

2018 ALABAMA COASTAL BIRDFEST SCHEDULE

The following is the schedule of trips and workshops for the 2018 BirdFest.

Registration will be open from 9 am August 13th – 4pm September 21st

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3

#100 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

7-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

A small group of birders will enjoy a personalized boat journey into the untouched Mobile-Tensaw Delta wilderness. Travel with local nature expert and guide **Jimbo Meador** on his custom-built boat that can maneuver the shallow waters of the bay and tributaries with a high-speed but quiet motor, allowing you to get close and observe the abundant wildlife in an environmentally-friendly, undisturbed atmosphere. Trip is limited to six participants. **Note: Small boat cruise**

#101 – WEEKS BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE/WEEKS BAY EXPLORER CRUISE

7-9am – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina

Fee: \$30

Cruise Weeks Bay, Fish River, and Magnolia River onboard the *Weeks Bay Explorer*, and learn about this beautiful estuary. Afterwards, you may enjoy boardwalks through a bottomland hardwood swamp and/or a native pitcher plant bog, or see exhibits in the Visitor Center. **Note: Cruise**

#102 – HUMMINGBIRD WORKSHOP

12-2pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$20

Emma Rhodes, from Birmingham Audubon, is a certified hummingbird bander working alongside well known master bird bander, Fred Bassett. She has banded hummingbirds in several states and has assisted with multiple educational hummingbird events and research projects. Emma will cover some hummingbird basics from attraction to habitat and will delve into her current research with Hummingbird Research, Inc. (a nonprofit organization that promotes the conservation of hummingbirds through research and education). She will discuss the complex and fascinating subject of hummingbird migration and winter vagrancy.

#103 – DELTA, BAY, AND RIVER BOAT TOUR – NEW!

2-4pm – Departs from Bluegill Restaurant

Fee: \$30

Enjoy a fun and interesting tour of Mobile Bay and the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. See American Alligators, herons, egrets, and other water birds, various historical landmarks, a WWII era battleship, a working port, naval vessels, and large and interesting cargo ships up close. Who knows what's to be seen? **Note: Cruise**

#104 – BASICS OF BIRDING WORKSHOP

2-4pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$20

New to birding and want to enhance your experiences during BirdFest and beyond? This workshop, taught by **Katie Barnes**, an experienced educator from Birmingham Audubon, will be talking about the hobby of birding and birding by season and habitat. She will discuss how to identify based on shape and bird families (categorizing), how to use binoculars, and good field guides and resources to use.

#105 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

3-5pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#106 – ADVANCED BIRDING WORKSHOP – NEW!

4-6pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$25

Take your birding knowledge to the next level with this advanced class, taught by local expert, **Carol Furman**.

#107 – ORIENTATION, PRESENTATION, AND WELCOME RECEPTION

6-8pm – Delta Hall at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$30

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, meet your fellow birders, pick up local brochures and your name badge, place a bid on the silent auction, and enjoy "Nature Through Our Senses," focusing on works from our 2018 poster photographer **Georgia Sims** along with previous featured photographers and members of Mobile's CameraSouth and the Eastern Shore Camera Club.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4

#200 – MAGNOLIA BRANCH WILDLIFE RESERVE – NEW!

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$60 – includes lunch

Magnolia Branch is the perfect place to get away and enjoy nature. Join our guides as we explore and bird some of the more than 900 acres of pristine forest, creeks, and beautiful lakes that are owned and maintained by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. Additionally, a tribal elder will speak on cultural issues and conservation activities utilized by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. **Note: Moderate alking**

#201 – BAYOU LA BATRE, FOREVER WILD GRAND BAY SAVANNA, GRAND BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, POINT AUX PINS

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$50 – includes lunch

The Nature Conservancy calls this area one of the "last great places on Earth." Fishing, shrimping, and oyster harvesting are big

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businesses here, and birding concentrates on water birds, shorebirds, and marsh species, with passerines and raptors abundant in the fall. **Note: Moderate walking**

#202 – DAUPHIN ISLAND/TRANS GULF FLYWAY

6:30am-2pm – **Ride bus from 5 Rivers**

Fee: \$50 – includes lunch

WildBird magazine called Dauphin Island, a narrow barrier island only 14 miles long, one of the “top four locations in North America for viewing neotropical migration.” This heavy-walking trip will visit prime birding spots, including the Dauphin Island Audubon Bird Sanctuaries, the airport marsh, Shell Mound Park, the goat trees, and the causeway. **Note: Extensive walking/sand**

