

ENVIRONMENTAL
STUDIES CENTER

MOBILE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MOBILE, AL



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Critter Corner



Meet Shadow

Shadow is a fish crow. The fish crow is one of two main types of crows that live in our area. The other type is the American crow. Shadow came to live at the ESC in the spring of 2001 after someone had raised her from a hatchling. She had become very familiar with people and is considered to be an imprinted bird. Therefore, she cannot be released back into the wild. Fish crows are very intelligent birds and can learn human words. If you have walked across the front porch of the ESC before, there is a good chance that Shadow has said "hello" to you! Stop by and see Shadow sometime. The ESC is open Monday—Friday from 8:00 until 4:30.

What's Happening at the Center



Honeybees are one of nature's great pollinators. Pollination is the transfer of pollen to the stigma or female part of the plant resulting in fertilization. Once a flower is fertilized it will go on to produce fruits, nuts, or seeds. Without honeybees we wouldn't enjoy many of the fruits and vegetables we eat today. Some crops such as apples, melons, cranberries, blueberries, and cherries are almost entirely dependent upon honeybee pollination. Other crops like almonds are 100% dependent on honeybee pollination. In fact, honeybees are so important they are responsible for one third of the food we eat.

Aside from the fact honeybees are important to our agricultural needs, raising honeybees can be enjoyable and profitable. There are pros and cons to beekeeping so do a little research and find a local beekeeping club to talk with before purchasing equipment. You can also stop by the Environmental Studies Center to look at an Observation Beehive on the porch or a regular beehive down by the lake.

What can you do to protect our pollinators?

- Start your own beehive

- Limit or eliminate the use of commercial pesticides

- Follow the application rate of pesticides

- Don't apply pesticides when pollinators are out



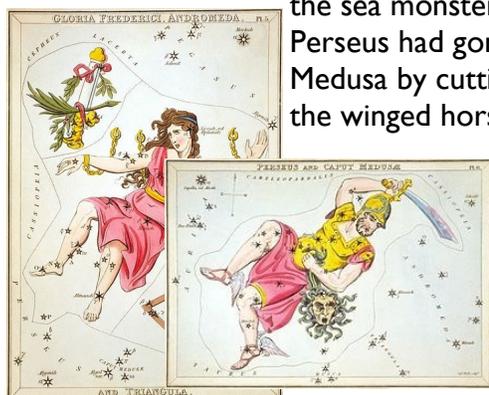
News from Out-of-this World

The Environmental Studies Center held its Fall Sky Watch on October 30. There were seven members of the Mobile Astronomical Society with their telescopes on hand to share the night sky with close to 200 visitors. Visitors viewed the moon, Uranus, the Ring Nebula, double stars, and a double star cluster in Perseus.

Fall constellations are especially fun to observe as they play out the mythological favorite, the royal rescue. Queen Cassiopeia and King Cepheus were forced to offer their daughter princess Andromeda as a sacrifice to Cetus the sea monster after angering Apollo and Zeus. Brave Perseus had gone to the underworld where he slayed Medusa by cutting off her head. He then rode on Pegasus, the winged horse. When Cetus approached Andromeda,

Perseus showed the head of Medusa to the sea monster and he turned to stone. Andromeda and Perseus were then married in the happy ending to this royal story.

Our Spring Sky Watch will be held on February 25, 2015. Come join us and the Mobile Astronomical Society as we celebrate the spring night time sky.



Annual Art Contest Winners

On November 1st the annual art contest winners were announced at Open House. The contest is sponsored each year by our Partner in Education, Pleasant Valley Opportunity Club. The winners are as follows:

Kindergarten-Third Grade

- 1st Place** Thomas Samuel Savell
Eichold-Mertz Magnet
- 2nd Place** Kayden Saint Louis
Shepard Elementary
- 3rd Place** Kalia Johnson
Shepard Elementary

Sixth-Eight Grade

- 1st Place** Reagan Lee
Grand Bay Middle
- 2nd Place** Landon Clark
Grand Bay Middle
- 3rd Place** Kaylee Gates
Grand Bay Middle

Fourth-Fifth Grade

- 1st Place** Catherine Chung
Old Shell Road Magnet
- 2nd Place** Louisa Forbes
Dodge Elementary
- 3rd Place** Anabelle Sullivan
Dodge Elementary

Ninth-Twelfth Grade

- 1st Place** Jasmine Jones
Montgomery High
- 2nd Place** Drew Maynard
Montgomery High
- 3rd Place** Brittany Mills
Montgomery High

The 2nd Annual Owl-O-Ween 5K Trail Run

The 2nd annual Owl-O-Ween 5K Trail Run was held on the grounds of the Environmental Studies Center, on October 18, and it was a huge success. Almost \$3,000 was raised at the event. The money raised went directly to the wildlife rehabilitation program housed at the Center. The Environmental Studies Center would like to thank everyone who helped make this run a success, especially the sponsors, volunteers, runners, and businesses who donated door prizes!



