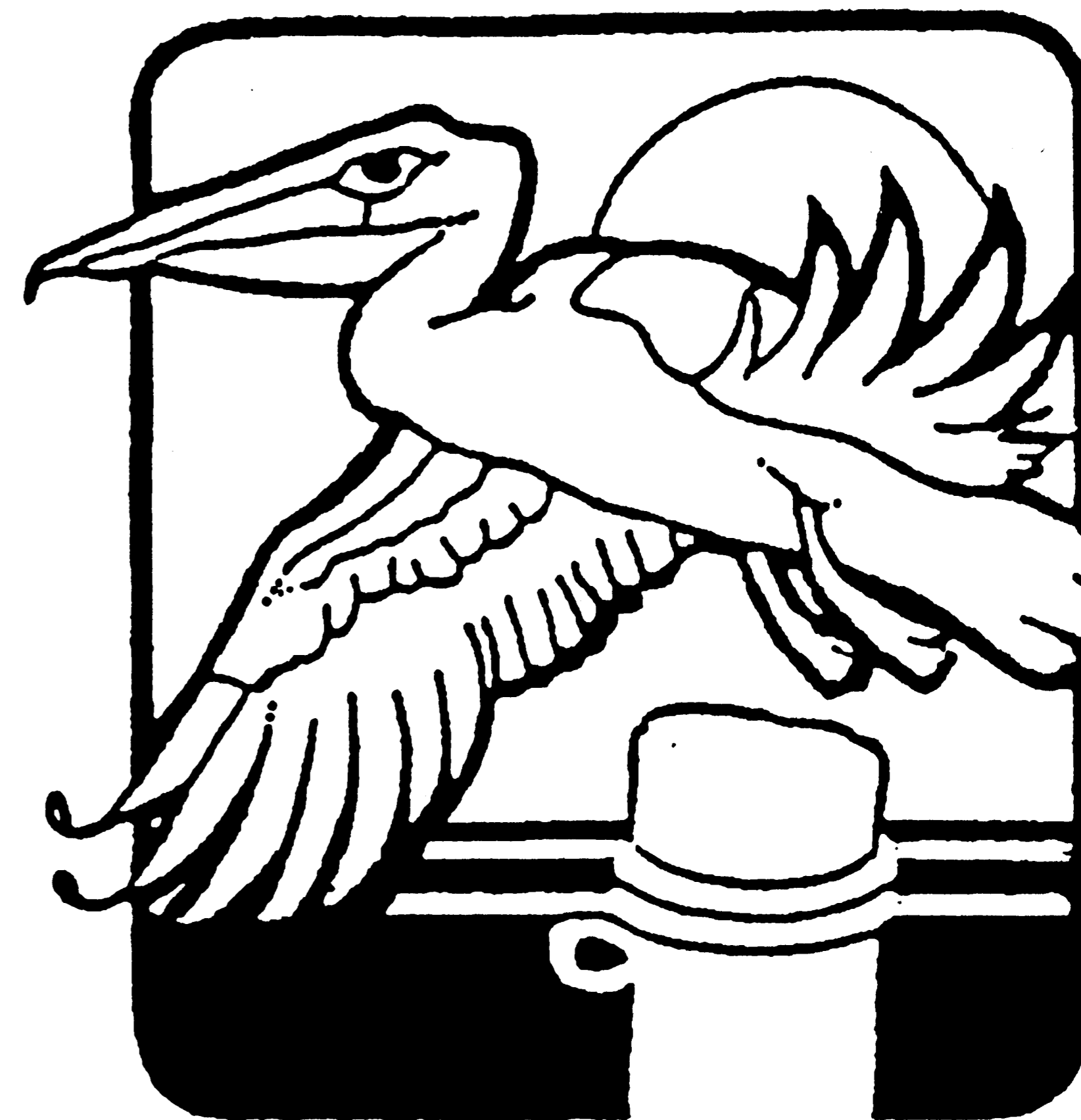


# THE PELICAN POST

Weeks Bay  
National Estuarine Research Reserve Newsletter  
Fall 1990



## NEW LOCATION

The Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve has a new office. The office of the Reserve Manager is located in the Larkin Harris Real Estate office building which is conveniently next door to the Weeks Bay Nature Trail.

