

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

Nature Notes



Charter 2016

Vol 4 ISSUE 5 Oct 2019

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President's Note:

Greetings, Master Naturalists!

Recently, I was able to visit Baltimore, MD for a National Recreation and Parks Association Conference so this president's note is inspired by that trip, especially two parks and the plane ride between Baltimore, Dallas, and Lake Charles.

Each one of us has a pretty small impact on the world, but collectively we have a gigantic impact. I'm sure that's not the first time you've read that, but it's absolutely true. I was lucky to have a window seat for the flights home and enjoyed the view for the entire flight. For the entire 1200 mile flight between Baltimore and Dallas, there was never a time evidence of humans was out of sight. Even mountainous areas, there were still some roads, some cleared forests, some mines, etc. Each little road segment or pasture isn't much, but it is when multiplied by the sheer number of them and their impacts to the surrounding ecosystem. Collectively, we cover the planet. Other destructive issues like litter and pollution, though invisible from 30,000 feet, certainly also cover the planet.

Calendar Quick View

Oct 2 SLAMN meeting at Tuten Park 6:00
Oct 5 SLAMN Field Trip
Oct 25-27 LOS Fall Meeting Hackberry
Oct 30-Nov 3 Yellow Rail Festival Jennings
Oct 31 Candy Crawl
Nov 9 Nature Kaleidoscope Tuten Park



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However, our impact doesn't have to be negative. Each one of us can have a small positive impact on the environment as well, but those impacts combined with the collective impacts of thousands of other people can surely make the world better. In Baltimore, there's been a major effort over the past couple of decades to clean the Chesapeake Bay. Maryland was always known for oysters, crabs, and terrapins, but the source of this bounty became so polluted by industry and poor practices that its natural resources nearly disappeared. Now, through the collective actions of industries, governments, nonprofits, and citizens the Chesapeake Bay is becoming cleaner and crabs and other wildlife are returning. That impact might consist of a rain garden or simply not littering, but it really does add up when the entire region is on board.

This is the idea behind combining the land ethic and backyard habitat workshops next year, and it was the inspiration for forming the SWLA Master Naturalists. Citizen science projects and the very idea of the land ethic rely on our collective impacts. The data generated by the Christmas Bird Count and other projects were used in recent reports outlining the declines in many bird species. That could not have happened without the thousands of birders who counted birds each winter since 1900. The Chesapeake Bay and many other bodies of water are cleaner now than they used to be due to the collective impacts of large numbers of people.

So, I'm very thankful for the group of master naturalists in Southwest Louisiana and our collective voice and impact we can have.

Irvin Louque

President, Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists



Meeting Notes

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Upcoming Board Meeting Location and Date Tuten Park at 6:00 P.M.

President: Irvin Louque

Vice-President:

Tommy Hillman

Treasurer: Clay Ardoine

Secretary: Barbara Morris

At-large Board Members:

Chuck Battaglia,

David Booth,

Theresa Cross,

Robby Maxwell

September 4 Board Meeting Highlights

Committee Reports

Promotions

SLAMN will have a table set up at the RV and Boat Show on January 17-20, 2020.

David Booth will check with the city to see if SLAMN can set up a table in downtown Lake Charles during the Halloween event.

On November 9th, from 9-12, Promotional Class to be offered at Tuten Park to give the public a snapshot view of the Master Naturalist coursework. **Robby Maxwell** and **David Booth** will participate in the first class. Volunteers should be there to help with courses and encourage sign-ups for class.

David Booth will check into purchasing a Tri-fold promotional screen for the display table.

New Business

- Nominations committee formed. Presentation of slate of new officers and four board members for elections at October general meeting. **Robby Maxwell**, **Irvin Louque**, and **Clay Ardoine** are on the committee.
- **Clay Ardoine** will continue with Handbook editing. He will try to have it ready for January meeting.
- The membership renewal form was approved for use with the addition of a photo release statement.
- Approval was given for the merchandise committee to check the cost of getting hats and bumper stickers made with SLAMN logo.
- Nature Notes as a requirement for new students was discussed. All agreed this would continue for next year.

Upcoming Events

Field Trips:

October 5, 2019 meet at Chloe exit 36 at 8:30 am to carpool.

We will be going to **Robby Maxwell's** house to look at the prairie in the fall.

May 15-18th: A trip is being planned to go to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center outside of Austin. It is about a 5 hour drive. Please contact **Theresa Cross** or **Barbara Morris** if you are interested.

October 2, 2019 General Meeting:

The next general meeting is October 2, 2019, at Tuten Park. The speaker will be **Dr. Erik Johnson** from Louisiana Audubon. He'll speak about what Audubon is doing, including Plants for Birds, beach nesting birds, Christmas Bird Counts, Prothonotary Warblers, and the Black Rail surveys.

Next General Meeting January 8, 2020

Chapter tentative meeting dates for 2020: January 8, April 1, July 1, October 7

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Chapter meetings are held quarterly on the first Wednesday of the month at Tuten Park at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.



Log-in your volunteer and continuing education hours using Track It Forward

Set-up your account and start logging in your SLAMN CE&V hours.

