

ALABAMA'S

TREASURED FORESTS

A Publication of the Alabama Forestry Commission



Spring 2021



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The Alabama TREASURE Forest Association is dedicated to promoting good forest stewardship, educating others about responsible forest management and improving the forests of our state and nation. These lands are managed for many resources, including wildlife habitat, pine and hardwood timber, clean water, recreation opportunities and beautiful scenery. When utilizing a multiple-use management strategy, all of the benefits a forest provides are enhanced.

We are passionate about making our land better for the next generation. In a very real way, the future of Alabama's forests rests in the hands of landowners and like-minded individuals who support good forest stewardship. You can be a part of that effort. Purchase an "I'd rather be in the woods!" tag and support education and outreach efforts to raise awareness about the wonderful possibilities of sustainable land management.



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On the Cover:
Cumberland Azalea
(*Rhododendron cumberlandense*),
a species found in the forests
of Alabama's Appalachian
Mountains.

Photo by Cole Sikes

This publication is provided at no charge to the forest landowners of Alabama, with a circulation of approximately 14,000. Published quarterly, the magazine is filled with forestry information and technical assistance designed to assist landowners in making informed decisions about the management practices they apply to their land. Articles and photographs are contributed by AFC employees and other forestry or natural resources professionals.

Alabama's TREASURED Forests magazine is also available on-line! www.forestry.alabama.gov



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The publication of a story or article in this magazine does not constitute the Alabama Forestry Commission's endorsement of that particular practice, product, or company, but is an effort to provide forest landowners of Alabama with information and technical assistance to make informed decisions about the management practices they apply to their land.

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Message from the *STATE FORESTER*

Recently we received a question from a landowner regarding membership in the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA), the Alabama Farmers Federation (Alfa), and the TREASURE Forest program. I want to try to clear up the distinctions between these organizations/programs.

This landowner's question arose when his check for ATFA membership dues was returned because he had not concurrently paid dues to Alfa. The gentleman did not understand why he must be a member of Alfa in order to be a 'TREASURE Forest' owner. Hopefully this letter will clarify that you can be a TREASURE Forest landowner yet not belong to either ATFA or Alfa.

Back in the 1970s, the Alabama Forestry Commission along with the Alabama Forestry Planning Committee (now the Alabama Natural Resources Council or ANRC) created the TREASURE Forest program as a way to recognize landowners who went 'above and beyond' in the way they cared for their forest land. The brainchild of former State Forester Bill Moody, TREASURE Forest has continued for nearly 50 years as the premier recognition program for Alabama forest landowners.

In the 1990s under the guidance of State Forester Tim Boyce, the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association was established as an independent organization to support TREASURE Forest owners. Although the association was not directly connected to the TREASURE Forest program, TREASURE Forest landowners were encouraged to join the ATFA as a way to help them better manage their property.

A landowner does not have to be a certified TREASURE Forest owner to join the ATFA. They have membership categories for landowners who aspire to receive this certification but aren't there yet. Also, non-landowners who support the mission and goals of the ATFA can join as well.

In 2014, the executive director of the ATFA retired, and their board of directors realized that to continue the Association, they needed help. Their leadership approached the Alabama Farmers Federation about becoming part of Alfa. This was a great fit for both organizations as their missions were similar, and there was considerable overlap between ATFA and Alfa membership.

In full disclosure, I was working at Alfa at this time and completely supported the merger. When all the pieces came together, I was appointed the new executive director of the ATFA. One of the terms of the merger was that Alfa would absorb many of the overhead costs that the ATFA routinely incurred. In exchange for paying those expenses, the ATFA board agreed that their members, if they weren't already, would become members of the Alabama Farmers Federation.

It took a couple of years to implement this requirement, but about the time I moved to the Forestry Commission and became state forester, the change took effect. Since that time in 2017, ATFA members have received a dues notice for both ATFA and Alfa. For various reasons, several people decided that they did not wish to join Alfa, so they resigned their ATFA membership. However, they continued to be TREASURE Forest owners. This situation was anticipated, so no one was surprised when ATFA membership numbers dropped slightly.

The Alabama Forestry Commission fully supports the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association and other landowner organizations. The ATFA offers many valuable services to forest landowners. In addition to being a strong supporter of the TREASURE Forest program, these benefits include free liability insurance for events held on a landowner's property, sponsoring many programs and meetings, providing funds for Classroom in the Forest and similar programs, as well as great educational and networking opportunities for landowners.

As you may know from my background, I fully support organizations that combine the strength of individual members to create a stronger voice which represents their interests. Whether it is the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association, the Alabama Farmers Federation, the Alabama Forestry Association, the Alabama Forest Owners Association, or the Alabama Wildlife Federation, all these organizations help make our state's landowners – and the industry their timber resources support – stronger. We cannot do it alone; we need the combination of members to improve forestry in Alabama.

I encourage you to take a look at the organizations listed above which represent forest landowners in Alabama. If you are not a member, consider joining one or several of them. They all do good things to make forestry better.



*Rick Oates,
State Forester*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Oates". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Anyone can receive the *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* magazine free of charge – without membership in either ATFA, Alfa, or even being a certified TREASURE Forest landowner!

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The Alabama Forestry Commission supports the Alabama Natural Resources Council's TREASURE Forest program. *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* magazine, published by the Alabama Forestry Commission, is intended to further encourage participation in and acceptance of this program by land-owners in the state, offering valuable insight on forest management according to TREASURE Forest principles. TREASURE is an acronym that stands for **T**imber, **R**ecreation, **E**nvironment, and **A**esthetics for a **S**ustained **U**sable **R**ESource.



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Revisiting "LITTLE NASHVILLE FARM"

By Coleen Vansant, Communications and Public Relations Manager, Alabama Forestry Commission

During the Alabama's *TREASURED Forests* magazine editorial board meeting last November, it was decided that we should revisit some of the past winners of the Helene Mosley Memorial *TREASURE* Forest Award to write a 'then and now' feature article, highlighting the accomplishments and changes that have taken place on their property over the years. When Jack McQuinn's name was mentioned as a potential revisit, I enthusiastically volunteered to write the story. Of all the *TREASURE* Forests that I've visited in the past 35 years, Little Nashville Farm in Jackson County is near and dear to my heart, and the man that is its owner and caretaker is equally special to me.

I was excited to call on Jack again at Little Nashville (named after a once thriving village adjacent to the property). I visited several times in the mid- and late-'90s, and again around 2001-2002. Every time I'm on the farm, I not only marvel at its beauty and great diversity but am also in awe of the hard work that has been put into reclaiming and improving what was once bare farmland.

The first thing I noticed when I drove through the gate on the morning of my visit was a fairly recent prescribed burn in a pine plantation to my left and a bee colony next to it that wasn't there before. I smiled and thought to myself, "Well . . . Jack's still at it."

This past spring, Jack celebrated his 94th birthday. You would never know by looking at him, or by hearing him talk about his

property and the many things he has done . . . or the things he plans on doing. His enthusiasm about his farm is infectious and inspiring. I enjoyed riding around with him again – and his trusty farm dog, Wiley, loping ahead of the SUV – just as we did almost 20 years ago (but with a different dog and I'll get to that later in the story), with Jack telling me about the thinning he has done, trees he has planted, and prescribed burning he has conducted. Remember the recent prescribed burn I mentioned earlier? Well, he and a friend did that by themselves this past February. Years ago, Jack participated in a Prescribed Burn Manager class and now he conducts his own prescribed burning. He and his friend burned approximately 175 acres this past winter.

After spending 32 years in the military (a little more than two years in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, and a little less than 30 in the U.S. Navy Reserve, where he retired as a Captain), Jack and his wife, Mary, located to Huntsville in the mid-1960s, where he started a construction company.

