

Coastal Markers



Volume 8, Issue 1

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

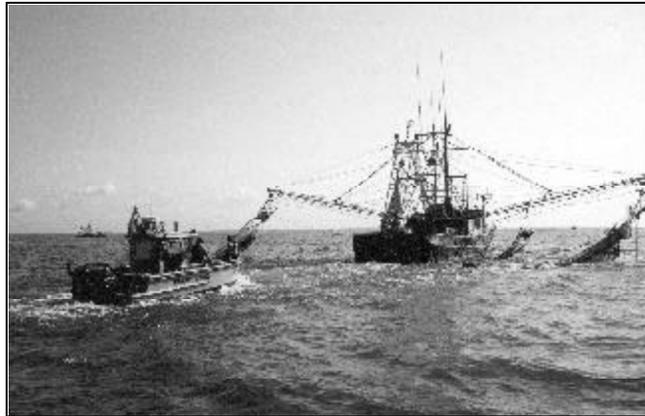
Summer 2004

2004 Shrimp Season began June 9

Shrimp season, which officially opened in Mississippi territorial waters at 6 a.m. June 9, brought with it fair weather and abundant quantities of shrimp. More than 500 shrimp boats came out to work on opening day.

"The catch has been varying between 100 to 200 pounds per hour depending on where shrimpers are working," said Department of Marine Resources Shrimp and Crab Bureau Director Mike Brainard. "The sizes are good 36-40 and 41-50 count."

The DMR's marine fisheries staff completed an aerial survey of the shrimp boats on opening day and observed a decrease in the number of shrimp boats: 538 shrimp boats this year compared to 1,067 shrimp boats last year possibly due to high fuel costs and low shrimp prices. The majority of boats were congregated between Ship and Horn islands.



DMR Marine Patrol Officers approach a vessel at the west end of Horn Island during opening day of shrimp season.

The total number of commercial shrimp licenses sold this year was 814 consisting of 600 resident and 214 non-resident and 201 recreational shrimp licenses were sold.

Prior to the season opening, the DMR's Marine Patrol issued two citations for shrimping during closed season.

"Law enforcement was extremely pleased

with the fishermen's compliance with the rules and regulations of the fishing industry," said Col. George Wright, Sr. of the DMR's Marine Patrol. "The number of violations has reduced greatly due to the cooperative efforts between Marine Patrol and the commercial fishermen."

The DMR's Marine Patrol was out in full force starting at 4:30 a.m. June 9 and worked 'round the clock to ensure a smooth shrimp season opening. This included 30 officers, four reserve officers and two dispatchers. Marine Patrol officers

conducted patrols from 12 patrol boats throughout the Mississippi Sound. Marine Patrol made three arrests and responded to two boat sinkings—none resulting in death or injury.

2004-2005 Saltwater Sportfishing licenses

Congressman Gene Taylor stopped by the DMR June 29 to purchase his 2004-2005 recreational saltwater fishing license. The DMR would like to remind anglers that Mississippi's recreational saltwater fishing licenses expired June 30. Annual licenses cost \$5.85 and are valid from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. The license is required for all recreational methods of finfish harvest in the coastal and marine waters of the state. For further licensing information, call (228) 374-5000.



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Coastal Markers is a publication of the



Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

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Managing your marine resources today...

for a sound tomorrow.

Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker



All along the Coast, the pungent aroma of boiled shrimp filling the midsummer afternoon air is a sure sign of another bountiful Mississippi shrimping season. More than 3 million pounds (headless) of shrimp were harvested during the first month of the season's opening.

Thanks to our hard working fishing fleet, residents and visitors alike are able to savor shrimp, oysters, blue crabs and the many other seafood delicacies that the productive waters of the Mississippi Sound relinquish each year.

These same waters also provide countless opportunities for sport and recreation for everyone's enjoyment. Among boating, sailing, fishing, swimming, diving, snorkeling and waterskiing, I am sure you too will find a cool and refreshing way to beat the midsummer heat and work off the calories of that seafood platter, too.

As your Department of Marine Resources and in keeping with our pledge to be wise stewards of our coastal and marine resources, we will do our best to see that you can continue to enjoy the best the Coast has to offer for many years to come.

Executive Director

Thank you!

A very special thanks to the following employees who contributed to this issue of Coastal Markers:

Jennifer Buchanan, Dorothy Daniel, Dr. Fred Deegen, Dale Diaz, Traci Floyd, Stanley Hamilton, Irvin Jackson, Ruth Posadas, Dave Ruple, Amy Taylor, Jan Welker and Frank Wescovich.

Boat and Water Safety Course Schedule (August 2004)

All classes are free. Preregistration is required. Class dates are subject to change. For details, call the DMR Boat and Water Safety Bureau at (228) 435-1332.

