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Fourth Quarter 2015

Be On The Lookout for Hydrilla!

Shared by Josh Yerby,
Environmental Affairs, Alabama Power Company

Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) is a non-native submerged plant found on every continent except Antarctica and South America. There are different ideas on its origins but most think the original introduction occurred from plants imported from Asia for the aquarium trade. In the early 1950's hydrilla was dumped into Tampa Bay in Florida and has spread rapidly.

Identification

Hydrilla is a "submersed" plant, meaning it never grows above the water surface. Plants begin growing from the lake bottom and stems quickly become branched. Leaves are arranged in whorls of 5 to 8 leaves per whorl. These are heavily serrated and have a very coarse feel.



Reproduction/Growth Rates

Hydrilla has four modes of reproduction: fragmentation, tubers, turions, and seeds. Fragmentation is the main mode of reproduction and distribution. As stems become long, they are more likely to break. Each small fragment can form a new plant. Tubers are deposited in soil and can withstand years of drought. Hydrilla is very adaptable to many habitat types and can grow in deeper water than most submersed aquatic plants.

Environmental Impacts

Large mats of hydrilla can cause major issues with navigation, recreation, water intakes and increased mosquito reproduction. These mats block sunlight from reaching the water column, degrading water quality by reducing oxygen fish and aquatic organisms breathe. It has an aggressive growth habit and outcompetes native plant species. Each plant tip is capable of growing 1 inch per day. Hydrilla can also harbor a cyanobacterium responsible for the death of bald eagles and waterfowl across the South.

Control

If found at an early stage of growth, hydrilla can be most efficiently controlled with herbicides approved for use in water. As a tropical plant, it cannot withstand a typical winter at our latitude, but can tolerate a wide range of aquatic habitats. Once established, it can grow back year after year from tubers.

What Can We Do?

Be on the lookout for hydrilla on Alabama Power reservoirs. Visit our website <https://apcshorelines.com/aquatic/> to report findings or call us at 205-257-2393. If possible, take a picture and get a GPS coordinate so we can expedite control measures. After traveling on lakes, boats and boat trailers should be cleaned to prevent carrying "hitch-hiker" plants and animals moving to the next lake.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES			
Area	Area Name	Representative	Phone
1	Blue Creek/ The Ridge	Bobby Lewis docx2@mindspring.com	205-212-1020 205-901-8307
2	Blue to Cargile	Jim & Johnye Woodrow ajwking@aol.com	205-425-9431 205-755-0055
3	Cargile South	Dan Murchison DanMurchison@gmail.com	205-408-7445
4	Cargile North	VACANT	
5	Cargile to Bird	Sonny & Peggy Bullard pnsbullard@gmail.com	205 755-9514
6	Bird Creek	Leslie Miles lesliemiles0@gmail.com	205-755-6432 205-612-2172
7	Bird to Walnut	Becki & Mau McCallum beckmau@gmail.com	205 755-5334
8	Walnut SW	Beau Battaglia beauredsox@yahoo.com	504-909-6990
9	Walnut Creek Peninsula	Betty & Joel Elam Betty687@aol.com	205-807-9056 205 755-2775
10	Cove and Mountain	Roxanne Martin roxypmartin@gmail.com	205 755-0863
11	Mountain to Lay Dam	Stan Holt Stan-holt@att.net	205-980-1428
12	Upper Hatchet and Weogufka	VACANT	
13A	East Pennamotley	Jim & Wathan Hand jmhand@centurylink.net	256-377-1153
13B	West Pennamotley	Richard & Wendy Cruse wendycruse@gmail.com	205-253-8298
14	Hatchet to Big Airplane	Eric & Rose Green rosegreenlake14@yahoo.com	205-492-7151
15	Airplane/Finger to Big Y Slough	Tommy Carpenter rtcarpen@southernco.com	256-377-1046 205-586-1749
16	Big Y to Mitchell Dam	Nan & David Spivey davidaspivey@gmail.com nanspivey@gmail.com	256-377-1178 205-492-0375

Mark Your Calendars!

