



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Southeast Region

SOUTHEASTERN CURRENTS

JANUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

Home Page
 Behind the Scenes
 Bragging Rights
 Hats Off
 Photo Album
 Wage Grade
 Visitor Services



Restoring vital oyster reefs in Florida and Texas. Photo by Jeff Rester.

SARP: An effective partnership to manage the region's aquatics

The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) was initiated in 2001 to address the myriad issues related to the management of aquatic resources in the Southeast. These issues include significant threats to the region's aquatic resources, as illustrated by the fact that 34 percent of North American fish species and 90 percent of the native mussel species designated as endangered, threatened, or of special concern are found here. Given these stark realities, and the predicted increased pressure on Southeast aquatic resources in the future, SARP was established with the following mission:

With partners, protect, conserve, and restore aquatic resources including habitats throughout the Southeast, for the continuing benefit, use, and enjoyment of the American people.

SARP includes fish and wildlife agencies from 14 States (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia); the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions; the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and NOAA Fisheries. These entities have signed a Memorandum of Understanding pledging to work together for the conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Southeast. SARP has many other partners such as non-governmental entities to aide in achieving the mission of the partnership.

SARP focuses on six key issue areas identified by member groups as being areas of greatest concern and interest to the Southeast. The six Key Issue Areas are: Aquatic Habitat Conservation, Public Use, Imperiled Fish and Aquatic Species Recovery, Fishery Mitigation, Interjurisdictional Fisheries, Aquatic Nuisance Species.

The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership is one of six Fish Habitat Partnerships approved by the National Fish Habitat Board. The National Fish Habitat Action Plan is an attempt to address the loss and degradation of fish and aquatic habitat nationwide. The plan was created when an ad hoc group supported by the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council explored the notion of developing a partnership effort for fish and aquatic species on the scale of what was done for waterfowl in the 1980s. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan has worked wonders during the past two decades to boost waterfowl populations by forming strong local and regional partnerships to protect key habitats.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries are principal federal partners, but the National Plan brings together fisheries professionals and a unique blend of industry, government, tribal, academic, and conservation groups with a shared interest in protecting, restoring and enhancing the nation's waterways and fisheries. This non-regulatory and voluntary plan is locally and regionally based, and driven by grassroots partners. It is focused on fisheries protection, restoration, and enhancement in key watersheds, and uses the best scientific expertise on habitat management. The plan recognizes the need for long-term investments in protecting and restoring habitat and focusing local support for aquatic habitat conservation.

SARP has provided one regional component of the national plan through development of a Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan that identifies regional priorities for aquatic habitat conservation and restoration, and facilitates action at the local level addressing regional and national priorities.

This science-based, landscape-style system for habitat conservation seeks to effectively apply limited resources to priority areas on a regional basis in order to reverse current trends and protect the Southeast's aquatic resources well into the future. The purpose of the Plan is to maintain, restore, and conserve the quantity and quality of freshwater, estuarine, and marine habitats to support healthy, sustainable fish and aquatic communities and sustain public use for the benefit of all regionally and nationally. Multiple projects at many different levels will focus on eight objectives:

- Objective 1:** Establish, improve and maintain riparian zones
- Objective 2:** Improve or maintain water quality
- Objective 3:** Improve or maintain watershed connectivity
- Objective 4:** Improve or maintain appropriate hydrologic conditions for the support of biota in aquatic systems
- Objective 5:** Establish, improve or maintain appropriate sediment flows
- Objective 6:** Maintain and restore physical habitat in freshwater systems
- Objective 7:** Restore or improve the ecological balance in habitats negatively affected by nonindigenous invasive or problem species
- Objective 8:** Conserve, restore, and create coastal estuarine and marine habitats

Although focused on aquatic species and their habitat, SARP is an excellent example of Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) at work. SHC is a science-based framework for making management decisions on where and how to deliver conservation to achieve specific biological outcomes as efficiently as possible. The SHC's five elements of Biological Planning, Conservation Design, Conservation Delivery, Outcome-based monitoring, and Assumption-Driven Research were at the heart of SARP's early development. SARP has developed an Aquatic Action Plan which provides the blueprint for defining and prioritizing the challenges of aquatic species and habitat conservation. It also provides targets and goals for reaching each objective.

SARP is actively engaged in spatial models from collecting new data to consolidating existing data into a consistent format for broader use, all of which enables us to characterize the aquatic landscape broadly, but define courses of action both locally and regionally. Projects funded by the Southeast Fisheries Program through SARP have aimed at improving on-the-ground aquatic habitats. These habitat altering projects as well as many others throughout the partnership boundaries incorporate a monitoring component that documents the impact of these projects. At its core, SARP is a unique avenue for the Service's Southeast Region to implement SHC beyond agency's resources.

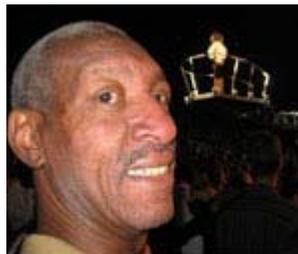
No single agency or organization can accomplish this task alone. Conservation strategies must occur on multiple levels with public-private partnerships. Local citizen support is needed, along with better community planning, to protect and preserve important

habitat. SARP will help initiate and coordinate multiple agency partnerships, especially where critical habitat crosses state boundaries. Cooperative agreements will be needed to align state and federal agency restoration efforts. Through working together we can make a difference by ensuring a future that maintains the biodiversity and wealth of natural resources which define our community, provide for quality of life, and attract people to our special region. Yet, these can be done strategically and with habitat at the forefront of our decisions. SARP and SHC are a partnership that needs no MOU, just a conservation effort!

More information on SARP can be obtained by visiting www.sarpaquatic.org or by visiting www.fishhabitat.org to learn more about the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

Submitted by Walter Boltin, Bears Bluff National Fish Hatchery, Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina

Behind the Scenes--



Johnnie and Tina in the same lens.
Photo by Billy Edwards.

Johnnie Gay enjoys Tina Turner concert

On November 10, 2008, Johnnie Gay's friends in the Southeast Regional Office sent him to see Tina Turner's concert in Atlanta. Johnnie calls Tina his girlfriend.

