

Saving Seabirds and Wildlife

SCA Interns Respond to Gulf Crisis

For SCA intern Jennifer Raabe, the Gulf of Mexico isn't just an assignment. It is her home.

The Mississippi native still lives in Long Beach and serves at nearby Gulf Islands National Seashore, an area under siege from the BP oil spill. "Petit Bois Island was the first to see large numbers of tar balls. They were fresh, more oily than rubbery," Jennifer says. Early on, the dead birds and turtles she found showed no sign of oil, raising concerns that chemical dispersants as well as the crude were taking a toll. Now, she notes, "every barrier island I've been to lately has large amounts of oil on its shores."

Jennifer, 23, began monitoring ospreys and other nesting seabirds before the Deepwater Horizon disaster. Since then, she's undergone hours of hazardous materials training and now uses a hotline to summon rescuers to oiled wildlife.

"Seeing it firsthand makes me feel physically sick," Jennifer confesses. "The seafood industry—so many people's livelihoods are at stake. The beach—it's what I've known my whole life. Now it's closed. And I know once all the oil comes in it will impact us for years to come."

Intern Elizabeth Lesley took a leave from her position at a Texas refuge to assist federal wildlife rescue and recovery teams along the Alabama-Florida coast, where she helped retrieve dozens of injured wildlife. "I feel really good about the surviving birds we've captured and sent to rehab because most were able to be set free," says Elizabeth. "At the same, I feel kind of helpless as oil is still coming in to a lot of sensitive areas."



"I feel good about the birds we've sent to rehab," says SCA's Elizabeth Lesley. "At the same time, I feel kind of helpless as the oil keeps coming."

"Humankind must make sure this doesn't happen again." – SCA intern Christopher Reddin

At the Unified Area Command office in New Orleans, SCA's Peter White, Jr. creates status maps as part of a federal cartography team. He also transferred from his previous internship to support the Gulf response. "We get many requests for maps each day from the Coast Guard, Navy, Homeland Security, and other agencies," Peter notes. "The data are so dynamic. We have to keep things as up-to-date as possible to ensure that resources are properly allocated."

On Florida's east coast, SCA interns Nicole Wutzke-Moore and Christopher Reddin have been pulled from normal duties at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge to conduct wildlife

(continued on page 3)

THIS ISSUE:



We Are Acadia Crew
page 5



The Case of the Curious Detectives
page 6



"Great Outdoors" Listening Session
page 7

CONSERVATION BEGINS HERE
Student Conservation Association
thesca.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Responding in the Gulf

As more pelicans, shorelines and livelihoods are affected by the Gulf oil "spill," the Deepwater Horizon disaster becomes more and more difficult to fathom. It has not only exceeded all previous leaks, it has surpassed our worst fears.

Long ago, John Muir observed that "when we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." I have been

reminded of Muir's wisdom many times during this crisis, which has dramatically magnified the interconnection among corporate actions, government policy, global ecosystems and families' futures.

Yet I have also been reminded of the resolve and resilience of our young people. No sooner had the oil started flowing when the emails and phone calls began: "How can I help? Where do you need me? When can I start?"

Since the spill first occurred, SCA has been consulting with our federal resource management partners including the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others, to offer our support. Understandably, the Gulf states's initial priority has been hiring local residents who have been financially impacted by the spill. Our planning, therefore, is focused on a long-term restoration effort.

As you will read in this report, however, a number of SCA interns were already serving in the Gulf when the spill occurred. Many of them have seen their responsibilities revised to support

the response. Their willingness to embrace these changes and take on new responsibilities is inspiring and reflects the eagerness of all SCA members to do whatever is necessary to meet the need.

I have also been heartened to hear from so many other friends who are grateful for the efforts of SCA members and keenly interested in getting behind a formal spill response program. I will be sure to keep you informed of our progress in this area as we will need the support of the entire SCA community to repair the horrific damage in the Gulf.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, not to react emotionally to this catastrophe with frustration, alarm and anger. Along the Florida coast, however, SCA intern Nicole Moore may possess the most useful perspective. "We can't just sit around and fume—we must take action," she says. "I'm focused on what I can do to make this situation better."

