

Summary: David Ford, Unionoida (Freshwater Mussels)

David Ford is a senior malacologist (mussel biologist) and rescue diver with Edge Engineering. Ford has been working with mussels since graduating with an MS in biology from the University of Texas at Tyler where he conducted a habitat modeling project on rare mussels of East Texas and has been working with them ever since both in Texas and across the country. Since graduating, Ford has been conducting various studies and surveys on mussels across Texas with a primary focus on the mussels of the Neches River Basin and Eastern Texas/Louisiana. His research has included stream size and its effects on mussel assemblage composition, the effects climatic events have had on assemblages, and long-term changes in mussel communities. Currently he is returning to old survey sites within the Neches and Sabine River basins to look at long term changes, and investigating the upstream range and live history of *Atlantic Rangia* within the lower Neches River.

David Ford presented a well-received Science Café in Beaumont in January 2025. The topic was *Atlantic Rangia* within the Big Thicket and its Association with Unionids of the Big Thicket.

Interestingly, David has worked as a volunteer in many ToD mussel projects beginning with work under his father, Dr. Neil Ford, and later with Alison Tarter. These projects certainly contributed to his professional interest as a malacologist.

Submitted by: David Ford and Mary C. Johnston, April 2026