Saturday, October 31, 2015: Renew our Rivers Annual Fall Lake Clean-up Higgins Ferry 8:00 AM

Friday, November 13, 2015: Annual Meeting Alabama Power Building Clanton 6:00 PM

Tuesday, December 15, 2015: Newsletter articles due for January 2016 Newsletter

Lake Mitchell Scholarship Update

Submitted by Rebecca Beaty-HOBO Scholarship Chairman

Next spring Lake Mitchell HOB will award two scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 each to two highly qualified students in Chilton and/or Coosa County! To apply, a student must be a senior in good standing with at least a B average, and planning to attend an Alabama college in the fall of 2016. The student must submit an application form, participate at one or more Lake Mitchell Clean-ups, write an essay, and participate in the interview process conducted by members of the Committee. Any student who is interested in applying for the Scholarship can go to our website at <http://www.lakemitchellhobo.org/scholarships.html> and download the HOB Scholarship Application Form and the HOB Scholarship Requirements. Contact Rebecca Beaty at rebecca.beaty@gmail.com if you need more information. Our highly successful Poker Run Fundraiser, along with the sale of our calendars and donations from you, our members, has enabled us to offer two scholarships this year! HOB Calendars for 2016 will be available at the Annual Meeting on November 13th. Buy several and help us with this important project!

From the President:

Steve Miles



Hello everyone and welcome to fall. Summer goes by faster and faster every year. Hope everyone had a great summer. As most of you know there were 20 break-ins on the Chilton County side recently. Needless to say, this was talked about at great length at our area rep. meeting. In our discussion we came up with the idea to put neighborhood watch signs with the camera eye inserted in the sign. I know professionals will find a way to steal, but it will make a teenager think long and hard about stealing from the area. Please let your area rep know what you think about this idea.

I was asked about buying extra HOB phone books. The answer is yes you can! Cost is \$5 each. If you want one, send \$5 to the HOB P.O. Box 1324 with name and address enclosed and we will get it you, or we will have some at the annual HOB meeting Nov. 13th.

In closing if anyone has concerns or hears things that happen that you're unsure about, please let your area rep know and they will let me know or just call me and I will do my best to find out the correct answer. Hope to see you at the cleanup on Oct. 31st and also on the lake enjoying falling leaves and cooler temps!

Be Safe
Steve Miles

Area Representative Reports:

Area 4-Connie Hampton and Susan Orr

Connie Hampton and Susan Orr are the new representatives for Cargile North. We are both widows who live next door to each other on the lake. Connie is here full-time and Susan drives down from Birmingham at every opportunity. We are looking forward to meeting everyone in Cargile North, and would love to welcome any new people to the area. Please let us know of any new residents so we can give them some welcome goodies. In addition, if you have information concerning the lake please let us know. Our email addresses are:

Susan at Sorrii@bellsouth.net or Connie at connie28fan@yahoo.com.

If you know of anyone who would like info on joining HOB or to get any corrected information to us please let us know. We have some new neighbors in our area. Please send a warm welcome to Dawn and Doug Deeter. By now we are sure everyone is aware of all the break-ins on our lake. Please be extra diligent in watching for unfamiliar vehicles and contact the Chilton County sheriff's office if you see unusual activity.

There are plans in the works for a get-together this fall or early next spring. More on that to follow. Have a great football season!

Area 6 – Leslie Miles

News from Bird Creek:

I would like everyone to know that our neighbor Phillip and Ann Brown's only granddaughter will be on The Voice this season. Her name is Shelby Gail Brown, and she just turned 17 last month. The show starts September 21st on NBC. It should be exciting! We will be pulling for her! Go Shelby Brown!!!! Troy and Tina Crocker once again opened their beautiful home for our annual area party last month, but this year they graciously extended the invite to all the area reps and the participants from the poker run. A great time, great food, and most of all, great fellowship! Thanks to the Crocker's for keeping our area a fun place to be. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the clean up, I go for the hot dogs!

Area 9 – Betty and Joel Elam

Summer has come and gone in the blink of an eye. Our area has seen many new faces and we welcome them to the Lake Mitchell family. Our neighborhood watch has increased as many help each other watch for strange cars and unfamiliar faces. Work has been done on our roads to patch holes and we continue to work towards road replacement. Do not forget our lake cleanup efforts on October 31. If you have any news for our area, please let us know.

Area 14 – Eric and Rose Green

We have sad news from Area 14. Longtime Lake Mitchell resident Cindy Smith passed away in early August following a long battle with cancer. Only a few days later her husband of 18 years, Ed Smith, also died unexpectedly at their home after a short illness. They were great neighbors on the lake, always willing to lend a hand with their backhoe when heavy lifting and hole digging were needed. Ed was famous for his boiled peanuts. They will be missed.

Area 15 – Tommy Carpenter

It is hard to believe that summer has come and gone. It was great on the lake except "hot as blue blazes". As I told you, I am retired now and look forward to more time on the lake. Especially looking forward to watching the leaves change and hoping to spot another bald eagle. I was told at the HOB meeting that there are at least four now. That's great considering we would only see ONE just a few years ago! You have probably heard about the 20 homes getting broken into across the lake. There will be less people on the lake now that Labor Day has past. Just a reminder to secure your belongings and look after each other. Let me know if anyone is interested in purchasing the "Neighborhood Watch Signs".

See you on the lake,
Tommy Carpenter

News from Higgins Ferry Park
Shared by Jake Sim, Park Ranger

Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O recently applied for and received a grant from Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Council with the help of Gerald Arrington, who is the Chilton County Parks and Recreation Manager. The \$5,000.00 grant was used to make improvements at Higgins Ferry Park. The improvements include installing new metal park benches, purchasing fire rings for the campgrounds, and graveling walking trails in the park. The park benches are placed where people can sit and look across the lake. These benches are the most used of the improvements, according to Jake Sim, Park Ranger.

Added note from Lee Poe: HOB is sad to learn that Jake Sim will be leaving his position as Higgins Ferry Park Ranger around the end of October. He has done a great job and will be missed by all on Lake Mitchell.

Lake Mitchell Monogrammed Merchandise For Sale



BEACH TOWELS \$15.00 EACH: Royal blue with lime green letters
Lime green with royal blue letters

TOTE BAGS \$20.00 EACH: White/hunter green
White/ royal blue

WIND BREAKER JACKETS \$30.00 EACH: hunter green

COLLAPSIBLE TRASH CANS FOR YOUR BOAT: \$10.00 EACH

These items will be for sale at the annual Fall Clean-up at Higgins Ferry Park on Oct. 31 and at the annual homeowners meeting at Alabama Power building in Clanton on November 6.

Alabama Power Shoreline Management

The Alabama Power Shoreline Management Team strives to protect and enhance the scenic, recreational and environmental values of the reservoirs it manages. As part of its mission, Alabama Power Shoreline Management is dedicated to ensuring all of the structures along Lake Mitchell's shoreline comply with the shoreline management program developed by Alabama Power with the input of its local, state and federal regulatory partners.

Permits for shoreline construction are good for one year, and the program's general policies are:

1. Alabama Power encourages shoreline structure owners to maintain the upkeep of existing boathouses, docks and seawalls. Prior to beginning any maintenance, contact Alabama Power to obtain a no-fee permit for repairs.
2. Alabama Power also encourages shoreline structure owners to remove noncompliant structures and replace them with compliant structures, and upon doing so will be issued a no-fee permit (e.g. replace an enclosed boathouse with an open boathouse).
3. A permit to build any new shoreline structure will incur a one-time \$250 fee (e.g. new boathouse, new dock or new seawall). More than one activity may be authorized with a single permit.