In August of 1984, Jack explains that he and Mary purchased the first 126 acres of land situated between the lazy Paint Rock River and Jacobs Mountain in western Jackson County for \$120 an acre, sight unseen. At the time, the only way to get to the property was a ford across the river where an old log landing was once located. He added that when he forded the river and got his first look at the property he had just purchased, "I wondered what I had gotten myself into."

(Opposite): Jack's faithful companion, Wiley, cools off in the Paint Rock River. Jack and Mary have approximately 2.5 miles of frontage where the lazy river winds through beautiful Paint Rock Valley in Jackson County.

Since that day, the farm has grown to a little over 1,000 acres comprising 12 adjoining tracts, becoming a showplace in the state as an example of multiple-use conservation practices. There are few people in the forestry, conservation, or wildlife industry in Alabama that do not recognize the name Jack McQuinn and Little Nashville Farm.

After purchasing the initial property, his first concern was stabilizing the soil in the fields that were prone to flooding from the Paint Rock River. For decade upon decade, the valley had been farmed in agricultural row crops. There were no trees to help stabilize the soil and prevent 'siltation' into the Paint Rock River, which led him to his first landowner assistance program. He used the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to plant these areas in pines. Over the years, Jack has continued to take advantage of CRP and the Forestry Incentive Program (FIP) to plant pines in sections of land in the Paint Rock Valley, which currently consists of approximately 175 acres of various ages of pine. The Forest Management Incentive (FMI) program has been used for prescribed burning, brush control, and thinning.

The CRP incentive was also used to establish grass buffer zones along the approximate 2½ miles of river frontage that Jack mows every year to keep it maintained, as well as to establish a duck pond in 2000.

With wildlife management being their primary TREASURE Forest objective, most of what Jack and Mary do on the property is geared towards that goal. Approximately 700 acres is in hardwood, the majority being second-to-fourth generation natural hardwoods located on Jacobs Mountain (elevation 1,588 feet) and in the beautiful Frazier Cove. He planted 26 acres of cherry bark and nutall oak in 1989, and 40 acres of water oak in 1990. Other plantations and plots (in various sizes) of wildlife-enticing hardwoods and shrubs include red, white, and sawtooth oak; crabapple; Chinese chestnuts; wild pecan; wild plum; bicolor lespedeza; redbud; dogwood; walnut; and yellow poplar. Much of this work was completed utilizing the Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP). Additionally, SIP has also been used over the years to install multiple wildlife green fields and other wildlife enhancement areas, while the federal Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) was used for quail management.

Even in March of this year, Jack was still planting for the future. He and a group of men that have lunch together on Fridays planted a small plot of persimmon trees. Jack laughed as he described the event as "a bunch of old guys in their 70s and 80s planting trees after lunch."

What once was almost void of wildlife is now teeming with numerous game and non-game wildlife species, including white-tail deer, dove, duck, turkey, squirrel, an occasional bear, and multiple varieties of songbirds. According to Jack, "We're over-run with deer."

With his background in the Navy and construction business, Jack says he knew very little about forest management when he started. He acknowledges it would have been hard to accomplish as much as he has without technical assistance from various natural resource agencies, as well as the cost-share assistance from



Landowner Jack McQuinn visits with AFC Jackson County Forester/Work Unit Manager Lynn Washington on the long and inviting front porch of the lodge at Little Nashville. Although wildlife and timber are Jack's management objectives, "porch sittin'" should also be in there somewhere.

various incentive programs. Over the years, the McQuinns have used the services of the Jackson County Farm Service Agency (FSA), the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC), and the Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (ADCNR).

Jack is quick to praise the staff of the Jackson County FSA along with the NRCS, crediting them for his successes at Little Nashville. "They've been great motivators for me," he explained. "They pushed me and guided me to do these things." However, he adds that "incentives only take you so far," explaining that even though he has received cost-share assistance over the years, a landowner is still responsible for all of the day-to-day maintenance and upkeep of the farm that such programs do not cover. That's where commitment and the love and belief in what you're doing take over.

On the flipside, representatives from the natural resource agencies Jack has used over the years hold him, along with the work he has done on Little Nashville Farm, in very high regard. Julia Crownover, Executive Director of the Jackson County FSA, says that Jack McQuinn has utilized more cost-share programs than any landowner in the county. "He makes the best use of cost-share programs available to him," she explained.

According to Julia, some landowners sign up for the program and then do not follow through with their commitments. But it's the opposite for Jack. "We don't have to worry about him with his management practices. Jack truly exemplifies being a good steward of the land."

Lynn Washington, Forester and Work Unit Manager with the Alabama Forestry Commission in Jackson County, comments that "Jack is a landowner you want to work with. He's always on for a project and always follows through."

Lynn noted that for years, Jack hosted the local 4th and 5th grade classes from nearby Paint Rock School for "Classroom in

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Revisiting "Little Nashville Farm"

(Continued from page 7)

the Forest,” and that numerous tours and events have been held at Little Nashville Farm including forestry field days and an Alfa Commodities Tour. “Jack makes your job a lot easier,” Lynn added. “You can count on him to help you do your job. He’s quite the gentleman.”

Aside from the wildlife and timber objectives, one of the greatest benefits for the McQuinns is having a place for their family and friends to gather. After a mobile home exploded from a gas leak (which Jack barely escaped), they built a log lodge for the family to congregate. The Paint Rock River provides swimming and fishing opportunities, while the forest management work sustains hunting. There are several intermittent streams, a waterfall, nature and hiking trails, a large picnic pavilion, and a campground. For the adventurous, there is a cave to visit on Jacobs Mountain.

Jack has also taken extra care in preserving historical sites on the farm including the rock remains of old homesteads from early settlers in the area, a rock overhang day-shelter used by early Native American hunters, as well as a Woodland Era (1,000 B.C.) Native American campsite where pottery shards and arrowheads have been found. One of the most unusual things is a large



Jack created this map of the boundaries of Little Nashville Farm.

limestone rock that holds marine fossils dating to the Paleozoic Era (350 million years ago).

And then for those folks that don’t want to do *anything*, there is a long porch on the lodge where you can just sit with your feet propped up, enjoying the quiet and always-changing seasonal beauty of the Paint Rock Valley and Little Nashville Farm.

All the hard work and commitment the McQuinns have put into Little Nashville has paid off. In December of 1994, just 10 years after purchasing the land, they earned TREASURE Forest certification. Three short years later in 1997, they were presented with the prestigious Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award. In 2004, the McQuinn family was named Tree Farmer of the Year for the Southeastern United States by the American Tree Farm System.

That same year, they were honored with the prestigious W. Kelly

Mosley Environmental Award for their work on Little Nashville. The Alabama Wildlife Federation recognized them in 2007 with the Forest Conservationist of the Year Award, and in 2011 with the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year Award.

According to Jack’s good friend, Alabama State Treasurer John McMillan, “Jack is a prime example that hard work, research, and innovation pay off.”



BEFORE

Young pines planted in 1990-1991 under the Conservation Reserve Program. This photo was taken by the author in 1997 while visiting Little Nashville Farm.



AFTER

The same stand in 2021. According to Jack, the pines have been thinned twice. It was wonderful to see and compare the changes that have taken place in almost 25 years.



Game and non-game wildlife is abundant in quantity, quality, and variety because of the many green fields that have been planted on the McQuinn farm in Jackson County.

He added that it's amazing what Jack has done with "washed out old row crop land." "He's constantly doing something to enhance his timber and wildlife management or some other aspect of his property," McMillan said. "He has truly created a unique place."

