

Shrimp Season opening brings bountiful harvest

Shrimp season, which officially opened in Mississippi territorial waters at 6 a.m. June 6 brought with it better than average size shrimp.

The Department of Marine Resources' (DMR) marine fisheries staff was on the water conducting interviews and surveying shrimp boats. Approximately 300 commercial and recreational shrimp boats came out to work the opening day, which is about equal to last year's count of 306.

On June 5, 2007, the number of commercial resident shrimp licenses sold was 356, down 50 from last year. The number of out-of-state commercial shrimp licenses sold was 120, down nine from 2006.

"Reports from the fishermen have been favorable," said DMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau Director Traci Floyd.

The majority of boats were congregated at Belle Fontaine and inside Cat Island. Other boats headed to the inside area of Horn Island where there were reports of larger shrimp.

"Our shrimp fishermen are bringing in larger than average size shrimp and in good numbers," added Floyd. "This



A large shrimp vessel heads out to join the 300 vessels that turned out June 6 for the opening day of the 2007 shrimp season in Mississippi.

reflects the good shrimp growing conditions—warm waters, high salinities, and little rain—that Mother Nature gave us in late winter and spring."

The DMR's Marine Patrol was out in full force starting at 6 p.m. June 5 and worked

See SHRIMP, page 4

Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area to host national meeting this fall

Directors and staff of the 37 national heritage areas affiliated with the National Park Service and a member of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas will spend five days on the Mississippi Gulf Coast this October.

The Office of Coastal Management and Planning at the Department of Marine Resources is the coordinating entity for the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area (NHA) and will host fellow national heritage development and tourism partners for the Heritage Development Institute, Alliance of National Heritage Areas Board of Directors and Roundtables. The historic meetings are set to take place in the Bolton State Office Building on Back Bay of Biloxi.

Representatives from Augusta Canal, Cane River, Delaware & Lehigh, Essex, Erie Canal, Yuma Crossing, Rivers of Steel, Oil Region, Lackawanna, Motor Cities,

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**Mississippi Department
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Haley Barbour
Governor

**Mississippi Commission on
Marine Resources**

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**Visit the DMR online
www.dmr.state.ms.us**

Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker



As we approach the two-year anniversary of Katrina, there will likely be many reports and news stories describing South Mississippi's progress and recovery.

To get a snapshot of how our marine resources are rebounding all you really need to do is cast a line or throw a net. One angler said recently he was out mulleting and when he pulled in his cast net he pulled out some lagniappe. No, it wasn't the remnants of someone's home; it was a 14-pound redfish. Anglers caught several record breakers this summer. In July the Commission on Marine Resources certified *eight* state saltwater sportfishing records.

And consider these bright spots: shrimp landings were up more than 1 million pounds for the month of June from 2006 to 2007, from 1.3 million pounds to 2.4 million pounds, and the price of shrimp is up. Blue crab landings for 2006 were the highest in over 15 years. And 71,000 cubic yards of cultch material has been deposited to refurbish over 710 acres of oyster reefs in the western Mississippi Sound.

As of July 30, more than 130,000 cubic yards of marine debris have been removed from our coastal waterways and 100 percent federal reimbursement for marine debris removal has been extended through December 2007.

Cleanup and rebuilding efforts on Mississippi's Coastal Preserves have resulted in 286 acres of coastal habitat being restored. Restoration efforts are under way on an additional 760 acres.

To date, Mississippi has received about \$11 million of the \$37 million that Congress approved to be distributed to the state over the next five years as part of the NOAA NMFS Fisheries Disaster Recovery Program. The funds are to be used to assist in the restoration of oyster beds and shrimping grounds rehabilitation, as well as to monitor the recovery of Gulf fisheries.

It is gratifying to see the rapid progress that has already taken place as we work together to rebuild our coastline.

Executive Director

**Boat and Water Safety
Course Schedule
(July-Sept. 2007)**



All classes are free. Preregistration is required. Class dates are subject to change. For details, call Marine Patrol at (228) 523-4134. Class schedules are posted monthly on the DMR's Web site at www.dmr.state.ms.us. Click on Marine Patrol, then select Boat and Water Safety and click on Schedule for Classes.

- **Aug. 4**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Aug. 11**, Bolton Building, Room 205, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Aug. 18**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 Hwy. 90, Bay St. Louis, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Aug. 25**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Sept. 8**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 Hwy. 90, Bay St. Louis, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Sept. 15**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Sept. 22**, Bolton Building, Room 205, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Sept. 29**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 Hwy. 90, Bay St. Louis, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Thanks!

