

Coastal Markers



Volume 15, Issue 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Fall 2011



CMR elects officers

The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) reappointed Dr. Vernon Asper as chairman and appointed Jimmy Taylor as vice chairman during the July 2011 meeting. The CMR is composed of five members appointed by the governor for four-year terms. Left to right, the CMR members are: Steve Bosarge of Jackson County, representing commercial fishermen; Jimmy Taylor of Harrison County, representing charter boat operators; Dr. Vernon

Asper of Hancock County, representing non-profit environmental organizations; Richard Gollott of Harrison County, representing commercial seafood processors; and Shelby Drummond of Jackson County, representing recreational fishermen.

CMR approves Marine Turtle Study Resolution

The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) voted unanimously to approve a Marine Turtle Study Resolution, which was presented to them for consideration at the Aug. 16 CMR meeting.

The approved resolution was submitted to the U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and requested a comprehensive Gulf of Mexico sea turtle population and distribution study to provide vital baseline data on the status of current sea turtle populations and furthermore, to more fully investigate all possible causes of sea turtle mortality.

The Marine Turtle Study Resolution acknowledges that increased turtle strandings are occurring in the northern Gulf of Mexico states, and there is a need to explore all options because tim-

ing of increased strandings does not correlate with spatial distribution of shrimping effort. The resolution also acknowledges the numerous proactive precautionary measures that have been taken by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) to address fisheries interactions, which may affect sea turtles in state waters.

Additionally, the Marine Turtle Study Resolution states that the CMR's management of marine sea turtles is essential, and recognizes the need to know the status and distribution of the listed sea turtle species in the state and all Gulf of Mexico waters before enacting regulations, which may severely impact shrimp fisheries and dependent communities within the Mississippi Coast region.

See page 3 for the resolution.

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**Mississippi Commission on
Marine Resources**

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Organization*

Jimmy Taylor, Vice Chairman
Charter Boat Operator

Richard Gollott
Commercial Seafood Processor

Steve Bosarge
Commercial Fisherman

Shelby Drummond
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Vacant
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www.dmr.ms.gov



Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker

In recent years, Mississippi's coastal resources have been dealt some devastating blows. Struck first by natural disaster in 2005 with Hurricane Katrina, followed by the quick one-two punch of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the 2011 Bonnet Carré Spillway opening and resultant freshwater inundation of the Mississippi Sound, many may have considered Coastal Mississippi down for the count.

But that couldn't be further from the truth. In the face of these natural and man-made disasters, the staff of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources—in concert with numerous federal, state, local, and private-sector partners—has made some amazing strides in rebuilding and restoring Mississippi's coastal resources.

This is just a snapshot of some of the progress MDMR and its partners have made over the past six years to restore and protect Mississippi's coastal habitats:

- More than 200 acres of Deer Island have been restored through the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program (MsCIP) with more acres being added through the Beneficial Use Program.
- Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program was implemented, with several projects in the works.
- Katrina damage to Deer Island Marsh Restoration Project has been repaired.
- Restoration efforts to rejoin East and West Ship islands have begun.
- The Bay St. Louis seawall has been rebuilt, and numerous flood potential reduction projects have been completed.
- Harrison and Hancock County beaches have been restored.
- Significant progress has been made in controlling terrestrial invasive species on 1,200 acres of Coastal Preserves lands and aquatic invasive species staff has kept giant salvinia (one of the world's worst aquatic weeds) in check on the Pascagoula River.
- MDMR Marine Fisheries staff provided 90 flights in coordination with the

Civil Air Patrol to support MDMR programs and objectives, relative to the oil spill.

- 441 seafood safety samples were collected and tested, with all indicating that seafood from Mississippi waters is healthy and safe to eat.
- 378 turtle excluders were provided to shrimpers.
- Through the derelict crab trap removal program, 161 participants collected 12,430 crab traps.
- Four new hydrographic stations were installed.
- About 4,818 acres of oyster reefs have been planted with 260,736 cubic yards of cultch material.
- Two oyster relay projects were completed encompassing 143,424 cubic yards and 284 participants.
- After Katrina, the Oyster Reef Mapping program employed Mississippi oyster harvesters to assess the resource for future harvest and to identify suitable substrate for cultch planting, 76 boats made 1,414 trips.
- Since Katrina, 100 percent of Mississippi's offshore artificial fishing reefs and 100 percent of its inshore reefs have been rebuilt and enhanced for a total of 113 offshore reef deployments and 48 inshore reefs; and two new keys were created.

