



# The Pine Cone Post

Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists



1st Quarter, 2024

## Table of Contents

President's Corner.....pg 1

Eagle Count.....pg 2

What's in a Name.....pg 3

Planting Longleaf.....pg 4

Planting Longleaf.....pg 5

Stream Team.....pg 5

Looking Back.....pg 6

AT Highlights.....pg 7

Initial Training.....pg 8

Field Trip.....pg 9

VMS Report.....pg 10

From the Editor.....pg 10

Upcoming Events.....pg 11

Chapter Info.....pg 12



## President's Corner

*By Daniel White*

We are nearing the completion of our training class. There have been excellent speakers, props, field trips, fellowship, and certainly food. I hope that everyone has learned something new and are ready to help us in the mission of the Texas Master Naturalists: "To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas." We have many great opportunities to be involved and earn service hours. Many of you will have no trouble completing your training and also certifying for this year. I look forward to working with all our members, new and old, to help the chapter accomplish our plans and goals.



*Initial Training Field Trip: Fish Hatchery*



*Initial Training Field Trip: Aldridge Sawmill*



# Mid-Winter Eagle Count

By D'Ann White

January 6th marked the date of the annual Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Count. This year was the first year Daniel and I were able to participate in the annual survey at Toledo Bend. There were seven of us that participated this year, and it was a LOT of fun! We counted over 20 eagles that day, plus heard one and saw an eagle's nest, and also saw many other different species of birds. I would encourage everyone to plan to participate in next year's survey.



*Laura Clark*



*Fred Lyons, Keith Stephens & Lori Horne*



*Daniel White*



*Elke Lyons & Keith Stephens*



# What's in a Name?

By Anne Davis



Have you wondered about our name Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists? We're named after a famous tree that needs our help. Longleaf pine forests are among the most diverse and beautiful in the world and provide a home for numerous plants and animals found nowhere else. According to the The Longleaf Alliance (TLA), "nearly 900 plant species are found in longleaf forests and 26 federally listed threatened or endangered species are part of the longleaf ecosystem."

The Longleaf pine (*Pinus Palustris*) holds the endangered conservation status (IUCN .31). It is the official state tree of Alabama and one of eight pine trees under the Pine designation of the state tree of North Carolina.

Longleaf pine ecosystems historically dominated the Southeast, growing on 90 million acres from Eastern Texas to

Southern Virginia. Today, the longleaf ecosystem is one of the nation's rarest, with between 3 and 4 million acres remaining. The Longleaf is tolerant to fire and thrives where wildfires remove undergrowth and mid-story canopy leaving a forest savannah that provides the germination of seeds. New seedlings resemble a fountain of needles, and this stage may take several years to grow ankle high. However, feral pigs feast on this young growth and are partly responsible for the decline.



*Longleaf  
Seedling*



*Young Longleaf Pine Tree*

The red-cockaded woodpecker is dependent upon the mature pine forest and is now endangered as a result of the decline. Other animals that favor this type of forest savannah include the brown-headed nuthatch, bobwhite quail, 26 frog species, and 56 reptile species (Wikipedia, March, 2024).

Landowners have many reasons to restore this iconic species while realizing its economic and ecological benefits. In addition to providing wildlife habitat for imperiled species, Longleaf pine forests sequester carbon, protect water quality, and produce high-quality wood products. (TLA).

Also, the longleaf pine is so unique. In addition to the seedling's fountain of needles, the young tree looks like a pom-pom on a stick with many of its pine needles growing out from the bark of the trunk. It's huge 6-8" pinecones are unique to the Piney Woods region. It's savannah-like forest floor is filled with wildflowers.

# Planting Longleaf Pines

*By Anne Davis*

## **How can you help?**

Start your own forest – it's easy. According to The Longleaf Alliance, seedlings can be ordered in March and planted from December through February. Any number of acres can be planted but to create a small ecosystem for migrating birds, consider a minimum of 10 acres. For timber production, a tract of 200 or more acres is more practical. However, even one tree will give you years of pinecones and seedlings. Remember these important planting tips:

- For ecosystem, first remove all the existing trees and understory. Longleaf do not like competition, and they want sunlight.
- Plant far enough apart that you can burn every few years – prescribed burn every 2-4 years is necessary for the growth of the tree. (Grants are available to help with burning.)
- Plant from December to February to ensure the seedlings get enough moisture. After March, the competing undergrowth will consume the water.
- Plant 450 seedlings per acre – it's easier to thin than replant. Expect losses from the prescribed fires and dry weather.
- Expect 3-4 years for roots to develop before the growth will kick in.
- Consider planting native grasses and wildflowers for a beautiful savannah floor.
- Plant per the TLA videos available at [Longleafalliance.org](http://Longleafalliance.org).

