2007 Fall Restoration Trips: A success!

by Dr. Pam Blanchard, CR Director, LSU Dept. of Educational Theory, Policy & Practice; Dr. Ed Bush, CR Co-Director, LSU School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences; Mr. David Bourgeois, CR Co-Director, Associate Fisheries Agent, LA Sea Grant /LSU AgCenter

LSU Coastal Roots schools have had a successful fall planting season. Eleven schools participated in planting 2,809 school-grown trees. Forty-one teachers and school staff, accompanied by 39 parents and other adult volunteers, escorted 499 students on their restoration trips.

Seedlings Planted - Fall 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tree Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cypress</td>
<td>2521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waxmyrtle</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live oak</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water oak</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red mulberry</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longleaf pine</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swamp red maple</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2809</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Participation

- Elementary students: 17
- Middle School students: 438
- High School students: 14
- **Total Students**: 499

- Teachers: 41
- Other: 39
- **Total Adults**: 80

A bald cypress seedling heavy with dew. This seedling was planted last year by Pierre Part students at the Patterson State Museum. Photo by Pam Blanchard.
Grand Isle a destination for CR schools
by David Bourgeois, LSU AgCenter Associate Area Agent - Fisheries
LA Sea Grant Marine Extension Program

Plantin’ and pinkin’-Friday November 16, 2007
Mr. Eric Zak and 30 students from South Lafourche High School along with 10 volunteers from Common Cause (New Orleans) planted over 200 live oak seedlings at Grand Isle State Park (Thanks Nick!). In addition, students collected over 5000 black mangrove seeds. These seeds will be used for several research and science fair projects. On the pre-survey visit to Grand Isle, Port Commission Director, Wayne Keller and I picked 5000 mangrove seeds and 100 live oak acorns for several additional research projects.

Pickin’-Friday November 30, 2007
Ms. Stacy Hess and 91 students, teachers and chaperones from Lafayette Middle School collected over 7500 black mangrove seeds. 1000 seeds were sent to each of three participating schools, 600 were soaked and planted and the rest are being stored for future use at the Lafourche LSU AgCenter office. As part of their annual seed collection trip, we conducted a four-part wetlands education program. Wayne Keller, Grand Isle Port Commission Director, conducted a walking tour of the flora from the beach to the bay. Jean Landry, Grand Isle Nature Conservancy, along with Mrs. Hebert and four of her water quality students from Grand Isle High School talked to the students about their sampling project. Jacob Bourgeois, America’s Wetland Conservation Corps, and Megan Orgeron, an Americorps volunteer, covered mangrove biology and directed the seed collection. I covered the basics of a serial dilution so students would know how to mix the correct salinity in order to harden off their seedlings prior to planting them in the spring. I am sorry to report that Mr. "D", Jeff Debitaz, Dean of Students at Lafayette Middle will be leaving his post in the spring. Mr. “D” has been a fixture at almost all of the previous pickin’ & plantin’ trips. I want to wish him well in his new school and maybe, just maybe…

Get your plants off to a strong start!
Dr. Ed Bush
LSU School of Plant, Environmental, and Soil Sciences

Spring is here and it is time to start cleaning your containers and yards for new plantings. Send your request for seeds today so you can get the species you want. Keep your seed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator away from moisture. Take inventory of your supplies. Ann Gray will be talking about can yard maintenance (see page 4), but be sure to clean up before planting your new seed. Make sure to clean and sterilize your used containers before re-using. Make sure the sprinklers and clocks are working. The goal of our program is for each student to learn about raising plants and have a positive experience. So make sure to monitor your seeds at least two times a week. As it gets warmer you may need to increase your irrigation. If we have a late freeze in April protect your seedlings. New seed plantings should include at least two or three seeds per cell. Watch for weeds and label a few pots with the seeding date. Having your students measure germination and growth is a great way for each student to stay in touch with the project and integrate a little math into the project. Measuring the average weight of an individual seed might also be fun. Grass nurseries need to use fresh living tissue for starter plants. If you are unsure, get new material. After four to six weeks use a low rate of fertilizer to encourage growth. Place 12 to 16 Osmocote beads, or prills, in each yellow cell. This supplies a slow release fertilizer. Have fun and keep your eyes on the plants. We are striving to have a 100% success rate this year. If you have problems, contact someone immediately.
CR Update  New schools and restoration partners, summer workshop, and more...!
by Pam Blanchard, LSU Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice

NEW SCHOOLS! The LSU Coastal Roots Program is happy to welcome several new schools into the program so far this year. They include: Christ Episcopal (Susan Koppenol, Covington), Metairie Academy for Advanced Students (Mona Herbert, Metairie), Lusher Charter School - Willow Campus (Lisa Sirgo, New Orleans), and Isidore Newman School (Jennifer Williams, Carrie Deyo, and Michael Kern, New Orleans). In addition to these schools, we have a number of other schools that will be installing canyards in the near future.