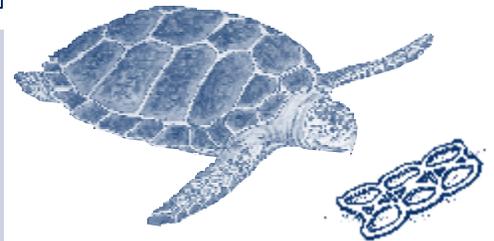
- **August 4-5**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 U.S. 90, Bay St. Louis, 6-9 p.m.
- **August 7**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- **August 14**, Bolton Building Auditorium, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- **August 18-19**, Bolton Building Auditorium, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 6-9 p.m.
- **August 28**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 U.S. 90, Bay St. Louis, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- **August 30-31**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 6-9 p.m.

Volunteer

for the

16th annual
Mississippi Coastal Cleanup

Saturday, September 18
8 a.m.-11 a.m.



For info call (228) 374-5000

Registration deadline:
August 31

DMR enhances artificial reefs south of Horn Island

The DMR in cooperation with the Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks began enhancement of three artificial fishing reefs June 28. The three permitted reef sites are located about 10 miles south of Horn Island at Fish Havens 1, 12 and 13.

The reefs will provide a hard bottom that will diversify habitat and, therefore, increase species diversity and richness. Matthews Marine in Pass Christian was the contractor deploying the reef material, which consisted of approximately five barge loads of concrete manholes. The manholes were donated from Hanson Pipe and

Products Inc. in Gulfport. Gary Gollott of Gollott and Sons Transfer and Storage in Biloxi helped with the transport of the concrete manholes. The estimated cost for the deployment of the concrete manholes is \$50,000.

“These artificial reefs will enhance fishing opportunities for the fishermen of Mississippi,” said DMR marine fisheries biologist, Kerwin Cuevas. “The material will provide exceptional habitat for reef fish such as red snapper and grouper.”

The artificial reef enhancement projects are funded through the Tidelands Trust fund. The Tidelands Trust Fund Program



From left, DMR Chief of Staff Joe Ziegler, DMR Marine Fisheries Biologist Kerwin Cuevas, Gary Gollott Jr. and Mark Snodgrass Jr. of Gollott and Sons Transfer and Storage, and Sen. Tommy Gollott wait while the first load of concrete manholes is transferred to a barge.



Kerwin Cuevas, DMR marine fisheries biologist, stands among the concrete manholes that were used to enhance three artificial fishing reefs.

consists of funds derived from the lease rentals of tidelands and submerged lands. Revenues are collected by the Office of Secretary of State, appropriated by the state legislature and administered by the Commission on Marine Resources. All tidelands projects are reviewed, evaluated and recommended annually by the Commission on Marine Resources.

Currently, Mississippi has 16 permitted artificial offshore fishing reefs encompassing approximately 16,000 acres of water bottoms. These reefs range in size from one acre to 10,000 acres.

Some of the materials used for

Mississippi's offshore reefs include concrete modules, concrete rubble, steel hull vessels, barges, an oil rig crew quarters and oil rig jackets.

For offshore and nearshore fishing reef locations, visit the DMR online at www.dmr.state.ms.us

DMR sets the pace in responding to oceans report

On April 20—the same day the *Preliminary Report* on the oceans was released by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy—Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Executive Director Dr. William Walker asked Dr. Vernon Asper, Professor of Marine Science at the University of Southern Mississippi and a member of Mississippi's Commission on Marine Resources, to chair Mississippi's preliminary report review committee.

“We brought together the top environmental experts in our state on oceans policy and coastal resources management to thoroughly review and comment on the Commission's *Preliminary Report*,” DMR Executive Director William Walker said. “The Department of Marine Resources assembled these findings and provided a report to Gov.

Haley Barbour so that he could respond to the Ocean Commission.”

The overall theme of the Ocean Commission's *Preliminary Report* is ecosystem-based management. According to the report, a new national ocean policy framework must be established to improve federal leadership and coordination to enable agencies to address the ocean, land and air as one interconnected system.

Gov. Barbour named the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources as lead agency to review the *Preliminary Report*. During the review committee's first meeting, held April 27 at the Department of Marine Resources in Biloxi, committee members were assigned sections of the report to review and comment on. The committee consisted of more than 20 stakeholders, repre-

senting Mississippi's academic, military, nonprofit environmental, and state and federal government sectors.

The Ocean Commission's more than 500-page *Preliminary Report* has been made available for review and comment by the nation's governors and interested stakeholders. The comment period ran from April 21, 2004 through June 4, 2004. Once all comments are considered, the Ocean Commission will prepare and deliver its final report and recommendations on a coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy to the President and Congress.

For more information, visit the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy's Web site at www.oceancommission.gov.

Oyster bed to improve water quality and fish habitat

The DMR recently completed construction on an oyster bed in St. Louis Bay near Mallini Bayou, to demonstrate the oyster's ability to improve water quality and create essential fish habitat.

