



# Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Nature Notes



Charter 2016

Vol.7 Issue 1 2022

President's Note .....	2
Chapter Business .....	3
News.....	4
Naturalist Notes .....	7
SLAMN Calendar.....	10
Resources for the Naturalist .....	11
Last Page.....	14



Class of '22 photo by Patty Palmer

## President's Note

Fantastic New Year! I'm looking forward to having great adventures together.

The SLAMN calendar is already filling up with events. We will be hosting a Citizen Science fair on March 19 to share info on the benefits of trees. We will be participating in the Paddlefish Spawning at Booker Fowler Fish Hatchery. We are also going to set up a booth at the SWLA Garden Expo. These are very fun events, and we need a lot of volunteers.

We have new students registered for the class which begins in January. Would you like a refresher course or to return to one of the fieldwork locations? You are welcomed to sign up as a facilitator. You can log onto Track it Forward and sign up for many events today. The program will send you a reminder near the date.

This year, members will be required to achieve 20 volunteer hours and 8 CEU hours to maintain Active Status. This is documented on Track it Forward. If you pay your membership renewal fee, but do not complete the volunteer/CEU hours you are considered an Inactive Member. Volunteering as a class facilitator, writing for the newsletter, attending meetings, and Citizen Science projects are some ways to earn hours.

I hope you will be able to attend scheduled events. Contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Barbara Morris  
President  
SWLA Master Naturalists

### About SLAMN Nature Notes

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists Nature Notes is published the final week of the following months:

**March, June, September, and December.**

We welcome contributions of original writing of observations, and topics on nature in our area of Southwest Louisiana. We welcome reports, reviews, essays, and digital photographs.

## Chapter Business

### [2022 Courses in Progress](#)

Classes began on January 22. Fourteen exceptional students are currently enrolled for the 2022 class. It is so exciting to be back together. You are invited to come along. Check Track-it-Forward for more information.

### [Next Board Meeting](#)

The next board meeting will be held on March 15th at Tuten Park. The agenda is still open, so contact a board member if you have a suggestion. As always, all members are invited to attend as observers.

### [Next General Meeting](#)

The next general meeting will be held on April 6th at the LSU AG Center Building next to Burton Coliseum. The speaker will be Pam Langley. There will be a "social half-hour" starting at 5:30 so that folks can mingle and chat with the meeting kicking off at 6:00. You can bring snacks if you wish.

### [Tuten Park Still Closed](#)

Tuten Park is still closed to the public. A press conference is scheduled for March 30 to discuss the future of the park. Lori Marinovich, our member on the inside, is encouraging positive ecological planning.

### [Website Updated](#)

James Doucet, Class of 2020, is updating the [swlamasternaturalists.org](http://swlamasternaturalists.org) website. He graduated with a Computer Science Degree in 2019. (Go James!) Visit often and see what's new.

\*\*\*PAYPAL\*\*\* and other online payment methods are now available for membership renewal. Payments now can be made from the website!

### [New Logo](#)

SLAMN has a new logo designed by Sam Wrobel, graduate of the 2019 class. The Whooping Crane is a nod to our first President, Irvin Louque, and because we have a growing non-migratory flock. Yellow Indiangrass and Sunflower represent the Cajun Prairies and of course the water is for the Gulf of Mexico and numerous waterways and lakes. We are ordering new T-shirts.

### [Field Trip](#)

The next field trip is scheduled for Saturday April 10th at Kisatchie National Forest. We are currently arranging the details and will keep you posted.

### [Emerald Fletcher Has Moved](#)

Emerald has moved to the Austin, TX area and is no longer at Tuten Park or on our Board of Directors. We wish her all the best in her new home.

## News

### [LMNA Rendezvous 2022 in Pineville, LA](#)

Registration is open for Rendezvous 2022. Speakers will be covering topics such as Pileated Woodpecker, Native Plants, and Black Bears. Participants will be making a Bat House and have the opportunity for a moonlight kayaking trip.

Visit <http://www.louisianamasternaturalist.org/rendezvous-2022.html> for more information or to register.

