

Lettalou Whittington (1927-2017)



Lettalou Whittington was a huge supporter of Houston Audubon for 27 years and a Lifetime Member. For 22 of those years, she was on the Houston Audubon Board of Directors for 9 years (1995-2004) and Board of Advisors for 13 years (2004-2017). She was a significant donor for many years to various projects. In 2000, she asked her friend Ann Weir Jones to contribute to her Birdathon team. Just so happened, Ann was waiting to contribute to a project that really spoke to her. That was the year Ann made the lead gift to the Bolivar Flats Shorebird Expansion Campaign. It was Lettalou who sparked this extremely generous donation. And after that amazing request, the Birdathon Award for Most Money Raised was named the Whittington Award. Even today, the Whittington Award is one of the most coveted awards for all Birdathon participants. In 2004, Lettalou made the lead donation to the Winnie Burkett Intern Fund. This fund helped pay the salary for coastal sanctuary interns. The work that Lettalou Whittington did for Houston Audubon over the years is too numerous to mention. She made a huge impact on the organization. It's amazing what one person's efforts can accomplish.

The Naturalist Jul/Aug 2004 about the Winnie Burkett Intern Fund:

A generous donation from Board of Advisor member Lettalou Whittington allowed Houston Audubon to hire two Sanctuary Management Interns to help with the increased work load at Bolivar Peninsula this spring.

Michelle Puig, a recent Texas A&M graduate, and Shannon Woodward, a student at Texas A&M in Galveston, have been handling many tasks, such as widening trails, weeding hummingbird gardens, protecting tern nests, picking up trash, planting trees and shrubs, counting birds, killing poison ivy, and guiding visitors and school groups at The Rookery.

This valuable intern program will continue through the early summer, thanks to a grant from the Magnolia Charitable Trust.

Houston Audubon Newsroom Article:

January 24, 2017

REMEMBERING LETTALOU WHITTINGTON

By Helen Drummond

Our very dear friend, Board of Advisor member, and former Board of Director member Lettalou Whittington passed away on January 16, 2017. Lettalou was a lifetime member and served Houston Audubon and the birds in so many ways over the years. She served on the Board of Directors from 1995 to 2004.

As the initial funder of the Winnie Burkett Sanctuary Intern Fund, Lettalou helped establish a program that continues to provide budding scientists with invaluable field experience while offering our sanctuaries a helping hand. This program has become a core element of our sanctuary management efforts today.

Lettalou did so much for Houston Audubon and in recognition of her dedication, Houston Audubon named its Birdathon Grand Prize – Most Money Raised award in her honor. We call it the Whittington Award, the highly coveted award for Birdathon.

Lettalou planted many seeds at Houston Audubon over the years and the fruit of her work continues to soar. She will forever be in our heart!

Destination High Island Gala Honorary in Memoriam presentation on October 19, 2017:

It is an honor to present the Coastal Conservation Award this evening to an individual who made extraordinary contributions to the overall vitality of our coastal sanctuaries.

Earlier this year, the birds and wildlife of our community lost one of its most devoted advocates. Lettalou Garth Whittington, a lifelong champion of bird conservation, dedicated 27 years to advancing Houston Audubon's mission, serving on both its board of directors and board of advisors. She was a tireless fundraiser, and her energy and enthusiasm resulted in the establishment of numerous projects - especially the Winnie Burkett Intern Fund.

And now I would like to read a message written by Richard Whittington, Lettalou's middle son... My mother had a lifelong love affair with nature. While my mother's association with Houston Audubon came late in life, it was a perfect fit, and she fully embraced it. She knew how important the work of Houston Audubon is, as she herself was a force of nature. She could organize and motivate. She could charm and persuade. I think she knew, in the twilight of her life, that she had a mission to fulfill. How many nature tours could she squeeze in? What could she do to help preserve her beloved Boy Scout Woods in High Island? Tonight's event is the culmination of my mother's efforts, and her family is honored by this recognition.

We honor Lettalou's memory and her commitment to Houston Audubon and the birds she loved. Her eldest son, Garth Whittington, will accept the award tonight. Garth, please come up.

Destination High Island Gala Program 2017:

Lettalou Garth Whittington (In Memoriam), a lifelong champion of bird conservation, dedicated 27 years to advance Houston Audubon's mission through her service on the Board of Directors and Board of Advisors. Many significant projects, such as the Winnie Burkett Intern Fund, were achieved as a result of her energy and enthusiasm. Lettalou helped Houston Audubon with the interior design of Houston Audubon headquarter

building at Edith L. Moore Nature Sanctuary. We honor her memory and her commitment to Houston Audubon and the birds she loved.