



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monroe, Louisiana

Larry Allain to Receive the 2026 Caroline Dormon Outstanding Louisiana Naturalist Award

The Louisiana Master Naturalist Association (LMNA) announced today that **Larry Allain**, renowned botanist, prairie restoration expert, and lifelong advocate for Louisiana's native ecosystems, be the recipient of the **2026 Caroline Dormon Outstanding Louisiana Naturalist Award**.

The award will be presented during a post-dinner ceremony on **April 11, 2026, from 7–8 p.m.** in the **Homewood Suites Ballroom in Lafayette, Louisiana**. The statewide honor is given annually to an individual whose life's work reflects exceptional dedication to the study, preservation, and interpretation of Louisiana's natural heritage. Allain was nominated by **Bayli Q. Brosette of Briarwood, The Caroline Dormon Nature Preserve**, the historic home of the award's namesake.

A Lifetime Devoted to Louisiana's Natural World

To know Larry Allain is, as colleagues often say, "to know nature itself." His career spans more than four decades of scientific research, ecological restoration, public education, and hands-on conservation. Raised on a sugarcane plantation in Jeanerette, Allain's early fascination with plants grew into a distinguished professional life marked by innovation, curiosity, and service.

Allain's contributions include:

- **Botanical and ecological research** at the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wetlands Research Center, where he advanced understanding of prairie ecosystems, invasive species, pollinator ecology, and coastal habitats.
- **Creation of major scientific tools**, including the *Coastal Prairie Restoration Information System* and the widely used online *Guide to the Plants of Louisiana*, featuring more than 1,700 species and over 5,000 of his own photographs.
- **Leadership in restoration initiatives**, such as the Louisiana Native Plant Initiative and the Coastal Prairie Native Seed Initiative, which have transformed access to genetically appropriate native plant materials.
- **Extensive volunteer service**, mentoring landowners, agencies, students, and naturalists across the Gulf Coast.
- **Pioneering ecological farming**, integrating prairie, pollinator habitat, and regenerative agriculture on his family farm.

Colleagues describe Allain as a "perpetual student of nature," a meticulous observer, and a generous teacher whose work has shaped the future of prairie conservation in Louisiana and beyond.

Honoring a Legacy in the Spirit of Caroline Dormon

The Caroline Dormon Award recognizes individuals whose achievements echo the legacy of Caroline Dormon—botanist, artist, educator, and one of Louisiana's earliest conservation champions. LMNA President **Katherine Gividen** will present the award.

"Larry Allain embodies the spirit of Caroline Dormon," Gividen said. "His scientific rigor, his passion for native landscapes, and his lifelong commitment to sharing knowledge have enriched Louisiana's natural heritage in profound and lasting ways."

Event Details

What: Caroline Dormon Outstanding Louisiana Naturalist Award Presentation

Who: Honoring Larry Allain

When: April 11, 2026 • 7–8 p.m.

Where: Homewood Suites Ballroom, 201 KALISTE SALOOM RD, LAFAYETTE, LA 70508

Presented by: Louisiana Master Naturalist Association

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Experts on Larry Allain:

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Bayli Q. Brosette Curator Briarwood Caroline Dormon Nature Reserve Cell/text 318 576 3379

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Expert on LMNA Rendezvous 2026

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Dormon Award dedicated webpage with profiles on current and past winners. 2025 — Nancy Newfield, 2024 — Linda Barber Auld A.K.A “NOLA Bug Lady”, 2023 — Malcolm Vidrine, 2022 — A. James “Jim” Delahoussaye, 2021 — William R. “Bill” Fontenot, 2020 — Kelby Ouchley, 2019 — Vernon Antoine Brou, Jr., 2018 — Dr. Charles Allen.

<https://www.louisianamasternaturalist.org/the-dormon-award.html>