Rendezvous is always a fabulous event, and well worth attending. Sign up on Track-it-Forward also, to possibly find a traveling buddy.

### [Field Trip to the Maxwell Microprairie](#)

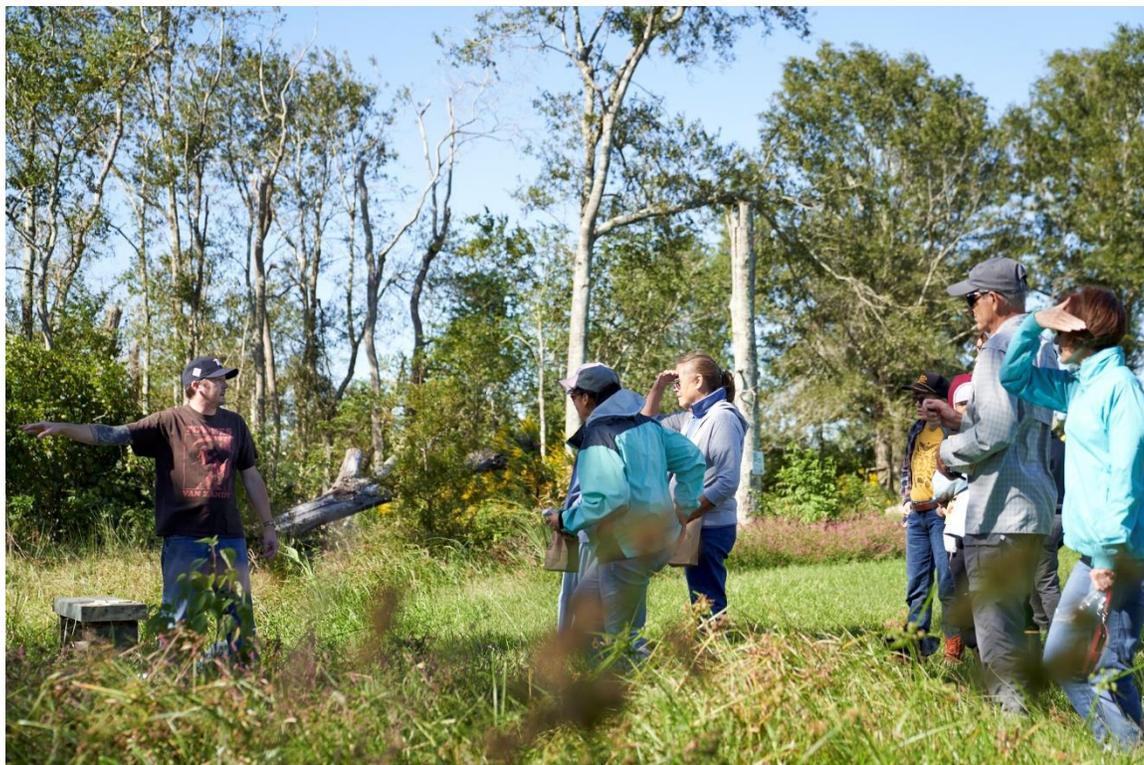
Text and Photos By: Dan Plummer

A group of Master Naturalists made another pilgrimage to Robby and Danielle's microprairie near Iowla, LA for a fall prairie walk on October 16<sup>th</sup>, and what a show it was! The first good cold front of autumn had moved in overnight, and we all gathered under a clear blue sky in a fresh breeze to



view the floral last hurrah of the year. This slice of natural Louisiana habitat has been a major project for the Maxwells, and it consists of three separate areas, some a little higher and drier, some a little lower and wetter. In each area thrives quite a variety of natural plants, with an emphasis on those that provide habitat for pollinators (and the things that like to eat them), birds, and other wildlife. Prairies like this one, and even small ones, help restore habitat that is regularly being lost to agriculture and development. The Maxwell's prairie is a Gold Level Louisiana Certified Habitat, as certified by the Louisiana Native Plant Society. As most of you know, even a tiny plot can be certified, and building one can be quite rewarding. You can find more information at <https://www.lnps.org/certifiedhabitat/>.