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs began renting this space which is approximately one mile west of the Fish River Bridge on U.S. Highway 98 in October 1989. This is a temporary arrangement that will last until the Weeks Bay Interpreting Center is constructed. Read on to find out more about that exciting development!

Office hours are 8:00 until 5:00, Monday through Friday. Drop by and take a look! The address is 10936-B, U.S. Hwy 98, Fairhope, AL, 36532, and the telephone number is 928-9792.

## NEW MEMBER ON ADECA'S COASTAL PROGRAM TEAM

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs welcomed Phillip Hinesley to the coastal program management team on March 1, 1990. Phillip worked as a State Planner with the ADECA's Community Development Block Grant program for one year prior to his planning position with coastal programs.

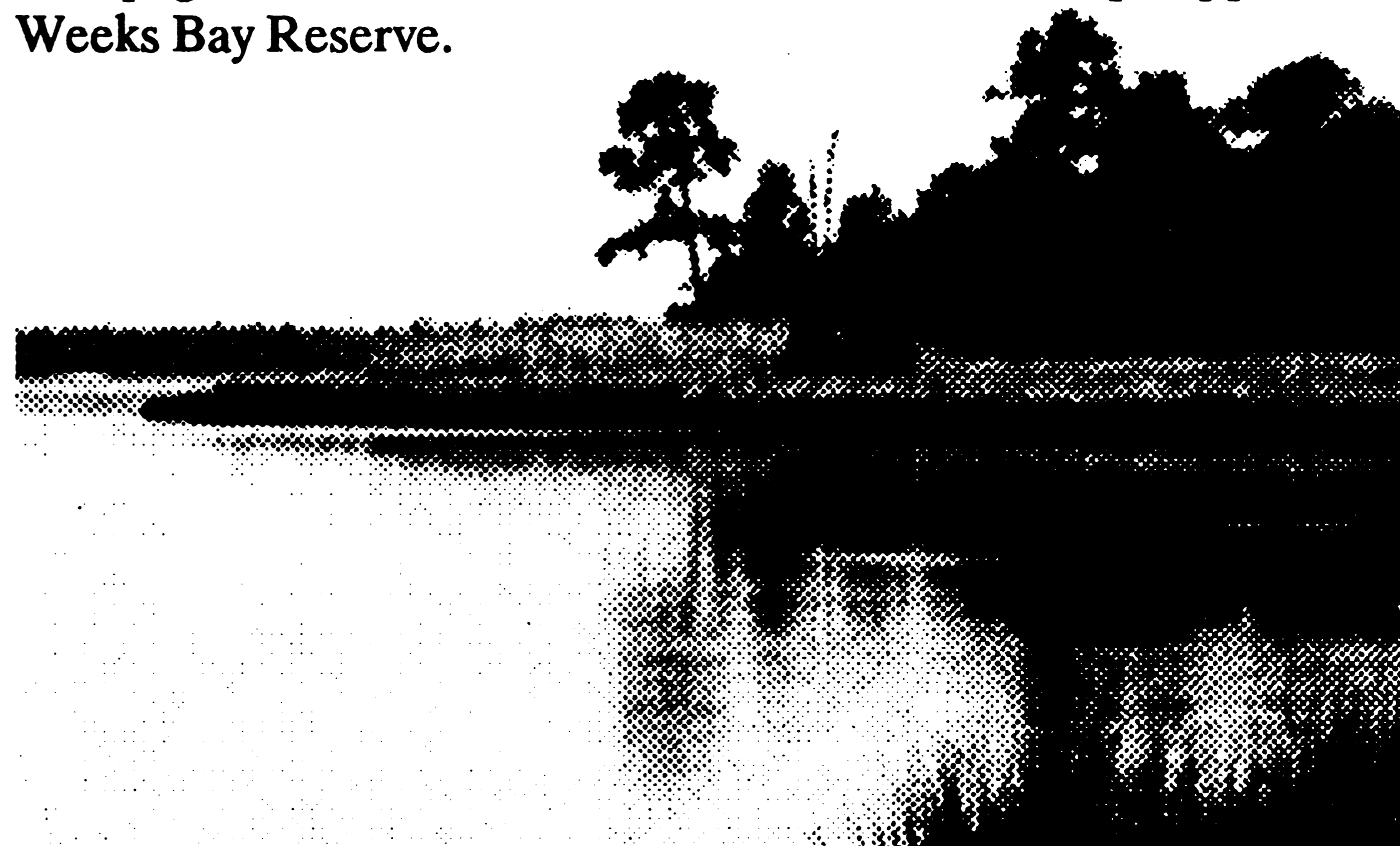
Phillip is currently located in the Weeks Bay NERR office in Baldwin County (205/928-3625) adding a welcome face to the Planning and Economic Development Division's Gulf Coast contingent. His duties include managing coastal marine debris projects, Alabama Coastal Area Management Plan implementation, working with local governments and local planning commissions, public information and education, managing all Coastal Zone Management construction projects, and acting as liaison to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

Residents of Baldwin County will quickly recognize Phillip as a familiar face. He has considered Foley his home for many years and was Director of Community Development for the City of Foley prior to coming to the ADECA. Phillip has a Bachelor of Science degree in Planning from the University of Southern Mississippi, and he and his wife Pam make their home in Foley. Welcome Phillip.

## WEEKS BAY RESERVE FOUNDATION INCORPORATED

The Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation, a non-profit organization whose members provide assistance and support to the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, was incorporated on January 16, 1990. The original board of directors includes Dr. George Crozier, Mr. Gil Gilder, and Pamala James. The officers are George Crozier, President; Hattie Smith, Vice President; and Pam James, Secretary. The incorporation was announced with a kick-off reception on March 8, 1990 at the Whiting Art Center in Fairhope where more than 80 people joined in the celebration.

The Foundation currently has nearly 30 members but still needs your participation. Additional information and an application for membership in the WBR Foundation are on the next page of this newsletter. Get involved and help support the Weeks Bay Reserve.



## MOBIL AND FAIRHOPE GARDEN CLUB HELP SUPPORT FOUNDATION

Mobil Exploration and Producing U.S. Inc. generously donated \$1,000 to the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation, to "assist the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation in its efforts to enhance the Reserve with its proposed interpretive center." Representative for Mobil Exploration, Mr. C.D. Sabathier presented the first corporate contribution received by the Foundation.

The Fairhope Garden Club also contributed \$100 to the Foundation development fund. As Ms. Ruth Abronski, Club Secretary, stated, "The vote to make this donation was unanimous!"

Our deepest thanks to Mobil, the Fairhope Garden Club, and to all those who have joined or made donations.



### JOIN WBR FOUNDATION

The Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation helps support the programs and activities of the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. The Foundation is a non-profit organization that is eligible to receive tax deductible donations of money, goods, and services. All donations go directly to environmental protection, research and education.

Through your membership in the Weeks Bay Foundation you will be joining a special group of people concerned about the fate of our estuarine and coastal resources. You can take an active part in the education, research, and preservation efforts at the Weeks Bay Reserve through volunteering to help with seminars, trail walks, newsletters and planning future events. Whatever your special talents, the Reserve needs your help and support.

As a member of the Weeks Bay Foundation, you will be kept informed through "The Pelican Post," special mailings, and regularly scheduled meetings. The Foundation has a board of directors and annually elected officers. Activities are determined by the membership. You will be a vital part of this effort to safeguard and educate others about the values of our natural resources.

To join, complete and mail the following form along with your check to: Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation, Inc.

10936-B U.S. Hwy 98  
Fairhope, AL 36532

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME IF CORPORATE MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

- |                          |                   |            |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | STUDENT           | \$ 5/YEAR  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | INDIVIDUAL        | \$ 15/YEAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | FAMILY            | \$ 30/YEAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | COMMERCIAL        | \$100/YEAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CORPORATE         | \$250/YEAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | DONATION \$ _____ |            |

(Make Checks Payable to WBR Foundation, Inc.)

### RESEARCH AT RESERVE CONTINUES

Two research projects are scheduled for 1990-91. Both are very exciting investigations that will give greater insight into what makes this estuary tick.

The first project is a continuing effort conducted by Drs. Gary April, Don Raney and Will Schroeder and a crew of very dedicated graduate and undergraduate students, all of the University of Alabama. The title is "Estuarine Modeling - A Tool in the Coastal Zone." This is the third year of National Estuarine Research Reserve funding for the project and much information has been generated through this team's efforts.

The second project underway is under the direction of Drs. Jonathan Pennock and Thomas Hopkins of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and the University of Alabama. The title of this project is "Biogeochemical and Hydrodynamic Regulation of Nutrient/Production Dynamics in Shallow, Terrestrially Impacted Estuaries." This is the first year of investigation on this topic by Drs. Pennock and Hopkins, and we expect some very useful information to result.

The WBNERR is proud of the growing history of success in the funding of research at Weeks Bay. This is surely a reflection of the high quality of the scientists working along our Gulf Coast. If you would like any additional information concerning either of these projects, call the WBNERR office.

# **INTERPRETIVE CENTER SOON TO BE A REALITY**

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs and the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation, have submitted a grant proposal to the NOAA Office of Coastal Resource Management for matching funds to build the Weeks Bay NERR Interpretive Center. The ADECA will provide \$100,000 toward construction and has requested an additional \$100,000 from NOAA. A decision from the NOAA Grants Office in Maryland has not yet been made but OCRM has recommended the grant for funding. What this all means is that the WBNERR Interpretive Center is soon to be a reality.

Funding for the first phase will provide for construction of a Center complete with classrooms, laboratory, offices and exhibit space. The design process is underway and will include expansion capabilities. We anticipate ground breaking in the fall.

It is anticipated that the Interpretive Center will be expanded as soon as additional funds are available. You can help by contributing to the WBR Foundation and requesting that your gift be specifically earmarked for construction activities. Funds will also be needed for equipment and furnishings for the new facility and donations may also be made to the Foundation for this purpose.

The construction of a physical facility on the Reserve is a result of many hours of hard work by private individuals, national organizations, state agencies and the members of the Advisory Committee. Weeks Bay has some very unique and valuable qualities that will be protected, enhanced, and better utilized when the Interpretive Center is completed.

## **CELEBRATE COASTWEEKS AND ESTUARIES DAY**

*September 15 through October 8*

### **Calendar of Events**

**Saturday, September 15 - NATIONAL ESTUARIES DAY - Coastweeks Kick Off**

- Family Picnic begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Weeks Bay Reserve Nature Trail.
- Bring your lunch - soft drinks will be provided.
- The picnic, on the Observation Deck, will be followed by a brief Recycling Discussion.
- Nature Trail walk for the adults and scavenger hunt for the kids.

**Monday, September 17 - BIRD WATCHING EXPEDITION** led by Mary Floyd, local bird enthusiast and Audubon Society member

- Will meet at Weeks Bay Nature Trail at 8:00 a.m.
- Dress comfortably and bring your own binoculars and bird guides.

**Wednesday, September 19 - WILDFLOWER TOUR** led by Peggy Dyson

- Will meet at Weeks Bay Nature Trail at 10:00 a.m.
- Dress comfortably and bring your own plant identification guides.