**Thanks to all those who
contributed to this issue of
Coastal Markers.**

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Marcia Garcia | Rhonda Price |
| Dr. Fred Deegen | Bill Richardson |
| Kristina Broussard | Darrin Stewart |
| Marian Dicas | Jennifer Buchanan |
| Dr. Mark Woodrey | Joe Jewell |
| Linda Wakefield | Ruth Posadas |
| Amy Taylor | |
| Frank Wescovich | |

DMR restores 580 acres of state's oyster reefs

The DMR recently distributed 57,668 cubic yards of cultch material (oyster shells and limestone), restoring 580 acres of oyster reefs—including Kittiwake, Pass Marianne and Telegraph reefs. The cultch plant cost \$3 million, ranking it as one of Mississippi's largest cultch plants and one of the largest in the nation.

"It has been said that Hurricane Katrina confronted us with insurmountable opportunities," said DMR Shellfish Bureau Director Scott Gordon. "The rebuilding of our oyster reefs, which so many hard working people of the Coast look to for their livelihoods, initially seemed to be one of those. I have confidence that we will be able to meet the great challenges of rebuilding Mississippi's oyster reefs so decimated by Hurricane Katrina. This is an essential step in the recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast."

Mississippi Marine Services of Pass Christian distributed 20,168 cubic yards of oyster shell and Alabama Seafood Producers Inc. of Bayou LaBatre, Ala. distributed 37,500 cubic yards of crushed limestone—more than 80 barge loads of cultch material.

Cultch plants consist of spreading oyster shell, crushed limestone or concrete rubble over the water bottom using high-pressure hoses, giving oyster larvae a clean surface on which to attach and grow. These cultch plants are intended to restore oyster pro-



The DMR recently completed a \$3 million cultch plant in the western Mississippi Sound, restoring 580 acres of oyster reefs destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The cultch plant ranks as one of the state's largest and one of the largest in the nation.

ductivity and increase fishing opportunities in South Mississippi through the continued rebuilding of existing reefs. In Mississippi waters it usually takes an oyster 18 to 24 months to reach a marketable size.

The cultch plant was funded through the Mississippi Hurricane Katrina Disaster Restoration, Enhancement and Monitoring Program to Study the Recovery of Gulf Fisheries.

"On behalf of the DMR, I would like to

thank Senators Thad Cochran and Trent Lott, Congressman Gene Taylor and Gov. Haley Barbour for their tireless efforts in getting Congress to approve these disaster funds for Gulf fisheries," said Dale Diaz, DMR Office of Marine Fisheries Director. "Restoration projects like this are important to the state's economy, the health of the coastal environment and for the livelihood and recreation of numerous Coast fishermen."

Grants available to marinas for pump-out installation

Grants are now available for the installation of pump-out facilities at local marinas and harbors through the Clean Vessel Act Program. The grants are cash reimbursable—75 percent federally funded and 25 percent recipient-matched—through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

For more information about applying for a pump-out installation grant, contact the DMR's Clean Vessel coordinator at (228) 523-4150.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources has been committed to cleaning up the quality of our water since 1994, when the Clean Vessel Act (CVA) program was first authorized. Since that time discharging raw sewage into state waters has been prohibited.

Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act in

1992 to reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges after finding that there were an inadequate number of onshore sewage disposal facilities in waters frequented by recreational boats and determining that these vessels may be a substantial contributor to localized degradation of water quality.

Under the provisions of the Clean Vessel Act, \$40 million will be reauthorized for distribution to the states over a five-year period. These funds come from boaters and anglers through taxes paid on fishing tackle and motorboat fuels under the Federal Aid Sport Fish Restoration Act program.

The Clean Vessel Act Program's mission is to enhance, protect and conserve the coastal resources of Mississippi through

the installation and maintenance of pump-out stations provided by the Department of Marine Resources in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Sport Fish Restoration Grant Program. Any marina in Mississippi is eligible to participate in this program that provides for a cash reimbursable grant with a 75 percent Federal and 25 percent marina match.

Until the local pumpouts at the harbors and marinas come back on-line, there is a pump-out boat accessible for use. Call Mitchell Marine, Inc. at (228) 875-1092.

How do I apply?

Contact DMR's CVA coordinator, Rhonda Price at (228) 523-4150.

SHRIMP, continued from page 1

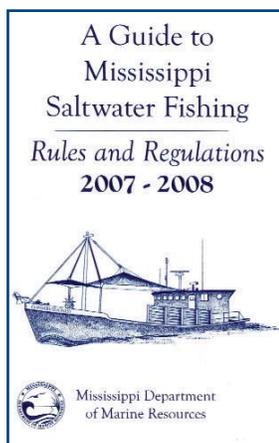


DMR Marine Patrol Officer Will Freeman performs a routine inspection aboard a shrimp boat, about one mile north of Horn Island on opening day of the 2007 shrimp season.

shrimp season opening. This included 34 officers, two reserve officers and three dispatchers. Marine Patrol officers conducted patrols from 14 patrol boats throughout the Mississippi Sound.