Blue mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)



*The group listening to Robby describing plants and movement of mosquito fish in the back prairie section*

On this outing, I was able to note about 45 species of plants, (limited mainly by my poor hearing and so many visual distractions), so I would bet there were another dozen or two species I missed. Robby's knowledge of all that goes on in his prairie is broad and deep, and it was fun to watch and listen to him. He assisted everyone in gathering seeds, and even handed out a few milkweed seedlings from his greenhouse. Whenever the next prairie tour is arranged, be sure to get it onto your schedule!



*Inland sea oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)*



*Robby handing out some milkweed seedlings*

[Gulf States Mycology Society Foray, December 11, 2021](#)

Text and Photos By: Barbara Morris

If you have ever wanted to go into the forest with someone who really knows their mushrooms, this is the conference for you! The GSMS group held the winter foray in Alexandria, LA. I met up with a group as they entered the Alexander WMA southwest of Alexandria. It is like going on a Scavenger Hunt for mushrooms. Each person searches high and low for fungi poking up through the leaf litter. We gather the mushrooms into baskets and boxes, each sample wrapped separately in wax bags. The group excitedly examines each mushroom as we return to the cars, before heading to another location.



That afternoon, all the mycologists gather in the meeting room and the sorting begins. At this foray we located over 100+ species of lichen and mushrooms. The identification process can involve the use of spore prints, chemicals, and microscopes. The young mycologists looked on as the seasoned hunters gave descriptions of the characteristics and edibility of the mushrooms. The oyster mushrooms were gathered for cooking later that evening.



This is a very interesting group of people. Many of them, like myself, are novices. But I invite you to join the group and come along on a foray. They have two primary conferences, one in summer and one in winter. They also sponsor day trips. ([gsmmyco.org](http://gsmmyco.org)) It is a great walk into the woods.



## Naturalist Notes

### A Naturalist Takes a Cruise

Article and Photos by Barbara Morris

Ah, the Caribbean! White sand, blue water, rum! What's not to love? In November we cruised to Belize, Cozumel, and Roatan. While others rushed off to do shopping, I headed to the nature walkway with my binoculars. Most of the locations that you visit will have nature tours.



My favorite was the Belize River tour. The guides pointed out Manatee, porpoise, and crocodiles. I spotted a Magnificent Frigate bird sunning. I also saw birds common to our area such as Great Blue Heron and Egrets. We headed up the river looking for Iguana and Howler Monkeys. Along the way I spotted a Fork-tailed Flycatcher. I saw quite a few large black raptors. The guides were unable to identify it but, later utilizing Merlin Bird ID, I learned Black Hawks are common in this area.



Cruising back to Louisiana, in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico, I noticed a bird that followed the ship. It was a Brown or Masked Booby. They do nest on islands near Puerto Rico but stay out to sea when not breeding.



Observing the native fauna was very interesting and for me, enriched the trip. If you get a chance to travel, keep your eyes open and give us a report on what you find! Happy Traveling.

## Monarch Madness

Article and Photos by David Booth

On a walk through the back yard I was surprised to see that some of my milkweed was stripped of its leaves. When I looked closer, I could see that they were replaced by black and yellow caterpillars. When I looked them up, sure enough, they were Monarch 'cats'. Once before, I had seen this, but they disappeared and I never could tell if they became adult butterflies or not. This time I decided to try to raise them myself and give Mother Nature a little boost. I picked 16 cats off of the plants and put them into an old aquarium I had in the garage. I also placed some sticks and some milkweed leaves in with them. This was about December 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>. I kept plucking leaves and feeding the hungry little hoard several times a day. For a lid I just used a cardboard box lid. Bad move, because some escaped into the dining room! I was down at least 3-4 cats, some of which were banished to the back yard by my loving wife.



