

# Louisiana Bucket Brigade's Blog

- [Front Page](#)
- [About](#)
- [Donate](#)



← [Two Days on Grand Isle](#) [Hurricane Season: Refineries Prepare](#) →

## Isle Grand Terre: oil pools and foul fumes

May 28, 2010 · [4 Comments](#)

*Guest blog post by Adam Griffith of Western Carolina University. Adam works as a Research Scientist in the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines. During his most recent visit he teamed up with Grassroots Mapping and LABB on two trips to the Grand Isle area. He can be reached at [agriffith@wcu.edu](mailto:agriffith@wcu.edu).*

Thursday morning at the office of the Louisiana Bucket Brigade (LABB), I met graduate students Tara Foster and Randy Caruso for a trip to Isle Grand Terre, just east of Grand Isle, Louisiana. We met Richard Shephard of [RSAirPhotos.com](http://RSAirPhotos.com) and Drew Wheelan of the American Birding Association with our boat captain Jeff Brumfield of Flamin' Hooks guide service. Our goal of visiting Isle Grand Terre was about to be fulfilled.

Upon our arrival on Isle Grand Terre, Richard and Drew met with a CBS news team while our team sought compelling photos of the oil reported here yesterday. I scouted the beach while Tara and Randy inflated the large weather balloon. Just as we were heading out a leader from Unified Command arrived by boat with some other officials. They were scouting locations to deliver the four wheelers and tents for the clean-up that he said might start the next day on the island. As we walked toward the beach a loud voice came through the bushes from one of the boats, "Hold it right there!" We froze in our tracks. As we peered through the bushes we saw why they wanted us to stand still: they were taking our picture with their cell phone cameras. Nice.



Photo by Adam Griffith of Western Carolina University, Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines

As we walked the beach, we were horrified: oil in large pools was evident on the beach. Hermit crabs wandered around next to bubbles of oil while dolphins frolicked in water that wasn't quite the right color. Foul fumes were ubiquitous and oil could be seen oozing out of the wetlands. The LABB team successfully launched the balloon and walked the beach while the inexpensive camera snapped away overhead. Air traffic seemed heavier and two helicopters took a keen interest in the weather balloon. They circled us twice, but eventually and correctly determined that we were benign. We stayed for several more hours covering as much ground as we could in the 90 degree heat and eventually were picked up by captain Jeff who returned us to Grand Isle.

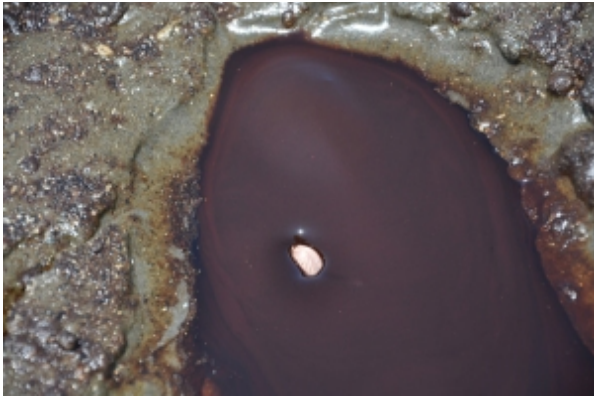


Photo by Adam Griffith of Western Carolina University, Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines

I have been to the Gulf Coast three times in three weeks from Western Carolina University where I work as a Research Scientist in the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines. On our first visit, Andy Coburn, our policy wonk, and I flew the coast from Pensacola, FL to the Chandeleur Islands. Those aerial images are here: [psds.shutterfly/oilspill](http://psds.shutterfly.com/oilspill)

The following week, I returned with Research Scientist Katie McDowell and flew over the Chandeleurs again, the mouth of the Mississippi, and a large plume of oil near Bay Ronquille. Details from this trip can be found here: [psds.shutterfly/louisianaflight](http://psds.shutterfly.com/louisianaflight)

Stewart Long at gonzoeath in California has been stitching together our aerial photographs and producing some large photo mosaics. View them here on his flicker account:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonzoeath/>

Jeff Warren of [grassrootsmapping.org](http://grassrootsmapping.org) put me in contact with Stewart. Our goal at our office at Western Carolina University is the same as that of grassrootsmapping and the Louisiana Bucket Brigade: obtain high quality imagery in large volumes to serve as an archive of environmental conditions at specific places. The oil will hit land eventually in many more places. Hopefully these images will help remind us what the land should look like.

**Categories:** [BP Oil Spill](#)

**Tagged:** [Grassroots Mapping](#), [BP oil spill clean up](#), [Grand Isle](#), [Isle Grand Terre](#)

**4 responses so far** ↓



• [Manuel Mota, M.D.](#) // [May 29, 2010 at 9:56 am](#) | [Reply](#)

I just learned about your commendable contribution (CNN interview) and I thought that maybe your organization could listen to a voice of wisdom that has been ignored by those with decision power. A former CEO of Shell Corp. advised to used oil tankers to SUCTION contaminated water from those areas your organization is trying to clean. It is such an-easy-to implement tool and BP has the tankers with millions of gallons capacity (remember how much oil the Exxon Valdez had?).

