

Coastal Markers



Volume 13, Issue 3

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Winter 2010

Secretary of State returns over \$7 Million to Coast from Tidelands leases, assessments



The Office of Delbert Hosemann, Mississippi Secretary of State, presented a Tidelands check for more than \$7 million to the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources on Dec. 16, 2009. Pictured are: front row from left to right, state Rep. Billy Broomfield, state Rep. Brandon Jones, Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, and state Rep. Randall Patterson; back row, left to right, state Rep. Jeffrey Guice, Department of Marine Resources Executive Director Dr. William Walker, state Rep. Scott Delano, state Rep. Richard Bennett, state Rep. Roger Ishee, state Sen. Tommy Dickerson and Nature Conservancy Field Representative Mike Murphy.

Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann presented a check for \$7,046,853 to the Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) at a ceremony held Dec. 16, 2009, at the Secretary of State's Office in Gulfport. The dollars are generated from tidelands leases and assessments.

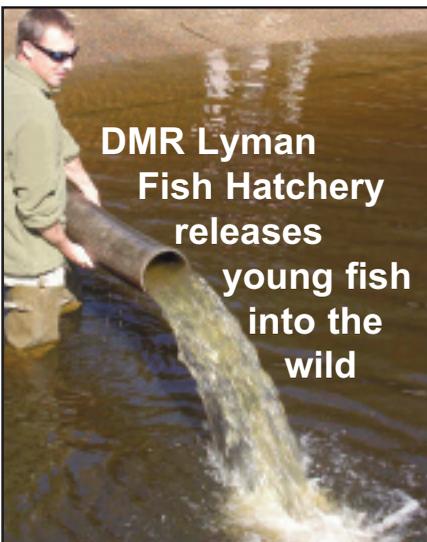
"The tidelands check is a crucial component of preserving the culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast," said Hosemann. "The Mississippi State Legislature and the Secretary of State's Office are committed to maximizing the benefit of our state-

owned lands and the preservation of our coastal areas."

The people of Mississippi own the public trust tidelands, the land covered by water at high tide. Rent is collected by the Secretary of State's Office from tidelands leaseholders, including casinos, then returned to the DMR at the end of the fiscal year. Since 1990, the Secretary of State's Office has collected more than \$74 million in tidelands leases.

"Tidelands Trust funds provide for public access projects that allow citizens

and visitors to coastal Mississippi to better access and utilize Mississippi's marine resources, provide educational programs and enhance management capabilities within the coastal region of Mississippi," said DMR Executive Director Dr. William Walker. "The funds are awarded annually to a variety of recipients, including cities, counties, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and state agencies. I thank the Mississippi Legislature for providing these funds to implement these worthy projects."



DMR Lyman Fish Hatchery releases young fish into the wild

The DMR Lyman Fish Hatchery has begun its release of tagged Gulf race striped bass.

See page 3 for story.

Department of Marine Resources' Lyman Fish Hatchery employee Adam Jackson steadies the tube as tagged Gulf race striped bass are released at the Ft. Bayou boat launch in Ocean Springs, Miss.

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www.dmr.ms.gov



Director's Notes
Dr. William Walker

Just offshore from Biloxi in the Mississippi Sound, Deer Island is one of the most visible and easily accessible of Mississippi's islands and a year-round hot spot for fishermen, boaters, kayakers and birders alike. The state purchased more than 90 percent of the island back in 2002 to become part of the Mississippi Coastal Preserves System. The Coastal Preserves are managed to restore, enhance and maintain their ecological integrity in recognition of the public benefits for present and future generations in protecting it as a natural area.

Our biggest obstacle to achieving these goals for Deer Island is managing the erosion problem. Unlike the barrier islands, Deer Island has no updrift source of sand to replenish areas eroded during storm events hence the island has lost about 300 acres to erosion since the mid-1800s.

Over the past several years, DMR has been working with many local, state and federal partners to help restore and maintain the island. A 50-acre marsh restoration project on the northeast end of the island was begun in 2003 and work continues to this day. DMR recently received a grant from the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program to construct a nearshore oyster reef to help stabilize about 800 feet of badly eroded shoreline. In addition, the Mississippi Coastal Improvement Plan includes two Deer Island restoration projects: a beach renourishment on the south side of the island and restoration of the western tip of the island.

Although Katrina killed many of the trees, shrubs and other vegetation, the survivors are reseeded the island and much new growth is evident. The DMR is monitoring this regrowth and will take action if we find areas that are unable to recover naturally. Although the dead trees may look bad to some people, they are providing vital habitats and nutrients for many species of fauna and flora that live on the island.