Access Track It Forward on the SLAMN website:

<https://www.swlamasternaturalists.org/>

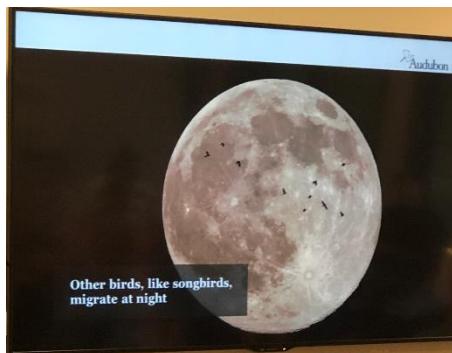
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October 5, 2019 General Meeting Tuten Park

Dr. Erik Johnson from Audubon Louisiana gave an informative and interesting presentation, *Being A Migratory Bird Conservation Hero*, concerning the numerous conservation projects sponsored by Louisiana Audubon. He talked about the important projects that he and others are working on including conservation of breeding shorebirds and wetland birds, engaging citizen scientists, and educating landowners and gardeners about the importance of native plants for wildlife and bird conservation. He asked that we get involved through political activism, volunteering, creating a Bird friendly habitat in your yard and community, and by becoming a member of conservation organizations.

The 2020 SWLA Master Naturalists elected the 2020 board and officers.



President **Irvin Louque** (irvinlouque@gmail.com)
Vice President **Barbara Morris** (btljm5@yahoo.com)
Treasurer **Clay Ardoine** (cardoin@infolink-usa.com)
Secretary **Patty Palmer** (pmpalmer8@hotmail.com)

At-Large Board:
Robby Maxwell (robjamax@gmail.com)
Tommy Hillman (tommyhillman@att.net)
David Booth (david@boothenvironmental.com)
Theresa Cross (tcross@wlf.la.gov)



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Beach Sweep 2019 by Tom Morris

On September 21st, in conjunction with the Louisiana Beach Sweep, the SWLA Master Naturalists organized a Pick-up the Park at Sam Houston Jones State Park.

Several members were there to greet volunteers in front of the riverside pavilion. We had 26 people scouring the park and riverbank for litter.

Thanks to the **Moss Bluff Junior High School Beta Club** for volunteering. Thanks also to the **Le Chein Black Pot Cookers** for showing up to provide us with great grub.

The best thing to say about this year, was less trash than ever.

To all the volunteers, thanks for another successful litter abatement project.



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November 9, 2019 Nature Kaleidoscope Introduction to Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists announces a special “Nature Kaleidoscope” presentation. This will primarily be an outreach effort to the general public, so invite your friends and associates to come. Better yet, bring them along. As a Master Naturalist you can receive needed Continuing Education credits in the process.

Save the date: November 9th from 9 am to 12 pm. The location will be Tuten Park in Lake Charles. During the event we will showcase several different mini-topics from our regular line up of classes. The idea is to give the general public a free sampling of what we are about and to recruit members for the 2020 Spring Classes. The meeting will be hosted by **Irvin Louque** and **David Booth**. Feel free to contact either of them for any questions you may have. Thanks and please help spread the word.

Irvin Louque irvinlouque@gmail.com, **David Booth** david@boothenvironmental.com

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists 2020 Board

President Irvin Louque (irvinlouque@gmail.com)
Vice President Barbara Morris (btljm5@yahoo.com)
Treasurer Clay Ardoine (cardoin@infolink-usa.com)
Secretary Patty Palmer (pmpalmer8@hotmail.com)

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SLAMN October Field Trip by Barbara Morris

The field trip started at the **Maxwell Prairie** in Lacassine. **Robby Maxwell** led us on a plant and pollinator identification walk. The prairie is beautiful in the fall.

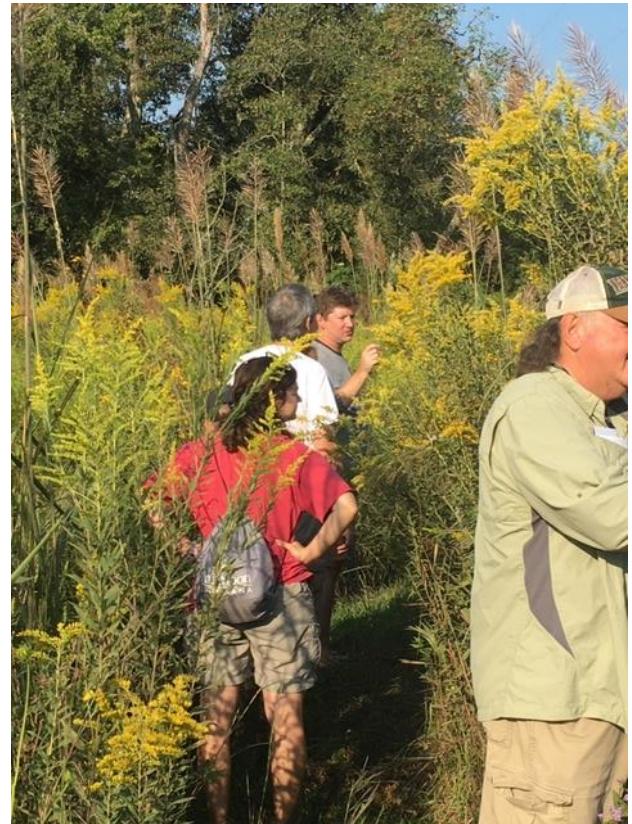
We then headed to Lorraine Bridge. We walked along the road looking for birds and reptiles. We heard a few birds. We did spot a seven foot alligator.

