

## BOOBAM ON THE DAM

Some years ago as the wife and I were on the way to be spooks in a “haunted house” the subject of the bamboo at the old house came up in the conversation. Try as she could, the wife kept saying boobam instead of bamboo. This started the giggles which of course made saying bamboo instead of boobam almost impossible. Notwithstanding the term refers to tuned bongos constructed of natural bamboo and was described as bamboo spelled sideways by the beatniks of California from long ago. However, the problems with bamboo can go way beyond proper pronunciation and bongo playing musicians as the staff at the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee NWR well know.



Bamboo is the largest member of the grass family and is also categorized as an invasive exotic plant. Bamboo grows particularly vigorously in low lying wet areas and the north and east levees of Bluff Lake are perfect areas. Giant bamboo was planted along the levee years ago for erosion control and then quickly began to crowd out the native plants and threaten the area’s biodiversity. Bamboo plants grow fast with certain species growing almost three feet per day, and they spread by rhizomes just as fast. Even though these rhizomes do not directly damage the levee,

no one wants these invasive exotic bamboo roots creeping in. So began the staff’s eradication program to take out the bamboo.

The Staff at the Refuge have been steadily working for the past three years to take out one particular patch on the Bluff Lake levee. This past summer the YCC crew cut and removed many loads of the bamboo from this patch. Then the area was cleared and sprayed with herbicide in an attempt to further eliminate it completely. But, according to Andrea Dunstan, it is sprouting back in a few places and so the battle is still ongoing.

So, if you see some bamboo around the lake, know that it is not there for you to make a homemade fishing pole nor even for a set of bongos but as a testament to one of the most difficult of the invasive plants to eradicate. As such, an appropriate expletive could become “boobam on the dam.”

*Submitted by Tom Gregory*

### MISCELLANEOUS:

Do you have a picture of the old Bamboo Trail? In the 50's and 60's, and maybe early 70's, it was one of the most popular Refuge attractions. Several weddings took place in the tunnel-like trail. Just wondering if there are any pictures out there that could be shared.

### Opportunity to Volunteer

#### Palmer Home Fishing Derby

Friends will assist the Refuge in hosting the children from Palmer Home in Columbus for their annual fishing rodeo on June 13. Volunteers are ALWAYS welcomed!

## From the FONR President- Larry Box



Over the past year or so, board members have been working to develop a focus and direction for Friends. We had a day long retreat in October 2014, a two and a half day mentoring workshop led by U. S. Fish and Wildlife staff and volunteers

in March 2015, and a May 2015 meeting with Steve Reagan to discuss needs identified in the Refuge's new Comprehensive Conservation Plan. With outcomes from these events and discussions at regular monthly meetings, we are nearing completion of our work. When approved by the board, we will have a list of the activities, events, and goals which will be shared with the membership. Equipped with this information, members will be able to determine the purpose of Friends, the events and activities Friends support, and the various volunteer opportunities available to members. While it is anticipated that new activities and needs will arise over the course of a year, the document will serve as the basic outline for the purpose of Friends. Turning now to an entirely different subject, it is a great time to visit the refuge. The young eagles are flying but regularly return to the nest, baby wood ducks and baby geese can be seen in quiet parts of the lakes, alligators frequently sun themselves on the lake shore, and as always fishing opportunities abound. Come to the Refuge and take it all in. You will have a good time.

## Refuge Manager Steve Reagan's Reflections



WOW! The year is going by way too fast and like many of us; I am not taking time to enjoy the outdoors as I should. It sure would be nice to have my entire write up simply say, **Gone Fishing!** However, we have a lot

of good work to get completed for both wildlife and people. With the help and dedication of Friends, the Refuge has been and will be hosting several great events which include the Youth Fishing Derby, Canoe Days, Palmer Home Fishing Derby, and the Wildlife Outdoor Learning Festival. I continue to look for new ideas for Behind the Scenes events that we can experience together. I am also thinking about some special Saturday events such as a Wilderness Walk. Our Artist-in-Residence program continues to show great potential, and with early June, we welcome our 10<sup>th</sup> artist. So even with the cool and wet start to our summer season, it appears many things are moving right along. Help me not take time for granted and let's keep working together today to make a difference for tomorrow. Come visit and give me a great excuse to leave my office and get outdoors to explore!