Mr. McMillan laughingly noted that he is most impressed with Jack's dogs. "He's the luckiest guy finding great dogs. They just show up . . . good farm dogs."

Jack is currently on his third dog that just appeared on his property. There has been Cody, Max, and his current canine companion, Wiley. When Wiley first arrived, he was in such poor condition that Jack didn't think he was going to make it through the night. But he did, and he's now Jack's constant companion when he's working on the farm. According to Jack (in reference to the dogs), "They all just volunteered."

Jack and Mary have spent almost 40 years building one of the most beautiful, productive, and diverse farms in the state, worthy of the highest honors in wildlife and forest conservation practices. I asked him why he didn't just prop his feet up and enjoy the benefits of his hard work. In the back of my mind, I already knew the answer to my question.

"It's just something that I want to do," he explained. "It's not something that I think about. It's just something that I enjoy doing."

While riding around the farm on the day of my visit, Jack explained that his next plans include burning some fields, doing some disking, and building up his all-weather road. "And then I might quit," he said with a grin. 🙏



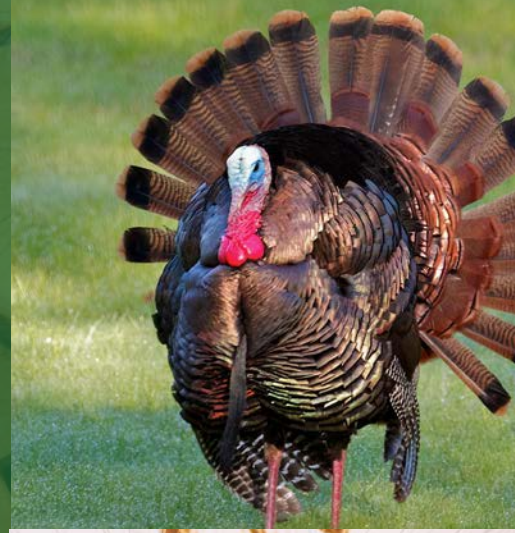
Jack McQuinn and Coleen Vansant in current day after revisiting "Little Nashville Farm."



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The Sweet Reward of Caring for *Honey Bees*

By Billy Carlisle, Southwest Region Fire Specialist,
Alabama Forestry Commission

It's a name and face you may recognize . . . Richard Scott is a well-known television meteorologist on WVUA 23 in Tuscaloosa. But did you know he is also a young forest landowner, family man, and beekeeper? I recently interviewed Mr. Scott to learn more about his hidden hobby.

Q. WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST IN HONEYBEES?

A. It's funny because I had a fear of bees growing up. This was likely due to the 'killer bee' movies on television and hearing old stories of people attacked by bees. When I was a kid, I came across a beehive in an old hot water heater tank. I'll never forget watching the bees fly in and out, doing their thing.

It wasn't until years later when my wife and I bought a house with a few acres. We love fruit, so we planted fruit trees all over our property – not only for us to enjoy, but also for the large deer population in our area as well. It was when the young trees flowered one spring that we noticed a lack of honeybees. Understanding how important honeybees are for pollination, I knew that if we wanted good fruit production, we needed bees.

Q. HOW DID YOU GET STARTED, AND WHAT ARE SOME RESOURCES YOU WOULD RECOMMEND FOR OTHERS STARTING OUT?

A. I called Tuscaloosa County Extension Agent Neal Hargle, and he had tons of great advice on how to get started beekeeping. We also met Jon Fleenor, with Katie Farms, and he was awesome with more helpful advice. Jon set us up with our first hive from a swarm he caught on his property. After getting that first hive, things snowballed quickly. We now have nearly 50 colonies! It's been a wild ride!

The winter before we officially saw our first bees, and through the advice of a few local beekeepers, we purchased a single deep brood box, hive top and floor, along with the frames. Basically, this was a complete hive starter kit. If you know anything about woodwork, it's easy to build your own equipment. We took the one hive kit and made numerous copies. There is a lot of money involved if you plan on having more than 10 colonies, so we cut corners to save money.

(Continued on page 12)



The Sweet Reward of Caring for *Honey Bees*

(Continued from page 11)

I would also advise anyone interested to join a local beekeeping club and find a mentor that can help with advice. Trust me, there will be times when you need advice quickly and on a moment's notice.

Q. DOES YOUR FAMILY SHARE THE ENTHUSIASM ABOUT HONEYBEES THAT YOU HAVE?

A. We have two boys, a three-year-old and a five-year-old, and they love bees! Parker's favorite honeybee is a drone, a male honeybee that doesn't have a stinger. The boys love to catch drones and play with them like they would play with beetles. Boys will be boys!

My wife, Tara, enjoys the honey side of beekeeping. I recruit her help when it's time to harvest, bottle, label, and deliver. I've been trying to convince her to come get stung with me a few times in the bee yard.

Q. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RISKS VERSUS REWARDS? WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO KEEP GOING?

A. There's no worse feeling than losing a colony of bees. There are so many things that can go wrong, and I've experienced nearly everything that can go wrong. Except for black bears. Fortunately, in our area, we don't have issues with bears. Between varroa mites, small hive beetles, wax moths, random queen losses, spring swarming, and the list goes on . . . it's easy to become discouraged. But, the interesting thing about beekeeping is learning how to tackle these obstacles and learn from mistakes. Believe me, I have made plenty of mistakes! We're in our fifth year of keeping bees, and I'm still constantly learning and trying new ideas.

My advice for new beekeepers . . . don't give up! Some bees will thrive, and some bees will die. I've met and talked to a lot of beekeepers locally and nationally. It seems as if everyone is in the same boat when it comes to issues with colony loss. It's comforting to know folks that have done this for 40-plus years have the same issues as we do. If you lose a colony, find out what went wrong (sometimes there's no clear indication), learn from mistakes, and move on. Plan ahead as to how you will replace losses, whether it's through splits [when bees leave on their own to form new hives], swarm traps [to catch bees after a split], or going on a removal.

Q. YOU RECEIVE A LOT OF CALLS FROM HOMEOWNERS OR THE PUBLIC ABOUT BEE COLONIES FORMING IN HOMES OR OTHER STRUCTURES, AND THEY WANT THEM REMOVED. DO YOU SEE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESCUE A COLONY? CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR FIRST COLONY RESCUE?



Richard tends to his hives while wearing a beekeeping suit.

A. I've never had to pay for bees. All my colonies are from structure removals, swarm captures, or splits. Structure removals can be dangerous, so I would highly advise anyone removing bees from a wall, soffit, or floor to work

slowly and be safe. Sometimes, electrical wires run through a comb and are hard to see.

The first removal I did alone was in Gordo. A sweet, older couple was trying to enjoy coffee on their front porch, and a colony of bees had built in the soffit above the porch. They didn't want to kill the bees, but they were getting stung which disrupted their morning routine. I had to help! I drove to Gordo early one morning before my afternoon shift at the TV station. At the time, I had a cheap bee suit and all homemade equipment to remove the bees without harming them. It took at least four hours to successfully remove the colony and take them home.

I posted pictures and video on Facebook, and that's when our little beekeeping hobby took off. It wasn't long before I realized there were a lot of people dealing with similar issues locally.

Q. LET'S TIE IN THE WEATHER! A LOT OF THE READERS ARE GOING TO RECOGNIZE YOU AS THEIR METEOROLOGIST. HOW DOES WEATHER AFFECT BEEHIVES? HOW DO YOU PROTECT THE HIVES IN WINTER, AND WHAT IS NEEDED TO START SPRING PRODUCTION?