We drove the back roads to Lake Arthur. We passed a field full of Ibis and Teal. We spotted a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Green Heron. When we arrived at Lake Arthur, we observed an enormous quantity of Apple Snail eggs on the shoreline. We spent a few minutes crushing the eggs, but it was rather overwhelming. We had lunch at The Regatta Restaurant.

We went to the Lake Arthur Campground to look at the property. It is always open, so if you are nearby stop in and have a look around.

We left there and went over to **Martha Hoag's** farm. Warren and Martha gave us a short tour of their homestead. It was a full day.

Our next field trip will be January 11th. Let me know if you have a suggestion for a location. Maybe we'll try a kayaking trip!



Local News:

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Continuing Education Opportunities:

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Bird banding at Sam Houston Jones State Park



Louisiana Bird Observatory Bird Banding

Irvin Louque holds bird banding activities at Sam Houston Jones State Park on Saturdays. Volunteers are welcome! Learn how to set-up mist nets, age birds, and collect important data for conservation efforts. Please check with Irvin for dates and times. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact Irvin Louque through email or phone (225)206-0400 irvinlouque@gmail.com

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists earn Continuing Education credit by participating in this upcoming webinar about firefly conservation.

Jewels of the Night: Conservation of Fireflies in the U.S. and Canada Webinar

Presented by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service -
Science and Technology
National Technology Support Centers

[Jewels of the Night: Conservation of Fireflies in the U.S. and Canada](#)

Oct 22, 2019 2:00 pm US/Eastern



Learn about the fireflies of the U.S. and Canada, including their ecology and life history needs, population status and threats, value for farm management, and recommendations for their conservation.

This webinar will cover the basics of firefly ecology and conservation. Participants will learn the status of the U.S. and Canada's 170 species of fireflies, the threats they face, how they benefit farms and watersheds, and the role that land managers can play in supporting healthy firefly communities.

Volunteer Opportunities:

[Back](#)**SLAMN Volunteers Needed for upcoming events
Sign up on Track it Forward**

October 31, 2019 Downtown Candy Crawl, in front of Panorama Music House. A table will be set up from 4-7pm. Volunteers are asked to come for 30 minutes to answer questions about SLAMN.

January 17-20, 2020 RV and Boat Show, Volunteers are needed to work at the table. Shifts are usually for three hours.

March 27-28, 2020 Garden Show, Volunteers will be needed to work at the table. Shifts are usually for two hours.

**Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau**

The Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau is recruiting some additional tour guides to accompany visitors on the Creole Nature Trail. This is a wonderful opportunity for Master Naturalists to share your knowledge and love of Southwest Louisiana with visitors from around the world. The bureau provides the training and there is a small stipend for serving as guides. If interested, please contact Jamey Kadim, Group Services Coordinator for the Convention/Visitors Bureau at jkadim@visitlakecharles.org or by telephone 337.436.9588 or 337.240.5780.





iNaturalist Spotlight and Photos:

[Back](#)**iNaturalist.org's Journal Official Blog**<https://www.inaturalist.org/blog>

Check out the "Observation of the Week" post.

iNaturalist Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Project
Observation of the Month by Irvin Louque
Unicorn Prominent - *Schizura unicornis*

Add your observations to the Southwest Louisiana master Naturalists Project
<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/southwest-louisiana-master-naturalists>



**Join the Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists project.
Add your observations and photos to our group project.**

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/southwest-louisiana-master-naturalists>

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ADD OBSERVATIONS

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Cajun Prairie by Debbie Davis

2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

I chose Cajun Prairie and Pollinators as my required Nature Notes article for several important reasons. The most striking one is that of the rapidly changing size of our wild, natural prairie landscape, especially as it applies to the southern coastal area of the US. There is a tremendous need to continue to preserve coastal prairie. Featured in this article is an area near Eunice, Louisiana that is presently under the management of the Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society with efforts to restore it as much as possible while facing the ever increasing urban society encroachment on our wild habitat.

This area in Eunice features 10 acres of native plants, flowers, and grasses of which have been the project of volunteer members of the Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society. Local seeds were used to cultivate the natural prairie flora that once grew over 2.5 million acres (1).

I agree that more awareness as well as knowledge is vitally needed in order to preserve the ecological balance of nature that will ensure the same for our children and the next generations to come. In order to do that, more people who care about nature must realize that each one of us has a divinely appointed duty to do what they can to preserve as well as restore using knowledge gained from the experts and education. Just like many of us, I wasn't aware of just how fast we're losing the wilderness, which is so vital to a healthy functional ecology, and of which affects each living organism on the planet. So after this project is completed, my task continues and I am encouraged more so to expand my observations, learning as I go, and most importantly, to teach our children well.

Some of the plants, flowers, and grasses displayed in a few of the many photos from my phone camera were taken in the area of this fieldtrip in early spring of this year, 2019, as well as from my home. I did not observe many pollinators in the preserved site (possibly due to the early spring) so I've added a few from my home in Jeff Davis Parish just thirty miles away from the Cajun Prairie site in Eunice.

