



natural
areas
ASSOCIATION

10.19.2021

virtual

2021 Natural Areas Conference

Life from the Ashes: Exploring the Impact of Prescribed & Natural Fire on Insects and Other Invertebrates

Ant Community, Diversity, and Seed Interactions in Longleaf Pine Forest Managed with Frequent Fire

Presented by Rachel Atchison

Biological Science Technician, USDA ARS, [Imported Fire Ant and Household Insects Research](#)

[Read Bio](#)

Presentation Description:

Ants provide crucial ecosystem services to the environments they live in such as seed dispersal, soil aeration, decomposition of nutrients, and are a food source for many higher trophic levels. Longleaf pine forest ecosystems contain a high diversity and abundance of ant species, but there is a need to better understand how the fire affects this ecological important group.

My research investigates how restoration and management of longleaf pine forests with prescribed fire affect ants. Specifically: How does fire frequency affect ant communities? Are nonnative species promoted or excluded by fire? How does burning affect seed dispersal provided by ants?