

4-H Tidelands Nature Center



Winter/Spring
2012-2013

A UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA 4-H PROGRAM

ABOUT US

11th Annual 4-H Tidelands Nature Center Art Sale

Held on Jekyll Island @ the Morgan Center (Located in the Historic District) Sunday Feb. 17th, 2013
10:00am-4:00pm

Local artists display their artwork for sale to benefit Tidelands.



Mark your calendars for the 11th annual 4-H Tidelands Nature Center 'Art Inspired by Nature' Sale, Sunday February 17th, 2013. The winter tradition continues with a host of artists, displaying their coastal themed art for sale. The annual event features an eclectic array of artwork created by talented local artists from our coastal Georgia area. Look for your favorites from Jekyll, St. Simon's, Brunswick and McIntosh displaying stained glass, paintings, pottery, hand blown glass-jewelry, metal sculptures, wooden bowls, books, bake goods, and more!

We hope to see you visiting our 11th annual art sale. Be sure to stop in and find your favorite treasures created by all of our talented local artists! And while you are browsing, be sure to check out our silent auction booth, featuring items donated by some of our artists as well as community organizations. Silent auction items include jewelry, pottery, books, photographs, hotel accommodations, restaurant gift certificates, dolphin tours, kayak tours, water park passes, and much more!



Attention Artists! Call Tidelands @ 912-635-5032 for more information about exhibiting!



What we offer

4-H Tidelands Nature Center offers hands-on marine science and environmental programs for the general public and educational groups. Meet a young loggerhead sea turtle, and sign up to explore the marsh, beach and maritime forest. Take a look at barrier island dynamics and the amazing organisms that are found along the beach. Rent a canoe or paddleboat and enjoy a relaxing day on the adjacent salt pond or sign up for one of our 3 hour guided Eco-Kayak tours through the salt marsh. Join us for our summer programs and participate in feeding our animals, making crafts, and learning about sea turtles, sharks, birds, crabs, insects, fish, and more!

<http://www.tidelands4h.org>

Tidelands Now Offers Membership Programs

Back by popular demand, Tidelands now offers Adopt-an-Animal and Friends of Tidelands memberships.

Our Adopt-an-Animal program is great for individuals or classrooms. With an adoption you receive: an information sheet full of fun facts about your animal, a full color photograph of your animal, a listing in the online newsletter as a "proud parent" of your animal, and an adoption certificate with information about your adoption. Animals up for "adoption" include a juvenile loggerhead sea turtle, gopher tortoise, alligator, diamondback terrapin, yellow-bellied slider, snake, or one of our many animals located in the touch tanks and marine aquaria.

The Friends of Tidelands program is great for individuals or families who love Tidelands and our programming. All members receive free annual admission to the Tidelands

exhibit area, a 10% discount in the gift shop, and a listing in the online newsletter. Additional levels allow for free annual admission for families, discounts on boat rentals and select programming and even passes for Tidelands renowned Eco-Kayak tours!

Adopting an animal or becoming a Friend of Tidelands helps us design and construct new exhibits and provides for the daily care of our animals. Your membership helps provide this educational opportunity for future visitors.



Juvenile Gopher tortoise "Sandy" enjoys grass and sunshine on one of her weekly basking walks. Basking is important for reptiles to synthesize vitamin D, allowing for proper bone formation.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER:

1. Download our Adopt-an-Animal and Friends of Tidelands forms at: <http://www.tidelands4h.org/>
2. Mail form and check to:
4-H Tidelands Nature Center
100 S. Riverview Dr.
Jekyll Island, GA 31527

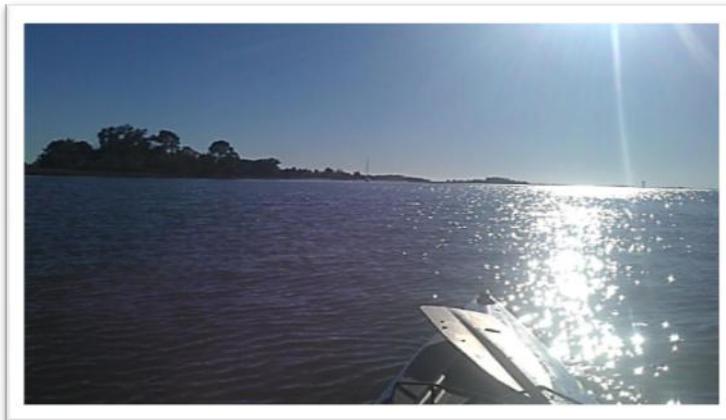
Kayaking Update: Winter

Winter is a slow, peaceful time on Jekyll Island. The cool calm weather is matched by a more relaxed attitude of residents and visitors alike. It is not uncommon to have an entire stretch of beach to yourself. This makes for the perfect atmosphere to explore and reflect upon the beauty of Jekyll's various natural habitats.

