Coastal Markers

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2012 Mississippi shrimp season opens to good reports

Despite windy conditions and choppy seas, shrimp effort increased on opening day of Mississippi's shrimp season, which began at 6 a.m., May 30, 2012, one of the earliest shrimp season openings on record. Shrimp season opens in Mississippi territorial waters when sampling confirms shrimp have reached the 68-count-per-pound state statute requirement.

According to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources' (MDMR) Shrimp and Crab Bureau's aerial survey, 210 shrimp boats were counted in Mississippi waters, compared to 162 boats observed last year. There were 100 boats between Horn Island and Belle Fontaine, 40 off of Long Beach, 36 inside Ship Island and about a dozen boats near the Mississippi-Alabama and Mississippi-Louisiana lines. Other lone boats were scattered along the coast.

"Good reports are coming in from shrimp fishermen near Horn Island," said Traci Floyd, director of MDMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau. "Many boats are catching 31/35- and 36/40-count shrimp there, some up to 200 pounds per drag. We are very pleased to receive favorable catch reports and to see an increase in opening day effort. It is a reflection that more of our shrimpers, despite past obstacles, are again able to participate in the time honored tradition of providing Gulf fresh shrimp for all of us to enjoy."

Average numbers of 36/40- and 40/50-count shrimp have been reported east of the Gulfport Ship Channel. From the west, north of Cat Island, shrimp fishermen reported catching 40/50- and 50/60-count brown shrimp in good numbers.

MDMR's Marine Patrol was out on the waters starting at 4:30 a.m. May 30 with 12 boats, 31 officers, and two dispatchers to help ensure a smooth shrimp season opening.

"Shrimp effort was up on opening day and although the winds picked up as the morning progressed we didn't experience any calls for rescue; everything went pretty smooth," said Col. Walter Chataginer, Chief of Enforcement of MDMR's Marine Patrol. "All shrimp boats checked were in compliance with state regulations. Marine Patrol officers are diligently checking for TED [turtle excluder device] violations; all TEDs checked have been in compliance."

For the new license year, from April 1 through May 30, 2012, the number of resident commercial shrimp licenses sold was 396 and the number for out-of-state was 113.

Recreational and commercial shrimp season will close at midnight, Dec. 31, 2012, north of the Intracoastal Waterway, and at midnight, April 30, 2013, south of the Intracoastal Waterway. Live-bait shrimping is open year round.

For the latest updates on the Mississippi shrimp fishery, call the toll-free Shrimp Information Hotline at 1-866-We Trawl (866-938-7295). For further information call the MDMR at 228-374-5000, or write to the Department of Marine Resources, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530.

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Director's Notes
Dr. William Walker

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program. Through the purchase of fishing licenses and excise taxes on fishing equipment as well as motorboat fuel, sportsmen and women have contributed more than $5.4 billion through the Sport Fish Restoration program for fisheries research, habitat restoration, recreational boating access, construction of fish hatcheries and aquatic education nationally. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, along with The University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, has been able to utilize Sport Fish Restoration monies to fund programs such as:

- Mississippi Artificial Reef Program has deployed over 16,000 acres of artificial reefs in the Mississippi Sound and adjoining Gulf of Mexico.
- Mississippi Coastal Sport Fish Studies has collected more than 5,000 seatrout for abundance and age estimates to monitor the population status of Mississippi's most popular coastal species.
- Sport Fish Tag and Release in Mississippi coastal waters and adjacent Gulf of Mexico. Through the assistance of thousands of anglers, 16,800 cobia, 19,200 spotted seatrout, and more than 2,700 tripletail have been tagged and released in southeastern waters. The data collected has aided fishery managers in determining geographic ranges and migratory patterns for these species.
- Restoration and Monitoring of Striped Bass in the Tributaries and Coastal Waters of Mississippi. More than 13 million striped bass fingerlings have been released since its inception.
- Boating Infrastructure Grant Program. It provided nearly $2.5 million for the construction, renovation, and maintenance of public and private boating infrastructure tie-up facilities with features for transient boaters in vessels 26 feet or more in length at coastal harbors and marinas along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
- Clean Vessel Act. It has provided funds to harbors and marinas to install pump outs at their facilities throughout Mississippi. Twenty pump outs have been installed across the state.
- Public Access Program. It has provided funds for improvements to public access facilities along the coast, which includes boat ramps and piers.

So the next time you're out on a pier, putting your boat in the water or reeling in a big one, know that your purchase of a fishing license, fishing tackle or motorboat fuel has helped construct or improve Mississippi's natural resources.

Executive Director

Your purchase of a fishing license supports research and restoration that enhances fishing opportunities in coastal Mississippi.

24-Hour License Sales: Call
1-800-5GO-HUNT
(1-800-546-4868)

Scan this to buy a license online

ms.gov/gf/hunting

Activities of Marine Patrol officers working under the Joint Enforcement Agreement with NOAA from March 2012-May 2012

Patrols	78
Contacts	511
Sea hours	357
Man hours	1164
State violations	7
Federal violations	6

MARINE PATROL CITATIONS
MARCH 2012-MAY 2012

Shrimp-4
Crab-9
Oyster-3
Live Bait-0
Net Fish-0
Fishing-92
Miscellaneous Seafood-2
Boat and Water Safety-103
Marine Litter-3
Miscellaneous-8

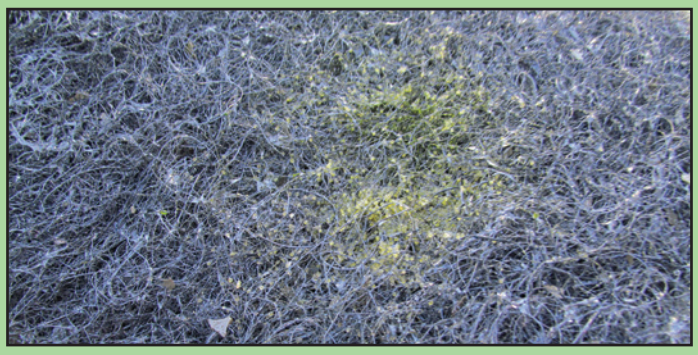
TOTAL-224

Lyman Hatchery news

MDMR's Lyman Fish Hatchery's Florida Largemouth Bass (FLMB) production for 2012 produced 341,914 fingerling bass. The fingerlings were released in local rivers in the three coastal counties. New spawning techniques implemented this year contributed to the production success. This year's production nearly doubled previous year's totals. Local bass anglers should welcome the stocking of the Florida Bass due to their fast growth rate, they are known for growing up to three pounds a year and reaching weights of well over 10 pounds.

Bass production started February 14 with the harvest of brood stock from the hatchery's grow-out ponds. Ten pairs of brood fish were stocked in each of eight lined ponds with 10 spawning mats per pond. After the brood fish had spawned on the mats, the mats were gathered and moved to hatching ponds. Just four to six weeks after hatching, the fingerlings were ready for release in our local rivers.

Lyman Hatchery employees from left to right: Nick Kostmayer, Michael Holliman and Jacob Holliman harvesting brood bass for spawning.



Spawning mats covered with eggs being gathered for relocation to grow-out ponds.

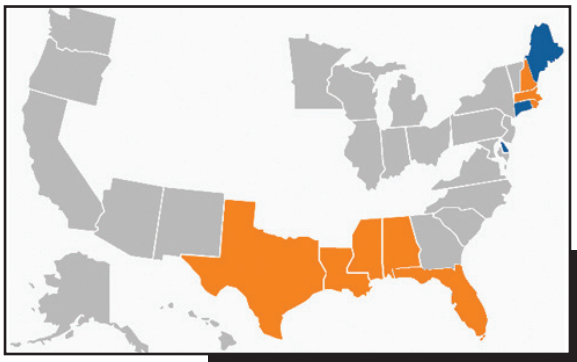
Six-week-old three-inch FLMB fingerling ready for release.

The stocking of this size fish should increase survival rates and anglers can expect to catch 12-inch fish as early as this fall. By refining techniques developed this year, the hatchery anticipates increasing production for next year.

Hands-on learning at Oak Park Elementary

Members of MDMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau gave an educational talk to students at Oak Park Elementary School in Ocean Springs in April. MDMR's Traci Floyd, Bill Richardson, Darrin Stewart, Rick Burris and Rudy Balius educated and delighted 175 students with hands-on learning activities in the classroom that included catching blue crabs in a dip net, touching and learning about many species of fish common to Mississippi's marine waters, and learning how a crab trap works to catch crabs and at the same time protect diamondback terrapins with its turtle excluder device.

Resilience tool bolsters readiness for hurricane season



Over the last several years, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance's Resilience Team, led by MDMR, worked closely with the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program and NOAA's Coastal Storms Program to develop StormSmart Coast websites for each of the Gulf States. These websites contain customized guidance to prepare for disasters, detailed contact information that is critical during a storm, and numerous federal funding resources for recovery. In addition, the StormSmart Coasts websites also provide a clearinghouse for coastal decision-makers interested in accessing, applying and sharing resilience information. The web resource helps decision makers in coastal communities address the challenges of storms, flooding, sea level rise, and climate change.

As coastal Mississippi residents know, hazard events can devastate communities. Launched in 2010, the StormSmart Coasts websites consolidate and simplify information from around the U.S. on everything from hazard identification and mapping to legal and funding information. There are fact sheets that explain the tools and success stories that showcase many of the recommended mitigation concepts.

"The Gulf State StormSmart Coasts effort is about providing resources to community leaders and residents, not about re-stating federal, state or local policies," says Rhonda Price, the Alliance Resilience Priority Issue Team coordinator and employee of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. "It's the local people who will be impacted by hazard events, so that is where the resources need to be."

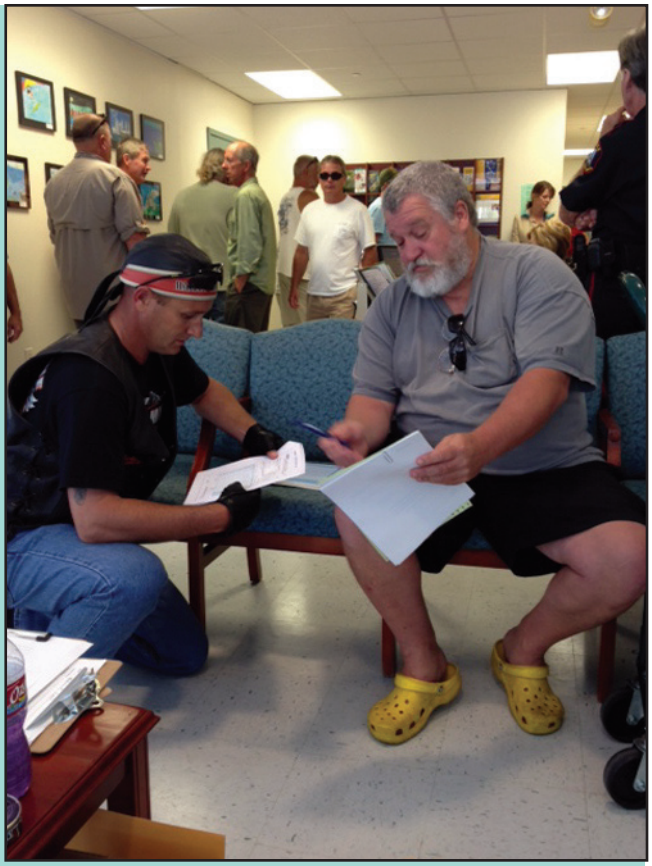
Although creating resilient communities is a national priority, implementation has to happen at the local level. The next phase of promoting resilient Gulf communities is developing customized strategies for select local communities. Currently, the Resilience Team is working with municipalities to identify vulnerabilities before storm season begins and providing technical support to address high priority needs in preparation for future events. This includes utilizing the many resources and networking capabilities on the StormSmart Coasts Network.

StormSmart Coasts for each of the Gulf States can be accessed at stormsmartcoasts.org.

About the Gulf of Mexico Alliance: The Gulf of Mexico Alliance recognizes that the economy and quality of life for citizens of the Gulf are linked to its ecological health. As the result of a shared vision for a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico region, the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas formalized the Alliance in 2004. A not-for-profit organization, the Alliance's mission is to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf region by encouraging collaboration among government agencies, businesses, education providers and non-governmental organizations. Priority issues addressed by the Alliance include water quality, habitat conservation, ecosystem assessment, nutrient impacts, community resilience and environmental education. The Alliance supports the creation of a parallel Mexican Gulf Alliance and strongly encourages the continued pursuit of collaboration among countries in the region.

To learn more about the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, visit gulfofmexicoalliance.org.

Trip ticket program takes off



At its October 2011 meeting, the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources passed a motion to implement a trip ticket program for commercial fisheries seafood landings. A trip ticket program is a system to collect commercial landings and associated information by trip. Trip tickets are the standard method of marine commercial landings collection throughout the nation. Trip tickets enable fishermen to get an accurate account of fish landed, which is important for establishing historical participation in the fishery. They provide for a quantification of loss of income, vessels and gear due to hurricanes and other disasters and allow a more equitable distribution of disaster funds. Many times funding has been based on a state's landings, therefore by not collecting all sources of landings, Mississippi could have missed out on its correct share of funds. Individual trip information provides fishery scientists with gear and area-specific catch information that will improve the accuracy of stock assessments and allows fishery managers to better evaluate the effects of proposed and current management regulations. Trip tickets are a first step in traceability, which allows for the tracking of food products through all steps of production, distribution and sales.