**Thursday, September 20 - RECYCLING PROGRAM**

- Barry Barter, the BFI Recycling Coordinator, will speak on Recycling Opportunities in Baldwin and Mobile counties at 7:00 p.m. at Faulkner State Jr. College, Fairhope Campus, in the Thomas Science Building.

**Saturday, September 22 - COASTAL CLEANUP**

- Interested persons meet from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at either the Gulf State Park Pavilion, the Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department, or the Dauphin Island Civic Center to disperse and clean up Alabama's beaches.
- There will be a cookout at the Gulf State Park Pavilion and the Dauphin Island Civic Center following the cleanup -- all food and beverages will be provided.

**Thursday, September 27 - FILM PRESENTATION**

- The movie "Estuary" will be shown at 7:00 p.m. at Faulkner State Junior College, Fairhope Campus, in the Thomas Science Building.

**Thursday, October 4 - COASTAL EROSION PROGRAM**

- Scott Douglass, Professor at the University of South Alabama, will discuss causes and possible solutions to coastal erosion at 7:00 p.m. in the Kilowatt Room of the Riviera Utilities Building on Highway 98 in Foley.

**ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE  
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 928-9792**

## ARE YOU ON OUR PERMANENT MAILING LIST?

We are in the process of updating "The Pelican Post" mailing list as those of you who received the last newsletter know. If you haven't sent in your confirmation slip from last time, please fill out and mail in the form below.

NAME

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ADDRESS

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- I want to continue receiving the *Pelican Post*
- Add my name to the *Pelican Post* mailing list
- Address correction

Please return this form and any questions or comments to:

**Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve**  
 10936-B U.S. Hwy 98  
 Fairhope, AL 36532

## CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE PELICAN POST?

Sure you can. As the song goes, "Ain't too proud to beg." If you have a special topic of interest concerning the coastal environment that you would like to suggest for the next "Pelican Post" or if you have written an article that you feel addresses an important issue on the environmental scene, please contact the Reserve Manager. Suggestions are always welcome!

## LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN WBNERR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Advisory Committee has completed a very successful and productive year under the leadership of Dr. George Crozier. Some of the major accomplishments during his term as Chairman include the appointment of a permanent Reserve Manager, Ms. Pam James; the incorporation of the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation; installation of plant identification markers on the Nature Trail; and significant progress in identifying State matching funds for the construction of an Interpretive Center.

Crozier, who is also the Director of the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium, has been involved in Weeks Bay Reserve activities for many years. He will continue to serve as a member of the Advisory Committee and add his dedication and special understanding of the coastal area to the group.

Ms. Hattie Smith, President of the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce, became Chairman of the Committee in June. Hattie has been an active member of the WBNERR Advisory Committee since the Reserve was first designated and has previously served as Vice-Chairman of the Committee. Energy, enthusiasm, and results have characterized Hattie's previous role on the Advisory Committee. We look forward to continued progress under her leadership.

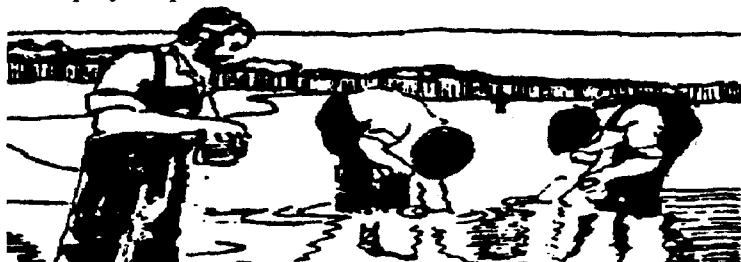
Dr. Bill Hosking, Director of the Auburn Marine Research and Extension Center, has been named as Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee. Hosking has worked in the Sea Grant Extension Program and marine research on the Alabama coast for more than a decade and has a unique insight on coastal issues. He had an important role in helping to establish research priorities and initiatives for the WBNERR and was also part of the original group involved in the designation of the Reserve.

## THREE RESEARCH PROJECTS COMPLETED AT WBNERR

Three research projects completed their sampling efforts this past spring. They include:

- "The Habitat Utilization, Population Dynamics, Reproductive Biology and Trophic Ecology of the Blue Crab *Callinectes sapidus* in Weeks Bay, Alabama: Important Implications for Fisheries and Estuarine Management" by Drs. James B. McClintock and Ken Marion of the University of Alabama.
- "Fish and Habitat Relationships During Spring in the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve" by Dr. Mark Bain of the Alabama Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Auburn University and Dr. Richard Wallace and Mr. Lance Robinson of the Auburn Marine Research and Extension Center.
- "Zooplankton Community Composition, Species Abundance and Grazing Impact in Weeks Bay, Alabama: Tidal, Monthly, Seasonal and Habitat Differences" by Dr. Donald Stearns, Rutgers University, New Jersey and Mr. Michael Dardeau, Dauphin Island Sea Lab.

A draft final report has been received from Dr. Stearns on his Zooplankton study. If you would like more information on these projects please call the WBNERR office.



## PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Numerical simulation of Alabama's Weeks Bay Estuary, April, G.C., D.C. Raney, W.W. Schroeder, B. McCormick, S. Sawhney, Z. Lu, Coastal Zone 91, Long Beach, CA, July 8-12, 1991.

Computer simulation of the hydrodynamics and salinity behavior of Weeks Bay, Alabama at Equatorial Tide Conditions, Thollapalli, A., G.C. April, D.C. Raney and W.W. Schroeder, Watermatex 91, Durham, NH, June 3-6, 1991.

Computer simulation of Weeks Bay, Alabama, G. April, D. Raney, W. Schroeder, A. Thollapalli, In Proceedings of the Estuarine and Coastal Modeling Conference, in review 1990.

Hydrodynamics of a National Estuarine Reserve - Weeks Bay, Alabama, G. April, D. Raney, W. Schroeder, A. Thollapalli, In Proceedings of the National Conference on Hydraulic Engineering, in review 1990.

Hydrodynamics and salinity models for Weeks Bay, Alabama, G. April, D. Raney, W. Schroeder and A. Thollapalli, In Proceedings of the Estuarine and Coastal Modeling Conference, in review 1990.

Weeks Bay modeling - a tool in the Coastal Zone, Thollapalli, A., G.C. April, D.C. Raney and W.W. Schroeder, Sixth Symposium on Coastal and Ocean Management/ASCE, Charleston, SC, July 11-14, 1989.

Computer simulation of hydrodynamic and salinity behavior of Weeks Bay, Alabama at Equatorial tide conditions, A. Thollapalli [MS Thesis] and BER Report No. 492-183, The University of Alabama, G. April, D. Raney and W. Schroeder [project advisors], March 1990.

Salinity structure of a shallow, tributary estuary, Schroeder, W.W., S.P. Dinnel, and W.J. Wiseman, 5th International Biennial Conference on Physics of Estuaries and Coastal Seas, National Environment Research Council of the U.D., Gregynog, University of Wales, July 9-13, 1990.

Determinants of estuarine nursery habitat for fish, Robinson, C.L. and M.B. Bain, Sixth Symposium on Coastal and Ocean Management/ASCE, Charleston, South Carolina, July 11-14, 1989. Also, In Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium on Coastal and Ocean Management (O.T. Magoon, et. al, eds.) Charleston, South Carolina, pp. 997-1010, 1989.

Relationship between fish community structure and microhabitat composition in a low tidal estuary, Robinson C.L., Canadian Conference for Fisheries Research, Annual Meeting, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, January 3-5, 1989.

Studies on blue crab population dynamics in a Gulf estuary, McClintock, J.B. and K. Marion, Association of Southeast Biologist Bulletin, in press.