The most intimate way to explore our beautiful salt marshes is by kayak. The salt marsh is vibrating with life in the winter, often without the interruption of some of the less charismatic fauna such as "no-see-ums". This is an especially excellent time to visit the marsh if you are interested in birds. To view Jekyll's waterfowl it helps to get close to the water. Hooded Merganser ducks are immediately recognized by their impressive back-and-white crests. These diving fish-eaters will enjoy our marshes from fall until spring. Other sea ducks,

including Scoter, Bufflehead, and Goldeneye can be spotted around the Island in winter – often floating comfortably together off the rocks north of Driftwood Beach. We have also enjoyed watching the Grebes and Loons diving in our adjacent salt pond.

Marine mammals are a treat to spot as you paddle through the coastal streams. As the water cooled in October and November our Florida manatee made their way back down to Florida, not returning to Georgia until



spring. However, many bottlenose dolphins remain in Jekyll's marshes year round.

And of course there are always the fish. As any fisherman will tell you, this is a great time of year to catch redbfish, speckled trout, black drum, and sheepshead. Many of the warm water sharks have migrated to tropical water for the winter, but cool water species such as dogfish sharks move into GA waters to winter. While we focus on education and are not out to catch trophy fish, it is still

humbling to know you are often just inches away from these highly sought-after animals.

Don't be fooled by the cool water, our kayak tours are offered year round and provide an enriching experience any season!

Clear skies and calm waters on a December afternoon kayak trip

New murals by Georgia Artist Marissa Yurko

Here at our 4-H Tidelands Nature Center we always like to take the opportunity to enhance our exhibit area so that we may continue to build on visitors' environmental educational experience on Jekyll Island. Since opening in the summer of 2000, we have been fortunate to design and create some of our exhibits in house thanks to the creativity and handy work of our staff. We have also incorporated the work of talented artists and exhibit designers with the help of grant funds, donations, and our annual art sale fundraiser. If you have stopped to see us at Tidelands over the years, you might be one of many visitors who express delight regarding any new exhibit additions that have surfaced since your last visit. Recent additions in the last several years include; a new shark tank, manatee exhibit, shrimp boat/ TED model display, and a right whale calf sculpture. All of these exhibit additions were made possible with the help of grant funds, donations, and creative talents.

If you have visited Tidelands in the last few months, you may have noticed the most recent additions to our Tidelands exhibit area, which includes two underwater seascape murals designed and created by Marissa Yurko. Marissa is an Atlanta area elementary school art teacher, who came down to Jekyll in August to lend her talents in our main saltwater exhibit area. Marissa is an Honor graduate from UGA with a degree in Art Ed. She currently teaches art at Britt Elementary, in Gwinnett County, where the hallways bear murals created by the talents of Marissa, her mother, and her sister. Thanks to Marissa's talents and her love of coastal Georgia, her murals now also adorn some of the walls here at Tidelands.

Marissa's murals include an array of saltwater organisms found along our Georgia coast such as; manatee, sea turtle, burrfish, squid, horseshoe crab, and bonnet head shark to name just a few. Marissa also designed and

created the shrimp boat mural incorporated in our shrimp boat /TED model display put in place several years ago. With the new murals in place, we are excited about incorporating more of Marissa's art work in our exhibit area. In addition, we are presently in the midst of exploring resources available to develop new text and graphic panels in our main saltwater aquarium exhibit area in order to enhance the visitor's educational experience. Stay tuned and be sure to stop by and visit Tidelands during your next trip to Jekyll and see what is new in our exhibit area.

Anyone interested in making a donation to Tidelands to make new exhibits possible, please feel free to contact Tidelands Coordinator, Dawn Zenkert @ (912) 635-5032.



Creature Feature: Eastern Glass Lizard

The critter featured in this issue is often the unfortunate victim of misidentification.

Eastern glass lizards, like all other glass lizards, lack legs. This gives them a striking similarity to their reptile cousins, snakes. Their Latin name (*Ophisaurus ventralis*) actually alludes to this similarity, Gk. *Ophio* meaning "snake" or "serpent" and Gk. *Sauros* meaning "lizard". While it is not inherently bad to be a snake, it does come with a downfall; some humans are afraid of snakes and will often kill them out of fear. Glass lizards, like so many of their snake cousins, are actually quite harmless to humans and shouldn't be feared. The most obvious observable differences between the two include; moveable eyelids, an external ear

opening, and an inflexible jaw. All of which are found in lizards but not in snakes.



Eastern Glass lizards are quite common on Jekyll Island. They can be found in meadows, grasslands, pine flatwoods, wetlands, and even on the dunes. They feast on insects, spiders, and other invertebrates as well as young rodents. Glass lizards get their name due to their propensity to "shatter" or break off their tail, often in several pieces. When seized, glass lizards will break off all or part of their tail (which makes up more than half of their total length); the wriggling tail distracts predators so they can safely escape. They will then re-grow a new tail over the period of months to years.

Glass lizards are found throughout the Southeast; if you should come across one on your next hike, feel free to admire its beauty and not be afraid. Just don't attempt to grab it by the tail!

Contact Us

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4-H Tidelands Nature Center offers educational programs through nature and landscape walks, kayak tours, and school group coastal ecology programs. The public is invited to visit the Tidelands live exhibit area, featuring live coastal species including sea turtles, fish, invertebrate touch tanks, horseshoe crabs, snakes, an alligator, and more! Tidelands is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Admission price: \$3.00 per person. For more information on nature walks, programs, kayak tours, etc. call Tidelands at 635-5032.