

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



June 2024

World Ocean Day June 8

World Ocean Day will be held on Saturday, June 8, 2024 at Escambia County Beach Access #4 just east of the Crab Trap Restaurant. Organized by the Perdido Key Area Chamber of Commerce, it features a variety of activities and displays around the theme “One Ocean, One Climate, One Future – Together!” Beach yoga will be held from 7:30 to 8:30 AM with the remaining event activities beginning at 8:30 AM and continuing until 11:30 AM. As part of World Ocean Day, the movie *Finding Nemo* will be shown at the Southwest Library beginning at 12 PM. PKA is posting links to several ocean-related slide presentations on its website and will have a display at Beach Access #4 during World Ocean Day; we hope to see you there!

Rosamond Johnson Beach Day Celebrated

A good crowd celebrated Rosamond Johnson Beach Day on Saturday, May 4, 2022 at Johnson Beach at the Perdido Key Area of Gulf Islands National Seashore. The event including comments by Escambia County Commissioners Jeff Bergosh and Lumon May, National Park Service officials, members of Private Johnson’s family and featured speaker Retired Navy Captain Pat Everly. For coverage of the ceremony, see the May 5, 2024 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Escambia community honors Rosamond Johnson, who joined Army at 15, died in Korea at 17” by Troy Moon at

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/2024/05/05/rosamond-johnson-beach-in-perdido-key-celebrates-korean-war-hero/73553161007/>.

Lifeguards on Perdido Key

Escambia County has begun lifeguard service on Perdido Key. From the Escambia County *Newscenter* article “Pensacola Beach Lifeguards Begin Service at Perdido Key May 23”:
“Lifeguards will be stationed at Perdido Key Public Access #2 from May 23 to Aug. 11, 2024, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. throughout the day, a lifeguard will travel to Public Access #1, #3, and #4 to monitor the water and make contact with beach patrons.” For more on this issue, go to <https://myescambia.com/news/news-article/2024/05/23/pensacola-beach-lifeguards-begin-service-at-perdido-key-may-23>.

No More Tolls on Foley Beach Express Bridge!

Trips from Perdido Key to Baldwin County and beyond will be less expensive and maybe quicker because tolls on the Foley Beach Express Bridge (next to The Wharf district in Orange

Beach) were terminated on May 23, 2024! This follows the bridge's purchase by the State of Alabama from the Baldwin County Bridge Company for \$57 million. Alabama Governor Kay Ivey said "Our coast continues to experience record growth and success, and I am proud we are making needed infrastructure improvements in the area that will help alleviate traffic congestion for Alabamians and those visiting our beaches." For more on this issue, see the May 23, 2024 *WBRC* article "Tolls eliminated from Beach Express after state purchases private toll bridge" at <https://www.wbrc.com/2024/05/23/tolls-eliminated-beach-express-after-state-purchases-private-toll-bridge/>.

June 18 Boat Launch Ribbon Cutting

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Perdido Bay Boat Ramp and Multi-Use Area at 10836 Lillian Highway will be held at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, June 18, 2024. The boat ramp is located just north of the Lillian Highway/Rt. 98 intersection and should be a great asset to the County. Further public notification of the ribbon cutting is expected shortly.

New PKA Members

Following a successful membership mail-out campaign, the Perdido Key Association membership increased by more than 80 families! We plan to build on this success with other initiatives later this year and look to continued member support in encouraging others to join.

Development "Concurrency" Discussed

With rapid development in Northwest Florida ongoing, many are concerned that infrastructure – including schools and roads – is not keeping up with the creation of new neighborhoods and commercial enterprises. "Concurrency" can require developers to provide infrastructure if evaluation of their proposed developments indicate the need, but concurrency has not been required in Escambia County since 2013. District 1 Commissioner Jeff Bergosh brought up the issue at a recent meeting of Escambia County Commissioners noting: "I understand we're a growing community ... I'm not anti-growth; I'm actually pro-growth, but it has to be done intelligently. Right now, we're the only large county in the state that does not have both local option sales tax and some form of transportation, mobility fees, concurrency or impact fees." He hopes to get concurrency back into the County's land development code. For more on this issue, see the May 3, 2024 *Pensacola News Journal* article "As Escambia grows, commissioners may tap developers to help upgrade infrastructure" by Jim Little at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/escambia-county/2024/05/03/escambia-county-to-look-at-concurrency-to-pressure-from-new-growth/73540003007/>.

First Area Sea Turtle Nest of 2024

Escambia County Sea Turtle volunteers found the first sea turtle nest of the season on May 17, 2024 on Pensacola Beach. "The nest is a loggerhead, which account for 90% of nests laid in Escambia County. June and July are the busiest nesting months in Escambia County, and more nests are expected in the coming weeks. For more on this issue, see the May 17, 2024 *Escambia County News Article* "First Loggerhead Nest Recorded on Pensacola Beach May 17" at [First Loggerhead Nest Recorded on Pensacola Beach May 17 \(myscambia.com\)](https://www.myscambia.com/news/first-loggerhead-nest-recorded-on-pensacola-beach-may-17).

Lionfish Tournament

Despite bad weather, the effort to remove lionfish during the Emerald Coast Open tournament was successful with 147 divers participating. A total of 11,844 lionfish were removed from area waters during the Feb 1-May 16, 2024 Pre-Tournament and May 17-18, 2024 tournament. For more on this issue, go to <https://emeraldcoastopen.com/>.

