



In Cooperation and Understanding With

# Choctaw Stewardship News



MBCI Department of Natural Resources

## Growing The Future!

*Choctaw Stewardship is taking care of the Earth . From Nanih Waiya to Chucalissa and beyond , practice good stewardship!*



Students Study Cultural Arts and learn about Culturally Significant Plants from Martha Ferguson MBCI

photo by Tim Oakes

## Special Youth Edition !!!

Newsletter Date  
May 7th , 2012



This is a special edition for National Wetlands Month . We hope that you enjoy it . If you would like to have more information on this and more services our office provides please contact the editing staff .

Tim Oakes and Jim McAdory 601-656-9679

## Self-Determination

submitted by: Timothy Oakes USDA/NRCS

The Schools of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians are an example of Self-Determination and Educational Assistance.

Students this past week enjoyed the opportunity to learn at the Wetlands Discovery Outdoor Learning Center in Conehatta MS and how they are connected by use of culturally significant plants, animals, insects and human beings that use wetlands. Many of us forget about how this opportunity was accomplish.

Since its introduction by President Richard Nixon, Public Law 93-638, or the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, as it is referred, gave the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians opportunity to exercising it right of self – governance. A Few years ago the MBCI entered into a contract with the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service ( NRCS ) to assist in the development of this wetland . The MBCI Schools recognized an opportunity to work with Tim Oakes Tribal Liaison with the Mississippi Choctaw Field Office /USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service and Jim McAdory of MSU Extension Service and other MBCI Departments on the development of the curriculum for the outdoor classrooms.

### Stewardship Definitions

#### Cultural Significant Plants :

Arundinaria Gigantea— Also known as Swamp Cane , River Cane , Fishing Cane ,Basket Cane Plant.

**Rhizome:** Horizontal underground plant stem (**Swamp Cane** )Capable of producing the shoot root stems of a new plant.

**Stolon :** Stem which grow at the soils surface or just below ground that form roots at the node, and new plant from the buds.