Sponsors:

Great Horned Owl: Wild Birds Unlimited, Thompson Engineering, Exalte' Magazine.com

Barred Owl: Hart's Fried Chicken, Cammie's Old Dutch Ice Cream Shoppe, EnviroChem, Southern Earth Sciences, James N. Dykes CDCU, AMIM, ARM, Willis

Screech Owl: Edith Gubler McCreadie, MD, LLD, Greater Mobile Urgent Care, The Broken iPhone, Progressive Lawn Maintenance, Walks and Wags, Inc., Foosackly's Chicken Fingers

Awards:

Female Fledgling (1-15): 1st– Isabella Elortegui, 2nd– Sara Higgins, 3rd– Brielle Turner

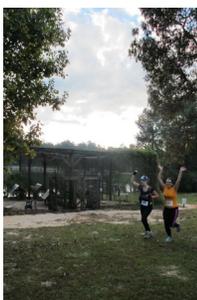
Male Fledgling (1-15): 1st– Ian Feuerhake, 2nd– Braden Turner, 3rd– Hinton Mott

Female Adult (16-50): 1st– Christina Gautier, 2nd– Claudia Schilling, 3rd– Ashley Jordan

Male Adult (16-50): 1st– Rusty Staggs, 2nd– Aaron Freesmeier, 3rd– David Yorio

Female Wise Ole Owl (51 & wiser): 1st- Diana Gough, 2nd-Sharon Brown

Male Wise Ole Owl (51 & wiser): 1st- Robert Staples, 2nd- Chris Lasonde, 3rd- Charles Perez



Wildlife Wish List

Clip-on clamp lamp	1 cc and 3cc syringes	Chicken vegetable baby food	Small frozen fish
Pine bark mulch	Pine shavings (for cages)	Dried whole corn	Cheerios
Cages	Baled hay	Frozen mixed vegetables	Scratch feed
Heating pads	Ziploc freezer bags (gallon & quart)	Fresh fruits and vegetables	Raisins
Liquid laundry soap	Bleach	Raw peanuts (in shell)	Wild birdseed
Liquid dishwasher soap	Paper towels	Nuts (in shell)	
Wal-Mart gift cards	Newspaper	Dry dog food (small bites)	
60-watt light bulbs	Plastic wrap	Unsalted sunflower seeds	
Scrub brushes	Dawn dish soap	Canned sardines in water	
Cash	Animal crackers	Canned dog and cat food	



Wildlife Adoptions

For a \$25 annual donation you can help with the feeding, care, and shelter of one of the native wildlife housed here at the Environmental Studies Center. Not only can you adopt an animal for yourself but, you can give an adoption as a gift. Adoption benefits include: adoption certificate, photograph of your animal, fact sheet about the species, recognition of your adoption on the exhibit, and Environmental Studies Center e-Newsletter.

Complete the information below and mail it to the Center with your payment. Make checks payable to the Environmental Studies Center.

Animal Adoption



Name: _____

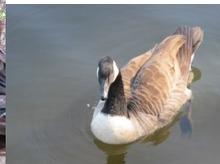
Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please choose one: Raccoon Deer Pelican Seagull Alligator
 Mallard Duck Canada Goose Black Vulture Turkey Coyote
 Red-Tail Hawk Bald Eagle Wood Duck Turkey Vulture Screech Owl
 Barred Owl Great-Horned Owl Great Blue Heron Other: _____



Recent Patients



Fledgling Bluebirds



Coot



Hatchling Box Turtles



Juvenile Bald Eagle



Juvenile Mississippi Kite



Juvenile Yellow Crowned Night Heron



Female Summer Tanager

Partners in Education



degussa.