In addition, Gov. Barbour has petitioned the secretary of commerce to declare a federal fisheries disaster for oysters and blue crabs in Mississippi involved in the freshwater flood through the Bonnet Carré. The declaration of a federal fisheries disaster for Mississippi may assist in obtaining financial assistance for all negatively impacted ecosystems, fishermen and related businesses in a timely manner. We expect a decision soon from NOAA's southeast regional office. Any disaster assistance from the federal government must be appropriated by Congress.


Executive Director



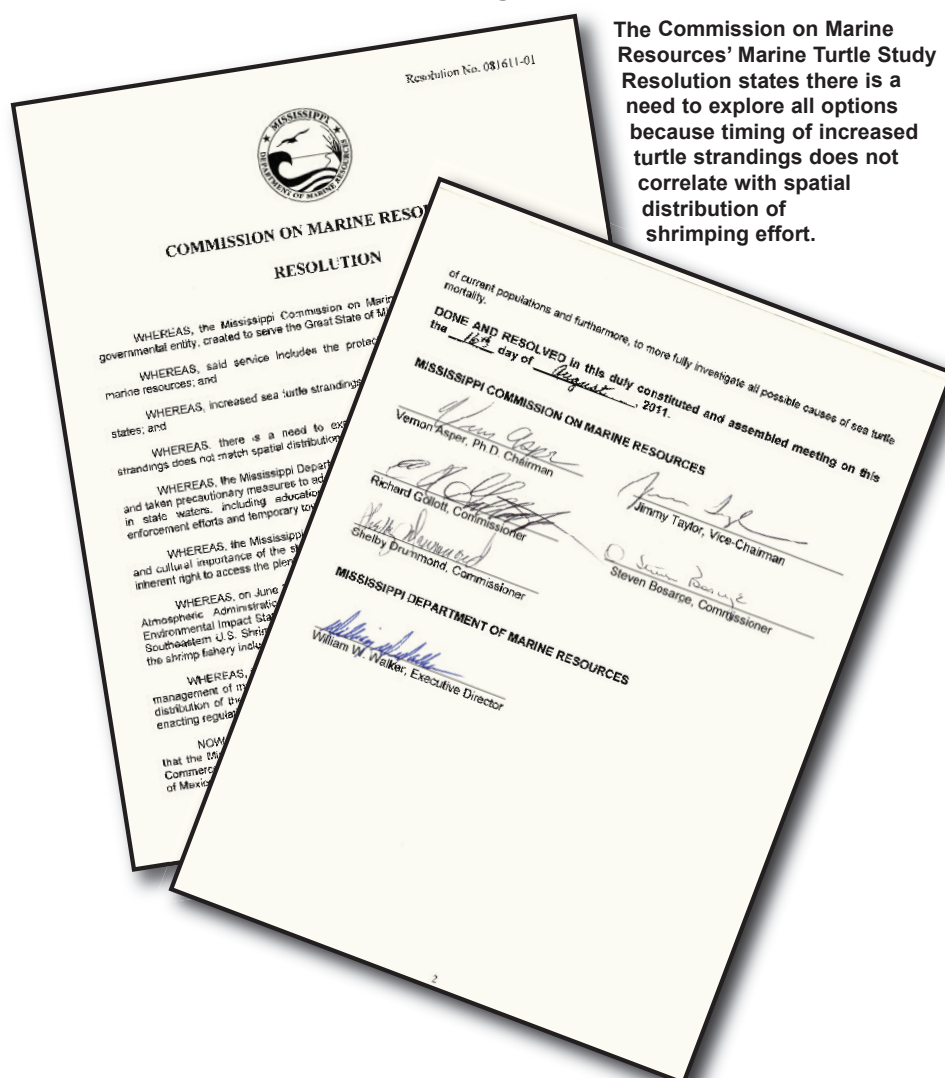
MDMR Executive Director earns First-Place Gulf Guardian Award

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program Office presented Dr. William Walker, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, with a First-Place Gulf Guardian Award for 2011 in the Individual category at an awards ceremony held August 3 in New Orleans. Dr. Walker has spent nearly 40 years research-

ing and protecting the resources of the Gulf of Mexico. Pictured, from left: Jerome Zeringue, Executive Director of the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority; MDMR Executive Director Dr. William Walker; Trudy Fisher, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; and Stan Meiburg, EPA Region 4 Deputy Regional Administrator.