A. Weather is critical to beekeeping. Going into the winter season, I start by reducing extra space. I run deeps [denotes size of hives] with medium supers [boxes used for storage of surplus honey placed over the brood chamber], so I pull off any additional supers and set that for winter. It's also important to reduce their entrance size to one-half inch or one inch at most.

On cold days in the winter, bees will form a cluster around the queen and any existing brood in the colony. The temperature inside the cluster will generally be 95 degrees. The walls of the

hive box and roof will be nearly the same temperature as the outside. For example, if the temperature is 20 degrees outside, and that air comes in contact with the warm, 95-degree cluster, condensation will occur. It will basically rain inside the colony. Wet bees are dead bees. Ventilation is important during the winter, to allow the warm, moist air to escape, rather than be trapped against the roof and walls of the hive body. I made a 1x2 shim, to provide space for ventilation. The shim fits between the top box and the roof of my hive body. I have a three-quarter-inch hole drilled on the front and back of the shim to allow air to vent, with a small piece of screen stapled over each hole, to prevent pests from entering. In meteorology, we know heat rises, so it's important to have the vent at the highest point, just below the roof.

Often in March, we run into issues where the colony is rapidly expanding, and honey supplies are swiftly being eaten. This is the critical stage before the main nectar flow begins. If there is a stretch of rainy and cool weather, bees can run out of food quickly and starve. If I see indications of five to seven days of 'no fly weather,' I'll feed sugar water to all colonies to get them into the warm spring weather.

Each spring, nectar flows begin at slightly different times, depending on the climate of that particular season. Once the nectar flow begins, we start the space management process to maximize success in both the health of the colony and honey production.

Q. WHAT CAN LANDOWNERS DO TO ENHANCE HONEYBEE PRODUCTION OR HIVE SURVIVAL?

A. This one is tough to answer, and if you ask 100 beekeepers this question, you will get 100 different answers. Here's what works for us. Learning hive management is critical. For example, in the early spring, bees need plenty of room for the queen to lay eggs. If they get too crowded, they will cast off a swarm. If the colony has too much room, small hive beetles and wax moths can come in and take over. Location is important, but understand, if you give bees the type of home they want, they can thrive just about anywhere. 🐝



Richard and his family on his property near their bee hives.



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SCAN ME



After the Storm

Urban Forest Strike Team Responds After Hurricane Sally

By Dale Dickens, AFC Urban Forestry Coordinator and Katie Wiswall, AFC Urban & Community Forestry Partnership Coordinator

Whether ice, wind, snow, or rain, storms can leave a trail of destruction that changes lives and landscapes. This includes changing a community's tree canopy and potentially causing long-term risks to public safety. While some trees blow over or snap off, others may have damage that is not as obvious but still require action. One resource for your town after a natural disaster is an Urban Forest Strike Team. Such a team can come to the aid of a community or region whose urban forest has been impacted by natural disaster. They provide rapid tree damage and risk assessments and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) public assistance information to communities.

The Urban Forest Strike Team program was developed by the US Forest Service and the Southern Group of State Foresters in 2007. Documentation from the Hurricane Katrina cleanup showed that many salvageable trees were removed, while other seemingly whole trees with dangerous faults were left. The objective of the program is to assist communities with post-disaster tree assessment so that these missteps are less likely to occur. A tree that looks ugly can be structurally sound and a tree that appears fine can have hidden faults that pose a danger to the public.

A Strike Team consists of a team leader, a Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping specialist, and five to seven two-person evaluation teams of technical specialists. These specialists are highly trained arborists qualified to assess tree risk. They inspect public areas, marking trees that may need removal or mitigation, such as pruning.

Hurricane Sally's drenching rains and steady winds left Alabama's coastal communities with a tangled mess of trees, limbs, and debris. After receiving calls for assistance from affected communities, AFC Urban Forestry Coordinator Dale Dickens organized an Urban Forest Strike Team. A total of 16 urban foresters from seven states met in Mobile to begin a week of public tree assessments in Mobile, Foley, and Gulf Shores. They came from forestry agencies in Georgia, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia to assist the two Alabama Forestry Commission arborists and local municipal foresters with the task of beginning the recovery of the community forest canopies.

With initial road-clearing completed and armed with maps and data collection support from Abi Dhakal, the Forestry



1. Virginia Department of Forestry
2. Georgia Forestry Commission
3. Alabama Forestry Commission

4. Mississippi Forestry Commission
5. Texas A&M Forest Service
6. Alabama Forestry Commission & Oklahoma Forestry Services

Commission GIS specialist, these teams scattered across city streets and parks to record and mark which trees needed removing, and which needed pruning or other support. And since no disaster is complete without paperwork, the teams also indicated which trees fit the FEMA criteria for assistance. Even amid post-disaster pandemonium, there are financial considerations. One is how to pay for the task of dealing with all the debris produced by clean-up efforts. When an area has been declared a disaster by FEMA, a strike team can assist with calculating debris quantities, and the community can apply for federal reimbursement for debris handling. Also, as the Strike Team assesses the remaining public trees, they categorize them according to FEMA standards so a community can request reimbursement for their removal or treatment.

At the end of the strike team's deployment, the community immediately receives both a map with the location (GPS) of the trees assessed and a listing of each tree's status. Later a prioritized plan for continued urban canopy recovery and full report is delivered to each municipality. Figure 1 (right) shows the species frequencies of the 1,529 trees found with significant damage in the three cities. Many more trees were evaluated and found to be sound.

You can learn more about requesting, funding, or joining an Urban Forest Strike Team at www.southernforests.org/urban/ufst or from our Urban Forestry Coordinator, Dale Dickens, at (334) 467-7971.

There is a lot to do after a storm. Figuring out how to get help taking care of your trees should not be one of them. Call or web-surf today so your community is prepared before the need arises! 🌳



AFC Urban Forester Katie Wiswall assesses a large fallen tree during the UFST Hurricane Sally deployment.

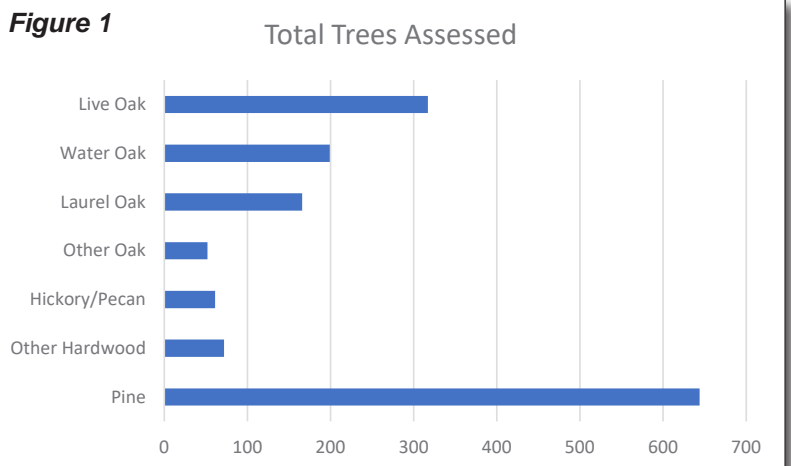


Photo courtesy of Brian Rushing, Center for Economic Development,
The University of Alabama



ALABAMA'S Cahaba Lily



By Ray Metzler

Threatened & Endangered Species Specialist, Alabama Forestry Commission

Shoals lilies are a rare aquatic, clump-forming, perennial flowering plant in the amaryllis family found in a small number of waterways in three Southern states. The three largest remaining populations are in the Cahaba River in Alabama, the Catawba River in South Carolina, and the Flint River in Georgia.

In Alabama, this species (*Hymenocallis coronaria*) is known as the 'Cahaba lily' as the Cahaba River is home to four separate populations – three within the Cahaba National Wildlife Refuge and one in Buck Creek. There are a few other small populations of Cahaba lilies scattered throughout central Alabama.

