# Museum of Natural Science

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Hop on over to the Museum and see 25 species of live frogs in colors you never even imagined!

A traveling exhibit organized by the Audubon Institute, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, New Orleans, This project is partially lunded through a grant by the Jackson Compution and Visitors Bureau.

# H op on over to the Museum to see 25 species of live frogs in colors you never even imagined!

From the tiny poison dart frogs (also known as the "jewels of the Amazon"), to the giant Surinam toad, to the highly toxic Terrible Dart Frogs, come discover how "toad-ally" important, interesting, and fun this interactive exploration of all things frog can be!

Enjoy this rare opportunity to see 25 different species of live frogs and toads from all around the world at "FROGS!", a new temporary exhibit created by the Audubon Nature Institute, on display from now through January 9, 2012.

Visitors to the "FROGS!" exhibit can expect to get an up-close look at frogs and toads housed in replications of their natural habitats from Asia, Australia, and South America. This exhibit even gives visitors the chance to see nocturnal frogs active during the day with the help of a bit of "lighting magic" in the enclosures. "Visitors can view frog life from around and on a tree, in a pond, and at night in three different parts of the world," explains Larry Castle, MDWFP Director of Technical Programs.

Interactive stations incorporate the impact that frogs have had on our popular culture and mythology. "You will want to leap from one part of this exhibit to the next – listening to frogs "talk", learning life cycle lingo, and meeting famous frogs from the past to the present," said Chris Zachow, president of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation board of directors.

"The exhibit is one part education, one part entertainment with a dash of humor, topped off with a message about conservation," said Angel Rohnke, Education Coordinator.

Frogs are highly adaptable animals that can thrive in a variety of different climates. However, this exhibit also examines the dangers facing frog populations around the world. Habitat loss, chemical contaminants, climate change, and infections are causing frogs to disappear at an astounding rate. Educating the public about how to protect frogs and our environment is an important aspect of the exhibit. You will be fascinated by the beauty, form, and natural history of these incredible creatures.

"FROGS!" was created by the Audubon Nature Institute and is sponsored locally by the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Gertrude C. Ford Foundation, Janet and Luther Ott Charitable Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater Jackson, The Walker Foundation, Regions Bank, Nissan of North America, Inc., Chris and Steve Zachow and other generous supporters.

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Dear Members,

The Museum of Natural Science is blessed to be located in a community that appreciates and supports our endeavors. This support has been manifested in several critical areas recently.

Even during tough economic times the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation was able to garner the financial support needed to bring AMAZING BUTTERFLIES and FROGS: BEYOND GREEN to Mississippi. The butterfly exhibit drew visitors from around the state and the southeast for the past three months to enjoy live butterflies and to learn more about these beautiful creatures. Now FROGS will fill the museum with plenty of action for the next seven months. Please notice the long list of dedicated donors listed in this Newsline who helped make these two exhibits possible and give them your thanks.

Growing UP WILD workshops were introduced two years ago and have been in demand throughout the state. Museum staff has reached more than 700 teachers with these half day events to learn fun ways to teach science.

The Museum staff has worked hard to plan lots of fun services for the coming months. Summer camps have started now and teacher workshops are offered throughout the state. Families have their pick of entertaining, educational activities so take a look at our calendar and mark some dates on your calendar so you won't miss out on the fun.

Come visit the Museum soon to experience FROGS: BEYOND GREEN and learn more about the fascinating creatures that share our world.

Jely Hartfe

Libby Hartfield

#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science is to promote understanding and appreciation of Mississippi's biological diversity through collections, research, scientific databases, education, and exhibits; and to inspire the people of our state to respect the environment and to preserve natural Mississippi.

2 SUMMER 2011

MISSISSIPPI MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

Corey Wright

MANAGEMENT

Ray Terry EXHIBITS SUPERVISOR NATURAL HERITAGE

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Aaron Francois

R.L. Jones. Ph.D.