After moving them outside and adding a weight to the lid, they seemed more contained but still hungry. After almost stripping my remaining milkweed plants a friend offered some from a small wild patch of milkweed by her home. I harvested both leaves and plants and it was sufficient to finish them off. They started to form chrysalis' in a couple of days, and we ended up with 9. This was about December 5. I was told that they would take 10-14 days to finish the process and emerge. Well, today on December 17, the first three emerged. I was able to call granddaughters, who had been watching the process, to witness their release to the yard environment. It was a spectacular time. I had never done this before and it was a thrill. Can't wait for the next batch to emerge. Thanks for the help and advice of friends.



# SLAMN Calendar

All dates are subject to change.

For more information and to sign up, go to [www.TrackitForward.com](http://www.TrackitForward.com)

January 2021		February		March		April		May		June	
4	General Meeting	5	Applied Natural Sciences Class	5	Birds Class	1-3	Rendezvous	14	Coastal Ecology Class	4	Riverine Ecology and Fish Class
8	Field Trip Sabine Refuge			8	Paddlefish Spawn	6	General Meeting			7	Board Meeting
22	Biology/Ecology Class	12	Park Tree Workshop	15	Board Meeting	9	Cajun Prairie Class	21	Aquatic Invertebrates Class	18	Backyard Habitat/Land Ethic Class
		19	Fungi Class	19	Herpetology Class	10	Field Trip				
						23	Longleaf Pine/Botany Class				
						28-30	City Nature Challenge				
July		August		September		October		November		December	
12	General Meeting			6	Board Meeting	4	General Meeting			6	Board Meeting
13	Outreach Class/Graduation					8	Field Trip Maxwell and Eunice Prairies				
16	Field Trip Kayaking										

## Resources for the Naturalist

### Green Infrastructure and Public Demonstration Areas- ReTreeLC

Article By Lori Marinovich

Resources:

<https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/what-green-infrastructure>

<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/greener-parks/about-great-urban-parks-campaign>

<https://res.us>

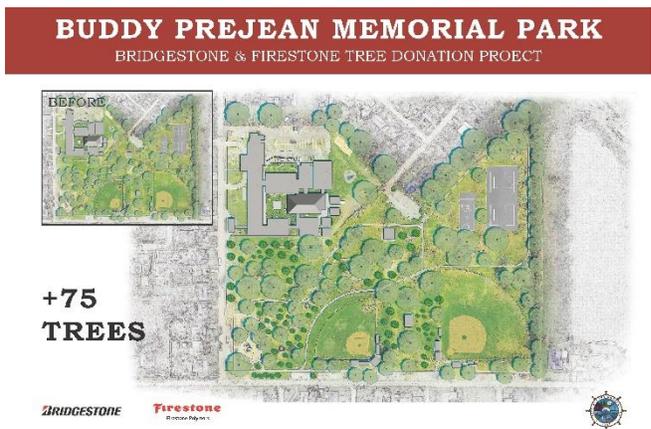
What is Green Infrastructure? The EPA states, “Historically, communities have used gray infrastructure—systems of gutters, pipes, and tunnels—to move stormwater away from where we live to treatment plants or straight to local water bodies. The gray infrastructure in many areas is aging, and its existing capacity to manage large volumes of stormwater is decreasing in areas across the country. To meet this challenge, many communities are installing green infrastructure systems to bolster their capacity to manage stormwater. By doing so, communities are becoming more resilient and achieving environmental, social and economic benefits.”

In order to implement these types of green infrastructure projects city staff coordinates a program to collaborate with non-profits, to seek grant funding, and to garner corporate donations. Recently several corporate sponsors have adopted the nature parks of Tuten, Riverside and Hillcrest. Grant funds kicked off the stormwater retention demonstration project at Hillcrest, which opened in 2021. This project was instrumental in capturing additional corporate interest to develop and fund a green infrastructure master plan and directly add vegetation to our public realm, parks and the demonstration areas.

Looking forward into 2022 the SLAMN membership will have opportunities to directly engage with these programs. A listing of the spring schedule is below.

