



The Delta News

5 Rivers Delta Resource Center



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May 2010

Your Delta Fun Fact for the Month:

Did you know dragonflies can spend almost three years of their life in water eating other bugs? When you see a winged dragonfly it is actually at the end of its lifespan.



Students Learning Conservation Hands-On

5 Rivers Saturday Adventure students had the opportunity to learn about and help our state reptile, the endangered Alabama Red-Bellied turtle. Students participated in an “Alabama Turtles” class on April 17, discussing fun characteristics and interesting facts about the 30 different species of turtles that inhabit our state. The class concluded by releasing six Alabama Red-Bellied turtles that had hatched on 5 Rivers property. Students helped the turtles gently into the water, said a happy goodbye and good luck, and watched them swim away to their home, the Mobile-Tensaw Delta.



“Alabama Turtles” student Tanner Doss releases an Alabama Red-Bellied turtle hatchling.

What’s up in the Delta this Month?



The most notorious, and certainly the toothiest neighbor we have in the

Delta — the gators are out and about! Look at a distance, and NEVER feed the alligators. Alligators who have been fed associate people with food, and then they are considered a nuisance and have to be put down.

A fed gator is a dead gator.



\$5,000 Fine for Feeding Gators



An Alabama Red-Bellied turtle hatchling (*Pseudemys alabamensis*).

vehicles, predators and heat exhaustion. Once in the water they face a new set of challenges, such as finding food and avoiding predators. They do not mature until around the age of six, and then can begin the cycle anew.

5 Rivers is an important nesting site for the Alabama Red-Bellied turtle, so the facility works closely with the University of South Alabama and Dr. David Nelson to help protect this endangered species. Fencing on 5 Rivers property, combined with the Alabama Department of Transportation’s fencing on the Causeway (Highway 90/98) has

helped to significantly reduce vehicular mortality on these turtles as well as many other types of animals. Nests are marked at the facility and precautions taken to prevent predators from digging up the eggs. When hatched, the young turtles are measured and weighed before being released, and the information added to the growing data we have on this species.

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What we've been up to

April was a very busy month for us here at 5 Rivers, and we loved every minute of it. We had 3,000 students of all ages come visit us for field trips this year so far - and even more are coming in May!

Student studies an Eastern Box Turtle in an "Alabama Turtles" Class



Students from Fairhope's K-1 Center asking Loretta questions.



Young lady examining turtle shell for the first time.



Thank you to all of our students and visitors!



Think you can count the seeds as they fall, and enter to win a fully loaded canoe?

The Release of the Alabama Red-Bellied Turtles



J.E. Turner Field Trip



2nd graders from J.E. Turner showing off their findings.



Striking a pose with the bear from the Apalachee Exhibit Hall.



Outdoor Alabama Photo Contest Visits Our Apalachee Exhibit Hall!

1st place youth winner ages 13-18, Ben Jackson III.



The ease of digital cameras has allowed photography to become popular with people of all ages. Capturing a good photo takes more than just using a good camera, however. It takes knowing how to compose the shot by evaluating the light and framing the subject in the most desirable position. It takes knowing when to get close, when to back away, and when to take a longer or wider shot. It takes patience and a desire to capture the beauty of nature. The winners featured on display in the Apalachee Exhibit Hall accomplished all of this and were selected among more than 1,700 entered photos to win this year's Outdoor Alabama Photo Contest. First, second, third, and honorable mention were chosen in the following categories: Birds; Flora; Mammals; Nature-based Recreation; Other Wildlife; Reptiles; Amphibians and Fish; Scenic Pictorial; State Parks; and two youth categories, ages 6-12 and 13-18. Be sure to stop by the Exhibit Hall today and catch a glimpse of Alabama's pristine beauty in these wonderful photos.

A Quick Glimpse of May's Events:

5/01/10	Delta Safaris Wine Tasting Sunset Cruise (\$45)	5/11/10	Audubon Society Meeting
5/01/10	Woods and Water Family Day	5/11/10	Hunter's Education Class
5/01/10	Outdoor Alabama Photo Contest Exhibit	5/15/10	Delta Safaris Wine Tasting Sunset Cruise
5/02/10	Sunday Matinee: "Armored Giants: Life in Cold Blood" Followed by a Turtle Walk around 5 Rivers	5/15/10	Saturday Class: "Insectigations" Grades 3-5
5/04/10	Mobile Bay Canoe and Kayak Club Meeting	5/16/10	Sunday Matinee: "Blue Gold"
5/04/10	Alabama Hiking Trail Society Meeting	5/20/10	StoryTime: "Feather Club"
5/04/10	Gulf Coast Amphibian and Reptile Keepers Meeting	5/22/10	Draw and Paint Coastal Butterflies Class with Local Artist Val Webb (\$45)
5/04/10	Sierra Club Meeting	5/23/10	Sunday Matinee: "The Civilian Conservation Corp"
5/06/10	Taste of the Towns	5/25/10	StoryTime: "I Thought I Saw An Alligator"
5/08/10	CCA Spring Fling	5/27/10	StoryTime: "The Lorax"
5/08/10	Guided Hike at Village Point Park Preserve (Free)	5/29/10	Saturday Class: "SNAKES!" Grades 3-5
5/08/10	Delta Safaris Bartram Canoe Trail Paddle #2	5/29/10	Delta Safaris Wine Tasting Sunset Cruise (\$45)
5/9/10	Sunday Matinee: "Fly Girls"	5/30/10	Sunday Matinee: "Algae Fuel"

For more information on any of the upcoming events, find us on FaceBook or check us out online at www.Alabama5Rivers.com, or even give us a call at 251-625-0814! If you'd like to be added to the Delta Newsletter email list, drop a line to Shonda.Borden@DCNR.Alabama.gov.