Northern Lights and Cicadas All at Once!

May 2024 was a month of unusual natural phenomena. Because of intense solar storms, the Northern Lights (aurora borealis) were visible at least as far south as northern Alabama while several broods of cicadas made their presence heard across the same and many other areas of the country, though Northwest Florida seemed too far south to participate in these events.

“Local” Invasive Species

Nutria on Perdido Key? – Nutria are invasive rodents from South America now found in many parts of the world. Often introduced for their fur and sometimes used as a food source, nutria can be destructive and have severely damage wetlands in places like Louisiana. A population of nutria has been identified for many years on Perdido Key, primarily on the Lost Key Golf Course. If seen elsewhere, please contact the Escambia County Extension Office at 850-475-5230 ext.1111 or Roc1@ufl.edu.

Tilapia in Escambia County? – Tilapia is a fish we might have for dinner, but is also considered an invasive species in the United States. Originating primarily in Africa, tilapia have been found in the upper arm of Bayou Chico in Escambia County. If caught (perhaps with a cast net) or photographed, please contact the Escambia County Extension Office at 850-475-5230 ext.1111 or Roc1@ufl.edu for species identification and to help begin a management plan. Drawn from May 9, 2024 *Sea Grant Notes – Invasive Species* by Rick O’Connor.

“Worldwide” Endangered Species

Here are three endangered ocean species discussed in a May 13, 2024 *Ocean Conservancy* e-mail by Emily Simeral Roberts with links to additional information:

1. ***Oceanic whitetip sharks*** are top predators that love the wide-open ocean. Because their meals can be few and far between, oceanic whitetip sharks are opportunistic feeders, meaning they will eat pretty much anything that comes across their paths, including large fish like tuna and marlin, cephalopods, other sharks and even sea birds. [Learn more about oceanic whitetip sharks >>](#)
2. ***Kemp’s ridley sea turtles*** are the world’s most endangered sea turtle. Kemp’s ridley sea turtles spend their days in shallow waters with muddy bottoms in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean. Females nest every one to three years and often travel hundreds of miles to get to just the right location, aiming for the same beach where they hatched. [Learn more about Kemp’s ridley sea turtles >>](#)
3. ***North Atlantic right whales*** are among the world’s largest animals, weighing up to 70 tons. Animals that big need a lot of fuel, and they can eat up to 5,500 pounds of food a day. You might be able to recognize North Atlantic right whales by the callosities around their heads, which are raised patches of thickened skin that are often covered by crustaceans known as whale lice. [Learn more about North Atlantic right whales >>](#)

Restoration Rambles by PPBEP

The Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program (PPBEP) conducted a “Restoration Ramble” along Escambia County’s Jackson’s Creek Floodplain Restoration project in April 2024 to view efforts to “remove invasive species, plant native plants, and create natural features to help slow water flow” to improve – along with Jones Creek restoration – “the creeks’ ability to absorb water during heavy rain events and work to improve water quality downstream in Bayou Chico.” Another Ramble will be organized in fall 2024. For more on this

issue, see the May 2024 *PELICAN POST* at <https://myemail-api.constantcontact.com/Pelican-Post-May-Newsletter.html?soid=1134175614329&aid=PWZnLf6yqfc>.

Where do Beaches come from?

We all enjoy our beautiful beaches, but where do they come from? For some interesting beach facts, go to the February 7, 2024 *Ocean Conservancy* article “Top Facts about the Beach” by Robyn Stegman at https://oceanconservancy.org/blog/2023/02/09/top-facts-about-the-beach/?ea.tracking.id=24LPENBDXX&utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=202405_BeachC&utm_content=20240528-BeachSummerRoundup-Prospects-Email1A-24LPENBDXX.

Blue Angels practice at NAS Pensacola on June 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 25, 26
Bands on the Beach at Pensacola Beach every Tuesday 7-9 PM April to October

June 2024 Calendar

June 01 – Fiesta Boat Parade along downtown Pensacola waterfront
June 02 – Blues on the Bay at Community Maritime Park in downtown Pensacola
June 4-9,18-23 – Pensacola Blue Wahoos at Blue Wahoo Stadium in downtown Pensacola
June 07 – Guided Pier Walk on Gulf State Park Pier in Gulf Shores
June 07-09 – Flora-Bama Fishing Rodeo at the Flora-Bama on Perdido Key
June 08 – World Ocean Day at Beach Access #4 on Perdido Key
June 08 – Alabama Free Fishing Day in most Alabama public waters
June 12-17 – Pensacola International Billfish Tournament at Palafox Pier downtown Pensacola
June 14 – Flag Day
June 14 – Juneteenth Financial Summit on N. Devillers Street near downtown Pensacola
June 15 – Pensacola Latin Fiesta 2024 in Seville Quarter in downtown Pensacola
June 16 – Father’s Day
June 19 – Fee Free Day at Gulf Islands National Seashore on Perdido Key and Ft. Pickens
June 22 – Home Show at John F. Rhodes Civic Center in Bay Minette, Alabama
June 29 – Grand Reopening of the Muscogee National of Northwest Florida Museum
June 29 – Pensacola Splash Fest at Community Maritime Park

<https://www.visitpensacola.com/>

<http://mygulfcoastchamber.com/>

<http://www.visitperdido.com/>

<http://mulletwrapper.net/>

<https://myescambia.com/>

<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com//>

<http://alabama.travel/festivals-and-events>

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors