

MISSISSIPPI
Museum of
Natural
Science



WILDLIFE
HERITAGE
FUND

VOL. #28 • No. III



Crawl, climb, and fly with 'Amazing Butterflies' at Jackson's Attraction of the Year.

Transform yourself into a caterpillar and journey through one of the planet's most amazing lifecycles at the "Amazing Butterflies" exhibit. Experience the challenges of being a caterpillar as it morphs into a beautiful butterfly through a hands-on human maze of larger-than-life leaves, grass, and trees. Along the way, discover the ways caterpillars move, what they eat, and how other creatures help them achieve their transformation. Mark your progress as a butterfly by stamping a souvenir garden card at eight stations before zooming out of the maze as a butterfly on "The Monarch Monorail!"

"After exploring the exhibit, 'fly' over to the Museum's Terrarium to see live butterflies," invites Chris Zachow, president of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation board of directors.

As butterflies seek out nectar for food, they often carry pollen from one plant flower to the next, and assist in plant pollination. "This exhibit provides a fun, interactive experience for families to learn about this amazing relationship," explains Larry Castle, Director of Technical Programs for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

If you enjoy butterflies, then you'll love MDWFP's Butterfly Conserving Wildlife car tag. The tag costs \$30 dollars (in addition to the regular tag fee). Proceeds benefit the Wildlife Heritage Fund. Contact your local tax collector's office to get yours.

"Amazing Butterflies" was created by the Natural History Museum in London in collaboration with Minotaur Mazes. The exhibit is sponsored locally by Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation, Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS), Anonymous, Clarion Ledger, Paul Benton, The Chisholm Foundation, Jackson Convention & Visitors Bureau, Sanderson Farms, Trustmark Bank, Chris & Steve Zachow, Feild Cooperative Associates, Emme Wells, Jennie McIntosh, Ollye B. Shirley, and other generous supporters.

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Dear Members,

The news concerning funding for state government is pretty grim right now. This year we face what has been forecast to be a challenging year.

The Mississippi Museum of Natural Science receives about 60 percent of our funding from the state's general funds, so we are included in the dire news and we have taken huge cuts in our state funding. Looking back over this year's accomplishments and noting that we provided services for more than 292,000 people gives us hope that we will come through this difficult time and find the resources to continue to serve our audience with quality education and conservation endeavors.

I am sure that we will continue to rely on friends and supporters to come to our aid as we have during previous times of need.

The new temporary exhibit Amazing Butterflies is an excellent example of the combination of public and private sector support we depend on. A grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in conjunction with local private donors such as Trustmark Bank and Sanderson Farms make this dynamic, interactive exhibit possible.

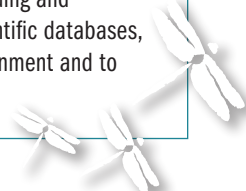
Our last temporary exhibit, Megalodon: Largest Shark That Ever Lived, was made possible by a similar mix of funding. Please take the time to read through the complete list of donors found in this newsletter.

We will also depend on our loyal volunteers who work hand-in-hand with our capable staff to consistently provide exemplary programs for our audience. We have faith that friends will step forward again to help.

Libby Hartfield
MUSEUM DIRECTOR

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.



Fossil Road Show

Pack up your fossils and hit the road!

Bring your favorite fossils and get expert opinions about their ages and identities from our team of scientists. See fossils from the Museum collection and enjoy interesting fossil presentations. Who knows what might turn up this year?

NatureFEST!

Come explore with us!

It's a festival, a nature outing, and a fascinating Museum trip, all wrapped into one exciting day. Bat expert Rob Mies is back to share the mysterious world of bats!



Met the "Snake Man", Terry Vandeventer. Enjoy fish feedings and live animal creature features. Interact with our biologists and researchers and tour behind the scenes. Get outside and tour the native plant garden, take a nature hike and paddle a canoe (weather permitting).



SPECIAL EVENTS

Fossil Road Show

SAT · MAR 5
10AM to 3PM

NatureFEST!

