Greetings from the School of Renewable Natural Resources! As always, fall semester at LSU is both energetic and exciting. This semester is no exception. The students are engaged, football is fantastic and the weather is good. So far, no hurricanes!

It’s this time of year that we produce our annual newsletter. We share this publication hoping to entertain and enlighten you with some of the exciting things that our faculty, students and staff are engaged in.

I would like to begin this issue by thanking each of you that responded so generously to our recent request for financial contributions to the program. I know the economic downturn has impacted many of you, but I continue to be amazed by your level of support. We promise to leverage your support in every way we can to maximize its impact. To those that have yet to give, I encourage you to help as you can. Your contributions will certainly help defray some of the funding losses we have incurred the last few years.

Everyone is well aware of the national and local economic situation, which does continue to impact state-funded programs in the department. University budgets have been reduced over 20% in the last several years and we are currently closely examining our budgets in anticipation of a mid-year budget cut. RNR’s current challenge is the inability to fill vacant faculty positions and dealing with the threat of losing additional support in the near-term. This would have a devastating impact on all RNR research, teaching and extension programs. We ask that you stay aware of the developing budgetary situation and help however you can to preserve the tremendous progress RNR has made over the last several years.

Although these ongoing budget constraints do restrict state-based funds, the RNR faculty continues to be successful in acquiring extra-mural grants. Faculty in the school continue to compete for nationally competitive funding sources, including the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health. This is a tribute to the quality of RNR faculty.

The teaching program remains a strong point for the school. Our latest data indicates 51 incoming freshmen for the fall semester. This will result in a total undergraduate program of just over 200 students. The graduate program continues to maintain an enrollment of around 70 masters and doctoral students. Both the graduate and undergraduate degree programs continue to attract outstanding students.

Some of you know that when the department head of Biological and Agricultural Engineering left for Oklahoma State University I was asked by the LSU A&M and AgCenter administration to serve as the interim department head for the coming year. With that, I am currently splitting my time between RNR and BAE. This is a challenging new role for me, but thankfully both units have strong faculty, undergraduate and graduate programs, and most importantly a hard working and dedicated staff.

On behalf of the faculty, students and staff at RNR, we hope you enjoy the news and happenings here in the school. I continue to believe that our RNR programs are strong, but as always your support can only make our research, extension and teaching efforts stronger. Your comments, feedback, suggestions and updates are always welcomed. I urge you to visit our web page or visit the department! We appreciate all you do!

D. Allen Rutherford
drutherford@agcenter.lsu.edu
“Louisiana’s Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast” will prioritize restoration and protection projects while considering the dynamic nature of the Louisiana coast, the availability of future funding, and other key uncertainties such as future hurricane risks, river flows and sea-level rise. One goal of the 2012 Master Plan is to reduce flooding risks using a range of methods, including levees, enhancing natural ridges, helping communities to flood-proof buildings and elevating homes. A second goal of the 2012 Master Plan is to sustain ecosystem services that support communities, nationally significant industries and commercial operations. Sustainable populations of fish and wildlife dominate the ecosystem services identified by stakeholders.

Coastal restoration and protection face the opposite of a “not-in-my-backyard” attitude because everyone wants taxpayer money to restore and protect their property. For this reason, previous plans simply consist of lists of all possible restoration and protection possibilities. The painful decisions of whose-backyard-to-restore or protect were omitted from those plans. The 2012 Master Plan will be different because it will prioritize possibilities based on the level of protection and ecosystem services they are predicted to provide, and costs. Computer simulation models will objectively compare numerous restoration and protection possibilities across a range of conditions, such as hurricane frequency and intensity. One of the strengths of systematically modeling numerous possibilities is that the differences between model output and reality become irrelevant because more effective possibilities will always rank higher than less effective possibilities as long as the models represent the important driving factors.

For the 2012 Master Plan, the Louisiana Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (OCPR) invited Dr. Andy Nyman to assemble an “Upper Trophic Level” team to model the fish and wildlife selected by stakeholders. Nyman identified and invited experts, including Dr. Kaller (largemouth bass) and Dr. Romaire (wild-caught crawfish), to model the species outside his area of expertise (Table 1).

The Upper Trophic Level models provide an index of habitat suitability on a 0 to 1 scale based on the assumption that there is a positive relationship between suitability and carrying capacity. For example, the model of American alligator for the 2012 Master Plan depends upon the percent land, land:water ratio, water depth, water salinity, habitat type and edge. Each of those factors in the model ranges from 0 to 1 such that 1 represents the highest animal density and 0 represents an absence of animals. Those five factors are combined with arithmetic means rather than with geometric means. Geometric means are used to model situations where habitat suitability depends upon a combination of factors. For example even if all other conditions are ideal, American alligators will not feed when salinity exceeds 10 ppt. Using arithmetic means to combine the five factors in this situation would produce an output of 0.96 when data show that animals actually die, whereas using geometric means to combine these five factors in this situation would produce a more realistic output of 0.

The Upper Trophic Level team is one of seven teams that developed models to predict the effects of restoration and protection on storm damage and fish and wildlife populations over 50 years. The effects of restoration and protection on fish and wildlife depend upon the effects of projects on factors, such as wetland area, pond area, plant community composition, water salinity and edge, which in turn depend upon hydrology and geomorphology. Thus the input for the upper trophic level models is output from other models.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species or Group</th>
<th>Modeler</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American alligator</td>
<td>Andy Nyman, Renewable Natural Resources, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<td>Muskrat</td>
<td>Andy Nyman, Renewable Natural Resources, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>River otter</td>
<td>Don Baltz, Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, LSU</td>
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<td>Black drum</td>
<td>Don Baltz, Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, LSU</td>
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<td>Speckled trout</td>
<td>Don Baltz, Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, LSU</td>
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<td>Brown shrimp</td>
<td>Mike Kaller, Renewable Natural Resources, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<td>White shrimp</td>
<td>Mike Kaller, Renewable Natural Resources, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<td>Largemouth bass</td>
<td>Mike Kaller, Renewable Natural Resources, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<td>Gadwall</td>
<td>Paul Leberg, Biology, University of Louisiana at Lafayette</td>
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<td>Green-winged teal</td>
<td>Paul Leberg, Biology, University of Louisiana at Lafayette</td>
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<td>Mottled duck</td>
<td>Paul Leberg, Biology, University of Louisiana at Lafayette</td>
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<td>Neotropical migrants</td>
<td>Robert Romaine, Aquaculture Research Station, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<td>Roseate spoonbill</td>
<td>Tom Soniat, University of New Orleans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild-caught crawfish</td>
<td>Robert Romaine, Aquaculture Research Station, LSU AgCenter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern oyster</td>
<td>Tom Soniat, University of New Orleans</td>
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Research Notes

Stakeholders cannot make decisions simply by looking at tables of numbers, so the 2012 Master Plan is using a Prioritization Tool to help interpret modeling results. As one of its tasks, the tool examines the modeling output to determine the most effective project concepts. The tool uses this information to group selected project concepts together into single options or alternatives. As it performs this step, the tool evaluates the performance of alternatives to a diverse set of criteria that summarize project benefits to the coast. Once several solid alternatives are assembled, models then evaluate how different groups of projects perform in combination.