## Canoe Days at the Refuge



Canoe Day at Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge has become a very popular event for all ages and experiences. The Friends of Noxubee Refuge organization has teamed up with the Refuge staff to provide free canoeing opportunities on Bluff Lake the third Saturday of each month, weather permitting, throughout the summer (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.). Canoes, kayaks, paddles and life vests are all provided. For those who have reservations about canoeing or are reluctant to challenge the scenery of Bluff Lake (alligators, turtles,

egret rookery, cypress trees, flowers, etc.), I encourage you to come spend a few minutes on the board-walk or at the launch area listening to the comments and watching the excitement from those who are on the water or just returning from their first canoeing experience. You will soon be putting on a life vests, getting into a canoe and enjoying a lifetime experience with nature. The best that Bluff Lake and our Refuge can offer.

These canoe days also provide a great opportunity for anyone wishing to spend a few hours volunteering their time to help others. We have been blessed with MSU student volunteers but many are not here during the summer. There is a core of dedicated Friends and Refuge Volunteers who will always be there to coordinate the activities but additional help is certainly welcomed and needed to help load and unload canoes, give canoeing tips, etc. If you would like to volunteer please contact the Refuge office at 662-323-5548.

*Submitted Wayne Wells*

## Eagle Watch Report

FONR and Oktibbeha Audubon Society hosted the Eagle Watch on April 11, 2015, when about 60 people came for a "view" of the two eaglets through a variety of telescopes and observation sites. Thanks to Andrea Dunstan who gave many folks a ride in the Refuge utility vehicle.



Everyone saw the young eaglets who were about as large as the adult birds. About half the folks saw one adult bald eagle sitting on a perch near the nest. This year's nest, in the exact same spot as earlier nests, had been totally reconstructed during the fall 2014; their prior nest had broken apart by June 2014. The 2015 nest was much deeper than the previous nest; the chicks could not be reliably observed until the birds were almost fully grown. It was early May before the two birds flew for the first time. Both young birds have been observed back at the nest eating food the parent birds brought to the "dining room." 2015 has been another successful nesting year for Noxubee's bald eagle pair.

*Submitted by Margaret Copeland*

## Annual Youth Fishing Derby Another Success (May 9<sup>th</sup>)



Lilly Grace Harsh with her day's stringer.



Wal-Mart furnished a great assortment of door prizes.



A successful fisherman, Luke Patrick, receives his trophy from Refuge Manager, Steve Reagan.

Noxubee Nature Series  
(AKA General Membership Meeting)  
June 4, 6:30 p.m.  
Tisdale Auditorium  
Noxubee Visitor Center

Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> is the next quarterly Friends of Noxubee Refuge general meeting. Santos Portugal will be our speaker. He is receiving his PhD in Medical Entomology from Mississippi State University in 2016.

Medical Entomology, a Current and Future Perspective

With earth's heating and our global economy, insect vectored diseases not seen in the US in decades are inching closer to our shores. Insect vectored wildlife diseases are also a very real problem. With little in new developments for combating old pest we may be faced with old and unpopular insecticides to save lives. Come listen to an avant-garde researcher's perspective on our future with insects and the diseases they carry.

The quarterly meeting will be in the Tisdale Auditorium of the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge. The meeting is open to the public, and there is no charge. Light refreshments and a social time will follow the presentation.



is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization,  
dedicated to conserving our natural resources  
through volunteer work and fund raising.

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**2015 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

**MEETING DATES**

**4-June**  
**3-September**  
**3-December**