



# Coastal Markers



Volume 14, Issue 3

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Spring 2011

## 13 million striped bass released through restoration program

During its 41 years, the Gulf Race Striped Bass Restoration Program has released 13 million “stripers” into waterways throughout the three coastal counties. Developed in 1969, the program rears hundreds of thousands of fish a year to help restock waning populations.

The DMR Lyman Fish Hatchery and the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) recently completed the 2010 Gulf Race Striped Bass stocking program under the direction of Larry Nicholson. During 2010, the program released 295,114 phase-one fingerlings (1.5 inches to 2 inches) and 19,346 phase-two fish (6 inches to 8 inches) into the three coastal county waterways. All primary bays and rivers were stocked. The phase-two fish should reach the state’s 15-inch minimum size requirement within a year to 15 months. The fish are tagged to help gather data on growth and migration of the stripers.

Anglers catching stripers (both tagged and untagged) are encouraged to report the catch to the tagged fish hot line 866-244-6420. Callers should provide tag number (if tagged), catch location, length and weight of fish. Data collected will lead to where the program will plan its next release.

Tagged striped bass fingerlings have been released into bays and rivers on the Coast. Look for posters explaining how fishermen can help with the Gulf Race Striped Bass Restoration Program.



In the 1940-50s the striped bass began disappearing in the area, so the Gulf states worked together to develop release programs. The Mississippi program commenced in 1969, and since then the program has implemented two releases a year.

Originally staged at GCRL, the program was moved to the DMR Lyman Fish Hatchery in 2007. The larger facility has allowed for more fish to be grown and has provided healthier stock.

Throughout the years, the largest tagged striper reported was 38 pounds and caught in the Bouie River located in Hattiesburg, Miss. The tagged fish that traveled the farthest was caught 172 river miles away at the Barnett Reservoir in Jackson, Miss.



### Extensive sampling ensures seafood safety

Commercial and recreational fishing are two vital components of life on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Ensuring the safety of the seafood-consuming public and maintaining the integrity of Gulf Coast seafood in the marketplace are two important priorities for state and federal agencies working on the response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

See page 4-5 for full story.

### Inside this issue...

- Haines to speak at conference . . . . .3
- DMR to host CZM meeting . . . . .4
- Sampling remains top priority . . . .4-5
- Marine Patrol nabs illegal fish . . . . .6
- Seafood Marketing attends International Boston Show . . . . .6
- Oyster season open to tonging . . . . .7
- Ancient shells give clues to future . . .8
- CIAP funds Deer Island trees . . . . .9
- Seafood Safety Corner . . . . .10
- Seafood recipe: Flounder Almondine . . . . .12





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[www.dmr.ms.gov](http://www.dmr.ms.gov)



**Director's Notes**

*Dr. William Walker*

Spring is in the air, the fish are biting, and lots of fishing rodeos and tournaments are on tap over the next several months for saltwater anglers hoping to break a state record or eager to introduce family members and visitors to the wonderful world of Mississippi saltwater sportfishing. DMR sponsors some of these events such as the annual Casting for Conservation youth fishing rodeos, with the first of these scheduled for May 7 in Bay St. Louis and Pascagoula in partnership with Coastal Conservation Association; and the 63rd annual Mississippi Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, which will take place over the Fourth of July weekend in Gulfport.

Before you head out to your favorite fishing hole, be sure to purchase your Mississippi saltwater recreational fishing license—recreational saltwater fishing licenses expire one year from date of purchase. For about 3 cents a day residents can fish year-round in Mississippi's marine waters. You can buy your license at the DMR office on Bayview Avenue in Biloxi or stop by one of more than 30 convenient locations in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties. For a complete list of locations along the Coast, visit [www.dmr.ms.gov/licensing](http://www.dmr.ms.gov/licensing).

Did you know that each time you buy fishing gear, fuel up your boat, or purchase a fishing license, you are helping to improve your fishing experience? You are among the many anglers and boaters who support the Sport Fish Restoration Program. This national program, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, collects money from excise taxes on fishing equipment and boats, and taxes on motorboat and small-engine fuels. The revenue collected is used to create future fishing and boating opportunities. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service distributes these tax revenues to the states for recreational sportfishing enhancement projects. Happy casting!