So must we all.

Saving Seabirds and Wildlife *continued from page 1*

mortality surveys in advance of the oil's anticipated arrival. They create and patrol a series of transects that are two kilometers wide, a task Nicole describes as "physically and emotionally demanding. When you find a dead bird and have to tag and retrieve it, it takes a toll on you."

"This is a huge deal," says the 23-year old. "Long after I'm gone, our surveys will be evidence in a civil action lawsuit. The magnitude of the situation is so much bigger than I am."



Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge Credit: George Gentry/USFWS

The SCA interns in the Gulf all contend that government responders have gotten a bad rap. "Leadership here has been incredibly proactive," Nicole states. And, despite the daunting nature of the situation, all are optimistic about the future. "There's a great effort going on here," Jennifer states. "The Gulf Coast community is strong and we will pull through this, just like we did with Katrina."

"I'd like to think something great will come of this tragedy," adds Chris, 23. "Not just here in the Gulf, but in general. Humankind must make sure this doesn't happen again."

Send a message to SCA's Gulf area interns, and see updates and comments at thesca.org/gulf-response

My First Backpacking Trip

by Victor Gollub, SCA '10, Dallas Community Conservation Crew



My name is Victor Gollub. I am in 11th grade in Silver Spring, Maryland, and a member of SCA-DC. Last weekend, I went on my first backpacking trip—in Shenandoah National Park. When we finally got there, I could hardly believe I was in real life. The views were stunning and seemed to go on forever. At times, I found myself holding my breath.

At the trail entrance, we quickly distributed tents and equipment, took a few pictures, and started hiking. It took us a little while to get used to walking with big packs on our backs—a few people stumbled—but they got right back up and kept going. We stopped a few times to rest, and Ted, our crew leader, pointed out some things about the trail that would be relevant to the trail assignments some of us are doing this summer. (I will be on an SCA crew in Denali National Park. That's in Alaska!)

When we got to camp a few hours later, the crew leaders began assigning jobs. Some of us set up tents and some learned how to use the water filter. We had already learned the dangers of drinking water without boiling it thoroughly.

When night came some people began wondering if we were going to be attacked by a bear, but the crew leaders promised they would fight the bears off. Great!

Dinner was mainly vegetables and rice. And everyone got enough. After dinner, we all cleaned our dishes and stashed them in a tree and put our food up high in another tree far away from camp. It was an adventure in the complete darkness!

Everybody went to their tents and slept for the night. The next morning, we had breakfast, loaded up our backpacks, and went back on the trail to hike the last half, which was completely uphill! It was tough and tiring work and I think it gave everyone a fair evaluation of what kind of shape they are in and where they need to be for their national crew. I think that if I keep exercising, I will be ready for Alaska.

We all learned a lot and got to know each other better. I had a very good time in Shenandoah National Park and I'm pretty sure everyone else did, too.



We'd like each issue to be better than the one before. If you have suggestions for stories you'd like to see published or ideas on how to improve the newsletter, write to us at thegreenway@thesca.org



Get **Hands On**, SCA's email newsletter for alumni and friends. Read and subscribe at thesca.org/hands-on



Follow us on Twitter @ twitter.com/the_sca and stay current with updates from thesca.org



Become an SCA **facebook** fan! Connect and share with thousands of conservation-minded people. facebook.com/StudentConservationAssociation



Watch and listen to member stories on SCA's YouTube channel youtube.com/user/conservationinaction

There's not a moment to lose.

SCA interns are mobilizing in the Gulf, helping to rescue oil-covered pelicans and turtles and aiding habitats affected by this disaster.

Help us put more responders on the ground. Donate to our Gulf response efforts.



Visit thesca.org/gulf-support to take action today.

Thank you for being part of the solution in the Gulf!

Scene + Heard



The 2-Minute Interview with Jennifer Brine

A 23-year-old from Sanford, Maine, Jennifer shares her experiences as a member of SCA's Wildfire

Recovery Corps, a three-month, five-person team working to restore wilderness areas in California's Angeles National Forest following the devastating Station Fire. Brine spends her days rebuilding trails, removing invasives, restoring picnic areas and working with citizen volunteers.

How are you adapting to the So-Cal climate and living in a tent?

It's all great. I've wanted to visit Cali since I was 10. As for sleeping outside, I expected there to be some adjustment and thought I was prepared, but those first nights under the stars were a bit scary.

What kinds of projects have you completed?

We've done trail work on the Pacific Crest Trail, rebuilt picnic tables destroyed in the fire, refurbished campsites, and recently dug out a campsite covered by a mudslide.

Your major is mechanical engineering. So, what drew you to SCA?

I love the outdoors and SCA seemed like a great way to feed my passion and make a difference. It has only been five weeks and already we've made a huge impact here. Everyone is so interested and grateful for the restoration work we're doing.

Anything unusual happen that you want to share?

Funny you should ask. Our group is up for doing and trying almost anything, including expanding our cuisine. The other night we dined on a rattlesnake that had met an untimely end, but not by our hands. It tasted like chicken.

For more alumni stories and profiles, visit thesca.org/blog



SCA founder honored with Spirit of Vassar Award. In June, SCA's founder Elizabeth Cushman Titus Putnam saw the past, present and future converge as she not only accepted the prestigious Spirit of Vassar Award from her alma mater, but also met with Hannah Clark and Jason Carter, the first interns to work at Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve. As Land Stewardship and Research interns, Hannah and Jason are working on several major projects to protect the Vassar Ecological Preserve and promote its use as an educational resource.

The Spirit of Vassar Award is given by the college annually to an individual or group whose volunteer efforts exemplify an enduring spirit of community and caring.

Rake in Retirement Income Later ... and Take a Tax Deduction Now

Establish a deferred gift annuity with SCA and you will save taxes now, enhance your retirement income later and make a difference forever by helping to build new generations of conservation leaders.

In exchange for your gift (minimum \$5,000), you will receive a set dollar amount each year, beginning on a future date you specify and continuing for life. The longer you wait for your payments to begin, the higher the rate you will receive.

Age Now	5 Year Deferral	10 Year Deferral
55	6.4%	8.5%
60	6.8%	8.9%
65	7.2%	9.8%

Example: Donate \$10,000 at age 65 with payments to begin at age 70. Once payments begin, you will get \$720/year (7.2%).

You will also get an immediate income tax deduction for a portion of the value of your gift. This can help offset tax from a Roth IRA conversion or high income.



For further information, please contact Hugh Montgomery, SCA's Director of Gift Planning, directly at 603.504.3241 or hmontgomery@thesca.org.



SCA crew members put their backs and hearts into rebuilding and restoring popular hiking trails at Acadia National Park.

We are "family!" We are Acadia crew.

Trail names are a popular part of hiking culture—but they're usually assigned to people, not wooden planks.

Faced with hauling eight-foot timbers nearly a mile up a rock-strewn trail at Acadia National Park, the SCA crew starts their task by giving the lumber nicknames like Logzilla and Log Ness Monster. With names like that, one can't help but smile before grabbing a board and ascending the mountain.

Single-minded in their determination, the crew and leaders set about installing a new bog walk around a circular pond known as The Bowl. Not a hiker passes without thanking them for their work. "When the trail is being used as you're building it, and people express their appreciation as you're doing it, it tells us we're really doing a good job," notes volunteer Candace Hodges of Antioch, California.

After reviewing plans and discussing options, the crew splits into work groups. There's an art to reading grades, proper routing, and using natural materials, and this crew has it mastered. Based on the amount of good-natured ribbing going on, it's clear they've also developed a strong team and camaraderie in the past two weeks. "We're like a family," observes Shannan Webb, a 17-year old from South Florida.

The team also knows why they're at Acadia. "Without well-maintained trails, people will venture off and confront potential

risk or unintentionally damage the environment," states 18-year-old Chris Weller. "We're protecting the park from the people and people from the park."