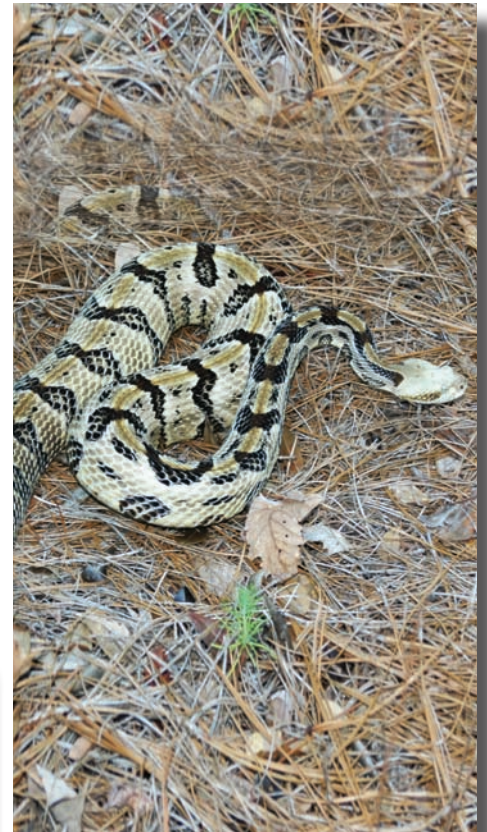
SAT · APR 9
10AM to 5PM

International Migratory Bird Day

SAT · MAY 7
10AM to 3pm

Snake Day

Tues · Jun 7
10AM to 3pm



Snake Day: Mississippi Style

Don't let this one slip by.

DHerpetologist Bryan Fedrick will help you spot the differences between Mississippi's venomous and non-venomous snakes, separating myth from accurate information about native snakes' value in the ecosystem. Catch one of Fedrick's interactive discussions from 10am-11am and 12noon-1pm. Live snakes will be exhibited from 10am-3pm, with experts on hand to answer your questions. (Snake exhibits provided by MMNS and Terry Vandeventer, Museum Associate).

International Migratory Bird Day

Come on over to their stopover.

Migrate to the Museum's grounds and nature trails, favorite stopovers for birds that fly between their breeding grounds in North America and their wintering grounds in Central and South America. We'll gather for bird watching, nature hikes, and more.





A Golden Silk Spider lounges in its web along the nature trails.
Credit: Hays Collins

Award Winning Announcements

Entries sought for “Third Annual Back to Nature Photography Contest ”

The Museum is accepting entries from February 2, 2011 - February 1, 2012 for the Third Annual Back to Nature Photography Contest. The contest is designed to encourage Museum visitors to venture out and capture the natural beauty of the wildlife and habitats seen on the grounds of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science and along the trails of Lefleur’s Bluff State Park. For details visit www.msnnaturalscience.org and click on The Latest or call 601-354-7303 for official guidelines and entry form.

Winners of the Second Annual Back to Nature Photography Contest will be announced in a future issue of the Newsline and on our website.



Libby Hartfield and Angel Rohnke

She develops strong partnerships with Mississippi science teachers and students

Angel Rohnke, Education Coordinator has received the Mississippi Science Teachers Association’s 2010 Informal Educator of the Year Award.



James Patterson

Museum recognized as key part of Jackson’s tourism product

The Mississippi Museum of Natural Science is Jackson’s 2010 Attraction of the Year. The award, part of the Jackson Convention and Visitor’s Bureau’s SUMITT (Superlative Merit in Travel & Tourism) Awards program, is voted on by Jackson’s tourism industry. The award was presented to Chris Zachow, President of the MMNS Foundation Board of Directors and Libby Hartfield, Museum Director in a ceremony held at the Jackson Convention Complex.

Mississippi's Endangered Butterfly

Two new populations of Mitchell's Satyr identified

Last summer, museum biologists had a unique opportunity to survey for the Federally Endangered Mitchell's Satyr butterfly (*Neonympha mitchelli mitchelli*) through a federally funded grant with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This survey was performed to determine the estimated distribution of this butterfly species in northeast Mississippi. Mitchell's Satyrs are considered to be one of the most critically endangered butterflies in eastern North America. In 2004, Mississippi State University entomologists identified the first two known Mitchell's Satyr populations in Tishomingo County, Mississippi. Until this time, this butterfly species was only thought to occur in Indiana, Michigan, and Alabama.

Mitchell's Satyrs require a very specific habitat type for their survival. This habitat type (sometimes called a fen) must consist of a wet meadow that allows sunlight to penetrate, but also provides bordering shade. In addition, the groundcover vegetation must be dominated specific sedge species (*Carex crinita* and *C. lurida*). These plants are thought to serve as the primary food sources for developing satyr larvae. The specificity of this habitat makes it an extremely rare find. In addition, wetland draining during the 1900's to expand urban development and agricultural lands likely destroyed many wetland areas that supported this unique satyr habitat type.



Adult Mitchell's Satyr Butterflies that were caught, photographed and released.

