

Outreach Approach by Field Station
Endangered Species Day: May 15, 2009
Southeast Region
Updated: May 7, 2009

Alabama: This year, biologists with the Alabama Field Office will be very busy in a commendable effort to recognize Endangered Species Day. On May 12th, biologists Dianne Ingram, Andy Ford, Josh Rowell, Jodie Smithem and public affairs specialist Denise Rowell will participate in a bio-blitz at Fairhope Intermediate School in Fairhope, Alabama. A bio-blitz is a 24-hour study of an area to determine all of the organisms living there. Bio-blitzes have been held all over the world and are a great way of getting scientists together with volunteers to explore and identify species. Four hundred-and-sixty students will be looking for organisms in an outdoor classroom and in the grassy areas around the back of the school. Our biologists will work with the students to help them identify these species. We will also provide a seine to help identify aquatic organisms. This bio-blitz will be divided into groups of organisms, including birds, mammals, fish and pond creatures, insects, amphibians and reptiles, trees and shrubs, and finally, weeds and wildflowers.

Our office will also kick-off a series of events on May 15th. Biologists Dan Everson and Bruce Porter will be participating in EstuariesLive! through Mobile Bay NEP and Weeks Bay Reserve. They will present two live nationwide broadcasts over the Internet to middle and high school students. The topic will be long leaf pine habitat and gopher tortoises. Our biologists will also participate in another event called "Nurturing Nature: The Science of Protecting Our Environment." We will be joining students at Elsanor School in Robertsedale, Alabama for a science expo. The students will form groups that will visit "stations" manned by biologists. Each station will present a problem in the form of a question, hypothesis, experiment, analysis and conclusion. We hope to challenge the kids, and make them aware of environmental issues in our area. The students will rotate through each station every fifteen minutes. The expo kicks off at 8:00 a.m. and wraps up at 2:30 p.m. Through our efforts, we hope to turn students into environmental stewards at a young age.

Arkansas: Endangered Species Day at the Museum of Discovery, Little Rock. Conway, AR Ecological Services FWS staff will have two days [May 8 and 9th] at the Museum of Discovery to celebrate endangered species work. The event is sponsored by Ecological Conservation Organization or ECO. We will set up a booth and give presentations on listed species, like Arkansas' several endangered mussels. We will provide materials and conservation handouts to teachers and students. This event will be similar to last year and be geared to being fun and interactive where museum goers can ask FWS staff direct questions.

Florida:
PCFL –

The theme this year will focus on problem solving and the conservation of threatened and endangered species that occur in the Florida panhandle. Middle school Gifted Program of 7th and 8th graders will participate. The students will learn about threatened and endangered species; a problem will be presented and the student teams will have to find a solution. As part of the problem-solving, the students will have hands on training using tools including Geographic Personal Systems units (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to help generate an answer to the problem. Finally, each team group will present their project solution to the school. Last year, three elementary schools from Bay County participated. This year the school activities are already underway and they will run up to Endangered Species Day.

Panama City, FL Ecological Services FWS staff will also join ZooWorld in Panama City to help out at their May 16, Endangered Species Day Festival. The festival will include a lot of fun activities, like scavenger hunts, live animal displays, face painting, and an Endangered Species walk.

SOFL – Two local NPR interviews are being planned and taped for air, both on endangered species. The first will air the 5th of May and the second will air the 20th of May. The South Florida office will also be hanging a banner on the street frontage of their building and welcoming and working with the community.