Seedlings that should match our soil in east Texas are available for order beginning in March at:

Evans Nursery

337-825-6329

23194 Hwy 111 Deridder, LA 70634

Cost: Box of 330 @ \$0.22 each or \$72.60 (as of March 2024).

See other locations at [ifcoseedlings.com](http://ifcoseedlings.com)

## **No Acreage?**

Plant seeds in pots – a bit more challenging but free. The large Longleaf pinecone drops its seeds in October and November. If you know of a location where you can collect the seeds as they land, or collect the pinecones before they fully open; you will get enough to start your nursery. Points to keep in mind:

- You'll be competing with the earth that swallows and germinates the seeds in just 10-15 days. You'll also be competing with the small forest animals that love the seeds.
- Plant the seeds in a 6" deep container (seedling containers).
- Use the native soil or potting soil mixed with sand. No pre-germination is necessary but ensure they get water.
- Your seedlings will be ready to give away in about one year.

(When locating seeds, it's helpful to know that each seed will have a "wing" attached. Loblolly seeds are smaller, and the wing structure will fall off when rolled in your fingers. Longleaf seeds are bigger, and the wing structure will not fall off.)

Support the Longleaf Alliance. The Alliance has planted 1.5 million trees and holds educational seminars in nine states, in addition to publications, videos, and more. They also provide technical support to landowners. Donate at <https://longleafalliance.org/donate/>.

*Special thanks to Mr. Doug Boutte, Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalist and Longleaf Farmer; and Mr. Jacob Barrett, Tech Specialist, The Longleaf Alliance.*

# Planting Longleaf Pines

By Anne Davis

In early November, TLA will create a Facebook post for seedling needs and surplus inventory. Anyone looking for seedlings or anyone with extra seedlings can comment on the post to try to find a match.

A few notes on how this will work:

- The post will be “pinned” to the top of the TLA Facebook page for easy access throughout the planting season.
- The Facebook post will be public so anyone can view the content, but only Facebook users will be able to post a comment. If you’d like TLA to post a comment on your behalf, submit your information at [longleafalliance.org/contact](https://longleafalliance.org/contact).
- When commenting, always include your location and preferred method of contact.
- Don’t forget important seedling details like quantity, lift date, and seed source.
- Once a successful match is made, please update your comment! The goal is to keep the post/thread as up to date as possible.
- This thread will be used primarily for longleaf pine seedlings, but we also hope to connect folks to groundcover plugs as well!

For more detailed information about site preparation, planting and more go to this brochure: <https://longleafalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Keys-to-Establishing-Longleaf-2007.pdf>

## Stream Team Training

Rachel Easley, Ashley Kelahlyah, and Jolene Amburn, a few of our new members, attended the Texas Stream Team Training, hosted by the Angelina Neches River Authority.

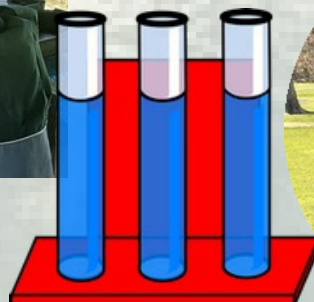


Rachel Easley, Ashley Kelahlyah, and Jolene Amburn

*“We had a great time, and Jolene specifically noticed there are a lot of areas near here that don't have anyone testing.”*

*So, it was overall pretty informative and interesting.”*  
--Ashley

Jolene Amburn



# Looking Back... 1st Quarter, 2024



Photos from LRMN  
Facebook page



Jan. 20-- Canyon Rim  
Bioblitz



Feb 19-- Native  
Grass Planting in  
Big Thicket



Mar 23 & 24-- Champions of  
Nature Booth at SETX State  
Fair



Feb 17--  
Bioblitz at  
Beech Creek  
Unit of the  
Big Thicket



Mar 9-- Bioblitz at Sabine  
National Forest



# Advanced Training Highlights

By D'Ann White



**January 9, 2024**

Gabrielle Hargrove, a biologist for Texas Parks & Wildlife, presented a program entitled "Adventures in Birding." She showed slides of numerous birds found in Texas and told a bit about each one. She was also presented a "Friends of TMN" pin.

February marked the beginning of our 2024 Initial Training class, so we did not have Advanced Training that month. Instead, Sharon Lamoreaux presented an Intro to TMN program for the new students. Likewise, in March, the training was another Initial Training class presented by Keith Stephens & Lori Horne.

**April 9, 2024**

Chris Clear, from the Piney Wood Lakes Master Naturalists Chapter, gave a brief program on the importance of having a Monofilament Recycling Program. He explained how to begin and maintain the program. Shown here is an example of a collection site.



# Initial Training Classes

We have 15 enrolled in our training class this year and are well on their way to graduating. We have had an amazing line up of presenters for the initial training classes, several of which are members of our chapter.

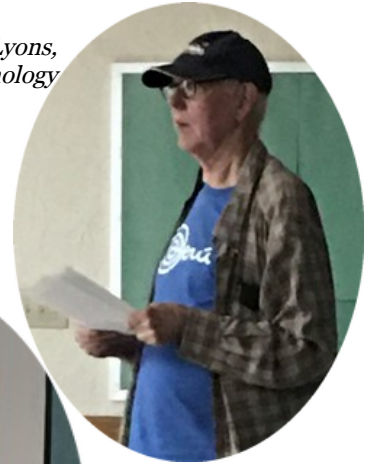
*Member Keith Stephens,  
Historical Naturalists*



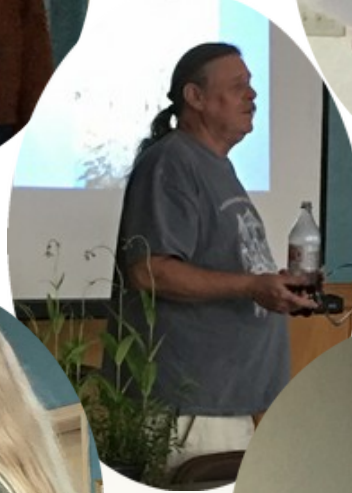
*Member Kimberly  
Wagner, Texas  
Water Resources*



*Member Fred Lyons,  
Ornithology*



*Peter Loos,  
Plants*



*Member Laura Clark,  
Citizen Scientist &  
Nature of Naming*



*Member Robert  
Webb, Entomology*



*Michaela  
Vincent,  
Aquatic Systems*



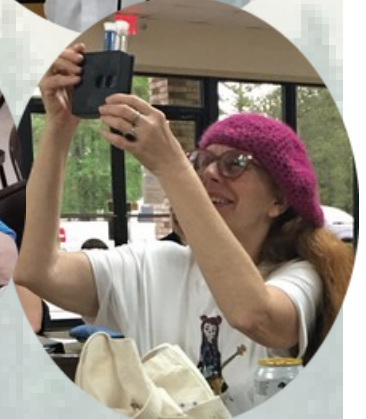
*Chris Clear,  
Geology*



*Reese Sparrow,  
Ichthyology*



*Anne Davis with Dexter the  
Snake during Herpetology  
class, taught by Richard Peters*



*Sara Ruth Harrison looking at  
water tester during Aquatic  
Systems class*



*Courtney  
McInnerey &  
Donna Work,  
Mammology*



# Field Trip: Aldridge Sawmill

*By D'Ann White*

One of the scheduled initial training field trips was to Aldridge Sawmill on March 16th. Located in the Angelina National Forest, it has a very interesting history. It was built in 1905, originally from wood, but it burned down in 1911. It was then built from hand-poured concrete; the remains of which are still there today. I found it sad, though, that much of this great historical landmark has been defaced with graffiti. However, we all had a great time exploring the ruins, hiking to the river, and taking photos of the butterflies and vegetation found in the forest.