# Wetland Discovery Outdoor Learning Center

Tribal School Grades 1-4  
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

04/12

Stations were provided to assist in additional learning



Martha Ferguson Cultural Arts



A. Anderson & E. Chickaway Native Arts

## Culturally Significant Plants and Cultural Arts



Dalton Henry with the MBCI Schools and Tim Oakes



Tim Oakes Cultural Resources and planting Swamp Cane

## Wetland Wildlife & Cultural Resources

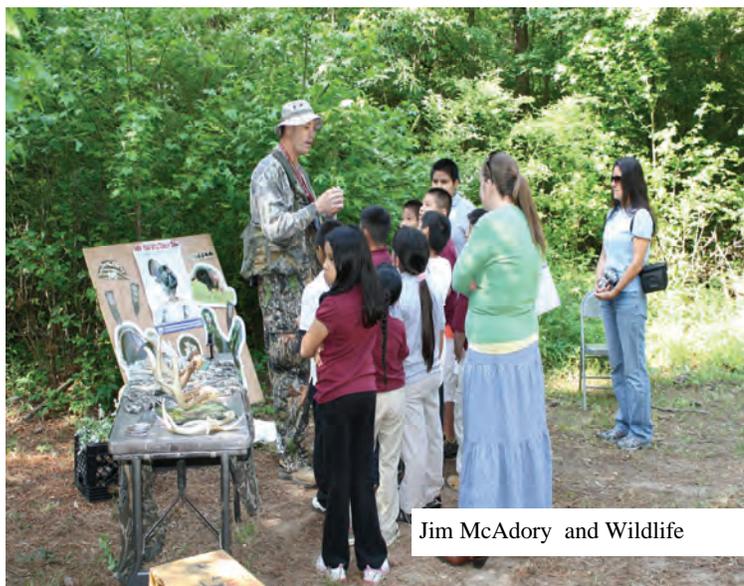


Leslie Burger and Wetland Wildlife



Justin Otter

# Stewardship Learning

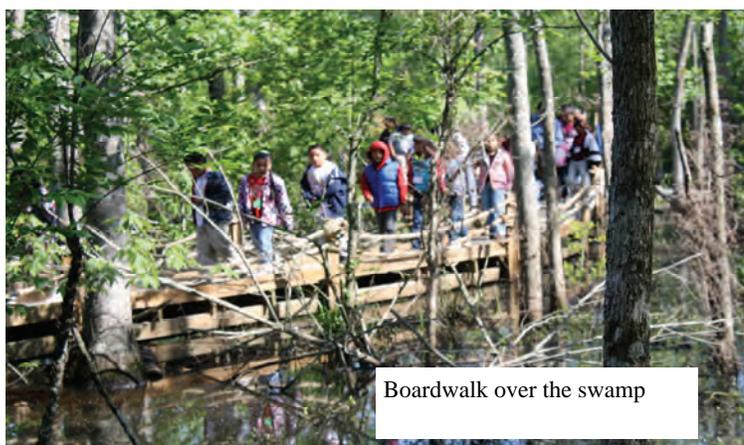


Jim McAdory and Wildlife



Mitzi Reed and Reptiles

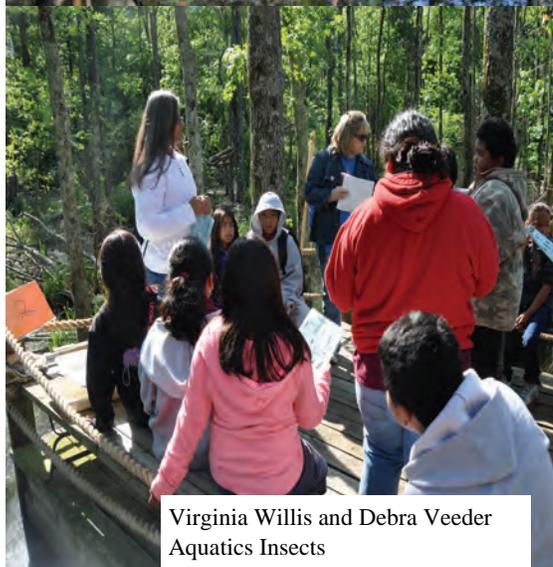
*Animals ,Reptiles ,Entomology , Rabbit Stick Throw ,Storytelling, Smoky Bear*



Boardwalk over the swamp



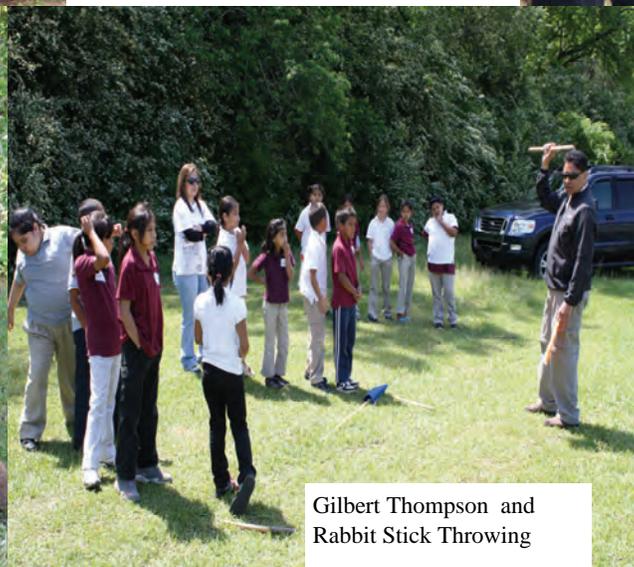
Native Story telling with Ronald Gibson



Virginia Willis and Debra Veeder  
Aquatics Insects



Earline Willis as  
SMOKY



Gilbert Thompson and  
Rabbit Stick Throwing



## Young Stewards



Submitted by Jim McAdory

There were several hundred Choctaw elementary students that participated in a unique program on the Conehatta reservation. This program is better known as the "Wetland Discover Outdoor Classroom". This facility is complete with a nature trail and a boardwalk through a natural and enhanced wetland area.

