



THE 19TH ANNUAL ALABAMA COASTAL BIRDFEST OCTOBER 4TH – 7TH, 2023

Trips visit various locations. Please pay close attention to trip details and icons. Some trips meet at the trip destination, others are bus trips, which all depart from and return to 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center on a 56-passenger charter bus with bathroom.

5 Rivers Delta Resource Center (DRC)
30945 Five Rivers Boulevard, Spanish Fort, AL 36527

Icon Legend	
Bus trip	
Food included	
Heavy walking; likely muddy or sandy terrain	
Kayak trip	
Motorized vessel	
New birders	
Open to sun with little cover	
Social event	
Wheelchair accessible	
Workshop	

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration opens Friday, August 4, 9:00am CST and closes Friday, September 22, 11:59pm CST.












All registration is online through Eventbrite. Prices listed do not include 7% state and local taxes.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY








In the unlikely event that a trip/workshop is cancelled, registered participants will be notified as soon as possible, and refunds will be issued. If a trip/ workshop is canceled due to circumstances that cause safety concerns, such as weather, you may donate your trip fee towards South Alabama Land Trust conservation efforts or request a refund via Eventbrite, calling SALT (251-990-5004) or email salt@southalabamalandtrust.org.

Should you need to cancel any or all your trips/ workshops, a refund will be issued subject to the following: A full refund will be issued for cancellations on or before Wednesday, September 6. No refunds will be issued after Wednesday, September 6. No refunds will be issued for no-shows.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2023










W1	Fort Morgan State Historic Site Bird Banding		  
Departs from 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center (DRC): 6:30am		Return: 2:00pm	Price: \$65
<p>Charter bus (with bathroom) departs promptly at 6:30am. The American Bird Conservancy calls Fort Morgan one of the top globally important bird areas in the United States. Visit open areas, light woods, and shoreline around this historic site, hoping to see a variety of neotropical migrants, resident birds, and hawks. This trip also includes visiting one of the banding sites of the Banding Coalition of the Americas and a chance to hold a bird and release it.</p>			
W2	Beginner Birdwatching		 
Meet at 5 Rivers DRC: 6:45am		End: 8:45am	Price: \$25
<p>On this short walk around the 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center grounds, we will be looking at herons, gulls, terns and passerine birds, mainly blackbirds and warblers. The guides will provide participants with guidelines on how to spot and identify birds and walk through identification of each of the species that we see. Be sure to bring your binoculars and any bird identification books or apps you have.</p>			
W3	Kayak Paddle on Mobile-Tensaw Delta		 
Departs from 5 Rivers DRC Bartram Landing : 8:00am		Return: 11:00am	Price: \$55
<p>Launch from the kayak launch at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center's Bartram Landing in Spanish Fort AL with WildNative Tours. Floating amongst the marsh, watch and learn about a variety of wildlife including alligators, Bald Eagles, Ospreys, herons, cormorants, pelicans, and nutrias. US history is deep and colorful in this region, and so is WildNative Tour's commentary, including points on the history, geology, ecology and characters of the Delta. Includes guide, boat, PFD, and paddle. Kayak Launch is ADA accessible.</p>			
W4	Binoculars and Birding Gear Workshop		  
Begins at Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers DRC: 9:00am		End: 10:30am	Price: \$15
<p>Led by Alabama Audubon and Alabama Ornithological Society, learn how to pick the right binoculars for you, and how to effectively bird with binoculars. Additionally, learn about the gear you should always have on you while birding. Please bring your binoculars to become familiar with your own. Binoculars will also be on hand test, too.</p>			
W5	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
Departs from Live Oak Landing : 9:00am		Return: 12:00pm	Price: \$175
<p>A small group of birders will enjoy a personalized boat journey into the vast wilderness of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. Travel with local nature expert Ben Raines, a licensed charter captain, award-winning journalist, and filmmaker. Ben coined the term "America's Amazon", which has now become the name of a published book and documentary. The Delta is one of the largest wetland systems on the continent, covering hundreds of thousands of acres with a network of rivers and creeks that braid together and twist apart. Trip is limited to six participants.</p>			