The Gulf of Mexico Program initiated the Gulf Guardian awards in 2000 as a way to recognize and honor the businesses, community groups, individuals, and agencies that are taking positive steps to keep the Gulf healthy, beautiful and productive.

Resolution continued from page 1



The Commission on Marine Resources' Marine Turtle Study Resolution states there is a need to explore all options because timing of increased turtle strandings does not correlate with spatial distribution of shrimping effort.



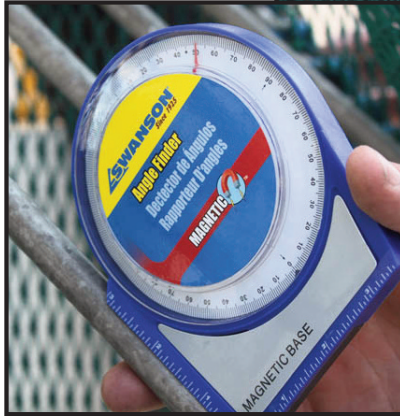
MARINE PATROL CITATIONS JUNE 2011 — SEPTEMBER 2011

Shrimp-4
Crab-31
Oyster-2
Live Bait-2
Net Fish-0
Fishing-169
Miscellaneous Seafood-1
Boat and Water Safety-133
Marine Litter-2
Miscellaneous-15

TOTAL-359

Angle meters are given to shrimpers as tools for TEDs

The Office of Marine Fisheries continues to look for ways to be proactive in relation to marine sea turtle issues. The Shrimp and Crab Bureau is mailing free angle meters to licensed Mississippi resident commercial shrimp fishermen. This will give the fishermen another tool to help make sure turtle excluder devices (TEDs) are set at the proper angle. This project is funded with a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife foundation.



Darrin Stewart, above left, with MDMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau, and Mississippi commercial shrimper, Frank Parker, test an angle meter aboard Parker's shrimp boat.

MDMR Seafood Marketing Program's, Linda Wakefield, right, hands out samples of Mississippi Wild Caught shrimp at the American Culinary Federation Conference in Dallas this past summer.



One hundred pounds of wild caught shrimp went to Dallas

MDMR's Seafood Marketing Program went to Dallas for the American Culinary Federation (ACF) Conference in July. Irvin Jackson, Linda Wakefield and Jason Rider attended and exhibited for two days. They took 100 pounds of Mississippi Wild Caught shrimp with the goal being to showcase to chefs from across the nation and prove to them our product is of the highest quality.

The trade show featured more than 100 exhibitors, and included numerous

live competitions, both ACF classics and a few new ones. The general session featured a keynote address by Sam Kass, White House assistant chef and senior policy adviser for healthy food initiatives, who encouraged chefs to join the fight against childhood obesity through community involvement and by volunteering with the Chefs Move to Schools program. Four hundred guests attended the American Academy of Chefs Dinner, which recognized the Academy's annual award winners and inductees.

The ACF is a professional organization for chefs and cooks that was founded in 1929 in New York City. Since inception, it has been an organization based on promoting the professional image of American chefs worldwide through education of culinarians at all levels.

ACF is the largest professional chefs organization in North America and is made up of more than 20,000 members who belong to more than 225 chapters in four regions across the United States.

MDMR rebuilds and restores oyster reefs

The MDMR concluded an oyster cultch plant, which is a process that is part of a continuing effort by the MDMR Shellfish Bureau to rebuild and refurbish Mississippi oyster reefs. The project began in August 2011 and finished in September 2011, which is an ideal time for oyster larvae to attach to cultch material and grow.

In this cultch plant, two types of materials were used to rebuild 1,043 acres. One was 30,000 cubic yards of oyster shell from Bayou La Batre, Ala., shipped on barges that were 123 feet long and 30 feet wide. The other was 34,681 cubic yards of limestone material that traveled down the Mississippi River, roughly 430 miles, to the Mississippi Gulf Coast on hopper barges, which are 195 feet long and 35 feet wide.

Once the material arrived, high pressure hoses were used to disperse the oyster shell and limestone material off the barges onto the reefs. The oyster reefs that were replenished are St. Joe's Reef, Pass Marianne Reef, Telegraph Reef, Henderson Point Reef and Pass Christian Tonging Reef.