In June 2010, Sherry Surette, Heather Sullivan, and Scott Peyton surveyed over fifty wetland habitats for Mitchell's Satyrs and their associated vegetation. The month of June was chosen because this is the month in which the first satyr brood of the year is known to emerge as adult butterflies. The biologists were successful at identifying two new Mitchell's Satyr populations in Itawamba and Tishomingo Counties. Again in August 2010, additional surveys were conducted during the estimated time of the second adult satyr brood flight. However, no new populations were found during this trip. Additional Mitchell's Satyr surveys are planned for June and August 2011.



Suitable Habitat for the Mitchell's Satyr Butterfly.

ONGOING



MPB RADIO SHOW

Listen to Museum Director Libby Hartfield and local veterinarian Dr. Troy Majure every Thursday morning at 9am (rebroadcast at 9pm) 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 family-friendly 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.

FEB 1 Summer Camp

Summer Camp Registration for MMNS Members opens. See www.ms naturalscience.org or call 601-354-7303 for form.

FEB 2, 2011 - FEB 1, 2012 Contest

Enter the 3rd Annual Back to Nature Photography Contest Designed to encourage visitors to venture out and capture the natural beauty of the wildlife and habitats seen on the museum grounds, and along the trails of Lefleur's Bluff State Park. See www.ms naturalscience.org or call 601-354-7303 for official guidelines and entry.

NOW - MAY 8, 2011 SPECIAL EXHIBIT Amazing Butterflies

"Amazing Butterflies". Giant Maze and Live Butterflies. Discover the caterpillar's secret world of towering grass and leaves, then transform and take flight!

MAR 1 Summer Camp

Summer camp Registration for non-mem-



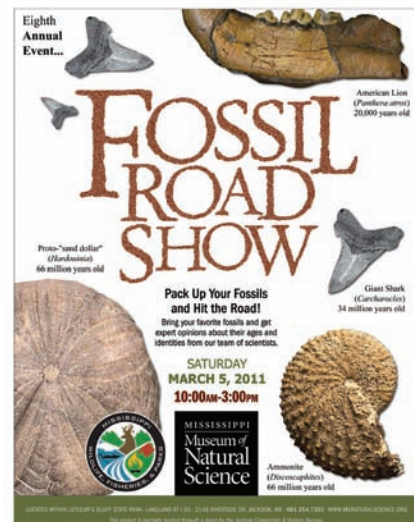
bers opens. See www.ms naturalscience.org or call 601-354-7303 for form.

MAR 1 · TUE · NOON-1PM - LECTURE · SPEAKER: DR. RICHARD BROWN, PROFESSOR OF ENTOMOLOGY, AND DIRECTOR, MISSISSIPPI ENTOMOLOGICAL MUSEUM, MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Butterflies, Caterpillars, and Plant Taxonomy



Did you know that caterpillars were able to identify plants and plant relationships before humans were able to do so? Dr. Brown will discuss caterpillars and this ability.



MAR 5 · SAT · 10AM-3PM Fossil Road Show

Fossil experts will help visitors identify their fossils and determine more about their own fossil collections.

MAR 14-18 · MON-FRI Teacher Workshops

For details, contact Angel Rohnke at 601-354-7303 or by email; angel.rohnke@mmns.state.ms.us rebecca.jones@mmns.state.ms.us

APR 5 · TUE · NOON-1PM - LECTURE · SPEAKER: DR. JESSICA KAS-



Bill Stripling

TLER, MARINE EDUCATION CENTER, GULF COAST RESEARCH LABORATORY, USM, OCEAN SPRINGS

Response Oil Spill Outreach Based in Science

An interactive discussion of oil in the Gulf of Mexico and the scientific response to the spill resulting from the Deepwater Horizon explosion.

APR 9 · SAT · 10AM-5PM

NatureFEST!

Bring the family to explore the museum - starring bats, snakes, fish and a behind-the-scenes look at research, guided nature walks, and other outdoor activities

APR 24 · SUN

Museum Closed for Holiday



MAY 3 · TUE · NOON-1PM - LECTURE · SPEAKER: ANDY PECK, PH.D., FRESHWATER ECOLOGIST, NATURE CONSERVANCY OF MISSISSIPPI & ENERGY FOUNDATION FELLOW, JACKSON

Restoring Mississippi Delta Habitats: How Green Infrastructure Can Provide Both Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat Improvements.

Planting more than 390,000 trees will benefit more than 900 acres of Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge Land. When combined with other resources, the end result becomes more than the sum of its parts. This project will be discussed at the restoration site level and on larger scales such as the Yazoo River Basin, Mississippi River, and the Gulf of Mexico

MAY 7 · SAT · 10AM-3PM

International Migratory Bird Day

Gather for bird watching, nature hikes, and lots of hands-on activities. Join in the fun and help support migratory bird conservation.