Executive Director

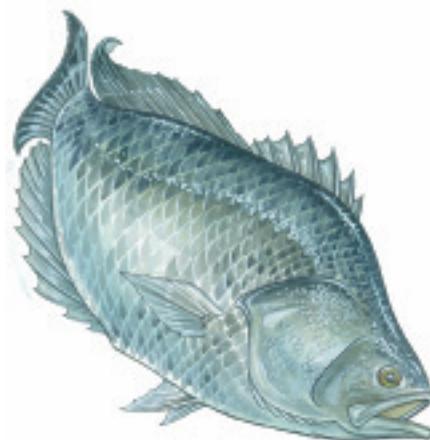


Illustration: Marty Wilson

New tripletail size and possession limits took effect March 1, 2010

The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources set new size and possession limits for tripletail caught in Mississippi waters at its regular monthly meeting Jan. 19, 2010. The commercial and recreational limits were set at size minimum of 18 inches total length and a bag limit of three per person. A public hearing on the tripletail size and possession limits was held Jan. 11, 2010. ***The rule change took effect March 1, 2010.***

**MARINE PATROL CITATIONS
JULY 2009 — DECEMBER 2009**

- Shrimp-11
- Crab-34
- Oyster-91
- Live Bait-2
- Net Fish-17
- Fishing-188
- Miscellaneous Seafood-3
- Boat and Water Safety-177
- Marine Litter-8
- Miscellaneous-15

TOTAL-546

Thanks!

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

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Linda Wakefield | Susan Perkins |
| Dr. Fred Deegen | Dorothy Daniel |
| Amy Taylor | Mike Walker |
| Traci Floyd | Marian Hanisko |
| Jeff Clark | Scott Gordon |
| Dave Ruple | David Rose |
| Jeff Davis | Mike Pursley |
| Jessica Rankin | Sandra Moore |

Derelict Crab Trap Cleanup snares 349 traps for recycling

During the Shrimp and Crab Bureau's 2010 Derelict Crab Trap Cleanup, a total of 349 derelict crab traps were removed from Mississippi waters to be recycled at a Coast scrap-metal facility. The cleanup was held Jan. 28-30, 2010, and the gear closure included all waters within a half-mile of the main shoreline.

All Mississippi crab trap license holders were notified to remove their traps from the closure area the week of Jan. 21-27, in advance of the cleanup. There were 140 volunteers registered in advance to help with the effort, although the Shrimp and Crab Bureau noted that high winds and cold conditions kept some volunteers from full participation. This type of cleanup works best in the winter months as low winter tides expose the derelict traps. Derelict traps are defined as traps which may be unbuoyed or unmarked and are not actively fished. Derelict crab traps can pose a serious navigational hazard to boaters and may inadvertently capture some marine life.

Volunteers turned in the derelict traps at three sites along the coast: Pascagoula Point (188 traps), Ocean Springs Harbor (118 traps) and Bayou Caddy Marina (43 traps). Volunteers also submitted data cards with information on where traps were recovered and what was in them. This information will be compiled by program partners at the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Lab.

"We are very pleased with the efforts of all of our volunteers and partners who worked together with DMR braving



Mississippi Derelict Crab Trap Cleanup volunteer Logan Stokes, 13, cleaned up 14 crab traps with his grandfather, commercial crab fisherman Wain Rogers, both of Escatawpa.

the cold to help restore our marine resources," said Shrimp and Crab Bureau Director Traci Floyd.

This year for the first time the Shrimp and Crab Bureau held a training program for volunteers. Thirty volunteers attended training on Jan. 14 and received safety information, instruction on filling out data cards, first aid kits, gloves, and maps with common derelict trap locations.

The Mississippi Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program is funded through a grant from the Fish America Foundation in partnership with the Brunswick Public Foundation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Restoration Center for Community-based Habitat Restoration. The program has removed and recycled over 18,270 derelict crab traps from Mississippi waters since its inception in 2000.



Capt. Kenny Melvin, DMR fisheries technician, tongs for oysters on Pass Christian Reef aboard his skiff, the Wicked Witch of the West, on his day off.

El Niño dampens oyster season

As of Feb. 18, 2010, a total of 190,881 sacks have been landed for the 2009-2010 oyster season. The season has experienced extended closings due to excessive rain and river stages exceeding the management criteria plan, compounded by the effect of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) event. ENSO is the result of a cyclic warming and cooling of the surface ocean of the central and eastern Pacific which has important consequences for weather around the globe. Among these consequences is the increased rainfall across the southern tier of the United States.

Lyman Fish Hatchery continued from page 1

On Feb. 2 and 5, 2010, a total of 20,000 hatchery-raised yearling fish (6 inches in length) were released into the wild. This is the second phase of the striped bass release. The first was in June 2009, when more than 120,000 non-tagged fingerlings (2 inches in length) were released along the coastal waterways. In 2009, the DMR Lyman Fish Hatchery raised over 150,000 striped bass and will continue to raise and release marine animals, including other fish and crabs, to enhance Mississippi's coastal habitat.

The Lyman Hatchery was established to further the DMR's ability to enhance coastal resources and to conduct research into aquaculture. A toll-free number, 866-244-6420, has been set up for fishermen to report tagged catches.

Coastal Cleanup nets 3,022 bags of trash

Boaters and land-based volunteers scoured Mississippi's beaches, islands and waterways picking up marine debris at more than 60 designated cleanup sites during the 21st annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, part of the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC)—the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to clean up the marine environment. In just three hours, more than 3,200 volunteers picked up 3,022 bags of trash along 190 miles of coastal waterways in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties and the Barrier Islands during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup. The cleanup was held Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009, and is organized by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force.

