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## *Kisatchie National Forest Prairie Wildflower Walk*

The Kisatchie National Forest will host its annual Celebrating Wildflowers Event on Saturday, May 12, 2012, with a prairie tour on the Winn Ranger District.

We will be visiting either the Coldwater Road or Milam Branch prairies. Some native prairie plants we can expect to see in mid-May are Blue Sage, Blue-Eyed Grass, Butterfly Weed, Fern Acacia, Neptunia, Pale Purple Coneflower, Partridge Pea, Poppy Mallow, Prairie Parsley, Prairie Pleatleaf, Puccoon, Purple Prairie Clover, Rose Gentian, Rose Vervain, Star Grass, White Prairie Clover, Wild Indigo, and Winecup.

Please bring lunches and water. Other sites may be visited if

time allows.

Please contact David Moore at 318-305-0585 or Shannan Sharp at 318-765-3554 for more information.

### EVENT SUMMARY

- **Depart Winn Ranger District Work Center on Saturday, May 12, 2012. at 9:30 AM**
- **Work Center entrance is located on the south side of U.S. Hwy. 84, 8.2 miles west of US Hwy 167 in Winnfield, Louisiana, or about 0.3 miles west of the Winn Ranger District office.**
- **Work Center GPS coordinates are 92°47' 3.1543"W - 31°53' 51.2668"N.**



*Wildflowers in the Kisatchie National Forest prairie*



*Prairie Pleatleaf*

## *2012 Winter Meeting Update*

Approximately 70 persons attended the 2012 LNPS winter meeting. A special thanks to David Moore, Johnny Armstrong, and Kelby Ouchley for their presentations.

The plant auction was the biggest success ever, raising \$988

to support LNPS grants awarded to selected students and organizations. LNPS Grant Applications are due July 31, 2012. Applications are available on the website: [www.lnps.org](http://www.lnps.org).

Approximately 20-30 persons

attended the Sunday morning field trip to the Croker Study site in Kisatchie National Forest. The study site was begun in the 1960s to observe the results of a prescribed burning and longleaf pine shelterwood regeneration harvest techniques. Regeneration was

## 2012 Winter Meeting Update cont.



successful as the abundant young longleaf pine saplings can attest to.

All in all the 2012 LNPS Winter Meeting was a success.

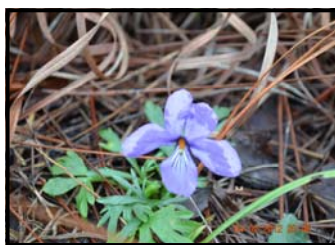
If you missed this year, we hope to see you in 2013.



Dr. Charles Allen teaching at the Croker Study site. Notice longleaf pine in the background.



Headed back.



Birdsfoot violet.



Kelby Ouchley presents "Flora and Fauna of the Civil War"



A rare panic grass—*Dichanthelium strigosum* var. *leucoblepharis*



The plant auction raised \$988.00.

Since these plants are easily overlooked even while on one's hands and knees, they were dubbed "belly plants."

### Collecting Vascular Plants In The Habitat Near The Ground Or, Locating And Collecting "Belly Plants."

Editor's note: The following article was published by Dr. R. Dale Thomas in the journal *Castanea* in 1971. We thought there is no use in repeating history, especially when so many valuable botany lessons have already been taught or written about.

We will be printing similar articles, i.e. "oldies but goodies", in future newsletters, and we hope you enjoy them.

In March, 1970, the author was searching for seedlings of *Oenothera spachiana* in an area of Union Parish, Louisiana where he had collected the plant the previous year. While on my belly looking for these seedlings of *Oenothera spachiana* for my flower garden, I discovered several tiny specimens of *Ophioglossum crotalophoroides*. Although the specimens were abundant, I could not see them while I was standing or kneeling. A study of the distribution of this small, easily-overlooked fern in Louisiana led to a most

interesting spring of collecting plants that are too small to be seen from a standing position. Since these plants are easily overlooked even while on one's hands and knees, they were dubbed "belly plants."

I collected *Ophioglossum crotalophoroides* from twenty-six Louisiana Parishes. It had previously been considered rare but it is almost as, if not as, common as *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Woodwardia areolata*, and *Polystichum acrostichoides* in Louisiana. I found it in any up-kept



*Ophioglossum crotalophoroides*





## Belly Plants cont.



*Lepuropetalon spatbulatum*



*Tillaea aquatica*



*Centunculus minimus*

cemetery in sandy soil. It is notably absent from the gumbo soils of the Mississippi delta of East Carroll, Madison, Tensas, and Concordia Parishes.

