



# Dauphin Island Sea Lab's MANATEE SIGHTING NETWORK

## Fall 2013 Newsletter



### MSN's First Public Seminar and Volunteer Training

On 28 September 2013, MSN held its first ever Manatee Safe Viewing and Volunteer Training seminar at the 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center in Spanish Fort, Alabama. The goal of this event was to educate local residents about the presence of manatees in Alabama and surrounding waters and how they can safely observe manatees. The event was also a chance for members of the public to learn about ways to become part of DISL's manatee sighting network. In all, 18 residents participated in the half-day event.

We hope to make this public training a regular event for Mobile & Baldwin counties.

If you are interested in participating in a future training or have a preferred venue for the training please contact MSN at 251-861-2141, x7547.



Halls Mill Creek 2013

Credit: M. Lerch

### Highlights

- *First MSN Public Training Seminar*
- *Familiar Manatees in Alabama Waters*
- *Warm Weather Manatee Mortalities*
- *MSN Adds Two New Faces*
- *Upcoming Outreach Events*

### Familiar Manatees Seen in Alabama Waters



Turbine in Dog River 2013

Credit: D. Chaltain

This summer MSN received repeated sightings of two manatees well-known to the network. A formerly tagged manatee, Ellie, was seen on several occasions from June through August in Dog River and Mobile Bay as part of a likely breeding group.

Ellie was often seen with Turbine, a well-traveled manatee from Tampa Bay, who swam nearly 100 miles north of Mobile Bay to the Claiborne Lock and Dam in Monroe County, AL in summer 2012. Turbine is named for his distinct windmill shaped scar pattern.



Ellie in Dog River 2013

Credit: D. Chaltain



It is NOW too cold for manatees in Alabama.

Report all sightings online or by phone!

Manatee.disl.org  
1-866-493-5803

Like! Us on Facebook:  
Mobile Manatees Sighting Network

# MSN Records First Warm Weather Manatee Mortalities

This summer was unusual for manatee mortalities in our region. In June, MSN responded to Alabama's first documented warm weather manatee stranding and responded to two additional mortalities in July.

The first mortality, a calf found in the Dog River area of Mobile Bay, was determined to likely have been stillborn. The second mortality was a large adult recovered in Bayou La Batre, AL. The cause of death could not be determined due to a high level of decomposition before the carcass was discovered and reported. The third mortality was recovered from Pascagoula, MS and is MSN's first known boat strike case. The large female manatee suffered severe blunt force trauma that led to her death.

These events are a sobering reminder that as we see more manatees, we also have a greater chance of warm season mortality, particularly due to boat strikes. Please boat safely and consider attending an MSN public training event (see page 1 for details).

## Upcoming Outreach Events

- Mobile Boat Show:** 7-9 February 2014
- Biloxi Boat Show:** 21-23 February 2014
- DISL's Discovery Day:** 12 April 2014

## Help Support MSN



- **Buy a Card for a Cause!**  
Tacky Jack's gift cards available online.
- **Manatee T-shirts** available in child & adult sizes online
- Sign our pre-commitment forms for the **Alabama Manatee License Plate**



**Go Green! Receive our newsletter via email! Contact [manatee@disl.org](mailto:manatee@disl.org).**



MSN volunteers assist with a manatee necropsy

## Introducing the Two Newest Members of the MSN Team

MSN and our sister network ALMMSN are excited to welcome two new members to our marine mammal research team.



**Kayla DaCosta** is our newest PhD student, coming to us from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Kayla is studying the ecology of manatees in the northern Gulf of Mexico.

**Noel Wingers** is the new Stranding Coordinator and Research Technician for our sister network, ALMMSN.

Noel comes from Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, CA where she is completing her MS in Biology

