

NATURALIST NEWSLETTER

Louisiana Master Naturalist Greater New Orleans



Meet Our New Vice President:

Janell Simpson

By: Alanna Frick

We are very excited to have elected Janell Simpson, Ph.D., as LMNGNO's vice president! Involved with the organization since its inception, Janell has always been a dedicated Master Naturalist. One thing she enjoys most about nature is "learning to observe a well-known spot with fresh eyes to appreciate

the complexity and beauty of all of the parts of nature working together." Inspired by her father, an avid fisherman and by association ecologically inclined outdoorsman, she is very excited to meet more and more naturalists that make our organization so unique. Janell has a lot of inspired goals for her tenure as our dedicated vice president -- goals like improved community outreach and education, listening to and supporting projects and goals of fellow master naturalists, and the long term goal of finding space to accommodate small gatherings and all of our naturalist gear. Next time you see her please help us in congratulating her on this well deserved position. We know she'll bring some fantastic improvements to our wonderful organization!

We're on social media!



Have you started following us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)?

You'll find tons of great content produced by our Communications Committee. We encourage everyone to submit photos & writings from naturalist workshops in order to be published online, or in the newsletter. You'll get volunteer credit and eyes on your work!

What is Track It Forward?

Track It Forward is LMNGNO's new platform for tracking volunteer and continuing education hours. Look for the email for more information on how to sign up. Video tutorials on how to use the site are posted on the website.

Questions? Email volunteers.lmngno@gmail.com



In this issue:

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NEW!

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- Event Calendar- Check out our Facebook page for updates
- Track It Forward- New Volunteer & CE hour logging site! See *website for details on how it's used.*

Photo Credit: Alanna Frick



Volunteer Events:

(Click event title for info)

February

- **2nd** Northlake Arbor Day Activities
- **6th** Northlake Titivation & Nature Walk
- **9th** Tabling at Cook-Off for the Coast
- **9th** SOUL Tree Planting in Broadmoor
- **20th** Northlake Titivation & Nature Walk
- **23rd** SOUL Tree Planting in Bywater
- **27th** Northlake Titivation & Nature Walk

March

- **6th, 13th, 27th** Northlake Titivation & Nature Walk

Photo Credit: Alanna Frick



Louisiana Master Naturalist Rendezvous 2019

By: Erin Richardson

It's right around the corner folks! The 4th annual LMN Rendezvous will take place **March 15th** through the **17th** at **Fontainebleau State Park** in Mandeville, LA.

A statewide meeting of seven Master Naturalist Chapters, this is an excellent opportunity to network, and gain volunteer & continuing education hours. Please visit the Master Naturalist Website to register and reserve your spot! The Rendezvous features talks on a variety of natural history subjects, guided naturalist hikes, volunteer opportunities, a Swap Table, Nature ID Table, a Naturalist Library, book sales, and plenty of leisure time to befriend other master naturalists.

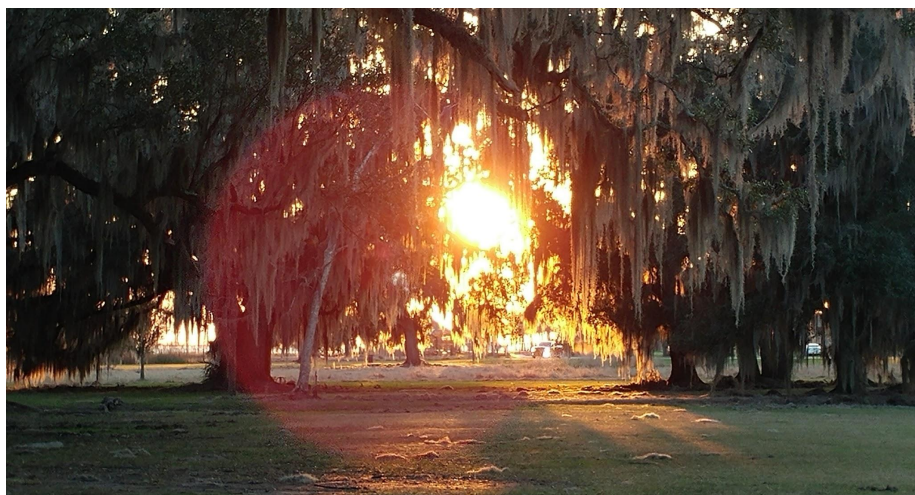


Photo Credit: Alanna Frick

Rendezvous Silent Action: Call for Donations

By: Erin Richardson

It's that time of the year again! The LMN Association hosts a silent auction each year at the Rendezvous which raises money for the organization; each year we ask for donations. If you have extra gear, interesting naturalist art, or want to create something that we can auction, please consider donating it! All proceeds will support scholarships funds for LMN, among other things. Please contact Ann Rogers

(annrogers1@gmail.com) or Bette Kaufman

(bjkauffman@gmail.com) for more information!