An Alabama resident, Chris is on his second SCA crew in as many summers and asserts it's the best way to truly experience what America has to offer. "For so many people, travel is flying across the country, staying in hotels, and driving from here to there," he says. "The real traveling spirit is to be a part of every place you visit, to put a little effort in to see what these places really have to offer. Being a fan on Facebook isn't enough. I wanted to give back through service."

When asked what they'll share first with their families and friends about their time in Maine, each crew member gives the same answer and it has nothing to do with the moose they saw at Schoodic, the sunset harbor cruise the park provided as a "thank you," or even the Log Ness Monster.

"I really appreciate being able to volunteer in a national park, and the work we're doing is really valuable," says Michelle, "but the first thing I'm going to talk about when I get home is my crew and how I got to work with so many great people." Everyone nods in quiet agreement. Their quick, knowing glances say far more than any words. Then, as one, the crew members grab their tools and go back to work.



Students from Thurgood Marshall Elementary unearth the mysteries of nature at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia Beach, VA.



The Case of the Curious Detectives

by Tasha Frazier, SCA '10, Visitor Services Intern, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge

As two big yellow school buses came slowly down the gravel road, filled with excited and smiling second graders, it was clear that today was not going to be another typical Monday at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Thurgood Marshall Elementary had come to spend the morning and learn about what we do here.

They quickly filed off the buses and ran towards the entrance of the Visitor Center, full of energy after their 45-minute drive. Staff biologist Gabe Harper, a former SCA intern, greeted the students who inched in close, hanging onto his every word.

I hoped the students wouldn't be distracted by me snapping away with my camera. They were filled with questions about snakes and fishing. They became even more engaged when Gabe announced that they would be broken into three groups with three special tasks to complete. I couldn't help but smile at how excited these second graders were.

The "Scavengers" group had to go out onto the beach and do a simulation of a turtle crawl, where they had to dig through the sand to find 17 "turtle eggs". Boy, did their eyes light up when we told them that!

The "Detective" group was given nets and told to go down to the pond and investigate some of the things that were flying around in the air and swimming around in the pond.

The last group, which we referred to as the "Cool" group because they didn't have to be outside in the heat, was tasked with watching a movie inside the air-conditioned Visitor Center about sea turtles and ocean animals here on the refuge and what we are trying to do to help them.

As I visited with each group, it occurred to me that I'd never seen so many kids so anxious to learn about the outdoors! Despite their frequent squeals directed at the dragonflies that

dominate the entrance trails, they seemed amazed by the nature that was all around them. One young girl named Unique asked me if any of the snakes would bite her. I chuckled and told her that "the snakes won't bother you if you don't bother them, but don't worry I'll be here so everything will be okay." She asked several more questions, some I didn't know the answer to, but her inquisitiveness warmed my heart. It was refreshing to know that children today are still fascinated by the great outdoors and eager to learn how things came to be.

Direct Your IRA to SCA



Keep young people on the conservation trail for years to come by naming SCA as a beneficiary of your traditional IRA or a workplace retirement plan such as your 403(b) or 401(k). Simply complete the beneficiary designation form provided by your plan trustee or custodian.

Retirement plan assets transferred to SCA after your lifetime will pass completely tax-free, ensuring that **every penny of your hard earned money will continue to work hard for conservation.** These plans are often considered the smartest assets to leave to charity since they are taxed more heavily than most other assets if left to your heirs.

For further information, or to notify us that you have named SCA as a beneficiary of a retirement plan, please contact Hugh Montgomery, SCA's Director of Gift Planning at 603.504.3241 or hmontgomery@thesca.org.

"Great Outdoors" Listening Session

by Ashley Stremme, SCA '10, Salmon-Challis National Forest

What's it like to have your own private meeting with the director of the National Park Service and the chief of the U.S. Forest Service? A group of SCA interns were given just this opportunity recently in Missoula, Montana, following a "Great Outdoors" listening session, part of a new Obama Administration campaign to reconnect Americans to nature and expand volunteer opportunities. SCA's Ashley Stremme was there (far left, in photo).

