



# Alabama Coastal BIRDFEST

October 6-9, 2021



SOUTH ALABAMA  
LAND TRUST

## Wednesday, Oct. 6

### #100 – MAGNOLIA BRANCH WILDLIFE RESERVE

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 some of the more than 900 acres of pristine forest, creeks, and lakes 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 walking**

### #101 – FORT MORGAN PENINSULA, TRANS GULF MIGRATION and BIRD BANDING

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers | Fee: \$60 – includes Lunch

The American Bird Conservancy calls Fort Morgan of the top globally-important bird areas in the United States. You will visit open areas and shoreline around this historic site, hoping to see a variety of neotropical migrants, resident birds, and hawks. This trip also includes visiting the banding site of the new Banding Coalition of the Americas and a chance to hold a bird and release it.

### #101-A – FORT MORGAN PENINSULA, TRANS GULF MIGRATION and BIRD BANDING

6:30am-2pm – Meet bus at Fort Morgan | Fee: \$30 – does not include lunch

### #102 – LANGAN PARK, MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS and ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES CENTER

7am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers | Fee: \$60 – includes lunch

Explore a variety of great birding locations in Mobile and hear from experts with stops at Langan Park, the Mobile Botanical Gardens, trails at the University of South Alabama, and the Mobile County Environmental Studies Center, a wildlife rehabilitation facility, where you will enjoy a bird and wildlife presentation from staff

naturalists. Expected birds include Anhinga, American White Pelicans, a variety of herons, and Brown-headed Nuthatch. **Note: Easy walking**

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

7am-9am – Departs from Meaher Park | Fee: \$100  
A small group of birders will enjoy a personalized boat journey into the vast wilderness of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta wilderness. Travel with local nature expert Ben Raines, a licensed charter captain, award-winning journalist and filmmaker. Ben came up with the name "America's Amazon" for a documentary on the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. The delta is one of the largest wetland complexes on the continent, covering hundreds of thousands of acres with a network of rivers and creeks that branch together and twist apart. His custom-built boat can maneuver the shallow waters of bays 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**

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

7am-9am – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina | Fee: \$30

Cruise Weeks Bay and Magnolia River onboard the Weeks Bay Explorer, and learn about this beautiful estuary. During the tour, be on the lookout for Bald Eagles, Osprey, terns, gulls, egrets, herons, and marine wildlife. Afterwards, enjoy a self-guided tour along the boardwalks through a bottomland hardwood swamp and/or a native pitcher plant bog, or see exhibits in the Visitor Center. **Note: Cruise**

### #105 – THE BIRDS, WILDLIFE AND HABITATS OF GULF STATE PARK

7am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers | Fee: \$60 – includes lunch

Situated on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, Gulf State Park is home to a variety of different ecosystems ranging from beaches to maritime forests and pine savannas. The park is home to a host of diverse species of plants and animals, including resident and migrating birds and several rare, threatened, or endangered species. Come explore the park and learn why it is so important to preserve this unique area.

**#106 – BLAKELEY STATE PARK NATURE WALK**  
9:30-11:30am – Meet at Blakeley State Park Entrance  
Fee: \$30

The extensive hardwoods at Blakeley State Park attract many migrant birds in October, including the striking Blackburnian Warbler. The park is also one of the best places in the Mobile area to find such resident birds as Hairy Woodpecker. In addition to birds, Blakeley State Park has a wonderful assortment of flowers that attract a great diversity of butterflies. It also is a seasonal home for many species of dragonfly ranging in size from Little Blue Dragonlet and Amanda's Pennant to several of the large clubtails. The nature walk gives you a great opportunity to hear and see many of the birds as well as other wildlife.