The work of the Upper Trophic Level modelers is virtually completed, whereas the restoration planners are now furiously using all the models to compare numerous restoration and protection possibilities. By the fall of 2012, the new Master Plan will be finalized.

New Equipment Obtained to Advance Forest Products Research

Dr. Todd Shupe has recently received and installed equipment purchased using a Louisiana Board of Regents grant. The items purchased include a bioreactor-fermentor and a gas chromatograph–mass spectrometer (GC-MS) to enhance programs in preservative-treated wood recycling and biomass processing. Currently, the most common waste treatment options for treated wood material are either incineration or landfill. Neither option is particularly economically viable or without potential adverse environmental consequences. Thus, recycling options that remove toxic preservatives from the preservative-treated wood are of great importance to those concerned with the life-cycle management of treated wood. Moreover, there is great economic development potential if a cost-effective recycling system can be successfully developed.

The equipment will also enhance programs in biomass processing. Specific biomass programs to be enhanced include (1) extraction of secondary plant metabolites and wood extractives for development of metal-free “green” wood preservatives, (2) bio-chemical extraction of heavy metals from preservative-treated wood waste and (3) chemical conversion of woody biomass into methanol and other bio-chemicals and bio-fuels. Although the Louisiana Forest Products Development Center has made great strides in these program areas, additional research is necessary to provide faster and more efficient extraction of residual preservatives from preservative-treated wood and removal of wood extractives from untreated wood using the new advanced equipment and other biomass chemical conversion processes. The equipment will increase the capability to carry out critical research not currently possible and enhance the competitiveness of faculty for extramural research funds. Research in this field can ultimately lessen the amount of treated wood that is sent to the landfill, help ensure the long term viability of the treated wood industry, assist the rapidly developing bio-energy industry in Louisiana and facilitate novel teaching and extension programs in the general areas of biomass chemical conversion and extraction of wood preservatives.

Medicinal Plant Research: Validating nature’s formulation for a healthier body weight

Drinking an herbal tea to lose weight is a well-liked concept. Gar Yee Koh decided to test this idea in her thesis research under the guidance of Dr. Zhijun Liu. This is not ordinary herbal tea or the green tea as we all know it. It is a special leaf tea from a plant called the Chinese sweet leaf tea plant. It is actually a cousin to many berry plants such as blackberry and black raspberry.

Why is it called sweet leaf tea plant? The leaves contain natural sweeteners called steviol glycosides, which are also found in the more familiar stevia leaves. Before scientists were aware of sweet leaf tea, local residents in southwestern China had been using the leaves as a beverage because of its sweet taste. They also used it as a folk remedy for maintaining good health. Modern research expanded this folk knowledge base to treat type 2 diabetes, coughs and to maintain healthy kidneys.

The medicinal plant lab, together with LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans and the Pennington Biomedical Research Center found that the Chinese sweet leaf tea extract was able to prevent pathologic blood vessel formation, which feeds cancer tumors and fat tissue.
To test for these effects, Gar Yee did a standard “feed and treat” study. She ordered some obese-prone laboratory rats and fed them either with high-fat diet (60 percent fat) or low-fat diet (14 percent fat) to test the effect of diet on body weight gain. Among the rats fed on high-fat diet, half were supplemented with the sweet leaf tea extract (in a special compositional formula labeled as GER) whereas the other half received no supplement. After nine weeks of feeding, she found that the low-fat diet alone had a noticeably healthier effect than the high-fat diet: rats were nearly 25 percent slimmer and had a 50 percent leaner abdomen. It is surprising that the Chinese sweet leaf tea extract had the same effect on the rats that were on the high-fat diet. Body weight gain was reduced by 22 percent (Figure 1) and abdominal fat accumulation was reduced by 48 percent when these fat animals “drank” the sweet leaf tea. Even more interesting is the finding that food intake was not affected between the treated and non-treated, meaning they ate the same amount of food.

Does eating bad food and drinking the sweet leaf tea together produce the same lean body as those on the healthier diet? Yes, that is how Gar Yee interprets it. No clinical signs of toxicity or treatment-related adverse effects were observed in the animals, indicating it worked safely.

Additional benefits were also observed. Serum triglycerides and total cholesterol were reduced by 50% in the treated group, indicating the ability of the sweet leaf tea to improve lipid profiles even when fatty diet is consumed. In addition, blood glucose level was lowered somewhat. Gar Yee was thrilled to quantify the effect and happy that her research results were published in a refereed journal. The promising health benefits extend beyond her research. In fact, there have been plans to test the effect in humans and there is interest from product developers to use this research to help people live a healthier life.
RNR Professors Engage Public with Research on Baitfish

Drs. Julie Anderson and Christopher Green continue to research and develop methods for the culture of cocahoe minnows (a.k.a. Gulf killifish) as live bait for coastal fishing. Recently, they developed a cooperative research partnership with parties interested in the various aspects of cocahoe culture for the live marine baitfish market.

Collaborators were supplied with fish eggs and fry together with data books to aid in the collection of production information, and a small number of test strips to monitor critical water quality parameters directly after stocking the eggs or fry. Eggs and fry collected from the LSU AgCenter’s Aquaculture Research Station spring production efforts were distributed to ponds on Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge and lands of three private partners. Each of these participants was assisted in the hatching of eggs and/or stocking of juveniles and provided with culture recommendations that came from earlier research efforts. Collaborators will use the data books to collect additional information on cocahoe, including water quality, feeding, growth and survival to produce data and questions for future research and extension efforts.

Drs. Anderson and Green maintain a constant dialogue with each collaborator to ensure that they can identify problems and answer any questions that collaborators may have. These ‘real world’ scenarios help to highlight several new research needs and priorities such as identifying appropriate levels of salt and minerals in the water, and densities of fish within different culture scenarios.

Workshops highlighting the project’s research findings are planned for this fall across coastal parishes of Louisiana. In the coming months Drs. Anderson and Green will perform an economic feasibility analysis of various holding, culture and grow-out scenarios with the assistance of Dr. Rex Caffey and the LSU AgCenter’s Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness. For information about the project, contact Jill Christoferson, LSU AgCenter extension associate at 225-578-7718.

RNR Faculty and Students Initiate an Integrated Study of the White River, Arkansas

The lower White River, Arkansas is a RAMSAR Wetland of International Significance that supports the largest concentration of wintering mallards in North America, the second largest tract of bottomland hardwood forests in North America and the most productive warm water fisheries in the southeastern United States. Unnatural flow patterns in the river and extensive bank and riverbed erosion caused by channel entrenchment of the Mississippi River, a series of hydroelectric dams upstream, a navigational lock at its confluence with the Mississippi River, a navigation channel along much of its course and an irrigation pump that diverts surface water from the river have created concern about the future conditions of this ecosystem.

