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Newsletter of the White Oak Bayou Wetland Management Plan

Wetland Management Plan Update

Current developments, meeting updates, and future plans



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Important Dates:

- March 12— Steering Committee Meeting; Jess Odom Community Center, 3:00—4:30 pm
- March 13—Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
- March 19 thru 21— Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) annual meeting in Shepherdstown, WV
- May 20 thru 23—Hydric soils class, contact John Turner (501) 682-1608 john.turner@arkansas.gov

Story Ideas? Want to be put on the mailing list? Contact us at
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Spring is just around the corner, and exciting things are happening regarding the Wetland Management Plan (WMP). The Steering Committee has started putting together plans for a series of public workshops starting in May 2013. There will be several dates for each workshop that will allow flexibility for as many attendees as possible. This will be a great opportunity to provide public awareness about the project and also get important feedback from the public to aid in crafting the WMP. Stay tuned for more information as the first workshop date approaches.

Other upcoming events include a presentation that will be given at the annual meeting for the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) meeting later this month. This is a by invitation meeting only, and is a great opportunity to share information about the project on a national platform. This will also be a great way to gain input from wetland professionals around the nation who have a great breadth of knowledge and experience in wetland management strategies.

Later this summer, a 90 minute webinar will be conducted for the project for ASWM members. Following the webinar, the presentation will be available to the public as well. The webinar will be held July 24th, 3:00 Eastern Standard Time.

Something that will be very useful for both of the aforementioned events will be the recently completed HGM subclass map. Completion of this map was contingent on floodplain data for the upper watershed which was provided by the City of North Little Rock. Additional review of the early draft by the TAC lead to some refinement of the map and can now be used as a helpful tool for discussing the project in a public setting.

In addition to discussions about the mapping itself, the TAC has been working diligently on a management strategy for wetlands within the watershed from a scientific perspective. Discussions have centered on the importance of the various types of wetlands, how mitigation might work at the watershed level, and how all of this might tie in with a Regional General Permit being developed by the Army Corps

of Engineers, Little Rock District.

Once the TAC has completed their discussions on a wetland management strategy, their recommendations will be provided to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee can then utilize this information along with social and economic factors to craft the draft WMP.

Currently, the Steering Committee has been discussing items such as getting the word out for the public workshops, how to go about starting a watershed advisory group (WAG) or watershed specific non-profit group in the future, project timelines, and future funding. They will be meeting again on March 12th to discuss how to structure the upcoming workshops, fine tuning logistical details, and continuing discussions on how to get the word out to the public.

Item of note; for anyone interested in wetland soils, there is a hydric soils class being offered May 20th thru 23rd through the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission. If interested, see Important Dates box to left for contact information. There is limited space, so act soon!

Wetland Ecology: Tiny Flowers

Exploring the functions and values of wetlands in the ecosystem

Look down! You can explore a whole new world if you take the time to look for it. Spring is a great time to look for some of Arkansas' tiniest and earliest-blooming flowers.

Don't forget to look up, too. Some of those tiny flowers can be found on trees, particularly elms and maples. These flowers are pollinated by the wind, so they aren't showy from afar, but take a closer look and you will discover they have a unique beauty of their own.

Clockwise from upper left: buttonweed, a common little wildflower that grows in moist areas; spring beauty, with its bright pink petal veins; bluet, which is less 1/4" wide; male flowers of the red maple; Johnny jump-up, a violet; and elm flowers. Photos by Sara Owen.



Wetland Trivia

Did you know some of the flowers featured on this page are edible? Candied violets are used to decorate cakes and other desserts. How do they do it? The violets are coated with egg white, then sprinkled with sugar. Alternatively, you could just throw some fresh violets on a salad!

Plant of the Month: Shooting Star

Featuring plants, animals and other critters in your area

Scientific Name:

Dodecatheon meadia

Although the lovely shooting star prefers well-drained soil and won't be found growing in a wetland, you might find it growing in the shade surrounding a wetland.

The flowers are about 1 inch long and white, rose, or lavender in color. The 5 petals point backward, leaving the protruding stamens to stick out like a point. The leaves are basal, and surround the long, bare flower stalk.

The flowers are pollinated by bees,

which grab hold of the petals and vibrate the flowers by buzzing their wings. This releases the pollen for the bees to gather. This unique pollination technique is referred to as "buzz pollination." All members of the genus *Dodecatheon* are pollinated in this way. Not all bees use buzz pollination—honeybees rarely use it. It is more common in bumblebees or other solitary bees.

This species is found primarily east of the Mississippi River, although its range does extend into the southern Great Plains.

Shooting stars begin blooming in April and continue through June.



The backwards-pointing petals and protruding stamens make shooting stars look like badminton birdies! Photo by Sara Owen.