Cahaba lilies are a species being considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The primary reason for the decline of the Cahaba lily was the creation of dams during the 20th century that inundated the free-flowing rocky streams and rivers they inhabit. More recently, human activities have caused sedimentation that has damaged the rocky substrates required by the plants.

These sun-loving plants typically grow to about 3 feet in height and develop from a bulb that lodges in cracks in the rocky shoals they inhabit. The plant blooms from early May to late June and each blossom opens only once during the overnight hours, then withers away in about a day. Luckily, not all the blooms open at the same time. Pollinators of Cahaba lily blooms include the trumpet vine sphinx – a nocturnal hawk moth – as well as bumble bees and butterflies active during daylight hours.

Botanists and outdoor enthusiasts have a variety of opportunities to view Cahaba lilies in their splendor during the blooming period. Populations within the Cahaba National Wildlife Refuge are probably the most visible and easiest to see in Alabama. The town of West Blocton in Bibb County has hosted the annual Cahaba Lily Festival (www.cahabalily.com) in May of each year since 1990. The festival includes educational lectures and a shuttle service to the river to observe Cahaba lilies from the shore. Do-it-

yourselfers can access the Cahaba National Wildlife Refuge by following these directions: From West Blocton, travel west on County Road 24 for about 5-6 miles. Turn right on the unpaved road (River Trace Road) just before you reach the Cahaba River bridge. River Trace Road runs along the river for over a mile with plenty of lilies in view. Additional lilies are in view in the shallows of Caffee Creek and Hargrove Shoals.

Cahaba lilies may also be viewed in several other streams throughout central Alabama including Hatchet Creek, Mulberry Fork, Locust Fork, and possibly small segments of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. Wading and canoeing in Cahaba lily habitat is typically easy to accomplish, as long as the water levels aren't excessively high from recent rains. ☸

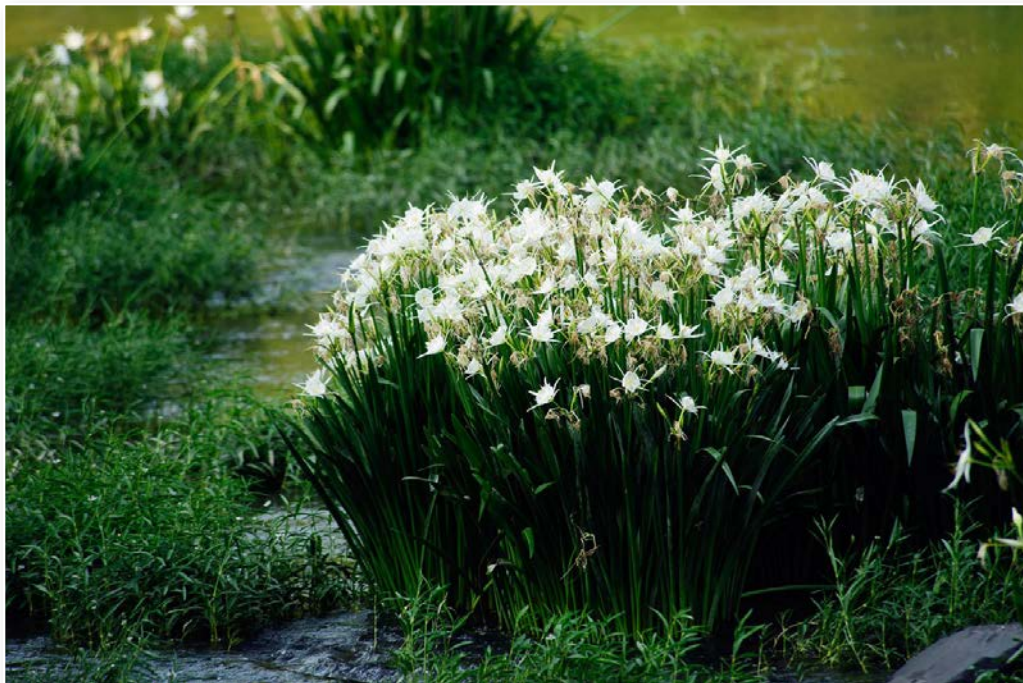


Photo courtesy of Paul Franklin, Alabama Birding Trails



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Hidden TREASURE

Preuit Oaks

*By Laura Emily Everitt,
Daughter of Johnnie Everitt, AFC Work Unit Manager*

In Colbert County on approximately 315 acres of land, lies a quiet little plantation home with a big history. The atmosphere is so serene, one would never guess that its neighbors include a hunting preserve and a busy highway.

The gorgeous property and accompanying house, known as “Preuit Oaks,” has been in the

Preuit family since the 1850s when it was sold to Colonel Richard Preuit. Originally built by Dr. John S. Napier, the home was sold a couple of years later to the Colonel. Under Colonel Preuit and future generations' guidance, the bustling farm grew to several thousand acres. Property was only sold when absolutely necessary to raise funds for survival.

When the home was plundered by the Union Army during the Civil War, even the doorknobs were taken. In 1863, it was one of the few structures to escape the fire that started when the Northern army burned nearby LaGrange College.

The house itself boasts a beautiful white exterior, double brick chimneys, and a grand staircase.

Today, the grounds hold remains of a smokehouse, a separate kitchen, and cooks' cabin. There is also a chapel and family graveyard located down a quiet, winding path dotted with beautiful flowers.

Mrs. Bettie P. Evans, the last family member to actually live at Preuit Oaks, kept the grounds covered with flowers, eventually submitting the property for TREASURE forest certification in 1992. According to her granddaughter, Mrs. Evans was raised in the house along with her sister, just as the many generations before. She continued this tradition by raising her own two daughters in the home, Cynthia Kimbrough and Jessie Evans. Mrs. Evans lived there until she passed away in 2007 and is buried in the family cemetery along with her sister and other relatives. The property is currently owned by members of the Preuit family and has remained an active farm throughout the years.

Preuit Oaks is truly an enchanting property. Its rich history and beautiful Italian Renaissance architecture leave visitors with a reminder of the decadence and beauty of the past, while providing Colbert County with a hidden gem. 🌿



Restructured

OLD-GROWTH WOODWORKS

*By Benji Elmore, Southwest Regional Forester, Alabama Forestry Commission
and Rickey Fields, Baldwin County Forester, Alabama Forestry Commission*

Nestled in the heart of Baldwin county in Fairhope is a small company with an interesting niche. 'Restructured' is a local millworks and antique lumber business, owned and operated by entrepreneur Trevor Clarke. He specializes in reclaiming, reviving, and repurposing wood from old homes and other structures dating back to the 19th century.

With his father an architect, as well as the generations before him being engineers and architects, Trevor grew up with designing in his blood. He graduated from Auburn University with a degree in industrial design and specialized in consumer product design. After several years in the dental equipment field, he wanted to "get his hands dirtier." As a side job working out of his garage after hours, he started building outdoor kitchens and furniture. As he took on more projects, he decided that he could make a living as he worked with his hands. So, in 2014, he left his job to pursue his dream of owning his own business. Soon after that, he saw the need for a shop to be able to fabricate materials into a finished product. Buying a batch of old longleaf pine, he began turning out furniture, vanities, cabinets, and whatever else a customer might request.



In today's society, most people look for products that they can obtain quickly, made of engineered composite materials, with a flawless appearance on the outside. What makes Clarke's craftsmanship unique is the fact that a product from his shop is painstakingly crafted from old growth materials, something you cannot buy in a furniture store. He enjoys blending the old with new construction, such as incorporating exposed architectural beams to give a structure additional flair. Some homebuilders bring their customers directly to Trevor for custom, specialized products. Many of his clients are simply homeowners wanting a customized piece of interior or exterior furniture. Outdoor furniture requires additional steps taken in construction to protect it from Mother Nature.