Dr. Sammy King (USGS Louisiana Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit) and Dr. Richard Keim from RNR, along with Dr. Cliff Hupp (USGS, Reston, Va.), are being funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct an integrated assessment of the White River to determine its current conditions and to predict the effects of future projects on the river and its floodplain forests and wetlands. This study is part of a much larger comprehensive assessment of the White River that involves several state agencies in Arkansas and Missouri. The 5-year study is slated to have four doctoral students working on integrated studies of geomorphology, hydrology, forest vegetation dynamics and systems modeling. Currently, doctoral students Wes Cochran and April Newman have

Several RNR scientists and agency collaborators participated in a pre-study tour of the White River. Front row (L-R): Dr. Louie Lin (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Tom Foti (retired, Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission) and April Newman. Back row (L-R): Dr. Sammy King, Dr. Richard Keim and Wes Cochran.
Restoring Catahoula Lake

Catahoula Lake is one of the most important wetlands in Louisiana for migratory waterfowl. The lake is very unique because it becomes nearly dry each year. In recent decades, waterfowl habitat on the lake has declined because of water-elm encroachment that shades-out important duck food plants. In cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), RNR is working to understand how hydrological modifications of the lake may have contributed to this problem, and to develop water management plans to restore this unusual and valuable ecosystem.

Navigation and flood control projects on the Mississippi, Red and Black rivers have completely changed the natural flooding of the area around Catahoula Lake, so a water control structure was built in the early 1970s in an attempt to control water and mimic the natural flows that were responsible for creating the ecosystem. However, despite all attempts, water-elm continues to spread and is an ongoing and costly problem for LDWF, which manages it by mechanical removal.

Sanjeev Joshi, an RNR graduate student from Nepal supported by an assistantship from the Gilbert Foundation, is using tree rings from the water-elm to learn how past water levels have controlled tree establishment and growth, so that future management can avoid conditions conducive to tree cover. Sanjeev is one of the few people to ever work with tree rings from this relatively uncommon species.

RNR graduate student Karen Doerr is also working with LDWF to monitor current vegetation conditions and develop comprehensive historical data about vegetative conditions on the lake—both of which are needed to help evaluate management plans.

RNR Studies the 2011 Mississippi River Flood

RNR faculty Richard Keim and Andy Nyman received a National Science Foundation grant to measure water flows through the Atchafalaya River Floodway during the opening of the Morganza Spillway in the major Mississippi River flood of spring, 2011. The work, which is being done in collaboration with Durelle Scott (Virginia Tech) and Robert Cook (LSU Chemistry Department), examines how water quality was affected by the Morganza Spillway floodplain. Cooperators from several agencies, such as the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey, helped to collect water samples during the rise, peak and fall of the flood. Samples are being analyzed to determine nutrients, organic matter and water isotopes to better understand how floodplain forests process flood waters.
Opinions of Louisiana Waterfowl Hunters – web versus mail surveys

Wildlife managers often need to know the opinions of their hunting constituents. Doctoral student Luke Laborde and Professor Frank Rohwer recently surveyed over 1,700 waterfowl hunters in the bayou state as part of a contract with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). One of the most exciting aspects of this research was the comparison of two very different survey methods. One set of surveys was mailed to a random sample of 2,500 hunters. In a second survey, the exact same questions were used, but were hosted on the LDWF website and were open to any interested individuals. As expected, engaged hunters voluntarily went online and answered the web-based survey, so the people in the web survey hunted more and shot many more ducks than did people who answered the mail survey.

However, the respondents in both surveys had essentially identical views about policy issues, such as species regulations, hunting zones, robo-ducks, public access and use of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) by commercial guides. That finding was exciting, because open web-based surveys are far easier, faster and cheaper than random mail surveys. It appears that web-based surveys can provide similar results for policy-related issues, which is exactly where decision makers often need input but cannot afford the time or resources to undertake mail surveys.

Of course, the survey generated a great deal of information about hunters and their opinions. Following are some of the policy findings.

- There is strong opposition to daily closures of duck hunting at noon.
- Over 60 percent of hunters oppose guided hunts on public lands.
- There is little support for banning the use of spinning wing decoys.
- Most waterfowl hunters support designated areas on state lands as “limited access” areas where no motorized boats are allowed.
- Hunters who are members of hunting clubs or waterfowl conservation organizations, such as Delta Waterfowl or Ducks Unlimited, hunt more frequently and more consistently.
- Over 70 percent of hunters were satisfied with their waterfowl hunting experiences on state Wildlife Management Area lands.

In follow-up work, Laborde and Rohwer have a much larger survey of waterfowl hunters in all 14 states in the Mississippi Flyway, but analysis of those results is just beginning.

Who’s Who

Shupe Becomes President of SWST

Dr. Todd Shupe became the president of the Society of Wood Science and Technology (SWST) at the society’s International Convention on June 22 in Portland, Ore. Shupe was elected vice president two years ago, became president elect this year and will serve as immediate past president next year. SWST is a professional organization that seeks to develop and maintain the unique body of knowledge distinctive to science and technology of wood and other lignocellulosic materials.

Wu Serves on National Science Foundation Panel

Dr. Wu served as a panelist for the SBIR/STTR Phase I Sustainable and Recycled Materials program at the National Science Foundation in February 2011. The program is designed to help small businesses in the U.S. to develop innovative technologies. The Phase I projects provide up to $150,000 per project for a six month period. Successful Phase I projects can lead to larger Phase II projects.

Dr. de Hoop Receives Prestigious Gottschalk Award

Dr. Cornelis F. “Niels” de Hoop received a surprising telephone call from Stefan Bergmann, the executive vice president of the Forest Products Society. Dr. de Hoop had been selected to receive the most prestigious award that is given out...
He has been active in society events, having served on the planning committee of its 1998 International Convention in Merida, Mexico, and on the planning committee of a 2006 convention concerning the utilization of small-diameter timber.

Dr. de Hoop has worked at the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center since 1992 and teaches courses in timber harvesting, procurement and green energy. He teaches logging safety workshops and is a regular contributor of logging safety articles to *The Louisiana Logger* magazine. He is also the technical editor of the *International Journal of Forest Engineering*, which is published by the society.

Prior to earning his doctorate at Texas A&M University, he worked 12 years in the forest products industry, mostly in logging supervision and timber procurement, in Canada and Texas. He also worked a year with the U.S. Forest Service in Kentucky and 1 ½ years with the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife. He holds a Master of Business Administration from Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas and a Bachelor of Science in forestry from the University of Kentucky.

**Who’s Who**

Dr. Cornelis F. "Niels" de Hoop received the prestigious Fred W. Gottschalk Memorial Award.

by that organization. Known as the Fred W. Gottschalk Memorial Award, it “recognizes and honors exceptional service to the Forest Products Society by an individual member.” It is presented annually in memory of Fred W. Gottschalk, the first president of the Forest Products Society who died in a plane crash in Salt Lake City in 1965. The award is supported by funds from the Society’s general operations and consists of an engraved plaque and complimentary registration to the International Convention for the winner and spouse. The award was presented in June during the Official Luncheon at the 65th International Convention in Portland, Ore.

Dr. de Hoop has contributed significantly to the Forest Products Society during his professional career, most recently having served on the board of directors from 2007-2010. At the Section level, he served two terms as secretary-treasurer of the Mid-South Section from 1994-2007 and 2010-present. He also serves as a trustee for the Mid-South Section’s James Love Memorial Scholarship Fund. He is an active Timber Production & Harvesting Technical Interest Group member within the society, having served as its secretary since 2001.

