

2025 Louisiana Native Plant Conference

Field Trip options

Friday February 14, 2025

Talk and Guided Hike at the Louisiana State Arboretum with Kim Hollier, 11am

Join other LNPS meeting goers at the **Louisiana State Arboretum** for a free talk and guided hike with Arboretum naturalist Kim Hollier. Come early and enjoy the exhibits in the Nature Center. The grounds surrounding the Nature Center were landscaped with natives and earned gold certification in the Louisiana Certified Habitat Program. After an introductory talk by Kim at 11am, the guided walk will start on the accessible pavement and continue on one of the nature trails, max 1.5 mile walk. Allow 2 hours but you can come and go as you like. Enter through Chicot State Park (1300 Sudie Lawton Lane, Ville Platte, 70586, \$3 entrance fee, free for 62+). No need to register. Pets and picnicking are not allowed at the Arboretum but are welcome elsewhere in the State Park. Also feel free to brownbag your lunch during the talk. Navigate to the entrance of Chicot State Park, pay the entrance fee, then follow signs to the Arboretum.

<https://www.lastateparks.com/parks-preserves/louisiana-state-arboretum>



Sunday February 16, 2025

Cajun Prairie Restoration in Eunice with Dr. Malcolm Vidrine, 9am



The [Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society's](#) signature restoration is in Eunice, at the corner of Martin Luther King Drive and East Magnolia, just 15 min drive from the LNPS meeting site. Join Dr. Malcolm Vidrine at the site for an insightful introduction to the restored Cajun Prairie and the story behind the restoration. Volunteers used only local seeds and plugs collected from nearby remnants so this prairie is as Cajun as can be. The paved trail around the 10-acre site is wheelchair accessible. But bring boots if you want to explore off-path. Throughout the year, you

will find plants in flower but especially from March to October. There is a paved parking lot and a covered shelter for picnics. Navigate to 650 E Magnolia Ave, Eunice, LA 70535.

Sunday February 16, 2025

Old Growth Longleaf Pine savanna with Brian Sean Early, leave ABC at 8:30



Join LDWF botanist Brian Sean Early for a guided visit to the Porteau Tract, a 500 acre tract with 200 acres of **old growth longleaf pine savanna** and flatwood ponds, with the rest undergoing restoration with the state's Natural Heritage Program. Details about accessibility available at the meeting. It's an easy one-hour drive west of the Acadian Baptist Center to just past Kinder. Those who want to carpool can arrange that morning. (Photo from a nearby tract)

Cajun Prairie Farms with Larry Allain, meet there at noon

Visit the Allains' working family farm and prairie restoration, Cajun Prairie Farms, in Arnaudville with Larry guiding you around several prairie restorations in various stages and their organic vegetable gardens and animal husbandry. It's on Hwy 93 between Grand Coteau and Arnaudville, about 35 minutes from the meeting site. Navigate to 7334 Hwy 93, Arnaudville LA 70512-5901. It's also an AirBnB farm stay!



Palmetto Island State Park

John Michel Kelley and Susan Norris-Davis will lead a field trip at PISP on Sunday morning, leaving Acadian Baptist Center(ABC) about 9am. PISP lies just south of Abbeville in Vermillion Parish, about 1.5hr drive time from the ABC. The park is about 1,300 acres of mostly coastal bottomland hardwood forest with many *Sabal minor* in the understory. It is located on the Vermillion River and just north of the west side of Vermillion Bay which connects with the Gulf of Mexico and hence is subject to tides. It was acquired by the State in 1981 and opened to the public in 2010. Between PISP and Abbeville lie some privately owned, freshwater but still tidally influenced, cypress-tupelo swamps. It was here that the new species of *Iris nelsonii* -



Abbeville Red, endemic to this area, was discovered in the 1930s. They are pollinated mainly by Ruby-throated hummingbirds. Concern for survival of the species due to the many hydrology/land use changes occurring in the area and accelerating since the 1940s, populations of *Iris nelsonii* have been moved to PISP. We should be able to see stands of growing Iris as well as many species specific to coastal bottomland hardwoods. There is a boardwalk into a wetland area as well as some short trails.



If not attending any of the excursions, **two native nurseries in Arnaudville** will be open 10am-1pm.

Gulf Coast Flora (gulfcoastflora.com) is a large wholesale native plant nursery at 250 Tupelo Rd. Arnaudville, La 70512. Visit their website for their inventory.

The **Acadiana Native Plant Project** (greauxnative.org) grows over 100 native plant species, including trees, shrubs, vines, and plants adapted for wetland and prairie conditions. Visit their website for their inventory. You can also stretch your legs with a short walk on ANPP's Teche Woods Nature Trail behind the greenhouse. 1046 Main Highway, Arnaudville.

Other self-guided options in the area are available anytime. Get a group together at the meeting if you like!

St. Landry Parish Visitor Center at I-49 north of Opelousas <https://cajuntravel.com/about-st-landry-parish-louisiana/visitor-center/> was landscaped with all Louisiana native species, including a large patch of wild indigos, an iris/cypress wet planting, and Cajun prairie plantings. 35 min ENE of meeting site. Building closed on Sunday but grounds are open.

The Nature Conservancy's Cypress Island Preserve at Lake Martin has a Visitor Center that serves as a hub for inspiring the public about TNC's mission and work in this fragile natural area. Volunteers staff the center most weekends. The Visitor Center is located at 1264 Prairie Highway, St. Martinville, LA

70582. Call 337-342-2475 to verify hours and access road status. <https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/cypress-island/>

Headed north? The US Forest Service's **Wild Azalea Trail in Kisatchie National Forest** has a trailhead not far from I-49 at 352-398 Castor Plunge Rd, Woodworth, LA 71485. Free. 1h 15 min from meeting site.

Headed south? **Palmetto Island State Park** south of Abbeville has an Abbeville red iris restoration, accessible on boardwalks. Entrance fee. 19501 Pleasant Road, Abbeville LA 70510. 337 893 3930. 1h 15 min from meeting site.