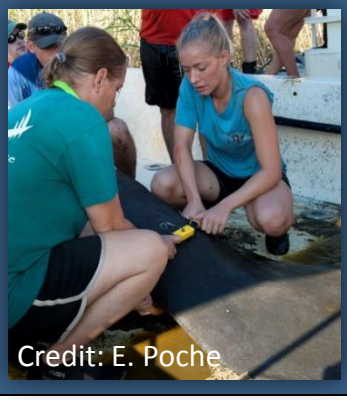
Dauphin Island Sea Lab's
MANATEE SIGHTING NETWORK
Fall 2014 Newsletter

Alabama Manatee Captures & Health Assessments

On 9 September 2014, the MSN team along with collaborators from Sea to Shore Alliance, SeaWorld Orlando, and the University of Florida captured and tagged two manatees in Dog River, Alabama. Health assessment data such as animal size and body fat measurements along with blood and tissue samples were collected to learn more about the health of Alabama's seasonal manatee population. These manatees, nicknamed "Steely" and "Cas" will be essential to MSN's research on manatee migration, foraging behavior, and population genetics. MSN thanks our funders with the Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and our many volunteers for making this effort possible!


Credit: E. Poche

Highlights

Early Cold Snap Prompts Manatee Concerns

Cold temperatures arrived early in 2014 to the northern Gulf of Mexico coast, prompting concerns for manatees still residing in the area.

Multiple manatees were reported to MSN in Alabama and Mississippi after November 15th, which is considered the official start of manatee stranding season in our area. Manatees were sighted in late November in Louisiana and Texas. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service coordinates efforts to locate and potentially rescue distressed manatees, and one animal was successfully relocated from Texas just before Thanksgiving!

Manatees begin to exhibit symptoms of cold stress, skin discoloration and weight loss, when water temperatures drop below 68°F. Since November 15th, water temps in Alabama have been 52 to 60°F.


Credit: D. Graham

Manatee exhibiting symptoms of cold stress.

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

Missing Manatee Found!

In MSN's last newsletter, we asked for the public's help in finding Aven, a manatee whose satellite tag stopped transmitting during his spring migration. After several months, Aven was relocated in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta this October and was recently spotted at the warm water refuge in Crystal River, Florida where he is known to spend the winter.

Another Alabama manatee, nicknamed Brodie, was recently spotted in Crystal River and equipped with a new satellite GPS tag. The MSN team will travel to Crystal River in December to monitor both manatees, and attempt to retag other Alabama manatees Wilson (pictured below) and Serge.

Credit: P. Wilbur

PhD student Kayla DaCosta practices manatee retagging skills in Crystal River, Florida.

Upcoming Outreach Events

Biloxi Boat Show: 6-8 February 2015
Mobile Boat Show: 13-15 March 2015
DISL's Discovery Day: 11 April 2015
Delta Woods and Waters Expo: 25 April 2015

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**

Tacky Jacks Bar & Grill

Go Green! Receive our newsletter via email! Contact manatee@disl.org.

Manatee Research Notes

- Congratulations to PhD candidate A. Aven whose work on passive acoustic monitoring of tagged manatees will soon be published in *Marine and Freshwater Research.*
- MSN personnel recently traveled to Port Aransas, Texas to the Gulf Estuarine Research Society's (GERS) biannual meeting where they presented research on:
  - Microchemistry of manatee ear bones (K. DaCosta)
  - Tagged manatee movements (A. Aven)
  - MSN Research overview (R. Carmichael)
- MSN Manager Elizabeth Hieb will present MSN's opportunistic manatee sighting data at the upcoming Bays & Bayous Symposium in Mobile, Alabama.

Introducing Manatee Plush Toys! Support MSN by purchasing a manatee plush toy with matching Mana-T-shirt at manatee.disl.org.