

## Activities of the ESG & ESIG in New Orleans

By: [Aaron S. Allen](#)

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### **Abstract:**

Following the events of Ecomusicologies 2012 (see the Review on page 13), the Ecocriticism Study Group (ESG) of the American Musicological Society (AMS) together with the Ecomusicology Special Interest Group (ESIG) of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) sponsored a number of joint events – social, intellectual, and administrative – as part of the AMS/SEM/SMT Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

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### **Article:**

**\*\*\*Note: Full text of article below**

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Between Ecomusicologies 2012 and the official start of the Annual Meeting, the ESG and ESIG sponsored a boat tour of Honey Island Swamp. Over two dozen participants, many of whom were new to ecomusicology, shuttled the 45 minutes from downtown New Orleans to the Pearl River Wildlife Refuge for a guided boat

tour of a portion of the 250-square-mile riverine swamp (some of which is a permanently-protected wildlife area). On Sunday after the end of the annual meeting, an adventurous group loaded up in two vans to go on an almost-but-not-quite-rained-out boardwalk hike in Barataria Preserve. Photos from both tours, as well as a recording (by Jeff Todd Titon) from the Swamp Tour of a red-bellied woodpecker during the only moment of human silence we enjoyed on the entire outing, can be found at

[www.ecomusicologies.org/archive/ecomusicologies-2012/reflections/](http://www.ecomusicologies.org/archive/ecomusicologies-2012/reflections/)

At the Joint Annual Meeting, the ESG also co-sponsored the Ecomusicology Listening Room, an alternative format, daytime session that explored the relationship between sound,

image, and place. The materials and observations from that session are available at [www.ecosong.org](http://www.ecosong.org).

The ESG evening session entitled “Music and Nature: Relations, Awareness, Knowledge” included papers from a musicologist (Sabine Feisst: “Hello, the Earth is Speaking’: Four Case Studies of Ecological Composition, Performance, and Listening”), ethnomusicologist (Kevin Dawe: “A Social and Environmental History of Small Guitar Workshops in England”), and music theorist (David Cohen: “Nature, Culture, and the First Principle(s) of Music: Two Myths of Theoretical Revelation”) on how beliefs about music’s nature have shaped our relationship with the non-human world. Afterward, I moderated a lively discussion.

At the joint ESG-ESIG business meeting, Kate Galloway graciously took over leadership of the ESIG from me. The ESG re-elected secretary-treasurer Michael Baumgartner. My tenure as ESG chair will end due to term limits, so the next ESG meeting will include an election for a new chair.

Plans were also made for continuing the Ecomusicologies conference. Ecomusicologies 2013 will be held in Brisbane, Australia (see the CFP on page 12), while Ecomusicologies 2014 is tentatively scheduled for Asheville, North Carolina, USA.

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Attendees of the Honey Island Swamp Tour.