

Imagine It! brings tree exhibit to life

As a forest landowner, you know the importance of trees and appreciate their beauty every day. **Imagine It! The Children's Museum of Atlanta** wanted to help visitors make a similar connection with the natural world and understanding the vital role trees play in our lives.

Developed by the Arbor Day Foundation and sponsored by Georgia-Pacific and other local companies, "Exploring Trees Inside Out" lets children experience the sights, sounds and scents of trees in a 2,500 square foot interactive traveling tree exhibit.

It allows visitors to:

- Climb through a larger-than-life tree from the roots to the canopy,
- "Grow" a seed into a mighty oak inside a huge acorn,
- Lie in the rope netting for a bird's eye view,
- Jump into a giant bird's nest, and much more.

In addition, the Museum's convenient location across from Centennial Olympic Park afforded a natural

opportunity for a tree-based scavenger hunt throughout the park and Trees Atlanta designed neighborhood tree walks to extend the Museum experience beyond its walls.

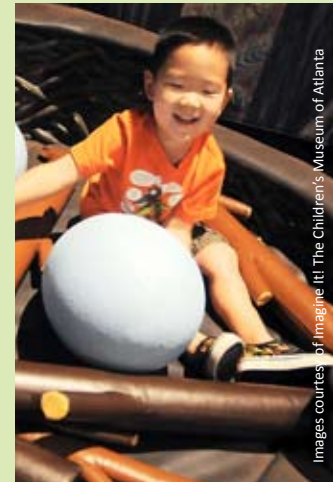
"It's truly amazing how creative this interactive exhibit is," said Deborah Baker, Georgia-Pacific's vice president of sustainable forestry, environmental and community outreach, who served on the committee. "We are excited to be part of the museum's mission to teach children and families about the important purposes trees serve in our everyday lives while having fun at the same time."

The "Exploring Trees Inside Out" exhibit can be seen at Imagine It! through Sept. 13. After Atlanta, the exhibit will travel to Boston and then to several of the top science centers and children's museums across the U.S.

For Imagine It! The Children's Museum of Atlanta hours of operation, ticket pricing and location details, visit its Web site at www.childrensmuseumatlanta.org or call 404-659-KIDS (5437).

Check out other opportunities for children and families to learn about nature across the Southeastern states:

- Chattahoochee Nature Center
www.chattnaturecenter.org
- Mississippi Children's Museum
www.mississippichildrensmuseum.com
- Georgia Aquarium
www.georgiaaquarium.org (kelp "forest" that GP sponsors)
- Earlyworks Museum Complex
www.earlyworks.com
- Atlanta Botanical Gardens
www.atlantabotanicalgarden.org



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FORESTRY IN ALABAMA: A Conversation with State Forester Linda Casey

Courtesy of AFC



NEWS FROM GEORGIA-PACIFIC FOR FOREST OWNERS AND OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

FAMILY FORESTS

SUMMER 2009

Editor's Note:
The next several issues of *Family Forest* will highlight forestry in various states.

In her first two years, Alabama State Forester Linda Casey and the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) have put outreach to landowners, other agencies and the general public at the top of their "to-do" list. Almost 80 percent of Alabama's nearly 23 million acres of forested land is owned by private, non-industrial or family forest landowners. Today, the AFC's focus has expanded from stewardship and fire protection (Alabama's Firewise Program) to touch on many other important issues.

The AFC strives to:

-- **Encourage Smart Growth**

With landowners feeling the impact of urban sprawl, the AFC is developing relationships with organizations and individuals – from developers to regional planning councils – to provide input and offer support that will benefit the state's

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FORESTRY IN ALABAMA

natural resources, help reduce the loss of wildlife habitat and improve water quality.

-- Address Urban Sprawl/Wildland-Urban Interface

In addition to working with developers who are just beginning the building process, the AFC is also partnering with local councils and associations in already developed areas. To encourage fire safety and education on management practices such as prescribed burning to minimize the risk of catastrophic fire, they are using Firewise, a community program designed to encourage local solutions for wildfire. For example, the AFC is currently working with a neighborhood group to develop a walking trail that acts as a fire break. "We are hoping that other groups will see the efforts and realize it is a great idea," noted Linda.

In addition, Linda has initiated Firewise audits where the AFC foresters help homeowners assess possible fire hazards such as trees planted too close to their homes or underbrush that should be cleared to minimize the devastation of a wildfire. A small amount of grant money is available to assist landowners in their efforts to become more Firewise.

-- Identify and Assist Underserved Landowners

The AFC's work goes beyond just wildland/urban interface areas to target very rural areas where forests are not being cultivated to their full potential. AFC foresters contact landowners - who have an average of 60 or fewer acres - interested in managing their property for timber production. They provide information including available cost-share programs.



Alabama forester and forest owner inspect Longleaf pine planting. Courtesy

"Our organization was restructured so that each forester has a smaller area of responsibility and can get out in the community more easily," noted Linda. "Our vision is to have the AFC, the Soil and Water Conservation districts and Alabama Natural Resources Council working in a concerted effort with the landowner. We believe there are significant efficiencies to be gained by doing that." A pilot program is currently underway.

-- Develop a Plan for Invasive Species

The AFC obtained a \$6.2 million grant from the federal stimulus package to address Cogongrass, which is one of the most invasive species in Alabama. After attending a workshop last year, Linda and the AFC set up a task force with other states to study the Cogongrass issue and look into funding, research, mapping, detecting and eradication.

