

ENVIRONMENTAL
STUDIES CENTER

MOBILE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MOBILE, AL



www.mcpss.com/esc

Desiree Bishop
Director

Susan Clement
Biologist

Tracy Delcambre
Resource Teacher

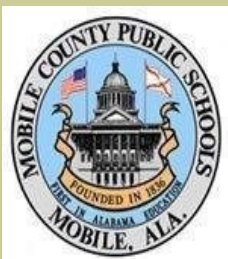
Troy Latham
Resource Teacher

Anita Salinas
Resource Teacher

Grace Phelps
Bookkeeper

Judson Martin
Grounds Keeper

Hubert Robinson
Custodian



Wild Adventures

Volume II, Issue II

Spring 2012

Critter Corner



Meet Delta

Delta is an American alligator who hatched in 2008. At that time he was 7 inches long, now he is approximately 4 feet long. American alligators are the largest reptiles in North America. Alligators are carnivores that feed on fish and other aquatic animals. They can also stalk prey onshore. Never approach an alligator in the wild. Also, it is important to note that you should not feed them in the wild. Stop by and meet Delta and Bayou, the other alligator at Spring Open House on May 5th. An alligator feeding will take place at 1:30 p.m.

The ESC is open during the school year Monday—Friday from 8:00 until 4:30. Summer hours are Monday—Thursday from 7:00 until 5:30.

What's Happening at the Center

Spring is here and the ESC is buzzing with excitement. As the activity picks up, the Center continues to need your help for the everyday operation of the wildlife rehabilitation program. Please make sure to check out the Wish List, Wildlife Adoption form, and information on how to become an ESC Wildlife Friend on the following pages. Without your help, the Center can not provide for injured and orphaned wildlife.

Spring Open House is May 5th from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Please make sure you are in attendance for this wonderful event. The day will include a dedication of the newest exhibit which opened during the winter. The exhibit is a set of mews that supports the raptor educational outreach program. This exhibit houses injured birds of prey that are glove trained.

These birds are used to educate school children and the general public about the

habitats and general features of these marvelous creatures. Evonik—Degussa Corporation, one of ESC's Partners in Education, provided funding for the exhibit.

The school system constructed this amazing enclosure.

Much thanks goes out to all who made this long-time dream come true! Please join the staff at the ESC on May 5th at 12 noon for the dedication of this exhibit.



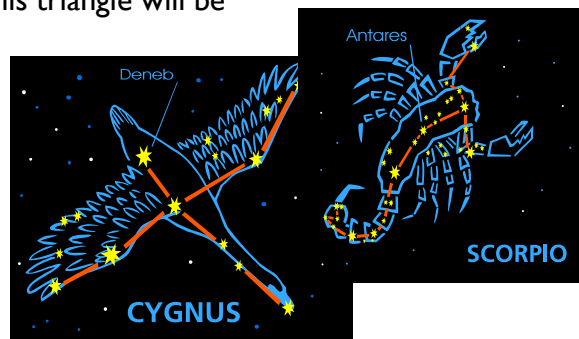
News from Out-of-this World



The ESC's STARLAB planetarium has been visiting sixth grade classes in various public schools to enhance the unit on space science. Resource Teachers at the ESC worked with Alba, Semmes, Pillans, Lott and Booker T. Washington Middle Schools. The ESC hopes to expand this program to reach more middle schools next year. During the "Reach for the Stars" program, sixth grade students learned about the life cycle of a star, the different types of stars and the constellations visible in our night time sky. Also, they learned which planets were visible and how to locate them in the sky. Winter is an exciting time in the sky with Orion the hunter and his two dogs ready to face Taurus the bull. Our spring

sky gives us Leo the lion overhead, Virgo in the East and Ursa Major high in the north. As we move into summer, you can look forward to seeing the summer triangle which includes the brightest stars in Cygnus the swan, Lyra the harp and Aquila the eagle. This triangle will be overhead in the middle of the summer season. Scorpio

the scorpion is an awesome constellation low in the southern sky with Sagittarius following right behind it. The Environmental Studies Center is fortunate to have access to two portable planetariums. One is used exclusively here at the center and the other is available for checkout by trained teachers throughout the school system. Happy Star Gazing!



What to do with wild baby birds...

There are two types of baby birds: nestlings and fledglings.

--A nestling is a baby, without feathers or with pin feathers, that has not left the nest.

--A fledgling has feathers and is learning how to fly. It does not return to the nest once it leaves it.