I also found *Lepuropetalon spatbulatum* to be common in north Louisiana in cemeteries and pastures and along power lines and gas lines. It grows in sandy soil and is also absent from the gumbo soils. It is abundant in Ouachita, Morehouse, Union, LaSalle, Grant, Caldwell, Jackson, Natchitoches, Vernon, and Beauregard parishes at sites collected by the author. Nowhere was it two inches tall. In the same habitats where I collected the two above plants, I also found tiny specimens of *Tillaea aquatica*, *Centunculus minimus*, and *Plantago heterophylla*.

Enough specimens of the *Centunculus* and *Plantago* increase in size with age till they are observable and are collected. However, the *Tillaea* is relatively common and in north Louisiana it usually remains less than two inches tall. It is most common in the tracks of animals or vehicles in pastures, old fields, etc. While collecting during March, April, and May,

1970, in thirty different parishes in Louisiana, I became convinced that these tiny ("belly") plants are much more common than extant herbarium specimens indicate. It is recommended that more collectors get down to where the plants are in their collecting.

Voucher specimens are on deposit in the herbarium of Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe and in various other herbaria. Limited numbers are available for exchange.

-R. DALE THOMAS,

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
OF BIOLOGY, CURATOR  
OF THE HERBARIUM,  
NORTHEAST LOUISIANA  
UNIVERSITY, MONROE,  
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Editor's Note:

When Dr. R. Dale Thomas arrived at ULM in 1967 (then called Northeast Louisiana

State College), the herbarium was represented by 250 specimens in three cabinets. Today, due to Dr. Thomas' lifetime commitment to field botany and exchange programs with herbaria around the world, the herbarium consists of approximately 336 cabinets housing nearly 472,000 plant specimens and counting.

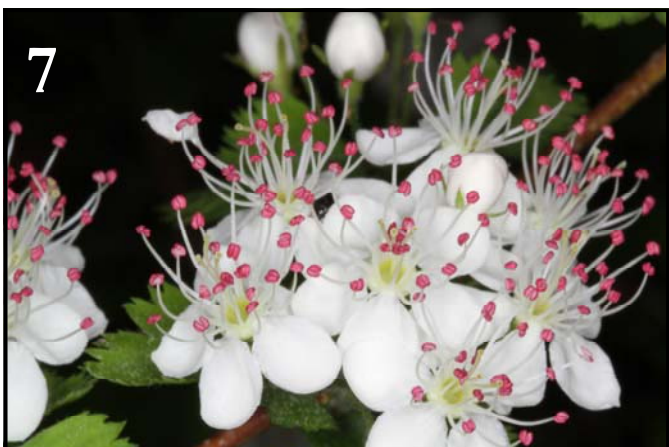
Dr. Thomas personally collected 173,300 specimens for the herbarium from 1966 until his retirement in 2003. He also collected more than 600,000 duplicate specimens that have been shipped out on exchange programs or to other botanists for further study. This makes Dr. Thomas the most prolific plant collector of all time, far ahead of the second, the famed botanist Julian Steyermark, with 138,000.

Dr. Thomas currently resides in the Appalachian Mountains of Eastern Tennessee, near his beloved Chilhowee Mountain.

*The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, "What good is it?" If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering. – Aldo Leopold, **Round River** (1953)*

Answers to flower photos: 1. Spring Beauty, 2. Bloodroot, 3. Rose Verbena, 4. Carolina Rockrose, 5. Common Chickweed, 6. Southern Crabapple, 7. Parsley Hawthorn

Can you name these spring wildflowers? (Answers on previous page)



## *Membership Form* (Checks payable to LNPS)

NOTE: Membership and donations may also be paid online at [www.lnps.org](http://www.lnps.org).

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual Dues:

|                |      |              |       |
|----------------|------|--------------|-------|
| Student/Senior | \$ 5 | Organization | \$25  |
| Individual     | \$10 | Sustaining   | \$50  |
| Family         | \$15 | Corporate    | \$100 |

### MAIL TO:

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## LNPS

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*The Louisiana Native Plant Society was founded in 1983 as a state-wide, non-profit organization. Its purposes are to preserve and study native plants and their habitats, to educate people on the value of native plants and the need to preserve and protect rare and endangered species, to promote the propagation and use of native plants in the landscape, and to educate people on the relationship between our native flora and wildlife.*

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[www.lnps.org](http://www.lnps.org)

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