Oyster larvae swim around in the water for approximately three weeks, then descend to the bottom of the sound and permanently attach themselves to the oyster shell and limestone material where they will grow. Within 18 to 24 months the oysters will be ready to harvest.

This project is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Emergency Disaster Recovery Programs I and II.



Contractors deploy limestone cultch material to restore oyster reefs in the Mississippi Sound. MDMR's Shellfish Bureau Director Scott Gordon is interviewed by Rhonda Miller with Mississippi Public Broadcasting about the procedure and its importance.

Two sharks and 4,000 pounds of shrimp seized in federal waters



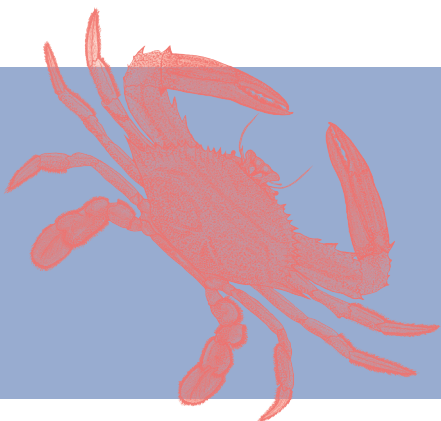
These two prohibited species of Atlantic Angel sharks are approximately 42 inches in length.

MDMR Marine Patrol was patrolling in federal waters under the Joint Enforcement Agreement on Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2011.

Marine Patrol Officers Dwayne Armes, John Grimsley and Leo DeGeorge boarded the shrimp vessel Sally Kim IV to check for permits and proper usage of Turtle Excluder Devices. Once onboard, the officers found that the vessel had no permit for shrimping in federal waters and was in possession of approximately 4,000 pounds of shrimp and two Atlantic Angel sharks, which are a prohibited species.

The vessel was escorted back to safe harbor by Marine Patrol Officer Bryan Wallace who was serving as captain for the day patrol. The case was transferred to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for judgment.

Illustration: Joe Jewell



Seafood safety update

The Office of Marine Fisheries continues to work to collect and analyze seafood tissue samples of shrimp, finfish, crabs and oysters since the Deepwater Horizon spill. From May 2010 through September 2011, 441 samples have been submitted and MDMR has received results for 428 of those samples. None of the samples have been above levels of concern and most samples have been listed as non detectable for any polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

Fishermen asked to report Asian tiger shrimp catches

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) is asking fishermen and seafood processors to be on the look-out for exotic Asian tiger shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*). This species, native to Southeast Asia, Australia and the Philippines, has been found recently in Mississippi waters and could pose a threat to native shrimp species.

Commercial shrimp fishermen working in the East Biloxi Channel reported catching several Asian tiger shrimp in late July of this year. The other two recorded Mississippi Sound sightings occurred near Pascagoula in 2009. Since 2006, tiger shrimp have also been found in the waters of Louisiana, Alabama, Florida and the Carolinas.

These exotic shrimp are presumed to have escaped from aquaculture facilities in the Caribbean and carried here by ocean currents. Although no tiger shrimp are being

raised commercially in the United States, past aquaculture facilities have operated in Texas, Alabama, Florida and South Carolina. Potential environmental threats from exotic shrimp introductions include diseases, aggression toward native shrimp and competition for food and habitat.

Asian tiger shrimp can easily be identified by the distinctive black and white "tiger" striping pattern on the shell and their large size compared to native shrimp. These giant crustaceans can grow to more than 10 inches long and weigh more than half a pound. When cooked, the meat turns white and the stripes turn red.

The MDMR would like to know about any Asian tiger shrimp caught in Mississippi waters to determine the severity of this threat. Sightings can be reported to report.invasive@dmr.ms.gov or by phone during business hours at 228-374-5000.



Twelve Asian tiger shrimp have been landed in Mississippi. Five of those were caught in the Mississippi Sound.

All Mississippi resident commercial shrimpers and seafood dealers and processors received this Asian tiger shrimp decal by mail from MDMR.