If a nestling is found, it should be returned to its' nest. It is alright to touch the baby because birds have a poor sense of smell and the parents will not smell your scent on the baby bird. If the nest cannot be reached, make one out of a hanging plant basket. Poke holes in the bottom, line it with pine straw or grass, and hang it in a bush or tree near the location where the bird was found. The parents will return when they hear the nestling cry.

Fledglings are learning to fly, so they do not stay in the nest. If a fledgling is found, please leave it alone. If it is on the ground, put it in a bush so that it is less vulnerable. The parents are not always with the baby because they are looking for food to feed their young. Again, touching the baby bird will not harm it or cause the parents to reject it.

Baby birds should be taken in only if one of the following occurs: both parents are positively dead, the bird is injured, or the bird is in real danger. When taken in, the bird should be placed in a dark box and brought to the Environmental Studies Center. It is against the law to keep any wild bird without a permit and it is also best for the bird if it is cared for by a trained wildlife rehabilitator. Raising a baby bird takes a lot of time. In fact a nestling has to be fed every 20 minutes from dawn to dusk. The best thing to feed a baby bird, until it can be brought to a wildlife rehabilitator, is dry dog or cat food that has been soaked in water. Never give it liquid with an eye dropper!

For more information contact the Environmental Studies Center at 221-5000.

Some of our recent patients...



Baby Great-Horned Owl



Baby Beaver



Purple Gallinule



American Bittern



Red-Breasted Merganser



American Oystercatcher



Dowitcher



Brown Pelicans

Annual MCPSS Science Fair Winners

The annual Mobile County Public Schools Science Fair was held on February 15, 2012 at Clark-Shaw Magnet School. The overall winners are as follows:

Lisa Bramucci-Faye Horizon Award for Most Promising 6th Grade Project
 Triston Holladay—Lott Middle School—Environmental Science
 “Testing Waters of T.K. and Barry’s Steam Plant”

Middle School Winner
 Sarah Bowman—Phillips Preparatory School—Environmental Science
 “Daphnia Magna: Canaries of Our Waterways”

High School Winner
 Thomas Gard—Murphy High School—Microbiology
 “Microbial Flora in Fire Ant Mounds”

Overall Winner
 Vivian Ho—Murphy High School—Chemistry
 “Depolymerization of Chitin Using Ionic Liquids”



Become a Member of the Environmental Studies Center's Wildlife Friends

The Environmental Studies Center houses a wildlife rehabilitation program that is dedicated to the care and potential release of injured and orphaned native wildlife. You can help the wildlife rehabilitation program by becoming a “Wildlife Friend”. The ESC needs your help fund raising, doing mailings, and maintaining exhibits. Please assist the ESC in helping local wildlife.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Zip Code: _____ **Phone:** _____

E-Mail: _____

Membership (includes a newsletter subscription)
 \$10.00 Individual or Family (annually)

I can volunteer to help with:

Fund Raising/Donation Solicitation _____ Mailings _____
 Promotions _____ Orphan Caretaker _____ Exhibit Animal Feeder _____
 Animal Transportation _____ Exhibit Maintenance/ Construction _____

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 \$25 a year you can help with the feeding, care, and shelter of one of the native wildlife housed 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, opportunity to make a scheduled visit with “your” animal. Complete the information below and mail it to the Center with your payment.

Animal Adoption

Name: _____

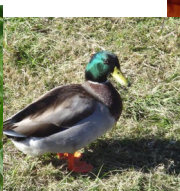
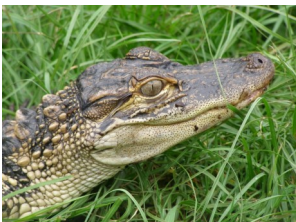
Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

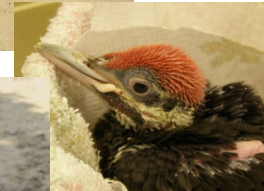


Please choose one: ☐ Raccoon ☐ Deer ☐ Pelican ☐ Seagull ☐ Alligator
☐ Mallard Duck ☐ Canada Goose ☐ Black Vulture ☐ Turkey ☐ Coyote
☐ Red-Tailed Hawk ☐ Bald Eagle ☐ Golden Eagle ☐ Turkey Vulture ☐ Screech Owl
☐ Barred Owl ☐ Great-Horned Owl ☐ Great Blue Heron ☐ Wood Duck



How can you help the ESC????

- ♦ Donate items from the Wish List
- ♦ Complete a Wildlife Adoption
- ♦ Become a Fan on Facebook
- ♦ Join the volunteer program
- ♦ Become a Partner in Education
- ♦ Purchase an inscribed plaque
- ♦ Make a cash donation
- ♦ Become an ESC Wildlife Friend



To find out more about helping the ESC contact 251-221-5000.

Partners in Education



degussa.

PVOC

Pleasant Valley Opportunity Club

Dr. Louis Buckalew
& Family

Thoughts from the Director

Ralph Waldo Emerson said the "Earth laughs in flowers" so the Environmental Studies Center is smiling and laughing every day. Spring came suddenly to the Center and now it is in full bloom. The grounds are covered in green grass and students; the sky is filled with butterflies and birds. If ever there was a time to visit the Environmental Studies Center this would be it. The pitcher plant bog and wildflowers are putting on their best show. Osprey, bald eagles, and many migratory birds are stopping by to rest on our lake. Summer Science Camps have been planned and the registration form is now available on our website. Visitors are welcome and the public is invited to attend our annual Spring Open House on Saturday, May 5, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. There will be animal talks and educational programs all throughout the day. Proceeds from concessions, kids' corner, and bake sale will go to the wildlife rehabilitation program. Also, Cammie's Old Dutch Ice Cream Shoppe will be at Open House with delicious ice cream treats and the Wildlife Rehab will benefit from those sales as well. Please walk the trails and enjoy some time at the Environmental Studies Center. Bring a friend that may never have visited the Center and come share our passion.

Desiree Bishop, Director



"The clearest way into the universe is through a forest wilderness." John Muir

Patients Received in 2011

BIRDS

Common Name	Total # Rec'd	Common Name	Total # Rec'd
American Coot	5	Purple Martin	4
American Goldfinch	2	Red-bellied Woodpecker	8
American Kestrel	1	Red-eyed Vireo	1
American Robin	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	1
American Woodcock	4	Red-shouldered Hawk	2
Baltimore Oriole	1	Red-tailed Hawk	8
Barred Owl	9	Red-winged Blackbird	3
Black Vulture	1	Ring-billed Gull	2
Bluejay	51	Ring-necked Duck	1
Black Skimmer	1	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	17
Baot-tailed Grackle	1	Sandwich Tern	1
Bonaparte's Gull	1	Sooty Tern	1
Bridled Tern	2	Sora	2
Broad-winged Hawk	2	Tufted Titmouse	3
Brown Pelican	17	Turkey	1
Brown Thrasher	9	Turkey Vulture	1
Canada Goose	2	Virginia Rail	1
Carolina Wren	28	White Ibis	3
Cattle Egret	1	White-winged Dove	1
Cedar Waxwing	1	Wood Duck	10
Chimney Swift	22	Wood Thrush	6
Chipping Sparrow	2	Yellow Crowned Night Heron	1
Common Crow	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	5
Common Grackle	3	Warbler Species	2
Common Loon	1	Non-migratory Birds	39
Common Nighthawk	1		
Common Snipe	1	Bird Total	480
Common Yellowthroat	2		
Cooper's Hawk	6	MAMMALS	
Downy Woodpecker	1	Common Name	Total # Rec'd
Eastern Bluebird	3	Bat	2
Eastern Screech Owl	12	Cottontail Rabbit	66
Eastern Towhee	1	Flying Squirrel	23
Great Blue Heron	9	Grey Squirrel	189
Great Horned Owl	8	Long tail weasel	1
Green Heron	2	Mole	2
Grey Catbird	2	Mouse	2
Ground Dove	2	Opossum	244
Herring Gull	3	Raccoon	3
House Finch	6		
Killdeer	1	Mammal Total	532
Laughing Gull	28		
Least Bittern	1	REPTILES/AMPHIBIANS	
Lesser Scaup	1	Common Name	Total # Rec'd
Louisiana Waterthrush	1	Box Turtle	64
Merlin	1	Cooter (Turtle)	1
Mississippi Kite	4	Gopher Tortoise	4
Mourning Dove	38	Mud Turtle	3
Northern Cardinal	13	Slider (Turtle)	6
Northern Gannet	13	Soft shell turtle	1
Northern Mockingbird	22	Snake	3
Pine Warbler	1	Snapping Turtle	4
Purple Finch	2		
Purple Gallinule	2	Reptile Total	86
		GRAND TOTAL	1098

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**6101 Girby Road
Mobile, Alabama
36693**

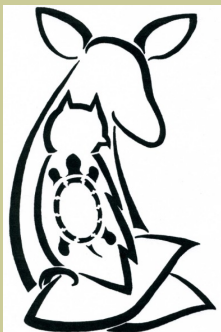
**Phone: 251-221-5000
Fax: 251-221-5002**

**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 at the Center. Featuring 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, library, 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 1000 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.

**Environmental Studies Center
6101 Girby Road
Mobile, Alabama 36693**