MAY 30

Museum Closed for Holiday

JUN 4 - JAN 9, 2012 · SPECIAL EVENT

"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 4 · SAT · 7AM-10:30AM

Katfishin' Kids at Turcotte Education Center

Fun fishing at Turcotte Lab off Hwy 43 at Ross Barnett Reservoir, for ages 15 and under, accompanied by adults. Equipment and refreshments are free.

JUN 6-10

Junior Naturalist Summer Camp

Jr. Naturalist Camp (for the older kids), gives kids a chance to participate in indoor/outdoor activities that focus on the ecosystems of Mississippi. Campers learn about identification, collection, and conservation of our indigenous species. For details, contact Megan Sewall. 601-354-7303 smegaroni@yahoo.com

JUN 7 · TUE · 10AM-11AM & NOON-1PM - LECTURE

SPEAKER: BRYAN FEDRICK, HERPETOLOGIST

Learn the value of our native snakes and how to distinguish venomous species from non-venomous ones. Live snakes will be exhibited from 10am to 3pm.

JUN and JUL

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

JUN 13-16 (entering K-1) · JUN 20-23 (entering 2-3) · JUN 27-30 (entering 4-5).

Wild about Summer Camp

Camp WILD (for the younger campers) is a place where kids explore the outdoors, make new friends, and delve into nature. For details, contact Nicole Smith. 601-354-7303 nicole.smith@mmns.state.ms.us

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

MAR 14 - Growing Up WILD
MAR 15 - Project WET
MAR 16 - Project Aquatic WILD
MAR 17 - Project Flying WILD
MAR 18 - WILD about Reptiles
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 Rebecca Jones 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 1-4PM

STORY TIME (ages 3 to 5)
WED 1:15, 2:15, & 3:15PM (AUG-MAY)
TUE & THU 10:15 & 11:15AM (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)

MAR, APR, MAY CLASS: "MOM! It's DARK!" - A STUDY OF NOCTURNAL ANIMALS AND THEIR BABIES. CHILDREN WILL APPRECIATE THE LARGE NUMBER OF ANIMALS THAT LOOK FOR FOOD AT NIGHT AND NOTE THE NAMES OF SOME OF THE BABIES AS WELL AS THEIR HABITATS.

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.



Aquarium Staff Brings “Amazing Butterflies” Exhibit to Life.

Visit The Swamp this winter and get close to the creatures that call this special habitat, “Home”.

As you have probably noticed, we try to have each of our newsletters reflect something to do with our current special exhibit. This winter we have an exhibit on butterflies and you may be wondering, “How in the world will the aquariums be able to tie into that subject?” Well, have no fear, we have done it. The terrarium, (aka The Swamp), is going to become the temporary home for not just fish, alligators and turtles but also live butterflies. Please understand that this is not going to be a full-fledged butterfly house, but we are going to try to have a few of the common native species.

The swamp is a 1,700-square foot greenhouse containing a lush native plant garden and a 20,000-gallon aquarium that provides a home for an assortment of alligators, fish, and turtles that includes endangered turtles such as the ringed saw back turtle, black knobbed saw back turtles, and the yellow blotched saw back turtles. The endangered turtle exhibit is designed with a simulated sandbar so that these turtles can dig nests and lay eggs. Each year we look forward to the baby hatchlings. However, we have always been disappointed that we did not see any baby yellow blotched turtle hatchlings. For our regular visitors, you may remember that last fall we did a complete renovation of the terrarium. We installed new basking lights, a sprinkler system, and basking logs. Apparently, this finally set the mood for the yellow blotched turtles. This summer, we were delighted to see our first baby yellow blotched turtle hatchlings. All three species of saw back turtle hatchlings are now on display in the baby turtle tank along with hatchlings from many other species of native Mississippi turtles.



FOR VOLUNTEERS

Have you ever experienced a “cool moon”? This was just one of many discoveries on our last adult volunteer field trip visiting the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale, MS and the B.B. King Museum in Indianola, MS. A full day of considering how to interpret our state’s rich culture for visitors ended with a surprise treat; heated moon pies topped with ice cream and chocolate sauce, aka, the “cool moon”. You never know what you’ll learn as a Museum volunteer!

Exploring Mississippi is just one opportunity provided by our volunteer program. Volunteers continue their outstanding support of all Museum activities, and we continue to welcome you to join our ranks.