About 900 cubic yards of cultch material (oyster shells) was planted and about 50 cubic yards of live oysters was transferred to the site to spawn and create oyster spat (larvae) that will settle for future growth of the reef.

The joint research project was funded through a grant from the Gulf of Mexico Foundation. A similar project was funded in Biloxi's Back Bay by the Fish America Foundation for the "Creation of Oyster

Reefs to Improve Coastal Water Quality & Critical Fish Habitat." The DMR partnered with six organizations on these grants in-



The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources distributed about 900 cubic yards of cultch material in St. Louis Bay near Mallini Bayou, creating an oyster bed. The project, funded through the Gulf of Mexico Foundation, will aim to demonstrate the oyster's ability to improve water quality and create fish habitat.

cluding: Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, Coastal Conservation Association, Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks,

University of Southern Mississippi's J.L. Scott Aquarium, The Nature Conservancy and the Office of Congressman Gene Taylor. The project is funded in part through the Gulf of Mexico Community-Based Habitat Restoration Program, the Gulf Ecological Management Sites Program and the NOAA Community Based Restoration Program.

Also included in the research project was the construction of a reef in Biloxi's Back Bay west of the train bridge near the mouth of Fort Bayou. Each reef was located in waters closed to oyster harvesting and will provide a beneficial sanctuary for adult oysters.

The DMR will monitor the reefs using side-scan sonar, square meter diving and hook and line surveys to measure the success of the reefs.

National grant funds shell plant

The DMR distributed about 11,000 cubic yards of cultch material (oyster shells) on two sites near the Henderson Point and the Telegraph reef areas south of Pass Christian in May. The sites were selected after gathering input from oyster harvesters in addition to on-site investigations of bottom types and other environmental factors.

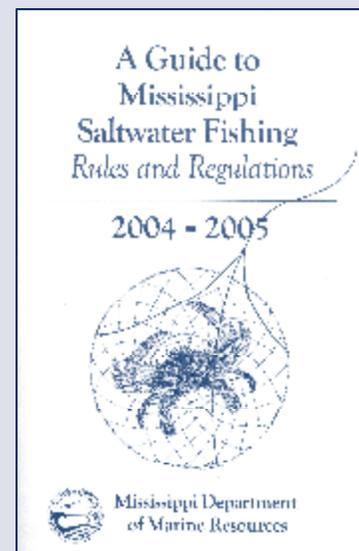
The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation awarded the DMR a grant for \$89,000 from the Shell Marine Habitat Program in support of the DMR's "Mississippi Sound Oyster Habitat Enhancement" project. The Shell Marine Habitat Program is a special program of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation created in partnership with the Shell Oil Company Foundation. These funds will help enhance approximately 120 acres of Mississippi oyster habitat through cultch plants and will help the DMR increase the effectiveness of collected shell retention fees collected from oyster harvesters and processors. The shell retention

fee collection process generates funds for shell planting and reef revitalization as mandated by state statute.

"With the completion of these shell plants, the DMR has created or enhanced more than 1,000 acres of oyster habitat in Mississippi since 1997," said Scott Gordon, DMR Shellfish Bureau Director. "Cultch plants are one of the best methods we have of helping to ensure the continued success of the oyster fishery."

Cultch plants consist of spreading oyster shell, unwashed limestone or concrete rubble over the water bottom, giving oyster larvae a clean surface on which to attach and grow. These plants are intended to enhance oyster productivity and increase fishing opportunities in south Mississippi through the continued development of existing reefs and the creation of additional new reefs. This project was funded in part by the Shell Marine Habitat Program and by the Mississippi Shell Retention Fee Program.

New Rules and Regulations Book Now Available!



Stop by our office, located at 1141 Bayview Ave., Suite 101, Biloxi, or call Public Affairs at (228) 374-5000 for your free copy. The cover illustration was designed by DMR Staff Officer Joe Jewell.

First annual Trash Splash...a big success

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) teamed up with the DMR, Keep Mississippi Beautiful (KMB) and Keep Harrison County Beautiful to host the First Annual *Trash Splash* on Friday, May 21 and Saturday, May 22. The purpose of the event was to clean up the shoreline along Biloxi's Back Bay and to educate people on the effect litter thrown on our highways has on our waterways. Trash Splash is part of Keep America Beautiful's Great American Cleanup.

On Friday, 225 MDOT employee volunteers and the Harrison County Sand Beach Department collected 457 bags of trash totaling 1,632 pounds from Coast highways.

"It's important that we (MDOT) serve as an example in cleaning up our highways," Transportation Commissioner Wayne Brown said. "I'm proud of all the employees who volunteered their time for this vital effort."

On Saturday, the public was invited to volunteer and help clean up the shoreline at Forrest Avenue Pier and Boat Launch, Keegan Bayou (under I-110 Bridge), Fountain Pier, and D'Iberville Boat Launch. Sixty-five volunteers collected 102 bags of trash totaling 1,730 pounds, including 200 pounds of large, unbaggable debris.