Black and White
Banding on
Tail →

Large Size -
Can Grow to Over
10" in Length

ASIAN TIGER SHRIMP

Please Report All Sightings With Location

(228) 374-5000

REPORT.INVASIVE@DMR.MS.GOV



Shrimp and Crab Bureau's Stewart flies high with CAP

Shrimp and Crab Bureau Special Projects Officer, Darrin Stewart, joined the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in May 2008 and within three years has flown over 200 hours on a variety of missions such as sundown patrols over Mississippi waters on weekends during the summer months looking for boaters in distress, aerial reconnaissance during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill crisis and to gauge fishing effort in response to the increased sea turtle strandings. He

has been highlighted twice in CAP's national *Volunteer* magazine.

"Darrin Stewart is a great asset not only for our bureau but for the Fisheries Office as a whole," said Traci Floyd, Director of MDMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau. "His flight reports helped illustrate to the federal government that there were little or no shrimp boats working during the unfortunate period of increased sea turtle strandings early this year. We also benefit from his valuable flight information on algal blooms and artificial reef usage."

Shrimp and Crab Bureau Special Projects Officer, Darrin Stewart, above right and middle left, is featured in three issues of the national magazine, *Volunteer*.

Real-time hydrological stations monitor Mississippi Sound

The MDMR's Marine Fisheries Office has been able to continuously monitor the salinity of the Mississippi Sound. There are 10 stations, each sponsored through a joint funding agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey and the MDMR. They are located throughout the Mississippi Sound and its adjacent waters and monitor water temperature, wind speed, tidal amplitude, specific conductance, and salinity in real-time format. The East Ship Island location, in cooperation with the National Park Service, also measures dissolved oxygen. The stations are as follows: East Pearl River at CSX Railroad, St. Joseph's Light No. 22, USCG Merrill Shell Bank Light, USGS Gulfport Light, East Ship Island Light, Back Bay of Biloxi, Biloxi Bay at Point Cadet, West Pascagoula River at Hwy 90 Gautier, Pascagoula River, and USGS at Round Island.

In addition to the 10 current stations, there is historical data available from

Biloxi East Channel, Mouth of the Pearl River, Old Fort Bayou, and Bay-Waveland Yacht Club.

The program was implemented in 1998 and has become valuable in determining the relationship between hydrological conditions and the behaviors and habitats of a variety of marine species. The real-time data proved to be particularly useful in tracking the 2011 Bonnet Carré freshwater arrival, an event potentially impacting fisheries.

"Being able to gather hydrological data in real-time format was an integral part in monitoring the populations of shrimp and crab species as the freshwater from the Bonnet Carré spillway entered and exited the western Mississippi Sound," said Rick Burris of the MDMR Shrimp and Crab Bureau.

The Bonnet Carré spillway was opened on May 9 allowing an excess amount of freshwater from the Mississippi River to flow into the Mississippi Sound. The spillway was opened to help relieve the rising waters of the Mississippi River, as it rose to

dangerously high levels. The spillway's last bays were closed on June 20, 2011.

The monitoring station near the site of the old St. Joseph's Lighthouse, near Pass Christian, saw the biggest decrease in salinity during this year's spillway opening. Measurements were taken of the salinity dropping down to below 1 ppt (part per thousand).

The data collected from the hydrological monitoring stations can be viewed anytime by following the "Ecology in the Environment" link on the MDMR website and clicking on Hydrological Monitoring. The data is updated every 15 minutes, 24 hours a day.

Additional funding for the Real-time Monitoring Program is provided by the Mississippi Tidelands Trust Fund, Coastal Impact Assistance Program and the NOAA Emergency Disaster Recovery Program.

NERR Notes

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve



Dry, wild summer at Grand Bay

The drier than average conditions this summer cut short the normally spectacular spring wildflower bloom in the savannas of the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) and left many of us longing for the return of milder temperatures and lower humidity levels. The carnivorous pitcher plants and sundews dried down earlier than normal and left the savannas looking a bit barren.

While the dry spring conditions were less than ideal for many of the

botanical wonders native to the area, several rare species did make springtime appearances and provided some unique viewing opportunities for staff and visitors at the NERR. Most notably, the upland spreading pogonia (photo 1) (*Cleistes bifaria*), was found blooming in the ditch banks north of the NERR Resources Center. This showy orchid is fairly uncommon in Mississippi and is primarily restricted to the coastal counties. Chapman's butterwort (photo 2) (*Pinguicula planifolia*), with striking red

leaves and pinkish-purple flowers, was thriving along some of the wetter pond cypress drains.

