

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES SCIENCE SEMINAR: GENTLE GIANTS OF MISSISSIPPI & THE NORTHERN GULF

SCIENCE SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT

Thursday March 22, 2012 ~ 4:00pm - 6:00pm ~ 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) invite you to attend a Science Seminar featuring research on Tarpon, Whale Sharks, Sturgeon, and Manatees in Mississippi and the Northern Gulf.

AGENDA

- 4:00 **Welcome and Overview**–
MDMR Representative
- 4:05 **Tarpon**– Jim Franks, Senior
Scientist, USM Gulf Coast Re-
search Lab (GCRL)
- 4:30 **Whale Shark Research in
the Northern Gulf of Mex-
ico**– Jennifer McKinney, Lou-
isiana Department of Wildlife
and Fisheries (LDWF)
- 4:55 **Break** (5min)
- 5:00 **Gulf Sturgeon of Missis-
sippi Sound: Links to Local
Rivers, Estuaries and Bar-
rier Islands... and Other
States!**– Mark Peterson, Pro-
fessor, USM Gulf Coast Re-
search Lab (GCRL)
- 5:25 **Shallow Water Phantoms:
Understanding Manatees
in the Northern Gulf of
Mexico**– Allen Aven, PhD
Student, Dauphin Island Sea
Lab (DISL)
- 5:50 **Questions and Wrap-up**
- 6:00 **Adjourn!**

****Refreshments will be served****

Young Tarpon in Coastal Mississippi Estuaries: Seasonal Occurrence and Habitat

Use– Jim Franks, USM GCRL. The tarpon (*Megalops atlanticus*) is one of the most important game fish species in the Gulf of Mexico. Jim will discuss how research conducted by GCRL and funded by the MDMR is revealing important aspects of the biology and habitat requirements of young tarpon that occur in Mississippi estuaries.



Whale Shark Research in the Northern Gulf of Mexico– Jennifer McKinney, LDWF.

The whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) is the largest fish in the ocean. Jennifer will begin by providing background information on whale shark biology and ecology. She will then share highlights from whale shark research in the northern Gulf of Mexico, including the GCRL whale shark sighting survey, satellite tagging, and large feeding aggregations.



Gulf Sturgeon of Mississippi Sound: Links to Local Rivers, Estuaries and Barrier

Islands... and Other States!– Mark Peterson, USM GCRL. The Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) is listed at the state and federal level as a threatened species. Dr. Peterson will provide an overview of the Gulf Sturgeon and discuss research from the Pascagoula River and associated coastal area of the MS Sound. He will also discuss data from the Pearl River and Florida populations.



Shallow Water Phantoms: Understanding Manatees in the Northern Gulf of Mexico

– Allen Aven, DISL. Little is known of the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) in the northern Gulf. Allen will discuss research into its distribution and ecology and share research by DISL's Manatee Sighting Network (MSN). Through innovative research and public support, MSN has been able to shed new light on the habits of these fascinating animals.



Questions ? Contact Avia Huisman, Grand Bay NERR Coastal Training Program Coordinator: Avia.Huisman@dmr.ms.gov or (228)475-7047

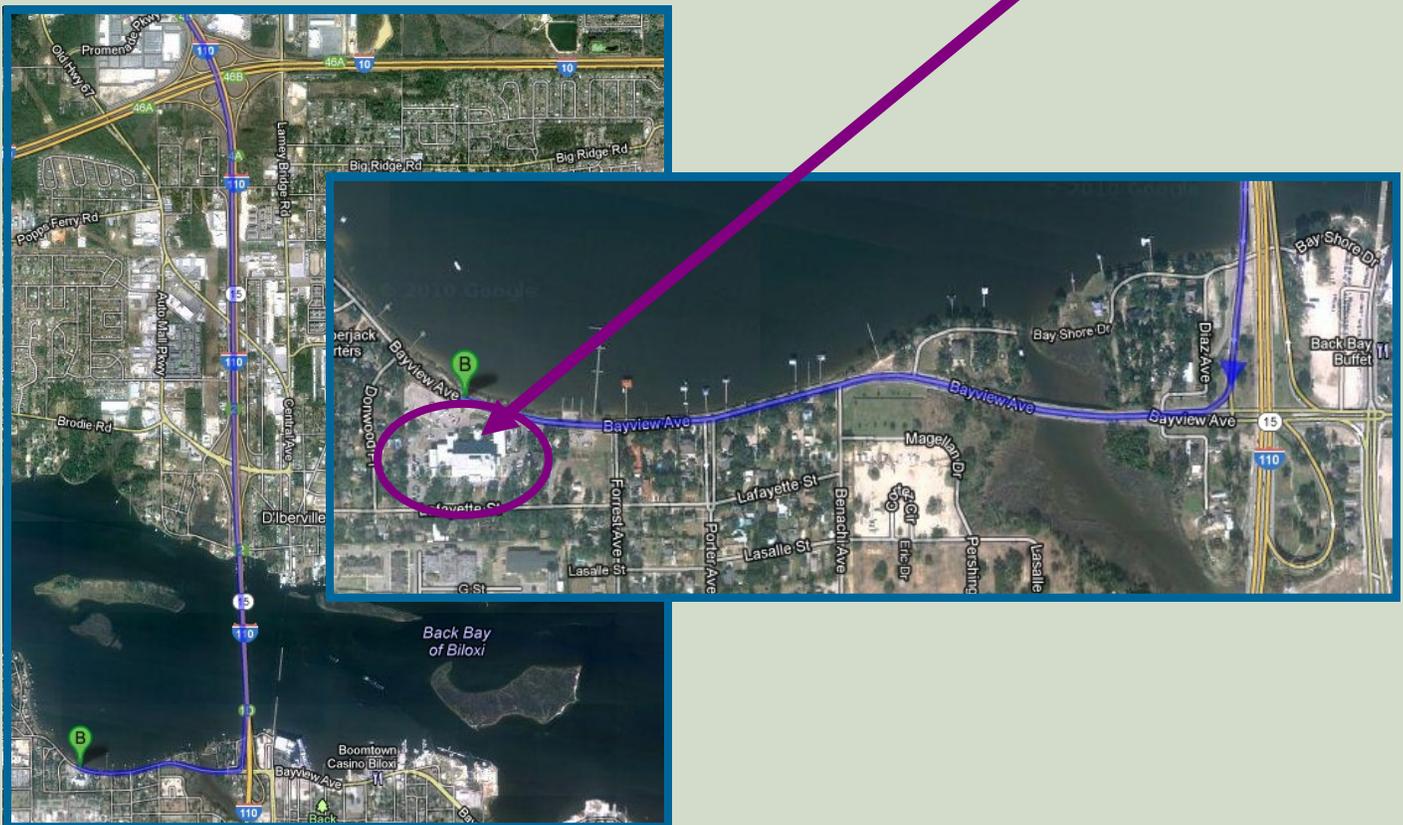


**First Floor Commission Meeting Room
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530**

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First Floor Commission Meeting Room Mississippi Department of Marine Resources 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530

- From I-10, take Exit 46A (I-110) and head south.
- After crossing the bridge over Back Bay of Biloxi, take Exit 1D for Bayview Ave.
- Keep right at the fork, follow signs for Bayview Ave W, and merge onto Bayview Ave.
- Continue down Bayview Ave for approximately one mile, the MDMR Building will be on your left-hand side.



Questions about the Event? Contact Avia Huisman at: Avia.Huisman@dmr.ms.gov or (228)475-7047