"Thanks to our partners and volunteers in the community, nearly a ton of marine debris was removed from our coastal wetland habitats during the Trash Splash event," DMR Executive Director Bill Walker said. "We will continue to look for hands-on opportunities like these to partner with the community and educate the public on the importance of being good environmental stewards and the detrimental effects of marine debris on our coastal environment."

"Trash Splash was a welcome addition to the Great American Cleanup," KMB Executive Director Barbara Dorr said. "It was so great to see parents come out and volunteer with their children. Involvement in Trash Splash and other anti-litter events, teaches children and families how trash travels and that individual actions can make a difference."

Dorr also mentioned that "trash" doesn't just consist of cans and paper. Other items collected included; large plastic and metal pipes, a wooden pallet, washing machine, car battery, luggage cart, metal roofing material, tires and fishing line.

Listed below is a breakdown of Saturday's event at each location:

Forrest Avenue: nine volunteers; 18 bags of trash, totaling 270 pounds

Keegan Bayou: 35 volunteers; 70 bags of trash, totaling 1,050 pounds

Fountain Pier: four volunteers; two bags of trash, totaling 30 pounds

D'Iberville Boat Launch: 16 volunteers; 12 bags of trash, totaling 180 pounds

Many thanks go out to all the volunteers—families, Boy Scouts, and the military; including Naval Construction Training Center and Keesler Air Force Base.



Greg Broom of Yazoo City picks up a car battery, just one example of dangerous debris from the shoreline at Keegan Bayou in Biloxi.



Craig Hawks, 6, (left) and his brother Cameron, 5, of Biloxi, worked hard to clean up Fountain Pier in D'Iberville.



A student from Naval Construction Training Center in Gulfport picks up trash along the shore at Keegan Bayou in Biloxi.



Student volunteers from Naval Construction Training Center in Gulfport stand near the 1,080 pounds of trash they picked up at Keegan Bayou in Biloxi.

DMR licenses 32 live bait camps

During the months of April and May, the Shrimp and Crab Bureau inspected and licensed 32 live bait shrimp dealer facilities, 25 live bait harvest vessels and 12 live bait transport vehicles to help provide the public with bait shrimp. The number of dealers licensed has decreased over the past 10 years—40 bait shrimp dealers were licensed in 1994, compared to 32 dealers today. By law, Mississippi live bait shrimp operations must be inspected and licensed annually by May 31. Inspections include observing that dealers have met requirements such as sufficient vessel safety gear, proper net and door sizes of trawls, and adequate facilities to keep live shrimp for sale to the public. Bait shrimp landings and sales are reported monthly to the DMR by each licensed dealer.

“New live bait shrimp dealers were licensed this year in every coastal county, providing greater opportunities for anglers to obtain



DMR Fisheries Biologist Traci Floyd (right) conducts an inspection of a bait boat at LaFrance Marina in Bay St. Louis.

one of the top live bait options for landing prized sport fish,” said Traci Floyd, DMR fisheries biologist.

For a complete listing of licensed live bait shrimp dealers, contact the DMR.

Sound Advice

Lt. Frank Wescovich



If the last week of spring was any indication of what type of summer we have in store for us, we better prepare for some real hot weather. This past

June was much warmer than any I can remember for some time. It seems that the air conditioners just can't keep up with the sweltering heat. I guess the only way to cool off is to go boating.

This past Sunday I did just that, but got off to a rough start. I always test run my boat's motor at home before starting out on a boat ride. I had just finished power washing the boat and trailer and was in the process of testing the motor. I hitched my truck to the trailer, put my cutoff plastic barrel under the motor and filled it with water. I attached my brand new tank of fresh gas and oil mix and climbed into the boat to crank up the motor. I pulled the choke, pulled the starter rope, pushed in the choke, pulled again and it started on the second crank as always. Up to this point everything was going as planned, right? Did I mention I was working in the full sun in the middle of the day?

I planned on letting the motor idle for a few minutes while I completed loading my boat gear. As I climbed down from the boat I suddenly felt a strange sensation of lightheadedness, nausea, slight dizziness and a feeling that I was about to faint. I had been sweating profusely earlier, but noticed that I had ceased to sweat. I realized that I had worked myself to the verge of a heat stroke. I was suffering from the classic symptoms. My body was beginning to shut down.

I knew that I had to cool off, but not too quickly. I got the water hose and showered my head neck and arms with cool water. I immediately started to feel a lot better. I was tempted to go inside and sit in the air conditioning, but knew that was the wrong thing to do. I have been told that cooling off too quickly can be very dangerous. I went into my

See **SOUND ADVICE**, page 9

Fishing Fun!



