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FALL 1992

NEWSLETTER

volume 10, number 3

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT, JOHN MAYRONNE

Fall is on the way, so remember to put LNPS's Summer/Fall meeting on your calendar. This year's meeting will take place on October 24th in conjunction with our field trip in the Tunica Hills. The following day, October 25th, we will offer another field trip to the Lake Ramsey savannah area. For detailed information see below.

Plans for our annual meeting on January 30, 1993 at LSU-A in Alexandria are presently being finalized. Steven Foster, nationally recognized herbal researcher, writer and photographer, will lecture on "Medicinal Plants in Louisiana". He is the author of numerous books and other publications. His latest book, done in conjunction with Yue Chongxi, is entitled "Herbal Emissaries - Bringing Chinese Herbs to the West".

David Pashley, Director of Science and Stewardship with The Louisiana Nature Conservancy, will be speaking to us on the relationship between habitats and the birds and other wildlife that coexist there. Some examples being rare species such as the black bear, as well as some common species of birds and other mammals.

David received his Ph. D. from LSU in Wildlife and Fisheries. His dissertation was "A Distributional Analysis of the Warblers of the West Indies". He is currently the National Coordinator for migratory bird activities for The Nature Conservancy, and is involved with numerous projects and committees dealing with conservation issues, both nationally as well as state-wide.

Virginia Plauche, founder of Save our Trees in Louisiana will give us a brief talk on that organization, how it started, obstacles it faced, and where it's going.

Plans are under way for another regional native plant conference to be held in Lafayette in 1993. Native plant communities will probably be the main focus of this conference, with more details coming out within the next few months. Bill Fontenot will be the director, with Marion Drummond as his codirector.

So mark your calendars, and plan to attend all the upcoming events. The LNPS is on the move, and we want you with us.

I enjoy receiving correspondence from our members, offering suggestions, criticism, praise, assistance, etc.....My term as president expires in January, until then if I can be of service to you, please give me a holler!

John Mayronne
320 North Theard
Covington, La. 70433
Phone (504) 892-5424

FALL FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

by Nelwyn C. McInnis

The fall field trip is actually the summer field trip "put off" until it got cooler! Here are the details:

WHEN: October 24, 1992, 10:00 AM. We'll hike until lunchtime, have lunch, and then go again. We expect to finish around 3:00 PM.

WHERE: Tunica Hills Wildlife Management Area, West Feliciana Parish, about 14 miles northwest of St. Francisville.

DIRECTIONS/MEETING LOCATION: From St. Francisville go north on US HWY 61 about 3 miles. Turn left (west) on LA HWY 66 (toward Angola). Go about 8 miles to HWY 968 and turn left. Go about 0.7 miles and take the right fork (at triangular shaped intersection) on an unnamed parish road. Go about 5 miles (road changes to gravel but should be passable in a car) and do not make any turns on intersecting roads. Park at The Nature Conservancy parking lot (see map). Travel time is approximately 40 minutes from St. Francisville.

WHAT TO BRING: Food and water (a day pack is recommended to carry at least some food and water with you); insect repellent; toilet paper (no facilities are present at site other than nice big trees); hiking boots or shoes for hiking.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Hiking moderate to difficult - difficult when going up or down steep slopes (just ask Bill Fontenot!).

AREA LODGING: The closest camping facility in the area is Homochitto National Forest in Mississippi. Motels in St. Francisville are the Ramada Inn (Phone 504-635-3821) and the St. Francisville Inn (504-635-6502). Several bed and breakfast lodgings are available. For information and reservations for B and Bs in the St. Francisville, New Rhodes, or Jackson, La. area call Southern Comfort Reservation Service at 504-346-1928.

DESCRIPTION: Step back in time in the beautiful, deeply dissected ravines of the Tunica Hills in West Feliciana, Louisiana. This area, blanketed by fine, wind-blown soil (loess) between the periods of continental glaciation, is part of a narrow belt referred to as Blufflands, that extends from Southern Illinois to Louisiana on the eastern escarpment of the Mississippi River Valley. The Tunica Hills are the southern-most extension of numerous northern species more typical in the Appalachians, Ozarks, and northward that found refuge by migrating along the bluffland route during the Ice Age. Several of the species here occur nowhere else in Louisiana. The forest canopy is dominated by Southern Magnolia, American Beech, and American Holly. The site to be visited has been recently purchased by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. It is a 590 acre natural area within the Tunica Hills WMA. Unusual species include Pyramid Magnolia (Magnolia pyramidata), Mountain Hydrangea (Hydrangea arborescens), Lowland Brittle Fern (Cystopteris protrusa), Glade Ferns (Athyrium thelypteroides and Athyrium pycnocarpon), Maiden-hair Fern (Adiantum pedatum), Schisandra glabra, low erythroides orchid (Erythroides querceticola) and others. It is also the only region in Louisiana to see the eastern chipmunk! We will explore shady ravines, creek bottoms, and ridges. The vertical bluffs, diverse plant assemblage, and scenic beauty make this trip extremely worthwhile. You won't believe you are in Louisiana! For more information,

refer back to the spring LNPS newsletter.

