

Marsh Notes

Finding Vegetative
Solutions for
Conservation
Problems



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

Spring Issue 2013

Pelican Germplasm Black Mangrove Trials

Logan Boudreaux, a student worker for Dr. Andy Nyman at Louisiana State University in the School of Renewable and Natural Resources requested plant material from the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center (GMPMC). He received 500 two year old Pelican Germplasm black mangrove (*Avicenna germinans*) from the GMPMC in February for the purpose of coastal restoration studies. After an unsuccessful attempt at growing his own trees he contacted Garret Thomassie and Curt Riche' for their information on the plant guide publication that NRCS has on the internet. Mr. Boudreaux's intent for the black mangroves is to establish a reproducing population at Pass A Loutre Wildlife Management Area at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

Currently, the area is mostly dominated by freshwater grasses, but because of saltwater encroachment, he believes it is important to accelerate the introduction of mangroves. Saltwater encroachment already has led to the loss of baldcypress from the areas nearest the river and the establishment



of oystergrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) in the areas far from the river. Freshwater inflow is expected to continue to decline as the river slowly retreats in response to subsidence, sediment starvation and sea-level rise. The mangroves, being a climax species and salt tolerant, can thrive and help stabilize soils and decrease erosion. Establishing a small population of mangroves now, rather than waiting for the mangroves to naturally colonize the area, will minimize the land loss in the future as salinity continues to increase. There were no known mangroves in the area before recent planting efforts by many groups. Unfortunately, all but one of the five planting efforts to date has failed. Dr. Nyman's Renewable Natural Resources 3108 class will be planting the trees during spring break and future classes will monitor the progress of the trees in following years. Previous efforts by the class using one year old trees were unsuccessful because the beaches rolled back and covered them with sand. Because these are two year old trees and taller than previous years, the trees have a better chance of surviving and will be able to establish the seed base for the future. Logan Boudreaux was very appreciative of the assistance and material he received from the GMPMC.

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>

Green Facts

Pioneers planted 4 corn kernels for every plant they hoped to harvest: "1 for the maggot, 1 for the crow, 1 for the cutworm, and 1 to grow."

<http://srel.uga.edu/kidsdoscience/sci-method-copters/plant-facts.pdf>

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PMC VEG QUIZ

Can you identify this native species?



Answer in next publication

Answer to Winter 2013 PMC Veg Quiz:
Lesser Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron strigosus*)
Muhl. ex Willd

USDA NRCS
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NFL Sponsored Wetland Youth Summit 

With regards to football, every yard matters and the same is true for Louisiana's coast. Every hour, approximately one football field of land washes into the Gulf of Mexico. In celebration of World Wetlands Day, youth from all parishes of Louisiana stood guard on coastal land loss by planting 3,000 trees on a National Wildlife Refuge near New Orleans, LA. While touring coastal Louisiana, the group was able to visit the GMPMC where they were shown the release plants used in combat to coastal land loss. This was the Second Annual Wetlands Youth Summit held to help youth preserve coastal habitats and learn about the many challenges facing the Louisiana coast.



Spring Time Is Volunteer Time

The Future Farmers of America group from Sumner High School (near Kentwood, LA) volunteered their time at the Center by propagating Caminada Germplasm sea oats. The group consisted of 11 hard working members that were eager to learn and get the job done. They successfully transplanted over 800 sea oats and this material will be available to eligible growers for the 2014 plant distributions. Volunteers play a vital role at the Center by making the numbers of plants available for upcoming plant distributions.



Annual Tribal Assistance

Staff from the GMPMC traveled to St. Mary Parish to give assistance to the Chitamacha Tribe. The Center has been working with the tribe to assist in reestablishing river cane to its reservation. The tribe has historically used the river cane to weave and create unique baskets. The PMC staff with the help of St. Mary SWCD, FSA and members of the tribe were able to excavate approximately 225 individual river cane shoots that were then transplanted in suitable areas on the reservation. A sufficient, and annually increasing, stock of river cane should be available on the reservation in order for the tribe to carry out and continue its historic cultural basket weaving tradition. Each year the PMC lends its tools, labor and technical expertise to make this event a success.



Ashy Sunflower Germination Study

Germination tests were performed for last year's harvest of Cajun Sunrise Germplasm ashy sunflower. The tests were for the purposes of comparing seed germination potential from multiple sites across southern Louisiana. The germination percentages were extremely high and location was not a limiting factor in germination. Data from this experiment will be shared with other PMCs and all other interested growers.



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