The 14 Marine Patrol boats patrolling the waters responded to two confirmed capsizings and one boat in distress.

“We are extremely pleased with the opening day of the 2007 shrimping season,” said Col. Walter Chatagner, Chief of the DMR’s Marine Patrol. “Compliance rates were much higher than in previous years.”



NEW Fishing Rules and Regulations Book

Get your
FREE
copy today!

Did you know as of June 1, the recreational red snapper possession limit is 2? For the latest regulations, stop by the DMR office at 1141 Bayview Avenue in Biloxi between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (374-5000) and get your free copy of the 2007-2008 “A Guide to Mississippi Saltwater Fishing Rules & Regulations,” pick up one of our handy pocket guides to size and possession limits, and purchase your 07-08 saltwater sportfishing license. Licenses expire one year from the date they’re issued. The 2007-2008 edition of “A Guide to Mississippi Saltwater Fishing Rules and Regulations” is also available on the DMR Web site as an Adobe PDF file and can be downloaded free at www.dmr.state.ms.us. The cover illustration was designed by DMR Staff Officer Joe Jewell.

HERITAGE, continued from page 1

Tennessee Civil War, Wheeling, Silos and Smokestacks and South Carolina National Heritage Areas are excited about coming to the coast.

Each heritage area is provided the opportunity to carry out the membership duties by hosting a national meeting. The Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area was given the opportunity to host two years ago and remains pledged and proud of the cultural, historical, archaeological, natural and recreational resources in southern Mississippi.

Known as the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area, the six-county area in southern Mississippi located on the Gulf of Mexico and in the Mississippi Coastal Plain has a unique history shaped by environment, culture, historical significance and recreational resources.

With broad support from local governments and other interested individuals for the establishment of the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area to coordinate and assist in the preservation and interpretation of these resources, the Comprehensive Resource Management Plan coordinated by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is a collaborative effort of the federal government and state and local governments in the area and is a natural foundation on which to establish the Heritage Area and establishment of the Heritage Area would assist local communities and residents in preserving the unique cultural, historical, and natural resources of the area.

With active support of Mississippi’s Congressional delegation, local government officials, stakeholders and private citizens, the MDMR-CRMP achieved the twin goals of having the six coastal counties designated as a National Heritage Area and having a management plan developed. It is anticipated that all of the entities that worked so hard to achieve these goals will be partners in implementing the components of the plan. An environmental assessment for the area will be completed this summer.

This fall directors, staff and commissioners from 36 heritage areas in the national system will visit the distinctive Mississippi Gulf Coast where many chapters in the national story have been written.

Visit the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve online



www.grandbaynerr.org

Smart growth conference draws record number

The DMR Office of Coastal Management and Planning and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce hosted the eighth annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference—Smart Growth, May 9-10, 2007 at the IP Casino Resort Spa in Biloxi. More than 600 people attended the two-day event, the largest Coastal Development Strategies Conference to date.

The DMR's Office of Coastal Management and Planning coordinates and facilitates smart growth throughout coastal Mississippi. It provides in-depth education based on a set of smart growth principles and practices for development. The Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce also provides support for smart growth in the region.

Since it was first held in 1999, the Coastal Development Strategies Conference continues to be the premier smart growth conference on the Gulf Coast, providing the knowledge and skills necessary to address the challenges and to identify issues associated with environmental protection and economic development in the six lower counties of the state.



Conference moderator Sen. Deborah Dawkins (right) introduces Gov. Haley Barbour. Gov. Barbour spoke on the second day of the event.

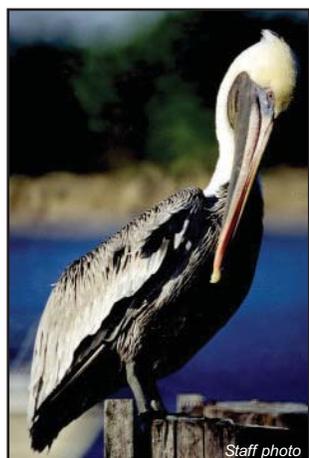
With support from federal, state and local governments, business and non-profit sectors, and surrounding community partners, the conference has grown into a vehicle for planners, elected officials, attorneys, real estate professionals, economic developers, citizens, environmental groups, industry, business owners, bankers, and others to convene and work on strategies, refining ideas and implementation methods for creating sustainable communities in the region.

Keynote speakers Mississippi Governor

Haley Barbour and Smart Growth America's Don Chen addressed conference attendees. Chairman Donald Powell, Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding, joined the group and offered support during his luncheon address.