I love all the native flowers of course, but I think my favorite at this time of the year is yellow false indigo (*Baptisia*) and hairyflower spiderwort (*Tradescantia hirsutiflora*) both of which have been identified with the help of iNaturalist. The colors are so vivid and bright, and I envision how beautiful a dye made from these colors, if possible, might be. And that's what attracts our pollinators, I'm sure. I did a little reading on the importance of floral color. In brief, color is for attracting pollinators for the plant's ongoing reproduction as well as for our enjoyment. Usually the ones with the brighter pigments are in need of insects for pollination, while those that are dull get help from the wind for their pollination (2).

Figure 1. Larva on milkweed



Louisiana has four common species of spiderwort (Figure 3), namely hairyflower, prairie spiderwort, bluejacket, and Confederate which flower from February through June (3).

Figure 2. Yellow indigo



Yellow false indigo (Figure 2), an herbaceous perennial, is a member of the genus *Baptisia* with flower petals that are typical legumes. This is the most common species and is reported in 35 parishes. The Louisiana white species is more widespread and can be found in 39 parishes favoring the clay soil that covers much of the state (3).

I observed many more wildflowers, grasses, and plants including prairie phlox, native onion, fleabane, big blue stem grass, Mexican primrose, coreopsis, needle rush, sugarcane plume grass, and many more. I also learned that once 40 plants per square meter was the norm and now there is only 10 plants per square meter; however, 25% is now restored.

Figure 3. Hairy spiderwort



Much is written about this great state of Louisiana, and I am forever grateful for those who led the way in the past and to those who are continuing to make progress now. We can only hope to be a part of that contribution.

Figure 4. Hackberry Emperor



Figure 5. Hummingbird*Figure 6. Western Honey Bee**Figure 7. Juncus sp**Figure 8. Unidentified***References:**

1. Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. (2005). Conservation Habitats & Species Assessments: Coastal Prairie. *Louisiana Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (LA CWCS)*. Retrieved from: http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/document/32869-coastal-prairie/coastal_prairie.pdf
2. ScienceABC (2019). What Makes Flowers So Colorful. Retrieved from : <https://www.scienceabc.com/nature/what-makes-flowers-so-colourful.html>
3. Allen, C.M., Wilson, K.A., & Winters, H.H. (2010). *Louisiana Wildflower Guide*. Pitkin, LA: Allens Native Ventures, LLC.

Naturalists Notes:

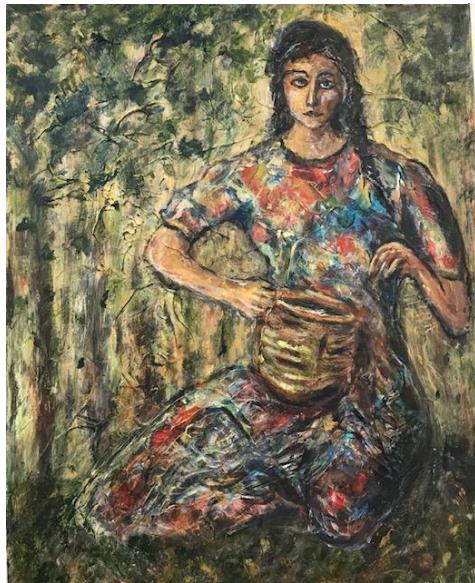
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Long Leaf Pine by Ellen Anthony

2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

I had not known that Long Leaf Pine forests were the ‘forests primeval’ of my American South before our recent visit to David Daigle’s long leaf pine forest in Reeves. I truly had an “ah, ha” moment that opened many memories and observations from my life.

The painting is my imagined/remembrance of a Cherokee woman making basket with long-leaf pine straw.



The visit brought back many connections of pine forests from my childhood, and also helped me see how the history of these massive forests are relevant to my present home is Lake Charles, Louisiana.

I was raised in Dalton, Georgia, which is in the northwest corner of Georgia, in the foothills of the Appalachians. Most of the forests were hardwood or scrub pine, having (I have now learned) taken the place of older trees that had been logged. But, I vividly remember the occasional stand of tall pines that looked like churches in the woods – like David’s forest. These stands didn’t have the bush and despised briars, but were walkable and silent places. Looking at the map of long leaf pine habitat that encompassed forests from Maryland down through the Carolinas, into northern Florida and over to Louisiana, I’d estimate my hometown was on the north western border of the great pine forests of the south.

As a married woman my current family moved to Baton Rouge, then to Lake Charles. Like many others, we were following industry. I learned early that my adopted home of Lake Charles, or Charlie’s Lake, came into creation as a lumber town. I was familiar with mill town culture in Georgia as the textile industry gradually moved south from New England. In Appalachia sawmill work provided needed cash for subsistence farming for my mother’s mountain family.

Recalling several books I had read about Southwest Louisiana’s history, I am now intrigued to learn more about how long leaf pines play such a starring role in the area’s founding and later with its huge population growth spurt. Lake Charles was thinly populated even in the 19th century when logging began in earnest here. The population swelled with the advent of intensive lumbering in the early 20th century. Farming and ranching were secondary industries. Cattle and hogs gradually replaced bison that had roamed the native prairies around Calcasieu Parish.

During the boom lumber years between 1900 and 1920s, numerous small enclaves of laborers and their families followed the lumber camps to create settlements that became townships in Louisiana. Many of these settlements disappeared in a scant few years as they were swallowed up by the vegetation following clear-cut swaths of long leaf

pine. In Louisiana the original long leaf pine forest reportedly totaled some 22 million acres. The forests around Calcasieu Parish were essentially cut out by 1925.

