

FLEUR DE LIS FISHERIES

US Fish and Wildlife Service



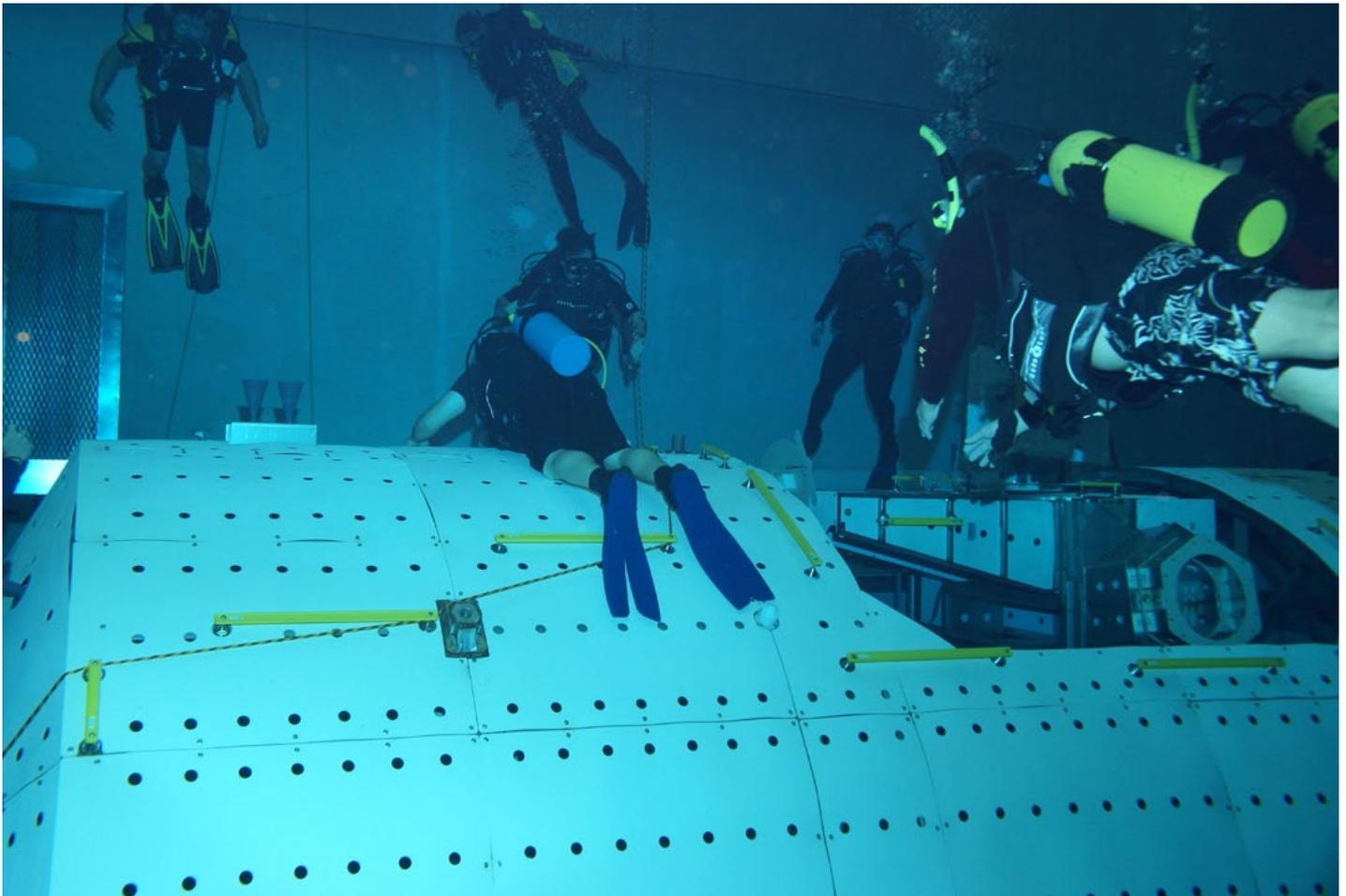
National Dive Control Board forges new frontier of dive training at NASA's Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory at the Johnson Space Center

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service SCUBA Dive Team Conducts Dive Training at the NASA Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory.

By: Tony Brady

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife's National Dive Control Board (NDCB) is made up of all the Regional Dive Officers and the Region 9 Safety Manager and Service Industrial Hygienist and meets every two years to discuss SCUBA diving issues in each region to review and make changes to the SCUBA dive safety chapter in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service safety manual and to conduct training. The NDCB meeting is hosted by a different region each time they meet, thus giving the different regional dive officers an opportunity to dive and see the conditions that the different regional dive

teams face. This firsthand knowledge of regional dive conditions helps the members of the NDCB when they are asked to comment on different dive plans or if they have to review any dive related incidents or accidents. Through the tireless efforts of Patricia Caccavale, Region 2's Regional Dive Officer, the NDCB went where no other federal dive team has gone before -- not space, but the Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory (NBL) at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX. If you are not familiar with the NBL, this pool contains a mock up of the International Space Station and is



During the dive workshop, divers were able to review their Rescue Diver Training at a depth of 20 feet. This training took place on top of the International Space Station Mock-Up.