Executive Director



**MARINE PATROL CITATIONS**  
**JANUARY 2011 — FEBRUARY 2011**

- Shrimp-0
- Crab-7
- Oyster-15
- Live Bait-0
- Net Fish-4
- Fishing-10
- Miscellaneous Seafood-0
- Boat and Water Safety-16
- Marine Litter-1
- Miscellaneous-2

**TOTAL-55**

**GREAT MISSISSIPPI SEAFOOD COOK-OFF**

June 15, 1-5 p.m.  
 Biloxi, MS  
 228-523-4156

**See Mississippi's finest chefs compete!**

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

Amy Taylor	David Rose
Traci Floyd	Bradley Randall
Jeff Clark	Sandra Moore
Dave Ruple	Rick Burris
Jeff Davis	Darrin Stewart
Jessica Rankin	Bill Richardson
Susan Perkins	Jason Rider
Mike Walker	Rusty Pittman
Scott Gordon	Ruth Posadas
Larry Nicholson	Dr. Fred Deegen



# Smart Growth Conference to explore 'Mississippi Gulf Coast and Its People'



Register now for the 12th annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference, to be held May 11-12 at the IP Casino Resort Spa in Biloxi. This year's conference explores "The Mississippi Gulf Coast and Its People." The conference is hosted by DMR's Office of Coastal Management and Planning, Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area and conference partners, the Gulf Coast Business Council and Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce.

A welcome reception will kick off this year's event May 10, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art. Conference attendees may also register for a Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area golf tournament to be held May 13.

This year's conference features two full days of speakers and breakout sessions. The first day of the conference will feature keynote speaker, author Carolyn Haines. Haines is a Lucedale, Miss., native and worked for nearly a decade as a photojournalist before writing fiction. Known as "the original Mississippi Delta mystery author," she has written the Them Bones mystery series, featuring fictional private investigator Sarah Booth Delaney. Other works include Delta Blues, Growing Up in Mississippi, Summer of the Redeemers and Summer of Fear. Haines will talk about how our heritage and landscape are intertwined with the lives we live and the stories we tell.

Other topics will include climate change, energy and resiliency; implementing Smart Growth; infrastructure; financing, real estate and development; and redevelopment. A preliminary agenda is available for download at [www.dmr.ms.gov](http://www.dmr.ms.gov).

This multidisciplinary event draws elected officials, city and county staff, contractors, developers, bankers, planners, zoning officials, real estate agents and appraisers, engineers, landowners, industry, students, federal and state agencies, boards of supervisors, lawyers, private and corporate entities, environmentalists, resource managers and others committed to rebuilding the Gulf Coast.

Real estate agents can earn 10 hours of continuing education credit by attending the 12th annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference (appraiser credits to be announced at a later date), and receipts will be provided to all other professions—such as, engineers, teachers and architects—to submit for credit to their respective organizations.

The registration fee is \$155 (until May 11); on-site registration is \$175. Conference fees include breakfast, refreshment breaks, lunches, receptions and conference materials.

For information on how to be a sponsor of the conference, call Susan Perkins at 228-523-4124 or Leslie Young at 228-523-4123.



**Above: Pete Floyd of Pascagoula is a seventh generation commercial fisherman and has been fishing in Mississippi for 40 years since moving from Florida.**

**Carolyn Haines is the keynote speaker for the Coastal Development Strategies Conference on May 11-12 in Biloxi. She will talk about how our heritage and landscape are intertwined with the lives we live and the stories we tell.**

## DMR to host regional CZM meeting

The DMR has begun preparation to host the Gulf States Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program regional meeting in fall 2011, and the DMR Office of Coastal Ecology has two projects ongoing under the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) funding.

During the CZM regional meeting the five Gulf State CZM Programs will review 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.

