

ENVIRONMENTAL
STUDIES CENTER

MOBILE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MOBILE, AL



Desiree Bishop
Director

Susan Clement
Biologist

Tracy Delcambre
Resource Teacher

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Resource Teacher

Anita Salinas
Resource Teacher

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Bookkeeper

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Grounds Keeper

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Custodian



Volume VII, Issue II

Spring 2017

Critter Corner



Meet Taz

Taz is a striped skunk who is now 4 years old. In the wild, skunks only live around 3 years but in captivity they can live up to 10 years. Skunks are omnivores, which means they eat both meat and vegetation. They eat such things as insects, worms, grubs, berries, and fruits. They have long front toenails that they use for digging. They dig for food and they will also dig a burrow in the ground for protection and to sleep in. Their eyesight is poor but they have good hearing and a good sense of smell. The skunk's main form of protection is its scent gland. It is located at the base of its tail and if something bothers the skunk it will spray a very smelly oil from this gland. Not only does this odor smell but if it gets into the eyes it burns. This then gives the skunk a chance to get away. The skunk can spray from the gland almost 10 feet. Before spraying, the skunk will usually give a warning by lifting its tail, hissing, and stomping its feet. Taz' scent gland has been removed so he does not produce an odor. Taz is on exhibit on our Bird of Prey Boardwalk so be sure to stop by and see him. He will probably be sleeping though since skunks are nocturnal.

What's Happening at the Center

Thank you for making our Spring Open House a success once again. The weather was perfect Saturday, May 6th and there was lots to see and do at the Environmental Studies Center. There were various educational programs offered throughout the day such as the opossum and skunk talk, raptor show, Starlab program, reptile talk, and bog tour. Musical entertainment was provided by the Dulcimers and face painting for the children. Thanks to all the exhibitors and vendors that help make our open house successful. The ESC holds Open House on the first Saturday in May and November. All of the money raised from donations, concessions, popcorn, etc. goes to our rehabilitation program and the care and maintenance of the exhibits. It's your support and generosity that helps keep the ESC going.

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 ok to touch the baby because birds have a bad sense of smell and the parents will not smell your scent on the baby. 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 that the baby was found. The parents will return when they hear the baby 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 it. Again, touching it 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 baby is injured, or the baby is in real danger. When taken in, the baby 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 knowledgeable person. Raising a baby bird takes a lot of time. In fact a nestling has to be fed every 20 minutes from dusk to dawn. The best thing to feed a baby, 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!

Preparing for a Solar Eclipse

The Environmental Studies Center is looking forward to the solar eclipse on Monday, August 21st. While a narrow band of viewers across the United States will have the opportunity to view the solar eclipse in totality, in Mobile viewers will be able to see 90% of the Sun covered as the Moon passes by. The eclipse will begin around 12:00 pm and will finish around 3:00 pm. The Center is working with the Mobile Astronomical Society to provide pre eclipse events and activities for the community. The Ben May library will be hosting activities for the community on Saturday, June 17 from 9:30 am – 11:00 am and on Saturday, July 29 from 9:30 am – 11:00 am. The Environmental Studies Center will be hosting a summer sky watch this year as we look forward to the solar eclipse. Join us on August 1 from 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm as the Mobile Astronomical Society shares their equipment and expertise to show us star clusters, nebulae, planets and other deep sky objects. Solar viewing glasses will be necessary for viewing the solar eclipse on August 21st. The Ben May library and the Environmental Studies Center have submitted applications for solar viewing glasses funded through the Space Science Institute which has been awarded 1.26 million free eclipse glasses by the Moore Foundation. Keep an eye on our Facebook page to learn about other pre solar eclipse activities and how you can celebrate this extraordinary event with us.