Truly 'old school,' Trevor enjoys working on the old wood using old tools. For now, he's just a one-man show, but he hopes to hire an assistant soon.

Being a bit of a history buff, Clarke takes pride in learning about the background of the old structures he encounters. He enjoyed telling us about the old Daphne Bay House (1840-2016), owned by the Yuille family. This was an old colonial-style house built on the bluff in Daphne and renovated in 1906. It was going

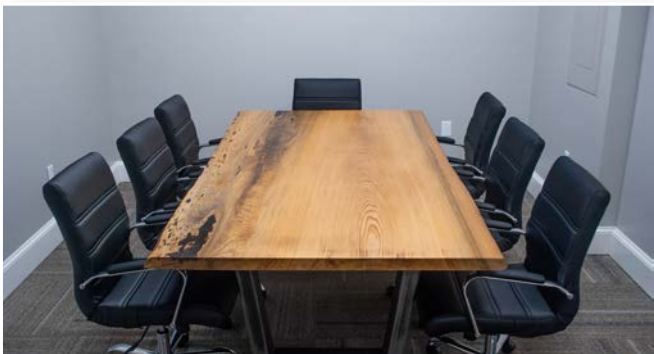


Trevor's shop entrance where reclaimed wood comes to life.

to be taken down by a bulldozer after it deteriorated. However, Trevor convinced the owner to allow him to tear it down, piece by piece, taking seven weeks instead of seven hours with a dozer. Much of the wood was old-growth longleaf pine and pecky cypress. He gives this old wood a new life when he fills various custom orders for clients.

Clarke has also worked with wood he has sawn from reclaimed 'sinker' logs which are retrieved from the bottom of rivers, where it's allowed by law. Back in the 19th century, all over the Southeast US, logs were cut by loggers and floated down the rivers as a mode of transporting them to market. During this process, many of these logs became water-logged and sank. Although he doesn't retrieve the logs from the river bottom himself, Trevor purchases such logs when he can. He has a small sawmill that he uses to saw the logs into boards. He then carefully stacks the boards, ensuring that they are lying straight and flat, allowing them to air-dry for as long as three to four years before he can use them.

What does it take to turn out the products which are produced by Restructured? I would call it a 'labor of love.' To see more of Trevor's handiwork, visit <https://www.facebook.com/restructured/>. 🛠️



LAUREL WILT DISEASE

RAFFAELEA LAURICOLA

Hosts and Range

Laurel wilt disease is caused by a fungus, *Raffaelea lauricola*, that is spread by the redbay ambrosia beetle, *Xyleborus glabratus* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) and potentially native ambrosia beetles. The disease kills redbay, sassafras, swampbay, pondspice, pondberry, camphor, spicebush, avocado and other plants in the laurel family. The redbay ambrosia beetle is native to Asia. Since its initial detection in Georgia in 2002, this wilt disease has spread to 10 states, including North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky.



from entrance holes. A single beetle can vector enough fungus to kill a host tree within a month of the initial attack.

Firewood

The best method of controlling laurel wilt is to prevent the introduction of the disease. Since the beetle can live in cut wood, infested wood debris and firewood should not be moved long distances (greater than 50 miles). If traveling for recreational activities, we recommend leaving firewood at home and buying local firewood at your destination. There is currently no known method to stop the spread of laurel wilt disease completely. Once infestation in a tree is detected, the tree should either be injected with a fungicide or cut down as soon as possible and then chipped

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What's In Your Firewood?

Firewood movement is a major pathway for the introduction of destructive invasive pests to new ecosystems. By using local or heat treated firewood, the public can prevent the accidental movement of these damaging pests.

Identification and Symptoms

The redbay ambrosia beetle adult is approximately 1/16-inch long and dark brown to black. The beetle carries fungal spores on its body and bores into the host tree creating galleries (tunnel-like paths). Beetles feed on the fungus, which grows in the galleries. The tree responds to the fungus by blocking water transport vessels, causing the tree to wilt. Infested sapwood will have black or purple streaking. Depending on the species, the foliage may wilt and remain on the tree (redbay and swampbay) or fall from the tree (sassafras). Although not always present, small, round

entrance holes may be found on infested stems. Toothpick-like tubes of sawdust may protrude

and burned on location. If burning is not possible, the tree should be cut down, chipped and left on site. A tarpaulin or other type of plastic covering can be placed over the chipped debris for an extended period of time to reduce the emergence and survival of the pest.

Additional Information

<http://southernforesthealth.net/diseases/laurel-wilt>



Toothpick tubes extrude from a redbay tree infested with the redbay ambrosia beetle.s



Materials excerpted with permission from "Changing Roles: WUI Professional Development Program," a publication of Urban Forestry South, USDA Forest Service: <https://urbanforestrysouth.org>

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ANOTHER OLD DEAD TREE

By Joel D. Glover, Wildlife Biologist

After touring the landowner's property, he asked if I had any recommendations he could implement to improve his property. The land was a well-managed tract with hardwoods, pine plantations, a young long-leaf stand, and several well-distributed wildlife openings. The landowner was obviously managing for multiple use; however, he had mentioned that his wife had developed an interest in bird watching and he wanted to know anything that might improve his property for birds. I could tell my answer was not what he was expecting.

When I asked if he had ever thought about killing a couple of trees, he looked a little startled and answered that he had not thought about that. I

knew the comment would need some clarification. I explained that a friend of mine – a TREASURE Forest landowner and Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award winner – had intentionally killed a few large pines on his property to provide cavity trees.

Obviously, the decision to deaden large valuable pine trees has a direct connection to one's perspective and objectives. It's not something everyone will want to do. However, if you are like many landowners who wish to enjoy the many various components of their timber stand, you may decide to create a snag or

two. This is especially true if you are like millions of other Americans who have a propensity to watch birds.

This past spring and summer I was once again reminded of the importance of cavity trees. The dictionary defines a 'snag' simply as a standing dead tree. Based on my observations, a snag could be described as a condo, a motel, or a delicatessen! If you want to observe some avian wildlife, especially woodpeckers, you need to locate a snag.

While working with a landowner whose newly acquired property includes many acres of clear cut, I noticed a dead pine tree about ten inches in diameter. I originally noticed one cavity in the tree, but I would eventually learn there were two cavities. I could tell the cavity appeared to have some activity going on, so I decided to keep an eye on it.

(Continued on page 24)



ANOTHER OLD DEAD TREE

(Continued from page 23)

The first day I took my camera to the snag, I got a few pictures of a pileated woodpecker. On my second trip, I was able to capture some photos of the adults feeding the young woodpeckers. It is amazing how quickly the birds are grown and gone – just like my own children. I would end up making numerous trips to the snag and I was rarely disappointed.

Through the years, I've met numerous folks who have pointed out a snag and commented they really needed to get it taken down. When I would ask why, the usual answer was it was just an eyesore. There are definitely times when you need to take down a snag, with the most common reason being if it is in an area where it might hit someone if it were to fall. However, if you are the type that enjoys seeing and/or photographing birds, then you may want to retain your snags and set up shop.

While monitoring the earlier-mentioned snag, I cataloged 19 different species of birds in and around the cavities. On most days there was plenty of action, not only from the species using the cavities, but also those that simply used the structure as a rest stop while flying through the area.