Other speakers presented issues ranging from Smart Growth/SmartCode, Regional Cooperation, Legislative Issues, Hurricane Hunter Tasks and Affordable Housing. Concurrent breakout sessions covered Banking, Main Street Programs, Floodplain Management, Heritage Tourism, Development Site Designs using Smart Growth BMPs, Bike Trails, Walking Paths and Green Space, Data and Technology Integration, Wetlands Permitting, and Business Safety designed to assist with land-use decisions, water quality, building and re-development, economic development and preservation issues.

Over 50 real estate professionals and 20 appraisers received continuing education credits. Community sponsors and exhibitors supported the conference and its strategies.



Staff photo

Names of the contributors will be placed in a drawing to win a spot on a special photography cruise through the reserve with a professional ornithologist. Twelve winners will be chosen!

WANTED!!

High-Quality Photos of Local Birds

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve will soon be publishing a book entitled *Selected Birds of the Grand Bay NERR and NWR* that will be distributed free to the public. We are asking professional and amateur photographers to donate high-quality photos of birds to us for inclusion in this book. All photographers will receive full credit.

For more information and a list of the bird pictures needed, please call Jennifer Buchanan at (228) 475-7047, or e-mail her at jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov

Don't forget to
renew your
fishing license



Saltwater sportfishing
licenses expire one year
after date of sale.

Fishermen collect more than 1,000 derelict crab traps

The DMR, in conjunction with the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL), held a deep water derelict crab trap cleanup. This cleanup coincided with the opening of shrimp season on June 6.

All licensed crab trap fishermen, both resident and non-resident, were notified of the closure in early May to give them adequate time to prepare for the closure. All crab fishermen were required to move their traps inside one-half mile of the shoreline, an area permanently closed to shrimp trawling. Any traps left outside the half-mile line were considered derelict and subject to removal.

During the first week of the 2007-2008 shrimp season, eligible registered resident commercial shrimp fishermen were allowed to pick up any derelict crab traps found in the legal



DMR Marine Fisheries Technician Rudy Balius (second from left) and DMR Marine Fisheries Employee Joseph Ferguson (right) assist fishermen with the unloading of the derelict crab traps they collected during the DMR- and GCRL-sponsored deep water cleanup.

shrimping grounds to deliver to the DMR for recycling. Forty shrimp fishermen

brought traps to the DMR staging area in Gulfport and a total of 1,078 derelict traps were turned in to be recycled as scrap metal.

The Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program, a joint effort of the DMR and GCRL, is currently funded by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) through the Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief Grant. This grant was created by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to give assistance to the fishing industry and monitor fisheries recovery from Hurricane Katrina.

The DMR would like to thank the fishermen, GCRL, the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission and NOAA for making the project a success.

DMR licenses 13 live bait camps



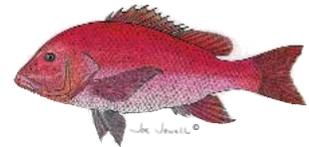
DMR Live Bait Inspector Designee Darrin Stewart (left) inspects a new live bait camp in Bay St. Louis.

The DMR is pleased to announce that thirteen live bait camps have been inspected and licensed to do business. That is an increase of three camps over last year, but still down from the original 28 that operated before Hurricane Katrina.

“These extra camps are really starting to fill in the gaps along our coastal cities,”

said Darrin Stewart, DMR live bait inspector designee. “With the exception of Pass Christian and Long Beach, every coastal city has nearby access to a bait camp. With the addition of much needed bait suppliers returning to Gulfport Harbor it should significantly assist the recreational fishermen throughout Gulfport, Long Beach and West Biloxi.”

Red snapper rule change now in effect



The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) adopted rule changes to Title 22, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Part 7 Regulations to Provide Size Limits and Bag Limits on Certain Fish Species and to Prevent Sale of Seafood by Recreational Fishermen, in order to be concurrent with federal regulations on red snapper. The CMR adopted the proposed rule at its May meeting. The rule change took effect June 1, 2007.

Regulation changes:

- Reduce the recreational possession limit from four to two red snapper
- Prohibit the captain and crew on charter vessel trips from possessing a bag limit of red snapper
- State possession and size limits for red snapper shall not apply to federally permitted commercial red snapper fishermen or dealers legally harvesting and/or selling red snapper harvested from federal waters only.

DMR Receives Keep Mississippi Beautiful Awards

The DMR received two awards—an award in the State Government category for the 2006 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and a Partnership Award—at the 15th annual Keep Mississippi Beautiful (KMB) awards luncheon held recently at the Country Club of Jackson.

Over 300 participants from across the state traveled to Jackson to attend the event. The KMB Statewide Awards Program recognizes those individuals, groups, companies and government agencies who, through ongoing efforts, are utilizing public/private partnerships to improve their community’s waste-handling practices and its environment. KMB received 25 entries in this year’s awards program.