It was a day full of excitement and anticipation at Keesler Air Force Base's annual Earth Day event, as students went fishing at the DMR booth to learn what kind of animals lived in the wetlands and the marsh lands by fishing them out with a pole and identifying them. More than 500 fifth-grade students attended the event, held April 22. The students also had the opportunity to board a Marine Patrol vessel and to play the Name that Fish Game by sticking their hands inside a box and seeing if they could name the fish pictured on the card that they pulled out.

Visit the DMR online

www.dmr.state.ms.us

Marine Patrol Citation Totals

(April-June 2004)

Shrimp	16
Crab	4
Oyster	32
Commercial Net Fishing	0
Live Bait	4
Miscellaneous Seafood	5
Recreational Fishing	26
Boat and Water Safety	76
Marine Litter	1
Miscellaneous	3

Boat and Water Safety Statistics

(April-June 2004)

Classes held	15
Students certified	233
Outreach events	5
Presentations	4
Boat inspections	46
Boating accidents	17
Fatalities	1

Mississippi chef to represent state in national cook-off

DMR's Seafood Marketing Program will promote domestic seafood at show

Gov. Haley Barbour has selected Executive Chef Matthew Meadows to represent Mississippi in the first "Great American Seafood Cook Off" to be held July 31-Aug. 2, 2004, under the Gulf Coast Seafood Pavilion at the Louisiana Foodservice Expo in New Orleans.

Chef Meadows grew up on the Gulf Coast and is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi. He is a Certified Executive Chef by the American Culinary Federation and is also the current president of the Gulf Coast Chapter of that organization. Some of Chef Meadows' past accomplishments include numerous gold and silver medals in competitive events such as the Louisiana Culinary Classic, Lafayette Culinary Classic, and Gulf Coast Classic. Chef Meadows is the Director of Food and Beverage for the Grand Casino in Biloxi.

"Chef Meadows has the background and experience with the ability to put just the right touch of Mississippi in all the unique seafood dishes he prepares," said Gov. Barbour.

Executive chefs from 16 states will compete in the Great American Seafood Cook Off, which will determine the King or Queen of seafood preparation in the United States. Winston Groom, the author of "Forrest Gump" will be representing Alabama, and Chef Paula Deen and Sons from the Food Network will also be competing in this event, representing Georgia. Other states competing include Alaska, Delaware, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Florida, Texas, South Carolina and Maine.

Chefs cooking under the Gulf Coast Seafood Pavilion will only be using domestic seafood in their recipes. Southwest Cargo, the lead sponsor of the Louisiana Seafood Expo, is presenting the Gulf Coast Seafood Pavilion and the Great American Seafood



DMR's Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program Director Irvin Jackson (right) congratulates Executive Chef Matthew Meadows for being chosen to represent Mississippi in the first "Great American Seafood Cook Off" to be held July 31-Aug. 2, 2004, at the Louisiana Foodservice Expo in New Orleans. Chef Meadows is the Director of Food and Beverage for the Grand Casino in Biloxi.

Cook Off.

The DMR's Seafood Marketing Program has been working with the Louisiana Seafood Marketing Board's Executive Director, Ewell Smith and will participate with other states in the Gulf Coast Seafood Pavilion.

"We are very excited about this opportunity to showcase Mississippi's wild caught seafood and demonstrate its exceptional quality and taste during the Great American Seafood Cook Off," said Irvin Jackson, director of the DMR's Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program. "It's very important that we show our support for our domestic seafood industry in which Mississippi has played such an important role for the past 300 years."

Executive chefs and their assistants will prepare culinary items that are unique to their state and which they feel represent the best seafood their state has to offer. The American Culinary Federation will oversee the Cook Off and a diverse panel of distinguished chefs will judge the dishes.

"We have received an extremely positive response to the Great American Seafood

MS Seafood Marketing Program attends National Restaurant Assn. show

The Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program exhibited for the first time at the 86th annual National Restaurant Association show held in Chicago, Ill. to promote Mississippi seafood. The event was held at the McCormick Place Convention Center May 22-25 and is the largest show of its kind held in the U.S. More than 80,000 hotel/motel and restaurant business representatives attend this event.

"This is by far the largest event ever attended by the Seafood Marketing Program and many potential seafood customers stopped by our booth to receive the Mississippi Seafood Business Directory, Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood Recipe Book, Recipe Cards, and other materials promoting Mississippi Gulf Shrimp, Oysters, and Blue Crab," said Irvin Jackson, DMR's Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program director. The Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program's new "Not All Shrimp Are Created Equal" poster was also distributed along with stickers and license plates in support of wild caught Mississippi Gulf Shrimp.

The Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program co-exhibited with the Florida Seafood Marketing Bureau to showcase the quality of naturally grown Gulf of Mexico Shrimp. The majority of visitors to the Mississippi Seafood Marketing booth expressed great interest in Gulf Shrimp, as well as a desire to support domestic shrimp industry and harvesters.

