



Bayou Bartholomew Alliance **NEWSLETTER**



Fall 2003
Vol. 15.

BBA Plans Ceremonies to Thank SEARK Marine and Trail Sponsors and Donors

SEARK Marine of Monticello plans to donate a pontoon barge to the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance. This work boat is equipped with electric winches and other features that will allow volunteers to assist with logjam removal efforts. Well over two hundred logjams have been mapped in the bayou. The BBA has been working to open up such logjams to allow small boats to pass down the bayou without having to portage. The logs removed are either pulled out of the way into areas out of the main channel or anchored to armor the stream bank from erosion. To date, the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance with volunteer labor has removed some 36 logjams in the bayou. With only a couple of hundred left, the barge will make efforts much more productive. If you would like to see the barge first hand the Alliance has planned a donation ceremony to be held at the **Delta Rivers Nature Center at Regional Park just off the Martha Mitchell Freeway in Pine Bluff at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday November 6.**



Immediately following , we will travel to Hazel and I-530 to the new Bayou Bartholomew Nature Trail, for a dedication ceremony. This trail has been in the works for some time with construction beginning last fall. Many people donated their time to help clear the corridor. The BBA contracted with Eastin Outdoors, Inc. to actually build the trail. With its numerous habitats, vistas of wetlands and the bayou, paths through large bottomland hardwoods, boardwalks, and bridges, the trail is certainly something the citizens of Pine Bluff can be proud of. **We plan to dedicate the trail around 2:00 p.m following the barge ceremony.** Please join us if you can for a fun afternoon. The trail is nearly two miles long and should be absolutely beautiful with the fall colors.

Fish Sampling on the Bayou

The past several years the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance in cooperation with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency have sampled fish populations in the bayou in an effort to see if fish populations are responding favorably to lower siltation rates from on-the-farm conservation practices, tree planting along the bayou and clean-up efforts. Data reveal that the number of different kinds of fish at each site sampled has increased by an average of nine species per site from data collected in 1992-1994. It seems that efforts are paying off.

Fishes were sampled at seven sites from above Pine Bluff down into Lincoln County at Garrett Bridge. This year the same sites were sampled again but also included six more sites down almost to the Louisiana border. The data from this years efforts have not yet been tabulated but several species not collected in previous years work were captured. Most notably, the river redhorse, a species thought to be relatively intolerant to siltation was captured at many sites. Juveniles were also collected hopefully indicating things are on the up-swing.



Nate Ralston and Jeremiah Lainhart sample fishes on Bartholomew (left). Volunteer Nate Wiese, fisheries graduate student from UAPB, holds a nearly 60 lb. grass carp collected in Ashley County. These fish are exotic but can't reproduce as they are sterile when sold by fish farms to pond owners to control aquatic vegetation. These fish are commonly caught at a number of sites in the bayou.



BBA Coordinator, Bill Layher, rests for a moment after working for two hours to get a boat and vehicles unstuck on a remote stretch of the bayou.



An electrofishing crew (left) brings in their catch to be weighed and measured (right). Pictured at left are Nate Ralston (left), A.J. Hancock (driving the boat), and a graduate student from UAPB fisheries department. Nate Wiese (right photo) measures a drum collected from the bayou.



You can contact the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance by writing, calling, or e-mailing:

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**BOO ON THE BAYOU!!!!!!!
PINE BLUFF NATURE CENTER
A FREE HALLOWEEN EVENT
REGIONAL PARK
FRIDAY OCTOBER 24 AND 25
6:00—9:00 P.M.
GAMES
FACE PAINTING
FOOD
COSTUME CONTEST
ANIMAL PROGRAMS
HAUNTED TRAILS
ARTS AND CRAFTS**

Please help us conserve the natural resources of the Bayou Bartholomew. Contributions are tax deductible. The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance is a nonprofit organization working to improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat among other goals.

Send to: Bayou Bartholomew Alliance, 7233 Camden Cutoff Rd, Pine Bluff, AR, 71603

YES, I WANT TO HELP!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

CHECK ONE

Enclosed is a donation to help fund the conservation and restoration work on the Bayou Bartholomew in the amount of \$5; \$10; \$20; other _____.

Please sign me as a volunteer for:
cleanups _____

logjam work _____

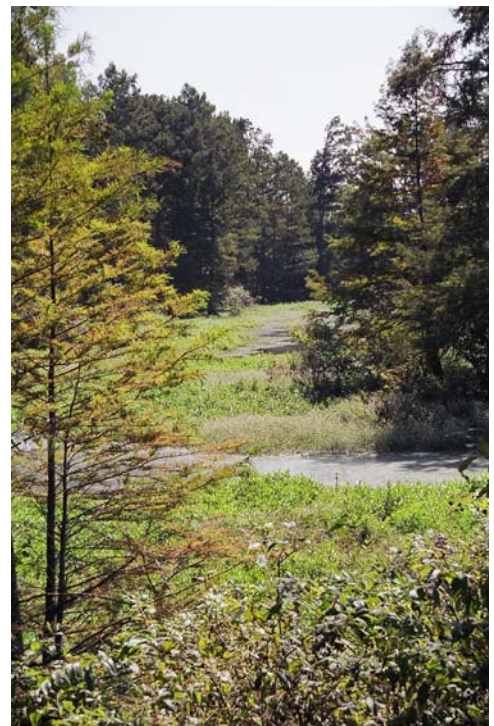
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!!!!

Alligator Snapping Turtles Confiscated and Released in the Bayou Bartholomew

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission confiscated some 600 alligator snapping turtles from an airport recently. These turtles were all young individuals and were on their way for sale. Alligator snapping turtles are protected in Arkansas where numbers have dwindled markedly from previous years. Locals often call these loggerheads. See our previous issue of the BBA Newsletter which discussed these amazing creatures. Some 39 of these reptiles were received by the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance to be released in oxbows and backwaters of the Bayou Bartholomew. The turtles were quite weak when received and somewhat cold. Hopefully, they recovered upon release. Turtles were warmed in the sun to regain activity prior to their being introduced into the wilds of the Bartholomew's waters.



Turtles were transported to release locations in a bucket (above left). After a period of warming, a young alligator snapping turtle moves off into his new home in an oxbow along the Bayou Bartholomew (above right). Kim Ruff, Layher Biologics RTEC, Inc., anthropologist places a turtle on the bank in the warm afternoon sun along the bayou prior to its release (left). The turtles new home is a vegetated oxbow along the Bayou Bartholomew..



BBA Website

The BBA has a website!

Visit the website at www.accessarkansas.org/bba/

Maps, pictures, teaching modules for science classes, past newsletters, and upcoming events are all posted. We hope to expand the materials at the site. Please let us know your thoughts and ideas. Drop in! We'd love to hear from you.



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