**#107 – SOUTHEASTERN HUMMINGBIRDS WORKSHOP**  
Noon-2pm – 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

The program, taught by Fred Bassett, will discuss Ruby-throated hummingbirds in depth and introduce several western hummingbird species wintering in the Southeast and show how they are banded. Fred Bassett is a certified master bird bander who is president of Hummingbird Research, Inc, a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of hummingbirds. He has worked with birds for over twenty-five years. During the winter Fred documents western hummingbirds wintering in Alabama and Florida. Over the past twenty winters, he has captured more than 3,500 hummingbirds of eleven different species in that area. He travels each summer to study hummingbirds in western states and has done hummingbird research in Alaska and Canada. He has banded more than 30,000 hummingbirds at more than 1,200 locations from Miami, Florida to Haines, Alaska. Results of his research have been presented in several national publications.

**#108 – BASICS OF BIRDING WORKSHOP**  
2pm-4pm – 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

New to birding and want to enhance your experiences during BirdFest and beyond? Taught by local expert Carol Furman, this workshop will offer tips on what to look for and when, how to use binoculars, what you need to know about birding etiquette, and more.

**#109 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA**

2pm-4pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | See trip description for #103

**#110 – ADVANCED BIRDING WORKSHOP**  
4pm-6pm – 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

Take your birding knowledge to the next level with this advanced class, taught by Alabama Audubon's Olivia Morpeth and Sabrina Cobb.

**#111 – SUNSET AIRBOAT TOUR**  
5:30pm-6:30pm – Departs from the Original Oyster House | Fee: \$55

Join Airboat Express for a beautiful evening exploring the Delta by airboat. This tour is a photographer's dream with chances to see eagles, gators, and other critters as well as a beautiful sunset over the water. Guides from Airboat Express are knowledgeable about the flora and fauna of the Delta and happy to educate all participants about the natural wonders they see.  
Note: Boat Tour

**#112 – DELTA SUNSET CRUISE**  
5pm-7pm – Departs from Cafe Del Rio Restaurant  
Fee: \$35

Explore the calm waters of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta and Northern Mobile Bay on this late afternoon boat tour. You'll explore the open marsh, watching for a variety of wildlife along the riverbanks as we make our way into Mobile Bay where we'll watch the sun set over the bay and the city of Mobile, Alabama. Snacks and soft drinks are provided. Note: Cruise

**#113 – WELCOME RECEPTION AND PRESENTATION**  
5pm-7pm | Fee: \$40

Enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres on the outside deck of the famed Bluegill Restaurant on the Causeway. Catch a beautiful sunset over the Mobile skyline, meet your fellow birders, pick up local brochures, and enjoy "Nature Through Lenses" focusing on works from 2021 featured photographer, Andrew Haffenden.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7

#200 – JACINTO PORT, WILLIAM BROOKS PARK, CHICKASAW PONDS, and BATTLESHIP PARK  
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**

#201 – DAUPHIN ISLAND/TRANS GULF MIGRATION FLYWAY

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers | Fee: \$60 – includes lunch

Dauphin Island has been named the “Birdiest Small City” in the U.S. and for good reason – an informal count in April 2008 recorded 203 species. Located on the Gulf Migration Flyway, Dauphin Island has been named 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, rock jetties at Fort Gaines, and the causeway.

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

7am-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | \*See trip #103 for description

#203 – FIELD SESSION AT BAYFRONT PARK

7:30am-10:30am – Meet at Bayfront Park in Daphne  
Fee: \$30

Take the skills you learned in the birding workshops out into the real world at one of the area’s most easily accessible and highly diverse birding spots...Bayfront Park. Local birding expert, Larry Gardella, will teach participants how to identify specific species of birds that are regularly seen at this particular spot. Be sure to bring your binoculars and any bird identification books you have. **Note: Moderate walking.**

#204 – MOBILE BAY, DAUPHIN ISLAND SEA LAB RESEARCH VESSEL ALABAMA DISCOVERY CRUISE  
6:30am-2:30pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers | Fee: \$60

Join marine biologists from Dauphin Island Sea Lab for a cruise aboard the Research Vessel 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.