Phase III of the Public Access project continues with the ongoing update of the inventory and assessment of possible enhancements to Mississippi's coastal public access sites. An online GIS map detailing the inventory locations is available on DMR's Web site at <http://gis.smpdd.com/dmrpublicaccess>. A management plan is the ultimate goal for this project, providing analysis of current public access sites, their viability and future development prospects.

Another CZMA project, Coastal Hazards Mitigation, continues with Phase II of a three-year timeline and will provide technical and practical support to communities within Mississippi's coastal zone, with the aim to enhance community participation in the Community Rating System (CRS), a voluntary component of the National Flood Insurance Program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. A local consultant has reviewed each community's flood mitigation plan and is providing assistance to each coastal community in the identification and implementation of additional flood mitigation methods, thereby achieving additional flood insurance premium discounts for resident homeowners.

DMR, as Mississippi's federally approved state coastal zone management program, receives funding from NOAA annually for CZMA administration and enhancement of Mississippi's coastal resources.



Darrin Stewart with DMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau collects crabs from Biloxi Back Bay for sampling.

## Seafood testing remains top priority

**The DMR and other state and federal seafood regulatory agencies continue to do a tremendous amount of work and testing to ensure all seafood from the Mississippi Sound and the Gulf of Mexico is safe for consumption. The latest numbers show that from May 28, 2010, to Feb. 18, 2011, DMR submitted 339 seafood samples for testing and all results indicate that seafood is safe for consumption.**

Long before any oil reached Mississippi waters, DMR, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) and the Mississippi State Chemical Laboratory (MSCL) were working with federal agencies, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) along with the other Gulf States, to ensure safe seafood.

Together these agencies developed a plan that would be applied consistently across the Gulf, in both state and federal waters. The plan called for precautionary closures when oil was present or sometimes projected to be present in an area. This helped to ensure that no potentially oil-contaminated seafood reached the market or was brought in by fishermen.

Oil contamination presents two kinds of risks to the seafood-consuming public. The first type of risk is the presence of petroleum-related taint or off flavor, which renders seafood unsafe to eat. Some petrochemicals create objectionable taste and odor at very low concentrations.

The second risk is due to health risks caused by the presence of chemical contaminants, primarily polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), in the edible portions of seafood. The safety of seafood is generally determined by comparing the amount of contaminant in the sampled tissue to the levels of concern set by the FDA. Toxicologists from federal and state agencies established criteria for PAHs in fish and shellfish, using standard FDA and EPA risk assessment methods, which are protective of human health and would be applied consistently in each of the states and in federal waters.

While closure and reopening protocols were being developed, state and federal agencies were also out in the field actively collecting seafood samples for tissue analysis before, during and after the spill had reached our waters. There were at least four separate phases of this sampling, and the State of Mississippi was actively involved in the first three:

- Natural Resource Damage Assessment Sampling (NRDA)
- Response Sampling
- Reopening Sampling
- Federal Sampling

### NRDA

Baseline or background samples were collected by the DMR and MDEQ in April and May before the spill reached Mississippi waters as part of the NRDA. This will be a long-term effort to evaluate damages over time due to the oil spill, but



in order to accurately evaluate damages, it is critical to establish baseline conditions to define pre-spill conditions. Samples include fish, shrimp, crabs and oysters.

### Response Sampling

After the NRDA baseline samples were collected, the DMR began response sampling in May 2010. This sampling is ongoing. Staff collect finfish, crabs, shrimp and oysters monthly from each of the three coastal counties. They remove the tissue from the organisms (peel the shrimp, filet fish, shuck oysters and remove muscle tissue from crabs) and send them to the MSCL courtesy of the MDEQ, where they analyze the tissue for PAHs.

The DMR collects seafood samples for each of the four fishery categories, with 0.5 pounds of edible tissue needed for testing. The number of specimens needed to extract the required amount of tissue varies by species: 10 to 12 blue crabs, 1 pound whole shrimp, etc. Finfish species used for this type of sampling include, but are not limited to, menhaden, mullet, cobia, croaker, white trout, spotted sea trout and red drum. The results for each of Mississippi's four major fisheries are summarized in the Mississippi Seafood Safety newsletter that can be viewed at [www.dmr.ms.gov/Publications/201102-ms-seafood-safety-newsletter.pdf](http://www.dmr.ms.gov/Publications/201102-ms-seafood-safety-newsletter.pdf).