JAFL - We will be setting up at the Jacksonville Zoo May 15th from 9 am to 3 pm to greet visitors and, if they are interested, encourage them to search the Zoo's collection for animals listed under and protected by the Endangered Species Act. We will set up tables near the entrance/exit area and at eight stations within the Zoo to answer questions about endangered species and the Service. We will also offer visitors an Endangered Species Passport (checklist/coloring book) of Florida endangered species that can be found at the zoo during their visit. Staff will be staged at each of eight targeted species' stations/exhibits (see list below). Staff will answer questions and talk about the endangered species (or at-risk species) highlighted at their station. They would also provide the visitor a Passport stamp to show they made it to that location. Hopefully they will make it to all the stations and, upon exiting the zoo, they will be able to show their checklist to our staff at the entrance/exit table and receive an "Endangered Species Day" sticker. We may also give away a few nature books to those who have a special stamp in their Passport. We will have staff at the following eight stations: Wood Stork Nesting Colony, Florida Panthers, Bald Eagles, Whooping Cranes, Red Wolves, Reptiles and Amphibians (Eastern Indigo Snakes, Gopher Tortoises, Alligators), and Manatee and Sea Turtles at the kid's play area. A Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) biologist will be assisting us at the Sea Turtle station. We have also asked the FWC Manatee staff to bring their Manatee rescue equipment to be set up on the big lawn area across from the Trout River Grill.

Georgia:

Regional Office: We will be celebrating Endangered Species Day with Berkeley Lake Elementary School, Duluth. We will be working with their fourth graders, doing fun interactive lessons focused on sea turtles.

Kentucky: On Saturday, May 16, the Kentucky Ecological Services Field Office (KFO) will be participating in "BloomFest" at Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest (Bernheim) near Louisville (<http://www.bernheim.org/>). The 1st annual BloomFest is a spring celebration that involves a plant sale, gardening seminars, wildflower hikes, and other family activities. Bernheim has invited us to join them and will provide us a booth at which we can highlight our endangered species activities in Kentucky. Our booth will likely concentrate on KY's listed plants, but we will have other info about the Service and KY's listed animal species. We will have handouts, stickers, and other items to distribute to interested persons. Over the past few years, we have worked cooperatively with Bernheim and the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission to propagate two of KY's endangered plants - Short's goldenrod and running buffalo clover. Some of these plants were used in a reintroduction effort during last year's Endangered Species Day celebration, when approximately 120 Short's goldenrod plants were added to a state mitigation site in northeastern Kentucky.

During the last week of May, the KFO will also be assisting the KY Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) in a mussel augmentation effort near the Daniel Boone National Forest. Approximately 30 juvenile Cumberland bean (*Villosa trabilis*) mussels will be released into Sinking Creek, a Cumberland River basin stream in southeastern KY. The mussels were propagated in KDFWR's Center for Mollusk Conservation in Frankfort, KY, a research facility that is partially supported by Service funds. As far as we know, this is the first release of propagated *V. trabilis* that are approaching 1 yr in age and are large enough to be tagged. The actual release date will depend on water temperatures in Sinking Creek that need to be at least in the low 70s. The event will be coordinated with local media, and KDFWR probably will showcase the event through their magazine and weekly show - Kentucky Afield - on Kentucky Educational TV (PBS).

Louisiana: Our Lafayette, LA Ecological Services Field Office will return to Audubon Zoo for their second Endangered Species Day celebration, May 15. There will be a scavenger hunt incorporating species in the zoo. Fun activities and educational materials for children and teachers. Additionally, the LDWF Natural Heritage Program will be joining FWS again this year. Their focus will be on the candidate Louisiana pine snake and their dog "Patches" who has been trained to survey for this species (applications to endangered and candidate snakes).

Mississippi:

Terri Jacobson will be partnering with a NRCS educator to present endangered species programs to 4 schools in Madison County, Mississippi during the first two weeks in May. At each school, we will hand out the "Weird & Wonderful Wildlife" poster to the students while discussing the wacky names of some of our endangered and threatened species in a matching game activity. We are also holding a poster contest in which the 4 school that we are visiting plus 3 other schools are creating endangered species posters, some of which will be put on display at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science (Museum) in Jackson. On Friday, May 15, the Mississippi field office will again collaborate with the Museum to present endangered species materials and information to school groups and general public that visit the Museum on that day. Terri Jacobson is also invited to Noxubee NWR to present an endangered species program for their refuge endangered species day celebration on May 16.