**Note: Cruise.**

#205 – MONARCHS AND MORE BUTTERFLY WORKSHOP

9am-10:30am – 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

Join naturalist Eric Haskell in watching an informative film about butterflies! Following will be a discussion of the movie and a question / answer session. Eric will also touch on butterflies of coastal Alabama, butterfly conservation, gardening for butterflies and moths, photographing insects, how to locate butterflies, and more!

#206 – PERCH CREEK/MOBILE BLUEWAY KAYAK TOUR

1pm-4 pm – Departs from McNally Park | Fee: \$55

Come paddle the City of Mobile’s new birding trail, the Perch Creek Nature Trail Preserve in the lower Dog River Watershed. Join other nature lovers as we depart from the Perch Creek launch of the Dog River Scenic Blueway inside McNally Park off Dauphin Island Parkway in Mobile. We will meander through serene waters of this quiet natural resource-rich complex. Watch for Bald Eagle, osprey, various songbirds and shorebirds, and maybe a glimpse of the resident Pileated Woodpecker. Local guides will also be on hand to discuss the unique flora and fauna found in this urban estuarine system.

**Note: Moderate paddle**

#207 – RAPTORS AND FALCONRY WORKSHOP

2pm-4pm – 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

Five Rivers Delta Center assistant manager and director of education Mark Wetzel will explore the variety of raptors found in Alabama. A licensed falconer, Mark will also describe the techniques and traditions associated with the sport of falconry and will introduce you to some of the amazing birds he works with.

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

2pm-4:pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | \*See trip #100 for description

### #209 – SUNSET AIRBOAT TOUR

5:30pm-6:30pm – Departs from the Original Oyster House | Fee: \$55 | \*See trip #111 for description

### #210 – WEEKS BAY SUNSET CRUISE

5pm-7pm – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina | Fee: \$35

End your day with a leisurely cruise onboard the Weeks Bay Explorer along Weeks Bay and Magnolia rivers, and watch birds and marine life end their day. The sunsets over Mobile Bay are spectacular! We will position the boat perfectly, giving you time to snap great photos before heading back to dock. **Note: Cruise**

### #211 – DELTA SUNSET CRUISE

5pm-7pm – Departs from Cafe Del Rio Restaurant  
Fee: \$40 | See trip #112 for description

### #212 – CHOOSING A BIRDING TOUR – UNITED STATES AND ABROAD

6pm-8pm – 5 Rivers Theater | Fee: \$25

Most birders at some point consider taking a guided birding tour, from just a few hours in an area they are visiting to multi-day domestic or international tours. Join Andrew Haffenden as he talks about how to decide which tour is right for you. He'll answer all of your questions, such as whether to take a privately guided tour just for your party or a group tour, what's a good size for a group tour, and how long should the tour last? Those are just a few of the topics, but rest assured by the end of the program you'll feel confident that the tour you might select is the best one to meet your birding needs, ability, comfort level, expectations and travel style. We'll also discuss tour etiquette and how to behave on the tour so you and your fellow tour participants get the most from the shared experience.

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8

### #300 – 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: \$60 – includes lunch

The Nature Conservancy calls this area one of the "last great places on Earth." Fishing, shrimping, and oyster harvesting are big businesses here, and birding concentrates on water birds, shorebirds, and marsh species, with passerines and raptors abundant in the fall. **Note: Moderate walking**

### #301 – BIRD AND NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AT MEAHER PARK

6:30am-9am – Meet at Meaher Park on the Causeway  
Fee: \$30

Meaher State Park, just off the Causeway, is a public park situated where the Mobile – Tensaw Delta empties into Mobile Bay. A raised 1,000-foot-long boardwalk offers spectacular viewpoints of Ducker Bay and Bay John and affords photographers a close vantage point to the birds. A fishing pier and an oyster shell beach also provide unique views and photo opportunities. Shorebirds large and small feed in the shallow waters of Ducker Bay along with Ospreys, herons, egrets, bitterns, ibis, American White Pelicans, terns, Common and Purple Gallinules, and several species of rails. Alligators, raccoons, otters, rabbits, butterflies, dragonflies, and a large variety of plants also inhabit the park. Join local award-winning nature photographers Rodney Kilgore and Carol Furman who will guide a morning photo walk to explore the park and all it has to offer, and give tips on where and how to get the best shots.