Rain is once again soaking the savannas with a wonderful diversity of butterfly-

attracting asters and orchids. An uncommon mid-August cold front provided us with some great weather for botanizing, with cooler morning temperatures and fall-like humidity levels. Several rare orchid species were found in full bloom, including the orange fringed orchid (photo 3) (*Platanthera ciliaris*) and the yellow fringeless orchid (photo 4) (*Platanthera integra*). These orchid species, among the other diverse ground cover plants of the pine savannas, are becoming increasingly rare in Mississippi due to development pressure and fire exclusion.

SWMP stories are being told at Grand Bay NERR

Grand Bay NERR, along with each of the other 27 NERRs in the national system, monitor water quality at four sites at each reserve. This is part of the System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) and also includes weather monitoring. Water quality and meteorological data points are collected every 15 minutes using real-time data loggers.

Field water-quality data includes salinity, water temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity. The weather station records air temperature, wind speed and direction, relative humidity, barometric pressure, rainfall, and light. Data is transmitted to the NERR's Central Data Management Office and can be accessed anytime through our website, www.grandbaynerr.org.

Once a month, water samples are collected from the SWMP sites and brought back to the lab for the measurement of several nutrients. The first of these, chlorophyll *a* concentration, indi-

cates how much phytoplankton, or single-celled algae, is in the water. Phytoplankton is important as the base of the food chain, but too much of it can cause the water to look dirty or cause a fish kill due to low oxygen. Like plants, phytoplankton use sunlight and nutrients from the water around them to make their own food, through a process called photosynthesis. This produces oxygen during the day when the organisms are actively photosynthesizing. But at night, they use oxygen, so high amounts of phytoplankton can cause problems for fish and other critters.

The SWMP program also measures some nutrients that are used by plants and phytoplankton: namely, nitrogen and phosphorus. High levels of these nutrients would indicate pollution problems.

Fortunately, Grand Bay NERR has low nutrient concentrations.

This data, along with other MDMR water-quality sampling, provide a

snapshot of water conditions in coastal Mississippi waters. Seasonal and annual occurrences of fish, shrimp and crab can be correlated to water conditions. Additionally, we are compiling a long-term database that can help us see trends in environmental conditions at both local and national scales.



Grand Bay NERR weather monitoring station in Crooked Bayou gathers environmental data used to track trends.

Coastal Preserves

Monitoring elusive marsh birds

The North American Marsh Bird Monitoring Program was developed in 1999 to create a standardized monitoring protocol for tracking the status and trends of this group of birds. The spring and summer of 2011 marked the first monitoring season for Coastal Preserve properties in Harrison and Hancock counties. This monitoring will build on five years of surveys already performed in the Jackson County Preserves by University of Georgia graduate students and Grand Bay NERR research staff. Due to in part to their secretive nature and habitat preferences, little is known about most marsh bird species. Additionally, they often remain concealed in the marsh grasses, only being detected by their calls, thus their population numbers are often underestimated using only visual counts.

During the breeding season, surveyors conducted three rounds of surveys at each pre-designated, randomly selected route. Each route consists of eight to 10 survey points, at which a series of vocalizations are played and the response of individual birds is recorded. With this data, surveyors can estimate the distribution and relative abundance of marsh birds across the marsh landscape. Long-term surveys can help us to understand trends in populations over time as well as provide for informed decision making for management activities impacting marsh birds on these Coastal Preserve sites.



Travis Williams with MDMR's Coastal Preserves, and Mark Woodrey with Grand Bay NERR, listen for the calls of secretive marsh birds during the early morning hours. Least Bittern, pictured above, is a common marsh bird.



Dune planting vital to Deer Island

Volunteers with the Mississippi Master Naturalist and Mississippi Master Gardener programs planted 2,300 dune plants on the recently restored west end of Deer Island. The project, which planted species such as sea oats, morning glory, and beach elder, was funded by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Network. Project leader, Chris Boyd, of the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium and Mississippi State University, said, "Community Grass Garden projects, such as this one, provide opportunities for communities to restore natural habitat while increasing their knowledge of local ecosystems."

Additional activities are under way to help preserve the ecological functions that this island system provides. This community-based project is one approach used to create critical dune habitat, in addition to providing erosion control and scenic beauty.

Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners plant sea oats on the west end of Deer Island as part of a Community Grass Garden project funded by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Network.