3 biologists of Mississippi Field Office are going to Camp Shelby on May 15 as a field tour to assess the progress of endangered species work being done at the base. This is a cooperative partnership with the National Guard, The Nature Conservancy, US Forest Service and USFWS

North Carolina:

ASNC – We're working with a local watershed group to host the inaugural Toe/Cane Watershed Festival, a two-day event that will bring every 4th grader in NC's Yancey County to a park on the South Toe River to learn about rivers and water quality. The students will rotate through a handful of stations including a nature walk, aquatic invertebrate collecting, and arts and crafts. Yancey County sits entirely within the Upper Nolichucky River watershed, which is home to the endangered Appalachian elktoe mussel. It is also a county which frequently gets its school calendar disrupted by snow days, so we've had to reschedule our events to May 28 and 29 to accommodate a lengthening school year and later end of grade testing.

RANC –

Alligator River/Pocosin Lakes NWR– will be hosting an Endangered Species Day in conjunction with their prior scheduled Refuge Friends Group open house.

Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands: - FWS is planning to celebrate Endangered Species Day by reintroducing the endangered cacti *Harrisia portoricensis* in the Cabo Rojo area. Boqueron, PR Ecological Services FWS staff along with staff at the Cabo Rojo NWR on May 15 will welcome the community to come help return this plant to greater numbers in its native habitat. There will be fun interactive activities in addition to the cacti planting and FWS staff will be on hand to answer questions and teach about endangered species.

Tennessee: May 8 – FWS staff will be attending the Crossville Sustainability Fair, where the folks working on the Cumberland HCP will have a booth set up. I will be joining them to provide information on endangered species and recognition of endangered species day.
May 16 – FWS staff will be joining staff from TN Division of Natural Areas for tours of the Sequatchie Cave State Natural Area (visit to exterior of this highly accessible cave) and to Town Creek, the only two known locations of royal snail. Sequatchie Cave is also one of only two known locations of Sequatchie caddisfly, a candidate species.
May 16 – FWS staff will be joining the TN Native Plant Society and staff from TN Division of Natural Areas for a wildflower walk at a large-flowered skullcap site near Chattanooga.
The Tennessee Aquarium is going to see if they can tie a South Chickamauga Creek Day event in with Endangered Species Day

This appears on Cookeville's website now:

The City of Crossville is hosting a Sustainability Fair on Friday, May 8th from Noon to 5:00

PM. The fair will be held at Martin Elementary School and admission is free. Come get to know today's hottest technologies to make you more energy efficient, give you a smaller carbon footprint, and save you money! Representatives from the University of Tennessee, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and Cookeville Field Office who are involved with the Cumberland Habitat Conservation Plan project will be on hand. Associated links:

Crossville Sustainability Fair: [more...](#)

Cumberlands HCP: [more...](#)

We will be joining staff from the Tennessee Division of Natural Areas for a couple of field trips featuring endangered and threatened species on Saturday, May 16, one of which is hosted by the Tennessee Native Plant Society :

Tennessee Native Plant Society field trip to Middle Creek Gorge, Signal Mountain: This hike will be from the Signal Point Overlook trailhead on Signal Point Blvd. to the Rainbow Lake Wilderness Area trailhead on Ohio Ave. in Signal Mountain. The hike will offer spectacular views of the Tennessee River Gorge and the federal and state threatened large-flowered skullcap (*Scutellaria montana*).

See the 2009 Tennessee Native Plant Society field trip schedule for all the details: [more...](#)

Click here for more information on the large-flowered skullcap: [more...](#)

Sequatchie Cave State Natural Area & Town Creek Tour, Marion County: Enjoy this in-depth examination of two spring-fed stream systems, home to the only known populations of the federally endangered royal snail (*Marstonia ogmorhapha*). We will start by visiting Sequatchie Cave State Natural Area in Sequatchie, Tennessee. This biologically significant area is located where Owen Spring Branch flows from the mouth of Sequatchie Cave Park. It also is home to the federal candidate Sequatchie caddisfly (*Glyphopsyche sequatchie*) and several rare cave species. From Sequatchie we will travel south to the privately owned Town Creek in Jasper, where we will witness ongoing stream restoration to benefit the snail.

See the Tennessee Division of Natural Areas schedule of 2009 field trips for all the details: [more...](#)

See the following websites for more information on:

royal snail: [more...](#)

Sequatchie caddisfly: [more...](#)

Learn more about Endangered Species Day here: [more...](#)