Cook Off, which comes at a time of change in our domestic seafood industry," said Ewell Smith, executive director of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion & Marketing Board. "We look forward to welcoming teams from throughout the nation to compete in this exciting event that will bring states together to showcase America's great seafood."

Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood



NERR Notes

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve



Grand Bay BioBlitz brings wonder, awe to everyone



David Ruple

The Grand Bay BioBlitz, held April 30-May 1, was a landmark event for our fledgling reserve. Despite the inclement weather over that weekend (Remember when our early spring drought broke on April 29?), hundreds of participants and volunteers took part in the research and educational activities. Considering the weather, the turnout was a testament of local commitment and interest in the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GBNERR).

The educational activities included several evening activities such as the search for frogs and owls and netting bats. Boat tours of the reserve were usually filled to capacity. Like the bat-netting, most of the participants had never had the opportunity to visit the tranquil waters and marshes of the reserve. The awe and delight in the eyes of the children and fondness and memories of earlier years by our older visitors made the event a success.

The 24-hour inventory conducted by about 40 local and re-

DMR biologist Mike Buchanan shows a group of students a common box turtle found at GBNERR.



gional scientists was also a great success. While the number of species and the identity of those species were important, the real success in the scientific aspect of the BioBlitz was the scientists themselves. Most of the scientists had never been to the reserve before and were enthusiastically impressed by what they found in terms of habitats and species. The long-term benefit for the reserve is that in years to come these same researchers will generate research



Visitors enjoy an early morning birding cruise on the first day of the Grand Bay BioBlitz.

projects that will be conducted at the reserve. Biological treasures like the GBNERR seem to be becoming scarcer with time.

Biological treasures like the GBNERR seem to be becoming scarcer with time.

Biological treasures like the GBNERR seem to be becoming scarcer with time.



A pig frog is counted during the 24-hour inventory.



Milkweed is just one of the species of plants documented during the Grand Bay BioBlitz.



Two BioBlitz attendees add a fiddler crab to the species count. They found the crab while walking along a shell midden.



Seafood Safety Corner

The DMR's Seafood Technology Bureau finished its season with 54 newly certified seafood dealers. Certification of seafood dealers will continue for this quarter with the bureau's newly Food and Drug Administration (FDA) certified State Standardized Officers, Clay Boulet

and Ron Jordan. Two other seafood officers, Jan Welker and Jeff Davis are also available for any technical assistance and inspection needed to help all the dealers.

Our bureau just finished water quality sampling of all the seafood facilities' water sources with the assistance of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, whose staff is instrumental in testing and analyzing the samples. The Seafood Technology Bureau is immediately notified if poor water quality is detected. Disinfection procedures of the water source are usually recommended if a sec-

ond water sample taken failed to meet the water-quality standard to ensure clean and sanitary conditions.

The Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) legislation has been adopted for all types of seafood. Every seafood importer and exporter must ensure that seafood packages have a "Country of Origin" label on the package and must indicate whether the product was "wild" or farm-raised.

The date of implementation for COOL is September 30, 2004.



Ruth Posadas

Foodborne Illness Risk Management: A Business and Legal Risk

Foodborne illness will continue to be an issue for seafood dealers and processors. Companies can reduce the risk for consumers and prevent a potential business and legal disaster by taking appropriate precautions.

SOUND ADVICE, continued from page 6

shop and got an electric fan and sat in the shade of my oak tree with the fan blowing on me. In about 15 minutes I was feeling good again and went into the house and got a big cool glass of ice water.

Later on I did get to enjoy my boat ride. The point I'm trying to make is that you can't be too careful when dealing with this unusually hot weather. I should have been pacing my activities and drinking plenty of fluids. I had been doing neither. I was so caught up in getting the boat ready to go that I forgot to take the proper precautions. It almost caught up with me.

Whether actually out on the water or just getting ready to go, you are susceptible to the heat and need to exercise proper precautions. Stay in the shade whenever possible. Dress properly with light weight clothing. Drink plenty of water and try to stay as cool as possible.

Remember, our summer season has arrived, and we have our historically hottest months yet to come. Let's all be safe and enjoy our boating experiences. And by the way, children are just as likely to have this problem, so watch out for them too.

And remember: Wear your Lifejacket. Safe boating is no accident.

Lt. Frank Wescovich oversees the DMR's Boat and Water Safety Program. He can be reached at (228) 432-2820 or (228) 435-1332.

Mississippi designates first Clean Marina



From left, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Communications Director Tim Reid and DMR Executive Director William Walker present Beau Rivage President Jeff Dahl and Beau Rivage Vending and Recreation Manager Doug Gaberty with a Clean Marina flag at a designation ceremony on July 13.

Beau Rivage Marina in Biloxi was designated Mississippi's first Clean Marina on July 13 as part of the Alabama-Mississippi Clean Marina Program.

