

# Marsh Notes

Finding Vegetative  
Solutions for  
Conservation  
Problems



USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center

## PMC Celebrates Arbor Day 2011

The Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center became actively involved with local students and teachers by providing native tree species to nearby schools. Curt J. Riche' and Alexis Luke visited schools and gave donated native trees to members of the classes in observance of Arbor Day 2011. The students were provided essential information in order to successfully plant their trees. Presentations were administered and consisted of ample information with regards to plants including the history of Arbor Day, why plants are important to our planet, fun plant facts, plant identification and finally, careers with plants. Curt J. Riche' of the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center was invited as a spokesperson for career day at nearby schools. We were able to share much information about NRCS with hundreds of students and teachers and informed them on how NRCS "Helps People Help The Land", by combating issues inevitably constraining our precious and numerous natural resources. This effort served not only as an educational tool to adolescents about plants, but also as an astounding outreach effort to aware the public what the NRCS Plant Materials Program is about.



## 2011 Nursery Grower Distributions

Summer time is indicative to grower time at the GMPMC as the 2011 orders for licensed nursery growers are at its peak. Over the last 5 years the GMPMC's licensed nursery growers has tripled due to not only the demand of locally adapted wetland plant material for restoration purposes, but for the escalating interest of native species abroad. The 2011 season consists of 11 eligible nursery growers that are receiving thousands of the PMC's 8 plant material releases. The growers are signing an agreement on what they receive and are to propagate this vegetative material in order to exponentially increase their stocks for the uses of conservation purposes. This material will primarily be increased by local growers, but there are some that are receiving our 8 releases as far as Pennsylvania. The eight releases cannot be found any other place other than the Golden Meadow PMC and we will continue our efforts to provide our customers with necessary plant materials in order to insure supply for the demand.



### The Mission of the NRCS Plant Materials Program:

*We develop and transfer plant materials and plant technology for the conservation of natural resources. In working with a broad range of plant species, including grasses, forbs, trees, and shrubs, the program seeks to address priority needs of field offices and land managers in both public and private sectors. Emphasis is focused on using native plants as a sustainable way to solve conservation problems and protect ecosystems.*

If you would like more information call us at (985) 475-5280 or visit our web site at <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/lapmc>

## SUMMER ISSUE 2011



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### PMC VEG QUIZ

Can you identify this native species?



Answer in next publication

Answer to Spring 2011 PMC Veg Quiz:  
Ashy Sunflower (*Helianthus mollis*)



## Nation Wide Volunteers Assist PMC

With temperatures nearing 100 degrees and 3 months of droughty conditions, the PMC not only got desperately needed rainfall recently, but also several hard working groups of volunteers to provide assistance with GMPMC plant release collections and propagations. Volunteer



groups have risen at the PMC since horrific hurricanes have pounded the southern coasts of Louisiana and additionally in the aftermath of the Deep Water Horizon explosion. Multiple groups ranging from Louisiana to states across the country have directly assisted the PMC primarily by harvesting plant releases located here at the PMC and propagating greenhouse vegetative material in order to fill 2011 nursery grower orders. The Seattle Academy visited from Seattle, WA and spent two days harvesting thousands of 'Vermilion' Smooth Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*), one of the PMC's cultivar releases, stems from the one acre foundation pond located here at the PMC. Additionally, the group was able to propagate numerous trays of Timbalier Germplasm Gulf Bluestem (*Schizachyrium maritimum*) to insure sufficient stock will be in place and readily available for future studies and projects. Another volunteer group consisted of current NRCS interns from states across the southeastern

United States. The group spent two days learning how Plant Materials operations and centers operate and how PMC's fit into the puzzle for natural resource conservation. This group concentrated on the propagation techniques of Bayou Lafourche Germplasm California Bulrush (*Schoenoplectus californicus*), and was able to successfully propagate hundreds of plants. Not only did the groups benefit from the knowledge they have obtained about the physiology, harvesting and propagation techniques of our vegetative releases, but also the importance of the NRCS and the mission and objectives of the Plant Materials Program. The PMC was also visited and toured by Southern University's College of Agriculture's BAYOU students (Beginning Agricultural Youth Opportunities Unlimited). This served as an annual opportunity for the group to use plant materials as a natural resource mediator to aid in the stabilization of the beaches of southern Louisiana.



Approximately 2000 Bitter Panicum (*Panicum amarum*) and over 700 Seashore Paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*) plant species were transplanted on the beaches of Grand Isle, LA. All were delighted in their times here and look forward to seeing the PMC next year.

## Upcoming PMC Studies

### Inland Saltgrass Study

The PMC will begin an evaluation of Inland Saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) with emphasis on seed propagation rather than traditional vegetative propagations for coastal restoration in the fall of 2011. Currently, we possess 22 accessions of Inland Saltgrass collected from a majority of coastal parishes across Louisiana. Partners will assist with the efforts of collecting additional sources for purposes of the representation of all coastal parishes to be collected and evaluated in the assembly. Additionally, the Plant Materials program will coordinate collections of vegetative genotypes from populations along the southeastern Texas coast in 2011 late summer and early fall. All new collections will be included with the existing 22 accessions before being permanently transplanted into the field.



## Plant Materials Specialist Corner

On May 27, 2011, partner agencies came together at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette Center for Ecology and Environmental Technology to sign an



agreement that marks renewal of an important initiative for Louisiana—Louisiana's Native Plant Initiative. This multi-agency initiative is dedicated to helping conserve a vanishing natural resource in Louisiana—our native plants. The Memorandums of Understanding were signed by 19 partners representing federal, state and non-governmental organizations in Louisiana.

**We're on the Web!**

[www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov)



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