THREATENED, IMPERILED, CRITICALLY IMPERILED: What does it all mean? *By Bobby Maddrey, Georgia-Pacific Wildlife Programs Manager*

Names used to describe wildlife and plant species that are at risk of becoming extinct can be confusing. With more emphasis being placed on the environment, it is becoming increasingly important for landowners to be aware of the unique plants and animals that inhabit their property. It is also important to be aware of all the terminology that resource scientists use to describe the population status of species.

Endangered species fall under the highest level of protection under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA). Endangered species are seriously close to extinction. Threatened species are

a step below and describe plants and animals that the scientific community has determined need improved protection. "Species of concern" is the lowest level under the Act and describes species that are believed to be in trouble. Any species listed under the Endangered Species Act falls under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In addition to the federal ESA, most states have endangered species laws, statutes or regulations. They also use the terms endangered, threatened and species of concern, and other terms such as "rare." State lists normally include federally listed species and any other species that are rare in that state.

"Imperiled" and "critically imperiled" are two recent additions to the descriptions given to plants and animals. These terms are part of a global ranking system of all plants and animals used to describe species around the world systematically. The five classes for this global ranking system are critically imperiled (G1), imperiled (G2), rare (G3), uncommon (G4) and common (G5). They follow the ESA rankings in most instances, but not always. The rankings are assigned by scientific bodies and undergo no regulatory process. States have this same ranking system, with the letter and number designations S1 through S5.



of the AFC.

LOOKING AHEAD

The AFC is currently updating its Web site with the latest information on carbon sequestration and biomass energy, and they will provide useful tools such as simple harvesting contracts, arson and timber theft alerts.

“The AFC’s job is to ensure the sustainability of Alabama’s forests,” concluded Linda. “That task encompasses providing viable markets for landowners while protecting the resource for the future.”

PROFILE: LINDA CASEY, ALABAMA STATE FORESTER

A 34-year forest industry veteran, Linda Casey took the role of Alabama State Forester in February 2007. Prior to that, Linda worked for International Paper and served in many leadership roles across the country which included procurement of more than 26 million tons of fiber. A Virginia native, Linda earned a forestry degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University of Blacksburg. She and her husband now live in Prattville, Ala.

FORESTRY -- BIG BUSINESS IN ALABAMA

- The state has approximately 22.7 million acres of timberland (the third most forested state in the nation).
- Loblolly and shortleaf pine are the predominant forest type in Alabama, with oak/hickory forests coming in second.
- Forestry ranks second in revenues in Alabama, right behind the poultry industry.
- More than 40,000 people are employed with forest products companies in Alabama, and even more are indirectly dependent on the industry.

GEORGIA-PACIFIC IN ALABAMA

Georgia-Pacific has a significant presence in Alabama, with eight manufacturing facilities producing consumer towel and tissue products, corrugated packaging and branded building products. The company also has wood and fiber supply offices in Brewton and Naheola.

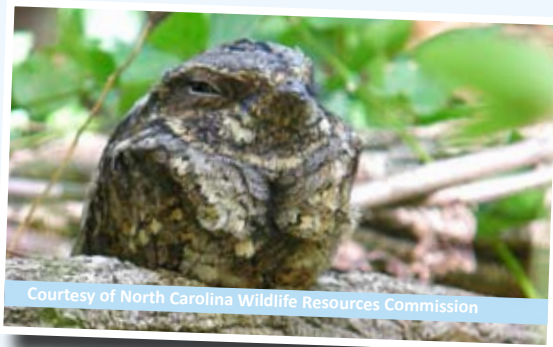
As with any new system, it takes a while to get comfortable with the terminology. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) State Implementation Committees in several states have produced pamphlets with more information on G1 and G2 species and how they can be managed.

Consult your local forester or biologist with questions about the implications of having G1 and G2 or threatened and endangered species on your property.



Endangered wood stork - Courtesy of Andrea Atkinson, National Park Service

Whip-poor-will



Courtesy of North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

About the Bird

The Whip-poor-will operates in stealth mode much of the time, blending in with its surroundings and coming out primarily in the evening. Its loud, distinct calling at dusk is the only thing that gives it away. Its coloring is a mix of blacks, browns and grays that provide natural camouflage. It looks like an owl with a large head and small bill.

Habitat and Range

The most common home for the Whip-poor-will is a deciduous or mixed forest. It also winters in mixed woods near open areas. The Whip-poor-will’s range is from Canada to the U.S. Southeast and Midwest during the summer season. Areas of Mexico and Latin America are its winter home.

The Whip-poor-will forages at dusk, dawn and when the moon is bright, catching flying insects such as moths and beetles.

Breeding and Nesting

The Whip-poor-will does not build a traditional nest, but lays eggs on leaves and leaf litter. The clutch size is two eggs, which are cream with darker spots. Its eggs hatch about 10 days before a full moon.

The young Whip-poor-will can move around almost immediately after hatching. Chicks often move slightly apart. The parents aid in the process, often physically separating chicks. Ornithologists speculate that this is to make it difficult for a predator to find them.

Interesting Facts

The male Whip-poor-will tries to intimidate potential intruders to the nest by hovering in place with its body almost vertical and its tail spread wide, showing off the white tips of its tail feathers.

In some areas, the Whip-poor-will is considered to be declining. However, because of the bird’s habits and coloring, good data is lacking. It is considered Least Concern under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) ranking system.