



LandMarks

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FAMILIES LEARN ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF WETLANDS

Families enjoying a Saturday adventure together on March 11th had the chance to explore different aspects of the ecosystems around them, including ways that wetlands help them and native wildlife. Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration staff exhibited materials and games at the Estuarine Habitats and Coastal Fisheries Center as part of 2017 Family Adventure Day to benefit the non-profit Healing House in Lafayette, LA. This annual event sends families to different locations throughout Lafayette for experiences that range from face painting to coming face-to-face with a snake.



Over 250 people stopped by the Center where they had the opportunity to see a demonstration of how coastal wetlands protect interior communities and wildlife habitat from storm surge. Visitors could pick up recent issues of WaterMarks and other materials on wetlands restoration projects in coastal Louisiana. Kids also received Henri Heron's activity book and helped match Louisiana wildlife with the wetland habitat they need to survive.

Other exhibitors, including US Fish & Wildlife Service and Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries, focused on topics like bat conservation, *(continued on page 2)*

IN THIS ISSUE...

Family Adventure Day	1-2
Audubon Earth Fest	2
Green Schools Youth Summit	2-3
Featured Project	3
Leeville Arts & Heritage Festival	4

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MAY/JUNE

May 3	CPRA Coastal Connections	Lafitte, LA
May 11-13	Freshwater Bayou Marsh Restoration	Pecan Island, LA
May 11	CWPPRA Task Force Meeting	Lafayette, LA
May 16	Chenier Plain Authority Meeting	Cameron, LA
May 17	CPRA Board Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA
May 20	Oyster Shell Bagging- Barataria Bay Reef	Buras, LA
May 20	Lake Pontchartrain Spring Sweep	Lake Pontchartrain
May 26-27	Freshwater Bayou Marsh Restoration	Pecan Island, LA
June 20	Chenier Plain Authority Meeting	Abbeville, LA
June 21	CPRA Board Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA

Find out more details about these events and other events at:
www.lacoast.gov/calendar

(continued from page 1) beekeeping, endangered species in Louisiana, and fishing. Helping families understand and appreciate the diversity of natural environments in Louisiana helps ensure that those environments will be present in the future. ■

EARTH FEST AT THE AUDUBON ZOO

Folks in New Orleans had no need to wait for Earth Day to celebrate the environment- the Audubon Zoo hosted their annual Earth Fest on March 18, and the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act was on-hand to discuss the importance of wetlands and wetland conservation in Louisiana. Visitors to the zoo could answer questions at each exhibitor's booth to collect stamps and win a prize- for those who wanted to test their wetlands knowledge further, CWPPRA staff had the "Wetland Jeopardy" game ready and waiting. Staff also distributed posters from the #ProtectOurCoast series, activity books, and other CWPPRA publications.



This full-day event at the zoo included live music, information on student work, and the opportunity to talk with representatives from Louisiana Sea Grant, the National Park Service, bee-keeping groups, and other organizations with an eye to the environment. Celebrating Earth Fest in March is a great way to remember that environmental conservation, including of wetlands, is not just something for a single day- CWPPRA projects work to protect and restore wetlands throughout the year for the communities, livelihoods, and wildlife that depend on them. ■

LOUISIANA GREEN SCHOOLS YOUTH SUMMIT

It's never too early to start thinking about sustainability- that was the message embodied by participants at the Louisiana Green Schools Youth Summit on March 24 held at the Audubon Zoo. An event organized by the Louisiana Environmental Education Commission and the Louisiana USGBC Chapter, the summit brought together students in grades 5 through 12 to discuss green initiatives in their schools and learn about other aspects of sustainability. Staff from the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act were there with information about the many different types of careers, including engineering, geology, and tourism, that contribute to coastal restoration efforts. CWPPRA staff also had #ProtectOurCoast posters and issues of WaterMarks for students. With almost 90 participants and exhibitors including Louisiana DEQ, Joule Energy, and The Green Project, the Youth Summit was an opportunity to look at how groups focusing on different aspects of sustainability, including CWPPRA's wetland restoration projects, come together to create a better long-term future for Louisiana. ■