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**Stouffer Participates in Service-learning Scholars Program**

Dr. Philip Stouffer was one of 12 LSU faculty members selected to participate in the 2011 Service-Learning Faculty Scholars Program, which trains faculty to modify their courses to develop hands-on learning in collaboration with a community partner.

The Center for Community Engagement, Learning and Leadership (CCELL) facilitates the faculty scholars program to promote the institutionalization of service-learning courses in every department, encourage interdisciplinary dialogue and advance the objectives of the LSU Flagship Agenda. Faculty scholars, representing 10 different academic departments, met weekly through the spring semester to learn the fundamentals of service-learning and how to apply them to their teaching.

Stouffer will incorporate service-learning in his Louisiana wildlife class by teaming with Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation Department (BREC) to identify amphibians, reptiles, mammals and birds using BREC parks. This will be the second service-learning class available in RNR; Dr. Andy Nyman participated in the same program and provides a service-learning component to his Case Studies in Habitat Restoration class.
Dr. Charles Shilling Retires After 34 Years

Friends, colleagues and former and current students gathered to wish Dr. Charles Leroy Shilling a happy retirement at a party held in his honor on May 6, 2011. Dr. Shilling has been a staunch advocate for student academic and career advice-ment in the school for many years, and it is hard to imagine the school without him.

Dr. Shilling began his college education at LSU, earning a bachelor of science in forestry in 1963 and a master’s in forestry in 1965. He joined the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1968, being honored with two Bronze Stars and other awards. His military period was sandwiched between two stints as research forester at the Southern Forest Experiment Station in New Orleans, La. He then obtained his Ph.D. in recreation and resources development from Texas A&M University in 1971. He was a faculty member at the University of Kentucky from 1971 to 1977 before moving back to join the faculty at LSU in 1977.

In his 34 years as a faculty member in the School of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, now the School of Renewable Natural Resources, Dr. Shilling worked under five school directors. He taught a number of courses, including Forest Recreation, Forest Fire Protection and Use, Forestry Camp and Natural Resource Policy. He was an excellent teacher and received numerous outstanding teaching awards. He also conducted frequent workshops, many of them in prescribed burning.

Since 1985, Dr. Shilling has occupied the position of director of Student Services, in charge of the undergraduate student advising and other undergraduate and curriculum coordination. In this capacity, he showed his devotion to students by advising hundreds of students, mentoring them, listening to their problems, whether academic or personal and working with their parents. Over the years, we have heard gratitude from countless number of students whose lives Dr. Shilling has touched in such a positive way. Some parents mentioned that their son or daughter might not have ever completed school without his advice. Part of Dr. Shilling’s activi-ties included research into recreation and fire related areas. He was also quite heavily involved in outreach through extension activities including landowner and forestry related workshops.

Although the school has been a large part of his life, Charles Leroy Shilling does have various interests when he is home. He recently completed restoration of an old tractor, and is now busy remodeling his home, mostly by himself. We wish him well in his retirement and that he will be able to find more old tractors to restore. Dr. Shilling plans to remain active as a volunteer for the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service conducting workshops in his areas of expertise.

Kaller New Student Services Director

Dr. Mike Kaller has accepted the role as director of Student Services and coordinator of Undergraduate Programs. Dr. Kaller assumes the duties of Dr. Shilling who served in the position from 1985 – 2011. Although Dr. Kaller has some really big shoes to fill, he is excited to work with the students.

Dr. Kaller can be contacted at Mkalle1@lsu.edu or by contacting the RNR office at 225-578-4131.
4-H University 2011

This June, more than 1,400 students attended the 2011 4-H University which was held over three days on the LSU campus. The students (grades 7-12) participated in 43 contests, 12 Clover College educational tracks or other educational programs. The LSU AgCenter awarded over $100,000 in scholarships and educational trips to deserving youth from across Louisiana.

During this event, the School of Renewable Natural Resources hosted more than 40 4-H youth who participated in contests (oral competitions in the areas of Wildlife, Forestry and Environmental Threats) and in the school’s very first Clover College event, Forestry 101. Forestry contestants competed against one another in tree, insect and disease identification, as well as showed off their skills at volume estimation, and compass and pacing. The top scorers in the day’s event were: Sadie Meshell and Aaron Henderson (Sabine), Alex Smith (Lafayette) and Gabriel McDaniel (Natchitoches). Youth competing in the Environmental Threats contest were tasked with researching and reporting on invasive species, including the genetics of invasions. Dylan Constantine and Robert ‘Trey’ Toups (Vermillion Parish) comprised the top ranked team, and Ashley Reddicks and Chelsea Sutherland (Ascension Parish) were the first runners up.

The event was a huge success for all involved.

Arborist Continuing Education

2011 has been a big year for Arborist Continuing Education in Louisiana. We have a new slate for the Continuing Education Community Advisory Group. New members include Jamie Montgomery, Donavan Guilbeau, Donna Ziegler, Darren Green, Patrick Sigur, Rory Primes, Steven Hoover and Zhu Hua Ning. The next big change for the arborists was the move to online registration. Now participants have the option of going online to see a listing for all workshops offered during the year. Over 700 individuals have participated in arborist workshops this year. These professional tree care specialists have participated and learned inexpensive and simple methods for evaluating trees for risk and hazard (prior to removal) and the newest in legal issues pertaining to landscape and trees.

Continuing Logger Education

Extension Specialists Hallie Dozier and Don Reed also worked closely with the Louisiana Forestry Association to develop and deliver multiple classes for the Continuing Logger Education (CLE) program on the topic of invasive species. In particular the classes focused on wild hogs and cogon grass. These classes were very well received by all.

Tour des Trees

2011 will be the sixth Tour des Trees for Dr. Hallie Dozier. The STIHL Tour des Trees is the signature public awareness and fundraising event that supports the mission of the TREE (Tree Research and Education Endowment) Fund. The TREE Fund supports carefully chosen researchers around the world and awards scholarships to college students each year. In addition, the Tour’s outreach events help educate the public about the importance of good tree care and mobilize support for local tree programs. In 2010 Dozier raised $5,980 for the TREE Fund. This event is especially important to Dozier as she now serves as the chairman of the Research and Education Committee on the TREE fund board of trustees. The 2011 VA2DC Tour takes place in October and riders will cover 441 miles from Virginia Beach to Washington, D.C.

Hallie also led the second annual Velo Dendro S in Shreveport. Last November, beginner and expert cyclists – 87 children and adults – joined Dr. Dozier, Baton Rouge Advocates for Safe Streets, Shreveport Green and A Better Shreveport on a 14-mile ride across Shreveport’s Highland, Broadmoor and North Highland neighborhoods. These Shreveporters were able to learn about trees, plant and also admire trees of all sizes along the route. A meal and social followed the ride. What a fun way for folks to get out and have fun while learning about trees!

Show your support!
For contribution information call 225-578-4131 or complete the form on page 23.
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**Drew Fowler**, a master’s student working with Dr. King, is evaluating the effects of wetland and agricultural management on soil salinity and fertility at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico.