My first trip to the site revealed the large main cavity was being used by pileated woodpeckers. I have heard the pileated referred to by many names. 'Indian hen' is a common one where



Joel D. Glover



Joel D. Glover

I live, but I've also heard people call it a 'Lord God.' I'll admit that the first time I heard that moniker, I had no idea why someone would refer to the bird in that way. Therefore, I asked. The answer I received was that the bird was so big, when they saw it, they gasped, "Lord God!"

While the pileated woodpeckers had obviously claimed the hole, that did not keep others from checking it out. Watching the cavity, I observed numerous species either utilizing the vegetation that had sprouted up in the area or perching on the snag itself. These included prairie warblers, towhees, crows, red-tailed hawks, wild turkeys, yellow breasted chats, grosbeaks, bluebirds, mourning doves, and even an orchard oriole. After the young pileated woodpeckers left the nest, they were followed by a pair of red-bellied woodpeckers, which were followed by a pair of red-headed woodpeckers! Talk about multiple use management!

An old saying comes to mind. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. While we might think a snag is an eyesore, many species might call it 'home sweet home.' At least for a little while. 🌲

EDITOR'S NOTE:

To read Joel's previous story, "Just an Old Dead Tree," see page 26 of the 2013 Spring issue of *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* publication at:

https://forestry.alabama.gov/Pages/Informational/Treasured_Forests/Magazine/2013_spring.pdf

Or use your smart phone or tablet camera to scan this QR code to read the story.



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Hidden TREASURE



THE CEMETERY

By Rickey Fields, Baldwin County Forester/Forestry Management Specialist

Sitting on a secluded area of a TREASURE Forest property in Baldwin County where we routinely perform prescribed burning, the landowner possesses a rare and special site. It is a small family cemetery dating back to the mid-1800s. To show our respect for the men, women, and children buried here, we take extra care every time we burn by carefully removing any fallen branches or unwanted vegetation from the tombstones and brick wall surrounding the cemetery. Among a few other mature trees that has grown in the center of the cemetery, there is a large longleaf pine which I estimate to be 80-100 years old.

Never did I imagine that while performing forest management activities we would have the opportunity to help preserve a piece of American history. Sometimes it is things such as this that makes life so rewarding! ☪





Be **SAFE** When Working Alone Outdoors

By Coleen Vansant, Communications and Public Relations Manager, Alabama Forestry Commission

Anyone that owns and works on their forest or farmland knows there are times you will find yourself working alone. Personally, I don't think twice about loading up my tools and going out alone to work on a project on my property.

For all of us 'do it yourselves,' working alone can be enjoyable and rewarding. If you're an introvert like me, you enjoy your own company and would *rather* work alone. However, keeping company with yourself can have its risks, too, and that's in the area of safety.

To gather the best information on safety while working alone, I carried the topic to the most knowledgeable professionals I knew – some of the rangers and foresters with the Alabama Forestry Commission.

It's not unusual for field associates with the Commission to work alone outdoors, sometimes for most of the day. As a result, they have developed their own 'checklists' of the things you need to take along or do to ensure your safety on those one-man jobs.

In today's world of technology, most everyone has a cell phone, GPS (Global Positioning System), or similar device on them. However, as we all know, those devices only work if you can get a signal from a tower or can connect to the satellite. Cell service in many rural areas is spotty or non-existent, and the same is true under a closed-canopy forest. Many of us have also experienced dead or dying batteries. You might not be able to

rely on an electronic device for communication or an emergency. The following suggestions are good to follow for those areas where electronic communications are compromised.

LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION!

(Every one of my contributors listed this item first.)

- Let someone know when and where you will be working.
- Establish a check-in system if you plan to be working alone for an extended period.
- If you plan to work in multiple locations, leave a detailed itinerary with someone. Include things such as landmarks, addresses, or GPS locations of the sites or areas you'll be working.
- Give an estimated time of arrival (ETA) on when you should be home or back in service.
- When you exit your vehicle, leave a note faceup on the dash detailing the time you left, direction of travel, and when you plan to return. If needed, someone will know where to look for you.
- When working on unfamiliar property, flag the path you take as you go along and follow it back out as you leave.
- If you are unfamiliar with the property, carry a compass and a map. That way, you won't have to worry about your batteries dying.

- If you happen to get lost, find and follow a road, creek, old fire break, forest road, utility right-of-way, etc. They all lead somewhere, and you can orient yourself or find help from there.

COMMUNICATION

(Another big item with my contributors)

- Have redundant communication methods. Cell phone and two-way radios are good choices. A sports whistle or small air horn are good tools for signaling for help, especially if you are hurt.
- The horn on your vehicle is also an effective way to signal for help.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

(This was also stressed by contributing rangers and foresters.)

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- When you arrive at the site where you are going to work, look around for hazards. Is there a leaning tree or overhanging limbs that might be unsafe? Mitigate any problems before you begin to work.
- Look around the ground for loose rocks, slick leaves, slick moss, or pine straw that may affect your footing.
- When crossing streams or creeks, watch for slick rocks, moss, or mud. It may be wiser to walk up or downstream to find a better place to cross rather than risk serious injury rock-hopping across a stream. The same goes for deep ditches and gullies.
- Always be on the lookout for snakes, fire ants, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, and other critters and creepy-crawlies you may encounter in the woods or farm environment. Also be aware of poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac.
- Park your vehicle in a location as close to your worksite as safely possible. Whether I'm at my job with the Commission or working at home, I always turn my vehicle pointing out when I arrive. It's a lot easier to drive straight out in the event of an emergency than worry about turning around or backing out.

ALWAYS BE PREPARED

- Plan your work event and bring any tools or equipment you may need to do the job safely.
- Make sure all your tools and equipment are in working order before you begin the job at hand.
- Bring everything plus a little extra of essentials such as fuel, oil, blades or saw chains, saw sharpener, toolbox, etc.
- Carry Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) you will need such as snake leggings, chainsaw chaps, hard hat, leather work gloves, handkerchief or bandana, sun hat, safety goggles, sunscreen, insect repellent, toilet paper, etc.
- Always keep a first-aid kit on hand. You can usually store these in your vehicle or field pack you take with you.
- If you are allergic to insects or plants, carry Benadryl, Epi-Pen, or other medication you may need.

- In summer, wear light-colored clothing and wear a sun hat. Remember to spray your clothing and any cloth or canvas gear you will be carrying with you before you leave the house or office. Insect repellents need time to work. The same is true for sunscreen.
- In winter, dress in layers so that you can remove outer clothing if needed. Wear a cold weather cap or hat.
- Make sure you bring plenty of water and snacks if you are going to be working for an extended period. If you take mid-day medications, bring them with you to take during lunch or a break.
- Take plenty of rest and water breaks, especially in warm weather.
- If the job or task you are working on requires it, establish escape routes and safety zones when you first arrive on the site.

OTHER ADVICE AND WORDS OF WISDOM FOR WORKING OUTDOORS ALONE

- Never leave home without a light source. A flashlight in your vehicle won't help if you're stranded in the dark away from it. Always carry a penlight in your pocket or field pack.
- AFC Work Unit Manager and Forester Charlie Wise always wears a field vest while at work. He says he can fill the many zippered pockets on the vest with everything he needs including his cell phone, pen and paper, a permanent marker, flagging tape, penlight, and his billfold. You can also use a lightweight field pack that will hold a small first aid kit, insect repellent, a bottle of water, and a snack.
- Always carry a knife. Whether a pocketknife, belt knife, or multi-tool, a good knife can many times be the best tool you have.
- Always carry a lighter with you. If you're hurt and alone, you can build a fire for warmth.

I'll close this article with some special words of wisdom from St. Clair County Forester Tyler Givens: "I have been over-prepared and under-prepared, and both have negative consequences. You have to find your own happy medium for the task you are trying to accomplish. Over-prepared with knowledge is never a problem, but too much gear is if you have a long hike in and out."