Johnnie works in Budget, Planning, and Financial Services and does so much every day for all the Southeast Region's employees that this was a small way to pay him back.

Billy Edwards from Engineering and several friends took Johnnie to the concert. They really enjoyed seeing his face light up when she played two of his favorite songs – "What's Love Got to Do With It" and "Proud Mary."

During the closing act, Tina was raised above the crowd using stage effects. You often hear "a picture is worth a thousand words" – take a brief glimpse at the photo and see for yourself... Mr. J and Tina in the same lens...

More photos in [Photo Album](#).

Submitted by Debbie Vess and Billy Edwards, Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia

Bragging Rights --



Traci Hameetman, administrative support assistant, stands next to the new hybrid vehicle, while Toni Westland, environmental education specialist sits in the new vehicle. Photo by Jim Mathisen.

J.N. "Ding" Darling goes GREEN in its fleet!

The J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge recently purchased its first hybrid vehicle, a 2009 Ford Escape Hybrid, as a replacement in its vehicle fleet. This new Visitor Services vehicle will not only save a lot on gas, but will help educate students at area schools about energy conservation.

"Demonstrating our commitment to energy conservation and reducing our carbon footprint is a high priority," said Refuge Manager Paul Tritaik. "By purchasing a fuel efficient, environmentally-friendly vehicle we set a good example to the public."

Submitted by Toni Westland, J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, Sanibel, Florida

Sturgeonfest

Seventy three enthusiastic volunteers spent more than 1,700 hours along with Service personnel from Welaka National Fish Hatchery, Eglin Air Force Base, the Daphne, Alabama, Ecological Services Field Office and the Southeast Regional Office, assisting Panama City, Florida Ecological Services Field Office staff this fall on the Choctawhatchee River. The participants netted federally-listed gulf sturgeon as they migrated from the freshwater to overwinter in the marine environment. More than 500 Gulf



Megan and Chris Gunter of Navarre, Florida, hold a gulf sturgeon. Photo by Frank Parauka.

sturgeons were collected and tagged during the daily dawn to dark netting operation that lasted four weeks. The gulf sturgeon population was estimated at 3,300 individuals with juveniles, sub-adults and adults all well represented in numerous year classes. A gulf sturgeon was collected that had been tagged 17 years ago in the same river! Then, the fish weighed 35 pounds and was 59 inches long. Now, the fish weighs 105 pounds and is 79 inches long.



Sean Thellen from Eglin Air Force Base, Carly Woodlief from the University of West Florida, and Chad Holloway of Eglin Air Force Base with 100-pound gulf sturgeon. Photo by Frank Parauka.

Submitted by Frank Parauka, Panama City, Florida, Field Office

Warm Springs biologist attends Outdoor Classroom Symposium

Nicole Rankin, fish biologist from the Warm Springs Fish Technology Center, participated in the 12th Annual Outdoor Classroom Symposium (OCS) on November 14, 2008 at the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Eatonton, Georgia. The OCS was hosted by the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia, a non-profit organization promoting communication and environmental education among professionals. This year's theme was "My Space is Outside: Connecting Kids to the World Wide Wonders of the Outdoors." Programs included hands-on sessions, presentations, and workshops. Participants learned how to incorporate recycling and online

technologies, such as bird, monarch, and amphibian monitoring programs, in outdoor education programs. Over 200 environmental educators, representing governmental and non-governmental agencies, organizations, and schools, were in attendance.

Submitted by Nicole Rankin, Warm Springs Fish Technology Center, Georgia

Fish passage and freshwater mussel conservation



Drought conditions affect crossing.
Photo by Bill Bouthillier.

Staff from the Warm Springs Fish Technology Center completed an extensive survey of stream crossings in the Sawhatchee Creek and Kirkland Creek watersheds of southwest Georgia to identify and prioritize barriers to fish passage. Both creeks have been designated as critical habitat for shinyrayed pocketbook, oval pigtoe, and gulf moccasinshell. Host fish support the larval life stages of these three mussels. Fish barriers can disrupt connectivity between stream reaches, impeding fish host movement, gamete transport, dispersal into newly suitable habitats, and food item transport. Approximately 30 road crossings and 35 river miles were assessed during this survey.



A culvert backwatered its entire length. Photo by Bill Bouthillier.

Submitted by Bill Bouthillier, Warm Springs Fish Technology Center, Georgia

A hatchery holiday

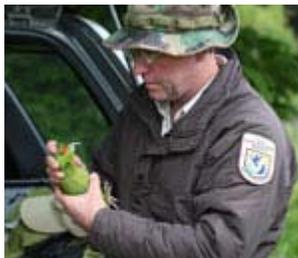
On November 29, 2008, Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery staff members and their families spread a little holiday spirit by participating in the 2008 Russell Springs Christmas Parade.

Project Leader James Gray, Fish Biologist Bob Clark, Bio Tech Chris Murphy, Volunteer Barbara Jones, and Volunteers Terry and Lynne Sammon, along with their families, utilized one of the distribution trucks for their float. The parade entry also included a special guest star, Goldie the Fish. Adding to the trout-tastic holiday theme, crowd participants were also treated to candy fish as the truck passed by. The crew eagerly looks forward to future outreach endeavors during the new year ahead.



Goldie the Fish. Photo by Amanda Patrick.

Submitted by Amanda Patrick, Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery, Jamestown, Kentucky



Thomas White holds a slender-billed parakeet. FWS Photo.

Fish and Wildlife Service biologist helps Chilean university with slender-billed parakeet research

Dr. Thomas White, Jr., a wildlife biologist with the Service's Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Program, visited Osorno, Chile, and the Universidad de Los Lagos (ULA) from October 11-23, 2008 to assist in the initiation of a collaborative ecological research project on the endemic slender-billed parakeet, a parrot species found only in southern Chile and for which there is virtually no ecological data. White is a co-investigator on the project with Dr. Jaime Jimenez of ULA and Ana Bertoldi, a ULA graduate student who is conducting the data collection in the field. The Service contributed to this research through a donation of radio telemetry equipment, and by allowing Dr. White to travel to Chile and participate in the project. During the visit, White also conducted a two-day workshop on wildlife radio telemetry at ULA. The workshop was attended by 25 students from several Chilean universities. Together, the telemetry training and the collaborative research project constitute important capacity building efforts for local biologists and researchers.

The research on the slender-billed parakeet, locally known as the Choroy, is designed to address a critical lack of information on this nationally endangered endemic species and the effects of past and current land use practices in southern Chile on its nesting ecology and prospects for long-term survival. Like most parrot species, the Choroy depends on natural cavities in large mature trees for nesting. Over the past decades however, large areas of southern Chile have been converted to intensive agricultural and cattle production, leaving only scattered remnants of the original forests in which the Choroyes now nest. This intensive agricultural use also prevents regeneration of young trees to replace the existing large trees once they die or are cut for firewood or fence posts. Moreover, the propensity of Choroyes to consume germinating grain crops frequently brings them into direct conflict with farmers who often resort to shooting the birds in order to prevent crop losses, even though they are considered endangered and protected under Chilean law.

Consequently, the research project will involve radio telemetry of adult and fledgling Choroyes to determine important habitat areas, identification and characterization of existing nesting areas, and landscape-level analyses of land use patterns in an attempt to determine the interaction between past and current land use practices and Choroy ecology. Results of this research will provide the scientific data necessary for formulating a comprehensive conservation plan to ensure the continued survival of this uniquely Chilean species and its co-existence with the important agricultural economy of southern Chile. People interested in volunteering or contributing time or resources to this effort should contact Dr. Jaime Jimenez by email at: jjimenez@ulagos.cl.

Submitted by Thomas White, Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Program, Rio Grande, Puerto Rico

Warm Springs Fish Health Center and Fish Hatchery participate in Harvest Hoe Down Parade



Chad's son Hunter is always a huge help. Photo by Jaci Zelko.

Hatchery employees Jaci Zelko and Chad Shirey, along with Fish Health Biologist Jill Popham, recently participated in the village of Warm Spring's Harvest Hoe Down Parade in October. Harvest Hoe Down is a fall festival that showcases local artisans and shops in the Warm Springs area. Chad drove one of the hatchery's trucks, while Jaci and Jill sat in the back to wave to the crowd and throw candy to all the people lining the street. Chad's son Hunter also rode with them and actually showed the girls the proper techniques for throwing candy without hitting someone in the head. All four had a great time and are making plans to participate in the parade next year.



Chad Shirey and Jill Popham are prepared to throw candy to the crowds. Photo by Jaci Zelko.

Submitted by Jaci Zelko, Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery, Warm Springs, Georgia

Public learns about sea turtle-friendly lighting

The spring season is often a time for new life. Brown grass is replaced with green, bright pink azaleas emerge, and the frigid air becomes soft and warm once again, making it one of the most beautiful times of the year on the Alabama coast.

Spring also marks a special time for female Alabama sea turtles. Starting in May, females make a special journey inland to start the cycle of life. They miraculously find the beach where they were born and nest, laying more than 100 eggs. A few months later, hatchlings will climb out of the sand and make the tough journey into the Gulf. The young turtles follow the light...literally. They instinctively follow the light reflecting on the water, which leads them home.



Sea turtle-friendly lighting. Photo by Denise Rowell.

Unfortunately, not all of those hatchlings will make it into the water. Artificial light surrounds many of Alabama's popular beaches, allowing tourists to see at night. Although artificial light is necessary for safety and security, it can also be bad news for hatchlings. The light often confuses them, causing disorientation. Instead of flapping their way back into the Gulf, the hatchlings will follow the artificial light inland. They'll often end up in a condo parking lot or busy road, succumbing to dehydration, predators, or getting hit by a car.

In fact, a heavily lighted beach can deter female sea turtles from nesting at all. Females will only nest on dark beaches. If they can't find a place to nest, they'll sometimes shed their eggs into the water.



Loggerhead sea turtle hatchling. Photo by Roger Reetz.

That's why biologists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Alabama Ecological Services Field Office felt compelled to teach the public about saving the sea turtles. With the help of "Share the Beach" volunteers, biologist Dianne Ingram spear-headed a sea turtle lighting workshop on November 13, 2008, at the Gulf Shores Activity Center.

"The focus of the workshop was to teach beachfront landowners and businesses about the type of lighting appropriate for nesting sea turtles," explained Ingram.

"What we teach them could result in darker beaches that attract more female sea turtles to nest in Alabama and help save the lives of hatchlings of these federally threatened and endangered species."

More than 70 people attended two sessions, where three Service biologists made presentations. Lorna Patrick, a biologist with the Panama City, Florida Ecological Services Field Office, spoke about the history of the sea turtle, the creature's historic decline, and current threats. She also discussed light pollution, its detrimental effects, and provided sea turtle-friendly lighting options.

"We know we need light for our safety and security, but doing both is possible," said Patrick. "Place lights as low as you need it for the task at hand."

Jereme Phillips, the Refuge Manager at the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, spoke on the current population of Alabama's sea turtles, including hurdles and accomplishments. Ingram talked to folks about the recent efforts toward lighting, and future goals and projects in Alabama. Ingram says local municipalities and city leaders are already starting to see the light.

"The City of Gulf Shores adopted an outdoor ordinance in 2006, initiating light control on the beaches of Alabama," said Ingram. "The workshop reached many concerned beach-front owners and has sparked interest from both the City of Gulf Shores and the City of Orange Beach to do more."

In the end, educating the public is the best way to change harmful habits and help conserve the beloved creatures of the Gulf Coast. That's why biologists at the Alabama Field Office are committed to conducting more outreach programs.

"We can't do it by ourselves. With the public's help, Alabama sea turtles can find great success here on the Gulf Coast," said Ingram.

If you are interested in additional information on how to make lighting friendlier for sea turtles and other wildlife, visit www.fws.gov/panamacity/species/turtlerestoration.html, www.darksky.org, or www.myfwc.com/seaturtle.

Submitted by Denise Rowell, Alabama Ecological Services Field Office, Daphne, Alabama

More than 500 residents spend morning collecting seeds and enjoying nature

More than 500 local adults and children volunteered their time on Saturday, October 25, 2008, to help the Everglades at the Marshall Foundation's eighth Annual Cypress Harvest and Student Photography Project.

The crowd, which included families, individuals, scout troops and community groups, collected 175 pounds of cypress seeds at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Boynton Beach. The seeds of the native, wetland tree will be germinated into saplings at a local nursery, and then planted to help restore the Florida Everglades.

Volunteers' efforts were captured on film by 60 students taking part in the Marshall Foundation's Student Photography Project. This unique project, held in conjunction with the Cypress Harvest, aimed to expose underprivileged youth to nature photography.



Collecting cypress seeds. Photo by Stephen Hanley.

"Our main objective is to get individuals and families involved in hands-on Everglades restoration. We've discovered time and again that the more exposure people have to the Everglades, the more interested they are in preserving it," observed Josette Kaufman, executive director of the non-profit Arthur R. Marshall Foundation. The Harvest is held annually and is completely free of charge to participants.

Submitted by Susanna Laurenti from the Arthur R Marshall Foundation



Audubon staff and volunteers clear fields as a part of native grassland restoration. Photo by Joe Cockrell.

Pick-Up-Sticks Day is for the birds

The staff of the Audubon South Carolina State Office, volunteers, and the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Coordinator gathered recently in muddy fields after a day of heavy rains. The object was to walk through the fields, bend over, pick up sticks, and put them into piles... all day long. It was just one of the steps in a native grassland restoration project undertaken by Audubon South Carolina to improve habitat for declining, disturbance-dependant migratory birds. The site is a cut-over, former loblolly pine plantation Audubon recently acquired as an upland addition to its Francis Beidler Forest. In the fall, the site was treated with herbicide and stumps were removed. Now that the remaining sticks are removed and the surface smoothed, fields are ready for seeding. The nearest commercially available ecotypes of native warm season grass seed will be combined with locally hand harvested seed and planted with a grass drill in February 2008. Financial and technical assistance is being provided by Partners for Fish and Wildlife.

Submitted by Joe Cockrell, Charleston, South Carolina, Ecological Services Field Office

Alligator River's Christmas float wins first prize

Christmas came early at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge when the Refuge float was awarded first place at the local Christmas parade in Manteo, North Carolina. Refuge employees, along with a slew of volunteers, represented Alligator River's extensive fire program by expressing our theme, "Fire Can Be Friend or Foe; Have a SAFE and MERRY Christmas." Volunteers awed the crowd by turning to their wild sides and taking on the rolls of the blue goose, the American alligator, and the elusive red wolf. Eight local children were Junior Refuge Fire Fighters in training, completely equipped with Nomax, hard hats, flaming drip torches, and blinged-up water hoses. The sooty-faced Junior Fire Fighters dedicatedly fought a wall of flames protecting the habitat and its many species of wildlife, of course while waving and wishing everyone a "Merry Fishmas." The Marsh Master also was featured in the parade, showing the public one of many unique pieces of equipment needed to manage prescribed burns and wild fires in a pocosin and marsh environment.



Abbey Reibel of Alligator River, accepts the first place ribbon for her brain child - the refuge float. Photo by Donnie Harris.

Contributed by Abbey Reibel, Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, Manteo, North Carolina



The pond bottom was rehabbed by laying a liner, several inches of sand, and then topped with 4-5 inches of gravel. Photo by Jaci Zelko.

Pond 43 at Warm Springs Hatchery gets a facelift!

It took several days, 80 tons of sand, and 178 tons of pea gravel, but an impressive looking pond finally emerged from the mud and muck. The process took over a week in early December, but all the hard work was well worth it. The gravel bottom will help with several water quality issues in the pond. A liner was placed on the bottom and sides of the pond, followed by several inches of sand and then four to five inches of gravel to minimize the suspended sedimentation that was a problem in the past. The hatchery decided to rehab the pond bottom to minimize the workload of sand filters used to filter out suspended sedimentation before the water was pumped into the mussel building. This pond is exclusively used as a water source for the mussel building. Water quality will be monitored on a weekly basis and compared to a second clay-bottom pond which is also used as a water source for the mussel building. Hopefully, all of these renovations will improve the quality of the water supplied to the mussels held in refugia at the hatchery.



We immediately began filling up the pond after putting in sand and gravel. Photo by Jaci Zelko.

Submitted by Jaci Zelko, Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery, Georgia



Christmas tree at Vieques National Wildlife Refuge. FWS Photo.

Vieques' kids learn about coral reefs through Christmas tree decorating

Did you know that 2008 was the International Year of the Reef (IYOR)?

IYOR was a global campaign to raise awareness about coral reef ecosystems, their value and the threats they face, and to inspire action to preserve this unique resource. In Vieques, coral reefs have significant social, cultural, environmental, and economic value.

The staff of Vieques National Wildlife Refuge reached out to the local elementary school. Although many of the students were aware of this unique resource, many didn't realize how easily it can be destroyed. We decided to motivate the teachers and students to make Christmas ornaments representing the coral reef ecosystem. Students made different types of corals and fishes, including the well-known clown fish (NEMO). After all the ornaments were collected and hung on the Christmas tree, the tree was exhibited in a highly visited area. The kids were thrilled.

Submitted by Gisella Burgos, Caribbean Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Puerto Rico

Two government agencies, one goal: the wildlife and the people

During the past year, two government agencies worked on a wetland restoration project at Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge. The Puerto Rico Commonwealth government, represented by the Lajas Town Municipal office, and the federal government, represented by the Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge, decided to join efforts to achieve a vital project benefiting the refuge and the nearby communities. The lagoon once was a large, open expanse of water and one of the most important freshwater habitats for migrating waterfowl and aquatic birds in Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, due to heavy agricultural runoff, containing fertilizers and pesticides, more than 90 percent of the lagoon is choked with cattails which have restricted nesting and feeding areas for these water birds. This project provides the refuge staff with better and more accurate water level control structures to help manage the lagoon for aquatic birds and minimize flooding issues in the area.

With \$60,000 in funding from the Wetland Restoration Project, both government agencies were able to complete this project. The project involved the construction of new water control gates to manage water control levels at the lagoon, a lower crossing bridge, and new culverts to minimize flooding to the nearby communities. It also involved the extension and repairs of three main dikes and the removal of a large portion of cattails and unwanted vegetation covering most of the lagoon.