Volunteers collected 46,873 pounds of trash including 167 tires—that's about 23.5 tons of marine debris. In addition to the more than 46,000 pounds of baggable trash, four dump truckloads of non-baggable items such as household appliances were collected. Other items found were: bullets, a pile of animal bones, a live copperhead snake, a sealed metal cylinder, car batteries, a bathing suit, mattresses, a box spring, propane tanks, a brass headboard, a weight bench, a partial stove, crab nets; found at Deer Island were remnants of eight pop-up tents, an electric water cooler/heater, a giant tire, the back of a plasma TV, eight 55-gallon drums, an orange traffic can, a plastic trellis, numerous foam products, a wooden orange channel marker; and a set of minivan seats were found at Bayou Heron in Jackson County.

In Long Beach there were two entanglements reported, a pelican and a catfish. Both were dead and entangled in fishing line. There was a live jellyfish entangled in a six-pack ring reported at the Courthouse Pier site in Gulfport; the jellyfish was released. The most peculiar item reported was a foosball table in pieces found west of Long Beach Harbor.

Although rough seas and a small craft advisory prevented divers and the 350 boaters who had signed up to clean the barrier islands from participating on

cleanup day, about 65 of those volunteers assisted in land-based cleanup efforts, including the DMR Fisheries Dive Team, who on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009, cleaned a mile of Horn Island. Two volunteers ventured out to clean a mile of Cat Island, picking up eight bags of trash.

During the ICC, hundreds of thousands of people across the world spend three hours combing the beaches and waterways to pick up trash that pollutes our waters, harms marine life, hampers tourism and poses health risks to beach-goers. During the 2008 ICC, nearly 400,000 volunteers worldwide in 104 countries collected 6.8 million pounds of debris. (Results from the 2009 ICC will be released in the spring.)

"Trash doesn't fall from the sky, it falls from our hands," said Lauren Thompson, state coordinator of the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and public relations director for the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. "Every year during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup about 60 percent of the marine debris that volunteers collect comes from shoreline and recreational activities like festivals, beach picnics and general littering."

The mission of the ICC is to remove debris from shorelines, bayous, bays, rivers, waterways and beaches; collect valuable information on the amount and types of debris collected; educate people on the issue of marine debris; and use the data collected to affect positive change. Volunteers clean beaches and collect information on what they find, using the International Coastal Cleanup Data Card, so that sources of marine debris can be targeted for education or pollution prevention campaigns. State coordinators mail the data cards to the Ocean Conservancy in Washington, D.C., where the data is tabulated. Over the years, data from the cleanups have been used to enact local, state, national, and even international legislation and agreements.

After the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, Bob Taylor and Rob Heffner, owners of the High Cotton Grill, treated more than 800 volunteers to a free lunch of hotdogs,



hamburgers, chips, fruit and cold drinks served by their staff from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Courthouse Pier parking area in Gulfport. Sysco, Gulf Coast Produce, Sara Lee and Coast Coca-Cola Bottling Co. also provided food and drinks for the event. Music was provided by WHGO 105.9 FM. All volunteers filling out a data card identifying the types of debris collected received a meal ticket for the free lunch at the Courthouse Pier parking area and an eco-friendly cooler tote from Chevron Pascagoula Refinery.

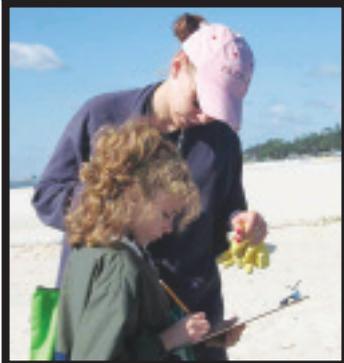
In Hancock County, the Office of Congressman Gene Taylor and the Bay St. Louis Rotary Club treated about 150 volunteers to hotdogs at a cookout held at the Washington Street Pier pavilion in Bay St. Louis, while BB's Snowballs provided snowballs. In Jackson County, about 1,000 volunteers received a free barbecue lunch of pulled pork and beef brisket, chips and drinks at the Estuarine Education Center at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Gautier courtesy of the Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint and Chevron Pascagoula Refinery.

"This year, the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup grew in number of sites cleaned, number of volunteers and number of community sponsors. More than 3,000 volunteers cared enough about their coastal resources to dedicate their Saturday morning to cleaning the shoreline, islands and marine waters of South Mississippi," Thompson said. "This was truly a coast-wide community effort, and on behalf of the Department of Marine Resources, I would like to thank the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force, our sponsors and the cleanup coordinators, zone captains and volunteers who came out and supported this educational and prevention effort on behalf of our marine environment."

[Visit mscoastalcleanup.org](http://mscoastalcleanup.org)



Volunteers on Singing River Island (above left) and from Hinds Community College (above right) are among the more than 3,200 volunteers who participated in the 2009 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.



Data that volunteers collect by filling out cards is an important part of the event and is used to identify sources of marine debris.

