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.

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.
Coastal Roots

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 restoration,” 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.”

At Luling Elementary School’s nursery, students start baldcypress seeds in yellow “conetainers.”
Coastal Roots

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http://www.lacoast.gov/watermarks/2007-08/5coastal_roots/
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