You may want to stay in the historic St. Francisville area afterward to see the many plantation homes, such as Rosedown. Also, in addition to the Tunica trip, I am willing to lead a field trip the following day to the Lake Ramsey Savannah north of Covington (see a description of the area elsewhere in this newsletter). Although it is not the best time of year for viewing flowering plants at this site, it is always a spectacular area to see. If anyone is interested please let me know. Camping facilities are available in the area, and include Fountainbleau and Fairview Riverside state parks. Call 504-624-4443 and 504-845-3318 respectively for information and reservations at these parks. Write or call me at:

Nelwyn C. McInnis
La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
Natural Heritage Program
P.O. Box 98000
Baton Rouge, La. 70898-9000
Phones: 504-765-2975 (work)
504-748-8388 (home)

LAKE RAMSEY SAVANNAH

by Newlyn C. McInnis

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has acquired 796 acres of land along the Tchefuncte River in St. Tammany parish. The tract, called Lake Ramsey Savannah and located about 7 miles northwest of Covington, is comprised principally of longleaf pine flatwood savannah, bay forest, hardwood slope forest, and floodplain forest along the Tchefuncte River. For five years prior to acquisition, the site had been on a list maintained by the Natural Heritage Program of the top sites in Louisiana in need of conservation attention. Lake Ramsey Savannah is known to support at least 18 rare plant species among the hundreds of species present in the area, and is considered the best example of a wet pine flatwood savannah remaining in southeastern Louisiana.

Longleaf pine flatwood savannahs are very special grass-dominated and fire-maintained wetland habitats noted for their high degree of species diversity, particularly of herbaceous plants, many of which are found only in these environs. It is here that plants such as the parrot pitcher-plant and pale grass-pink orchid may be found in Louisiana. Until now, none of this now-threatened habitat type was protected in any conservation area anywhere in the state. Management efforts will focus on restoring and maintaining natural habitat conditions so that all species native to the area will be sustained for the foreseeable future. A range of recreational activities such as hiking, nature study, and hunting, consistent with the department's conservation efforts and objectives, will be permitted on the area.

DUES REMINDER

Don't forget that membership dues for 1992 were due by the first of the year, January 1, 1992! Members who have not paid their dues have been dropped from the roster. If you know someone who is interested in joining (or rejoining) the LNPS, give them the following address. Make checks payable to the LNPS:

LNPS
Rt. 1, Box 195
Saline, Louisiana 71070

The dues schedule is as follows: Student=\$5.00, Senior Citizen=\$5.00, Individual=\$10.00, Family=\$15.00, Organization=\$25.00, Sustaining=\$50.00, Corporate=\$100.00.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT 4 NEWSLETTERS:

Don't forget! In an effort to better coordinate the distribution of information concerning field trips as well as other dated information the newsletter uses the following deadline policy. Any information received after the deadline will be included in the next newsletter. Deadlines for the next four newsletters are as follows:

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|--------------------|-------------------|
| Winter Newsletter: | December 1, 1992 |
| Spring Newsletter: | March 1, 1993 |
| Summer Newsletter: | June 1, 1993 |
| Fall Newsletter: | September 1, 1993 |

The editor's address is:

David Heikamp
717 Giuffrias
Metairie, La. 70001
Ph (504) 831-2342

LOUISIANA UTILITY LINE CLEARING PRACTICES QUESTIONED
by Virginia Plauche

A task force appointed by the Public Service Commissioner Louis Lambert presented a report with over 50 recommendations on ways to improve the line clearing practices of utility companies operating in Louisiana. In 1989, utility line clearing cost Louisiana consumers over \$25 million. The report recommended several changes in line clearing practices, including adherence to national standards for tree pruning, on-site supervision of workers, and adequate notification of landowners.

Tree trimming using national standards has been shown to improve cost effectiveness because improper and severe pruning actually causes more rapid tree growth into power lines, requiring frequent returns by contract crews. In-the-field supervision by trained and licensed utility employees should result in clearing that is done efficiently and correctly.

Currently, utility companies and their contractors are exempt from the state arborist licensing procedures. In addition, while utility companies and their contractors are required to comply with the licensing and certified herbicide applicators, the current Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry regulation does not require direct "on-site" supervision of uncertified personnel. The task force recommended that utility companies have employees who are licensed by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry in arboriculture and herbicide application to provide on-site supervision of all line clearing operations.

In addition, the task force recommended that utility companies notify all landowners of tree trimming, tree removal, and herbicide use. Landowners must

be notified of the herbicide to be used, and, in the case of tree removal, informed that the removal of a mature tree can affect their utility bill and their property value.

Facing stiff opposition from utility companies, the Public Service Commission voted unanimously for a full public hearing on utility line clearing practices. Anyone interested in attending the hearing can call the Louisiana Public Service Commission in Baton Rouge at 342-1418 for the date. For further information contact Virginia Plauche at 336-0181.

Editor's Note: the hearings mentioned above were scheduled for August 24th through 28th.