Image Credit: NASA.gov

Image credit: eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov



Upcoming Events

- June 10th 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.—Rabies Clinic benefitting the wildlife rehabilitation program—Griggs Elementary School Front Parking Lot
- June 19th—Summer Camps begin
- August 1st— Summer Sky Watch

Annual MCPSS Science Fair Winners

The annual Mobile County Public Schools Science Fair was held on February 17, 2017 at Clark-Shaw Magnet School. The overall winners are as follows:

Lisa Bramuchi-Faye Horizon Award for Most Promising 6th Grade Project

Grayson Morgan
Burns Middle School
Physical Science—Physics
“Soaking Up the Truth”



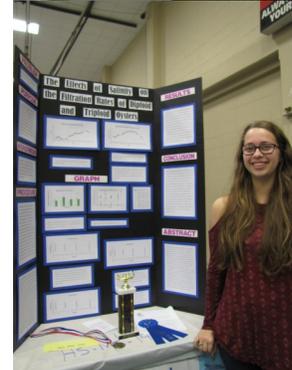
Middle School Winner

Lane Stefurak
Clark-Shaw Magnet School
Physical Science—Chemistry
“Just Brew It!”



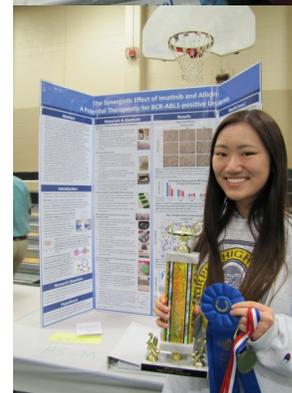
High School Winner

Sophia Davis
Davidson High School
Marine Science
“Differences in Filtration Rates of Diploid and Triploid Oysters”



Overall Winner

Jamie Lim
Murphy High School
Microbiology
“The Synergistic Effect of Imatinib and Allicin: A Potential Therapeutic For BCR-ABL I-Positive Leukemia”



Wildlife Wish List

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Clip-on clamp lamp | Small frozen fish | Canned dog and cat food |
| Pine bark mulch | Pine shavings (for cages) | Dried whole corn |
| Cages | Baled hay | Frozen mixed vegetables |
| Heating pads | Scratch feed | Fresh fruits and vegetables |
| Liquid laundry soap | Bleach | Raw peanuts (in shell) |
| Liquid dishwasher soap | Wild birdseed | 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 | B & B Pet Stop gift cards | |



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-tailed Hawk Bald Eagle Wood Duck Turkey Vulture Screech Owl
 Barred Owl Great-Horned Owl Great Blue Heron Other: _____



Partners in Education



*Dr. Louis Buckalew
& Family*

PVOC

Pleasant Valley Opportunity Club



Thoughts from the Director

What is science?

Science is the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment. Countless high school students that I have taught have asked, “Why do we have to study biology (or algebra or history or art)? I won’t ever use it in real life. Why is science so important in our life?”

Almost everything we touch and see is science. The first scientists were farmers who figured out the answer to why certain crops grew better than others and why certain cows gave more milk. Every person is a scientist. If you have a problem and you wonder if something will fix it and then you try and try to find a way until you are successful, you are a scientist. You are a scientist if as a child you looked up at the sky and wondered why the sky is blue and then went and asked someone. Science is a means to gain knowledge to help solve problems and improve your life.

And that’s all I have to say about that!

Desiree Bishop, Director





Environmental Studies Center 2017 Summer Day Camp Program



Grades 1-2 "Nature and Me" 4 (1/2 Days) Camp \$100

Students will be guided through discovery investigations of the area's natural forest environment. The program will focus on living things and their habitats. Students will gain an appreciation for our natural resources while taking nature hikes, comparing physical features of animals, and participating in interactive games that will deepen their understanding of the forest.

Dates and Times: 4 (1/2 Days) Camp June 19 – 22 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Cost: \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)

Grades 1-2 "Art in Nature" 4 (1/2 Days) \$100

Students will discover the beauty, colors, and patterns in nature and will use what they experience to create original art projects.

Date and Time:

4 (1/2 Days) June 19 - 22 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)

Grades 3-4 "Let's Get Physical with Science" 4 (1/2 Days) \$100

Get your hands on unforgettable learning experiences and see how science can be truly amazing. Be a part of the wonder, discovery, and exploration that is science. Students will learn the science behind the WOW! By taking part in inquiry-based activities that follow the scientific method, students will learn through exploration and strengthen their critical thinking skills.

