

**Coastal Habitats:
Mississippi's Natural Treasures
Underrepresented and Underserved
Populations Program**

Mississippi Academy of Sciences

by

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Coastal Habitats: Mississippi's Natural Treasures

Partnership Between

Gulf Coast Research Laboratory-Marine
Education Center

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research
Reserve

Gulf Islands National Seashore

Moss Point School District

Funding Agency:

- Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) funds awarded through the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)

Project Goals

- Address three of the five identified issues outlined in the GOMA Governors' Action Plan.
- Focus on wetland and coastal conservation and stewardship.
- Provide participating students experiential learning opportunities on the structure and function of the wetland ecosystems.
- Emphasize the significance of the coastal habitats of Mississippi and the need for conservation.
- Implement standards based experiential learning activities.

Participants

- Sixty fourth graders of:
 - Charlotte Hyatt Elementary School
 - Orange Lake Elementary School
 - West Elementary School
- Chosen by the Superintendent of the Moss Point School District
- Coordinated by Ms. Kim McMillan, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator

Expectations of Participants

- Improved academic status,
- Increased interest in science,
- Increased ability to use resource information for future research or school assignments about coastal environments, and
- Improved community involvement.

Project Activities

- Introductory School Visit to Orange Lake Elementary- Puppet Show Sponsored by Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality- *Watershed Harmony*
- Field Trips
 - Gulf Coast Research Laboratory- Marine Education Center
 - Gulf Islands National Seashore
 - Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Final School Visit- *Estuary Live*
 - Charlotte Hyatt Elementary School
 - Orange Lake Elementary School
 - West Elementary School

Pretest-Posttest Data

VENUE	DATE	p VALUE
GCRL- Marine Education Center	9-23-08	≤ 0.01
Gulf Islands National Seashore	12-9-08	≤ 0.02
Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve	4-16-09	≤ 0.01
Over All First and Last School Visits	9-17-08 5-1-09	≤ 0.01

Gulf Coast Research Laboratory

Marine Education Center

Educational Activities					
Activity	Very Valuable	Valuable	Average Value	Limited Value	No Value
Mini PowerPoint Lecture of Aquatic Life Styles	100%				
East Beach- Overall	100%				
Seining	100%				
Yabby Pumping and Sieving	100%				
Dip Netting	100%				
Resource Materials (journals, colored pencils, Coast Manual)	100%				

Gulf Islands National Seashore

Educational Activities					
Activity	Very Valuable	Valuable	Average Value	Limited Value	No Value
Review of Aquatic Life Styles-Introduction	72%		14%	14%	
Cast Netting-pier	83%		17%		
Scavenger Hunt	83%		17%		
Wetland Metaphors-Marsh Walk	83%		17%		

Grand Bay NERR

Educational Activities					
Activity	Very Valuable	Valuable	Average Value	Limited Value	No Value
Review of Biodiversity and Bird Trail	100%				
Fishing-Pier	100%				
Plant Walk-Carnivorous Plants and the Pine Savanna	100%				