George Phillips

LaToya Turner

Nicholas Winstead

## Fun Fridays

Fun Friday should be a fun Friday! Fun Fridays are interactive, handson programs offered in June and July. An adult must accompany children. Upcoming Friday dates are:

June 24: Fabulous Frogs July 1: It's Not Easy Being Green July 8: Don't Croak July 15: Web Wonders July 22: Sticky Fingers July 29: Hip Hop You Don't Stop

## Turtle Day

ome out of your shell and head over to celebrate our First Annual Turtle Day!

Join us for our first annual "Turtle Day". Museum staff will be on hand to help you learn all about turtles, with a special emphasis on native and endangered turtles of Mississippi.



## Fossil Friday

ig into the Museum's fossil pile and enjoy fossil activities.

# Slither, Crawl, & Fly

S nakes, Spiders, and Bats, oh my! Ever wanted to learn more about creatures that go "bump in the night"? At this event, you will learn about creatures like snakes, spiders and bats that slither, crawl and fly! Don't worry: they're not as scary as you might think. Discover the facts and myths about these mysterious and often misunderstood creatures. You'll get the chance to touch

### Special Events

**Fun Fridays** FRI · JUN 24 & JUL 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 10AM to Noon

> TUES · JUL 5 9AM to Noon Lecture Noon to 1PM

# Fossil Friday

9<sub>AM</sub> to Noon

Slither, Crawl, & Fly SAT · OCT 29 10AM to Noon

## **Turkey Tuesday**

Tues · NOV 22 10am to 2pm

a snake, examine a bat specimen, and observe a spider while learning about the beneficial role they play in the ecosystem.

## Turkey Tuesday

hanksgiving is a perfect time to spend with family...

Join us on Turkey Tuesday for family fun and special activities for all ages!













# Award Winning Announcements

Joan Elder, Preschool Coordinator at the Museum of Natural Science has been awarded Mississippi's Project WILD Facilitator of the Year.

oan has been in the field of early education for over twentyfive years. She provides hands-on programs & professional development for teachers. Joan teaches natural science classes for preschools, head start programs, daycares, home school groups, and pre-service teachers. She coordinates summer camps for preschoolers on-site, schedules a special time for twos called "Time for Twos", and does "Story Times" using age-appropriate literature. Joan provides professional development through our newest early childhood training: "Growing Up WILD". She speaks at Preschool Conferences and other special events statewide, promoting the early childhood offerings from the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science. Joan's enthusiasm and knowledge of wildlife & early childhood education encourages all Mississippians to explore the outdoors with excitement and curiosity.



# Second Annual Back to Nature Photography Contest Best of Show Announced

## Heather Day of Jackson, Mississippi won the Best of Show for her photo, "Bee on Golden Rod". Congratulations, Heather!

he contest is designed to encourage Museum visitors to venture out and capture the natural beauty of the wildlife and habitatsseen on the grounds of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science and along the trails of Lefleur's Bluff State Park. The Museum is accepting entries through February 1, 2012 for the "Third Annual Back to Nature Photography Contest". For details visit www.msnaturalscience.org and click on The Latest or call 601-354-7303 for official guidelines and entry form.



# Mississippi Amphibian Monitoring Program

n 2001, Mississippi joined with the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program (NAAMP) and the Mississippi Amphibian Monitoring Program was born. The goal of the program is to monitor frog populations with a statewide network of volunteers. There are now over 60 frog call routes in Mississippi. Each route is a permanent roadside route randomly located throughout the state. The routes are run at least one night during each sampling period, in the late winter (late January through February), early spring (mid-April to mid-May) and early summer (June). The routes have 10 stops that are located at various wetland habitats like ponds, lakes, creeks or swamps. Volunteers stay at each stop 5 minutes and record all species of frogs heard. It typically takes about 2 hours to complete a route. To ensure that volunteers are correctly identifying frogs all volunteers must take and pass a frog quiz. The quiz consists of sound files of all frogs that could potentially occur along a route. The observer must reach at least a 65% detection index to pass. The quiz can be taken as many times as needed to reach this level.



This quiz can be found at www.pwrc.usgs.gov/ frogquiz. There is also a public quiz found on the website which is a fun way to learn and test yourself on your knowledge of Mississippi frog calls. Because of the quiz requirement and online data entry access to a computer with internet capabilities is a must. Training sessions can be scheduled throughout the state to help volunteers learn the frogs and protocols for the routes. To learn more about volunteering or to get more information about MAMP contact Kathy Shelton at 601-354-7303.