“The Department of Marine Resources would like to thank Keep Mississippi Beautiful, the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force and our many community part-

ners and volunteers with the Coastal Cleanup for all they have done and continue to do to improve our state,” said Lauren Thompson, DMR Public Relations Director. “We will continue to work together to educate the public about litter prevention and the detrimental effects marine debris has on our state.”

The 2006 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup was held on Sept. 16 in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup—the world’s largest single-day volunteer effort to clean up the marine environment. More than 3,200 volunteers participated, picking up 4,051 bags of trash along 147 miles of Coastal waterways in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties and the Barrier Islands. The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup takes place each year on the third Saturday in September. For more information visit www.mscoastalcleanup.org.



DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson, left, accepts a Keep Mississippi Beautiful Partnership Award on behalf of the DMR from KMB Board Chairwoman Stephanie Hutchins for exemplary support of KMB.

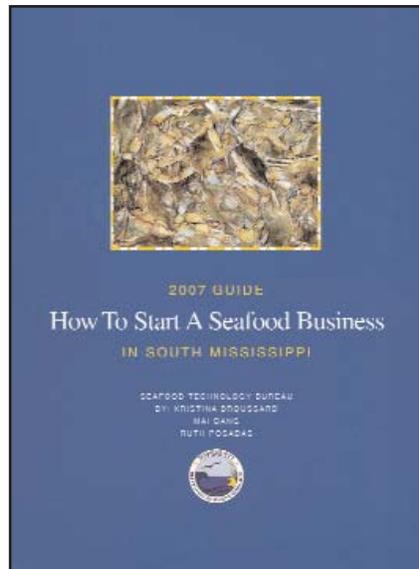
Free Mississippi seafood business start-up guide available at DMR

The DMR Seafood Technology Bureau has developed a publication on “How To Start A Seafood Business in South Mississippi.” The guide, a contribution to the rebuilding efforts of the seafood industry of Mississippi, contains information to assist anyone interested in starting a seafood business in Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, George, Pearl River and Stone counties. The guides are free and are available at the DMR, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (374-5000).

For each city included in the guide, there is a written description of the proper procedures for developing a seafood business as well as a flow chart for easy reading. The guide addresses businesses such as seafood processors, seafood dealers and seafood retail facilities. The appendix of the guide includes important information for any business including:

- County, state and federal agencies requiring certification or licensing;
- Licensing, regulations, state laws and certification codes for the State of Mississippi;
- Available financing options; and
- Insurance requirements.

The guide will be sent to each city’s



The “How To Start A Seafood Business” guide is available free at the Department of Marine Resources, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi. The guide contains information about how to start a seafood business in Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, George, Pearl River and Stone counties.

building and/or planning department and all libraries within the six coastal counties, as well as to university libraries and any non-profit organizations dealing with business basics.

**18th annual
Mississippi
Coastal
Cleanup**

**Saturday, Sept. 15
8 a.m.-11 a.m.**



Volunteer!

Call 877-BEACH 05

Visit
www.mscoastalcleanup.org

NERR Notes

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve



Grand Bay NERR, partners host marsh bird workshop

In May, the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) partnered with Sapelo Island NERR, ACE Basin NERR, North Inlet-Winyah Bay NERR, and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to host a Marsh Bird Training Workshop. Dr. Mark Woodrey with Mississippi State University and the Grand Bay NERR and Dr. Courtney Conway with the University of Arizona and USGS were the primary instructors. Together they taught natural resource managers to use standardized survey protocols to identify secretive marsh birds such as rails, bitterns, and gallinules. Workshop participants represented six wildlife management areas across three southeastern states.



Participants in the Marsh Bird Training Workshop look for secretive marsh birds at Bird Plantation near Georgetown, S.C. The wildlife plantation is owned by the Sasser family.

Secretive marsh birds are noted by

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as species of management concern due to the fact that their populations are considered to be declining. They are called “secretive” because they are often diffi-

cult to detect, and they inhabit areas such as tidal marshes and coastal wetlands that are not easily accessible. Since they are difficult to see, they are often overlooked by national bird survey efforts, and little is known about their abundance, population trends, and management needs.

Coastal wetlands are critical habitats for many secretive birds, and the NERRs and National Wildlife Refuges are actively training staff and volunteers to identify the calls of some of the more elusive species of birds in order to compile baseline data to deter-

mine species presence and habitat association. Using a standardized protocol to collect data is critical to researchers’ abilities to utilize data and compare results.