Seafood Safety Corner



Jeff Davis



Jessica Rankin

The MDMR's Seafood Technology Bureau (STB) is participating in an "Environmental Stewardship Program" that assists elementary schools affected by Hurricane Katrina in the three coastal counties. Qualified schools are encouraged to participate by submitting proof of destruction and a project proposal totaling \$5,500, such as a bird watching corner, herb garden, an aquarium, or mini-butterfly garden.

Schools awarded this year were Magnolia Park Elementary, Pass Christian Center for Excellence in Education, Pass Road Elementary, Hancock North Elementary, D'Iberville Middle School, Gaston Point Elementary, Thomas L. Reeves Elementary, Anniston Avenue Elementary, and Woolmarket Elementary.

All projects funded this year are slated for completion in spring 2012. Projects include installing a saltwater fish tank, creating outdoor learning spaces with ponds and native plant species, gardening fresh vegetables to encourage children to make healthy eating choices, updating outdoor learning spaces, creating interactive learning centers focusing on coast living, planting grasses to decrease runoff on school property, and funding field trips to places such as Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

On July 14, STB and other fisheries staff hosted the first Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) workshop. The program is funded with qualified outer continental shelf oil and gas revenue by CIAP, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement, and the U.S. Department of Interior.

In May 2012, the STB will be giving another set of awards to nine more schools. If your school is interested or if you would like more information, call Ruth Posadas

or Jessica Rankin at 228-374-5000 or email ruth.posadas@dmr.ms.gov.

The STB staff has been busy promoting seafood safety at several events around the coast. Events include: the Billy Creel Memorial Gulf Coast Wooden Boat Show, the "Let's Move Healthy Kid's Day," at Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, an event for parents and students at Colmer Middle School, and the 17th annual Carl H. Legett Memorial Fishing Tournament.

During the second quarter, the STB staff inspected seafood processing facilities, which consisted of reviewing both the sanitary conditions and the processing records.

These records are part of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) program implemented in the seafood processing industry. All shellstock shippers and shucker-packers should have had their HACCP plans and records updated to include the newly implemented time and temperature controls within compliance of the new Interstate Shellfish Sanitation regulations. If you have not completed these changes, please contact an officer of the STB. Additionally, if any seafood dealer has employees that need HACCP training, please contact Mai Dang at 228-523-4081 to schedule a training session.

MDMR hosts regional CZM meeting

MDMR hosted the annual Gulf States Regional Coastal Zone Management Program meeting on Nov. 1-2, at the Gulf Hills Hotel & Conference Center near downtown Ocean Springs. There was a total of 51 attendees from the Gulf states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and federal representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) offices located in Maryland and Mississippi.

The five Gulf State Coastal Zone Management Programs reviewed current issues affecting their respective states and the Gulf, as well as covering federal issues and updates with NOAA's Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management staff.

Topics included: National Estuarine Research Reserve Initiatives, Sea Level Rise Initiatives and Updates, and Beneficial Use and Regional Sediment Management in the

Gulf; two staff members of the New Orleans office of the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management gave updates on Gulf Outer Continental Shelf activities.

Attendees also went on a field trip to the restoration sites on Deer Island, guided by Office of Coastal Ecology's Preserves Bureau staff.

The Gulf States Regional Coastal Zone Management Program meeting was informative and fun. After the meeting, participants leave Ocean Springs Harbor for Deer Island to see restoration projects.





Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

Casting for Conservation teaches lifelong fishing lessons

The Casting for Conservation kids tournament was held Aug. 6, 2011, in conjunction with the Carl H. Legett Memorial Fishing Tournament in Biloxi. Casting for Conservation is supported by the NOAA Katrina Emergency Disaster Recovery Program and is designed to provide an educational conservation-based quality outdoor experience through catch-and-release children's fishing tournaments.

Each child is given a rod and reel and terminal tackle to fish with at the tournament. Five stations were set up at the tournament to promote conservation: 1) Species identification: fish specimens were put on display and a biologist was there to answer questions about the fish; 2) Knot tying: taught the proper way to tie a hook on a line; 3) Casting: taught how to safely cast a rod and reel; 4) Boat and water safety: Marine Patrol officers were there to talk about safe operation of a vessel; 5) Conservation and ethics: at the end of the tournament a brief summary was given to the children about the importance of our marine resources and the responsibility to use them wisely.

The Artificial Reef Bureau participated by setting up booths at both the Captain's Party at the Isle Casino Hotel and at the tournament all weekend at Point Cadet.