The Clean Marina Program, coordinated by the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium with the DMR and other partners, is a voluntary program that encourages marina operators to adopt best management practices for sewage handling, fuel management, solid waste management, vessel cleaning and repair, storm water management, staff training and boater education to help reduce water pollution and erosion in state waterways. An evaluation team visits the marina to determine that the marina has met all necessary requirements to become certified as a Clean Marina. The Alabama-Mississippi program is one of only 12 in the nation. For more information, contact Mississippi's Clean Marina Program coordinator Cherie Arceneaux at (228) 806-8811.



FREE, Family FUN!

Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival

Saturday, September 25
Pass Christian Harbor, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Kid's Fishing Rodeo begins at 8 a.m.

Details: (228) 374-5000

DMR receives Keep Mississippi Beautiful Awards

The DMR was presented with two awards at the 12th annual Keep America Beautiful Awards Luncheon held April 27 at the Country Club of Jackson in Jackson, Miss.—a second place award in the State Government category for the 2003 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and a 2004 Partnership Award for exemplary support of Keep Mississippi Beautiful.

This is the fourth consecutive year the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup was recognized with an award and the first year the DMR was recognized with a partnership award.

“The Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force is the key to the success of the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup,” said Lauren Thompson, DMR Public Relations Director. “Community partnering activities like the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and our recent collabora-



DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson accepts a Keep Mississippi Beautiful award on behalf of the DMR for its partnering efforts with Keep Mississippi Beautiful and for its role in coordinating the 2003 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup. (From left: Southern District Transportation Commissioner Wayne Brown, Keep Mississippi Beautiful Chairperson Nevie McArthur, former First Lady Pat Fordice, DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson and Central District Transportation Commissioner Dick Hall.)

tion with the Mississippi Department of Transportation and Keep Mississippi Beautiful help generate public interest in the importance of environmental stewardship.”

To be eligible for a Keep Mississippi Beautiful/People Against Litter statewide award, a program must show successful results in one of the following environmental leadership areas: litter prevention, beautification and community improvement, minimizing the impact of solid waste on communities and recycling.

The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup is held each year in September in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup. The DMR and Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force coordinate the event to raise public awareness about the issues of marine debris. In 2003, 4,520 volunteers picked up 36.5 tons of

marine debris along 233 miles of Coastal waterways in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties. Data identifying debris found is collected and submitted for analysis.

DMR mentors local student through national program



Tommy Nguyen

Tommy Nguyen, a graduating senior from St. Martin High School is as a recipient of the 2004 Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology mentoring program scholarship. Nguyen began the eight-

week mentorship program with the DMR, sponsored by the American Fisheries Society, on June 1, 2004. Nguyen, who graduated in the top 10 percent of his class, applied for the scholarship because of his interest in pursuing a career in Marine Science. Tommy was one of only 65 students selected internationally.

“The Hutton Scholarship Program is a very competitive nationwide program, and I commend Mr. Nguyen on his selection,” said DMR Executive Director William Walker. “The DMR is honored to be chosen by Mr. Nguyen as his host agency. This is an outstanding program that assists our most talented future leaders in making important career development decisions, and we look forward to working with him during his

mentorship.”

Students selected for the program were matched with a professional mentor for a summer-long, hands-on experience in a marine setting. A scholarship of \$3,000 is awarded to each student accepted into the program. Selection of students was made by the American Fisheries Society. Selection criteria included: academic ability, recommendations, and communication skills.

“This is the first year the DMR has participated in the mentoring program,” said mentor Dale Diaz, DMR Fisheries Staff Officer. “Tommy will have an opportunity to work with all of the programs in fisheries; this should help him in settling on which area he would like to focus his studies on.”



DMR intern Tommy Nguyen (back) and DMR Marine Fisheries Staff Officer Dale Diaz conduct routine water sampling at one of Mississippi's oyster reefs.

“The internship is a great experience for me,” said Tommy Nguyen, DMR intern. “I learned a lot of different things about the DMR.”

Nguyen plans to attend the University of South Alabama in the fall to pursue a career in biology or medicine. Nguyen is the son of Frank and Phuong Nguyen of St. Martin.



Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

FDA certifies two DMR seafood officers

DMR Seafood Officers Clay Boulet and Ron Jordan recently received State Standardized Officer (SSO) certifications from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Boulet, who has been a SSO for the past three years, received re-certification for another five years. Jordan was newly certified for five years.

To receive the SSO certification, Boulet and Jordan had to successfully pass the seafood standardization inspections by the Food and Drug Administration Regional Specialist, John Veazey.

Training helps seafood officer bridge language gap with seafood industry

Jan Welker, Seafood Officer with DMR's Seafood Technology Bureau, completed a semester-long Vietnamese language course on May 12. Beginning Vietnamese I was offered by Tulane University College in Biloxi.