RESTORATION SITE PARTNERS. We’ve been working diligently to establish longterm planting site partners for CR schools. I am delighted say that the Louisiana Office of State Parks, the LA Black Bear Conservation Committee, Maple Bayou Hunt Club, Avery Island, Inc. and Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve (Barataria Preserve) have all welcomed the opportunity to work with our schools to restore damaged habitats in their areas.

2008 SUMMER CR INSTITUTE. Mark you calendars! We’ve set June 5, 6, and 7 as the dates for our 2008 Summer Coastal Roots Institute. June 5 and 6 will be for teachers only, and June 7 will be set aside for student Coast Roots Ambassadors from each school to learn about the habitat loss and wetland issues. Set the dates aside and look for additional details to come out soon.

NING SITE. Teachers attending the Winter Institute mentioned that they wanted a place to chat about CR issues. Craig Howat (Luling Elementary) voluntarily set up a NING space for us to use.... To join, go to http://lsucoastalroots.ning.com/?xgi=1mOYato. There is a discussion forum, you can post and view images and videos (check out the video that Craig’s elementary students helped produced about their planting trip and how to plant trees). Thank you, Craig!

2008 CR WINTER WORKSHOP. Speaking of Thank you’s..... we want to thank Linda Messina and Vicki LaPlace of St. Joseph’s Academy for hosting out 2008 Winter Workshop. Twenty teachers from 17 Coastal Roots schools came to the workshop. Some preliminary planning for the upcoming summer institute was done and everyone share how they integrated the CR Program into their schools. Teachers toted home their seeds and soil.

UPCOMING SPRING RESTORATION TRIPS. Five or six schools will be making restoration planting trips this spring. Schools include Abbeville High, Erath High, JH Williams Middle, Jackson High, Lafayette Middle, and Montegut Middle. We’ll post images from these plantings on the CR website as these trips take place across the spring.

CR FUNDING. We are continuing to search for funding to support our program. If you know of a funding source or interested supporter, please let Pam Blanchard know.

THANKING CR HELPING HANDS. We are grateful to the New Orleans Americorps personnel, and to Audubon Institute’s Colleen Morgan for providing assistance in the installation of Lusher Charter’s canyard last January. In addition, we would like to thank Ben at Isidore Newman for his expert work in plumbing the irrigation system for IN’s new can yard. Thanks!

LA DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES SUPPORTS CR. Last, but not least, we are happy to say that after a meeting that Ed and Pam had with LDNR Secretary Scott Angelle last December, he is interested in supporting our efforts with the LSU Coastal Roots Program. Look for additional details in the next newsletter.
Keys to a SUCCESSFUL Can Yard!

by Ann Gray, SELU Biology

I have been to your school nurseries this year and I would like to share some tips for maintenance and plant growth I have gathered from evaluating your canyards. There has been a wide range of germination success among participants. I find that schools that are vigilant about re-seeding empty cells have the best crop of seedlings. Try this method for good germination. Two weeks after the initial planting, consolidate all yellow cells that do not have a small plant and plant another 2 or 3 seeds. It is not necessary to empty the cell of its media, wash it, or otherwise disrupt the system already there UNLESS there is no germination after multiple seed plantings. Talk to one of the CR staff if this happens. Continue to do this every two weeks until all cells have a plant.

I find that the best place for the trays is in the center of the canyard. These trees seem to take off faster and then “harden up” faster to be healthy, fast-growing plants. The most successful schools fertilize their trees by adding liquid feeding weekly in the summer growing months. These plants get as high as 2 feet in one summer! This is accomplished by waiting until the seedlings are approximately 2 inches tall. Then, buy one of the liquid feed canisters in your local store, hook it up to a hose and water the plants. This brings me to an essential ingredient in raising plants: regular, adequate water. There can be no plants without water. You may be thinking DUH, but I have witnessed some unintentional droughts brought on by simple human error or a glitch in the irrigation system. The first question to answer: is the water on? This could be cut off at the main valve (your maintenance man), the solenoid (is it in the “on” position), the faucet (if you have one), or a shut-off valve we have installed in many of your canyards. Second, the symptom of an improperly programmed timer is that the water never shuts off, therefore you have to manually turn it on and off. Most of the time there is a programming mix-up in how LONG the water runs and WHEN it runs. So think about it; when those numbers are mixed up the timer runs for 8 hours and thirty minutes when you think you are watering at 8:30 am. Another symptom is no watering. After making sure the water is ON, this usually means a wire is loose on the solenoid. Call Coastal Roots for this.

If you have all these lush, healthy trees; are you ready to plant them? Now that you all have had the fun of participating in the plantings, you might want to evaluate how many plants you need or perhaps talk to another school about being a partner in planting and you being the grower. Also, have you talked to your planting site supervisor about what to plant and how many? This is your project….what are some ways of being creative? If you have any questions about the germination process of a particular requested plant, please ask.

LSU Coastal Roots Restoration Partners

We thank our restoration partners for their willingness to work with and educate our LSU Coastal Roots students about the restoration needs of their site as well as other important coastal issues.

LSU Coastal Roots Seedling Nursery

LSU Coastal Roots: Helping the LA coast one seedling at a time!
http://coastalroots.lsu.edu/