# World-famous alligator gar arrives at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science

he 327-pound, 8-foot 5 1/4-inch Alligator gar (Atractosteus spatula) made waves around the world after being discovered by commercial fisherman Mr. Kenny Williams in one of his nets set on Mississippi's Lake Chotard. Mr. Williams was unable to revive the fish after freeing it from the net and the museum was thrilled to receive this remarkable specimen after he graciously made the decision to donate it to science. After official measurements were taken by biologists, Mr. Williams' fish is quite possibly the heaviest alligator gar on record. Pictures of the behemoth were soon wowing viewers from Vicksburg, Mississippi to London, England! MMNS Curator of Fishes Dr. Matt Roberts commented that, "Ideally we would have seen this exceptional fish returned alive and well to its natural habitat. Given that scenario did not occur, we at the museum are striving to make the most out of the opportunity having access to this unique specimen provides. We are grateful to Mr. Williams." Dr. Roberts went on to describe what this donation will mean for the museum and the public, "After returning from the taxidermist, the gar will be put on display in our exhibit halls. We hope that it will serve to inspire curiosity for Mississippi's natural heritage in the years to come. We will also be able to provide the public and the



Missississippi Department of Wildlfe, Fisheries, and Parks Fisheries Biologist Dennis Riecke (Left) and Missississippi Museum of Natural Science Curator of Fishes Dr. Matt Roberts (Right) prepare the alligator gar donated to MMNS by commercial fisherman Kenny Williams for official measurements. The fish, taken from Lake Chotard, is potentially the heaviest alligator gar on record.

scientific community with information regarding the fish's age, sex, and potentially its diet and habitat associations." The date at which Mr. Williams' alligator gar will be ready for display is not yet known, but we will keep you informed!

### Ongoing



#### **MPB RADIO SHOW**

Listen to Museum Director Libby Hartfield and local veterinarian Dr. Troy Majure every Thursday morning at 9am as they take call-in questions from listeners about all of Mississippi's critters—big or small, furry or scaled, wild or domestic. Join the live fun with a call to the team at 877-672-7464.

#### **FUN FRIDAYS**

This summer, join the Museum's Education staff for Fun Fridays and experience interactive, hands-on programs. These familyfriendly programs, for accompanied children, are offered every Friday in June and July beginning June 10.

#### **FISH FEEDING**

Meet some of our most fascinating aquarium inhabitants, every Tuesday and Friday at 10am, and Sunday at 2pm.

#### **CREATURE FEATURES**

Scheduled or spontaneous, these informal programs feature live or mounted animals. Scheduled every Saturday at 10am and 2pm, Creature Features make learning fun!

#### **LECTURE SERIES**

On the first Tuesday of the month (except Dec. and Jan.), the Museum offers lectures addressing a variety of natural science subjects. Unless noted otherwise, the lectures take place from 12noon to 1pm in the Museum's Rotwein Theater. Lectures are free to Museum Foundation members or regular admission visitors. Please show your membership card at the gate.

#### **BIRD WALKS**

On the first Saturday of the month (except Dec. and Jan.), join experienced birders and Jackson Audubon Society members for a walk on the wild side. Bird walks for family groups and beginners are from 8AM to 10AM at Lefleur's Bluff State Park Campground. Fee: \$3. For more information, call Mary Stevens at 601.956.7444.

#### NOW - JAN 9, 2012 "Frogs!"

Created by The Audubon Nature Institute From the "jewels of the Amazon" - the tiny poison dart frogs - to the giant Surinam toad to the highly toxic Terrible Dart Frogs, come discover how "toadally" important, interesting and fun this interactive exploration of all things frog can be!

### JUN 24

**Fun Fridays** 

Fun Fridays are interactive, hands-on programs offered in June and July from 10am - 12noon. An adult must accompany children. June 24: Fabulous Frogs

July1: It's Not Easy Being Green July 8: Don't Croak July 15: Web Wonders July 22: Sticky Fingers July 29: Hip Hop You Don't Stop

#### JUN 24 Teacher Workshop Project WET

Call 601-354-7303 or see www.msnatural science.org for registration details.