The Seafood Technology Bureau makes a continuous effort to communicate more effectively with the Vietnamese seafood industry.

The course work completed by Welker included Linguistics: Listening and speaking basic Vietnamese; Reading, Writing and Comprehension; and Culture: Customs, Education and Lifestyle.

"I understand and appreciate the difficulty that other cultures experience with the English Language," said DMR Seafood Officer Jan Welker. "The language class was an Introduction; now that I have acquired the tools, I can practice this new language and prepare phrases for situations in order to communicate with the Vietnamese seafood dealers."



Vietnamese course instructors Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Vuong with Jan Welker (center).

MP Officers complete FLETC training

Marine Patrol officers Jason Ferrill and John White attended the Marine Law Enforcement Training Program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Ga.

The FLETC is the nucleus of advanced training for 72 different federal agencies.

Program topics include the following: aids to navigation, air/sea operations, boarding procedures, boat handling, chart interpretation, crew overboard, engineering casualties, fire and damage control, GPS and DGPS, radar, marine communications, marlinspike seamanship, meteorology/heavy weather operations, nautical terminology, piloting and dead reckoning, preventative maintenance; pursuit, stop and approach, rules of the road, safety and emergency equipment and survival swimming.

In the Line of Excellence



(From left: Dennis Woullard Jr., Tim Broder, Brock Bowen and Patrick Webb.) Marine Patrol welcomes officers Dennis Woullard Jr., Brock Bowen and Patrick Webb who recently completed training at the Southern Regional Public Safety Institute in Long Beach, Miss. Woullard received the physical fitness award and the Larkin Smith Award for having the highest overall point average. Brock received a defensive driving award. Broder also joins Marine Patrol with more than 13 years of law enforcement experience.

Happy Anniversary!

These anniversaries mark employees' years of service with the Department of Marine Resources and the state of Mississippi.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (7/1/80) George Wright Sr. | (8/13/01) Joan Murphy |
| (7/1/85) Scott Gordon | (8/15/01) Richard Cooley |
| (7/1/87) Joey Moran | (8/18/03) Sally Richards |
| (7/1/91) David Rose | (8/20/01) Christine Popwell |
| (7/1/91) Frank Wescovich | (8/21/02) Jill Cooke |
| (7/1/93) Linda McCarthy | (8/25/86) Judy Bosarge |
| (7/1/97) John Grimsley | (8/25/97) Marty Jones |
| (7/1/99) Leah Bray | (9/1/98) Kenny Melvin |
| (7/1/03) Marian Dicas | (9/1/00) Don Baxter |
| (7/1/03) Jamie Drennen | (9/1/00) Alan McArthur |
| (7/7/92) Charlie Vyles | (9/1/00) Tina Shumate |
| (7/8/02) William Walker | (9/1/01) Linda Bullard |
| (7/14/03) Mike Rigdon | (9/1/03) Jason Ferrill |
| (7/15/99) Michaela Hill | (9/1/03) John White |
| (7/15/02) Kevin Schultz | (9/1/03) Chris May |
| (7/21/97) Joe Ziegler | (9/9/00) Matt Hill |
| (7/25/96) William Perret | (9/10/01) Gwynn Taylor |
| (7/31/90) Dorothy Daniel | (9/15/99) Erick Porche |
| (8/1/86) Mike Buchanan | (9/15/99) Joe Roach Sr. |
| (8/1/99) Susan Perkins | (9/15/99) Al Warburton |
| (8/1/01) J.R. Harrington | (9/18/00) Jerry Brashier |
| (8/7/02) Ben Bloodworth | (9/20/01) Marti Schuman |
| (8/7/02) Justin Godfrey | |

We thank them for their dedicated service to the management of our marine resources.



**Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources**
1141 Bayview Avenue, Suite 101
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

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DMR Calendar

August 12

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 10 a.m.

August 17

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

September 18

Mississippi Coastal Cleanup. To Volunteer, call (228) 374-5000.

September 20-22

Southern States Environmental Conference and Exhibition, Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center, Biloxi. For info, call (662) 325-8877.

September 21

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

September 25

Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Pass Christian Harbor. Kid's fishing rodeo begins at 8 a.m. Fun, free hands-on activities for the family. For info, call (228) 374-5000.

October 14

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 10 a.m.

Doc's Fishing Tips

Fred Deegen, Ph.D., Deputy Director

Fishing bright—hot pink or chartreuse—topwater baits for trout is most productive in the clear waters of the Gulf Islands National Seashore this time of year. Just be sure to get on the water at the crack of dawn for best results, as the fish are sure to hightail it for deeper, cooler waters once that infernal mid-summer sun gets cranked up.

If you would like to receive Coastal Markers in the mail, please fill out below and mail to: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Office of Public Affairs, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530; call (228) 374-5022, ext. 5062; or e-mail susan.perkins@dmr.state.ms.us.

Name: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____