We—ranchers, hunters, college students, conservationists and others—were given color-coded nametags as we entered the University of Montana auditorium. I was assigned to the Blue Team, a discussion group that included Montana residents, nonprofit leaders, Montana Conservation Corps staffers, a local congressman's representative, and several SCA colleagues.

The most common challenges cited were the public's sense of ownership of public lands, land access and funding, all of which were seen as lacking. Schools don't include outdoor education in their curricula. Property owners are required to carry expensive liability insurance to open their lands to the public. Limited funding restricts parkland development, outdoor education, and public/private partnerships. Most participants felt they are fighting an uphill battle for our nation's greatest treasures—the lands that inspired our country's greatness.

A second session with Park and Forest Service officials focused on those of us pursuing outdoor careers. Where did



SCA interns get up close and personal with NPS Director Jon Jarvis (second from left) and U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell (back row center).

we want to see conservation in 20 years? What did we want to change? Where is the federal government succeeding and where is it missing the ball?

This discussion centered on education and the need to engage children and community. I come from just outside San Francisco, where people generally support the green movement but where there is not an abundance of public land. Now, however, I am serving in Idaho and living in a national forest. I love waking up to vast mountain ranges, creeks and rivers, and wandering wildlife.

I recommended we inspire people by using whatever resources their home communities have to offer. In California, not everyone has the means and opportunity to travel hours to see Tahoe or Yosemite, so it's important to incorporate the local outdoors. If that means a community garden, plant one. If it means restoring a local park, get the community behind it and let them see the tangible results and take pride in their accomplishment.

Afterwards, my SCA mates and I met with Tom Tidwell, U.S. Forest Service Chief, and Jon Jarvis, Director of the National Park Service. We talked about our work in the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Director Jarvis personally thanked me for my comments.

I am thankful that officials who have important jobs and places to be—Jarvis was headed back to the oil-ravaged Gulf immediately following our session—were not only aware, but appreciative of the work SCA is doing here in Idaho. The genuine respect and interest we were shown, and validation we were given, stirs my excitement for the future of conservation and I am thrilled to know that I will be a part of making it happen.

You can submit your ideas or stories about conservation online at: <http://doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors>

Become an SCA Sponsor and receive a letter from the field ...and the heart.



The SCA tradition of sponsorship connects you directly with an SCA member. When you give at least \$250 annually, you will receive a biography and a personal letter describing the impact of the SCA experience and the tangible accomplishments achieved along the way.

You can become a sponsor by making a sustaining monthly gift for as little as \$21 through our Partners in Conservation giving program—use the included reply envelope, or visit thesca.org/donate



The American Institute of Philanthropy and Charity Navigator rank SCA among America's top conservation charities for fund-raising efficiency.

SCA is a nationwide conservation force of college and high school volunteers who protect and restore America's parks, forests, and other public lands. SCA's active, hands-on approach to conservation has helped to develop a new generation of conservation leaders, inspire lifelong stewardship, and save our planet.

Chairman of the Board: Jane Goedecke
 President/CEO: Dale Penny
 Editor: Deirdre Fitzgerald
 Graphic Designer: Julia Jandrisits
 E-mail: thegreenway@thesca.org

Printed on 100% post-consumer paper, processed chlorine-free, soy ink



thesca.org



Proud Member

Student Conservation Association
 689 River Road, P.O. Box 550
 Charlestown, NH 03603-0550



SCA Intern Eli Logan

Follow me... and be inspired!

Ever wondered what it's like to spend the summer on assignment with SCA?

Follow Leah, Eli, and Adrian as they build trails in the backcountry of Massachusetts and Alaska, save turtles at a wildlife refuge in Virginia and preserve an historic Anasazi site in New Mexico. We hope you'll be inspired by their energy and creativity, and by their commitment to improving our natural places.

The journey begins at thesca.org/follow-me



the **GreenWay**
 SCA's Conservation Quarterly Summer 2010

Save the Sea Turtles

SCA to begin sea turtle recovery process!
 For more information and to apply visit thesca.org.