Today the entire long leaf pine forests range in the whole of the American South has been reduced to about 3 million acres from an estimated 90 million acres of virgin original forests. What's incredible to me is that Americans can even make such an estimate as Europe and other parts of the world were widely inhabited and woodland cleared for farming and wood thousands of years ago.

Returning to our subject, long-leaf pine can live upward of 250 years. Because of their resin and deep tap root, they are very fire tolerant, and indeed need fire to clear competing foliage for growth. Fire, historically begun with lightning, is needed every three to five years for promotion for best ecological health of long leaf pine forests.

The long leaf pine forests produce diverse biological communities with over 101 species. These North American forests are compared to upside-down Amazonian rain forests with microscopic communities at the bottom and tree top communities on high. A long leaf pine is 17 years old before it produces pine cones. Saplings can endure fire and harsh weather because of the deep tap roots penetrating the earth before their upward growth.

Biologists concur that the biological communities long-leaf pine forests inspire are essentially more important than the trees themselves. Loblolly pines, which are fast growing, are the most common species of pines grown in the United States today; however, the environment they produce does not compete favorably with the diversity in plant and animal life that long leaf pine forests foster. Long leaf pine trees are more desirable than loblolly species as they are straighter, self-pruning and generally stronger as well as sustain a larger ecological family.

As a young adult home buyer, I became aware of the beautiful, and sought after, heart pine flooring in older homes. My husband and I were lucky enough to purchase and enjoy a home with these beautiful boards when we first married.

My mother was born a couple of counties over from where I grew up in the mountains of rural Blue Ridge, Georgia where pine forests were more plentiful. The area is famous for its Staurolite mineral formation, locally known as Fairy Crosses, which at one time I could pick up on the ground. I am reminded of the mystery of the crosses when I find myself amidst the tall pines. It was in Blue Ridge that I first saw controlled burns for fields and woodlands. I have to admit I didn't understand the notion that people would set fires when Smokey Bear said to prevent forest fires!

Our family's getaway a few times a year was to the Smokies Mountains. I encountered my first glimpse of Cherokee folk culture through street dances and traditional craft demonstrations in Cherokee, North Carolina. Particularly, I remember Cherokee women weaving baskets from long leaf pine straw.

Here are my mother's Fairy Crosses in the long leaf pine forest of Blue Ridge, Georgia.



Going south for yearly vacations in Florida, my father would drive the Old Dixie Highway (Old 41) towards Panama City and Saint Petersburg, Florida. In the 1950s and 1960s we would travel miles along the roadway in South Georgia without seeing anything but stands of pines. My first encounter with the smell of skunk lingers in my recall of warm, humid nights traveling through these eyrie pine forests on summer evenings,

I am delighted to have been part of the 2019 Master Naturalist session. With long leaf pine forest experience, especially, I have integrated memory with naturalist thought. I see a connection with myself and the history of the great forests. I see the value of people like David Daigle who are working to preserve a piece of natural history in nurturing long-leaf pine forests for future generations. Like me, our histories are important to understand what has molded us culturally and ecologically.

Photos from David Daigle's property: "After the Burn".



References:

- "Lumbering in SWLA, A Study of the Industry as a Culturo-Geographical Factor", by George Alvin Stokes 1954
- "Longleaf Pine: A History of Man and a Forest", The Longleaf Pine Alliance
- "Longleaf Pines": Wikipedia



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DRAGONFLIES by Martha Hoag

2019 Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists

During our Longleaf Pine Ecology workshop, our fearless leader, Chuck Battaglia, ventured into a roadside pond and scooped up an odd looking critter which he promptly identified as a dragonfly nymph. I will say that I was quite ignorant of dragonflies having an aquatic life stage. This, along with the huge numbers of dragonflies that I was noticing in our pastures, prompted me to invest more time observing and reading about dragonflies. What I discovered is how little I actually remembered about taxonomy from my high school and college biology classes many years ago, as well as how little I actually knew about dragonflies in general.

The dragonfly is a fascinating insect belonging to the order Odonata of which there are over 400 species in North America and over 5000 species worldwide. Odonates are divided into 2 suborders: Anisoptera (the true dragonflies) and Zygoptera (damselflies). In some texts there is an additional suborder of Anisozygoptera, which as the name implies, shares characteristics of them both, but there are no living species in North America. The families of dragonflies commonly seen in this area include common skimmers, darners and clubtails. There are also several families of damselflies including broadwinged, narrowwinged and spreadwinged damselflies (NC State University, 2018).

Dragonflies have existed for millions of years, with fossils dating back to over 300 million years ago. Their ancestors had wingspans up to 20 inches. Interestingly, their way of life has not changed over these many years. They are ferocious predators of other insects, with a 95% kill rate, which lies in their attributes regarding flight, vision and unique mouth parts. Their success in surviving has been partially attributed to their ability to eat any living thing they can catch and hold on to (Chinery, 1979, p. 123).

The dragonfly nymph, which develops after the adult female deposits her fertilized eggs onto submerged aquatic plants, does not have developed wings but is able to propel itself by forcing water over internal gills in its anal region. It has a unique and amazing hinged mouth apparatus called a labium that it projects out to catch its prey at a speed faster than they can respond. Its diet consists of insect larva (including dragon fly larva), tadpoles, and even small fish. Link to a video of nymph catching prey: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHo_9wnnUTE.