Nature Highlights: Feral Hog

By: Erin Richardson

Happy New Year! 2019 is the year of the pig, so it's fitting that our nature highlight is on the Feral Hog (*Sus scrofa*). Feral hogs are present in all 64 parishes in Louisiana and are considered to be a nuisance invasive species. These highly-adaptable omnivores have vast negative impacts; outcompeting native wildlife for resources, damaging agricultural crops, and uprooting planted and naturally regenerated conifers and hardwood seedlings. There are several control methods in place to help cull the feral hog populations including a genetically based contraceptive.



Photo Credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters

Nature Highlights: Air Potato Vine

By: Erin Richardson

Continuing the invasive species theme, the Air Potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) is a perennial vine native to Asia and Africa that has been spreading through the warm climates of Southeast Louisiana. Rapid springtime growth propels these vines vertical; choking out other vegetation, competing for light and sometimes causing structural damage. Earn some of your volunteer hours for 2019 by signing up for *Air Potato Vine Pulling* in Grand Isle!



Continuing Education Events:

(Click event title for info)

February

- **2nd** Couturie Forest Bird Trip
- **9th** Open Air Studio in the Woods
- **16th** Moonlight Hike & Marshmallow Melt
- **16th** LEEC Workshop
- **16th** St. Brendard Bird Trip
- **23rd** Diamond Bird Trip

March

- **9th** Bayou Sauvage Bird Trip
- **10th** Great Louisiana Bird Fest
- **22nd** Moonlight Hike & Marshmallow Melt
- **23rd** Walk in the Woods
- **30th** Grand Isle Bird Trip
- **30th** Louisiana Iris Celebration

Photo Credit: Alanna Frick



Naturalist Resolutions

By: Erin Richardson

As we welcome the new year, some people may commit to resolutions. Some have to do with wellbeing or reading more books, but what would a Master Naturalist's Resolutions be? We've compiled a list of resolutions to get you started, as well as some pro tips and life hacks to help you follow through and achieve your goals!

2019 Master Naturalist Resolutions

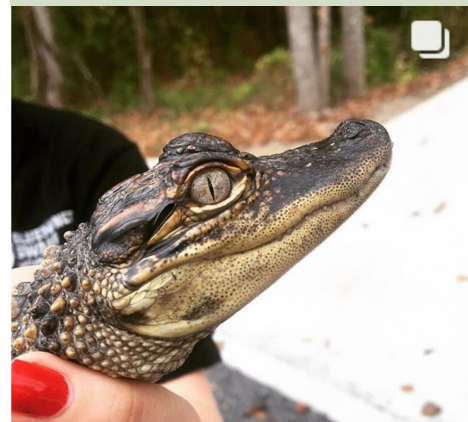
- ☐ Learn the scientific names of species
- ☐ Keep & maintain a nature journal
- ☐ Spend at least 10 minutes a day observing nature
- ☐ Complete a backyard bird count
- ☐ Be more active in the environmental community

Tips to achieve your resolutions!

- ★ **Start small!** Creating small goals that are easily achieved are a great building block to long term goals. Consider adding a new resolution each month instead of trying to do several all at once.
- ★ **Be specific!** When you create a goal make sure you break down the specific steps you'll take to reach that goal. For example, instead of just saying you'll learn the scientific names of species, set a more specific goal to practice one new scientific name a day. This will help ensure follow through of those resolutions and challenge yourself more.
- ★ **Get support!** Reach out to your fellow naturalists. Consider starting a group and commit to meeting once a month. Not only will you network with the organization, but it can help hold you accountable.
- ★ **Reward yourself!** Have you been eyeing a new field guide or birding scope? Treat yourself to a reward when you've completed one of your goals. You deserve it!
- ★ **Enjoy it!** Resolutions are about reflection and improvement, not stress.



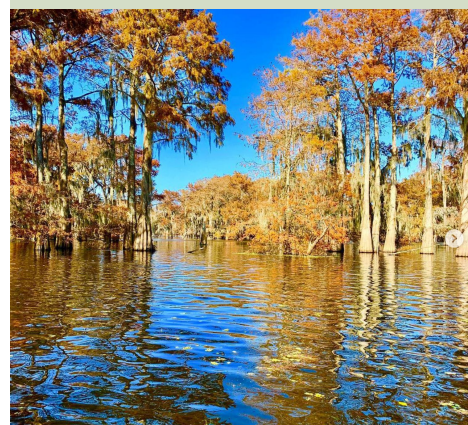
Social Media Buzz



Little cousin with little gator, Bluebonnet Nature Center
Photo by: Alahna Moore



The herp man himself, Dr. Bob "Pseudalsophis thomasi" Thomas



Where are the knees for these trees? Photo taken in the Atchafalaya Swamp by: Erin Richardson