Please call Alabama Power Shoreline Management Team Member Candy Hayes at 205-280-4476 to discuss your project/work and to obtain a permit prior to beginning any maintenance or construction.

Rails to Animal Trails **Chip Gates, H.O.B.O. Historian**

It was *not* a dark and stormy night. Fact is, it was a beautiful, albeit slightly warm, spring afternoon, the Sunday before Memorial Day, 2015. My entourage consisted of my dear Aunt Marie DiGiorgio (Area 2) and two of her teenage grandsons, Noah DiGiorgio and Nate Leopold. Armed with picks and a metal detector, our quest that day was the possible recovery of artifacts left behind from the old railroad line that used to go to the river. A little history on that line is in order before we go further.

If you missed the Fourth Quarter 2014 Newsletter, in it we learned after the Civil War William Wadsworth had one of the largest sawmills in the state, this being at the town of Rushton. Rushton was located on the banks of the Coosa River at the mouth of Blue Creek. The story about Wadsworth in ***Notable Men of Alabama: Vol. 2***, states that "He has a railroad connecting his mill with the Louisville and Nashville railroad, and a narrow gauge road to bring timber to the mill from the woods". Unfortunately, there is no mention of where Wadsworth's line tied into the L&N line. There may be a clue found on a 1915 Ala. State Highway Commission map showing a proposed system of trunk roads in the state. Trunk road is not a common term in the U.S. now, but Wikipedia says it was generally used to denote a major road connecting two or more cities, ports or other places and was the recommended route for long distance or freight traffic. This particular map shows a proposed 7½-mile "macadam, gravel or chert" road leaving Verbena and going directly to Rushton, obviously an indication of the latter town's importance. The type of road described doesn't sound like much, but of the 5 classifications of roads in the state at the time, that was the best there was. One might think the trunk road would closely follow an already existing rail line, that is if Wadsworth's spur tied in at Verbena. But this is just a guess. Whatever the case, this trunk road was never built. It is just as well, because in eight years Rushton would be going under, literally.

Moving forward a little in time and drawing from the 1920 census, we find the population of Cooper was 1,492, with nearby Verbena having a slight edge with 1,929. According to the book ***Putting Loafing Streams to Work*** by Harvey H. Jackson III, in November of that same year word started circulating in Chilton County that Alabama Power was going to build another dam on the Coosa River at a place called Duncan's Riffle. The building of the dam would require the laying of a spur line off the L&N mainline to the construction site. Knowing what a boon this would be for the local economy, both of the aforementioned towns lobbied for the spur line. Much to the disappointment of Verbena, Cooper was selected as the tie-in point.

We now return to the present, almost. Just off Hwy. 31 in Cooper, on County Road 24 near Chestnut Creek Baptist Church, is a nice house with flowers generally in abundance. Some of the perennials are found growing in an old rail depot baggage cart in the front yard. Deducing this cart may have come from the long gone Cooper depot, but most certainly having a rail connection, one morning back in the summer of 2014 my wife and I stopped by for what could be termed a "cold call". Our reception was anything but. Mr. Cagle didn't elaborate much on the baggage cart, but he did tell me of a gentleman he knew named Boswell that had part of the old rail bed on his property, stating that Mr. Boswell used part of the old railroad embankment to make a pond for his cattle. Mr. Cagle gave me directions to Mr. Boswell's place, a little further up C.R. 24 towards M&H Grocery.

Several months passed before I had a chance to call on Mr. Boswell. When I did, I interrupted the midday meal, but nevertheless was graciously invited in by Mrs. Boswell and offered sustenance. Sadly, I had to decline, having just downed some fast food back at the 205 exit. Following lunch, Mr. Boswell drove us down through his gently sloping pasture and showed me what was left of the rail bed. Looking to my right, due west, about two hundred yards away was the embankment and pond. However, directly in front of me and going towards the east was a raised mound. It was a few feet higher than the approach, but once on the flat top, the other side dropped off more substantially. About 75 feet to the east there was a deep gap or break in the mound where one could easily see a change in the upper strata, the cinder-type material commonly used for rail beds long ago being plainly visible. While taking all this in, Mr. Boswell mentioned that his wife had suggested using a metal detector on the ground, and that was all I needed to hear. Still, it would be the latter part of May 2015 before that came to pass. But good things sometimes do come to those who wait