2009 STATISTICS

3,205 volunteers
46,873 pounds of debris
190 miles cleaned
3,022 bags filled
66 designated sites

Harrison County
 1,195 volunteers
 1,081 bags of trash
 20 sites

Hancock County
 414 volunteers
 522 bags of trash
 19 sites

Jackson County
 1,581 volunteers
 1,391 bags of trash
 25 sites

***Barrier Islands**
 15 volunteers
 28 bags of trash
 2 sites

*(Numbers low due to small craft advisory)

Peculiar Items Found
 Set of minivan seats
 Foolsball table in pieces
 Weight bench
 Live copperhead snake
 Brass headboard

2009 SPONSORS

SEA TURTLE:

Chevron Pascagoula Refinery; High Cotton Grill; Matthews Brothers, Inc.; Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

SHARK:

Beverage Association of Mississippi; Delta Sanitation of Mississippi, LLC; J.E. Borries, Inc.; Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; Mississippi Media; Ocean Conservancy; Ship Island Excursions; The Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint; The Sun Herald; Waste Management

DOLPHIN:

Allen Beverages, Inc.; Best Gloves Co.; Coast Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Inc.; Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Consolidated; Domino's Pizza; Fisher Safety; Gulf Coast Produce; Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Professional Division; Lamar Advertising-Mississippi Gulf Coast; Microflex; Milner Rental Center; Sysco Foods

COBIA:

American Canoe Association; Biloxi-D'Iberville Press; Hancock Medical; Island View Casino Resort; K99FM, Magic 93.7, 92.5 The Beat and News Radio 104.9; Keep Mississippi Beautiful; Knight Abbey Printing & Direct Mail; L.L. Bean; Mississippi Department of Transportation; Sea Coast Echo; WLOX-TV 13

MULLET:

Academy Sports + Outdoors; Ashman & Son Construction; BB's Bar-B-Que & Snak Shak; Coast Electric; Coastal Rivers; Desporte's Biloxi Paper Company; D'Iberville Walmart; The Dive Shop; Dixie White House Nursing Home; The Ocean Springs Gazette; Ocean Springs Walmart; Pascagoula Walmart; Waveland Walmart

The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup is made possible by the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force, which includes representatives from Ashman & Son Construction; Chevron Pascagoula Refinery; City of Gulfport; City of Biloxi; City of Moss Point; City of Ocean Springs; City of Pascagoula; Coastal Rivers; DMR Marine Patrol; Eco-Tours of South Mississippi; Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Gulf Islands National Seashore; Hancock County Board of Supervisors; Hancock County Chamber of Commerce; Hancock County Solid Waste; Harrison County Beautification Commission; Harrison County Board of Supervisors; Harrison County Sand Beach Department; Harrison County Sheriff's Department; Harrison County Utility Authority; Heritage Trails Partnership; Jackson County Board of Supervisors; Jackson County Chamber of Commerce; Jackson County Solid Waste Department; Keesler Air Force Base; Mississippi Air National Guard CRTC-Gulfport; Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium; Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; Mississippi Department of Marine Resources; Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services; Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College; Mississippi State University Coastal Research & Extension Center; Naval Construction Battalion Center; NOAA Fisheries; North Gulfport Community Land Trust; Office of Congressman Gene Taylor; Rotary International District 6840; Sea Coast Echo; University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast Research Laboratory; Waste Management.

2010 Marine Information Calendar features

The DMR held an art contest for third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties for the annual marine information calendar. In an effort to generate interest and promote awareness of the value of our coastal resources, students were asked to create artwork illustrating the contest theme: "Preserving and Enjoying Mississippi's Coastal Resources."

Over 1,895 entries from 32 schools were received. The winning artwork appears in the 2010 DMR calendar and was on display Jan. 6-24, 2010, at Edgewater Mall in Biloxi. The drawings are now on display in the DMR's main lobby at 1141 Bayview Ave. in Biloxi and will be there for the remainder of 2010.

Thank you to the following schools for participating in the contest: Holy Trinity Catholic School, Second Street Elementary, Bay-Waveland Middle School, Beauvoir Elementary, Cedar Lake Christian Academy, Jeff Davis Elementary, North Bay Elementary, Our Lady of Fatima, D'Iberville Middle, Martin Bluff Elementary, Anniston Avenue Elementary, Bayou View Elementary, Gaston Point Elementary, Lizana Elementary, Orange Grove Elementary, Pass Road Elementary, Westminster Academy, Coast Episcopal, Harper McCaughan, Magnolia Park Elementary, St. Martin Upper Elementary, Taconi Elementary, Beach Elementary, Central Elementary, Resurrection Catholic School, Pass Christian Middle School, West Wortham Elementary & Middle, Vanleave Upper Elementary, Tinkerbell School, Twenty Eighth Street Elementary, South Hancock Elementary and West Hancock Elementary.

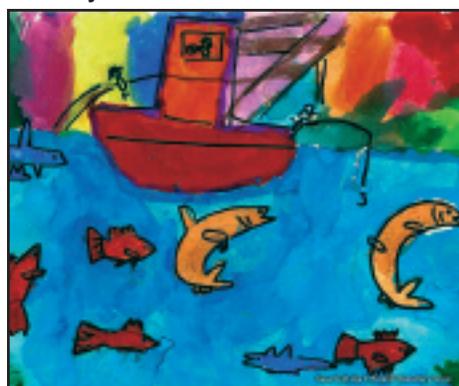
The calendar, which was printed through grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC), highlights DMR programs and contains tide information, sunrise and sunset times, moon phases, reef coordinates, size and possession limits, boating safety information, Mississippi saltwater fishing records and marine debris information.