Much of a dragonfly's life is spent in this aquatic stage where it will grow thru successive molts for anywhere from a few months to five years, depending on the species. When mature, it leaves the water where it sheds its now dried exoskeleton and matures into a large winged dragonfly over a period of about a month. The life expectancy of the adult is several months, the cause of death usually being due to predators and not aging. These adult dragonflies are valuable predators themselves that eat predominantly mosquitoes and flies, in addition to other small flying insects like bees, ants, wasps, and very rarely butterflies.



Dragonfly nymph (Photo credit: Martha Hoag)



Dragonfly. Photo credit: Drew Smith Photography
https://www.drewsmithphoto.com/store/art_print_products/blue-dasher-dragonfly?product_gallery=15558&product_id=1445185)



Damselfly (Photo credit: Pixaby
<https://pixabay.com/photos/swallowtail-damselfly-insect-wings-960184/>)

The dragonfly can be easily distinguished from the damselfly by the shape and position of its wings and its body habitus. The dragonfly is much more heavily bodied and has two pair of sheer heavily veined wings of different sizes (as implied by the Latin name, *Aniso*, meaning “unequal” and *ptera*, meaning “wing”), the rear wings being notably wider at their base and are held in a horizontal position when at rest. The damselfly is much more delicate in appearance with wings that are equal in size and hinged, allowing them to be folded together up above the abdomen when at rest. Their abdomen is long and thin, and longer than their wings. Their flight skills can be attributed to their independently functioning wings, allowing them to hover, pivot, fly backward, and quickly change direction, all at amazing speed. The LSU entomology site notes they break the speed limit of most insects at 35mph (LSU Department of Entomology).

It wasn't until our class on aquatic invertebrates that I actually began to read about the dragonfly. Interestingly, I learned that when I was admiring these flying beauties during the several weeks prior, and pointing out to my youngest daughter and grandchildren what I thought were “cute baby dragonflies,” were actually the delicate slender bodied damselflies I previously described. It was easy to spend an hour just observing all the different colors and sizes of dragonflies and their flying skills as they darted about in all directions, quickly disappearing before I could capture a photo and then resting on the nearby fencepost or the tall grass as they quickly devoured their prey, and darting off again as I tried to approach them again for a photo. It always seemed that my best opportunities for photographing them was when I didn't have my iPhone with me. They would sometimes pose for my husband, who was not the least bit interested in obtaining a photo or identifying them.

I am recently retired and enjoying the opportunity to spend quite a bit of time outdoors on our farm where we raise cattle, chickens, ducks, turkeys, goats, flies ...and MOSQUITOES! I mention mosquitoes here because, with the past few years of excessive rain and persistent wet areas on the farm, the mosquito population has been unbearable. But this year, it seems that with the abundance of dragonflies, we do not have nearly as many mosquitoes. I am supposing that because of the increased amount of water ponding in the pastures over the past 3 years, along with our farming practices that are hopefully improving the water quality in the stagnant ponds, the dragonfly habitat has improved, allowing them to dominate the mosquito population.

I think my next dragonfly adventure is going to include either a butterfly net or binoculars so that I can start working on identifying them to the level of family and not just dragonfly or damselfly. I would also like to venture into neighboring pastures, where sustainable practices of avoiding the use of herbicides, pesticides, and anthelmintics are

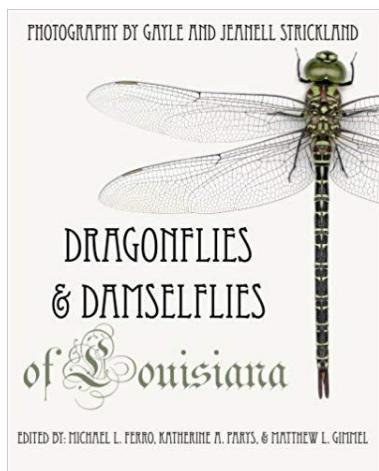
not implemented, to see if dragonfly populations compare to ours. There are many other interesting facets to dragonflies that I haven't mentioned, but are worth looking up, including their symbolism, folklore, medicinal use, as well as being used as a food source in some areas.

References:

1. Chinery, M. (1979). *Insects, an illustrated survey of the most successful animals on earth*. New York: Grossett and Dunlop.
2. LSU Department of Entomology: <https://entomology.lsu.edu/>
3. NC State University: <https://www.ncsu.edu/>
4. Sciencing. (2018). Life Cycle of a Dragonfly: <https://sciencing.com/life-cycle-dragonfly-5398237.html>

Dragonflies and Damselflies

<https://www.insectidentification.org/dragonflies-and-damselflies.asp>



Dragon flies and Damselflies of Louisiana by Michael L Ferro, Katherine A Parys, Matthew L Gimmel, Gale Strickland Photographer, Jeanell Strickland Photographer

https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Dragonflies+and+Damselflies+of+Louisiana&i=stripbooks&ref=nb_sb_noss



Upcoming Events:

[Back](#)**Upcoming Education Programs at Tuten Park** 3801 Nelson Road, Lake Charles

Sign up for any upcoming programs at: bit.ly/TutenEd or by email or phone: Irvin.louque@cityoflc.us, 337 491 8770.