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

7am-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | \*See trip #103 for description

### #303 – BON SECOUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

7:30-11:30am – Meet at Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge | Fee: \$40 – Lunch will be provided

Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge on Fort Morgan Peninsula is a prime birding location. Guides and naturalists will take you down trails through woods, coastal marsh, and sandy beaches to seek birds and wildlife 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**

### #304 – DELTA WILDLIFE BOAT TOUR

9am-10:30am – Departs from Cafe Del Rio Restaurant  
Fee: \$35

Experience the lower Mobile-Tensaw Delta on this highly rated wildlife tour. You'll float amongst the open Marsh watching for a variety of wildlife, and learn about these unique animals of the swamp and how they live. This is the "must do" tour for all avid lovers of nature and its creatures when visiting Mobile, Alabama. The Mobile-Tensaw Delta is Mobile's biggest jewel - If you do nothing else, take this trip! **Note: Cruise**

**#305 – BUILDING A BACKYARD WILDLIFE HABITAT**  
10am-11:30am – 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

Creating a backyard habitat that attracts birds, bugs, bunnies and the rest of the local wildlife is a fun and rewarding experience. Whether you live in the city, on suburban lot, or in a rural area with loads of land, you can provide all of the basic necessities for inviting the locals into your yard. Planting a wildlife-friendly garden can enhance the enjoyment of any yard, and providing for the birds and animals has a positive impact on wildlife that extends far beyond the boundaries of your property line. You'll be led by Rebecca Bryant, architect and co-founder of WATERSHED, where she works to create and build environments that inspire a greater connection to the natural world, and 5 Rivers assistant manager and director of education Mark Wetzels, where Mark will show participants a "backyard habitat" in the works at 5 Rivers.

**#306 – MOBILE RIVER, BAY, AND DELTA TOUR**  
1pm-2:30 pm – Departs from Cooper Riverside Park  
Fee: \$35

The most interesting water-based tour in Alabama – You'll experience the 10th busiest Port in the nation, the 4th largest, and most diverse estuary in North America and the 2nd largest river delta in the U.S. You'll see a working port, naval vessels, large and interesting cargo ships up exceptionally close, along with Mobile Bay, historical landmarks, birds, dolphins, and gators are all often seen on this tour. **Note: Cruise**

**#307 – GRAHAM CREEK/WOLF BAY KAYAK TOUR**  
1pm-4:pm – Departs from Graham Creek Nature Preserve  
Fee: \$55

This tour departs from the Graham Creek Nature Preserve in Foley, Alabama. We'll explore the protected waters of Graham Creek as we 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'll explore the bay and its local wildlife including many species of wading birds and raptors. **Note: Moderate paddle**

**#308 – SMALL BOAT ECO-TOUR OF THE MOBILE TENSAW DELTA**  
2pm-4pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | \*See trip #103 for description

**#309 – AVIAN CONSERVATION: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**  
4:30pm-5:30pm – Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers | Fee: \$25

Explore the history of human exploitation of avian populations, causes (past and present) of species declines and the efforts applied to mitigate habitat/species losses, and future problems associated with increased land use/al-teration, climate change, and sea level rise. Joel Borden is a vertebrate ecologist and instructor of biology at the University of South Alabama where he has been active in education and research in avian biology for over 10 years.