January



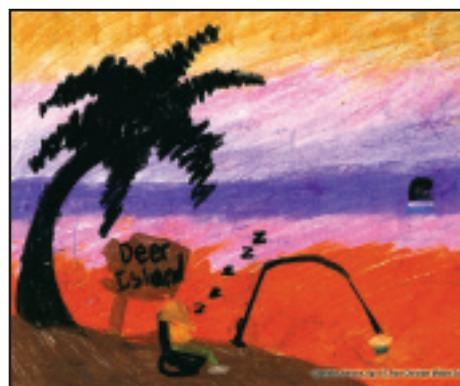
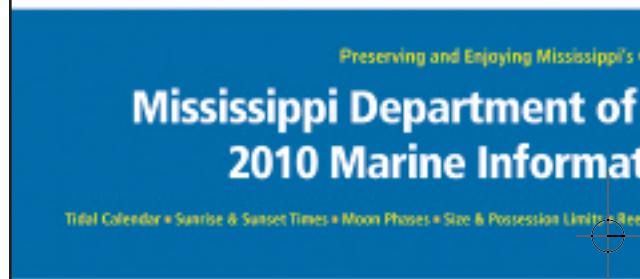
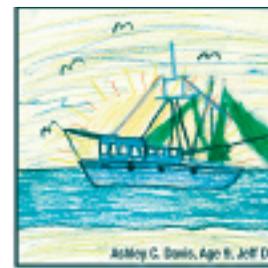
February



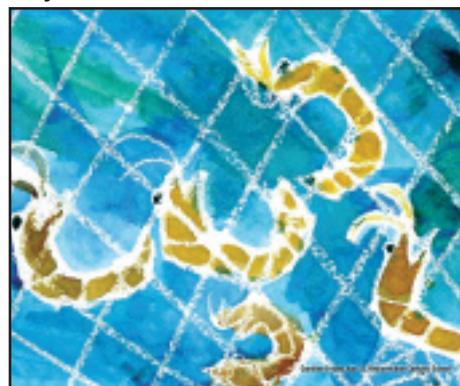
March



April

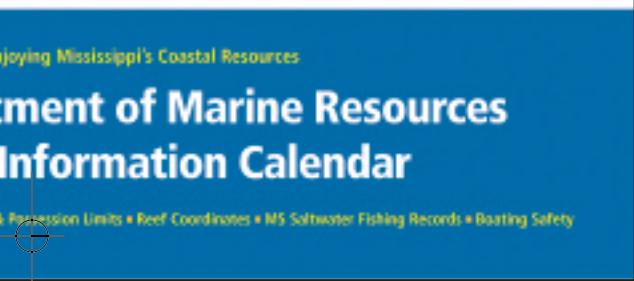


May

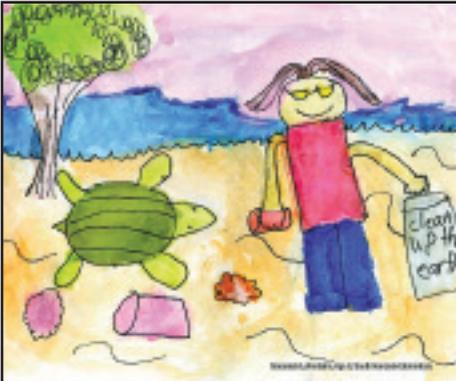


June

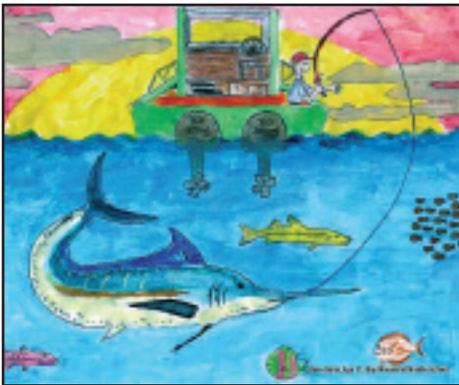
Features Coast students' winning artwork



September



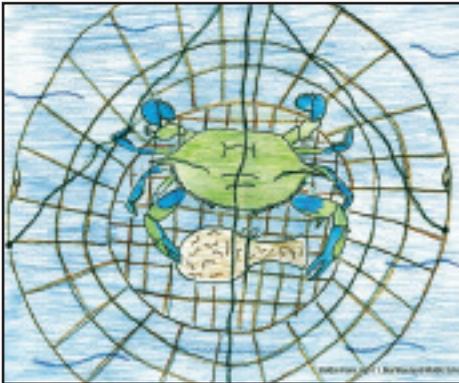
October



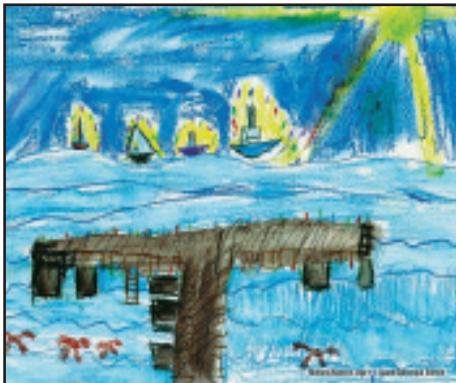
July



November



August



December

And the winners are:

Front Cover:

- Shane Bonura, age 10, South Hancock Elementary
- Lucinda Roberts, age 10, West Hancock Elementary
- Rebecca Choate, age 10, Taconi Elementary
- Clare Baumhauer, age 11, Resurrection Catholic School
- Ashlen C. Davis, age 9, Jeff Davis Elementary
- Amber Guerra, age 10, North Bay Elementary

Back Cover:

- Kyliegh Seale, age 10, Second Street Elementary
- Chandler Lamey, age 11, Westminster Academy
- Carter Landry, age 8, Westminster Academy

Months:

- January, Sofia Aderer, age 11, Coast Episcopal School
- February, Jarrett Green, age 10, Resurrection Catholic School
- March, Ciaya Scott, age 9, Beauvoir Elementary School
- April, Jenna Robinson, age 10, Our Lady of Fatima
- May, Gabrielle Johnson, age 10, Pass Christian Middle School
- June, Caroline Foster, age 12, Resurrection Catholic School
- July, Bess Baria, age 11, Bay Waveland Middle School
- August, Holden Favre, age 11, Bay-Waveland Middle School
- September, Sarah Janus, age 10, Our Lady of Fatima
- October, Savannah LaFontaine, age 8, South Hancock Elementary
- November, Clay Gollott, age 9, St. Martin Upper Elementary
- December, Richard Alarcon, age 11, Coast Episcopal School

For distribution locations of the free calendar, visit www.dmr.ms.gov/public-affairs/calendar/calendar.htm

NERR Notes

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve



About 225 people attended the opening of the new NERR headquarters, including speakers (center photo, L-R) State Rep. Frank Hamilton, Jackson County Supervisor Manly Barton and Grand Bay NERR Manager David Ruple.

NERR opens Coastal Resources Center

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) celebrated its 10-year anniversary and the grand opening of the long-awaited Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center on Dec. 7, 2009. The Center will serve as the permanent facilities for the Grand Bay NERR and Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The 20,000-square-foot facility includes office space, laboratories, classrooms, a dormitory for visiting scientists and an interpretive area that is open to the public 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

About 225 members of the public, Reserve partners and invited guests attended the opening day events. Speakers included DMR Executive Director Bill Walker, Grand Bay NERR Manager David Ruple, Lloyd Culp of the Grand Bay NWR, Jackson County Supervisor Manly Barton, Mississippi State Rep. Frank Hamilton, Laurie McGilvray of the NOAA Estuarine Reserves Division and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Assistant Director Greg Siekaniec.

The year 2009 marked the 10th anniversary of the creation of the Grand Bay NERR. The Reserve was officially

dedicated into the National Estuarine Research Reserve System on June 16, 1999. A summary publication, "Grand Bay NERR Reflections on 10 Years of Progress," was printed for the anniversary celebration and is available at the Grand Bay NERR or DMR office.

NERR office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday - Friday; Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center Interpretive Area: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Tuesday - Saturday; A complete activities schedule for Reserve field trips and tours will be available soon.

Dr. Andy Clewell leads a workshop on coastal restoration at the NERR in October 2009.



NERR hosts workshop

The Coastal Training Program hosted an Ecological Restoration Workshop on Oct. 27-29, 2009, at the Coastal Resources Center to provide resource managers with an understanding of the principles of ecological restoration. International wetland restoration expert Dr. Andy Clewell was the primary instructor. Lectures focused on the restoration of native habitats such as pine savannah, forested wetlands and salt marsh, and attendees visited a number of field sites in Jackson County to learn about the attributes of these restored ecosystems.



NOAA Director Dr. Jane Lubchenco (eighth from left) poses with members of NERR, DMR and National Wildlife Refuge staff at the new Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center.

NOAA director visits Grand Bay NERR

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, the director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, visited the new state-of-the-art Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center and took a brief boat tour of the magnificent estuaries found within the NERR on Nov. 6, 2009. As a former field biologist, Lubchenco was amazed at the diversity of habitats at the Reserve.

Coastal Preserves

CIAP funding helps further fight against aquatic invasions

The DMR has been awarded \$377,757 to fund a four-year program to assess, control and coordinate efforts against aquatic invasive species through the Coastal Impact Assistance program (CIAP). The CIAP program, created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, serves to mitigate the environmental effects of outer continental shelf oil and gas production by funding a wide variety of projects that promote conservation, restoration and protection of critical coastal habitats.

South Mississippi's problem with invasive plants became serious in 2005 when what many consider the world's most destructive weed, a floating fern from the Amazon Basin called giant salvinia, started taking over the Pascagoula River near Gautier. Thick, floating mats of this plant were making boating and fishing difficult and smothering out oxygen needed by fish and other aquatic life. By late summer, the infestation covered dozens of acres and was too large and expanding too rapidly for effective herbicide treatment.

Later that summer, the massive tidal surge from Hurricane Katrina stranded much of the salvinia on land and increased salinity providing a toxic environment to the remainder. Unfortunately, about 5 acres of giant salvinia managed to survive the storm and began to rapidly repopulate the area as temperatures began to warm in spring 2006.