Keep informed about what's happening at Tuten Park, sign up for the Tuten Park monthly newsletter by contacting Irvin Louque at: Irvin.louque@cityoflc.us

October 12, 2019 Bloomin' in the Bayou Fall Wildflower Walk, 10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Barataria Preserve

Learn some basic botany, and find out what's blooming in the wetlands 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Walk led by retired park ranger Wanda Lee Dickey. Free but space limited, call the Jean Lafitte visitor center for reservations at **504-689-3690** ext. 10.

October 14, 2019 International Plant Propagators Society Southern Region Conference – Baton Rouge, Louisiana – Botanical Landscapes by way of Seed by Marc Pastorek <https://marcpastorek.com/2018/11/10/wild-garden-talks-by-marc-pastorek-2019/>

Allen Acres Plant ID Classes: <http://www.nativeventures.net/default.asp>

Oct 8-10: Plant ID class Allen Acres

Oct 12-13: Plant ID classes Allen Acres

Oct 15-17: Plant ID class Allen Acres

October 18-19, 2019: Southern Garden Symposium, St Francisville

<http://www.southerngardensymposium.org/>

October 17-20, 2019 Florida Birding and Nature Festival Tampa Hillsborough Community College

<http://www.floridabirdingandnaturefestival.org/>

October 19-20, 2019 Ding Darling Days Birding and Eco-Festival Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island Florida

<https://www.dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/ding-darling-days>

October 25-27, 2019 LOS Fall Meeting Hackberry Community Center 986 Main Street, Louisiana http://www.losbird.org/meetings_2019_fall.htm

**October 30 – November 3, 2019 Yellow Rail and Rice Festival Hampton Inn & Suites Jennings, Louisiana**

<https://www.yellowrailsandrice.com/>

November 6, 2019, 26th Annual Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival

Harlingen MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM COMPLEX 1204 FAIR PARK BLVD. • HARLINGEN, TEXAS <https://www.rgvbf.org/>

November 7, 2019 LNPS Fall Symposium at ULL Cade Farm, 1178 W.J. Bernard Rd. St. Martinville, LA 70582

https://www.lsu.edu/hilltop/programs/adult/landscape_workshop.php

**Save the date for LMNA Rendezvous 2020!**

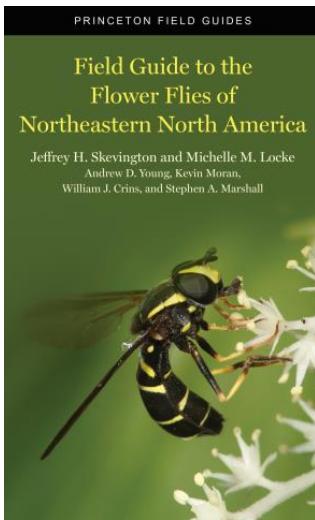
April 17 - 19, 2020 at Camp Hardtner, Pollock, Louisiana. We have ordered great weather for exploring the Kisatchie National Forest!

New this year: The camp staff will be providing our meals for us

Resources for the Naturalists:

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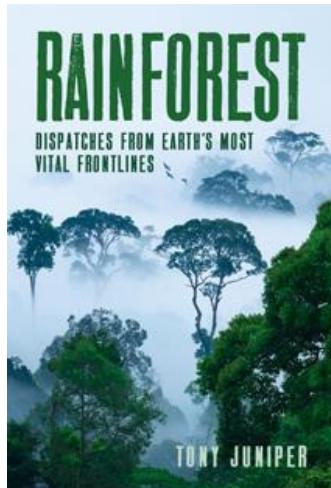
Books:


Field Guide to the Flower Flies of Northeastern North America by Jeffrey H. Skevington and Michelle M. Locke

June 2019

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07NCZC1L5/?tag=princetonuniv-20>
A groundbreaking guide to flower flies in North America

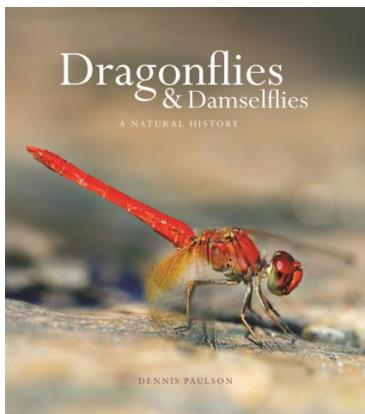
This is the first comprehensive field guide to the flower flies (also known as hover flies) of northeastern North America. Flower flies are, along with bees, our most important pollinators. Found in a varied range of habitats, from backyard gardens to aquatic ecosystems, these flies are often overlooked because many of their species mimic bees or wasps. Despite this, many species are distinctive and even subtly differentiated species can be accurately identified. This handy and informative guide teaches you how.


Rainforest Dispatches from Earth's Most Vital Frontlines by Tony Juniper

September 2019

<https://islandpress.org/books/rainforest>

Rainforests have long been recognized as hotspots of biodiversity—but they are crucial for our planet in other surprising ways. Not only do these fascinating ecosystems thrive in rainy regions, they create rain themselves, and this moisture is spread around the globe. Rainforests across the world have a powerful and concrete impact, reaching as far as America's Great Plains and central Europe. In *Rainforest: Dispatches from Earth's Most Vital Frontlines*, a prominent conservationist provides a comprehensive view of the crucial roles rainforests serve, the state of the world's rainforests today, and the inspirational efforts underway to save them.


