News Release + Packet

For Immediate Release

“NOLA Bug Lady” to receive Caroline Dormon Outstanding Naturalist Award

Louisiana Master Naturalist Association’s annual Rendezvous begins April 12

April 8, 2024, Monroe – Linda Barber Auld, the NOLA Bug Lady, will receive the Caroline Dormon Outstanding Louisiana Naturalist Award Saturday, April 13, at 7 p.m. in the Bayou Room of the Abe Pierce III Convention Center at the Monroe Civic Center.

“I am excited and honored to receive the award,” Linda Auld said. Auld follows Dormon’s model in being curious about many things, and that will be the focus of her keynote speech at LMNA’s awards dinner Saturday evening at the Civic Center.

“If Caroline Dormon were around today, she would very likely show up at a Linda event with gardening pruners and seeds to give a helping hand,” wrote Betty Miley, author and native plant nursery owner, in a letter of support for Auld’s nomination.

Auld became known as “the NOLA Bug Lady” through her lifelong passion, commitment to citizen science, teaching, and tireless advocacy on behalf of Louisiana’s natural heritage, especially butterflies and other arthropods, with special focus on the monarch butterfly.

Auld has written numerous articles about bugs, butterflies, and monarchs in particular, including one about the namesake of the award she will receive, Caroline Dorman. Many of her articles have been turned into presentations she has made across Louisiana and in neighboring states. She has raised hundreds of butterflies and has done her own research into how the protozoan parasite, “Oe,” cripples monarchs. She will present a workshop titled “Monarchs, Milkweed, Migration, and Oe” Saturday afternoon, prior to receiving the Dormon Award that evening.

Many of Auld’s articles are available through her website, NOLABugLady.com, as is her recently authored book titled “Bug Lady’s Butterfly Summer.”

Perhaps Auld is best known for a long career of partnering with schools, municipalities, state agencies, arboretums, and more to make real things happen. In other words, Linda Auld picks up her trowel and gets her hands in the dirt, helping start native plant gardens friendly to butterflies across the state. She is also a long-time counter and compiler of butterflies for the North American Butterfly Association.

“Linda Auld embodies the spirit of Caroline Dormon–a woman whose legacy continues to shape Louisiana's conservation landscape. I [am] confident that her passion, knowledge, and unwavering commitment will continue to elevate our state's natural heritage,” wrote Stephen Norman, M.D.

Auld is the 7th recipient of the award, given by Louisiana Master Naturalist Association at their annual Rendezvous, hosted this year by the Northeast Chapter April 12-14. In addition to speakers and workshops at the Convention center, Rendezvous activities are planned at Black Bayou Lake NWR and Restoration Park in West Monroe.

The LMNA website, <https://www.louisianamasternaturalist.org/the_dormon_award.html>, provides a list of previous winners of the award, as well as additional information about Linda Auld.

The following items are also attached for media use:

Photos suitable for publication

A list of 22 significant accomplishments relevant to the Dormon Award

A list of article titles

Photo captions:

Linda Auld with a monarch butterfly.

Linda Auld teaching about butterflies.

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