



## FLOODPLAIN FOREST RESTORATION ALONG THE TRINITY RIVER AT THE FORT WORTH BOTANICAL GARDEN

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The Society for Ecological Restoration defines ecological restoration" as an "intentional activity that initiates or accelerates the recovery of an ecosystem with respect to its health, integrity and sustainability". Ecological restoration can include removal of introduced species, The Fort Worth Botanic Garden (FWBG) restored an area of floodplain forest by mechanical removal followed by chemical treatment. Historically, this forest would have been an area of Central Texas floodplain forest (CTFF) which would have consisted chiefly of cedar elm, western soapberry, sugarberry, and greenhaw. All these species were found in the restored forest at FWBG. Introduced species in the unrestored area had importance values of 54%. The most important were Chinese parasol and Quihou's privet. None of the introduced species sampled are considered invasive according to the USDA. However, several are tracked by the Texas Invasives organization and are considered threats to Texas ecoregions. In the restored area, native plants had an importance value of 95%. Laurel cherry was the dominant shrub with bur oak and sugarberry being the most important trees. All three are native plants and sugarberry was listed as historically occurring in the Trinity River floodplain. Also, bur oak has been sampled in the floodplain of the Bosque River. Laurel cherry is native to East Texas but is planted in Tarrant County and escapes into forests. It appears that the restoration has effectively eliminated most of the introduced species in the CTFF. In the future, since laurel cherry is an escape from cultivation, it should be removed during restoration along with introduced species.

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