Over 400 boat captains attended the party and over 1,000 people attended the tournament throughout the weekend. Hundreds of reef maps, rules and regulation books, tide charts, ruler stickers, key chains, seafood recipe books and fish posters were given out at the booths.



Everyone had a great time fishing at the Casting for Conservation kids tournament in conjunction with the Carl H. Legett Memorial Fishing Tournament at Point Cadet in Biloxi. A lot of activities and a great day of fishing kept all the participants busy and happy.



American Red Cross

MDMR's summer blood drive was a success! Human Resources' goal was to have 18 participants. But instead they had 27 donors participate. The American Red Cross said that MDMR's drive was one of the few blood drives that met its goal. There will be another drive on Dec. 6, 2011. Thank you to everyone that gave and continues to give the gift of life!

Happy Anniversary!

These anniversaries mark employees' years of service with MDMR and the state of Mississippi. We thank them for their dedicated service to the management of our marine resources.

Will Freeman07/01/05
 Scott Gordon07/01/85
 John Grimsley07/01/97
 Michaela Hill07/15/99
 Bradley Randall07/01/92
 David Rose07/01/91
 Dave Ruple07/23/90
 Bill Walker07/08/02
 Christina Young07/01/05
 Joe Ziegler07/21/97
 Erik Broussard08/02/08
 Jennifer Buchanan08/01/86
 Buck Buchanan08/01/86
 James Davis08/13/07
 Marty Jones08/25/97

Sandra Moore08/01/07
 Sally Richards08/18/03
 Travis Williams08/06/07
 Don Baxter09/01/00
 Greg Christodoulou09/15/06
 Ron Cole09/07/06
 Matt Hill09/09/00
 Alan McArthur09/01/00
 Kenny Melvin09/01/98
 Erick Porche09/15/99
 Kay Rexroad09/18/06
 Joe Roach09/15/99
 Tina Shumate09/01/00
 John White09/01/03

Thanks to all who contributed to this issue of Coastal Markers!

Christy Royals
 Traci Floyd, Darrin Stewart,
 Irvin Jackson, Jason Rider,
 Donnie Armes, Dale Diaz,
 Dave Ruple, Jeff Clark,
 Ruth Posadas, Mike Pursley,
 Jessica Rankin, Jeff Davis,
 Ruth Posadas, Mike Walker,
 Sandra Moore, Amy Taylor,
 Dr. Fred Deegen, Rick Burris,
 Scott Gordon, Buck Buchanan



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Guide to Mississippi Saltwater Fishing

Rules and
Regulations



2011-2012
Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources

Pick up your free Rules & Regulations Guide.

Available at bait camps, MDMR and wherever licenses are sold.

Doc's Fishing Tip

Fall is my favorite time of year to fish along the Mississippi Gulf Coast because the weather will finally cool off, but the fishing will still be red hot. Out front, bull reds (large red drum) will give those who like to troll (or cast) a spoon plenty of excitement, while inshore, pier and wade fishermen will enjoy good success catching trout right off the beaches on a wide assortment of baits including topwater. Even bay and backwater anglers will experience some of the best fishing of the year with a mixed bag of trout, largemouth and striped bass to name a few. Deep-bodied, silvery baits like Rattle Traps are excellent choices for striper fishing. But if lure selection seems baffling, just rig up with a live shrimp to count on good results with any of these gamesters.

'Til next time,
Good luck and good fishing! — Dr. Fred Deegen

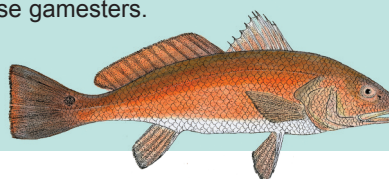


Illustration: Joe Jewell

MDMR Calendar

November 15

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

December 20

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

January 17

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

To receive your
Coastal Markers
via e-mail, contact
lauren.thompson@dmr.ms.gov



Go Green

Mississippi Blue Crab Dip

8 oz. cream cheese
1/8 cup mayonnaise (fat free will not work)
1 finely chopped jalapeno
1 tbsp. worcestershire sauce
1/8 cup chopped green onions
1 lb. Mississippi Blue Crabmeat



In a sauce pan, add first four ingredients and warm until cheese completely softens. Stir until blended then add crab and onion. Heat until warm throughout, serve warm with crackers.

Reprinted from MDMR's *Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood Recipe Book*
Recipe by Roxanne Russell