



LLELA

- preservation
- restoration
- education
- research

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*A quarterly publication for LLELA season pass members
Fall, 2011*

The drought has not dried up LLELA's restoration efforts! Richard Freiheit, Restoration Manager

As fall approaches we are all looking to the future...back to school, football games, holidays with family and most importantly an END to this heat! Here at LLELA, the restoration team looks forward to quite a different set of fall activities... seed harvests, transplants and fire! But this fall we are tempering our usual pursuits based upon this summer's heat, lack of rain and the projected future of another dry year to follow.

Typically we would be clearing and burning trees off of our prairie restoration areas, transplanting grasses and wildflowers from our on-site native plant nursery into these newly cleared areas and spreading additional prairie seeds throughout. *Typically* the fall and spring rains would be enough to ensure that most of the plants in our restoration areas survive and take root. *Typically* we would be burning large areas of grassland to suppress any encroaching woody species. But, as we all know this year has been anything BUT *typical*.

Does this mean we just stop and wait for conditions to get better? Absolutely not! We do need to adjust, and that is exactly what we are planning to do. In a typical year we would be transplanting a fairly even mix of tallgrass prairie grasses: Indian Grass, Little Bluestem, Big Bluestem and Eastern Gamma Grass. This year we are going to be emphasizing Little Bluestem since it tolerates dry conditions better than the other grasses. It is hoped that these grasses will have a better chance of surviving if the long-range forecast for a dry fall/winter followed by another drier than normal year hold true. We have made other contingency plans as well. For example, we have been developing smaller, concentrated restorations that can be watered and maintained such that young plants thrive regardless of the weather conditions.

It does look like our plans for prescribed burning will be set aside for this fall. It is unlikely that the burn ban currently in effect will be lifted before next spring. The inability to burn will be the hardest-hitting setback to our prairie restoration efforts. Several burn units were already in severe need of burning, but the ban has prevented us from burning these areas. As the ban continues, more units will be in similar need.

So the important question is, "How does LLELA get all this work done, anyway?" The answer is simple – volunteers! That is one thing that won't change. Last year we had over 6,000 hrs of volunteered time. Thousands of plants were potted in the nursery and later planted on



Volunteers, including this group of students from Brookhaven College, are vital to LLELA's ongoing restoration projects.

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What's Happening at LLELA?

**** Schedules are subject to change. Call the LLELA Gatehouse at 972-219-7980 to confirm.****



Homestead Open House

- September 17, 12–3 p.m.
- October 15, 12–3 p.m.
- November 19, 12–3 p.m.

Walk through LLELA's restored 1870's log home and smokehouse, a replica dugout, and an unrestored barn. Friendly and knowledgeable staff and/or volunteers will be available to answer questions. Currently there is no fee for this program.



Bird Walks

- September 10, 7:30 a.m.
- October 8, 7:30 a.m.
- November 12, 7:30 a.m.

Accompany a master birder on a guided hike. Over 275 species of birds have been documented at LLELA, so there's no telling what you might find! Birders of all ages and skill levels are welcome, \$2 program fee required per person (season pass holders). Reservation required. Bring your own binoculars.



River Trips by Kayak-Power.com

- September 17, 9 am–2 pm
- October 15, 9 am–2 pm
- November 19, 9 am–2 pm

Whether you're got lots of river time under your belt or have never set foot in a kayak, you're welcome here! Kayak Power will provide equipment and instruction followed by a six-mile trip down the Elm Fork to a shuttle vehicle. Contact info@kayakpower.com or 214-669-1663 for information. Reservation required.



Nature Walks

- September 10, 10:00 a.m.
- October 8, 10:00 a.m.
- November 12, 10:00 a.m..

Explore the Cicada Trail with a Texas Master Naturalist in this guided search for animal tracks and signs, and learn more about the natural history of LLELA. There is a \$2 program fee, in addition to the regular gate fee (\$5/person). All ages are welcome. Reservations are requested, but not required, at 972-219-3930.



Bison Tours

- September 25, 2 p.m.
- October 30, 2 p.m.
- November 27, 2 p.m.

Learn more about LLELA's bison herd—their natural history, management, and integral role in prairie ecology. As the bison live in a closed area of LLELA, this behind-the-scenes visit is a treat. All ages welcome, \$2 program fee required per person (season pass holders). Reservation required; call 972-219-7980.

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site. This fall is will be no exception. Whether it's schools, corporations or individuals... the restoration moves forward. Our small army of dedicated volunteers helps day in and day out regardless of how hot it has been or will be. We look forward to all of our groups that come out in mass and really give the restoration a push: UNT with Make a Difference Day, monthly visits from Dr. Maxey and her students from Brookhaven Community College, TWU and their Helping Hands program, REL, multiple Scouting groups throughout the region, church groups, YMCA groups, and the list goes on. We would like to welcome our newest corporate volunteer Dr. Pepper/Snapple, who will be bringing out 150 employees on Oct.28. To find out how to get involved, either as an individual or as a group, contact Richard Freiheit at (972) 219-3827 or freiheit@unt.edu.