#203 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

7-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#204 – WEEKS BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE/WEEKS BAY EXPLORER CRUISE

7-9am – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina

Fee: \$30

*See trip #101 for description

#205 – MOBILE BAY, DISL RESEARCH VESSEL ALABAMA DISCOVERY CRUISE

7:30am-1:30pm – Meet at DISL parking lot

Fee: \$40

Join marine biologists from Dauphin Island Sea Lab for a cruise aboard the *Alabama Discovery*. You'll learn the Bay's history, ecology, and value, perhaps see bottlenose dolphins and the Sand Island Lighthouse up close, and view specimens caught in a trawl net. Includes a stop at the George F. Crozier Estuarium. Please note lunch is not included, but guests may bring their own. **Note: Cruise**

#206 – DELTA DISCOVERY TOUR

1-5pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$65

Explore the majestic Mobile-Tensaw River Delta and visit numerous habitats and points of interest along the way. This tour begins in the Lower Mobile-Tensaw Delta and heads north up the Blakeley, Apalachee, and Tensaw Rivers toward the Middle Delta. Visit marshlands and cypress swamps. **Note: Cruise**

#207 – BASICS OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

2-4pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$20

This class is for beginners, novices, and anyone who wants a refresher on the basics of using a digital camera. We will discuss how to expose pictures properly, how to make sure your pictures are sharp, and how to compose a photo to make it more interesting. We will also discuss how to transfer photos from your camera to computer and some of the photo editing software available.

#208 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

3-5pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#209 – JUSTIN'S BAY SUNSET KAYAK COOKOUT – NEW!

4-7pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$65

At the city limits of America's wettest city, you will find the vast wetlands of the lower Mobile-Tensaw Delta. This lush habitat provides the perfect backdrop for amazing sunsets and energetic wildlife. You will paddle through the marsh grasses, watching for and learning about a variety of wildlife including alligators, Bald Eagles, osprey, heron, pelicans, and Nutria. This is the “hands-on” tour for all lovers of nature and its creatures. This 3-hour tour paddles out to remote camping shelters, where guests will exit their kayaks and enjoy a low country shrimp boil. The group will then paddle back to the landing to watch the sunset over the Delta. This tour will use both tandem kayaks and canoes. **Note: Moderate paddle***

#210 – WEEKS BAY SUNSET CRUISE

5-7pm – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina

Fee: \$35

End your day with a leisurely cruise onboard the *Weeks Bay Explorer*, cruise Weeks Bay, Magnolia River, and Fish River, and watch bird and sea life (possibly bottlenose dolphins) end their day. We will position the boat perfectly giving you time to snap great sunset photos before heading back to dock. **Note: Cruise**

#211 – DELTA SUNSET CRUISE

5-7pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$35

Explore the lower Mobile-Tensaw Delta and northern Mobile Bay on this late afternoon boat tour. Cruise through the open marsh watching for a variety of wildlife including alligators, Bald Eagles, osprey, and herons. Learn about these unique animals of the swamp on the way to the bay where you will delight in watching the sunset over Mobile Bay and the city of Mobile. Snacks and nonalcoholic drinks are provided. **Note: Cruise**

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5

#300 – JACINTO PORT, WILLIAM BROOKS PARK, CHICKASAW PONDS, and BATTLESHIP PARK – NEW!

6:30am-Noon – Carpool from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$40

Enjoy birding the 7.5 miles of this Forever Wild property located in Saraland, Alabama. Our guides will take you through various habitats that include longleaf pine, slash, and hardwoods with views of Bayou Sara and surrounding Mobile-Tensaw Delta. William Brooks Park is located on Chickasaw Creek and offers trails and a boardwalk system to view the waterfowl, waders, and migratory birds. Birds that are frequently seen at Chickasaw Ponds include Common Gallinule, Least Bittern, Purple Gallinule, Anhinga, and various migratory birds.