**Ali Fitzgerald** is a master’s student with Dr. Mike Kaller studying how saltwater barriers between rivers impact freshwater fishes in coastal Louisiana.

**Bruce Davis**, a doctoral student with Dr. Rohwer, shown holding Mottled Duck eggs from a nest on the Atchafalaya Delta. Much of his field work was in an airplane radio-tracking marked ducks for studies of survival and habitat use in coastal Louisiana and Texas.

**April Newman** studies hydrologic processes, including subsurface flow and evaporation, in forested wetlands. She is working on her doctoral degree with Dr. Richard Keim.

**Blain Cerame**, a master’s student with Dr. Taylor, is studying Bachman’s Sparrows to discover whether the fragmentation of long leaf pine habitat reduces genetic exchange between isolated populations.

**Yu-Hsin Hseuh** is working toward her doctoral degree with Dr. Chambers using stable isotope analysis of tree water content to determine if freshwater sources enable plants to grow and survive in saline habitats.

**Rafael Cuevas-Uribe** working in Puerto Rico on a project to conserve germplasm from a threatened elkhorn coral. Rafael is a doctoral student with Dr. Tiersch.

**Emma DeLeon**, a master’s student with Dr. Phil Stouffer, is detailing the habitat requirements of Rusty Blackbirds, a declining species that winters in Louisiana wetlands. Here she surveys birds in Sherburne Wildlife Management Area.

**Brett Miller** is investigating the mix of species and the food habits of sunfishes and bass in the Atchafalaya Basin, as well as the effects of the annual flood pulse on fish movements. Brett is working on a master’s degree with Dr. Kelso.
Anthony Rietl recently initiated work on his doctoral degree with Dr. Andy Nyman and will examine how disturbance influences the sequencing of different plant communities in coastal wetlands.

Anil Kizhakkepura, doctoral student, is working with Dr. de Hoop on evaluating biomass supplies. Here, Anil is collecting time-and-motion data at a logging site.

Runzhou Huang is an exchange doctoral student from China (Nanjing Forestry University) working with Dr. Wu in the Forest Products Development Center. Their work is on wood-plastic composites.

Roger Smithhart is a master’s student working with Dr. Rich Vlosky on bio-based business opportunities for Louisiana forest landowners and agricultural producers.

Josh Patterson is a doctoral student with Dr. Christopher Green working on reproductive physiology in Gulf Killifish, a commercially and ecologically important species for the Gulf Coast.

Abram DaSilva, a master’s student under Dr. Jun Xu, is taking stream measurements as part of his assessment of the efficacy of forestry BMPs for protection of water quality.

Rafael Cuevas-Uribe working in Puerto Rico on a project to conserve germplasm from a threatened elkhorn coral. Rafael is a doctoral student with Dr. Tiersch.

Xinan Zhang is a doctoral student with Dr. Todd Shupe. Xinan is examining termicidal chemicals produced by endophytic fungi from Eastern red cedar.

Yu-Hsin Hseuh is working toward her doctoral degree with Dr. Chambers using stable isotope analysis of tree water content to see if freshwater sources may preferentially enable plants to grow and survive in saline habitats.
Problem Fish Become Solution for Haitians in Need

Asian carp have gained notoriety for overtaking the Illinois River, which connects the Mississippi River to Lake Michigan. Closer to home, the invasive fish have made inroads into the lower Mississippi, Red and Ouachita rivers and the Atchafalaya Basin. These filter feeders are now a common incidental catch in the hoop nets of Louisiana’s commercial freshwater fishermen. Two species – the silver and bighead carp – also happen to be delicious, but there are numerous challenges in establishing a market for their flaky, white flesh.

Silver carp commonly reach 20 pounds or more; bighead carp often exceed 40 pounds. They grow rapidly and can out-compete native fish for food and habitat. Additionally, silver carp pose a threat to humans when they are disturbed by boat motors and leap from the water. Videos of startled carp flying through the air and striking unwary boaters are popular Internet fodder. Now, it appears the problem fish have the potential to become a solution for earthquake weary Haitians. In an innovative pilot project, RNR has successfully produced canned Asian carp pleasing to the Haitian palate. Ultimately, the product could deliver a high-quality protein to people in need, be a boon to fishermen, provide a new opportunity for canneries and reduce the population of an unwanted invasive species.

The project began when Fisheries Specialist Dr. Julie Anderson with Louisiana Sea Grant and the LSU AgCenter met Bill Horan, Operation Blessing International’s president and chief operating officer. Operation Blessing is a non-denominational Christian humanitarian organization providing disaster aid in the United States and 23 other countries. It focuses on hunger relief, clean water and medical care. The group did extensive work in Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina, and Horan and Anderson were introduced at an event celebrating Operation Blessings’ efforts to help New Orleans area soft-shell crab producers rebuild their shedding facilities.

The test run produced about 75 cans of fish. Anderson sent bighead and silver carp packed with and without sauce, and Operation Blessing workers delivered them to St. Damien Pediatric Hospital in Port-Au-Prince. The four fish preparations were sampled by about 20 people. David Darg, Operation Blessing’s director of Disaster Relief reported, “We had the cooks from the hospital in on the test, and they were very impressed. The conclusion is that they could serve this to people breakfast, lunch and dinner with no complaints.”

The fish was a hit, and Operation Blessing would like to move forward by purchasing enough canned carp to fill a 40-foot shipping container. It’s a tall order that Louisiana Sea Grant and the LSU AgCenter are now working to meet. “It was great to connect with Bill and Operation Blessing. This is an exciting opportunity to use an underutilized and sometimes misunderstood fish to feed people in need,” Anderson said. “We quickly marshaled resources at LSU to create this pilot project. We are now looking for ways to expand production.”

“At this point, the 40-foot container is our next ‘sample,’” Anderson explained. “Operation Blessing will collect some data for us and themselves about shelf life, how widely it’s received, basic nutrition and ways it’s served. As long as it all goes well, then they will plan to continue the project into the future and possibly into the domestic food bank area.” Now all that is needed is to find a canning company willing to work on the project.
Dr. Taylor Attends Danish Conference

Dr. Taylor attended the Fourth International Symposium on Biomolecular Archeaology in Copenhagen, Denmark in September 2010. The conference covered the latest in ancient DNA techniques and advances in several fields, including molecular ecology (her area of interest), climate change, forensics and archaeology. Dr. Taylor presented preliminary data on high Arctic Peary caribou, which showed that there have been genetic changes over the last 100 years as the species has declined.

Dr. Shupe Hosts Chinese Scientists

Dr. Todd Shupe had two visiting scholars from China working in his lab this year. Dr. Zhen An is a professor at Inner Mongolia Agricultural University in Huhehaote, Inner Mongolia. He works on wood engineering aspects of treated wood recycling.

Dr. Hang Chen is an associate professor with the Department of Bio-technology, Research Institute of Resource Insects, International Fungi Research and Development Center in Kunming, Yunnan. He has been conducting research on entophytic fungi associated with the Formosan termite.