JUL 4 Museum closed for holiday

#### JUL 5 First Annual Turtle Day

9 am - Noon Learn all about turtles, with a special emphasis on native and endangered turtles of Mississippi. (See page 3 for details).

#### JUL 5

#### First Tuesday Lecture (Noon- 1pm)

Topic: "Where are all the little Gopher Tortoise Burrows?" Speaker: Matthew G. Hinderliter, Gopher Tortoise Biologist, The Nature Conservancy, Camp Shelby Field Office, Camp Shelby, MS.

Matt's talk will be about investigating the daily lives of juvenile Gopher Tortoises on Camp Shelby to discover what more we can do to protect them in their early years.

JUL 25-29 Teacher Workshops July 25 – Growing Up WILD July 26 WILD about Reptiles July 27 Project Aquatic WILD

#### July 28 – Flying WILD July 29 Project WET

Call 601-354-7303 or see www.msnatural science.org for registration details.

#### AUG 2

#### First Tuesday Lecture (Noon- 1 pm)

Topic: "Being Green: A Cultural History of Frogs, from Moses to Muppets" Speaker: Matt Smith, author and GIS analyst, Hattiesburg, MS

Slimy and adorable, bearer of plague and fertility, symbol of good luck and the devil: few creatures have been so loved and so hated as the frog.

#### SEPT 5

**Museum Closed for holiday** 

#### SEPT 6

#### First Tuesday Lecture (Noon-1pm)

Topic: "Frog Conservation in Mississippi" Speaker: Kathy Shelton, South Mississippi Conservation Program Biologist, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, MS Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks.

Kathy will discuss frog conservation in Mississippi including efforts to save endangered frogs.

#### SEPT 8

#### **Teachers' Back to School Night**

4pm–7pm

Teachers - this is a great way to start the new school year! Get resource materials, program ideas, and activities that can be used to bring environmental and natural resource education into the classroom.

#### SEPT 23

#### Make a Splash (8 am - 2 pm)

This fun, interactive water day allows students to explore a diversity of water related topics.

#### **OCT 4**

#### First Tuesday Lecture (Noon-1 pm)

Topic: "Horseshoe Crabs: Social and Ecological Relevance, Fringe Lifestyles, and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill" Speaker: Ruth Carmichael, Ph.D., Senior Marine Scientist, Dauphin Island Sea Lab; Assistant Professor of Marine Science, University of South Alabama.

Horseshoe crabs have remained largely unchanged for 450 million years and are considered "living fossils" that exist as relics of an earlier age. Throughout the world, horseshoe crabs are harvested for bait, their blood is used to produce biomedical products, and they are important to local food webs. Horseshoe crabs are largely unstudied in the northern Gulf of Mexico, but these fringe populations may become more important if populations decline due to habitat loss and over-harvest in other areas. In the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, these humble creatures may also teach us about the resiliency of the northern Gulf ecosystem.

#### **OCT 14**

#### Fossil Friday (9 am - Noon)

Dig into the Museum's fossil pile and enjoy fossil activities.

#### **OCT 29**

#### Slither, Crawl and Fly (10 am - Noon)

Join the Museum staff to learn about creatures like snakes, spiders and bats that slither, crawl and fly! But don't worry: they're not as scary as you might think. Discover the facts and myths about these mysterious and often misunderstood creatures. Touch a snake, examine a bat specimen, observe a spider, and understand the beneficial role they play in the ecosystem.

#### NOV 1

#### First Tuesday Lecture (Noon-1pm)

Title: On the Move: "Remarkable Migrations of the River Shrimp" (*Macrobrachium Ohione*) Speaker: Tyler Olivier, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Biology, University of Louisiana, Lafayette

Amphidromous shrimps live and breed in fresh water, but brackish or marine conditions are required for larval development. Similar shrimps are typically found on tropical and subtropical island systems. However, my research uses Macrobrachium ohione as a model species to study amphidromous life cycles of shrimp populations widely distributed from the sea in large continental river systems (e.g., Mississippi River System). This study tested the hypothesis that M. ohione conduct long-distance migrations to and from the sea to populate far-upstream freshwater habitats.