**#310 – AN EVENING OF SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY**  
6pm - 9pm - 5 Rivers | Fee: \$60

What better way to experience Southern hospitality than with a delicious meal that features coastal favorites, plus a great selection of beer and wine, followed by keynote speaker Mark Woodrey, PhD, a research biologist at the Mississippi State University Coastal Research Center. Mark also serves as the Research Coordinator at the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. His topic for the evening will be Pine Savanna Birds. Throughout the evening enjoy a beautiful video presentation of bird and wildlife photography from along the Coastal Birding Trail, created by Kathy Hicks, outreach and education, of 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center. We will announce winners of the raffle following the keynote presentation.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9**

**#400 – SALT AIRE IN MOBILE COUNTY**  
7am-noon – Carpool from 5 Rivers | Fee: \$30

Located north of the mouth of East Fowl River in Mobile County, the 233-acre Salt Aire property possesses one of the most pristine examples of old growth mesic Beech-Magnolia hardwood forest in the area and one of the few remaining examples of this rare habitat. The canopy trees across the property are both massive and impressive; their large stature reflects Salt Aire's lack of logging over a period of perhaps 100 years or more. This old-growth hardwood forest is important ecologically as the habitat offers numerous benefits to wildlife, including providing important stopover and foraging habitat for neotropical migrants and local breeding species. The upland knolls and ridges serve as scenic promontories overlooking the adjacent marshes, offering unique opportunities to view wading and marsh birds such as herons and egrets, rails, and ospreys. **Note: Moderate walking**

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

7am-9am – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | \*See trip #103 for description

#### #402 – SHOREBIRD FIELD WORKSHOP

6:30am-2pm – Ride bus from 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$60 – Includes lunch

#402a | Fee: \$40 – Self-drive and bring your own lunch

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**

#### #403 – EARLY BIRD KAYAK TOUR OF BAY MINETTE BAY

7am-9am – Departs from Buzbee’s Fish Camp |  
Fee: \$55

Paddling out of Buzbee’s Fish Camp gets you out right away into the southern reaches of the great Mobile-Tensaw Delta, Alabama’s Amazon. The diversity of plant and animal life is astounding! Near shore, you can hear some of the resident and summer resident birds still singing. Out on the open water, look for herons and gallinules along marshy edges and cast your eyes upward for birds flying overhead including Bald Eagles, Osprey, an assortment of other raptors, both Glossy and White Ibis, both Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-herons and several species of swallow. **Note: Easy paddle**

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

2pm-4pm – Departs from Bartram Landing at 5 Rivers  
Fee: \$100 | \*See trip #103 for description

#### #405 – WINE ON THE FARM

4pm-6pm – The Hope Farm in Fairhope | Fee: \$60

Sample wines chosen by The Hope Farm sommelier, enjoy delicious appetizers in a beautiful outdoor setting, and relax with fellow birders and nature lovers to round out the four-day festival!

#### #406– SUNSET AIRBOAT TOUR

5:30pm-6:30pm – Departs from the Original Oyster House  
Fee: \$55 | \*See trip #111 for description

#### #407 – WEEKS BAY SUNSET CRUISE

5pm-7pm – Departs from Weeks Bay Marina  
Fee: \$30 | \*See trip #210 for description

### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration opens Monday, August 9, 8am. and closes Sunday, September 26, 11:59pm

All registration is done online. If you are unable to register online, please call 251-990-5004. Registrations are taken in the order in which they are received. You will receive a confirmation email from the ticketing site.

Prices listed do not include 7% state and local taxes.

### CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

**IMPORTANT COVID INFORMATION** - Due to the rapid spread of the COVID 19 Delta variant, we will follow all CDC guidelines during BirdFest. For bus trips, ALL passengers, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask at all times on the bus and while in close proximity to fellow birders.

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

Should you need to cancel any or all of your trips or events, a refund will be issued subject to the following:

- Cancellations on or before Sept 6 will receive a full refund minus a \$10 administrative fee.
- Cancellations after Sept. 6 and on or before Sept. 16 will receive a 50% refund minus a \$10 administrative fee.
- No refunds will be issued after Sept. 16.
- No refunds will be issued for no-shows.

If BirdFest cancels a trip/event due to circumstances that cause safety concerns, such as weather, a full refund for the trip will be available upon written request submitted on or before Oct. 31. Please include address and phone number.

**Please send all refund requests to:**  
[diana@southalabamalandtrust.org](mailto:diana@southalabamalandtrust.org)