

# The Estuarium

## at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab

### Hours of Operation:

March 1-August 31

Monday-Saturday: 9am to 6pm

Sunday: 12pm to 6pm

September 1-February 28/29

Monday-Saturday: 9am to 5pm

Sunday: 1pm to 5pm

### Admission:

Adults: \$7.00

Seniors: \$6.00

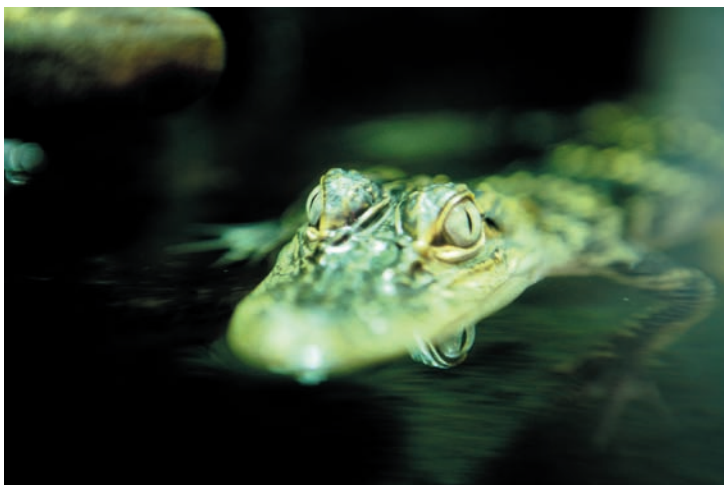
Children 5-18: \$4.00

Children 4 and under: Free

Group rates available. Discounts to AAA and military.



The Estuarium is the public aquarium of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Alabama's marine education and research institution. Using the Sea Lab's wealth of marine science knowledge and experience, the Estuarium has developed into one of the premier aquariums of the Gulf Coast. In this exciting facility, visitors explore the four key ecosystems of coastal Alabama: the Delta, Mobile Bay, the Barrier Islands and the Gulf of Mexico. Features include the 10,000 square-foot Exhibit Hall; the Living Marsh Boardwalk; the Miss May May; the Weather Station; the Gift Shop and much more...



### The Delta

The Mobile Tensaw Delta is one of the most significant bottomland hardwood habitats in the country. The enormous fresh water marshes and forests of the Delta drive many of the bay ecosystem processes and protect the metropolitan area from drastic flooding events. The largest Delta tank is an above and below water representation of this habitat, and you'll see turtles basking on logs and ancient gar peaking through the cypress roots. Other exhibits include the pitcher plant bog, baby alligator habitat, and other aquaria highlighting the diverse animal and plant life of the Delta

### Mobile Bay

Mobile Bay is a major biological nursery area of the north-central Gulf of Mexico. Up to 95% of the commercial seafood of the Gulf depend upon the estuaries for food and protection during some part of their life cycle. Major species include shrimp, oysters, blue crab and mullet. The Bay exhibit features the 9,000 gallon Bay tank, with rock jetties, oyster reefs, and replicas of the legs of Middle Bay Lighthouse, a historic landmark in Mobile Bay since 1887. You'll see numerous other tanks representing salt marshes, tidal pools, and submerged grass beds found in Mobile Bay.

## Barrier Island

Barrier islands are an integral part of the coastal system, providing natural protection from hurricanes and offering attractive recreational and residential areas. The exhibit starts with the walk from the Estuarium parking lot into the Exhibit Hall facility. Signs along the beautiful boardwalk illustrate the ecological wonders of Dauphin Island, Alabama's very own coastal barrier island. Displays in the building focus on the habitat from the salt marsh, through the maritime forest, and into a surf zone.

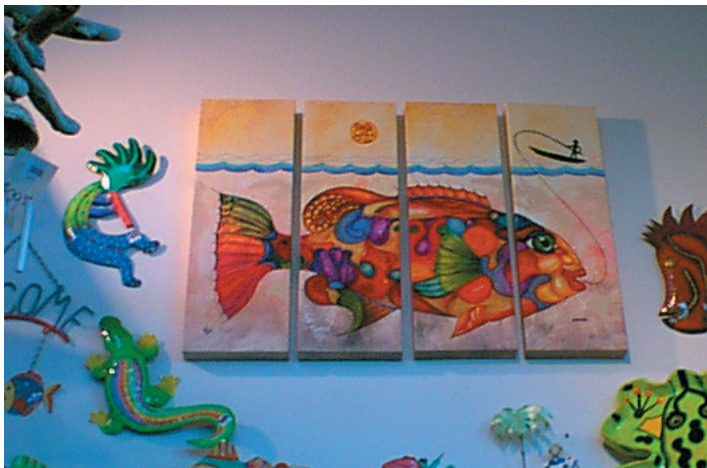
## Gulf of Mexico

Known to many as "America's Sea," the Gulf of Mexico is a tremendously important resource to the nation. The Gulf produces most of the country's domestic oil and natural gas. The Mobile Bay gas reserves are second only to the north slope of Alaska in volume and value. The Gulf produces almost half of all seafood in the nation and its ports are among the largest in the United States, including the Port of Mobile. This gallery houses the largest tank in the Estuarium, the 16,000 gallon Gulf tank, that features the unique hardbottom community discovered off Alabama's coast in the mid 1980's. Sharks, snappers, grouper, jacks and many more fish glide through the waters of the Gulf. Individual tanks feature jellyfish, lobster, octopus and a fascinating variety of other animals.



## Gift Shop

You'll find something for every "jolly tar" on your list at the Estuarium Gift Shop. Children's books on marine life and educational games will delight the little ones; pewter giftware and jewelry will please the pickiest of recipients. Artwork and crafts from local artists are also featured. Proceeds from the Gift Shop support the educational and research programs of the Sea Lab.



## How to get to the Estuarium

The Estuarium is located 35 miles from Mobile. From Interstate 10, take Exit 17A (Dauphin Island). Travel south on Rangeline Road/193 to Dauphin Island. Take a left at the water tower, and we're two miles down, on the left. The Estuarium is a five-minute walk from the Dauphin Island/Fort Morgan ferry landing, and we're located across the street from Historic Fort Gaines. The Estuarium is a handicapped accessible facility.

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