The ReTreeLC program kicked off on 12.3.21. On this date, under the direction of RES, volunteers from Bridgestone/ Firestone implemented their plantings at Hillcrest, Brentwood, and Grace & Medora Parks. The funding of the Hillcrest master plan is included in this donation as well as a 2000 tree giveaway planned for April 2022 at Hillcrest Park.





Additional ReTreeLC events are planned.

- First Week of January 2022 Lyondell Basell for their tree plantings at 1<sup>st</sup> Ave & Tuten
- Second Week of January 2022 Sasol support for Tuten/Riverside master plan updates & projects
- Third Week of January 2022 Northrop Grumman support & plans for Mary Belle Williams
- For Feb/March 2022 (Further ReTreeLC Details TBD)
- Partnership Event to be scheduled **with SWLA Master Naturalists**. Focus activities on tree health, planting, and care. This will probably take place at Hillcrest Park due to the ongoing renovations at Tuten Park.
- Partnership Event with McNeese College of Agriculture – Dr. Chip Lemieux. Event at Imperial Calcasieu Museum Focused on Oak Trees/ Sallier Oak (tentative)
- Event organized & hosted by City Recreation Department
- April 2022 Tree Giveaway at Hillcrest by Bridgestone / Firestone

## New Exhibit at Library

The Cameron Parish Public Library, in cooperation with The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and the Calcasieu Parish Public Library, will examine water as an environmental necessity and an important cultural element as it hosts “Water/Ways,” a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street (MoMS) program.

The “Water/Ways” exhibit will be on view January 22, 2022 through March 5, 2022 at the Central Branch of the Calcasieu Parish Public Library, located at 301 W. Claude Street in Lake Charles.

[LIBRARY NEWS! \(patronpoint.com\)](http://patronpoint.com)

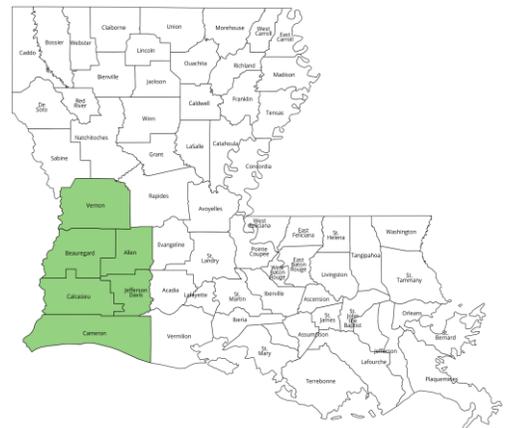


## Last Page

### 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*

Board of Directors		<a href="#">Back</a>
President	Barbara Morris	<a href="mailto:tblsim5@yahoo.com">tblsim5@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Lori Marinovich	<a href="mailto:Elleu1@yahoo.com">Elleu1@yahoo.com</a>
Treasurer	Clay Ardoin	<a href="mailto:cardoyn@infolink-usa.com">cardoyn@infolink-usa.com</a>
Secretary	Patty Palmer	<a href="mailto:pmpalmer8@hotmail.com">pmpalmer8@hotmail.com</a>
LDWF	Robby Maxwell	<a href="mailto:robjamax@gmail.com">robjamax@gmail.com</a>
LDWF	Theresa Cross	<a href="mailto:tcross@wlf.la.gov">tcross@wlf.la.gov</a>
SLAMN	Tommy Hillman	<a href="mailto:tommyhillman@att.net">tommyhillman@att.net</a>
Gulf Coast Bird Club	David Booth	<a href="mailto:david@boothenvironmental.com">david@boothenvironmental.com</a>
Past President	Irvin Louque	<a href="mailto:irvinlouque@gmail.com">irvinlouque@gmail.com</a>
3801 Nelson Road, Lake Charles, LA 70601		225 206 0400



### AMAZON SMILE

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists  
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-5541690>



You shop. Amazon gives.

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to **Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists** whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.  
You can select a different charitable organization after signing in.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

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



Find us on Facebook

Southwest Louisiana Master Naturalists  
<https://www.facebook.com/SWLAMasterNaturalists/>