

# Annual Banquet Features Hurricane Katrina Recovery Specialist

6 p.m., Saturday, March 24

Allison Mansion on the Marian College campus  
3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis

Guest Speaker: Dr. Mark LaSalle  
Manager of the National Audubon Society's Gulf Coast Project  
**"Impacts of Hurricane Katrina on Birds and Other Wildlife"**

Doors open at 5 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. followed by Dr. LaSalle's presentation

Tickets: \$40, students \$20

Mark your calendar now for our exciting March 24 annual banquet at Allison Mansion on the Marian College campus. The Amos W. Butler Audubon Society (AWBAS) is excited to announce that Dr. Mark W. LaSalle, Director of the Audubon Mississippi's Pascagoula River Audubon Center in Moss Point, Mississippi, will be our guest speaker.

Dr. LaSalle's work as Center Director and manager of the Gulf Coast Project Office involves evaluating the impacts of Hurricane Katrina on birds and other wildlife, both in terms of analyzing available databases and engaging citizens to help rebuild Gulf Coast backyards to support birds and other wildlife.

One of Dr. LaSalle's interests is to encourage people at all levels to learn more about their environment and take part in helping to preserve it. His presentation will cover the impact of Hurricane Katrina and will also highlight opportunities to engage people throughout the U.S. in Operation Backyard Recovery. This post-Katrina program encourages people to build birdhouses that can support cavity-nesting birds that lost their home trees (and associated cavities) to Hurricane Katrina. It also focuses on the long-term efforts associated with the Katrina Tree Recovery Campaign, a partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation. The idea of this program is to get bare-root native trees planted in Katrina-affected areas to help rebuild the canopy and replace the natural forest and cavities that support birds. To date, Dr. LaSalle and his associates have built thousands of bird houses and distributed over 40,000 trees, with support from throughout the U.S.

Dr. LaSalle previously served as Associate Extension Professor at the Mississippi State University's Coastal Research & Extension Center. As an estuarine ecologist, he conducted environmental education programs for youth, teachers, real estate agents, and the public, focusing on coastal wetland biology and ecology, coastal habitat creation and restoration, coastal water quality, and assessment of the environmental impacts of human activities. Dr. LaSalle has also been involved with the Invasive Species Focus Team of the Gulf of Mexico Program.

The message that Dr. LaSalle brings to Indianapolis is one of hope and promoting the idea that everyone can engage others both in affected areas like south Mississippi as well as at home, and not to wait until a tragedy happens. It is about getting excited about the everyday things that we can all do to make a difference. For more information about this topic visit [www.gulfbase.org/person/view.php?uid=mlasalle](http://www.gulfbase.org/person/view.php?uid=mlasalle)

For more information, please contact April Sterling at [aster6002@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aster6002@sbcglobal.net)

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