That first spring and summer post-Katrina, DMR staff in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Survey performed an exhaustive search of the entire Lower Pascagoula River Basin to locate and map all areas still infested with giant salvinia. At the same time, contract workers hired with funding from a Department of Labor Hurricane Recovery Grant worked to eliminate remaining patches of giant salvinia as soon as they were discovered through the use of approved herbicides and physical removal. The effort was successful at controlling but not eliminating giant salvinia entirely. To this day, regular patrols of the Pascagoula River are needed to find and control plants that periodically appear before they become a problem.

Thanks to funding from the CIAP program, all waterways in our coastal area are now being regularly monitored for new and existing aquatic invasions. This new invasive species program is a joint effort of the DMR's Coastal Preserves Program and Office of Marine Fisheries. When located, aquatic invasive species are mapped and control efforts, if feasible, are initiated. This program of early detection and rapid response (EDRR) is the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly way to preserve our coastal habitats for native plants and animals against the invasions of non-native species.

Tertiary stage giant salvinia can form floating mats up to 3 feet thick.



Giant salvinia infests a stand of native bullrush on the West Pascagoula River.



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



Seafood Safety Corner



Jeff Davis



Jessica Rankin

The Seafood Technology Bureau (STB) would like to remind the public about taking precautions when cooking seafood. Pathogens and viruses can be easily spread when handling food. A common pathogen that can cause gastroenteritis, or stomach “flu,” is norovirus. Infection starts suddenly and symptoms include nausea, vomiting and watery, non-bloody diarrhea with stomach cramps. Other symptoms may include chills, headache, muscle aches and fatigue. Those infected with the virus but show no symptoms are said to be asymptomatic and can still transmit the virus.

Preventive steps to avoid contracting the illness include: frequently wash hands after restroom visits and before handling food; carefully wash fruits and vegetables, and steam oysters before eating; thoroughly clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces immediately after an episode of illness with a bleach-based household cleaner; immediately remove and wash clothing or linens that may be contaminated with a virus (use hot water and soap); flush or discard any vomitus and stool in the toilet and make sure that the surrounding area is kept clean. Those infected with norovirus should not prepare food while they have symptoms and for three days after they recover. Food that may have been contaminated should be disposed of properly.

The STB would like to remind all seafood dealers and processors that recertification inspections will be in March and April 2010. Permit recertification cannot be issued without the renewal of a dealer’s or processor’s license. License renewal starts April 2010 for fiscal year 2010-2011. Sample HACCP plans and record forms are posted on the DMR’s Web site at <http://www.dmr.state.ms.us/Fisheries/Seafood-Technology/programs/regulatory/technical-assistance.htm>.

A planned Seafood HACCP Training class scheduled for March 2010 needs a minimum of 12 participants. If you are interested in participating, please contact STB Training Coordinator Mai Dang at 228-523-4081 or mai.dang@dmr.ms.gov.

The STB outreach program instituted several new programs during 2009, including the portable handwash stations, bacteria demo, the Fishy Prize Wheel, the Giant Microbes display, and several live animal demonstrations. The Fishy Prize Wheel was the most beneficial addition, enabling the STB to engage the public in an interactive learning process. The casualness of the game draws in members of the community who would not otherwise have approached the booth.

The STB outreach program reached over 40,000 people in 15 outreach events. The event with the biggest turnout in a single day was the Gautier Mullet Festival, with an estimated 5,000 people attending on the first day, Oct. 17, 2009.

It seems 2010 is shaping up to be an even bigger year than 2009. In April, the STB will once again attend the annual Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival in Pass Christian. For more information or to volunteer for upcoming events, contact Jessica Rankin with the Seafood Technology Bureau at jessica.rankin@dmr.ms.gov or by phone at 228-523-4095.



Jessica Rankin with DMR Seafood Technology attended D’Iberville Elementary with the Fishy Prize Wheel in October 2009 to celebrate the Blue Ribbon award the school received for being among the top schools in the nation.

DMR selects firm to assist with Coastal Zone Management assessment

The Office of Coastal Ecology has selected, through a bid process, Eco-Systems Inc. to provide technical assistance for DMR’s Coastal Zone Management Act Section 309 Assessment and Strategy for 2011-2015. Prior 309 projects will be reviewed, current 309 enhancement tasks will be assessed and a strategy developed for 2011-2015 in Mississippi’s coastal zone from one or more of the following nine coastal zone enhancement areas of national significance: wetlands, coastal hazards, public access, marine debris, cumulative and secondary impacts, special area management plans, ocean resources, energy and government facility siting, and aquaculture. Once completed, NOAA will review and approve the five-year plan. Then each year funding will be allotted to the DMR by NOAA for these projects.

The DMR, as Mississippi’s federally approved state coastal zone management program, receives funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration annually for Coastal Zone Management Act administration and enhancement of Mississippi’s coastal resources.



Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence



DMR Administrative Assistant Libby Denyer completed Level One of the Administrative Support Certification Program (ASCP) presented by the Mississippi State Personnel Board (SPB). The program is designed to provide comprehensive training to staff who support the program areas of governmental agencies.



