

**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

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



# Gulf Coast Research Laboratory

## Marine Education Center

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

# Gulf Islands National Seashore

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

# Grand Bay NERR

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