

2025 Louisiana Native Plant Conference

Speakers and Topics



Tammy Greer Assoc Prof of Psychology and Director of the Center for American Indian Research and Studies

Dr. Greer is a member of the United Houma Nation and director of the Southern Miss Center for American Indian Research and Studies. She wild tends the 1,000 square foot Southern Miss Medicine Wheel Garden whose paths point in the four directions. The wild tended garden is filled with Southeastern native plants that were and are still used as tools, building materials, clothing, cordage, food, drink, dyes, pigments, weapons and medicines. Dr. Greer coordinates the yearly Southern Miss Powwow that is open to the public and allows Natives and non-Natives to experience powwow culture here in Hattiesburg. She, currently, is working on several projects that involve waking up our sleeping Southeastern cultural traditions, including our pigment and dye, cordage and mound building traditions as well as food traditions in an effort to address health disparities among Southeastern American Indians.

Native Plants, Traditional & Indigenous Uses

Dr. Greer will talk about the role of native plants in the revitalization of Native cultures.

Dr. Greer will conduct a workshop to introduce the use of foraged native plants as pigments and dyes that can be used now, as they have in the past, to color our world.



Emily Marie Miller is a student employee at UNO Shea Penland Coastal Education and Research Facility (CERF). Emily will soon be a graduate of the University of New Orleans earning her degree in Earth and Environmental Science with a coastal concentration. Growing up on farmed and forested property in rural Maryland she developed a love and appreciation for the natural world. In 2009 she moved to Louisiana out of desire to connect with the land that raised many generations of her family, and now calls Louisiana home. Dr. Christopher Belser at UNO introduced her to the value of planting native and she has focused her efforts on applying natives for ecosystem enrichment ever since.

Planting Native in our Dynamic Coastal Zones

Emily is a LNPS grant recipient and will describe lessons learned from developing native gardens on a strip of land surrounded by coastal brackish marshland and Chef Menteur Pass, an area known to shift in salinity throughout the year. This project informs on the resiliency of particular natives in this environment, and how this information may aid in navigating the future of South Louisiana through coming climate change, sea level rise, and other factors



Eric Fuselier is an environmental scientist who works with engineers, planners, and landscape architects to provide effective, sustainable solutions for environmental challenges facing cities, regions, and organizations worldwide. Eric has educated city leaders, industry leaders, and legal professionals on a wide variety of topics including climate resilience, low impact development, phytoremediation, wetland science, and environmental regulations.

Phytoremediation with Native Plants: How to Use Native Plants to Improve Environmental Quality

Learn about how native plants can be used to improve soil, water, and air quality through the process of phytoremediation. The concepts and species discussed in this presentation aren't limited to green infrastructure or large-scale remediation projects: they can be applied to residential, commercial and municipal landscaping projects as well. Learn how to pay attention to surrounding land uses and activities to know how to select species for your next native plant project that will benefit the environment beyond just providing habitat for pollinators and wildlife. Topics covered in this presentation will include rain gardens, stormwater management, pesticides, carbon sequestration, outdoor air quality and more!



Jennifer Blanchard is a botanist and Instructor of Horticulture -Medicinal Plants at LSU. She has introduced new courses on medical plants and indigenous plant use and Cannabis Horticulture. As a PhD student, her research focuses on the extraction of natural plant products for use in industry. Jennifer has a bachelor's in environmental biology and a masters in Earth and Environmental Science and has enjoyed working with Dr. Charles Allen in recent years. Jennifer is enthusiastic about sharing information on the propagation and use of native medicinal plants in the landscape and all the value-added benefits these plants provide to human health and the environment.

Jennifer Blanchard will lead a guided nature walk on Saturday afternoon.



Johnny Armstrong retired following 42 years as a medical doctor with specialty in pathology. He has worked for the past 16 years on the restoration of the ecology of the shortleaf pine-oak-hickory woodland and grassland on Wafer Creek Ranch, Ruston, a project detailed in his latest book, *Rescuing Biodiversity: The Protection and Restoration of a North Louisiana Ecosystem*.



Latimore Smith is the Founder of Southern Wild Heritage, LLC (2018). He retired from LDWF (2000, 15 years) serving as a Natural Heritage Ecologist. Previously he worked at The Nature Conservancy as Director of Science and Stewardship. Lattimore is an authority on longleaf pine and shortleaf pine ecological systems in Louisiana.

History and Ecology of Shortleaf Pine Systems in North LA and a Review of the Shortleaf Pine-Oak-Hickory Woodland Restoration Project at Wafer Creek Ranch

Johnny and Latimore will present jointly on a restoration project on one of the leading examples of shortleaf pine woodland restoration in the state. Latimore will provide an overview of the history and ecology of the shortleaf pine system in North Louisiana and Johnny will discuss the many facets and lessons learned in the restoration of a shortleaf-oak-hickory woodland at Wafer Creek Ranch over the last 16 years.