### Reopening Sampling

Reopening criteria, which were agreed upon by the federal agencies (EPA, NOAA, FDA) and all the affected Gulf States, included the following steps:

**Rick Burris with DMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau removes muscle tissue from crabs for sampling.**



1. There must be no significant oil detected in the area by visual observation, aerial reconnaissance or water testing for a minimum of three days;
2. There must be a low threat of oil moving back into the area;
3. Samples were first screened for tainting or off flavor using sensory (smell and taste) assessment of seafood by NOAA/FDA-trained experts; and
4. If samples passed the sensory testing, they were submitted to an FDA laboratory for chemical analysis. This analysis must have demonstrated that the levels of PAHs in the tissues were well below the levels of concern before an area could be reopened to fishing. Reopening tissue samples were sensory tested by NOAA's Pascagoula, Miss., laboratory and were chemically tested by an FDA laboratory in Maryland. All of the Mississippi samples passed both the sensory and the chemical screening.



**Don't forget your fishing license!**  
**Are YOU legal?**  
**228-374-5000**



## Marine Patrol stops shrimpers with illegal red drum, expired federal license

**Marine Patrol Officer Will Freeman found illegal red drum aboard the Andy & Johnny Jr.**

The DMR State Marine Patrol reported that a shrimping vessel and its crew were found to be in illegal possession of red drum and shrimping in federal waters without a license during a routine inspection Feb. 16.

Marine Patrol Officers Will Freeman and Jack Ewing were patrolling the Mississippi Sound and federal waters when they boarded a shrimping vessel, the Andy & Johnny Jr., with trawls in the water about 8.5 miles inside the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). After the boat's captain could not show the officers a valid federal commercial shrimping license, only a completed application for renewal, officers proceeded to inspect the boat and its fish hold. Several bags of frozen red

drum were found in the freezer, and officers noticed after inspecting the fish, some of the red drum's stomachs were everted, indicating the fish were caught from a substantial depth.

Deckhand Sonny Dang reportedly claimed the red drum were his. When informed by officers that possession of red drum in federal waters is illegal, he said they were caught in state waters, but he did not have a Mississippi or Louisiana state saltwater fishing license.

Marine Patrol Lt. Olin Gunter further investigated the incident with a call to the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Fisheries Law Enforcement. NOAA records confirmed the federal shrimping permit for the vessel

was terminated and the Andy & Johnny Jr. was prohibited from fishing in the EEZ. Officers Freeman and Ewing were instructed to seize the eight red drum and allow the captain to keep the reported 3,000 pounds of shrimp.

The commercial vessel Andy & Johnny Jr. holds current commercial shrimp licenses in Mississippi and Alabama and held a commercial Gulf of Mexico shrimp license for Texas until Aug. 31, 2010. The vessel had no current licenses for Louisiana. According to the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office, the boat's owner, Hong Van, is a member of five Limited Liability Corporations, all containing the name Hong & Men.

## Seafood Marketing attends International Boston Seafood Show

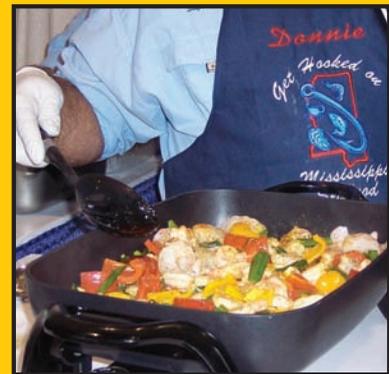
**DMR Marine Patrol Senior Master Sgt. Paul Grote, left, and Lt. Donnie Armes were the chefs for Seafood Marketing at the International Boston Seafood Show.**



DMR's Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program recently attended the International Boston Seafood Show to promote safe and delicious Gulf seafood. Held March 20-22, the trade show is North America's largest seafood event, featuring more than 900 exhibits, 20,000 buyers and sellers, and more than 130 countries. The event offers a vast array of seafood, seafood products, seafood services and seafood equipment from all over the world. Vendors come to the show to find new seafood products and trends that will be hitting the market. The show is also a great opportunity to make connections with industry professionals and expand business to the national or international levels.