Volunteer Jim Leonard has now earned over one thousand hours since he began volunteering in 2008. “I get a lot more than I give, as far as I’m concerned,” Jim says. “Every day I learn something new.” Jim’s made major contributions to the Museum collections, specifically with dissection of mussel and gill tissue samples for the DNA sample storage



Volunteer coordinator Ann Peden shopping in downtown Clarksdale on a volunteer trip to the Delta with a couple of our most faithful volunteers, Bill and Betty Anne Hays



A “Cool Moon” - moonpie heated up with ice cream on top. Genius!

and preparing specimens for the herbarium. You’re also likely to meet Jim in the exhibit hall, sharing what he’s learned working with our research biologists. “What keeps me coming back is being with a cadre of very knowledgeable people who are always willing to help you. And then I’m able to go downstairs and impart that knowledge to our guests. That’s fun, too.”

We welcome new volunteer divers, Charles Burrage and Jennifer Whatley. Look for them waving at you underwater during our fish-feeding dives. Weekdays, new volunteer Derek Terry will be out and about in the exhibit hall to help answer questions and share interesting info.



VOLUNTEER NOTES

Our current temporary exhibit, Amazing Butterflies, gives you the opportunity to transform into a Museum volunteer, especially if you enjoy meeting new people and would like to learn more about butterflies! 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.ms-natural-science.org. Teen Volunteer information is also available.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!

This is a great time to join our volunteer community. Teen Volunteer information is also available. Please contact volunteer coordinator Ann Peden at 601-354-7303 or ann.peden@mmns.state.ms.us to get started.

Wind Storms Damage Trails but Swift Repairs are Planned.

Trails continue to benefit from volunteer involvement and use.

The museum and park trails are very pleasant during the months of February through May and are the most pleasant for walking along the river, up and down the bluffs, and along our upper and lower backwater sloughs. However, in the last few months, wind storms have brought down trees and wrecked both of our 3 year-old viewing platforms. The upper slough platform was 50 percent destroyed and the lower slough only lost some hand rails and a few stairs. Prompt repairs are planned. The trees along our trails make them attractive and provide shade, but they smash our trail improvements when they come down.

Six Eagle Scout projects provided new trail amenities in the form of retaining walls, benches and bridge repair over the last few months. Joseph Herrington, Jarred Easterling, Philip Lanoux, Zachary Thaggard and Jimmy Swensen earned their Eagle Scout pins in part by completing functional projects that made the museum and park trails nicer places to visit and use. Cody Cliburn did his



Florence High School senior project on urban water pollution and built and installed wood duck nesting boxes along a slough on the river trail.

LeFleur's Bluff State Park manager Randy Dearman has created a new primitive campground near the Pearl River for use by scouts, church, and school groups. This campground is only 50 feet from the road to the boat ramp on the river, and is easy to use for scout troops that have trailers full of camping equipment and need to camp close to their vehicles, plus it is within a short walk of shower and bathroom facilities of the main campground.

The LeFleur's Ridge group camping area is open and has been improved by the addition of picnic tables and portable toilets on platforms, but it requires a hike of about 15 minutes down the river trail from the closest parking area and is better suited for backpack camping. Scouts and other supervised groups are welcome to use it by arrangement with the park manager, call (601) 987-3923. Last Spring, Troop 8 from First Baptist Church of Jackson launched canoes below the Ross Barnett Reservoir dam, and paddled down the Pearl to camp – a first for the park.





Steadfast Supporters

\$100,000-\$200,000

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\$50,000-\$100,000

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NatureFEST!

**Saturday
 April 9, 2011
 10 am - 5 pm**

*Spend the day in the
 middle of nature!*
 – inside and outside
 the Museum –

Some of the many Activities:

- Birds of Prey
- Museum Collections
- Native Plant Sale
- Live Animals
- Scuba Divers
- Nature Trails
- Giant Aquariums
- “Snake Man
 Terry Vandeventer”
- Behind-the-scenes Tours
- Bat Expert Rob Mies
- Photo Contest Winners

\$25,000-\$50,000

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 Feild Cooperative Association, Inc.
 Foundation for the Mid South
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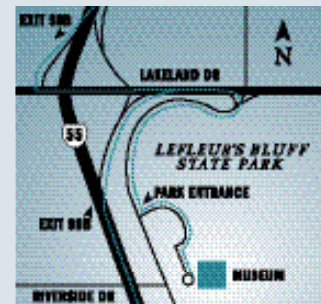
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LOCATION

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



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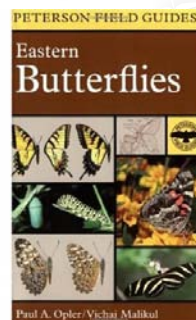


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