Region 2's Patricia Caccavale demonstrate how to capture San Marcos salamanders.

where NASA trains their astronauts to conduct space walks to do repairs on the space station. Patricia spent four months working with NASA to get the clearance needed for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to gain access to this 200 + feet long and 40 feet deep training facility. In the words of NASA personnel, the NDCB

was the guinea pig for future federal agencies to be able to conduct similar training in the NBL. The depth of the NBL and the mock up of the space station added dimensions to the training that aren't found in any other closed water (pool) situation. The NDCB was able to review skills needed to rescue an unconscious diver at depth and with obstructions similar to those U.S. Fish and Wildlife divers face while completing our underwater duties. Patricia then lead the NDCB to San Marcos, TX and Spring Lake, the spring-fed headwaters of the San Marcos River, where we assisted Region 2 divers collect endangered San Marcos salamanders that will be placed in refugia at the San Marcos Aquatic Resources Center. While Spring Lake was a little cooler temperature-wise than the NBL, it was just as cool scenery-wise and for the overall dive experience as the NBL. The NDCB would like to thank Patricia for her efforts and to the folks at San Marcos Aquatic Resources Center for allowing Patricia the time to organize a great meeting. If you are wondering how the author was able to attend this meeting while not a part of the NDCB, the answer is simple. Due to a scheduling conflict with Region 4's Dive Officer, Glenn Culling-

ford, and the fact that I needed to complete my required annual SCUBA evaluation, I was asked to attend this meeting in place of Glenn. While at the meeting I was able to complete my annual evaluation with Region 7's Dive Officer Mitch Osborne. I would like to thank Mitch for overseeing my evaluation, allowing me to regain my active diver status, and to the rest of the NDCB for a great experience. I look forward to diving with you in the future.



San Marcos salamanders are not very big.

Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery Host a Hunter's Safety Course

By: Tony Brady

In our ongoing commitment to connect people with nature, Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery partnered with Natchitoches Parish 4-H to provide a hunter's safety course. The course was taught by Natchitoches Parish 4-H extension agent Steve Roberts and was held at the Harold B. Wales Environmental Education Classroom located at the hatchery. A total of 9 youth ranging in age from 10 to 16, and three adults participated in the class. Through the course, everyone learned about proper gun handling, hunter's ethics dealing with both land owners and the non-hunting public, and safety and survival in the

woods while hunting. Because the hatchery is surrounded by residential homes, the shooting portion of the class, which is normally taught with .22 rifles, was conducted using bows and arrows on the hatchery's archery range. At the end of the class, everyone was able to pass the required test and will be receiving their hunter's safety cards from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. We would like to thank Mr. Roberts for taking time out of his busy weekend to teach this class at the hatchery.



Student in the Hunter's Education class watch a video to learn safety while handling firearms.

First Annual High School Fishing Tournament Held in Natchitoches, LA

By: Tony Brady

Fishing teams have started appearing on college campuses across the nation over the past few years. College bass fishing has even been sponsored by the B.A.S.S. under their Bassmasters College Series. As these college teams gain more exposure, high school students want to follow suit with their own high school fishing teams. Here in Louisiana, this is no exception; there are at least five high schools in north-west Louisiana that now have fishing teams. One of those teams belongs to Natchitoches Central High School here in Natchitoches, LA. On February 2, 2013, the Natchitoches Central High School Fishing Team hosted their first annual Largemouth bass tournament on Cane River Lake. Fishing Teams from Benton High School, Anacoco High School, North Desoto High School and Airline High School, sent teams of anglers to join fishermen from Natchitoches Central on Cane River Lake to start what became a great fishing tournament. Van Wiggins, coach for Natchitoches Central, wanted to make sure that this tournament was a huge success, and that included caring for the fish during the tournament and after the weigh-in. The teams were to keep all fish alive during the day of fishing and any dead fish brought to the weigh-in re-



The Natchitoches Central High School fishing team was an excellent host.

sulted in the loss of one pound from their total weight. Wiggins approached Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery to see if we would be able to help care for the fish after the weigh-in and then to return the fish alive back to Cane River Lake after the tournament. The hatchery was happy to bring one of our fish hauling trucks to hold the fish after they were weighed. After the tournament was over, the fish took a short ride down river where they were released alive. In this first tournament, a total of 17 boats with two fishermen each spent about 6.5 hours fishing. After that time the teams returned to the weigh-in area where a total of 48 fish were weighed in totaling 99 lbs. First place went to Airline High School with a five fish total weighing 14.4 lbs, second place went to Natchitoches Central High School with a 5 fish limit weighing 13.6 lbs. Finally, third place went to Benton High School who weighed in 9.86 lbs of fish. At the end of the day, fishermen, parents and teachers were all very excited about the tournament and the hard work that went into producing a great event.



First place winners from Airline High School.

Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery Helps Start the National Archery In the School Program at Northwestern State University Middle Lab School.

By: Tony Brady

In last month's newsletter, you read about the Natchitoches staff assisting in teaching teachers how to teach archery in the schools through the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). One of those teachers was Brian Dodson, coach/teacher at Northwestern State University Middle Lab School (NSUML). Coach Dodson quickly capitalized on this new training and, with the assistance of loaner equipment from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, he began teaching archery at NSUML one week after becoming a Basic Archery Instructor for NASP. Coach Dodson has a unique situation at NSUML in that their entire building is round and thus his gym is pie-shaped, giving him limited area to set up his archery range. To ensure the safety of his students, Coach Dodson asked if the staff at Natchitoches NFH would spend a couple of days assisting him teach his

students archery. Coach Dodson's goal with bringing NASP to NSUML was to give the students the safest environment to learn and enjoy the sport of target archery, and to help bring a new team sport to the school. Archery gives everyone an equal opportunity to compete. A student doesn't need to have special skills or abilities to be competitive in archery. In many cases, students who would not try out for traditional school sports will learn through archery that they can be competitive on the school's archery team, thus improving their school experience. It has been our pleasure to introduce Coach Dodson to the NASP program and to help him implement NASP at NSUML. We look forward to continuing working with Coach Dodson and NSUML as well as introduce NASP to other schools in Natchitoches.



Students at NSU Middle Lab School taking aim with their new skills in archery.