Note: Moderate walking

#301 – BLAKELEY ISLAND MUD PONDS & BATTLESHIP PARK

6:30am-Noon – Carpool from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$30

Mobile River's Blakeley Island is known for large dredge disposal ponds that are the premier shore-birding spots in the state. With Battleship Park on the Causeway, these sites are great for spotting osprey, shorebirds, and waterfowl-and the occasional Roseate Spoonbill. **Note: Moderate walking**

#302 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

7-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#303 – WEEKS BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE/WEEKS BAY EXPLORER CRUISE

7-9am – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina

Fee: \$30

*See trip #101 for description

#304 – BON SECOUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

7:30-11:30am – Meet at Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge

Fee: \$35

Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge on Fort Morgan Peninsula is a prime birding location. Our guides and naturalists from BSNWR will take you down trails through woods, coastal marsh, and sandy beaches to seek birds in a variety of habitats. A new boardwalk trail opened in 2018. Please note, this is a remote area and you will need to bring water. **Note: Extensive walking/sand & distance**

#305 – DELTA WILDLIFE BOAT TOUR – NEW!

9-11am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$25

Experience the lower Mobile-Tensaw Delta on this highly rated wildlife tour. You will float through the open marsh watching for a variety of wildlife including alligators, Bald Eagle, osprey, heron, cormorant, pelicans, Nutria, and more. Learn about these unique animals of the swamp and how they live. Commentary includes points on the history, geology, ecology, and characters of the Delta.

Note: Cruise

#306 – GRAHAM CREEK/WOLF BAY KAYAK TOUR – NEW!

1-4pm – departs from Graham Creek Nature Preserve

Fee: \$70

Explore the protected waters of Graham Creek as you watch Brown Pelicans dive around us. This tour will make its way out to the north end of Wolf Bay, a premiere dolphin habitat of the area. There we will explore the bay and its local wildlife including many species of wading birds and raptors. **Note: Moderate paddle**

#307 – DELTA DISCOVERY TOUR

1-5pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$65

*See trip #206 for description

#308 – ADVANCED BIRD & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP – NEW!

2-4pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$20

Want to know more than the basics of nature photography? This is a class for people who are intermediate or advanced photographers. We will cover what gear you need to get the shots you want. We will explore tips and tricks for using depth of field, composition, and perspective to achieve better results. We will also discuss when and where to go to get great pictures.

#309 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

3-5pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#310 – BEACH BIRD BONANZA WORKSHOP – NEW, FOR CHILDREN!

3-5pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$20

Children ages 6-11 will learn about beach nesting birds through three hands-on activities, including building your own baby Snowy Plover, creating a beach nesting sign, and painting your own

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camouflaged eggs. Workshop put on by Birmingham Audubon's Coastal Stewardship Office.

#311 – LIVING ON THE EDGE: THE PERILS OF MIGRATION PRESENTATION – NEW!

3:30-5:30pm – 5 Rivers

Fee: \$25

Professor Joel Borden from the University of South Alabama will lead a discussion on the strategies and stresses involving migration in relation to feeding/energy metabolism, climate conditions, and the effects of migration on survivorship and reproductive output. Emphasis on passerine Neotropical migrants.

#312 – BIRDFEST SOCIAL WITH SPEAKER AND SILENT AUCTION

6-9pm – Delta Hall at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$35

Enjoy Southern hospitality and a delicious meal with barbecue, seafood, and tasty sides. The BirdFest Silent Auction wraps up tonight, so be ready to place your final bid! Keynote speakers Katie Barnes and Emma Rhodes will talk about the Alabama Coastal Bird Stewardship Program and report on their findings from the first beach nesting bird stewardship season.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6

#400 – BLAKELEY ISLAND MUD PONDS & BATTLESHIP PARK

6:30am-Noon – Carpool from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$30

*See trip #301 for description

#401 – BAYOU LA BATRE, FOREVER WILD GRAND BAY SAVANNA, GRAND BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, POINT AUX PINS

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$50 – Includes lunch

*See trip #201 for description

#402 – HISTORIC BLAKELEY STATE PARK & CRUISE – NEW!

6:30am-2pm – Meet at Blakeley State Park entrance

Fee: \$65 – Includes lunch

Historic Blakeley State is situated in one of the most ecologically diverse sections of Alabama. Join our guides and naturalists as we explore the more than 16 miles of trails traversing the property searching for migrating warblers, tanagers, vireos, and flycatchers. The Upper Battlefield is a botanist's and lepidopterist's dream come true with many species of plants and butterflies to observe.