Traveling with the Seafood Marketing Program were Irvin Jackson, Linda Wakefield, Jason Rider, Donnie Armes, Paul Grote, David Gollott, Richie Gollott, Gulf Pride Enterprises, Crystal Seas Oysters and C.F. Gollott & Son Seafood.

Mississippi Seafood Marketing has been attending the International Boston Seafood show for 10 years and has plans to increase the presence of local seafood industry members at the event in future years. Seafood Marketing is planning to attend at least 10 to 12 more shows during the remainder of 2011 and has already been to two shows so far this year—the American Culinary Federation in Atlanta and the Charleston (S.C.) Food and Wine Festival.





# The 2010-2011 oyster season open for tonging only



Oyster tongs harvest the Pass Christian Reef at the beginning of the 2010-2011 oyster season.



The 2010-2011 Mississippi oyster season kicked off Nov. 8, 2010. In an effort to conserve the oyster resource, the season has been limited to tonging only. As of March 17, 2011, a total of 32,847 sacks have been harvested by 3,971 boat trips.

The DMR Shellfish staff is in the process of completing the final phases of EDRP I and II and is planning intensive oyster shell cultch plants in the spring. Forty-two thousand cubic yards of oyster shell will be spread over major commercial oyster reefs in the western Mississippi Sound. In addition, the Conservationist research vessel has relayed 600 sacks of oysters to north Whitehouse Reef.

The Shellfish Bureau and Coastal Preserves are nearing completion of the Deer Island Restoration Project to protect the shoreline with oyster beds. Metal mesh bags containing oyster shell have been laid out along the northwestern shoreline, and now spartina, or cordongrass, will be planted along the shell beds. Together, the oyster beds and vegetation will provide a breakwater that will protect the shoreline from further erosion.

The Natural Resource Disaster Assessment (NRDA) team, which consists of DMR, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, use established scientific techniques to assess possible damage to the oyster resource from the oil spill. A 70-page draft of sampling protocols was developed through cooperation of representatives from Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida. This plan was used to identify areas of concern from the oil spill and to determine possible long-term damage to the oyster reefs. The various components include larvae, sediment, water quality, disease, condition index and tissue samples.

The Reef Keeper and Stewardship research vessels have begun the process of mapping the NRDA oyster transition sites, interjurisdictional sampling and the 60-site intensive reef analysis. The mission of these trips is to determine the condition and present status of the oyster reefs. Staff is also collecting oyster tissue samples for the seafood safety program with MDEQ. The DMR Shellfish staff is continuing its monitoring efforts by conducting one-minute dredge tows on the oyster reefs. Staff also collects weekly water samples in compliance with the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.





# NERR Notes

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve



## Planning the future with an eye on the past

Researchers from the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Auburn University and the University of Southern Mississippi are working with the Grand Bay NERR to define the legacy effects of land-use changes on coastal ecosystems and human health. They will explore biological and chemical secrets locked in the area sediments and shells.

The nitrogen content of oyster shells in fragile ancient shell middens along the Coast provide a record of human activity and its impact on ecosystems going back thousands of years. Project partners will open these biological time capsules and combine this record with data from sediment cores, modern sediment and water samples, and contemporary shellfish communities. In so doing, they plan to provide a benchmark to improve the ability to measure land-use-related nitrogen sources and pathogen levels through time, and define the resulting effects of these changes on ecosystems and human health.

To collect nitrogen source and ecological and human health data from recent decades, the team will analyze sediment cores from undisturbed sites for carbon and nitrogen content, stable

isotope (SI) ratios (indicators of land-derived nitrogen and carbon sources), and the bacteria *Clostridium perfringens*, an indicator of potential human health risk. They will measure internal growth patterns in clams and oysters and link biological responses of shellfish to nitrogen source shifts. They will also measure SI ratios in bivalve shells and tissues and compare historical readings with present day readings.