Grants for coastal projects topic of workshop series

Grand Bay NERR’s Coastal Training Program has offered a series of grant workshops this summer designed to provide local government and environmental nonprofit representatives with skills needed to locate and acquire funding for coastal resource projects in local communities. For the purposes of these workshops, coastal resource projects are defined as those that protect natural resources, improve local heritage and cultural associations and implement hazard mitigation strategies to protect communities from future flood events.

The first workshop in the series, Success Starts at the Top: What Decision-Makers Need to Know and Support to Maximize Funding for

Coastal Resource Projects, was held at D’Iberville City Hall on June 1. This event was designed to teach program managers and agency directors how to find funds to support their programs as well as techniques to support grant writing and management staff. Over 30 participants from across the coast discussed barriers to the grant seeking process and learned team-building and communication strategies to help overcome many of these issues.

The series continued on June 26 with Creating Success: Scoping, Researching, Writing, and Tracking Grants. Workshop participants learned techniques for preparing successful grant proposals, developed budgets for

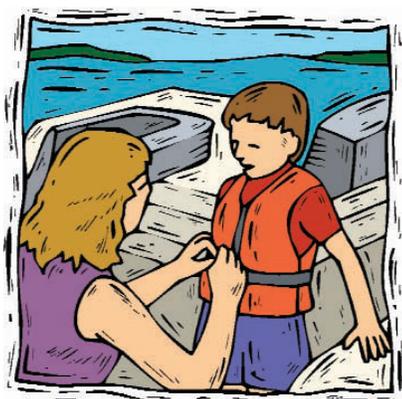
their projects, established success criteria for evaluation purposes, and learned how to successfully manage grant awards. The workshop series concludes on August 17 with a Coastal Resource Funding Fair. The last two events will take place at Mississippi State University’s Coastal Research and Extension Center (CREC) in Biloxi.

Need more info?

For more information about the grant workshop series or other Coastal Training events, visit: www.grandbaynerr.org/education/ctp/

Know the Rules of the Water:

Take a free boat and water safety class



With the arrival of summer, many more people will be out boating on Mississippi's coastal waters. And with more than 300,000 boats registered in Mississippi, and about 25 percent of those operating in coastal waters, it's important to know the rules of the waterways. The DMR resumed its Boat and Water Safety classes in April. Classes are free and open to all ages. (See page 2 for August-September schedule.)

The DMR Marine Patrol-sponsored courses have been designed to effectively introduce topics such as boat registration, navigation rules, trailering, first aid response and weather watch into a comprehensive one-day class. The classes are taught in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties.

"Drowning continues to be the number one cause of boating accident-related deaths," said Lt. Frank Wescovich, head of the DMR's Boat and Water Safety program. "Although it's not a requirement for persons over 13 years of age, Marine Patrol would like to see everyone wear their life jackets. Proper knowledge and training go a long way toward a safe boating experience. Please consider taking one of our free safe boating courses. It only takes eight hours, and we guarantee it will be time well spent."

Since the inception of the DMR's Boat and Water Safety program in March 2000, the Marine Patrol Officers of the DMR have taught over 300 courses and have certified over 3,000 students in Boating Safety.

These programs and certification courses are conducted by the DMR free of charge, in the three coastal counties, year-round for the public and in the school systems.

In the DMR's Boat and Water Safety presentation program, students learn the history of boat and water safety, the duties of the DMR's Marine Patrol, what to expect in the certification course and why there is a need for it. Topics covered include registration, safety equipment, negligent operation, who has the right of way, boating accidents, no wake zones, weather and navigational aids.

DMR Boating Safety has also spread the message of boating safety to about 30,000 people through its outreach programs and exhibits at various events.

To register for a free boating safety class or to bring a class into your school, call Marine Patrol Dispatch at (228) 523-4134. For more information, visit the DMR online at www.dmr.state.ms.us.

Did you Know?

In order to operate a motorboat or personal watercraft in Mississippi, those born after June 30, 1980, are required to successfully complete an approved boating safety course and to have a certificate of satisfactory completion in their possession while in operation of the motorboat.

Marine Patrol Citation Totals

(April-June 2007)

Shrimp	3
Crab	11
Oyster	5
Commercial Net Fishing	0
Live Bait	4
Miscellaneous Seafood	3
Recreational Fishing	86
Boat and Water Safety	181
Marine Litter	3
Miscellaneous	41

Sound Advice

Lt. Frank Wescovich



A recent boating accident prompts this reminder about boating and alcohol. A boat being operated late at night ran aground on the rock jetty at the east end of Deer Island. Fortunately, no one was killed in this accident, but there were severe injuries. Investigation of the accident revealed several beer cans in the boat. Although the final investigation has not been concluded, there is a great possibility that alcohol played a part in this accident.