"It gets dark in the woods much faster than anywhere else, so plan ahead. If you don't have a light and don't plan on staying overnight, leave the work site 30 minutes before sunset. It takes longer to walk back up the hill than it did coming down." 🙏

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *I would like to thank Winston County Forestry Specialist Johnna Franks, Clay County Forestry Specialist Josh Benefield, Marion County Forestry Specialist Joel Bartlett, St. Clair County Forester Tyler Givens, and Work Unit Manager and Forester Charlie Wise for assisting me with this article.*

MEMORIALS

GALORIA ANN SNODDY DAVIS

OCTOBER 30, 1941 – FEBRUARY 14, 2021

Gloria Ann Snoddy Davis, age 79, of Double Springs, Alabama, passed away on February 14, 2021, at Hendrix Health and Rehab. Funeral services were held at on February 20, 2021, at Nichols Funeral Home in Double Springs, with burial in Fairview Baptist Cemetery, also in Double Springs.

Mrs. Davis was a TREASURE Forest landowner in Winston County. Born on October 30, 1941, in Russellville, Alabama, she was a first grade teacher for many years who was loved by her students. She also enjoyed cross stitching.

Gloria is survived by her daughter, Malinda Jane Childers and her husband, Richard; granddaughter, Era Jane Childers; grandson, Robert Leonard Childers; brother, William “Bill” Snoddy; and a host of nieces, nephews, family, and friends. She was preceded in death by her husband, John Waymon Davis; her parents, Dr. James Samuel Snoddy and Jane Prideaux Lakeman Snoddy; and her brother, Robert Samuel Snoddy. ☪

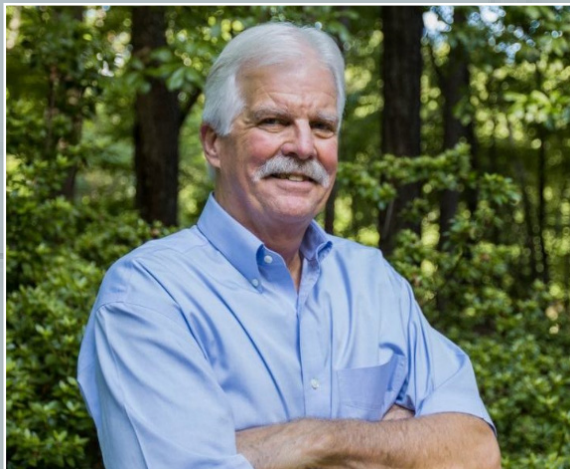


Photo courtesy of Alabama Power

KENNETH J. MUEHLENFELD

JULY 15, 1951 – MAY 1, 2021

*By Gary Faulkner, Economic Development Coordinator,
Alabama Forestry Commission*

A good man passed away recently. An individual that many in our forestry community possibly did not know due to his quiet nature, confidentiality of work, and self-effacing nature. It is said that every now and then we are blessed with a unique friendship and professional colleague that makes a valuable difference in our world. Kenneth Muehlenfeld was one of those individuals.

Ken came to Alabama as Director of the Forest Product Development Center at Auburn University and later worked with the Alabama Department of Commerce providing more than 30 years of service to facilitate Alabama’s forestry, forest industry, and wood-based economic development opportunities. His name was always associated with integrity, honesty, objectivity, and truth.

Alabama was the recipient of his conscientious work ethic and perseverance with literally thousands of job creations and billions in new capital investment throughout his successful tenure. I am not aware of any individual who has left such a legacy over time in a singular field. In fact, it is possible that Ken may have contributed more to rural economic development in Alabama than any other economic development professional. We only have to look at his record for a sampling of names such as Louisiana Pacific, Norbord, Kronospan, Weyerhaeuser, SmartLam, Enviva, Rex Lumber, and Abbeville Fiber. These are just a small collection of mills he helped facilitate which now call Alabama home. If you live in the shadow of these facilities, you may thank Ken for the contributions they provide.

Even more important to Ken than his profession, the pride of his life was his family. Ken loved and adored his family; he lived his life fully with them and for them. Ken is survived by wife, Linda Muehlenfeld; daughters, Emily (Cody) Hill and Melissa (Casey) Jarrell; sons, Matthew Muehlenfeld and Mitchell (Carli) Muehlenfeld; grandchildren, Blaise, Piper, and Rhett Jarrell; sisters, Jolene (Mark) Roesel and Sandee Launch; mother-in-law, Birdie Ratcliff; sister-in-law, Lou Ann (Joey) Wall; and brothers-in-law, Tommy Ratcliff and Ernie Ratcliff.

I am reminded of the Old Testament verse Nehemiah 2:8, the first known reference of a forester of which I am aware, which reads “. . . and may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king’s forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel . . .”

I like the image in my mind that Ken was the keeper of our forests in Alabama and provided a greater foundation for building our state. Forestry lost a good man, and he left Alabama a better place for us all. ☪



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Prescribed burning not only provides benefits for both your timber and wildlife, but also protects you and your neighbor from devastating wildfire. The Alabama Forestry Commission's professional team of Certified Prescribed Burn Managers can safely and efficiently conduct either a site preparation or understory burn on your property. For more information or specific pricing, contact your local AFC office.

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The Majestic **Longleaf Pine**



By Gary Kolb

Coastal Program Forester, Baldwin County, Alabama Forestry Commission

P*inus Palustris*, commonly known as the longleaf pine, is found along the coastal plains from eastern Texas to southeast Virginia and extending into northern and central Florida. In Alabama, the longleaf pine is mainly found in the southern two-thirds of the state. However, a subspecies known as montane longleaf is found in the Piedmont of Northeast Alabama and into northwest Georgia. The southern longleaf pine was first designated as the State Tree of Alabama in 1997.

Often mistaken for slash pine, loblolly pine, or pond pine, longleaf can be distinguished from these and other pines by several distinct characteristics. Needles of the longleaf pine can be found in bundles of three. Evergreen in

color, with a glossy, waxy look, the needles are very long (8-18 inches). Given this feature, as well as the fact that the needles do not deteriorate as quickly as other pine needles, longleaf pine needles are typically used for landscaping purposes.

The longleaf pine also produces the largest pinecone of the southern pines. These pinecones can grow to between 6-10 inches in length. The bark of a young longleaf pine appears brownish gray in color and is deeply furrowed. As the tree ages, the fur-

rows become shallower and the bark takes on an orange-brown shade.

Longleaf can thrive in a variety of habitats including flatwoods, sandy hills, on the edge of swamps, and even on low mountains for the montane variety. Longleaf pines tolerate fire very well. When exposed to frequent fire, pines can become a dominant species. Due to this, controlled burns are the best management tool for longleaf. Maintaining the understory is very important and helps keep wildlife plentiful. Many species prefer open, grassy habitat that is provided by the longleaf pine ecosystem. Gopher tortoise, deer, and quail are just a few species that typically thrive in this type of ecosystem. Species such as red-cockaded woodpecker, whose preference is to nest in cavities of mature longleaf, have been under pressure due to loss of that ecosystem across the landscape. Longleaf restoration continues with the help of many private and public entities. One of these organizations is the Longleaf Alliance, which helps to sustain and enhance future longleaf ecosystems through partnerships and landowner assistance. 🌲



A natural uneven-aged stand, made up mostly of longleaf with wet areas containing sweetbays and maple trees, during a recent prescribed burn at Baldwin State Forest conducted by the Alabama Forestry Commission.



A 20 to 30-year-old uneven-aged longleaf stand that is burned every two to three years.