Population dynamics and reproduction of the Blue Crab (*Callinectes sapidus*) in an Alabama estuary, McClintock, J.B., K. Marion and P. Hsueh, J. Alabama Acad. Sci., in press.

A comparative study on the population dynamics of the Blue Crabs *Callinectes similis* and *C. sapidus* in estuarine environments of the Gulf of Mexico, Hsueh, P., J.B. McClintock and T.S. Hopkins, J. Alabama Acad. Sci., in press.

The abundance, size frequency, sex ratio and molt condition of blue crabs in upper, middle, and lower estuarine habitats of Weeks Bay, Alabama, McClintock, J.B., K. Marion and P. Hsueh. Joint Meeting of Georgia and Alabama Fisheries Workers Association, Auburn, Alabama, February 14-16, 1990.

A preliminary study of the population dynamics of blue crabs (*Callinectes sapidus*) in a Northern Gulf of Mexico estuary, McClintock, J., K. Marion, J. Dindo, and P. Hsueh. Benthic Ecology Meeting, Mobile, Alabama, March 29-31, 1990.

Distribution, population dynamics, and life history characteristics of the blue crabs *Callinectes similis* and *C. sapidus* in estuaries of the Gulf of Mexico, Hsueh, P., J. McClintock and T. Hopkins, Benthic Ecology Meeting, Mobile, Alabama, March 29-31, 1990.

A comparative study on the distribution, population dynamics and life history characteristics of the blue crabs *Callinectes similis* and *C. sapidus* in estuarine environments of the Gulf of Mexico, Hsueh, P. and J.B. McClintock, Amer. Zool. 29, 175, 1989.

## EDUCATION UPDATE

More than 900 students of all ages were involved in Reserve activities in the past year. Ms. James, the Reserve Manager (RM) presented programs that provided information on estuaries at the Reserve and in other locations.

Many groups, such as the Gulf State Park Snowbirds, the Foley High School Science Club, South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce Environmental Council, and classes from elementary and secondary schools throughout Baldwin County, have participated in programs centered around the Weeks Bay Nature Trail. This activity includes a walk down the Nature Trail where the different habitats, plants and animals are discussed, eventually winding up on the observation platform overlooking Weeks Bay.

Estuaries are always a focus of the program; however, this activity can be tailored to highlight the area of science that each group is most interested in. The program can last from 45 to 90 minutes. Ideal group size is approximately 30 students or less, but if you have a larger group the RM can usually design a two-part program and, with the help of a Reserve volunteer, accommodate your entire group.

For those of you who are classroom bound or have students six years old and younger, we offer programs that can come to you. The most popular of these is the Touch Lab, a hands-on experience for students. This program has traveled to Fairhope Middle School, the Foley Public Library, the Fairhope Kindergarten Center, and has been offered at the WBNERR office.

The WBNERR Touch Lab includes a collection of animals and plants that live in and around estuaries. They have all been preserved so there is no danger to your students. The activity leader will show each item and discuss some characteristics unique to that organism. This is a versatile program that may be scaled for the level of knowledge each group possesses. Lessons on conservation, oceanography and a variety of other topics are also offered.

If you are not a part of a formal group that studies science or natural history but are interested in learning more about coastal resources, we have something for you too. Each quarter the RM offers a variety of programs at night or on the weekends that are open to anyone interested. In the past year topics including birdwatching, wildflower identification, carnivorous plants, estuaries, the Mobile River Delta, Nature Trail Tours, and Touch Labs for children and adults have been offered to the general public. A calendar listing topics, dates and locations is sent to those people on the WBNERR mailing list about every four months.

If you would like to schedule a group or get on the WBNERR mailing list, please call the Reserve office at 205/928-9792. The Reserve is here to serve anyone interested in learning, and all of our programs are free of charge, so don't hesitate to call.

Funds for this newsletter are provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Service, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management; and the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Planning and Economic Development Division.

### EDITORS

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