

## BUILDING LOUISIANA'S FUTURE

# Coastal Roots Teaches Wetland Science from the Ground Up

**Braving the coldest weather of the year, eighth-graders from Pierre Part Elementary planted nearly 300 cypress seedlings at a state park.**

Students from Lafayette Middle School spent a damp winter day on Grand Isle gathering black mangrove seeds to grow in their school nursery. To prevent

erosion on the Morganza-to-the-Gulf hurricane protection levee, Montegut Middle School students planted 500 smooth cordgrass plants in Terrebonne Parish.

These students — and hundreds more from 18 south Louisiana elementary, middle and high schools — participate in Coastal Roots, a program designed to cultivate awareness of conditions in the state's wetlands.

The LSU Coastal Roots Program helps schools establish and maintain their own nurseries, where students grow native trees, shrubs and grasses to plant in habitat restoration projects. "In class and on planting field trips, Coastal Roots teaches kids about horticulture, ecology and wetland res-



Coastal Roots

toration," says Pam Blanchard, Coastal Roots' program coordinator. "Because they're directly involved in restoring the coast, they develop a sense of responsibility for the wetlands."

Coastal Roots is supported by the Louisiana State University Department of Educational Theory, Policy and Practice; the LSU School of Plant, Environmental, and Soil Sciences; the Louisiana Sea Grant College Program and the LSU Ag Center. For more information about Coastal Roots, visit <http://coastalroots.lsu.edu/>



Coastal Roots

**Left:** At Fairview Riverside State Park, students from Baton Rouge's St. Joseph Academy plant loblolly pine and baldcypress seedlings with guidance from Coastal Roots program coordinator Pam Blanchard.

**Right:** At Luling Elementary School's nursery, students start baldcypress seeds in yellow "conetainers."

# WATER MARKS

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