Teaching Wetland Hydrology in Malaysia

In June, Dr. Richard Keim travelled to Penang, Malaysia to teach hydrology as part of an international wetlands course for young researchers and professionals in southeast Asia. The course was the Ninth Regional Training Course on Wetland Ecology and Management in the Lower Mekong Basin, which is the most recent in a series of courses that rotates annually among universities in the region of the Mekong River. Students attended from Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, China, Japan and Malaysia.

The course, hosted this year by Universiti Sains Malaysia, was a three-week program that included classroom instruction, field instruction, hands-on field experience, data analysis, and synthesis of the ecological, physical, and sociological dimensions of several wetlands in Malaysia. This interdisciplinary approach challenges students to expand beyond their own areas of expertise to grapple with the complex problems facing wetland management. The wetlands of the Mekong region are particularly important ecologically and sociologically.

The course examined several different kinds of wetlands: coastal mangroves, a peat-swamp forest in the flood plain of a small river of the coastal plain, and a narrow riparian wetland and small stream in the lowland foothills of Malaysia’s Main Range of mountains. One remarkable aspect of this course was the wildlife: heavy use of riparian wetlands along the small stream meant that students worked in elephant tracks and inventoried wild ginger plants along the stream that are a favorite food of elephants. Luckily, no elephants arrived to take their lunch at the same time as the class!

Students from Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia dig a soil pit in a sandbar along Sungai Enam in Perak, Malaysia.

Students plant mangroves (Rhizophora apiculata) at Matang Mangrove Forest Reserve, Perak, Malaysia.
International Crossings

International Student Contributes to Whooping Crane Conservation

In 2007, Dr. Sammy King received funds to study food availability at White Lake Wetland conservation area near Gueydan, La., to determine if the site was suitable for a reintroduction of Whooping Cranes. Dr. King began an international search for the best doctoral student possible and Sung-Ryong “Jackie” Kang from Busan, South Korea rose to the top. Jackie’s research results were instrumental in the approval of the recent reintroduction of Whooping Cranes to southwestern Louisiana. His dissertation research evaluated the effects of salinity, flooding patterns, vegetation and other habitat characteristics on fish and wetland invertebrate abundance. He collected, sorted and identified over 42,900 wetland invertebrates and 32,000 fish and crustaceans during his study. His results indicate that food is not a limiting factor, although the availability of fish and invertebrates do vary seasonally. His research will also make a significant contribution to our understanding of wetland invertebrate communities in freshwater marshes.

Jackie’s immediate plans are to secure a post-doctoral position in the U.S., but ultimately have an academic position in South Korea and to develop a wetlands and waterbird education and research program. He feels that his graduate education from RNR has equipped him to meet these challenges. “My classes provided me with both an understanding of the general background of ecosystems and the practical application of the information learned within these classes to real world systems.”

MOU between LSU AgCenter and KFRI

In June, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and Korea Forest Research Institute (KFRI) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for furthering international co-operation in research and education. The institute was originally the Forest Experiment Station before reorganizing into the current name in 1987.

In 2002, Sunyoung Lee received his doctorate in forestry under Dr. Qinglin Wu and acquired a position as a research scientist at KFRI. Drs. Wu and Lee currently collaborate in the field of wood-plastic composites and nano-cellulose composites and have developed plans for future collaborative work.

The mission of KFRI is to develop technologies that sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests for both present and future generations. KFRI is a comprehensive research institute with 282 personnel in the Research and Development Sector, including 162 researchers with doctoral degrees. Currently, there is on-going research collaboration with universities and institutes in the U.S.A., Japan, Canada, China, Finland, Russia, Austria and Sweden, among others.

In May, Dr. Chang traveled to Taiwan to serve as a member of the academic assessment team to review the teaching and research program at the School of Forestry and Resource Conservation, National Taiwan University. He then traveled to Xishuangbanna, in Yunnan Province, China, to determine the cost of restoring rubber plantations to tropical rainforests. In addition to environmental benefits, rainforest restoration efforts are intended to expand the habitat for wild Asian elephants to ensure their survival and accommodate their future population growth.

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In the Classroom

RNR Students Assist Coastal Restoration Efforts

Since its inception in spring 2004, students enrolled in RNR 3108 (Case Studies in Habitat Restoration) have studied and visited restoration projects in Louisiana’s prairies and coastal marshes. RNR 3108 also gained a service-learning component, where students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs. Through this process, students gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation for the discipline and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Students enrolled in the course provide service to agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF).

The RNR 3108 students traveled to the Breton National Wildlife Refuge (WWR) to collect black mangrove seedlings that they subsequently cultivated on campus. Breton NWR encompasses the Chandeleur Islands and is the second oldest refuge in the federal system (established in 1904). Black mangrove is the only salt-tolerant, flood-tolerant tree native to coastal Louisiana. It is commonly planted as part of barrier island restoration projects with seeds that come almost exclusively from marshes near Grand Isle and Cocodrie, La., where black mangroves are easily accessible.

RNR 3108 students collected seeds from the Chandeleur Islands because those seeds may have different genetic characteristics than black mangroves elsewhere and because hurricanes, subsidence and natural processes eventually will eliminate those barrier islands.

The students also traveled to the marshes at the very end of the Mississippi River at Louisiana’s Pass A Loutre Wildlife Management Area. Students planted seeds on the sand bar at the east end of Pass A Loutre and monitored survival of a previous mangrove planting organized by RNR alumni Matt Huber in 2009. The goal of planting black mangroves at the mouth of the Mississippi River is to create a seed source of black mangrove that can expand as those wetlands become more saline. Salinity there is anticipated to increase because freshwater and sediment inflows are projected to decrease when large-scale wetland restoration projects are constructed further upstream on the river.

Students Learn About Trees and Woody Plants of the World

During the 2011 spring semester, Dr. Jim Chambers offered a “Trees of the World” course to School of Renewable Natural Resource undergraduate and graduate students. Students learned about commercial and culturally important characteristics of trees and woody plants from around the globe.

While the course was primarily based on internet search results, students took it upon themselves to bring samples of wood, wood products or other items to illustrate the unique characteristics of their chosen tree species. One student even brought the fruit of the infamous Durian tree for the others to taste; some liked it, some tolerated it and some would not try it (smells really bad).

The students explored trees famous for their size, unusual appearance or traits, cultural or mythic prominence and commercial importance. The presentations covered endangered species, invasive species, ecological settings and even mythic forest species. The course also covered mangroves, rainforests, treed savannas, temperate forests, boreal forests and mountain forests. The students demonstrated unique approaches to presentations, including videos, music and even a comparison of U.S. trees to counterparts in the rest of the world.

Overall, the students and professor alike were exposed to a plethora of information regarding trees and forests of the world. The course covered over 80 species and an “e-book” was developed for the students to keep.

School of Renewable Natural Resources

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In the Classroom

Wetlands from Mississippi to the Rio Grande
by Karen Doerr
Doctoral Student

Drs. Sammy King, Richard Keim and their spring semester Floodplain Ecology graduate class spent seven days visiting wetland sites in Mississippi, Arkansas and Tennessee. King and Keim’s summer semester Wetlands of the Rio Grande graduate class spent nine days studying in the arid southwest of Colorado and New Mexico. Students received hands-on lessons in practical applications for managing wetlands in different climates, hydrology and soils.