Using Grand Bay as a benchmark, estuary samples of sediments and bivalve shells dating back some 3,000 years will be examined. By better understanding the historical occurrences of nitrogen in sediments and growth patterns of oysters and clams from Grand Bay shell middens, researchers can better assess impacts from present day runoff and pollutants as it relates to the past.

Funding for the project was provided through the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's National Estuarine Research Reserves Science Collaborative Program.



Oyster and clam shells from midden habitats at Grand Bay NERR may link past land use to the future.

Elise Stephens, volunteer at the NERR, and Travis Williams, with DMR's Coastal Preserves program, team up to exercise their Water Words.



## Workshop teaches 'Water Words that Work'

On Feb. 3-4, a group of 40 environmental professionals from Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama gathered in Biloxi to attend the "Water Words that Work" workshop led by nationally recognized environmental communicator Eric Eckl. Arranged by the NERR Coastal Training Program, the workshop focused on how to best communicate resource management messages, particularly those relating to water, to various audiences. Participants learned how to develop communication messages, using language and specific words that register with an audience, shifting somewhat away from the technical jargon scientists often use. To learn more about Eric Eckl and the Water Words method, visit [www.waterwordsthatwork.com](http://www.waterwordsthatwork.com).





# Coastal Preserves



**A Mississippi State University researcher plants a southern magnolia on Deer Island.**

## CIAP plants trees on Deer Island

The ongoing erosion of Deer Island has not only reduced the size of the island, but has also reduced the diversity of tree species and the ability of the trees to defend themselves from the variable coastal weather. A project, funded by the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP), is being conducted jointly by Mississippi State University and the DMR's Coastal Preserves Program. The project will increase the population of tree species that are adapted to survive at the fringe of the forested areas of the island. These trees, referred to in general as coastal maritime fringe species, make up the first line of defense of the forested part of coastal and barrier islands.

A total of 400 trees will be planted in groups of 25 to study their growth and survival on Deer Island. The majority of the trees consist of four types of maritime fringe species. These include live oaks and pines that are genetically adapted to the southeastern U.S. coastal environment and species of magnolia and holly that are also native to the coastal and barrier island fringe.

In addition to planting these trees on Deer Island, the project is studying a novel planting technique that may help the trees survive and flourish in the absence of irrigation. It is hoped that the results of this project will benefit Deer Island and also may be used to help restore the barrier islands of the northern Gulf, which have been severely eroded over the last century.

## Volunteer program finds friends for the environment

The Mississippi Coastal Preserves Program partnered with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Mississippi Wildlife Federation (MWF), Natural Capital Development (NCD) and local conservation partners, including the Mississippi Sandhill Crane and Grand Bay National Wildlife refuges and the Land Trust for Mississippi Coastal Plain, to kick off the Habitat Stewards Program in Coastal Mississippi.

The two-year pilot project is a natural outgrowth of the NWF's initial response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Small groups of volunteers will serve as local "friends" groups on specific tracts of conservation land along the Mississippi Coast. Volunteer habitat stewards will be trained and supported as they conduct various services, such as clearing and monitoring trail conditions, cleaning up litter and ensuring safe conditions for visitors, observing wildlife, documenting human use of public lands and treating and monitoring invasive species. Thus, volunteer habitat stewards will enhance wildlife habitat and help improve people's connection with important conservation areas and nature.

The main objective of the Coastal Preserves Program is to acquire, protect and manage sensitive coastal wetland habitats along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, therefore ensuring the ecological health of



Coastal Preserves Bureau. "Having the Habitat Stewards Program in place is extremely beneficial to the Coastal Preserves Program because it puts more people on the ground and helps us get more accomplished."

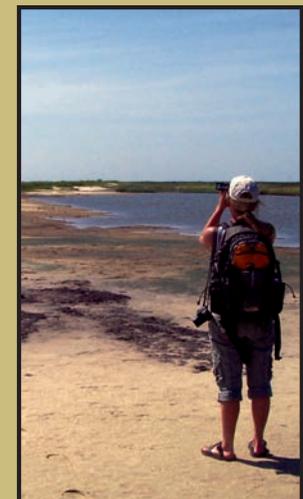
Those interested in volunteering to become a habitat steward can contact local project coordinators Cynthia Ramseur or Leah Bray at 228-875-1032 for more information.

