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"A PRAIRIE CHICKEN IN EVERY PLOT"

VOLUME 25, April 2006

PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

Greetings to all once again! Well spring is here and summer is fast approaching and things are getting busy for everyone including the CPHPS. We have a lot of projects going, especially with the trail construction and etc. at the Eunice Prairie and the construction of the observation tower at the Duralde Prairie. I personally can't wait to see the progress at Duralde. Thanks to everyone who helped out, we all really appreciate you.

Our meeting is coming up the second weekend of May, the 13th. The program will be slightly different for this meeting in that we will not have a guest speaker this time. Instead we have decided to hold the meeting at the L'Acadie Inn and discuss/brainstorm on and about future and current projects of the CPHPS over lunch. So I hope everyone will attend so we can get everyone's ideas and etc. There is a schedule of events on the next page so make sure and take a look at it and mark your calendars now! I hope to see everyone at the May meeting!

See you all then!
Sara Thames

From the Newsletter Editor: Lots of excuses but will get back on track and have newsletter out on a regular basis this year

UPCOMING EVENTS 2006

May 13 Cajun Prairie contact Charles Allen native@camtel.net

May 20 plus Duralde Tower construction. Contact Ken Wilson lakband@aol.com

May 24-28 Lone Star Conference, Nacogdoches contact Peter Loos, cyrilla@inu.net, <http://www.lnps.org/lstar06.pdf>

June 23-25 CCCCC Columbia, La area. contact Charles Allen native@camtel.net.

July 19-22 Cullowhee Native Plant Conference <http://nativeplants.wcu.edu/>

July 23-27 North American Prairie Conf. <http://www.napc2006.org/>

August 18-20 Lily/Orchid Fort Polk area, contact Charles Allen native@camtel.net.

September 16 Butterfly Festival Haynesville, La contact Loice Lacy, llacy@magnolia-net.com,

October 10-13 Eastern Native Grass symposium <http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/engs.html>

CAJUN PRAIRIE SPRING MEETING

Saturday May 13, 2006

Note: A tour of the Jean Lafitte National Park Center Prairie (Acadian Cultural Center) in downtown Eunice is suggested as a concurrent option all day. The Center opens at 8 AM on Saturday and closes at 6 pm. The Liberty Theatre Performance: A live radio broadcast of Cajun music, stories, anecdotes, etc. in 'Cajun French'. is from 6 pm to 8 pm every Saturday. Note that the Center is closed on Sunday.

800 AM: Tour of Eunice Restored Prairies; meet at the corners of Martin Luther King and East Magnolia and enjoy the best restored prairie in the United States. This site is north of U.S. 190 and east of La 13. For those of you coming from the north on La 13, turn left (east) at the first paved road (East Magnolia) to the east after you cross the railroad tracks in Eunice. Go a couple of blocks and the prairie is on your left. For those coming from the east on U.S. 190 turn right (north) at the first red/green traffic light and follow Martin Luther King Drive for a couple of blocks and the prairie is on your left. For those coming from the west on U.S. 190, follow U.S. 190 through Eunice and after crossing a railroad track, go to the next red/green traffic light and turn left onto Martin Luther King Drive (See above). For those coming from the south on La 13, when you reach the stop sign, turn right onto Maple Ave. Follow Maple for about 3-4 blocks and at the 2nd four-way stop sign, turn left onto Martin Luther King Drive. Follow this street across U.S. 190 and see above.

930 AM Duralde Restoration Prairie Tour: Directions to Duralde: Take La 13 north out of Eunice and after crossing a bridge, go about 1.5 miles and turn left onto La 374. Follow La 374 west and it will take a sharp right then a sharp left. After straightening out from the sharp left, go about 0.5 miles and turn left at the first double intersection. You will be turning left onto a gravel road that is Parish Road 6-29S. Parish Road 6-29S is about 2 miles from La 13. Follow Parish Road 6-29S and it will take a sharp right and then will start a sharp left but you will not turn at the left but drive straight into the Duralde Prairie

1130 AM till 1215 pm: Pick up lunch and caravan to L'Acadie Inn where we can eat and meet. Malilda's is on the way to L'Acadie Inn.

1215-200 PM : Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society meeting and brainstorming for the future. At L'Acadie Inn

230 PM-till: Acadia Power Partners Prairie, Frey Remnant, and Malcolm's Prairie. WE will meet at the newly installed Acadia Power Partners (Cleco) Prairie at 2:30 pm. Take La 13 south out of Eunice, and after crossing a bridge, go one mile and turn right into the power plant. The restored prairie will be inside the first fence you see. Then we will caravan to the Frey remnant. Get back on La 13 and turn right south and then turn right at the next double intersection onto La 370. La 370 will make several sharp curves and you will cross a bridge. After crossing the bridge, turn right at the next intersection onto La 368. Follow La 368 for about 0.5 mile and turn left onto Parish Road 7-37. Parish Road 7-37 will take a sharp left and then straighten out and run parallel to an old railroad bed. The Frey Prairie is located along this strip.

We will use the L'Acadie Inn as the headquarters for this meeting. To reserve a room, call Kelly or Lance Pitre at 337-457-5211 or 337-457-4719. Other motels in Eunice include: Best Western 337-457-2800; Howards Inn 337-457-2066; La Parisienne 337-457-4274 and the new one Day's Inn 337-457-3040.

For more information, visit the website at www.cajunprairie.org or email Charles Allen at native@camtel.net or call 337-531-7535 (day) or 337-328-2252 (home) or Sara Thames at asthames@hotmail.com or call 337-531-7535 (day) or 337-462-2543 (home).