PVOC

Pleasant Valley Opportunity

Dr. Louis Buckalew & Family



Thoughts from the Director

According to Walt Disney “The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.” So it is time for us to start where we are and begin working toward a project that has to be done. If you have been to the Environmental Studies Center you have been down to the lake and seen the water bird aviary. This aviary was built over twenty years ago and houses many different kinds of injured water birds, like pelicans, ducks, geese, and herons. This aviary is critical to wildlife care, especially during the winter when food is scarce and after major storms when many injured and emaciated water birds are brought to the Center. Water birds are also a central part of our environmental education program. It is in dire need of renovation and must be repaired soon. Unfortunately, the cost is staggering at approximately \$30,000.00 because of the size of the cage and the equipment that has to be used. Since wildlife rehabilitation works from donations and grants our work begins with raising funds for this project. It is hoped that some schools may take up the cause for us, but we also need our friends to help with donations, contacts for donations, and generally spread the word to people who could assist us. So as you know “It Starts With Us” and we hope you will be with us during this fundraising campaign.

Desiree Bishop, Director



NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S

Backyard BIRDS

CHECKLIST

See if you can spot these common backyard birds:

- 1 AMERICAN CROW**
American Crows will gang up on a predator to chase it away. If you see a mob of crows harassing a larger bird, you might get a glimpse of a hawk or an owl.
- 2 AMERICAN GOLDFINCH**
Thistle is an important source of food and nesting material for the American Goldfinch. It can cling to narrow stems and delicate seed heads, sometimes upside down.
- 3 AMERICAN ROBIN**
Cocking its head from side to side, the American Robin seems to be listening for worms. Actually it spots them by sight and pulls them from the ground.
- 4 BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE**
The Black-capped Chickadee may become quite tame and can learn to eat from your hand. It's named for its call, which sounds like "schick-a-dee."
- 5 BLUE JAY**
The Blue Jay can be noisy and aggressive at feeders. It also has a habit of robbing other birds' nests and eating the eggs and young birds.
- 6 COMMON GRACKLE**
Though the Common Grackle looks black from a distance, its feathers shimmer in glossy blue, purple, bronze, and green.
- 7 DOWNY WOODPECKER**
The Downy Woodpecker is the smallest woodpecker in North America, similar in size to a Chickadee with which it often flocks.
- 8 EUROPEAN STARLING**
The most common songbird in North America, the European Starling travels in large groups, often with blackbirds and grackles.
- 9 HOUSE SPARROW**
The House Sparrow is a noisy and aggressive bird that will steal nest sites from native hole-nesting birds.
- 10 MOURNING DOVE**
The Mourning Dove's wings and tail make a whistling sound during flight, especially when the bird takes off.
- 11 NORTHERN CARDINAL**
A male Northern Cardinal will fiercely defend his feeding territory. You may see him fighting his reflection in a car mirror or window trying to scare off the "other" bird.
- 12 RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD**
The male Red-winged Blackbird can hide his red feathers when he searches for food. It eats mostly insects, as many as a trillion a year.
- 13 TUFTED TITMOUSE**
The Tufted Titmouse lines its nest with fur, sometimes plucked from living animals.

FROM
National Wildlife Federation's
World of Birds
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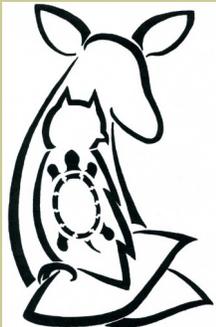
www.mcpsesc.com

Open 8:00a.m.-4:30p.m.
Monday—Friday

Individual Admission:
Free
\$2 Donation appreciated

Group tours:
Reservations required
Contact 251.221.5000
for pricing information

Non-profit organization



Wild Adventures

The Environmental Studies Center is a natural sciences education facility designed to provide unique learning experiences. In addition, wildlife rehabilitation plays a vital role each day here at the Center. With over 500 acres of rich woodlands, the Center affords teachers, students, and the general public an opportunity to experience firsthand the natural environment. Natural resources include pine and bay forests, swamps, freshwater streams, carnivorous plant bog, and a twenty-acre lake.

Man-made resources include numerous nature trails, covered pavilions, live animal exhibits, butterfly garden, and native plant garden. Indoor facilities include an auditorium, gift shop, and classroom containing live reptile exhibits, a saltwater aquarium, and numerous preserved specimens native to Alabama.



The Environmental Studies Center houses a wildlife rehabilitation program that is dedicated to the care and potential release of injured and orphaned native wildlife. The wildlife rehabilitation program receives over 800 wild patients a year. These animals all need food, care, and shelter to survive. The program relies upon donations from people like you for its operation and success.

Environmental Studies Center
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