**Above, a volunteer helps build a nature trail.**

**Right, Ali Leggett with DMR Coastal Preserves monitors shorebirds.**

Mississippi's coastal wetland ecosystems. The State of Mississippi currently has title to approximately 36,000 acres of the designated 72,000 acres of crucial coastal wetland habitat within Mississippi's 20 coastal preserve sites.

"Managing 36,000 acres is a tremendous undertaking," said Jeff Clark, director of the DMR's





## Seafood Safety Corner



Jeff Davis



Jessica Rankin

The Seafood Technology Bureau (STB) conducted extensive quarterly inspections of seafood processing facilities from October through December 2010. Seafood officers validated the sanitary conditions of each facility as well as each facility's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points records. Seafood products were also examined to ensure that no product was tainted from the Deepwater Horizon incident.

During this quarter, DMR seafood officers accompanied Food and Drug Administration (FDA) specialists in their collection of seafood samples for the ongoing seafood safety monitoring and surveying, which will be done at least twice a year for the next five years.

The visits were made to randomly selected processing plants, and shrimp samples were collected and sent to an FDA-approved laboratory for analysis.



All products that were sampled originated from Mississippi waters. Results of the analyzed samples will be released by the federal agencies involved in the continued effort to monitor seafood safety and seafood products coming from the Gulf of Mexico. These efforts are separate from the monitoring of state marine resources, including all marine commercial species in Mississippi. Ongoing quarterly reports from state testing indicated no evidence of oil in any of the samples.

In the past, the DMR's shellfish sanitation and regulatory inspection program evaluation was done every two years. With the new development, the frequency had changed to about once a year in the last two years, and starting this year, evaluation inspection will be performed twice a year. The FDA and the STB found no critical deficiencies at any of the facilities during the time of inspections. Consequently, the STB passed its evaluation.

In October, STB staff attended several events along the coast, including the Gautier Mullet Festival and the Jackson County Fair. Staff members were able to answer questions related to seafood safety and talk to the public about the ongoing seafood sampling program with the help of the DMR's Gulf Safe Seafood Marketing Program. As of October 2010, DMR staff had collected nearly 300 seafood samples of shellfish, shrimp and several fish species. FDA Public Affairs Specialist Natalie Guidry also attended these events with STB staff members to address community concerns pertaining to water quality and seafood safety.

In November 2010, the STB attended the first annual Oyster Festival in Pass Christian. This free festival was held in conjunction with a children's fishing rodeo. The festival lasted two days and

**Children design Christmas ornaments made out of oyster shells at the first annual Oyster Festival at the Pass Christian Harbor in November 2010.**



featured live music, local vendors selling homemade goods, and Gulf oysters on the half shell sold by the dozen or char-grilled. The STB booth also included a station where children or adults could decorate an oyster shell as an ornament to help Coast residents remember the area's rich history of seafood production. The seafood industry is a big part of the cultural heritage in the South. For more information or to volunteer for upcoming events, contact Jessica Rankin with the STB at [jessica.rankin@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:jessica.rankin@dmr.ms.gov) or by phone at 228-523-4095.





# Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence



Mississippi Regional Science Fair winners of the DMR's Excellence in Marine Sciences Award are (left to right) Taylor Trippe, St. Patrick Catholic High School; and William Nelson, Magnolia Junior High School. Other winners are Myers Hogan, St. James Elementary; and Aden Beaugez, Magnolia Park Elementary.



The DMR was presented the Seven Seals award by the Mississippi Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). Pictured from left to right, are James "Jack" Wallace, Mississippi ESGR state chair; Scott Gordon, DMR's Shellfish Bureau director; and Major General William L. Freeman Jr., adjutant general of Mississippi.



DMR's Fisheries Scientist Christine Murrell won first place in her division in the St. Patrick's Day 5K Run. Several DMR employees participated in the run as part of the Worksite Wellness Program at DMR.