*Lori Horne, Keith Stephens, Tricia Galos,  
Richard Peters, & Skip Davis*



*Anne Davis, Daniel White,  
Skip Davis, & Laura Clark*



*Skip Davis &  
Lori Horne*



*Anne Davis, Daniel White & Richard Peters at the river*



*Lori Horne*



*Jolene Amburn & Keylen Petrich*

# Quarterly VMS Report

By D'Ann White

In the last quarter, members reported to the the following opportunities, totaling 876.25 volunteer hours:

- CB: Chapter Meeting & Admin Work.....373.25 hours
- FR: Birding at MDJSP.....8.0 hours
- FR: Birding Classic/Big Sit.....1.0 hour
- FR: Citizen Scientist.....162.0 hours
- FR: CoCoRaHS.....10.0 hours
- FR: Eagle Survey.....59.5 hours
- FR: Great Backyard Bird Count.....16.25 hours
- FR: Nestwatch.....2.25 hours
- FR: Feeder Watch.....20.75 hours
- FR: Texas Nature Trackers.....2.0 hours
- FR: Texas Stream Team.....7.0 hours
- PO: MDJSP.....1.5 hours
- PO: Public Outreach Service.....1.0 hour
- RM: Forest Service.....7.0 hours
- RM: Keep Texas Beautiful.....2.0 hours
- RM: MDJSP Volunteer.....9.0 hours
- TG: Friends of MDJSP.....32.25 hours
- TR: Headstart.....2.0 hours
- TR: Big Thicket Volunteer.....8.0 hours
- TR: Programs/Presentations.....99.25 hours

## From the Editor

Georgia Purdy had earned her 500 hour pin last year, but she has finally received it. Congratulations, Georgia!!



# Upcoming Events

## May

- May 4--- Field Trip---Boykin Springs
- May 7--- Training Class
- May 11---Birding at MDJSP
- May 14---TMN Tuesday  
Chapter Meeting
- May 15--- Bioblitz
- May 17---Volunteer Training at MDJSP
- May 18--- Neches River Rendevous

## June

- Jun 8---Birding at MDJSP
- Jun 11---TMN Tuesday  
Chapter Meeting
- Jun 15---Bioblitz

## July

- Jul 9---TMN Tuesday  
Chapter Meeting
- Jul 13---Birding at MDJSP
- Jul 20---Bioblitz



## HOW TO



## TMN License Plate

[Click Here](#)

ORDER



- Can be ordered on [myplates.com](http://myplates.com)
- FAQ on our website

- **\$30** for non-personalized OR **\$70** for personalized
- \$22 of each plate sold goes back to TMN Program
- <https://txmn.tamu.edu/tmn-license-plate/>

Thanks for your Support!

- Quarterly Reports from DMV
- 647 total sold as of Q1 2024
- Need to get to 800

# Chapter Information

## WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists website.....<https://txmn.org/llr/>  
 Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalist Facebook.....<https://www.facebook.com/groups/196451348395608>  
 Martin Dies Jr. State Park events.....[https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/martin-dies-jr/park\\_events](https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/martin-dies-jr/park_events)  
 Watson Preserve Facebook.....<https://www.facebook.com/groups/564425933696669/>  
 Big Thicket National Preserve.....<https://www.nps.gov/bith/index.htm>  
 Keep Texas Beautiful.....<https://ktb.org>

## Chapter Officers

### **President**

Daniel White

### **Vice-President**

Richard Peters

### **Secretary**

Georgia Purdy

### **Treasurer**

Fred Lyons

### **Past President**

Lori Horne

## Coordinators

### **Birding Trips**

Fred Lyons

### **Bioblitzes**

Laura Clark

### **Field Trips**

Keith Stephens

### **VMS / Newsletter**

D'Ann White

Daniel White

Daniel White

Daniel White

## Article Submissions Due: June 30, 2024

Email me any pictures or articles you would like to see in our next quarterly newsletter! My email address is [danielwhitefamily@gmail.com](mailto:danielwhitefamily@gmail.com). You can also upload to the Google Drive, and just email me to let me know that you have done so.



*Our Chapter has a Google Drive!  
 Do you have any pictures, videos, or files you would like to share with the rest of the chapter? You can scan the QR code to access the drive & upload.*



### **Meetings:**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tues of each month, 6 pm  
 At St. Michaels Catholic Church  
 2898 US Hwy 190 W, Jasper, TX 75951

### **Board Meetings**

1<sup>st</sup> Thurs of each month, 10 am  
 At the Jasper County Agrilife office  
 271 East Lamar, Suite 101 Jasper, TX 75951

### **Partners**

**Martin Dies, Jr State Park**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers---Sam Rayburn**

### **Advisors**

Texas Agrilife: Caitlin Gallegos  
 TPWD: Chuck Hubbard