W6	Delta Explorer Pontoon Cruise – Lower Delta		
	Departs from 5 Rivers DRC Bartram Landing : 9:00am	Return: 10:30am	Price: \$35
	This pontoon boat excursion showcases the incredible beauty and natural diversity of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. This is the second largest delta in the U.S. and one of the largest wetland ecosystems in the world. Every one of these outings take a slightly different course and features unmatched opportunities to view the abundance of the Delta wildlife, such as Bald Eagles, Ospreys, several varieties of herons, gallinules, and, of course, alligators.		
W7	Basics of Birding Workshop		  
	Begins at Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers DRC: 12:30pm	End: 2:00pm	Price: \$15
	New to birding and want to enhance your experiences during BirdFest and beyond? This workshop offers tips on how to engage your senses while identifying birds by sight and sound, how to use equipment such as binoculars, what you need to know about birding etiquette, and more.		
W8	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 1:00pm	Return: 4:00pm	Price: \$175
	See trip #W5 for trip description.		
W9	Delta Explorer Pontoon Cruise – Lower Delta		
	Departs from 5 Rivers DRC Bartram Landing : 1:00pm	Return: 2:30pm	Price: \$35
	See trip #W6 for trip description.		
W10	eBird and Merlin Bird ID App Workshop		  
	Begins at Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers DRC: 3:00pm	End: 4:30pm	Price: \$15
	This workshop offers guidance, clarity, and hands on instruction on how to use two well-known apps, eBird and Merlin Bird ID, to their full potential. Merlin Bird ID leverages the power of eBird observations to help beginners identify common birds. Merlin uses eBird data to create a short list of birds that match the user’s description and are likely to be found at the location and time of the sighting.		
W11	Welcome Reception - District Hall in Fairhope		 
	Meet at District Hall in Fairhope : 5:00pm	End: 7:00pm	Price: \$30
	Mingle with fellow birders and guides and enjoy a photo slide show, “Nature Through Lenses”, focusing on works from 2023 featured photographer, Stephanie Pluscht . Food will be by District Hall , a local favorite restaurant. Cash bar available. Stick around afterwards to join in on District Hall’s trivia beginning at 6:30pm on the outdoor patio!		



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2023










T1	Mobile Bay, Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Research Vessel <i>Alabama Discovery Cruise</i>	  
Departs from 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center (DRC): 6:30am		Return: 2:00pm Price: \$65
Join marine biologists from Dauphin Island Sea Lab for a cruise aboard the Research Vessel Alabama Discovery . 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. You'll also see a wide variety of terns and gulls and might even spot a Northern Gannet or Magnificent Frigatebird. Includes a stop at the Alabama Aquarium on Dauphin Island. The rain date for this trip will be the same time for October 6. *Requires notarized form to board vessel, which will be emailed to you upon registration.		
T2	Beginner/Intermediate Birdwatching	
Meet at Village Point /Bayfront Park: 6:45am		End: 9:45am Price: \$30
Village Point Park Preserve and Bayfront Park in Daphne AL are a local favorite and one of the area's most accessible and highly diverse birding spots. It is one of the planned stops for a Victor Emmanuel Nature Tours tour of Alabama in 2024. A guide will teach participants how to identify species of birds regularly seen locally. Be sure to bring your binoculars and any bird identification books or apps you have.		
T3	Pine Beach Trail of Bon Secour Wildlife Refuge	 
Meet at Pine Beach Trailhead : 7:00am		End: 11:00am Price: \$35
Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge on Fort Morgan Peninsula is a prime birding location. Guides and naturalists will take you down Pine Beach Trail, a 3.5 mile out-and-back trail near Gulf Shores AL through woods, coastal marsh, and sandy beaches to seek birds and wildlife in a variety of habitats.		
T4	Hummingbird Workshop	 
Begins at Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers DRC: 8:00am		End: 10:30am Price: \$15
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. Results of his research have been in several national publications.		
T5	The Birds, Wildlife, and Habitats of Gulf State Park	
Meet at Gulf State Park Pavilion : 8:00am		End: 2:00pm Price: \$35
Situated on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores AL is home to a variety of 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. Lunch is not provided, please pack one with you.		
T6	Kayak Paddle on Graham Creek/Wolf Bay		
	Departs from Graham Creek Kayak Launch : 8:00am	Return: 11:00am	Price: \$55
	Launch from the kayak launch at Graham Creek Nature Preserve in Foley AL with WildNative Tours . The Preserve also has several trails and boardwalks to explore on your own afterwards if you would like! Includes guide, boat, PFD, and paddle.		
T7	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 9:00am	Return: 12:00pm	Price: \$175
	See trip #W5 for trip description.		
T8	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 1:00pm	Return: 4:00pm	Price: \$175
	See trip #W5 for trip description.		
T9	Bird and Nature Photography Workshop		 
	Begins at Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers DRC: 3:00pm	End: 5:00pm	Price: \$15
	Of all wildlife, birds are among the most colorful, behaviorally intriguing, and varied, making them extremely fun and challenging to photograph. Learn tips and tricks on how to capture incredible moments of nature in action and in stillness. This workshop is taught by the dynamic duo, Paul Dovie (Airwind Creative) and Mark Watts (Waterline Photos and Videos).		
T10	Sunset Pontoon Cruise of Weeks Bay		
	Departs from Weeks Bay Reserve Marina : 5:00pm	Return: 7:00pm	Price: \$35
	Enjoy the sunset on a leisurely pontoon cruise aboard the Weeks Bay Explorer where you will learn about the important estuary that not only supports young marine life but also healthy bird habitat. The Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) is a stop on the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail. Weeks Bay NERR is comprised of 9,317 acres and contains upland and bottomland hardwood forests, salt and freshwater marshes, submerged aquatic vegetation and unique bog habitats.		







FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2023

F1	Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge in Mississippi		 
Departs from 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center (DRC): 6:30am		Return: 2:00pm	Price: \$65
<p>Charter bus (with bathroom) departs promptly at 6:30am. Join the staff of the refuge for an overview and tour of the refuge and get a behind the scenes look at management practices. Historically, non-migratory Sandhill Cranes inhabited much of the Gulf Coast, but loss of habitat due to timber farming and wildfire suppression has confined the Mississippi Sandhill Crane to the 19,300 acres of the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge. The wet pine savanna habitat, where Sandhill Cranes call home, is one of the most species-diverse plant communities in North America. After visiting the refuge, you will go with your guides to Bethel Bike trails for Red-cockaded Woodpecker or Pascagoula River Audubon Center for migrants and marsh birds if time allows.</p>			
F2	Bayou La Batre, Forever Wild Grand Bay Savanna, Lightning Point, Point Aux Pins Trip		  
Departs from 5 Rivers DRC: 6:30am		Return: 2:00pm	Price: \$65
<p>The Nature Conservancy calls this area one of the “last great places on Earth”. Fishing, shrimping, and oyster harvesting are big businesses as shown in the classic movie, Forrest Gump. Birding concentrates on water birds, shorebirds, and marsh species, with passerines and raptors abundant in the fall.</p>			
F3	Beginner Birdwatching		 
Begins at 5 Rivers DRC: 6:45am		End: 8:45am	Price: \$25
See trip #W2 for trip description.			
F4	Dauphin Island/Trans Gulf Migration Flyway		
Meet at Dauphin Island Audubon Bird Sanctuary : 7:30am		End: 1:00pm	Price: \$30
<p>Dauphin Island has been named the “Birdiest Small City” in the U.S. and for good reason. Located on the Gulf Migration Flyway, Dauphin Island has been named one of the “top four locations in North America for viewing neotropical migration”. Visit prime birding spots, starting at the Dauphin Island Audubon Bird Sanctuary, then Goat Trees Reserve, ending at Indian Shell Mound Park.</p>			
F5	Kayak Paddle on Perch Creek in Mobile		
Departs from McNally Park launch : 8:00am		Return: 11:00am	Price: \$55
<p>Paddle the City of Mobile’s new birding trail, the Perch Creek Nature Trail and Preserve in the lower Dog River Watershed. Meander through serene waters of the Dog River Scenic Blueway and enjoy the thriving ecosystem. Watch for Bald Eagles, Ospreys, various songbirds, shorebirds, and maybe a glimpse of the resident Pileated Woodpeckers. Guides will share their knowledge of the special flora and fauna found in this urban estuarine system. Includes guide, boat, PFD, and paddle.</p>			







F6	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 9:00am	Return: 12:00pm	Price: \$175
	See trip #W5 for trip description.		
F7	Delta Explorer Pontoon Cruise of Upper Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 9:00am	Return: 12:00pm	Price: \$60
	Explore the secluded regions of the vast Delta in its most natural setting. Depart from Live Oak Landing, located on the Tensaw River in the upper Delta. Venture up this storied waterway around the infamous “Devil’s Bend”, into Bottle Creek before journeying down the Middle River and returning to the Tensaw.		
F8	Birds and Blooms		
	Meet at location TBA in Daphne, AL: 9:00am	End: 11:00am	Price: \$20
	Although within the Daphne city limits, this rustic site consists of 6 plus acres encircled by a walking path. Participants may choose to focus on birdwatching or plant identification or a mixture of both. Your hosts and guides are a part of the Audubon Eastern Shore Birders and Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries . The yard is filled with plants that attract birds and butterflies, numerous bird feeding stations, water features, and wooded areas. Learn how you can implement some of these features in your own yard to attract the birds you like. Viewing areas include an outdoor deck, two glassed-in sun porches, and a spacious front porch. Refreshments will be available.		
F9	About Cavity Nesters and Wood Duck Box Build Workshop		 
	Begins at Tensaw Theatre at 5 Rivers DRC: 12:00pm	End: 2:30pm	Price: \$15
	Learn about the different types of bird boxes, how to pick which type is right for your yard, and how providing nest boxes can help secure homes for migratory birds in areas with limited bird habitat options. Examples of cavity nesting birds would include bluebirds, chickadees, nuthatches, Tufted Titmice, screech owls, Great Crested Flycatchers, woodpeckers, and Wood Ducks. Discussion will cover the construction of boxes to attract these types of birds and their potential predator control options. Then, join Mobile County Wildlife Conservation Association in assembling Wood Duck boxes that will be deployed into the Mobile-Tensaw Delta on a later date.		
F10	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 1:00pm	Return: 4:00pm	Price: \$175
	See trip #W5 for trip description.		
F11	Delta Explorer Pontoon Cruise of Upper Mobile-Tensaw Delta		
	Departs from Live Oak Landing : 1:00pm	Return: 4:00pm	Price: \$60
	See trip #W5 for trip description.		