## 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.

Donnie Armes.....	01/16/85	Steve Breland.....	02/01/89
Jan Boyd.....	01/15/98	Karen Carron.....	02/25/02
Mark Boyles.....	01/01/00	Jeff Clark.....	02/01/99
Jed Bullard.....	01/01/09	Richard Cooley.....	02/01/87
Kim Cressman.....	01/24/11	Jeff Grant.....	02/01/06
Wes Devers.....	01/29/01	Rick Ranew.....	02/13/10
Dale Diaz.....	01/01/90	Will Underwood.....	02/08/09
Doug Drieling.....	01/01/95	Jennifer Wittmann.....	02/15/06
Rita Duvernay.....	01/01/95	Debbie Belk.....	03/25/02
Kerry Endris.....	01/01/95	Leo Christie.....	03/17/99
Diane Fisher.....	01/10/00	Ava Coleman.....	03/27/89
Gretchen Grammer.....	01/13/05	Jeff Davis.....	03/01/02
Olin Gunter.....	01/01/95	Libby Denyer.....	03/27/10
Jamie Herring.....	01/01/03	Janet Doucet.....	03/01/02
Melanie Lane.....	01/01/00	Courtney Freeman.....	03/01/08
Richard May.....	01/01/00	Lisa Jones.....	03/31/08
Baron O'Grady.....	01/01/07	Rusty Pittman.....	03/01/90
Jeff Payne.....	01/01/00	Christy Royals.....	03/15/10
Susan Perkins.....	01/01/08	Jimmy Sanders.....	03/26/01
Ruth Posadas.....	01/29/01	Amy Taylor.....	03/01/98
Rhonda Price.....	01/01/99	Evelyn Thompson.....	03/12/01
Rocky Southern.....	01/01/95	Patrick Webb.....	03/15/04
Willa Brantley.....	02/12/04		





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

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## GREAT MISSISSIPPI SEAFOOD COOK-OFF

June 15, 1-5 p.m.  
Biloxi, MS  
228-523-4156



### DMR Calendar

#### April 19

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

#### May 7

CCA Casting for Conservation Children's  
Fishing Rodeo  
Pascagoula and Bay St. Louis  
8 a.m.-noon

#### May 11-12

12th annual Coastal Development  
Strategies Conference  
IP Casino Resort Spa  
For more information contact Susan  
Perkins at [susan.perkins@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:susan.perkins@dmr.ms.gov)  
or 228-523-4124

#### May 31

Memorial Day - DMR offices closed

#### June 15

Great Mississippi Seafood Cook-Off  
Biloxi, 1-5 p.m.  
Details: 228-523-4156



**Go Green**

To receive your Coastal Markers via e-mail,  
contact [lauren.thompson@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:lauren.thompson@dmr.ms.gov)

### Doc's Fishing Tip

Spring has sprung, and you know what that means: Specks are on the front beaches! So grab your waders, rod and reel and bait buckets, and head down to the nearest fishing camp for a bucket of guaranteed fishing success. Of course, if a popping cork and live shrimp don't exactly set your sportfishing blood astir, try fishing a plastic shrimp look-alike, spoon or plug instead. These work almost as well (and sometimes better) than their live counterparts; and instead of standing in the bait line at o-dark thirty, you could already be catching fish...

Good Luck and Good Fishing! — Dr. Fred Deegen

### Flounder Almondine

6 Mississippi flounder fillets  
1 cup Italian bread crumbs  
1/4 lb. butter  
1 cup almonds  
3 tbsp. lemon juice  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 egg and 1 cup milk



Salt and pepper fillets. Add milk to egg and beat. Dip fillets in the egg mixture, dredge in bread crumbs. Place fillets in buttered baking dish. Bake 20 minutes at 300 degrees. Melt butter in pan and add almonds until toasted. Remove from heat and add lemon juice. Pour mixture over fillets and bake another 10 minutes.

Reprinted from DMR's *Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood Recipe Book*  
Recipe by Irvin Jackson