Dragonflies and Damselflies A Natural History by Dennis Paulson

March 2019

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07PH7X959/?tag=princetonuniv-20>
A lavishly illustrated introduction to the world's dragonflies and damselflies

Dragonflies and damselflies are often called birdwatchers' insects. Large, brightly colored, active in the daytime, and displaying complex and interesting behaviors, they have existed since the days of the dinosaurs, and they continue to flourish. Their ancestors were the biggest insects ever, and they still impress us with their size, the largest bigger than a small hummingbird. There are more than 6,000 odonate species known at present, and you need only visit any wetland on a warm summer day to be enthralled by their stunning colors and fascinating behavior. In this lavishly illustrated natural history, leading dragonfly expert Dennis Paulson offers a comprehensive, accessible, and appealing introduction to the world's dragonflies and damselflies.

Resources for the Naturalists:

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iNaturalist Guide Bees of Louisiana by Robby Maxwell

<https://www.inaturalist.org/guides/9447>

Bees of Louisiana

All 85

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Sort Grid Card

TAXONOMY

- Mining Bees
Family Andrenidae 6
- Honey Bees, Bumble Bees, and Allies
Family Apidae 29
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- Sweat Bees
Family Halictidae 22
- Mason, Leafcutter, Carder, and Resin Bees
Family Megachilidae 23



Western Honey Bee ¹
Apis mellifera



Honey Bees, Bumble Bees, and Allies ²
Apidae



Eastern Carpenter Bee ³
Xylocopa virginica



Large Carpenter Bees ⁴
Xylocopa



Bumble Bees ⁵
Bombus



Mason, Leafcutter, Carder, and Resin Bees ⁶
Bombylius major



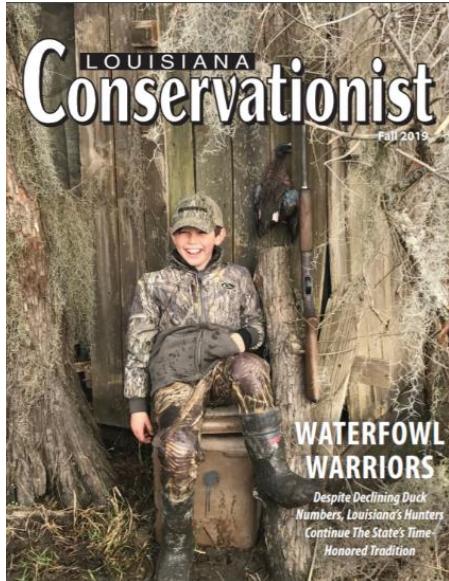
Two-spotted Bumble Bee ⁷
Bombus bimaculatus



Leafcutter, Mortar, and Resin Bees ⁸
Megachile

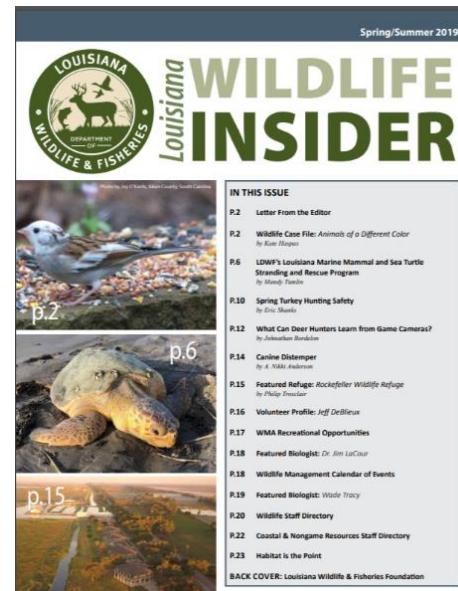
Louisiana Conservationist Fall Issue (Free pdf download)

<http://laconservationist.wlf.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/LCM-Fall-2019.pdf>



Louisiana Wildlife Insider Spring/Summer Issue (Free pdf download)

http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pa_gehunting/41031-wildlife-insider-newsletter/2019_springsummer - wildlife_insider_low-res.pdf



Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists is to promote awareness, understanding, and respect of Louisiana's natural resources using unbiased, accurate, scientific information provided by a trained corps of volunteers. These volunteers provide education, outreach, and services dedicated to the conservation and management of our ecosystems

Visit our website:
Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists
<http://www.swlamasternaturalists.org/>



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IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER!

We welcome contributions of original writing of observations on nature in our area of Southwest Louisiana. We also welcome reports, reviews, poems, sketches, paintings and digital photographs. Please type "Newsletter" in the subject line of the email. When you send a digital photograph, please include in the email the subject, your name, location, date and any interesting story or information about the photograph. Please send your email to the Newsletter Editor: arlenevidaurri.cain@yahoo.com



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nature, **meet** other nature lovers, and
learn about the natural world.



From hikers to hunters, birders to beach-combers, the world is filled with naturalists, and many of us record what we find. What if all those observations could be shared online? You might discover someone who finds beautiful wildflowers at your favorite birding spot, or learn about the birds you see on the way to work. If enough people recorded their observations, it would be like a living record of life on Earth that scientists and land managers could use to monitor changes in biodiversity, and that *anyone* could use to learn more about nature.