Both agencies held a press conference at the refuge grounds. Among the attendees to the conference were the local Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources Secretary Javier Arocho; Lajas City Mayor Marcos



Blake Mathys, January 15th, 2008
Laguna Cartagena, Puerto Rico

Turín; Laguna Cartagena Refuge Manager Oscar Díaz; and the Caribbean Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex Project Leader Susan Silander. A group of enthusiastic kids from the local elementary school planted more than 25 native trees near the observation tower at the lagoon to help with the reforestation efforts at the refuge.

The restoration efforts completed at Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge produced extraordinary benefits for the wildlife. During the last 10 months, many rare bird species were observed, including the Aplomado falcon, first record for the Caribbean, and more recently the Black-bellied whistling duck, a rare species for Puerto Rico. During the event, the public and the press also toured the new public use facilities built last year by the refuge's maintenance staff. These facilities include an observation tower, a boardwalk and a fishing dock, a kiosk with interpretive panels, a parking area and a blind platform for birders and researchers.

Submitted by David Bocanegra, Caribbean Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Puerto Rico



Batacular event. FWS Photo.

A Batacular event at Vieques National Wildlife Refuge

More than 50 excited kids visited the Vieques National Wildlife Refuge to see, touch, and learn about backyard bats. Bats are not only for spooky activities during Halloween, they're about zapping bugs, dispersing seeds, and just appreciating the great benefits we receive from them. Vieques, a small island off the coast of Puerto Rico, is home to a variety of bats. We have insect, fruit, and fish-eating bats. Recently, refuge biologists and volunteers found two new nectivorous bats in the abandoned munitions storage bunkers at the west side of the refuge -

Leach's Single-leaf Bat and Brown Flower Bat.

After the bat talk featuring live bats, visitors enjoyed a creepy night walk and helped us in our bat mist netting activity.



Bat mist netting activity.
Credit: USFWS

Submitted by Gisella Burgos, Caribbean Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Puerto Rico



Collecting fur from an Indiana bat for isotope analysis. Photo by Robert Currie.

Biologists get down to the atomic level to track bat migration patterns

Isotopes are versions of a chemical element that differ in the number of neutrons. The different isotopes of an element aren't distributed evenly across the landscape, and distribution is generally linked to latitude and elevation - for example, isotopes with more neutrons are heavier and tend to sink and thus are found lower than lighter isotopes. As a result, scientists can look at the isotopes in body tissue, which enter the body as part of the food and water consumed and air breathed, and get an idea of where an animal has been.

This approach has long been used in researching bird migrations, and Dr. Eric Britzke of the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers, working with Service biologists from the Frankfort, Kentucky, Cookeville, Tennessee, and Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Field Offices is using it to help determine migration patterns for endangered Indiana bats in Tennessee and Kentucky. The bats molt in mid-summer, and the new fur contains isotopes that enter the bat's body as the fur grows. Examining the isotopes in the hair collected at the hibernation sites enables researchers to determine where the bats spent their summer.

Submitted by Gary Peeples, Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Field Office

Partners for Fish and Wildlife biologists share expertise and experience

The Service's stream conservation work was discussed at October's Stream Restoration in the Southeast – Advancing Science and Practice conference in Asheville, North Carolina. Robin Goodloe of the Georgia Ecological Services Field Office spoke about identifying priority streams for mitigation actions and developing uniform monitoring and success criteria. Anita Goetz of the Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Office talked about her experience addressing cultural resource issues in a stream restoration project. Also, Andrea Leslie, of North Carolina's Ecosystem Enhancement Program, discussed an aquatic organism passage project in North Carolina's Little Tennessee River basin, a multi-partner project involving the Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Field Office and Warm Springs Regional Fisheries Center.



An inventory of aquatic life passage issues in the Little Tennessee River Basin. Photo by Gary Peeples.

Submitted by Gary Peeples, Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Field Office



Indiana bat with a sensor to track body temperature. Photo by Robert Currie.

Biologists respond to threat from White Nose Syndrome

Biologists from the Frankfort, Kentucky, Cookeville, Tennessee, and Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Field Offices are collecting information about the endangered Indiana bat to prepare for a potential White Nose Syndrome (WNS) outbreak in the Southeast. White nose syndrome is a mysterious ailment linked to the deaths of thousands of bats in the Northeast.

A symptom of WNS is especially low hibernation body weight; however, biologists in the Northeast were handicapped when they didn't have enough data to quantify weight loss and gain a clear idea of what's abnormal. Service biologists in the Southeast recently teamed with other federal, state and private partners in Tennessee and Kentucky to collect data on the pre-hibernation weight of Indiana bats, providing a much-needed baseline for future comparisons.

The scientists also put sensors on 20 bats in a Kentucky cave which will provide information on the bats' body temperature throughout hibernation. Since body temperature rises when a bat is awake, this gives biologists an idea of how often healthy bats

wake up during hibernation, important since frequent stirring uses up fat reserves and can lead to low body weight.

Submitted by Gary Peeples, Asheville, North Carolina, Ecological Services Field Office

Record numbers of waterfowl wintering on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge

A recent waterfowl survey documented almost 42,000 waterfowl in the farmfields of Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Among the birds, over 32,000 were Northern Pintails and 5,800 were Tundra Swans. Other species included American Black Duck, Gadwall, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and American Coot.

"That's more ducks than I've ever heard of on this refuge," Deputy Refuge Manager Scott Lanier said. "The fact that over 30,000 are pintails makes it even greater."

"The significance of eastern North Carolina to the eastern population of northern pintails is without parallel in the entire Atlantic Flyway," added John Stanton, supervisory migratory bird biologist for the area. "Alligator River and Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuges are the diamonds!"



Migratory Bird Biologist John Stanton describes Alligator River as one of the "diamonds" for pintails. Photo by Jeff Lewis.



Northern Pintails by the thousands are wintering on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Bruce Creef, maintenance supervisor for the refuge, described the areas being used by the birds as mostly flooded cropland, some moist soil areas, and some permanent ponds. The birds are all over the farming units. Almost 10 miles of designated "wildlife drive" border these fields, providing a comfortable way to view these birds and other wildlife on the refuge.

Southeast Regional Director Sam Hamilton and Deputy Regional Director Cindy Dohner were fortunate enough to time a refuge visit to coincide with the waterfowl.

"Thanks to you and your staff, we were able to see them all and it was amazing," said Dohner. "Thanks for making sure the refuge is managed in a way to get these results!"

For information about the best places to go to observe wildlife, visit <http://www.fws.gov/alligatorriver>.

Submitted by Bonnie Strawser, Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, Manteo, North Carolina

Celebration of Service - Learning event and Veteran's Day flag raising at Southport, Florida, Elementary School

On November 13, 2008, about 500 students, parents, teachers and members of the community attended an event, Celebration of

Service-Learning, organized by Southport Elementary School in Florida. The Panama City, Florida, Ecological Services and Fisheries Field Office participated in the event which educated people about community services and the importance of protecting the environment. Field Office staff demonstrated how the Service conducts fishery investigations using gill nets and electrofishing.

Submitted by Laura Jenkins, Panama City, Florida, Ecological Services and Fisheries Field Office

Friends Group --



Rosla Plant accepts check from Karen Redick of Wal-Mart. Photo by Friends' member Mike Plant.

Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery receives check from Wal-Mart

On October 7, 2008, Karen Redick of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center 6054 in LaGrange, Georgia, presented a \$1,500 check to Rosla Plant, staff liaison to the Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery.

The funds will be used to support the non-profit Friends Group's efforts and programs. Recently, the Friends supported the Chattahoochee Council of Boy Scouts' God, and Country Encampment when more than 300 Scouts and leaders toured the aquarium and public use area on September 13. During the encampment, Friends' members manned various stations to showcase the variety of activities and career opportunities the Service offers. On September 20, Friends' members provided hot dogs, drinks, and hatchery information for Open House participants. On September 27, the Friends traveled to West Point Lake Highland Marina to support the Children's Miracle Network's Camp Sunshine bass tournament fundraiser. The Friends Group supported the event by providing family activities and by donating raffle prizes for the fundraiser.

Other 2008 efforts the Friends have supported include the annual Kids Fish for Fun Day and a Big Brother and Big Sister Atlanta Chapter's fish event. In addition, Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery provided three purple martin rack house systems, wood duck boxes, bluebird houses, and bird feeders to support migratory birds and the Audubon February Great Backyard Bird Count. The Friends Group also provided materials, interpretative signs, and equipment for the one-mile nature trail on the hatchery and the carnivorous plant display. A tree grant was secured by the Friends Group providing 30 trees to replace native tree species lost during the past several years on the hatchery.

The Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery has provided many services since the group was founded in 2003. Four of the Founding Board Members Ray Schmeck, Tim Coates, Frida Powers, and Mike Plant were honored with the Regional Director's Award in 2007 for their support and dedication to the Service.

For more information about the Warm Springs Regional Fisheries Center and the Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery, or if you would like to join the Friends Group, please see these web sites: www.fws.gov/warmsprings or www.warmspringsfishfriends.org .

Submitted by Rosla Plant, Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery, Georgia

Friends

By Noreen Clough, former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Regional Director and one of the founding members of the Friends of Warm Springs Hatchery.

Such a small word with such large implied meaning. We all have them -- friends. And we all are one. But now, there's a new set of "friends" on the block. During August, while many of us were fishing (I was doing mine down in Costa Rica), a group of dedicated volunteers and fisheries professionals were meeting in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, putting together the "National Fisheries Friends Partnership."

In 2006, the National Fish Hatchery System Volunteer Act was passed to enhance the existing volunteer program of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), most of which has been focused on the National Wildlife Refuge System. Now, through the Fisheries Friends Partnership additional focus can be provided to promote community partnerships that benefit National Fish Hatcheries and FWS fisheries program offices throughout the US. The goal of the program is to enlist volunteers to work with FWS staff in promoting conservation of fisheries and aquatic resources, providing environmental education opportunities for the public, and advocating the mission of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS), its associated Fish Technology Centers, and FWS Fisheries Offices that work with states and others in managing interjurisdictional fishery resources.

I hope most of you have had the opportunity to visit a National Fish Hatchery. There are 70 of them in all, in 35 states, plus 7 Fish Technology Centers and 9 Fish Health Centers. Many of them are historic properties with lovely old buildings and serene grounds in beautiful settings – the Hatchery System began in 1871. One of the oldest is D.C. Booth in Spearfish, ND. It was established in 1896 and today is a living museum as well as a hatchery continuing its original mission of raising trout for the Black Hills area recreational fishery.

When the NFHS was established, its purpose was to provide domestic food fish to replace declining native fish due to natural or human influences, as well as to expand recreational fishing opportunities. The system has evolved over time, changed, endured and grown to meet modern needs. While many National Fish Hatcheries in the southeast culture trout to mitigate for lost recreational fisheries due to Corps of Engineers dams, today the system has a unique responsibility in helping to recover a variety of endangered and threatened aquatic species, including freshwater mussels, as well as working with national fisheries and aquatic resource restoration and research programs. This includes work involving Great Lakes lake trout, Atlantic Coast striped bass, Atlantic and Pacific salmon, technologies for the culture of endangered sturgeon, advances in fish health, and many other things too numerous to mention.

During my time with the FWS, I had the privilege of overseeing the operations of the Hatchery System. I gained a real appreciation for its diverse mission as well as the outstanding unique expertise and dedication of the folks who staff them for the benefit of the American public. I was so impressed that, when I retired, I became – well, you know – a "friend."

Yep, I was one of the original handful of volunteers that got together 5 years ago at the behest of FWS hatchery employee Rosla Plant, to form "Friends in Support of the Hatchery" (F.I.S.H.), at Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center, in the town where FDR took his therapeutic baths – Warm Springs, Georgia. Since that time we've grown in numbers and

accomplishments – everything from renovating the visitor center to planting native trees. But the real achievements have been in being able to provide environmental education and fishing opportunities to schools and youth groups. It's these types of activities that foster future anglers and fisheries biologists, and youth who appreciate and support natural resource conservation.