FEATURED PROJECT: LOUISIANA SALVINIA WEEVIL PROPAGATION FACILITY

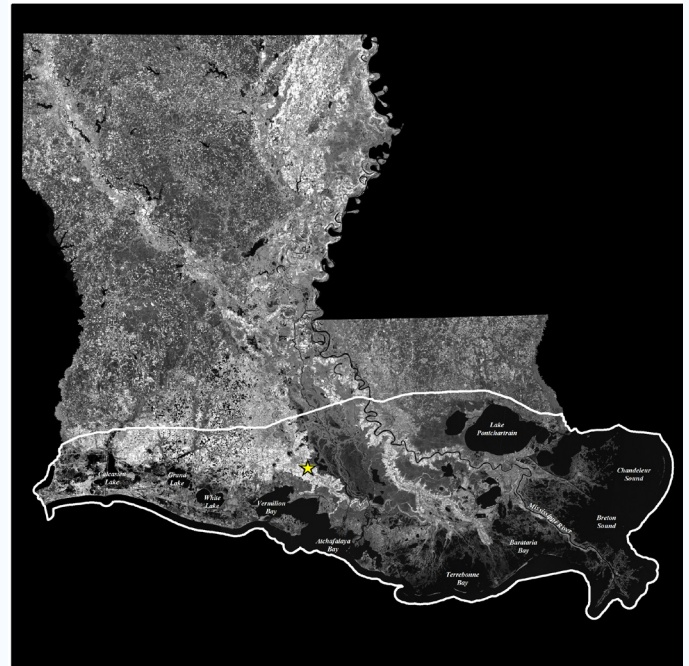
The invasive plant, giant *Salvinia*, was first observed in Chenier Plain marshes in 2009. Since then it has spread throughout most of the Louisiana Chenier Plain marshes. This plant can stack up above the water surface to as much as 6 to 12 inches. Under such conditions, oxygen exchange is greatly reduced, and decay of shaded *Salvinia* can easily cause anoxic conditions in affected areas. As a result, habitat quality of badly infested areas is severely degraded, and may affect many species typical of fresh marshes, including many species of management concern (alligator snapping turtle, mottled duck [including critical brood rearing habitat], wintering migratory waterfowl, black rail, king rail, little blue heron, whooping crane, and peregrine falcon).



Photo of the weevil that will be harvested to infest the *Salvinia*.



Photos above show the invasive plant, giant *Salvinia*, as it overtakes marsh areas throughout the Chenier Plain.



Project map for LA-284. This is a coastwide project.

LSU Ag. Center has a pond in Jeanerette which is capable of producing weevil-infested *Salvinia*, but LSU does not have funding to operate a weevil production facility there. Costs associated with this project consist primarily of supplies and one part-time position to operate the pond, coordinate public weevil harvests, keep records of release locations, monitor *Salvinia* problem areas, assist landowners in conducting weevil releases, relay infested *Salvinia* to new locations, and conduct public outreach to promote the program.

This project is on Priority Project List (PPL) 26. It was approved for Phase I, Phase II, and Operation in January 2017 and is funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

LEEVILLE ARTS & HERITAGE FESTIVAL

On April 1st residents of Lafourche Parish and places farther afield had a sunny and windy day to celebrate the 4th Annual Leeville Art & Heritage Festival in Golden Meadow, LA. Organized by Launch Leeville, this festival works to highlight changes in the landscape and community around Leeville as processes like subsidence, erosion, and sea level rise convert land to water. Staff from the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act, and other exhibitors such as the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, were present to talk about the causes of land loss and options for protecting and restoring what remains. In addition to live music, craft vendors, and a shrimp boulette competition, festival-goers could learn about coastal restoration projects, see Houma basket weaving demonstrations, and participate in a fishing rodeo.



Leeville sits along Bayou Lafourche and Louisiana Rt. 1, two geographic features that have witnessed a number of CWPPRA projects, from the West Belle Pass Headland Restoration (TE-23) project, which created new marsh and stabilized shorelines to the south of Port Fourchon, to the GIWW to Clovelly Hydrologic Restoration (BA-02) project, which increased freshwater availability to prevent higher salinity levels which could damage local vegetation. Another CWPPRA project, East Leeville Marsh Creation and Nourishment (BA-194), is currently in engineering & design and would provide increased southeastern protection for Leeville from weather and tides. Preserving the livelihoods and heritage of small communities like Leeville requires both protecting their physical setting and giving them the time and space to develop strategies for a changing future. ■



COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT

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