After saying hello and making introduction to our hosts, we four took up our tools and started walking down to the pasture and our goal. As we neared the rail bed, I inadvertently kicked something with my steel-toed boots and lo

and behold, the first spike was found lying exposed on the ground. With Nate using the detector and Noah doing the digging, it wasn't long before we found another spike and a couple of broken bolts. These bolts were substantial in thickness, and would have also been in length when new, as they had to pass through a steel plate known as a fishplate, through the side of the rail, and then another fishplate, before being cinched down with a lock washer and nut. This was how the rail sections used to be joined together, end to end, with the traditional spikes holding the rails to the crossties. All told we found four spikes, five bolts (all broken), several lock washers, and one 4-sided nut. A good day, by relic hunting standards.

Now for some unanswered questions. Was this the spur from Cooper to the dam construction site, or to the sawmill in Rushton, or perhaps did it serve both, at different time periods? Calling logic into play, if Wm. Wadsworth had a line coming off the L&N main in Cooper and going to his sawmill, it would stand to reason Alabama Power could at least use the western portion of this spur before diverging somewhere east of present-day Co. Rd. 59, going south of the ridge bordering Blue Creek and on to the dam site. Assuming the Rushton sawmill was still operating, most or all of the work there would involve cutting up timber for use in the dam's construction, so no lumber would be going outbound to interfere with the incoming construction material trains. This would also mean a substantial cost savings to the Power Company, having to lay much less track. On the other hand, the Power Company's choice of where to come off the L&N line was apparently not a foregone conclusion, as one would expect if a line was already in place for at least half the distance to Duncan's Riffle. There is another hint that the construction rail line was independent of any other. On the official Alabama Power survey map dated May 1919, fifteen structures were indicated at Rushton, but most telling was the surveyor's dotted lines and notation "*Old R.R. Bed*". Whether this was the narrow gauge line or the full size spur, "*Old*" and "*Bed*" are indications it wasn't in service anymore. Mr. Wadsworth died in 1913 at the age of 72. Maybe by the time of his death or shortly thereafter the sawmill had ceased operation.

Back to the section on Mr. Boswell's property, I realize that more investigation is needed. However, because we found only broken bolts and even fewer spikes, I feel certain this line was definitely the one used to take construction material to the dam. It is known that following Mitchell Dam's completion in 1923 the line was taken up. In about a year's time Alabama Power would be building another dam, this time on the Tallapoosa River, and a spur line would be needed there. So up came the rails, fishplates, and as much of the other hardware as was fit to use again. Broken bolts would have been left where they lay. In light of the fact that over 90 years has passed, I am quite pleased to have found anything at all. So my thanks go out to my relic-hunting compadres, but especially to Mr. & Mrs. Boswell for their kindness and hospitality.

I

f you have any additional information, comments or questions about this, or any other historical topic concerning our lake, please contact me at gatesestate@bellsouth.net.

Clanton, Alabama 35046

PAID

Permit 12

Change Service Requested

Birmingham, AL

Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. Membership Application

Annual Dues Homeowner \$25.00	Marine 9 - Donation Maintenance & Operation \$	Fireworks - Donation Purchase of Fireworks \$	Utility Boat - Donation Maintenance & Operation \$
Other Donation Boathouse Sign \$15____ Memorial ____ Education Fund ____ Scholarship ____ Other (specify) _____			
Amount \$			
Name:		Check One: Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> New Member <input type="checkbox"/>	
Home Mailing Address:			
Lake 911 Address:			Lake Area:
Email:			
Home Phone:	Lake Phone:	Cell Phone	

Detach and mail completed form along with your check to: Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O., PO Box 1324, Clanton, AL 35046