetland birds on private lands.

All waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older, even those who are not otherwise required to purchase a license, must have a Federal Duck Stamp. A current Federal Duck Stamp also serves as a free admission into any national wildlife refuge that charges an entry fee.

### 2024 Contest Winner

The 2024 contest was restricted to designs featuring ruddy ducks. Anthony Padgett,

of Noblesville, Indiana claimed top honor with last year's rendition of a single ruddy duck drake in a calm backwater setting. The Louisiana Waterfowl Conservation Stamp bearing that design will go on sale June 1, 2024. Stamps can be purchased at: [https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Licenses\\_and\\_Permits/Files/state\\_duck\\_stamp\\_request\\_form.pdf](https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Licenses_and_Permits/Files/state_duck_stamp_request_form.pdf)

For more information about the contest, contact Jason Olszak at 337.735.8687 or [jolszak@wlf.la.gov](mailto:jolszak@wlf.la.gov).



Pictured are three generations of family and friends of the Down The Road (DTR) gang during their November 2023 Thanksgiving Week hunt in West Texas. Pictured in the back row, from left: Jacob Dickinson, Mikey Dickinson, Jeremy Munsterman, Wren Munsterman, Bryan Dickinson, Gary Mays, Mike Dickinson, Tate Dickinson, Brent Ragas, Gavin Mays, Ben Ragas and Landon Thibodaux. Front row: Matthew Dickinson, David Mays, Rhett Audibert, Patrick Dickinson and Matthew Ragas.

## It Takes a Community to Restore Our Forests

The New Year started out strong at Woodlands Conservancy with numerous habitat improvements underway at Woodlands Preserve. Funding from the EPA, CPRA, TC Energy, and Chevron Oronite over the past several months, has allowed our staff to clear fallen trees and invasive species, to make room for our restoration efforts. At the end of last year, we received 5,000 seedlings to plant in those areas targeted for restoration. Thanks to support from the Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation, Woodlands Conservancy will be planting 14,560 seedlings

and trees over the next three years, creating better nutritional habitat for wildlife while improving the forest's ability to absorb storm water.

In addition to the 5,000 seedlings, Woodlands Conservancy received 150, three-gallon native trees thanks to Apache Corporation's Tree Grant program. Planting 5,150 trees this winter wouldn't be possible without the help of hundreds of volunteers. The fifth grade and seventh grade classes at Ursuline Academy of New Orleans worked hard and planted over 200 trees within one volunteer day. With the help of Common

Ground Relief, Plaquemines Parish 4-H, Plaquemines Parish Sheriff's office, Chevron Oronite employees, along with community volunteers, we have planted over 3,444 total trees and seedlings already in the New Year. We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers and are excited for our future growth.

If your company or interest group can help us get the remaining trees in the ground before it gets too warm or if you want to join with others to be a part of planting a healthy forest, please Email [volunteer@woodlandsconservancy.org](mailto:volunteer@woodlandsconservancy.org).



## State's Largest Litter Cleanup and Beautification Event to be Held During Earth Week

During Keep Louisiana Beautiful's Love the Boot Week, happening April 20-28, 2024, Coca-Cola will fund the recycling of plastic bottles and aluminum cans for litter cleanup events happening in 13 parishes. Love the Boot Week is Louisiana's largest litter removal and beautification effort held during Earth Week, with events organized by businesses, non-profits, schools, governments, and families in all 64 parishes.

"Thank you to Coca-Cola for funding recycling during Love the Boot Week," said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. "According to KLB's 2023 litter study, 92 percent of people in Louisiana think litter is a problem. The proper disposal of our trash and recycling is key to ending litter in Louisiana. It's important to recycle when possible and never litter."

Osprey Initiative will facilitate recycling for Love the Boot litter cleanup events in the following parishes: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa. In addition, West Monroe Recycling Center will be a drop-off site for plastic bottles and aluminum cans picked up at Love Boot Week cleanups happening in Ouachita Parish. To date, 90+ Love the Boot cleanups have signed up to implement recycling.

This is a significant expansion from the 2023 recycling effort, which was successful in collecting 3,506 aluminum cans and plastic bottles at 13 Love the Boot Week events. Last year, 12,777 individuals volunteered 61,493 hours, removing 313 tons of litter in all 64 parishes. In addition to litter removal, volunteers focused on community beautification, planting 370 trees and 3,542 plants, and refurbishing 146 gardens.

When registering for Love the Boot Week at [LoveTheBoot.org](http://LoveTheBoot.org), events in eligible parishes can sign up for recycling. Recycling bags will be shipped from Osprey to those who sign up for recycling. Osprey will pick these bags up, sort the material, and deliver the recyclables to a recycling facility.

"Coca-Cola is committed to creating a sustainable future and collection is an important part of our sustainable packaging initiative, World Without Waste," said Scott Ryan, Vice President of Franchise Operations for The Coca-Cola Company. "We're proud to support Love the Boot Week and commend Keep Louisiana Beautiful's effort on litter reduction in the state."

"When items are properly recycled, they don't end up littering our environment or entering our landfills," said KLB Executive Director Susan Russell. "Not only does recycling reduce waste, but it also requires less energy to use recovered materials when making products in comparison to virgin materials. We are grateful to Coca-Cola for funding recycling at Love the Boot Week events, so the bottles and cans collected can be repurposed rather than landfilled."

On May 29, Keep Louisiana Beautiful will present a recycling award to the group that collects the greatest weight of plastic bottles and aluminum cans.

Everyone in every parish is invited to register a cleanup or beautification event and/or sign-up to volunteer at [LoveTheBoot.org](http://LoveTheBoot.org).

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