Dates and Times

4 (1/2 Days) June 26 - 29 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Cost: \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)

Grades 3 – 4 "Wildlife Palooza" 4 (1/2 Days) \$100

Students will visit with native wildlife of the Mobile area. They will learn how these wonderful creatures survive in the wild and how these critters interact with each other. Also, they will develop an understanding of how each animal is beneficial to our environment and the people living in it. Activities include visiting the outdoor animal exhibits, viewing birds of prey up close, and a nature walk to look for signs of wildlife.

Date and Time: 4 (1/2 Days) Camp June 26 - 29 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)

Grades 5-6 "Wonderful World of Nature" 4 (1/2 Days) \$100

This camp is designed to combine outdoor recreation activities with environmental education experiences. Camp activities include trail hikes, fishing, saltwater aquarium presentations, and an 'up-close' look at the Center's wildlife collection. Participants will learn about the important plants of the forest and examine insect-eating plants in a pitcher plant bog.

Dates and Times:

4 (1/2 Days) July 10 - 13 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Cost: \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)



Grades 5-6 "Feathers to Rockets" 4 (1/2 Days) \$100

Come explore air travel with us as we investigate the "science" of FLIGHT. How do feathers help birds fly? How do airplanes fly? How do rockets go into space? We will discover these things together.

Dates and Times:

4 (1/2 Days) July 10 – 13 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)



Grades 6-8 "WATER Activities" 1 Day \$50

W.A.T.E.R (Watershed Activities Teaching Environmental Responsibility) will be a fun filled day of adventures that will explore our interactions and the effects we have on the Dog River Watershed. Students will collect and observe aquatic insects from Pine Lake, take water samples and measurements, build storm drain models, and discuss water safety to include kayaking on our 18 acre Pine Lake.

Date and Time: 1 Day July 18 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$50 per student (includes T-shirt)



For a registration form please see the reverse of this page.

2017 ESC Summer Camp Registration Form

Student's Name _____ Sex _____ School _____ Grade Level _____
THIS FALL _____
(School Year 17-18)

Address _____
Street _____ City, State, Zip Code _____ email address _____

Phone # where parents can be reached during day _____
Mother _____ Father _____ Other _____

Allergies/Special Needs _____

T-shirt Size: (Please Check) Child S (6-8) _____ Child M (10-12) _____ Child L (14-16) _____ Adult S _____ Adult M _____ Adult L _____

PLEASE CHECK APPROPRIATE SESSION BELOW *

Grades 1 & 2 Nature and Me
4 (1/2 Days) \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)
June 19 - 22 8:00am-12:00pm _____

Grades 3 & 4 Let's Get Physical with Science
4 (1/2 Days) \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)
June 26 - 29 8:00am - 12:00pm _____

Grades 5 & 6 Wonderful World of Nature
4 (1/2 Days) \$100 per student (includes T-shirt)
July 10 - 13 8:00am - 12:00pm _____

Grades 1 & 2 Art in Nature
4 (1/2 Days) \$100 per student (includes T)
June 19 - 22 12:30pm - 4:30pm _____

Grades 3 - 4 Wildlife Palooza
4 (1/2 Days) \$100 per student (Includes T)
June 26 - 29 12:30pm - 4:30pm _____

Grades 5 & 6 Feathers to Rockets
4 (1/2 Days) \$100 per student (includes T)
July 10 - 13 12:30pm - 4:30pm _____

Grades 6 - 8 WATER Activities
1 Day \$50 per student (includes T-shirt)
July 18 8:00am - 4:30pm _____

*Supervised lunch and 2 snacks will be provided for all day camps.
**Students may bring their own lunch if preferred.

* Transportation is not provided. * PLEASE NOTE: MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES CENTER AND FORWARD WITH THIS FORM TO 6101 GIRBY ROAD, MOBILE, AL 36693. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 221-5000.
(Participants in all camps should wear appropriate clothing and shoes for outdoor activity. NO SANDALS or FLIP-FLOPS!)

(Please cut along dotted line and forward with payment to the Environmental Studies Center, 6101 Girby Road, Mobile, AL 36693)

The Mobile County Public School System

Presents.....

**Summer 2017 at the
Environmental Studies Center**

June 19 — July 18



Rabies Clinic



Benefiting the Environmental
Studies Center's wildlife
rehabilitation program.