Seafood dealers, processors and commercial fishermen were sent a letter in December 2011 describing the program and requesting that they come to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) office to receive the Trip Ticket Program manual and trip tickets and begin reporting their landings for February by March 10, 2012. Trip tickets can be reported electronically by computer or manually by filling out a paper trip ticket. The information collected on trip tickets is confidential. Further information regarding this program is available on the MDMR website at dmr.ms.gov. Please see MDMR Regulation – Title 22 Part 09 for details on who is required to report and what licenses and/or permits are necessary.

Gentle giants of Mississippi and the Northern Gulf

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) Shrimp and Crab Bureau, along with the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) presented a free seminar entitled "Gentle Giants of Mississippi and the Northern Gulf" March 22, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., in the first floor meeting room of the Bolton State Building, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi.

The free seminar began with a brief overview by NERR Manager David Ruple and continued with presentations on tarpon, whale sharks, sturgeon and manatees in Mississippi and the northern Gulf. More than 40 people attended.

University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Research Lab (GCRL) Senior Scientist Jim Franks gave a presentation on tarpon, one of the most important game fish species in the Gulf of Mexico. Franks discussed what important aspects of tarpon's biology and habitat requirements have been revealed by research conducted by the GCRL and funded by the MDMR.

Jennifer McKinney of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries spoke about the whale shark, the largest fish in the ocean. She provided background information on the biology and ecology of the species, and later shared highlights of research conducted in the northern Gulf, including the GCRL whale shark sighting survey, satellite tagging and large feeding aggregations.

GCRL Professor Mark Peterson provided an overview of Gulf sturgeon, a threatened species, and discussed research from the Pascagoula River, associated areas of the Mississippi Sound and Pearl River and Florida populations.

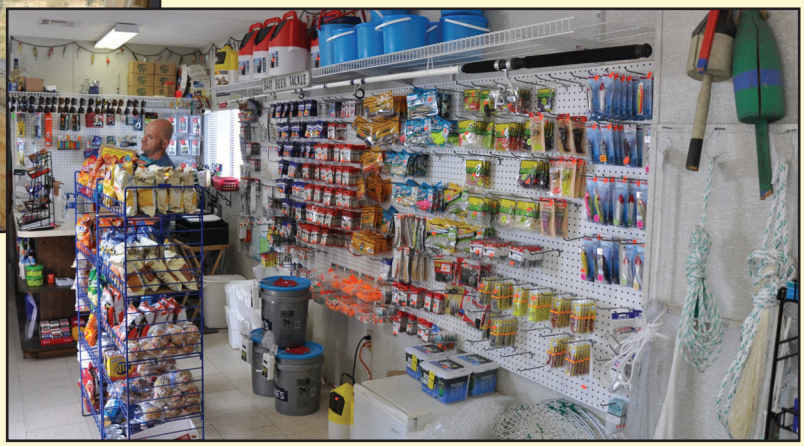
Lastly, Allen Aven, a Ph.D. student from the Dauphin Island Sea Lab (DISL), presented research on the distribution and ecology of the West Indian manatee. Aven also shared information on the habits of this fascinating animal that have been recently revealed by innovative research conducted by the DISL's Manatee Sighting Network.

Live bait on the Coast

There are currently 15 licensed live bait camps for the 2012-2013 license year, which is an increase of one from last year. This number could possibly increase with the recent change in state statute that now allows applications for a live bait dealer to be submitted at any time instead of between January and April. There was also a change in the regulations that now allows licensed live bait dealers to sell mullet minnows, which increases bait options and should help out in the winter months when shrimp are scarce. The newest live bait camp for this year is the Biloxi Boardwalk Live Bait, which is located in East Biloxi and is situated on the Biloxi Bay, making it accessible by vehicle or boat. Now that the Gulfport Harbor renovation is nearly complete, The Tackle Box, formerly Gulfport Harbor Live Bait, is reopening its doors with a new building on the east side of the harbor near Moses Pier. The harbor renovation did not affect Brady's Bait House, which is still in the same location.