The following information is reprinted courtesy of <http://boatsafe.com>:

Most boaters, even though they logically know that they should not drink and boat, don't understand the enhanced effects that alcohol can have on the water. Natural stressors, such as exposure to sun, glare, wind, noise, vibration, and motion on the water, produces "boater's hypnosis" or fatigue. This in itself reduces reaction time almost as much as being under the influence. Adding alcohol to these environmental stressors intensifies their effects.

Alcohol can decrease a person's ability to handle a boat in many ways. As a depressant, alcohol goes straight to the nerves, blood stream, and the brain. As recreational boaters, it is hard enough to remember all the rules, regulations, boat handling techniques, etc. while lucid. A few beers to quench the thirst in a rapidly dehydrating body and the following happens:

Eroding sense of balance.

Most boating deaths result from falling out of a small open boat, without a PFD, whether it capsizes or not.

Vision fades.

Because of the sun and reflection of light, objects on the water can be hazy and difficult to see. Color perception and peripheral vision deteriorate and at night depth perception decreases. You

See SOUND ADVICE, page 10



Seafood Safety Corner

Quarterly Inspections

The DMR Seafood Technology Bureau completed its first quarter inspections. The inspections, which began in April and were completed in June, included water quality sampling at each seafood processing facility. The facilities that met all National Shellfish Sanitation Program compliances received their certification renewal for the year. Seafood Technology Bureau staff provide technical assistance to the facilities when needed throughout the year.

Research

The bureau conducted a *Vibrio vulnificus* trace-back case of an 84-year-old male that became seriously ill after eating raw oysters in a local restaurant. The joint investigation by Bureau staff and the Mississippi Health Department established that the oysters eaten were harvested in Louisiana. The man was released from the hospital.

The Seafood Technology Bureau has a variety of research programs during the year that gather new information about *Vibrio vulnificus*. Bureau staff mailed out 76 *Vibrio vulnificus* packets to hospitals and clinics on the coast. All seafood safety information goes into training presentations, seafood safety brochures and posters and is made available to the public through outreach events.

Education and Outreach

A new publication prepared by Seafood Technology Bureau staffers Kristina Broussard, Mai Dang and me is now available. The book, "How to Start a Seafood Business in South Mississippi" provides the information a person needs to start a seafood business in Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, George, Pearl River and Stone counties. For each city included in the guide, there is a written description of the proper procedures for developing a seafood business as well as a flow chart for easy reading. (See page 7.)

The festival season got off to a good start with our exhibiting at the Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival held at the

Pass Christian Harbor in April where we distributed educational materials, such as cookbooks, posters, seafood safety brochures and seafood business directories. We also distributed seafood safety information at the Cajun Crawfish Festival held in April in Biloxi, which attracted an estimated 49,000 visitors. We worked at the Hancock County



Ruth Posadas



Visitors at the Seafood Technology Bureau's booth at the Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival pick up seafood safety information.

Welcome Center during Tourism Appreciation Week, May 12-16, greeting visitors to the Coast and providing free publications on Mississippi seafood. We attended the Fly Fishing Federation Convention in Lake Charles, La. in May where we continued our education and outreach efforts.



DMR Seafood Technology Bureau Director Ruth Posadas (left) and DMR Seafood Officer Kristina Broussard prepare their booth at the Fly Fishing Federation convention in Lake Charles, La.

*Get Hooked on
Mississippi Seafood*

SOUND ADVICE, continued from page 9

can imagine what happens if you can't distinguish between the red and green markers (or worse, don't see the markers at all) or red and green lights of an oncoming vessel at night.

Coordination suffers.

Should a person fall into the water they may have trouble just floating, let alone grasping onto a life ring or throwable device. Add the shock of the cold water and the risk of cramping and drowning is increased significantly.

Surface blood vessels dilate.

Blood vessels on the surface of the skin dilate to increase the rate of body heat loss while in the sun. If, while these vessels are dilated, you fall overboard into cold water, hypothermia sets in quickly and this further reduces your decision-making abilities.

Dehydration sets in.

As the sun beats down and the body naturally tries to cool itself by perspiring, the body starts to get dehydrated. Drinking alcohol while dehydrated greatly enhances the rate at which the alcohol is absorbed.

Judgment is impaired.

Under the influence, people tend to lose judgment, be relaxed and be more likely to perform dangerous acts that they might not normally do. This, combined with the other debilitating symptoms previously covered, spells disaster.

One-third of all boating fatalities are alcohol related. It is illegal to operate a boat, or to permit others to do so, while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, or barbiturates. Penalties are severe and could include fines up to \$5,000, imprisonment of up to one year, non-paid public service work, and mandatory substance abuse counseling. If an operator under the influence kills or seriously injures another person, the penalty can be up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000.

More boating information may be obtained at <http://boatsafe.com>.

Lt. Frank Wescovich oversees the DMR's Boat and Water Safety Program. He can be reached at (228) 523-4126.



Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

Perkins earns Accreditation in PR



Susan Lepoma Perkins

DMR Public Relations Representative Susan Lepoma Perkins recently earned her Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) designation.

To receive the distinguished APR credential, Perkins successfully completed a comprehensive program that included a portfolio presentation before three Accredited public relations professionals and a computer-based examination—both assessing the knowledge, skills and abilities of the public relations profession.

APR, administered nationally by the Universal Accreditation Board, is a mark of distinction for public relations professionals who demonstrate their commitment to the profession and to its ethical practice. The designation is earned based on broad knowledge, strategic perspective and sound professional judgment. Nationwide, approximately 6,000 public relations professionals have achieved accreditation since the program began in 1964. Among the membership of the Public Relations Association of Mississippi, there are now seven accredited public relations professionals in south Mississippi and approximately 27 statewide.

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Public Affairs Bureau wins national awards



DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson and Public Relations Representatives Marti Schuman and Susan Perkins received an Award of Excellence for the "Preserving and Enjoying

Mississippi's Coastal Resources" 2006 Marine Information Calendar and an Award of Excellence for the Coastal Markers newsletter at the annual National Association of Government Communicators Communications School held recently in Oak Brook, Ill.

The DMR is one of about 85 government agencies in the U.S. to earn the prestigious Blue Pencil Award. More than 550 entries were submitted. Judging was done across the nation by both governmental and nongovernmental information professionals.

Outreach and Education



DMR Grand Bay NERR employee Teresa Stadler (left) distributes educational materials at the DMR's booth at the Gulf Islands National Seashore Earth Day event on April 21. More than 3,500 attended the event. Thanks to employees Teresa Stadler, Melanie Lane, Tom Van Devender, Christina Young and Mike Walker for working the event with the Public Affairs Bureau. The booth featured a marine debris awareness display and children's activities and information on boating safety, fisheries and coastal ecology.

Happy Anniversary!

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

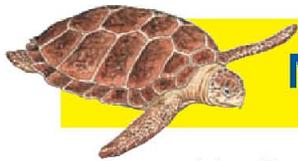
- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| (7/1/85) Scott Gordon | (8/18/03) Sally Richards |
| (7/1/90) Dorothy Daniel | (8/25/97) Marty Jones |
| (7/1/91) David Rose | (9/1/98) Kenny Melvin |
| (7/1/91) Frank Wescovich | (9/1/00) Don Baxter |
| (7/1/97) John Grimsley | (9/1/00) Alan McArthur |
| (7/1/97) Joe Ziegler | (9/1/00) Tina Shumate |
| (7/1/03) Marian Dicas | (9/1/01) Linda Wakefield |
| (7/1/05) Will Freeman | (9/1/03) Chris May |
| (7/1/05) Christina Young | (9/1/03) John White |
| (7/7/92) Charlie Vyles | (9/7/06) Ron Cole |
| (7/8/02) Dr. William Walker | (9/7/06) Barry Moore |
| (7/15/99) Michaela Hill | (9/9/00) Matt Hill |
| (7/25/96) Corky Perret | (9/15/99) Erick Porche |
| (7/28/05) David LaVigne | (9/15/99) Joe Roach |
| (8/1/86) Michael Buchanan | (9/15/99) Al Warburton |
| (8/1/99) Susan Perkins | (9/15/06) Greg Christodoulou |
| (8/3/06) Stephanie Roberts | (9/18/06) Kay Rexroad |
| (8/15/01) Richard Cooley | (9/20/01) Marti Schuman |

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



Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

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Mississippi Coastal Cleanup

Saturday, Sept. 15, 8 a.m.-11 a.m.
Visit www.mscoastalcleanup.org

DMR Calendar

August 9

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan Meeting, D'Iberville City Hall, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 10 a.m.

August 21

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

September 15

Mississippi Coastal Cleanup. Details: Visit www.mscoastalcleanup.org

September 18

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

October 11

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan Meeting, D'Iberville City Hall, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 10 a.m.

Doc's Fishing Tip

Coastal trout fishermen can beat the summertime heat AND catch more fish over the course of a long, hot summer by wetting a hook before the crack of dawn. Big sow trout oftentimes cruise the shallows for an easy meal in the predawn darkness, and they will readily take a well-fished topwater bait. Give it a try!

— Fred Deegen, Ph.D.



Shrimp Dip

- 1 lb. Mississippi Gulf Shrimp (boiled, peeled and chopped)
- 2 tbsp. chopped green onions
- 8 oz. Philadelphia cream cheese
- 1 c. mayonnaise
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. Tabasco

Mix all of the above and serve with crackers or bread.

Recipe by Dorothy Sabbatini



Reprinted from "Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood" recipe cards.