Rosla and her "friends" do such a good job that last year, Friends of Warm Springs received the FWS Regional Director's Award for outstanding community outreach and facility improvement. But the icing on the cake came just this past week. Rosla was notified by the Wal-Mart Distribution Center in LaGrange, GA, that Friends of Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery is the recipient of a \$1,500 Wal-Mart Community Grant to help further our efforts. Doesn't get much better than that for a Friends Group!

Treat yourself. Got to the website (<http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/nfhs>) to learn more about the National Fish Hatchery System and see if there's a Hatchery near you. If so, take your kids and make a visit, learn what they do – I think you'll be pleasantly surprised. And ask if they have a "Friends" group. You might even want to think about expanding your own circle of "friends."

This article was reprinted from the September issue of Bass Conservation Journal. It is reprinted here with the permission of the author Noreen Clough and Bassmaster.com.

Hats Off -



Cindy Dohner gives Dale Hall, outgoing Service Director, a hug after he presented her award. Photo by Garry Tucker.

Cynthia Dohner receives Distinguished Service Award

On December 15, 2008, Cynthia Dohner, deputy regional director of the Southeast Region, received the Department Of Interior's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award.

"Cynthia Dohner's dedication to public service produces major regional and national accomplishments, resulting in long-term benefits for both wildlife and people," says Dirk Kempthorne, secretary of the Interior. "Her collaborative methods and her win-win approach to conflict resolution have led to increased respect for the Service and its mission and to stronger relationships with its conservation partners."

Dohner's leadership has included hands-on involvement in Strategic Habitat Conservation issues, emergency preparedness initiatives, and workforce planning. She has supported several employee-benefit programs, such as teleworking, mentoring, and Regional listening sessions. This year, she led efforts to secure water allocations for endangered mussels in the Appalachian-Chattahoochee-Flint River System.

As the former Assistant Regional Director of Ecological Services, She also was responsible for several major accomplishments involving endangered species. Nationally, she drafted and ensured the completion of the Service's "No Surprises" rule, codifying landowner guarantees under the Act's Habitat Conservation Program. Regionally, Dohner guided Ecological Services through the controversial listing of the Alabama sturgeon, the resolution of interagency conflicts over Cape Sable Seaside sparrow protections in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project, and the settlement of a major lawsuit over West Indian Manatee protection.

Submitted by Elsie Davis, External Affairs, Atlanta, Georgia



Johnnie Gay. Photo by Garry Tucker.

Johnnie Gay and Brian Hardison receive special recognition:

Outgoing Service Director Dale Hall presented Johnnie Gay of Budget, Planning and Finance, and Brian Hardison of Safety and Health, with the Director's Belt Buckle in appreciation for their tireless efforts on behalf of the Service and its mission to conserve America's fish and wildlife resources. The presentation took place on December 15, 2008, in the Southeast Regional Office.



Brian Hardison. Photo by Garry Tucker.

Ronnie Haynes, Richard Nehrling, and Roger Schulz receive Superior Service Awards

On December 15, 2008, outgoing Service Director Dale Hall presented Department of Interior Superior Service Awards to Dr. Ronnie Haynes and Roger Schulz in Atlanta, Georgia. Richard Nehrling also was recognized with a Superior Service Award; but, he was not able to be present during the ceremony.



Regional Director Sam Hamilton and outgoing Service Director Dale Hall present Dr. Ronnie Haynes with his award. Photo by Garry Tucker.

Dr. Ronnie Haynes:

Since 1993, when the Southeast Region's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program originated, Dr. Haynes has served as its Director.

"Dr Haynes' foresight and leadership in working with biologists in all Service programs have not only influenced the restoration of thousands of acres of wetlands and uplands, but also taught a generation of Service biologists to think in terms of on-the-ground results, not program boundaries," said Hall. "His ability to lead restoration from an ecosystem perspective and to efficiently manage a large and complex program will have a lasting legacy."

Under Dr. Haynes' guidance, The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has restored an average of 14,000 acres and 50 miles of habitat every year for the last seven years

Richard Nehrling:

Nehrling received his award in recognition of his contributions to fisheries conservation and management. He has worked for fisheries in three regional offices, three National Fish Hatcheries, one National Wildlife Refuge, and the Washington Office.

“Richard Nehrling’s career is distinguished by exceptional leadership skills, outstanding technical expertise, and the highest level of integrity,” said Hall. “Through his unwavering support for the National Fish Hatchery System, he has significantly influences the direction, advancement, and success of the National Fish Hatchery System and the Fisheries program.”

One of his most significant accomplishments was his role in developing the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership or SARP comprised of state and federal agencies and private organizations. SARP is the driving force and model for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. He also played a primary role in the development of three fisheries reports showcasing the Service’s integration of budget and performance.

Roger Schulz:

Schulz received his award in recognition of his achievements in fisheries conservation and management. He has supported fisheries through his work in three regional offices, seven National Fish Hatcheries, one Fish Technology Center, and the Washington Office.

“Roger Schulz consistently demonstrates his exceptional technical expertise, leadership skills, and professionalism,” said Hall. “Because of his well-rounded experience, he plays a pivotal role in the management of the Southeast Region’s Fisheries program and the advancement of the National Fisheries program.”

Schulz helped develop SARP. He also helped formulate a study showing the positive economic effects from fishing rainbow trout produced at a National Fish Hatchery. A strong advocate for environmental education, he helped increase fishing opportunities for disabled people and senior citizens at Southeastern National Fish Hatcheries.



Outgoing Service Director Dale Hall presents Roger Schulz with his award. Photo by Garry Tucker.

Submitted by Elsie Davis, External Affairs, Atlanta, Georgia

Photo Album --

2008 Great Delta Bear Affair honors Theodore Roosevelt -- more photos



Fourth-graders get an up-close look at an endangered indigo snake during Herpetologist Terry Vandevanter's "Mississippi Snakes" demonstration at the annual Great Delta Bear Affair Youth Education Day. Photo by Connie Dickard.



Storyteller Doris Jones captivates children and adults alike with her tall tales of black bears and other fascinating wildlife yarns. Photo by Connie Dickard.