Biloxi Boardwalk Live Bait

The Tackle Box



2012-2013 live bait dealers

	Camp Name	Phone	Location
		Hancock County	
1	Bay Marina	466-4970	100 Bay Marina Dr., Bay St. Louis
2	Bordage Bros. Marina	341-5220	6149 Central Ave., Bay St. Louis
3	La France Fish Camp	467-9180	3200 Ansley Road, Bay St. Louis
		Harrison County	
4	Biloxi Boardwalk Marina	297-0207	200 8th St., Biloxi
5	Biloxi Harbor Bait	243-7930	675 Beach Blvd., Biloxi
6	Brady's Bait House	864-5338	860 E. Pier Road, Gulfport
7	Crabby's Bait + Tackle	323-2894	9492 Central Ave., D'Iberville
8	The Tackle Box	234-5961	720 S. Cleveland Ave., Long Beach
9	The Tackle Box	248-2248	801 20th Ave., Gulfport
		Jackson County	
10	The Bait Box	219-3817	2815 Front St., Pascagoula
11	CC's Bait Shop	218-7614	5303 Ladner St., Pascagoula
12	Fort Bayou Bait Shop	875-6252	1022 Legion Lane, Ocean Springs
13	Ocean Springs Marine Mart	875-0072	1320 Harbor Dr., Ocean Springs
14	Mary Walker Marina	497-3141	3308 Mary Walker Dr., Gautier
15	Who Zat	218-5158	5600 Washington Ave., Ocean Springs

Marine patrol responds to Jet Ski accident in Bay St. Louis

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) Marine Patrol and American Medical Response (AMR) responded Sunday evening, April 15, to a Jet Ski accident that occurred in the Jourdan River near Baffin St. in Bay St. Louis.

Jordan Manalla, a 22-year-old Kenner, La., man, suffered injuries when he hit a dock while riding a Jet Ski on April 15. Manalla was transported by AMR to Hancock Medical Center for treatment.

The emergency call came in to MDMR Marine Patrol dispatch from Hancock County 911 at 6:28 p.m. Sunday evening. MDMR Marine Patrol officers Tim Broder and Chris Mask responded.

MDMR staff tours LSU oyster hatchery

In April, several members of MDMR's Office of Fisheries, including Fisheries Director Dale Diaz, center, and Shellfish Bureau Director Scott Gordon, right, visited the Louisiana Fish and Wildlife Building in Grand Isle, La., where the Oyster Hatchery and Nursery of Louisiana State University is being temporarily housed while its new Hatchery building is being built. Dr. John Supan, left, a marine biologist with LSU's Sea Grant program and director of the hatchery, demonstrates how to operate the 1-micron filter system for the hatchery. The Louisiana Sea Grant Program's Grand Isle bivalve hatchery has both research and commercial-scale larval rearing capabilities. It is the largest oyster hatchery along the Gulf coast of the U.S., based on larval rearing capacity. The hatchery serves as a research, production and demonstration facility for the Gulf of Mexico region.

Oyster and Shrimp news

The MDMR Shellfish and Shrimp and Crab bureaus published 2012 newsletters as a part of their Stewardship Programs. The newsletters were mailed in March and April 2012. They were sent to 545 shrimpers and 657 oyster license holders including: recreational and commercial oyster tongers and dredgers, oyster dealers and processors (including in-state and out-of-state license holders). Publication for these newsletters was funded by the Emergency Disaster Recovery Program. The newsletters can be found on the MDMR website under the section "News & Events/Newsletters."

MCMR-approved changes to size/possession limits and sale of reef fish requirements now in affect

The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (MCMR) approved a motion at its April 2012 meeting to change state regulations on size and possession limits of some fish and prohibit the sale of seafood by recreational fishermen.

The changes that took effect June 1, 2012, include lowering the grouper limit from an aggregate of five to four fish for recreational fishermen. Additionally, the possession limit of gag grouper was lowered to only two fish within the four-fish grouper aggregate and possession of speckled hind grouper and warsaw grouper have been limited to only one fish per vessel within the four-fish aggregate.

Other changes include a reduction of commercial minimum size limits for red snapper to 13 inches total length, red grouper to 18 inches total length and gag grouper to 22 inches total length. Regulations have also been changed to require any commercial fisherman, person, firm or corporation to be federally licensed to sell, barter or trade reef fish species.