The Floodplain Ecology trip began at Steele Bayou Drainage Structure on the Yazoo River in Mississippi. Students then traveled to the Delta National Forest. A highlight of the day was a walk in the Delta National Forest, where students wandered through a forest of some of the oldest sweetgum trees in the Southeast.

Students were escorted by Chris Bridges, with The Nature Conservancy in Tennessee, to view his project at Crooked Creek, where one mile of channelized stream has been restored to two miles of meanders.

Dr. Henry Langston, a soil scientist, accompanied the class for several days. Langston helped interpret the geology and soils of the Crowley’s Ridge region of Arkansas. Both he and students took soil samples and discussed the geomorphology of the region.

The final stop of the floodplain ecology trip was at Five Oaks duck lodge in Stuttgart, Ark. Jody Pagan, chief biologist, gave a tour of the property, leading the class through areas managed for waterfowl, migratory birds, wading birds, turkeys and deer. Pagan applies the philosophy that managing habitat with a long-term systems perspective will enhance wetland habitats and waterfowl populations.

The Wetlands of the Rio Grande trip was an equally valuable experience. The class hiked through both desert and wetlands. A visit with Greg Higel, land manager of the Higel Centennial Wetland Project, led to a discussion of water rights, a somewhat foreign concept for some of us from the southeast. Water is a valuable resource in this area, so the politics of water rights makes the job of a land manager like Higel difficult.

The stop at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge was one of
In the Classroom

the most memorable experiences of the trip. Guides John Vradenburg and Ashley Inslee, wildlife biologists with USFWS, were gracious and knowledgeable. Bosque del Apache is an expansive refuge of about 57,000 acres in Socorro County.

In 1991 Dr. Robert Chabreck taught it and renamed it Ecology and Management of Wetland Wildlife. In the fall of 2010, it was offered for the first time since Dr. Chabreck retired. Now, RNR 4013, the class retains a focus on disturbance and succession of ecology in wetlands, but is not limited to marshes as it also addresses forested wetlands.

There were 14 students and several field trips, including an overnight trip to the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON). Field trips were supplemented by speakers from nongovernmental organizations as well as state and federal resource management agencies. Drs. King and Nyman intend to offer RNR 4013 every even fall semester.

A Special Thanks

Sara Simonds is easily recognized as a special person. Sara is a deeply committed conservationist who developed a love for the outdoors through a passion for waterfowl hunting she shared with her husband. Although she no longer hunts, Sara travels all over the world working on a variety of conservation projects. She is an avid birder, participates in coastal prairie restoration and is deeply engaged in the Whooping Crane reintroduction project in Louisiana, where she serves on the fundraising committee. Sara has spearheaded the building of over 10 prison chapels, and for the last few years she and friends have met every plane coming and going from Fort Polk to Iraq and Afghanistan with apple pies. Sara has been a cherished and generous supporter of RNR students, providing funds for Whooping Crane research, as well as travel funds for graduate student’s field trips to western wetlands. We express our appreciation to Sara for her support of RNR and natural resource conservation, as well as her commitment to the people of Louisiana. Thank you Sara!

Ecology and Management of Wetland Wildlife Resumes a Regular Schedule

In 1957 Game Management 124 (Fur Animal Management) was taught when muskrat and nutria trapping were economically important; as such it focused on disturbance and succession ecology of marshes. The description in the course catalog read “Management of fur animals with emphasis on marsh species.” The class was renamed as a wildlife class.

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RNR Creates Departmental Honors Courses

RNR students enrolled in the Honors College occasionally have trouble finding enough honors courses to satisfy their science requirements, a problem that has become widespread among other Honors College students majoring in the sciences. RNR responded with the creation of four departmental honors courses. These courses are based on existing courses, but include additional responsibilities and time in the classroom. Honors courses are Natural Resource Conservation (RNR 1070), Ecology of Renewable Natural Resources (RNR 2070), Introduction to Renewable Natural Resources Policy (RNR 2071) and Principles of Wildlife Management (RNR 2072).

Dr. Rohwer taught RNR 1070 this semester and Dr. Kelso will teach it from now on. It is open only to students enrolled in the Honors College. Dr. Stouffer will offer RNR 2070 for the first time next fall and each fall thereafter. RNR 2071 and 2072 will first be offered in spring 2013 and will be offered each spring thereafter by Dr. Rohwer or Dr. Nyman.

RNR 2070, 2071 and 2072 are open to students enrolled in the Honors College as well as to RNR students with exceptional GPA’s with permission of the instructors. In addition to being
In the Classroom

useful to RNR students concurrently enrolled in the Honors College, the Honors College hopes that these classes will encourage RNR students with exceptional GPAs to enroll in the Honors College during their freshman or sophomore year. The Honors College realizes that many qualified students overlook the Honors College when applying to LSU. To graduate with College Honors on a diploma, students take honors courses, independent learning courses and complete an undergraduate thesis project. RNR students with a 3.5 GPA after completing at least one semester are eligible to enroll in the Honors College. Contact Michael Blandino, Director of Student Services, at the Honors College for more information in applying for admission.

Student News

Wood Products Student Wins SWST Poster Award

Xianglin Zhai won the second place award for this year’s Student Poster Competition sponsored by the Society of Wood Science and Technology (SWST) on June 23 in Portland, Ore. This competition recognizes and honors the most outstanding graduate student research and poster presentation in the field of wood science and technology. The title of the poster was “Preparation of Hydrophobic CaCO$_3$-wood Composite in situ.” Zhai received a $250 honorarium and a plaque.

The first Student Poster Competition was presented in 1995 and has been given annually since its inception. This is the first time a first or second place winner for this award has been from LSU. Congratulations to Xianglin!

Graduate Students Help Evangeline Area Council, Boy Scouts of America

Yu-Hsin Hsueh, a Taiwanese student pursuing a doctorate in forestry, and Som Bohora, a Nepalese student completing his master’s in forestry, assisted the boy scouts in learning about natural resources and the Atchafalaya Basin. They quizzed the scouts on various plants, animals, tree ages, interesting tidbits related to forestry, wildlife, fisheries and other aspects of renewable natural resources. They answered numerous questions and talked about the school’s undergraduate programs and career opportunities. RNR’s two graduate students learned much about scouting and some of Louisiana’s traditions and culture. Good food and good music resulted in both a fun, as well as educational experience, for all.

Tiger Chapter Recognized as Region II Committee-of-the-Year

RNR students form the nucleus of the Tiger Chapter of Ducks Unlimited at LSU. Ducks Unlimited is a leader in wetland conservation, helping protect and restore over 346,000 acres in Louisiana and over 12 million acres across North America. Our spring banquet featured live music by 484 South, drew 115 members and netted over $11,000 for wetland conservation. The event was co-chaired by Mitchell Buffington, Bruce Davis (doctoral student in wildlife), Dexter Courville (RNR undergraduate in forestry management), Seth Hatsfelt, Rebecca Harper and Jessica Owens. Luke Laborde (doctoral student in wildlife) serves as committee chair and chapter advisor.