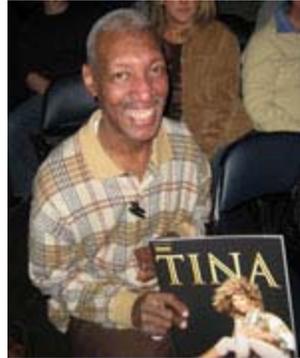


Theodore Roosevelt (Case Hicks) describes his famous 1902 bear hunt to a group of fourth-grade students from the Mississippi delta. Photo by Connie Dickard.



This four-student high school team from Sharkey-Issaquena Academy competes in the brain bowl portion of the Great Delta Bear Affair's Wildlife Olympics. Photo by Connie Dickard.

Johnnie Gay enjoys Tina Turner concert -- more photos



Johnnie enjoys the concert.
Photo by Billy Edwards.



Tina Turner. Photo by Billy Edwards.

Visitor Services --

2008 Great Delta Bear Affair honors Theodore Roosevelt



Mississippi native Elvis Presley (impersonator Tim Johnson) sings "Happy Birthday Mr. President" to Theodore Roosevelt (living historian Case Hicks). Photo by Connie Dickard.

The seventh annual Great Delta Bear Affair (GDBA) was held on October 25, 2008, and attracted more than 6,000 people to the quaint Mississippi delta town of Rolling Fork. In addition to raising awareness about black bears in the state, it also commemorated Theodore Roosevelt's sesquicentennial birthday and themed the event "Bearing it all for 150 years – the legacy and the legend."

Case Hicks from Colorado, nationally known Theodore Roosevelt living historian, was the center of attention for the 2008 festival and related activities. Hicks, dressed as President Roosevelt in his formal best, was the master of ceremonies for the Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge dedication program held on the main stage during the festival. VIP speakers for the dedication were elected officials from the federal to the local levels, significant players in refuge establishment, and refuge managers including Holly Gaboriault, deputy area supervisor from the Southeast Regional Office. At the end of the ceremony, a 150th birthday cake was presented to Hicks, along with a super-sized greeting card fashioned by the Southeast Region's nationally recognized graphic artist Ellen Marcus.



Surrounded by the Teddy Queens, Theodore Roosevelt (Case Hicks) blows out the candles on his 150th birthday cake. Photo by Connie Dickard.

Birthday cake was also served during the pre-festival, Friday night fundraiser. Hicks, re-enacting TR, was again the focus as he was surrounded by the local phenomenon the "Teddy Queens" paying homage the President and the iconic creation attributed to Roosevelt – the beloved Teddy bear.



Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge dedication ceremony speakers (from left) Holt Collier (re-enactor Ollie Morganfield), Theodore Roosevelt (living historian Case Hicks), Senator Thad Cochran's field representative Leon Bramlett, Sharkey County Board of Supervisors President Bill Newsom, FWS Deputy Area Supervisor Holly Gaboriault, Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Foundation Board Chairman Clarke Reed, Executive Director Wildlife Mississippi James Cummins, Mississippi Author and Attorney Minor Ferris Buchanan, and Theodore Roosevelt Refuge Manager Joe Fontaine. Photo by Connie Dickard.

Hicks, clad in Rough Riders' attire, also was a presenter during the Great Delta Bear Affair Youth Education Day on Friday, October 24. Youth Education Day provides an exciting and didactic field trip for about 450 fourth graders where they learn about natural resources, the environment, conservation and of course, black bears. Hicks, and Holt Collier re-enactor Ollie Morganfield, talked with the students from all around the Mississippi delta about Theodore Roosevelt's renowned 1902 bear hunt in Sharkey County, Mississippi. Holt Collier was Roosevelt's legendary guide for that famous hunt more than a century ago. Morganfield, an employee of the Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge Complex, was by Hicks' side for most of the weekend's GDBA events.

In addition to all the Roosevelt-featured activities, the Great Delta Bear Affair also offered: the Wildlife Olympics competition for high school teams, a horse-trail ride, the long-distance black bear bicycle ride, a 5K run/walk, tours of prehistoric Indian mounds, live music all day long, arts and crafts, educational seminars, storytelling, children's amusements, food, food, food, and an incredible fireworks display to conclude one of the best fun-filled family days in the South. For more photos go to [Photo Album](#).

Submitted by Connie Light Dickard, Mississippi Field Office, Jackson, Mississippi

Wage Grade Profile --

Sheldon Hawkins of Bears Bluff National Fish Hatchery



Sheldon Hawkins. Photo by James Henne.

As the only Wage Grade employee at Bears Bluff and a certified electrician, Maintenance Mechanic Sheldon Hawkins has a heavy and diverse workload.

"I never do the same job two days in a row," says Sheldon. "I enjoy the variety and challenge involved in my work."

Sheldon was primarily responsible for the design and construction of a new fish culture building, specially designed for the spawning and rearing of Atlantic sturgeon. An Atlantic sturgeon can exceed 12 feet in length and weigh over 800 pounds. Sheldon designed a 4,000 square foot pole-barn style building that contains four fiberglass tanks, as well as two water treatment systems complete with temperature control and biofiltration. He also constructed a modified egg hatching system within this building. All of the fish holding systems have the capability to filter, reuse, and control the temperature of water in order to condition fish to spawn. The fish culture building was designed with the flexibility to rear both fresh and saltwater fish species. Although designed primarily for Atlantic sturgeon culture, the building has already been used to culture American shad, a species of concern in South Carolina.

"He has the ability to improvise and multitask," says Kent Ware, hatchery manager. "We often ask for Sheldon's advice when we are evaluating new or existing fish culture systems. He possesses a unique ability to devise innovative ways of accomplishing the task at hand."

Sheldon has worked at Bear's Bluff National Fish Hatchery, located on Wadmalaw Island in South Carolina, for about six years. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting and offshore fishing. He and his wife Debbie have a son, Brian, and a daughter, Emma.

Submitted by Elsie Davis, External Affairs, Atlanta, Georgia

[◆ Southeast Region's Home](#) [◆ Privacy](#) [◆ FOIA](#) [◆ Disclaimer](#) [◆ Contact Us](#) [◆ Search](#) [◆ Regions](#) [◆ Archived SE Currents](#) [◆](#)