#### NOV 22

#### Turkey Tuesday (10 am - 2 pm)

Leaf and turkey activities to enjoy before Thanksgiving.

NOV 24 Museum closed for holiday

#### DEC 2

Merry Mammals! (9 am - Noon) Join us for some cool warm-blooded and furry fun activities!

#### DEC 3

#### **Christmas for the Birds (10 am - Noon)** Participants of all ages will learn how to create natural ornaments that will help

create natural ornaments that will help feed the birds during the winter months.

#### DEC 8-10 "Parents and Kids" magazine Christmas Fest 2011

See www.msnaturalscience.org for details as they develop.

#### DEC 10

#### Nature Made Christmas (10 am - Noon)

Participants of all ages will make fun ornaments using natural objects.

DEC 24-25 Museum closed for holiday

Note: Dates are subject to change.

### For Teachers

#### WET AND WILD CEU CREDITS

The Museum offers two environmental education programs, Project WILD and Project WET, with CEU credits available.

#### WORKSHOPS

JUN 24 - Project WET JULY 25 - Growing Up WILD JULY 26 - WILD about Reptiles July 27 - Project Aquatic WILD July 28 - Project Flying WILD July 29 - Project WET

#### **RESOURCES**

To schedule a workshop or field trip, reserve a resource kit, download classroom materials, or learn more about how our Museum can help meet your classroom needs, call Angel Rohnke or Megan Sewall at 601-354-7303

or visit www.msnaturalscience.org.

#### For Preschoolers

The Museum's "hands-on" Preschool Discovery Room is designed specifically for pre-kindergartners, ages 3-5. It is open when a staff member or volunteer is available. The schedule is subject to change. Call Joan Elder at 601-354-7303 ext.136 or email joan.elder@ mmns.state.ms.us for more information.

#### **PRESCHOOL DISCOVERY ROOM HOURS**

MON-FRI 1-4pm SAT 9:30am-12noon & 1-4pm SUN 1-4pm

TIME FOR TWOS ( ages 2 & under) 2nd TUE 1-4  $\ensuremath{\mathsf{PM}}$ 

STORY TIME ( ages 3 to 5) WED 1:15, 2:15, & 3:15 pm (aug-may) TUE & THU 10:15 & 11:15 am (JUN-JUL)

#### **PRESCHOOL CLASSES**

PRE-RESERVATION REQUIRED MON-FRI 9am, 9:45am, & 10:30am (Aug-May) WED & FRI 9am, 9:45am, & 10:30am (JUN-JUL)

JUL-AUG CLASS: "Small, Yet Awesome!" - a peek into the world of insects. Children will explore the fascinating world of insects and appreciate their diversity, usefulness, and physical structure.

SEPT-OCT CLASS: "You Can't See Me!" - (explore the importance of camouflage) Children will understand the importance of camouflage in the animal world. They will note the effectiveness of an animal's camouflage in its specific habitat. For example, a white fox in the snow of the Arctic.

NOV-DEC CLASS "Love It Down Here!" - (a study of animals that live part or all of the time underground) Children will note that many animals live all or part of the time underground. They will under stand that these animals are well adapted to this habitat, and thrive in it; they find the basics – food, water, shelter, and space.





### For Volunteers

During the "Amazing Butterflies" exhibit, many new friends emerged to help us have a successful and very busy spring season at MMNS!

Thanks to the Millsaps College students who have strongly supported the work of the Museum this winter and spring! These Conservation Biology students of Dr. Marcus Telkamp earned service learning hours by volunteering at the Museum and educating visitors through interpretation of our traveling exhibit, "Amazing Butterflies": Neha Patel, Brittany Ector, Mark Herndon, Ashley Scales, Courtney Dugas, Elise Fontenot, Adam Williams, Jonathan McNair, Phillip Schwartz, Lauren Gabreski, Mimi Nguyen, and Lamees El-Sadek.