In 2010, the Tiger Chapter was recognized as the Region II Committee-of-the-Year by Louisiana Ducks Unlimited. Plans for the upcoming year include restoration of a marsh, a sporting clays event and the annual banquet.

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Xi Sigma Pi Apple Seminar

Dr. John Toliver, retired deputy station director of the Rocky Mountain Research Station, USDA Forest Service, gave a talk at the Xi Sigma Pi Apple Pie Seminar in February 2011. From 2005 to 2006, he was research coordinator for Forest Service Research and Development in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. His talk was titled “Impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the South—Lessons Learned: Are We Prepared for the Next One?” Afterward, Dr. Toliver, an avid photographer, showed pictures from his photo collections, taken over the years as his career carried him from Louisiana to Mississippi, Washington, D.C. and finally Colorado. He taught silviculture at RNR from 1976 to 1988 and now resides near Toledo Bend Lake, La.

RNR Forestry Students Attend Conclave in Georgia

Twelve RNR forestry students competed in the 54th annual Southern Forestry Conclave hosted by the University of Georgia in March 2011. Attending were Billy Dahmen, Courtney Staudermann, Nathan Yeldell, Taylor Simoneaux, Jason Waguespack, Carolyn Haworth, Nicole Krieg, Greg Marshall, Hannah Plaisance, Jake Barrington and Zach Herrington. They were accompanied by Dr. Niels de Hoop and graduate students Ray Olson and Levi Horrell. Of the 15 schools competing, RNR placed 11th in the technical events and 10th in the physical events, for an overall placing of 12th. Bragging rights include: first place in wildlife identification (Taylor Simoneaux and Zach Herrington), second place in timber estimation and axe throw (both by Billy Dahmen), fourth place in pole felling (Taylor Simoneaux) and first place in a non-point event (Jason Waguespack). A special thanks to the folks at UGA who ordered perfect weather and hosted a great conclave on a beautiful spot beside the Oconee River. In return RNR hosted a well received crawboil.

Active year for Aquaculture and Fisheries Club (AFC)

After many years of excellent service, Dr. Michael Kaller stepped down as faculty advisor in spring 2011. His position will be filled by Dr. Julie Anderson, who joins Dr. Christopher Green as faculty advisors. Once again in 2010-2011, AFC members were engaged in community service, scholarship and the club’s traditional social events.

The club had members present at both Ocean Commotion and the AgCenter’s AgMagic, two events which presented opportunities to interact with Baton Rouge area school children by providing a positive introduction to natural resources management and aquaculture. AFC continued its partnership with the Baton Rouge Kiwanis Club, selling pancake breakfast tickets to benefit Kiwanis and giving presentations at two Kiwanis meetings about aquaculture and fisheries research at the Aquaculture Research Station and RNR. AFC members also participated in a clean-up of University Lake in fall 2010. To enhance the academic experience the club provided two undergraduates from RNR with registration fees to attend the Louisiana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society meeting. The traditional AFC spring crawfish boil became a fish fry in 2011 due to higher than normal crawfish prices.
Dr. William Conner is internationally known and respected for his research on wetland forests. He is currently assistant director and professor of the Baruch Institute of Coastal Ecology and Forest Science at Clemson University. His research interests include freshwater and salt water associated forested wetlands; wetland management; wetland creation and restoration; effects of people and nature on natural environments; dendrochronology; wetlands for wastewater treatment, estuarine/upland connections; changing land-use impacts on natural systems; and historical ecology. He continues to do research throughout the South. William began his education with a B.S. in biology at Virginia Tech.; obtained his master’s in marine sciences at LSU and completed his doctorate in forestry at LSU under Dr. John R. Toliver.

Dr. Conner began his academic career as an assistant professor - research, Coastal Ecology Institute, LSU 1989 to 1990; then became an assistant professor, Clemson University, Baruch Institute of Coastal Ecology and Forest Science, 1990 to 1994. He was promoted to associate professor in 1994, to professor in 1999 and to assistant director in 2006.

His experience and productivity includes: Outstanding Dissertation in the College of Agriculture in 1989; the Taking Wing Award: awarded by USDA Forest Service for Collaborative Research of Iatt Creek Ecosystem in 2000; and the Clemson University Board of Trustees 2000 Award for Faculty Excellence. He has garnered over $2,000,000 in research grants and contracts, authored or edited over 25 books and book chapters, nearly 60 refereed journal papers, and over eight other scientific papers and reports. He has given over 220 presentations as presenter or co-author.

In addition, Dr. Conner has served as associate editor of Wetlands from 1996-1998; chaired, co-chaired, organized or served as an officer in over 39 organizations; including the Program committee for Wetland Restoration; Addressing Asian Issues Through International Collaboration (2002 in Nanjing, China); as organizer and chair of Symposium on Effect of Climate and Sea Level Changes on Coastal Wetlands (Cairns, Australia 2006); and served on the Louisiana Governor’s Coastal Wetland Forest Conservation and Use Science Working Group from 2004 to 2005. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) 2007 and served as secretary-general SWS 2008 to 2011. He is a member of a number of professional and honor organizations.
Alumni News

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Got News?
The alumni news is compiled and written by Dr. Paul Burns. If you have any news items that you would like to share, please e-mail him at: pburns@tigers.lsu.edu.

Alumni Deaths

- Donald Louis Harper, B.S.F. ’48, died on May 28, 2011 at the age of 79. He was a native of Monticello, Ark. and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He was employed by Regions Bank for 30 years in Mobile, Ala., serving as vice-president and woodlands manager in the Trust Department. He was secretary of the southeast section of the Society of American Foresters. He is survived by his wife, two sons and five grandchildren.

- Harold Logan “Pat” Molloy, B.S.F. ’39, died in 2011 in Crosby, Miss. He was the owner of Molloy Timber Co. and he was married and had three children.

- Robert E. Noble, B.S.F. ’57, M.S. in game management ’58, Ph.D. Michigan State, died on November 10, 2010, at the age of 75, in Crockett, Texas. Born in Mississippi, he was a veteran of the U.S. Army. Dr. Noble was a professor in wildlife and forestry at LSU for 28 years, until his retirement. He traveled extensively in Alaska in his wildlife studies. He received the National Amoco Foundation Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching. In 2009 he was inducted into the Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Alumni Association Hall of Fame.

- Michael E. “Mickey” Richardson, B.S.F. ’67, died July 13, 2011, at age 65, at his home in Holden, La. Born in Baton Rouge, he was a state-registered forester and worked for Cajun Contractors. He was an Army and Air National Guard veteran.

- Milton E. Robinowitz, B.S.F. ’42, died in 2011 in Richmond, Texas. He was a self-employed rancher and implement dealer in Richmond. He had three children. During his senior year at LSU he was president of the forestry club and an officer in honorary fraternities Alpha Zeta and Xi Sigma Pi.

School of Renewable Natural Resources

Contact Director Allen Rutherford for more information concerning contributions to the School of Renewable Natural Resources at 225-578-4131 or drutherford@agcenter.lsu.edu.
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