GRASSES OF LOUISIANA DELAYED

Due to several problems, the publication of Grasses of Louisiana was delayed. Please accept our apology and thanks for your patience. There is some good news; the original cost estimate was too much. We were able to print at a lower cost and thus the selling price is \$30.00, postpaid.

Grasses of Louisiana, Second Edition (ISBN 0-9633191-0-9; Library of Congress Number 92-72282) is an updated, hardcover version that contains keys and descriptions to more than 380 grass taxa growing without cultivation in Louisiana. The documented distribution by parishes for each taxon is presented in a checklist. Almost all taxa are illustrated with more than 370 illustrations.

This publication is a joint effort of the Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society and The Herbarium, Northeast Louisiana University, Monroe. Please mail orders to:

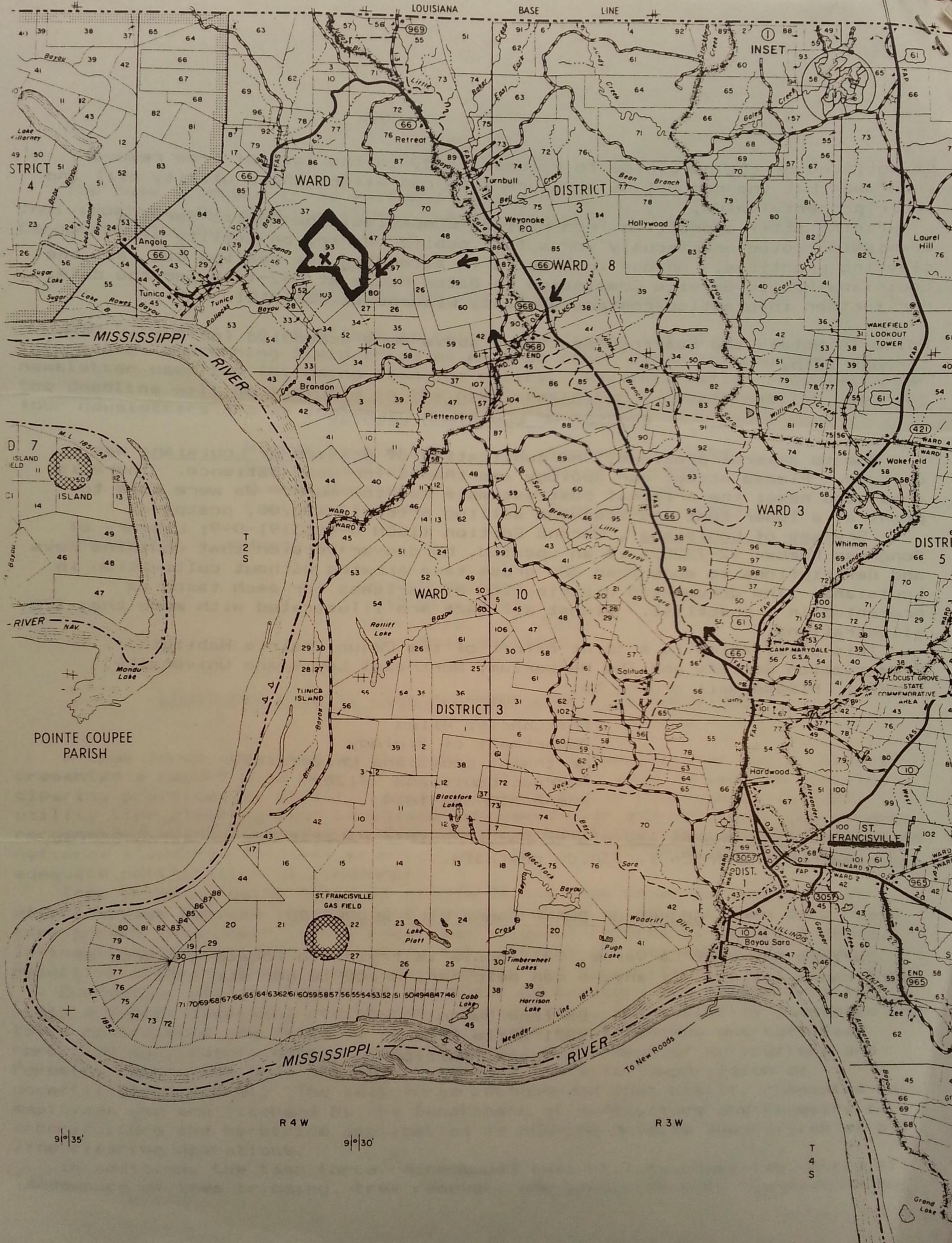
Dr. Charles Allen
Department of Biology
Northeast Louisiana University
Monroe, Louisiana 71209
Phone 318-342-1814

Please make checks payable to Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society and remember the price is \$30.00 postpaid.

SOURCE OF DWARF CANNA LILY REQUESTED

Darlene Munro of La Verne, California is trying to locate a source of dwarf canna lilies. If anyone can help her, write to her at:

Darlene Munro
2821 White Avenue
La Verne, California 91750



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