Grand Bay NERR Manager David Ruple accepts a congratulatory plaque from Laurie McGilvray, chief of the NOAA Estuarine Reserves Division, in recognition of the NERR's 10th anniversary and for completion of the new Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center in Moss Point.



Interns and mentors gathered for a luncheon at the USM Gulf Coast Research Laboratory's dining hall to celebrate the completion of the DMR fall internship. Pictured left to right are the interns and mentors that participated: back row—Sarah Broussard, Dr. Reginald Blaylock, Jennifer Dixon, Jessie Kastler, Violet Knight, Dr. Lena Melton, Dr. Shelia Brown, Debbie Belk, Tia Cunningham, Dr. Jinx Campbell, LaGena Fantroy; front row—Dr. Jason Lemus, Lisa Vining, Steven Newson.

Happy Anniversary!

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

Iris Lofland.....12/1/1988	Doug Drieling.....1/1/1995	Richard Cooley.....2/1/1987
Traci Floyd.....12/1/1997	Rita Duvernay.....1/1/1995	Steve Breland.....2/1/1989
Mike Walker.....12/1/1997	Kerry Endris.....1/1/1995	Jeff Clark.....2/1/1999
Brandon Hall.....12/1/1998	Olin Gunter.....1/1/1995	Jeff Grant.....2/1/2006
Shelly Becker.....12/1/2007	Rocky Southern.....1/1/1995	William Underwood.....2/8/2009
Kerwin Cuevas.....12/2/1996	Rhonda Price.....1/1/1999	Willa Brantley.....2/12/2004
Joe Jewell.....12/8/1997	Mark Boyles.....1/1/2000	Jennifer Wittmann.....2/15/2006
Brittany Breazeale.....12/13/2004	Melanie Lane.....1/1/2000	Karen Carron.....2/25/2002
Mike Brainard.....12/17/1990	R. T. May.....1/1/2000	Rusty Pittman.....3/1/1990
Crystal Morgan.....12/18/2007	Jeffery Payne.....1/1/2000	Amy Taylor.....3/1/1998
Curtis Culpepper.....12/19/2005	Andy Ryals.....1/1/2000	Jeff Davis.....3/1/2002
Matt Kasovich.....12/19/2005	James Herring.....1/1/2003	Janet Doucet.....3/1/2002
Tony Tremonte.....12/19/2005	Baron O'Grady.....1/1/2007	Courtney Warth.....3/1/2008
Roy Lipscomb.....12/20/2006	Susan Perkins.....1/1/2008	Evelyn Thompson.....3/12/2001
Mario Sapet.....12/22/2003	Jed Bullard.....1/1/2009	Patrick Webb.....3/15/2004
Mai Dang.....12/22/2007	Diane Fisher.....1/10/2000	Leo Christie.....3/17/1999
Robin Vaughn.....12/23/2006	Gretchen Grammer.....1/13/2005	Debbie Belk.....3/25/2002
Wade Dominey.....12/29/2005	Jan Boyd.....1/15/1998	Jimmy Sanders.....3/26/2001
John Ladner.....12/29/2005	Donnie Armes.....1/16/1985	Ava Coleman.....3/27/1989
Ali Leggett.....12/29/2005	Wesley Devers.....1/29/2001	Lisa Jones.....3/31/2008
Dale Diaz.....1/1/1990	Ruth Posadas.....1/29/2001	



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11TH ANNUAL COASTAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES CONFERENCE MAY 12-13, 2010

DMR Calendar

March 16

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

March 26

Mississippi Artificial Reefs and Reef Fish Studies Seminar, 9 a.m.-11 a.m., 1st floor Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi. For more information contact the Shrimp and Crab Bureau at 228-374-5000.

March 27-28

Advanced Problems in Hydric Soil Evaluation Workshop, Grand Bay NERR, 6005 Bayou Heron Road, Moss Point, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. For registration contact Teresa Stadler at teresa.stadler@dmr.ms.gov.

April 10

Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival, War Memorial Park, Pass Christian. For more information contact Jennifer Buchanan at 228-475-7047 or jennifer.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov.

April 20

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

May 12-13

11th Annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference, Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center. For more information contact Susan Perkins at susan.perkins@dmr.ms.gov or 228-523-4124.

Doc's Fishing Tip

Try your luck with sheepshead for some dependable fishing this time of year. You can find these gamesters around any deepwater, barnacle-encrusted pilings where their contrasting black stripes make them easy to spot. Contrary to what you might think, their flaky, white flesh is excellent table fare. - Dr. Fred Deegen



Illustration: Joe Jewell

Smoked Oyster Paté

- 1 cup smoked Mississippi oysters (chopped)
- 1 8 oz package cream cheese (reg, low-fat, or fat free)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp grated onion
- 1 tsp prepared horseradish
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 3 tbsp cilantro (chopped)
- 2 slices of cooked bacon (crumbled)



Combine: cheese, oysters, lemon juice, onion, horseradish, salt, and 1 tbsp cilantro. Chill 2-3 hrs. Shape into ball or log. Top with pecans, remaining cilantro and crumbled bacon. Serve with toast points.

Reprinted from DMR's Get Hooked on Mississippi Shrimp Recipe Book



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