Saturday, June 10

1:00 – 5:00

at

W. C. Griggs

Elementary School

6001 Three Notch Road

\$9.00 per shot

For more information call: 221-5000

Recent Patients

Downy Woodpecker: The Downy woodpecker was found in a tree that had been cut down. Unfortunately the woodpecker was in a nest that was in a hole in the tree. It was brought to us with a broken leg but that has healed and the baby will be released in a couple of weeks.



American Coot: The coot was found next to a road so we think that it had been hit by a car. It was lethargic the first day, but after fluids and rest, it was doing a lot better the second day. We observed it for a couple of days and then released it on the Center's lake where there were other coots.

Northern Gannet: The Gannet was brought to the Center in April after a bad storm. It was weak and starving but had no injuries. It appeared exhausted because of the storm. We gave it fluids to hydrate it and then started feeding it fish twice a day. After 2 weeks it was doing fantastic. We released it on Dauphin Island where it was originally found.



We RECYCLE!!!!

Bring your aluminum cans to the ESC and we will recycle them!!!! We sell the aluminum and use the money to support the wildlife rehabilitation program at the ESC.



WHAT WE RECEIVED IN 2016

BIRDS

Common Name	Total # Rec'd	Common Name	Total # Rec'd
American Coot	3	Mississippi Kite	7
American Crow	3	Mourning Dove	27
American Goldfinch	2	Nashville Warbler	1
American Kestrel	1	Northern Bobwhite	3
American Robin	1	Northern Cardinal	15
American White Ibis	3	Northern Gannet	1
American Woodcock	2	Northern Mockingbird	15
Bald Eagle	1	Osprey	1
Barn Swallow	1	Pied-billed Grebe	1
Barrred Owl	9	Red-bellied Woodpecker	13
Blue Grosbeak	1	Red-eyed Vireo	1
Blue Jay	12	Red-headed Woodpecker	5
Blue Gray Gnatcatcher	1	Red-tailed Hawk	8
Broad-winged Hawk	2	Ring-billed Gull	1
Brown Pelican	16	Royal Tern	2
Brown Thrasher	8	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	1
Canada Goose	7	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2
Carolina Chickadee	1	Sora	1
Carolina Wren	33	Swainson's Hawk	1
Cattle Egret	1	Swamp Sparrow	1
Cedar Waxwing	1	Turkey Vulture	1
Chimney Swift	11	Tufted Titmouse	1
Chuck-will's-widow	2	Virginia Rail	4
Common Grackle	3	Whip-poor-will	2
Common Nighthawk	1	White-winged Dove	3
Common Yellowthroat	1	Wilson's Snipe	1
Cooper's Hawk	11	Wood Duck	6
Double-crested Cormorant	6	Wood Thrush	2
Eastern Bluebird	6	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2
Eastern Kingbird	1	Yellow-breasted Chat	1
Eastern Meadowlark	1	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	2
Eastern Screech Owl	9	Non-Migratory Birds	43
Eastern Wood Peewee	1	Bird Total	397
Gray Catbird	2	MAMMALS	
Great Blue Heron	3	Common Name	Total # Rec'd
Grat Crested Flycatcher	1	Armadillo	8
Great Egret	1	Cottontail Rabbit	54
Great Horned Owl	5	Opossum	132
Herring Gull	4	Mammal Total	194
House Finch	9	REPTILES	
House Wren	1	Common Name	Total # Rec'd
Killdeer	1	Aquatic Turtles	8
Laughing Gull	28	Box Turtle	48
Least Bittern	1	Eastern King Snake	1
Lesser Scaup	1	Gopher Tortoise	3
Little Blue Heron	1	Tree Frog	1
Mallard	1	Reptile Total	61
Merlin	1	GRAND TOTAL	652

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36693

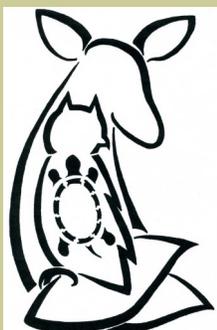
Phone: 251-221-5000
Fax: 251-221-5002

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 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 around 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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