F12	Building a Backyard Wildlife Habitat		
	Meet at location TBA in Fairhope, AL: 3:00pm	End: 4:30pm	Price: \$15
<p>Ecosystems are being quickly damaged by what’s known as fragmentation. National parks, state lands, and other protected properties help in reconnecting vital habitats, but the power in private property has great potential in increasing biodiversity and in re-wilding land. Whether you have a small yard, balcony, or many acres, everyone can participate in reconnecting these ecosystems. Learn about the importance of planting native plants, and best practices in categories such as water, cover, sustainability, breeding places and food sources. This workshop is a great example of how a suburban home can still be “neat and tidy” yet successful in re-wilding a bland yard.</p>			
F13	Reception and Keynote Speaker Presentation: <i>Alabama Sojourn: Through the Eyes of a Migrant</i>		  
	Begins at 5 Rivers DRC: 6:00pm	End: 9:00pm	Price: \$TBD
<p>Enjoy a selection of beverages, including beer and wine, desserts, and heavy hour ‘devours by Georgia Roussos Catering from 6:00pm-8:00pm then join us in the Tensaw Theater to hear from this year’s keynote speaker, Emma Rhodes, co-founder of the Banding Coalition of the Americas. Emma’s presentation is titled <i>Alabama Sojourn: Through the Eyes of a Migrant</i>.</p> <p>Biography: Ornithologist and South Alabama native, Emma Rhodes has been an avid birder from a young age and began participating in migration banding as a teen with Bob and Martha Sargent at the Fort Morgan State Historic Site in Gulf Shores, AL. In 2019, she became one of the youngest Master Banders in North America and has worked with and studied a variety of avian taxa, from hummingbirds to birds of prey. Emma has worked alongside various avian conservation organizations in Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, and the Bahamas monitoring coastal birds. She has also worked with both state and National Audubon chapters and is an instructor for the Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine where her purpose is to educate and inspire the next generation of birders. Emma received her BS in Biology, with a minor in Geographic Information Systems, at the University of South Alabama and is currently a PhD candidate at Auburn University where her thesis work is focused on studying the physiological underpinnings of bird migration. In 2022, her PhD work entitled “Mitochondria Power the Evolution of Bird Migration” received prestigious awards from both the National Science Foundation and the Society for the Study of Evolution. Apart from her graduate work, Emma is a co-founder of Banding Coalition of the Americas (BCA), a non-profit organization focused on better understanding migratory birds using banding and advanced tracking techniques. At its core, BCA believes in the importance of bird banding and research as a public outreach tool and has several on-going studies in the state of Alabama.</p>			



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023

S1	Shorebird Field Workshop Dauphin Island	
Departs from 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center (DRC): 6:30am		Return: 2:00pm Price: \$65
Charter bus (with bathroom) departs promptly at 6:30am. Dauphin Island is classified as an “Important Bird Area” (IBA) and one of the “10 most globally important sites” for migration. 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. Your guide will provide instruction on shorebird identification and habitat.		
S2	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta	
Departs from Live Oak Landing : 9:00am		Return: 12:00pm Price: \$175
See trip #W5 for trip description.		
S3	Small Boat Eco Tour of Mobile-Tensaw Delta	
Departs from Live Oak Landing : 1:00pm		Return: 4:00pm Price: \$175
See trip #W5 for trip description.		
S4	Bird and Nature Festival at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center	
Begins at 5 Rivers DRC: 9:00am		End: 1:00pm Price: FREE!
Free, fun, and family-friendly, come participate in a variety of activities and exhibits hosted by local environmental groups, non-profits, and other agencies. Learn about local conservation efforts, nature, and more! Two live raptor shows presented by the Mobile County Environmental Studies Center will begin at 10:00AM and 12:00PM. Three boat tours aboard Blakeley State Park’s <i>Delta Explorer</i> depart from 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center dock at 9:00AM, 10:30AM, and 12:30PM. Boat tours are free, though donations are appreciated, and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Pontoon boat tours will be led by Mason Carrier, a junior birder, who leads birding tours for young birders.		

*If any changes are made, the most up-to-date schedule will be available on our website:
www.southalabamalandtrust.org/birdfest