Lamees El-Sadek and Mimi Nguyen working in the native plant garden

Millsaps Biology major Phillip Schwartz both volunteered and interned with us, working on studies of long-eared sunfish with aquarist Mike Stegall. Neha Patel will continue to serve the Museum by interning with us this summer in both research and education.

Hinds Community College Phi Theta Kappa honors students continued their practice of supporting us at "NatureFest!", and this year we were joined by future nurses in the Hinds CC dual enrollment program, led by teacher Lisa Fitchie. Public events such as "NatureFest!" would not be a success without the support of all our community partners.

Mentor student Michael White, a senior at Magee High School, has learned about Mississppi black bears and worked with Museum education staff to spread the word about Mississippi endangered species to visitors.

Congratulations to Nathan Bartosek, a senior at New Summit High School and museum teen volunteer, who earned his Eagle Scout award by building a chimney swift tower in the meadow area on the Museum's front lawn. In addition to the hours spent working on his Eagle project, Nathan has given over 100 hours of service at the Museum since he began volunteering.

This spring we recognize the contributions of our volunteers who have reached new milestones of service at the Museum. Teen volunteers Brooke Nash and Ashley Williams have now given over 200 hours; Richard Plucker has now earned over 400 hours.

Adult volunteers: Former Museum librarian Mary Stevens has now given over 100 hours in volunteer time; Derek Terry has given over 100 hours. Gail Buzhardt has given over 200 hours. Aaron Trubman and John Haliburton have given over 300 hours, Martha Bercaw, 600; Roseanne Horn, over 700 hours.

As we look forward to a fun summer at MMNS, we welcome applications for our teen volunteer program in particular! Teens who are accepted as volunteers may be considered for summer camp counselor positions and can assist with summertime public events. For more information, contact Ann.

### Volunteer Notes

Our current temporary exhibit, Frogs! Beyond Green, gives you the opportunity to hop into the Museum to volunteer, especially if you enjoy meeting new people and would like to learn more about frogs! If you'd like to help out, get in touch at ann.peden@mmns.state.ms.us or contact volunteer coordinator Ann Peden at 601-354-7303.

To participate you will first need to complete a volunteer application, available on-line at www.msnaturalscience.org. Teen Volunteer information is also available.



## Aquarium News

uring the "Frogs!" exhibit, MMNS aquarium and education staff members will work together to take care of the frogs, toads, and tadpoles that will be housed in our Museum through January. The cleaning, feeding and maintenance of the various live animal displays will take between two and three hours of staff time daily. Some of the food for the frogs will have to be grown or cultured on site. Many of the tanks that house the frogs will be filled with moist sphagnum moss and most have underlying beds of wet gravel. Pumps behind the scenes will keep water circulating through gravel layers that filter out excess food and other particulate waste. Food items for the various frogs and toads include crickets, fruit flies, thawed krill and mysid shrimp, pelleted algae and fresh algae.

Some of the species that will be on display are Barking tree frogs, Dart frogs, Green tree frogs, and Red eyed frogs. The Museum's Woodland Ravine and Amphibian tank displays have long featured native frogs. We have always fed them on crickets which are delivered weekly by Canton Wholesale Bait Co. The "Frogs!" exhibit will bring us some new and exotic frog and toad species to learn about and care for. Some of the frogs will eat crickets, but our animal husbandry talents will stretch in new directions as we begin to grow fruit flies on yeast solutions for the smaller frogs. Nobody here has taken care of this many frogs before, but with the help of a good husbandry manual and lots of advice from the keepers at the Audubon Institute in New Orleans (this is Audubon's traveling exhibit) we should be fine!









### Tuesday July 5, 2011 9 am - 1 pm

Come out of your shell and head over to celebrate our First Annual Turtle Day! Museum staff will be on hand to help you learn all about turtles, with a special emphasis on native and endangered turtles of Mississippi. Activities from 9 am - Noon: Lecture at Noon. "Where are All the Little Gopher Tortoise Burrows?" join Matthew G. Hinderliter, Gopher Tortoise Biologist, to learn about the daily lives of juvenile Gopher Tortoises on Camp Shelby.

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#### LOCATION

The Museum is located on I-55 at Lakeland Drive—within LeFleur's Bluff State Park.

