

Kisatchie National Forest –Pitcher Plant Restoration

Who (partners): Dr. Michael Bodri, formerly chair of the Northwestern State University (NSU) biology department in Natchitoches, LA, and Linda Chance, NSU research technician, received a grant in 2005 from the Coypu foundation to rescue native plants. Linda was assisted by members of a summer youth group who were chosen by the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, the equivalent of a board of county commissioners, to gain outdoor working experience during their summer vacation. Nelson Ball, the owner of TXI, a local construction supply company in Alexandria LA, donated fill material.

What: Linda Chance, the summer youth group, forest service employees Harold Brandon, Bradley Kohls, Kara Filius, and Antoinette Davis, and Kevin Warner of the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury conducted the 2nd year of Pitcher Plant Bog restoration on the Kisatchie National Forest.

When: Summer work was done in July 2006. This phase of the project began in summer 2004 and continues until December 2006.

Where: Southern Region, Kisatchie Ranger District, Kisatchie National Forest
The Kisatchie district is in west central Louisiana.

How: This project is part of a four-pronged research and restoration methodology to gather background data, investigate and monitor restoration methods, develop better long-term management practices for fast disappearing pitcher plant bogs communities. This knowledge will be disseminated to interested government agencies, businesses, and private landowners. The summer project, with the help of volunteers and donated materials, focused on erosion control by filling in vehicle ruts with sand and re-vegetation by mulching. Further re-vegetation in late 2006 will involve transplanting bog species from the NSU greenhouse and out-planting from high-quality, nearby “donor” bogs.

Why: Pitcher plant bogs in Louisiana contain 35 state-rare species listed by the Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries including some of our most beautiful orchids. Pitcher plant bogs are the second-most endangered plant community in the state. These rare elements of our natural heritage, pitcher plant bogs, remain in only two areas of the state. Due to habitat destruction or adverse land management practices pitcher plants bogs have been reduced to occurring in only two parishes today. Unfortunately, few members of the public are aware of this precious jewel of our natural heritage. Through this project we will make more people aware of this endangered plant community.

Contact: Converse Griffith, Calcasieu Ranger District, Zone Botanist (318) 793-9427.



Volunteers collecting mulch.
Photo courtesy of Linda Chance.



Pitcher plants returning after burn.
Photo courtesy of Linda Chance.



Volunteers implementing erosion controls.
Photo courtesy of Linda Chance.