Within the park's grounds are the site of the last major battle of the Civil War. We will enjoy a 90-minute uniquely narrated voyage of discovery on the *Delta Explorer* while exploring the major battles of the Civil War's "Mobile Campaign" from the rivers along which its major actions took place. **Note: Moderate walking and Cruise**

#403 – FORT MORGAN PENNINSULA/TRANS GULF FLYWAY

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers

Fee: \$50 – Includes lunch

The American Bird Conservancy calls Fort Morgan one of the top "globally important bird areas" in the U.S. You'll visit the open areas and shoreline of Fort Morgan State Historic Site, all part of a vital Trans Gulf Flyway. **Note: Moderate/extensive walking**

#404 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

7-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#405 – SHOREBIRD FIELD WORKSHOP

7:30am-Noon – Depart from Dauphin Island Pier

Fee: \$40

Dauphin Island is one of the "10 most globally important sites" for migration. We will visit the maritime forest, marshes, and dunes of Audubon Bird Sanctuary and Pelican "Island," a narrow strip of land that migrated from Sand Island Lighthouse and is now attached to Dauphin Island. Andrew Haffenden will lead the tour and give extensive instruction on field identification. **Note: Moderate to extensive walking/sand & distance**

#406 – HASTIE LAKE/TENSAW RIVER PADDLE TOUR AND SHRIMP BOIL – NEW!

9am-1pm – Departs from Live Oak Landing

Fee: \$70

Look for raptors, wading birds, kingfishers, songbirds, and pelicans as you paddle along the majestic banks of the Tensaw River toward Hastie Lake, a small slough that leads into deeper forests and narrow waterways. Following this 3-hour paddle, guests will be treated to a low country shrimp boil and soft drinks. This tour will use both tandem kayaks and canoes. **Note: Extensive paddle**

#407 – DOLPHINS AND WILDLIFE KAYAK TOUR – NEW!

10am-1pm – Departs from Happy Harbor at Oyster

Bay, Gulf Shores

Fee: \$70

Enjoy kayaking among the beautiful sights and sounds of our local waterways while watching and learning about the local Bottlenose Dolphins. We will visit a portion of the Bon Secour National Wildlife

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Refuge that is only accessible by kayak, while exploring this extraordinary haven for migratory birds, nesting Loggerhead and Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtles, and the endangered Alabama Beach Mouse. Bring your own water and snacks. **Note: Moderate paddle**

#408 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA

3-5pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$100

*See trip #100 for description

#409 – WEEKS BAY SUNSET CRUISE

5-7pm – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina

Fee: \$35

*See trip #210 for description

#410 – DELTA SUNSET CRUISE

5-7pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers

Fee: \$35

*See trip #211 for description

GENERAL REGISTRATION INFO

All registration is completed online. If you are unable to complete online registration, please call 251-625-0814 for assistance.

All prices include state and local sales tax. Registrations are reserved in the order received. You will receive email confirmation of your registration from the ticketing site. Remember to check your "Spam" folder for this confirmation before calling for assistance.

For bus trips, be at 5 Rivers Delta Hall at least 15 minutes before scheduled departure time. You will check-in for your trip inside and can enjoy coffee and donuts before boarding your bus.

For trips that meet at a different location, such as paddles and boat trips, be at the departure point at least 15-20 minutes before the scheduled time.

Maps for any trip that does not leave from 5 Rivers are available on the website and hard copies will be available at 5 Rivers during check in.

Paddling trips will include all necessary gear and safety equipment.

BIRDFEST CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS

Alabama Coastal BirdFest reserves the right to cancel any event for any reason. In the unlikely event that BirdFest cancels a trip, we will notify registered participants as soon as possible.

If you need to cancel any or all of your registered tours or events, a refund will be subject to the following:

- Cancellations on or before September 3 will receive a full refund, minus a \$10 administrative fee.
- Cancellations September 4 through September 19 will receive a 50% refund, minus a \$10 administrative fee.
- No refunds will be issued for cancellations after September 19.
- No refunds will be issued for No Shows.
- Weather Related: If BirdFest cancels a trip/event due to unforeseen circumstances that cause safety concerns, usually weather, a full refund for the trip fee will be available **upon written request**, received on or before October 31. Refunds not requested in writing will be considered a donation to the Weeks Bay Foundation for Alabama Coastal BirdFest.
- Requests for refunds should be emailed to: marcia@weeksbay.org, subject line--BirdFest Refund, or by mail to: Weeks Bay Foundation, 11401 US Highway 98, Fairhope, AL 36532, Attention: Birdfest Refunds. Written requests should include the name of the registrant(s), the trip number(s), contact phone number, and mailing address.