This facility's purpose is to give life to some of the aspects of science that the students see in their text books and hear the teachers explain. This event will become an annual experience for the tribal youth through a working partnership between the Choctaw Tribal Elementary Schools staff, Tribal Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

This event highlighted some of the natural world's plants and animals that we share with our neighbors. Some of the educational experiences for the youth were: planting seeds and how plants grow, poisonous and non poisonous snakes, mammals and how they communicate, aquatic insects, animals of the wetland, cultural plants and their uses, forestry practices, and a fun rabbit stick throw.

A special thanks to our presenters, educators and volunteers for this event: Dalton Henry , MBCI Schools Transportation , Peggy Crowe and Nell Adkins DOS , Ronald Gibson ( Story Telling ) & Virginia Willis with Tribal 4H, (Entomology )Gilbert Thompson, Interim Director DNR ( Rabbit Stick Throwing) Brantley Willis ,the crew at MBCI Department of Natural Resources , Candy Jimmie, Madge Issac, ( Waiter and Posters) Karla Keats, (Planting Seeds) Robin Allen, ( Forestry) and Johnny Dixon, (Cultural Resources) Leslie Burger ( Wetland Animals) & Jim McAdory with MSU Extension Service , ( Wildlife) , Debra Veeder (Aquatics) with the Adopt A Stream program, Mississippi Natural Science Museum, Tim Oakes,( Planting Swamp Cane) Tribal Liaison for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service , Bobby Smith ( Overview ) with Choctaw Tribal Schools . Martha Ferguson and Phyllis McMillan Museum of Choctaw Culture , Eleanor Chickaway and Amita Anderson for their assistance on Choctaw Cultural plant use . A Very Special Thanks goes out to Brian Billy and the staff at Choctaw Recycling for all the extra materials they provided to make benches for Wetland Discovery.

Through these efforts we are surely exposing the young to visual aspects of our land so they will appreciate the plant and animal life we share our planet with, and the connection we all share. This is nothing new, we have been handed down from generation to generation a natural world that has provided our every need and benefitted us greatly. We can thank the generations of the past for being good stewards of the land for us, so we now will hopefully start a new generation of young stewards for the generations to come.

On Behalf of Mississippi State University Extension Service; I thank all of you that participated not for me, but for the young people we were able to influence, and educate for this short week.



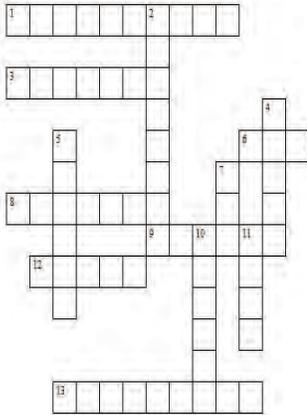
*Youth Page Find All the Wildlife !!!!!*



Robin Allen and Forestry



## Animals Crossword Puzzle

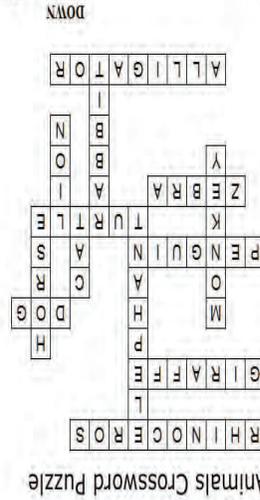


### ACROSS

- 1 Big animal that has one horn
- 3 This animal has a very long neck
- 6 Man's best friend
- 8 Lives in the cold and waddles
- 9 Slow moving and has a shell
- 12 Striped animal that looks like a horse
- 13 Can swim under water and walk on land and has a big bite

### DOWN

- 2 This animal has a long trunk
- 4 This animal likes to eat carrots and sugar cubes
- 5 This animal loves bananas
- 7 Some say this animal has nine lives
- 10 Has big ears and likes to hop
- 11 King of the jungle



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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
 Mississippi Choctaw Field Office and MSU Tribal Extension Office  
 Phone 601-656-9679 or 601-656-2070

**Helping People Help the Land!**



This news letter is provided by the office of the Tribal Extension Agent, Jim McAdory, Mississippi State University Extension Service through the Federal Recognized Tribal Extension Program .



And by : The office of Tim Oakes, Tribal Liaison , Mississippi Choctaw Field Office , USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Contact us at : [choctawstewardshipnews@gmail.com](mailto:choctawstewardshipnews@gmail.com)

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