NERR Notes
Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Water words that work

Scientists and natural resource managers working along the northern Gulf of Mexico region are asked to engage with the public about their work more and more often. This is happening for a number of reasons: there is growing interest in the economic value of natural resources and their services; coastal development is driving a need for a broader understanding of natural coastal changes (e.g. sea level rise); and folks around the country (and the five Gulf states) are interested in how well the Gulf is doing in the aftermath of the BP oil spill.

When preparing presentations, articles and flyers for public audiences scientists and natural resource managers struggle with how to present their work accurately while at the same time avoiding the use of complex, discipline-specific words. Scientific and environmental degree programs just don't require courses that teach public engagement skills, so unless they took a course as an elective, they must rely on instinct and experience to guide their outreach efforts.

Working to meet the professional development needs of environmental professionals in the northern Gulf, the Coastal Training Program (CTP) at the Grand Bay NERR offers workshops and training events at low or no cost. Recognizing that training in public communication skills would be useful, the CTP, working with several partners, offered three science communication training events (one in Louisiana and two in Mississippi) in April 2012. Led by Eric Eckl, an environmental marketing and communication expert who began his career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Water Words That Work training teaches participants how to make "audience focused" education and outreach efforts. Over 65 people representing a variety governmental and non-governmental organizations in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana attended the training and improved their communication skills.

Monitoring marsh response to sea level rise at the Grand Bay NERR

Scientists at the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve are on the lookout for the effects of sea level rise on coastal habitats, and recent additions of infrastructure and equipment will help them to do just that. Data from local tide gauges demonstrate that sea level is indeed on the rise along the Gulf Coast, but just how this will impact salt marshes and other sensitive habitats remains to be determined. Much of the potential impact depends on the present and future rate of sea level rise as well as the ability of the marsh to accrete sediments to keep up with the rising sea. If the rate exceeds the capacity of the marsh to build, then large expanses of marsh might become drowned and convert to open water. The marsh does have the potential to migrate inward in the face of sea level rise, but only if the areas' upslope of the marsh have not been altered by human activities. Roads, railroads, seawalls and ditches can all limit the ability of the marsh to move over time.

Grand Bay NERR provides the perfect laboratory to study changes in the natural environment, and recent efforts to achieve vertical control on the Reserve will strengthen the ability of NERR scientists to detect these changes. In marsh environments, a few centimeters of difference in elevation can mark the transition from one vegetation type to the next. Traditional methods of measuring elevation don't lend themselves well to application in marshes, but several new techniques will be applied at the NERR to accurately measure marsh elevations. Over the last year, 15 Sediment Elevation Tables (SET) were placed across the elevation gradient in the marsh. These SETs allow us to measure on a fine scale the processes of accretion and subsidence that influence how a marsh responds to changes in sea level. Over the course of the next few months, these SETs will be surveyed to a high level of vertical and horizontal accuracy using digital leveling as well as static GPS occupations. Additionally, NERR staff will create digital elevation models associated with permanent vegetation plots and the SETs. These models will be created using the recently acquired Trimble R8 RTK GPS. By tying all of these pieces of the puzzle together, NERR scientists will begin to slowly unravel the mysteries of the marsh and predict its fate in the face of sea level rise.

Please report silver carp sightings

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is asking boaters and fishermen to be on the lookout for silver carp (Hypophthalmichthys molitrix). This exotic fish, native to Asia, has been sighted recently in the West Pearl River and poses a significant threat to our native fish and mollusk species.

Originally imported in the 1970s for plankton control in aquaculture ponds, silver carp escaped and have spread throughout the Mississippi River Basin. Twelve states now report reproducing populations of these harmful fish. An electric barrier has been constructed to keep these voracious creatures from ruining a $7 billion per year recreational fishery in the Great Lakes.

Silver carp are rapidly reproducing filter feeders that can live 50 years and weigh more than 60 pounds. Females can produce 2 million eggs per year. Silver carp can crowd out native fish to become 90 percent of an infected river's biomass.

When disturbed by a boat motor, silver carp will leap out of the water to heights of up to six feet. Boaters have been seriously injured by these flying "missiles" but no fatalities have been reported so far.

Biologists think there is a good chance that silver carp arrived from Lake Ponchartrain during the Mississippi River flood last spring. Decreased salinity in the Mississippi Sound at that time created a "freshwater bridge" that could have provided unfettered access to coastal Mississippi rivers.

Early detection is critical to managing populations of invasive species. MDMR encourages everyone to report all silver carp sightings in Mississippi waters. Please email location, observations and any photos to report.invasive@dmr.ms.gov or call (228) 374-5000 to report by phone.

Photos: USGS

Third annual casino-initiated Earth Day Cleanup at Deer Island

The MDMR's Coastal Preserves Program partnered with volunteers from Mississippi Power's Renew Our Rivers program, the Beau Rivage Resort and Casino, and the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino for the 3rd Annual Earth Day cleanup of Deer Island. Approximately 120 volunteers spent their day combing the beach for man-made items washed onto shore or left by island visitors. At the end of the day, these dedicated volunteers had removed approximately 2.5 tons of debris from the island including cans and bottles, styrofoam, treated lumber, plastics and various other items.

Deer Island is a favored recreational area for residents and tourists alike. It boasts the simple beauty of the Mississippi Gulf Coast and is an ecological treasure. The island provides a unique opportunity to experience an undisturbed natural island, yet with the convenience of close proximity to the mainland. With the combined resources and enthusiasm of this partnership, we are able to ensure the island's health and beauty for generations to come.

MDMR staffers Mai Dang, left, and Kristina Broussard, remove debris from the beach at Deer Island.

Seafood Safety Corner

Jeff Davis

Jessica Rankin

With summer and hurricane season upon us, the Seafood Technology Bureau (STB) staff would like to remind all certified seafood dealers and processors to check their refrigeration units and verify that these are maintained properly. Certain foods must be maintained at proper temperatures to avoid bacterial contamination. Oysters are required to be maintained at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below. In the case of refrigeration unit malfunction, it is beneficial to have a backup unit available to safely store your food products.

ISSC Biannual Meeting

During the 2011 Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) biannual meeting, delegates approved a review of the time/temperature controls in the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP). After review, the committee made several changes to the NSSP Model ordinance that went into effect May 19, 2012. These time/temperature control changes will affect the operation of some certified dealers. Inspectors will conduct on-site visits to help dealers update records to ensure these new guidelines are followed. If you have immediate questions please contact the STB staff at (228) 374-5000.

Celebrate the Gulf

The STB participated in several outreach events this spring. March 31 was the annual Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival and Art in the Pass, which were held jointly at War Memorial Park in Pass Christian. This year's participation was especially large with attendance in the thousands. More than 25 exhibitors participated, highlighting benefits of a healthy Gulf of Mexico. The STB staff ran an interactive station that allowed children to paint clay marine creatures.

STB officer Jessica Rankin held several interactive Fishy Prize Wheel demonstrations where kids answered questions about marine species of the Gulf. The STB staff also had several displays showcasing the accomplishments of various schools that were recipients of the "Environmental Stewardship Program." This program assists elementary schools affected by Hurricane Katrina in the three coastal counties. Thank you to all teachers and students who attended.

If you would like more information about upcoming events or more information about the STB outreach program, contact the Seafood Technology Bureau's Outreach Coordinator: Jessica Rankin at Jessica.rankin@dmr.ms.gov or by phone at (228) 523-4095.

Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

Interns in action

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC) and the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) completed the Spring 2012 Semester Internship Program on April 25. A luncheon was held at the GCRL for all participants in the program and their mentors. During the luncheon, the interns gave presentations on the projects they worked on with their mentors during the semester. The program has expanded to include Singing River Hospital Systems, Pascagoula School District, as well as the Public Affairs Bureau at the MDMR.

The MDMR and MGCCC have worked closely together for the past eight years as the Internship Program has continued to grow. As a result, a select group of MGCCC students are paired with mentors from various biology-related fields to work on a wide variety of programs and projects. While the interns gain valuable on-the-job experience and insight into exciting possibilities of continued education and career development, the mentors in the program are able to enhance their professional development through this unique experience.

The total number of spring interns was 15, and there were 13 mentors. Thanks to the continued support of the MGCCC, MDMR and the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory for this great educational program.

From left to right: Jennifer Leirer, Corry Bialota, Debbie Belk, Courtney Walker, Dr. Lena Melton, Jessica Slay, Ali Rodriguez, Bryon Hedgepeth, Callie Greenough, Syneathia Lett, Steve Giddens, Ashley Burbage, Ka'Reema Coleman, Tamela Jones, LaGena Fantroy, Jessica Rankin, Jeff Davis, Dr. Heather Joesting.

Celebrate the Gulf draws 3,000 visitors

Thanks to dedicated partners, sponsors, exhibitors and MDMR volunteers, the annual Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival held March 31 at War Memorial Park in Pass Christian was a great success. "This event could never happen without the devotion of those people who helped at the festival or during the planning phase," said Grand Bay NERR's Jennifer Buchanan, coordinator of the annual event, which offers hands-on educational activities for all ages to enjoy. Joe Jewell, a member of the MDMR's Office of Marine Fisheries and an artist, signed more than 600 of his beautiful Deer Island prints at one sitting for festival-goers. Visitors also enjoyed samples of Mississippi gulf-fresh seafood provided by Mississippi's Seafood Marketing Program. Special thanks to all those MDMR employees who helped. Included are: Rudy Balius, Shelly Becker, Buck Buchanan, Jennifer Buchanan, Rick Burris, Gaye Clark, Keith Colm, Mai Dang, Jeff Davis, Doug Drieling, Dale Diaz, Rita Duvernay, Brooke Goff, Irvin Jackson, Joe Jewell, Melanie Lane, Jennifer Leirer, Syneathia Lett, Iris Lofland, Susan Perkins, Ruth Posadas, Rick Ranew, Jessica Rankin, Sally Richards, Bill Richardson, David Ruple, Tina Shumate, Teresa Stadler, Darrin Stewart, and Lauren Thompson.

Happy Anniversary!

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

Ava Coleman	04/01/07	Jill Zednick	05/19/08
Kristina Broussard	05/01/06	Rudy Balius	06/01/00
Jennifer Buchanan	05/01/01	Mark Boyles	06/01/07
Joyce Gagliano	05/01/01	George Ramseur	06/01/07
Leo DeGeorge	05/12/10	Lauren Thompson	06/01/00
Avia Huisman	05/17/10	Robin Zantow	06/01/02
Bradley Randall	05/01/04	Tim Broder	06/14/04
Shannon Rojas	05/01/08	Jessica Rankin	06/16/08
Scott Saucier	05/01/06	Michelle Shumake	06/16/08
Darrin Stewart	05/01/08	Rick Burris	06/20/07
Melissa Faircloth	05/19/09	Grant Larsen	06/25/01

Thanks!

to all who contributed to this issue of Coastal Markers:

Traci Floyd, Rick Burris, Amy Taylor, Donnie Armes, David Rose, Laura Bowie, Christine Murrell, Darrin Stewart, Ruth Posadas, Kristina Broussard, Joe Jewell, Buck Buchanan, Avia Huisman, Will Underwood, Mike Pursley, Ali Leggett, Jessica Rankin, Jeff Davis, Sandra Moore, Christy Royals, Jennifer Buchanan, Dr. Fred Deegen, Brooke Goff

Mississippi Department
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MDMR Calendar

August 21
Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting,
Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.

September 18
Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting,
Bolton Building
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.

September 29
National Estuaries Day

October 16
Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting,
Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.

October 20
24th annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup
8 a.m.-11 a.m., coastwide.
For details, call 228-374-5000.

To learn more about the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup scan the QR code or visit mscoastalcleanup.org.

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

Go Green

Mississippi Coastal Cleanup

Join us! Oct. 20, 2012
mscoastalcleanup.org

Doc's fishing tip

The best thing about fishing the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the summertime is the great variety of its offerings, from Amberjack to Wahoo and everything in between... Nearshore anglers in particular will enjoy hot action with speckled trout, white trout, redfish, Spanish mackerel, flounders, jack crevalle, king whiting, black drum, sheepshead and many more. And, you can catch them ALL on the same bait, whether that's a soft plastic jig or everyone's favorite live shrimp... So, what are you waiting for?

Until next time, good fishing! — Dr. Fred Deegen

Illustration: Joe Jewell

South Mississippi Crab Cakes

1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1/4 c. mayonnaise
1 tsp. sour cream
1 tsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
2 tsp. chopped parsley
1/4 tsp. paprika
2 tsp. cayenne pepper
1/2 tsp. Old Bay seasoning
1 tsp. kosher salt
1 egg

1/4 c. bread crumbs
2 tbsp. diced red peppers
1 lb. Mississippi lump crab (drained)
2 oz. unsalted butter

Recipe by Brooke Goff

Mix first group of ingredients in a bowl. Whisk until smooth. Gently fold in bread crumbs, diced red peppers and lump blue crab, using spatula. Hand-form crab cake mixture into small patties, then coat each side with bread crumbs and place on a sheet tray lined with parchment paper. Refrigerate 2 hours prior to cooking.
Place 2 oz. of unsalted butter into a sauté skillet. Allow skillet to get hot. Cook each side until golden brown. Place into 350-degree oven for 5 minutes. Serve with Wasabi or Remoulade Sauce.