PRAIRIE PRECIS

Website: Doug Miller and Allison Vaughn have taken over the Website upkeep etc. Their email is bigthe at bigthe dot com

Trails Grant: The grant is in place and the architect (Ken Novak) is beginning the process of getting the parking lot installed. He is getting an elevation survey of the parking lot area done and then will design it for drainage etc and then we will get bids from contractors.

Seeds 2005 Sale: We paid out about \$2400 for seed collecting last year (2005) including \$1100 for some Katrina evacuees. Those eleven young people were very thankful and most have returned to New Orleans after journeying to various parts of the United States. We have sold 142 lbs at \$50 per pound so we have collected or have out on invoice a total of \$7100. We still have about 100 lbs of seeds and have some leads on selling those. When we sell those 100 lbs, we will have brought in around \$12000 with expenses of \$2400 and thus a net of about \$9,600. The last seed harvesting was done by David Daigle with a tractor mounted seed harvester.

Seeds 2006: It looks like we can hire David Daigle to harvest the seeds again and we need to start thinking about a June harvest to get the Spring flowering species. And, we would need to have him back again in October. Also, see next item.

Seed Duralde Grant: A grant was submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Foundation to harvest seeds from Eunice and plant them in strips at Duralde. This would greatly enhance the species diversity at Duralde. The proposal made the first cut and we have to submit a full proposal in by April 24. The grant calls for hiring seed harvesting commercially and also some hand collecting to catch the missed species. And, also includes monies to pay the Society for the seeds and to get the seed bed prepared at Duralde.

Katrina Iris Bed: Tyrone Foreman of New Orleans stayed at the L'Acadie Inn in Eunice after Hurricane Katrina and created an Iris bed to honor the evacuees. This is a link to pictures and story of the Irises provided by Kelly Pitre <http://hot-boudin.blogspot.com/>

Conservation Servitude: David Daigle has asked the Society to consider holding a conservation servitude on a protected site. It will probably be a 40-50 year servitude, and would be on a longleaf flatwoods site--grasslands with a few scattered trees. The Society could receive some monies for monitoring the site.

Duralde Tower: The tower is about 60-70% complete. We ran out of lumber and have raised \$400 to purchase additional lumber. The weekend of May 20 has been set aside for the completion of the tower. Y'all Come.

SO YOU WANT TO JOIN US OR RE-JOIN?

Dues are \$20 per person, \$25 per family, and \$10 for students.

Make checks payable to Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society and mail to:

CPHPS/CO Patricia Lewis

RR2, BOX 194L

Newton, TX 75966

CHINESE TALLOW TREE ATTEMPTED CONTROL AKA TALLOW WHACKING

By: Charles Allen and David Daigle

Chinese tallow tree (*Sapium sebiferum* aka *Triadica sebifera*) is the worst threat to Cajun Prairie restoration efforts. The two major problems are the many viable seeds that seem to be spread everywhere by birds and water and the ability of tallows to resprout. If you cut down a tallow tree, you just seem to irritate it and it comes back with two to three or even more stems than before. The two natural controls that seem to work are fire and the establishment of the dense sod of Cajun Prairie plants. Fire will kill some of the young tallow seedlings but once the tallow reaches a larger size (I am not sure what that size is) fire does not seem to work anymore. This is also a double-edge sword as the tallow grows, it shades out an area under its canopy and thus the fire the next year will not be as effective as there will not be any grass fuel to carry a fire. Some may argue that a growing season fire would control tallow but my observation has been that these growing season fires will kill smaller tallows but there is a size beyond which even growing season fires will not control tallows.

If you can get a dense cover of Cajun Prairie, then tallow seeds have a difficult time finding a place to germinate. It seems that the seeds cannot reach the soil and thus do not germinate. This is where the delicate balance between controlling tallows without disturbing too much becomes important. If you mechanically remove tallows, you are opening up spaces for seeds of tallow and other weedy species. It seems that the best way (and the way that Malcolm and I with help from many others followed in establishing the original prairie in Eunice) is to plant or transplant the Cajun Prairie seeds in and then don't disturb again. This is where the use of chemicals comes into play. It is best to kill the tallows and just let them die in place. Soon Cajun Prairie plants will fill in the space that the dying tallow tree once occupied. If you try to plow up or push up the trees, there will be many many sprouts of tallows from the roots that are left in the ground.

From David Daigle: Effective "seed tree" tallow control can be conducted year around with the low-pressure basal spray method. This method includes an application of a mixture of 25% triclopyr (remedy) and an oil carrier (diesel or vegetable oil) that is applied under low pressure to the bottom 15-20 inches of the tree. It is critical that the entire circumference of trunk receive treatment. This method is effective in killing tallow trees up to 6 inch DBH, and requires no cutting or hacking of the tree. This method creates essentially no soil disturbance for seed regeneration or root sprout to occur, and can be applied in cooler times of the year when the task is less stressful.

Other chemicals will also work during the growing season including arsenal or garlon applied to the leaves. Also, if one could cut the stems down and immediately apply an herbicide, there are reports of good reduction of tallow trees by this method. Even, roundup applied to cut stumps has been reported to work. I was once working on a non-chemical method but have not had the time nor the energy to continue. This method was to cut the tallow trees at 24 inches and then come back within a day or so and re-cut the stump at the ground level. The tallow tree would concentrate its food and energy into sealing the first cut and thus would concentrate most of its food and energy into that 24 inch stem and then you come back and cut all of this off. Seemed like a practical application that might work for other woody plants also. I had done some of this work in Monroe and need to follow up with different heights, different times between the two cuts, and especially different times of the year. But notice, this method would not disturb the soil either.