The damage could be lessened if millions of gallons of oil-tainted water are removed from the proximities of those areas at imminent risk or already affected.

Maybe this public outlet could be the conduit to get one of the Think Tanks to think about the tankers. I should say that when I saw this young college student with such strong determination to do something, it made me proud of having successful daughters too.

Best of luck,

Manuel Mota-Castillo

P.S. It is classified information how deep a Navy submarine can go but, if they can descend one mile, could be possible to just “seat” one of them on top of the leak for a few days until BP creates a magic formula? It is up to the experts to say if this is feasible but it could be helpful to remember that the 1979 oil disaster was 400 feet deep and lasted for 9 months. It was in the same Gulf but on the Mexico side. Still, the oceans belong to the planet not to a country.

Psychiatrist

Lake Mary, Florida



• [Jeremy](#) // [May 29, 2010 at 10:41 am](#) | [Reply](#)

This will be a litte long but pls read it.

I live in Pensacola, I went to Escarosa (employment center) and completed application for helping clean up this spill... they claimed 12hr hrs a day 7 days a week work until this thi ng is brought under control.... I worked offshore on crewboats on and off over the last 10 years from Venice to Galveston I hold a TWIC card wehich they said was preferred... I thought I would have been one of the first people to be contacted and put to work. I heard nothing.... I went back down there and just so happened to be there when they were doing a mini orientation type thing and interviewing folks. I sat in there with everyone else for about 2 hours before I was seen. I had a “good” interview with one of the people “screening” people for the job. I thought for sure I would be called the very next day... nothing.....

I went back down there the following week and asked the guy at the desk what was going on with the cleanup project and he told me that they were still in the process of calling people, but that they had a team down there already .....and here is what floored me..... he said the team they had down there were NOT working... they were just standing by... I dont get it... You would think that after such a horrible “accident” BP or whpoever would be bending over backwards to try and stay on top of this thing so as to not further tarnish their already tainted image.... Why have a creww ready to clen up the mess just standing by???? and then this deal with Obama visiting Grand Isle then suddenly 400 people show up to have a day at the beach??? Something is very wrong with this entire situation. None of it makes any sense... this guy i was talking to in the waiting room said that his boat...(he is

a deckhand on a fishing boat) had been put on charter by BP but it wasn't working ... it was being paid to sit at the dock!!.... They are doing something out there that they don't want people to see.... None of it makes any sense..... We need to find out what the hell is really going on here.... there should be thousands of people working 12 hrs a day cleaning this mess up.... there are plenty of people without jobs that are available and willing for work but nothing like that is happening....

Thank you guys for starting this web page... I saw u guys on cnn.... one suggestion that might be useful.... Can you guys start a msg board or forum for people to share experiences and thoughts about this nightmare? thanks



**Louisiana Bucket Brigade** // [May 29, 2010 at 10:11 pm](#) | [Reply](#)

Hi Jeremy, thanks for sharing your experience and for your suggestion about a forum/discussion board. As a result we will be setting one up in the next couple of days on the Oil Spill Crisis Map site.



**monte merrick** // [May 31, 2010 at 7:28 pm](#) | [Reply](#)

Excellent work – greatly appreciated – curious if there is a wildlife component of this action... i see that only 70 or so birds have been captured alive – very low numbers for the amount of oil that has hit the marshes –

are there any efforts, outside of FWS crews, doing surveys, possibly rescue, and documentation of dead...

thank you  
monte

## Leave a Comment

**Name**

**E-mail**

**Website**

☐ Notify me of follow-up comments via email.

☐ Subscribe to this site by email



- **We need your help to keep our work going!**

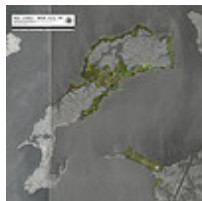


- **Email Subscription**

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.



- **LABB photos**



[More Photos](#)

## • [Louisiana Bucket Brigade Twitter](#)

- Are you looking for a dynamic internship for fall that will get you involved in the oil crisis, refinery... <http://fb.me/wKwmnA7T> 9 hours ago
- Blog post by RJ Bowman, a member of Residents for Air Neutralization in Shreveport and an up and coming... <http://fb.me/xSmcYMtf> 5 days ago

## • LABB blog categories



## • What were talking about...

[Baton Rouge](#) [Benefits](#) [BP](#) [BP oil spill clean up](#) [BP worker health](#) [Calumet](#) [Chalmette](#) [Chandeleur Islands](#) [Communities Empowered for Change](#) [Community Meetings](#) [Concerned Citizens Around Murphy](#) [Dauphin Island](#) [dispersants](#) [Elmer's Island](#) [ExxonMobile](#) [Fishermen](#) [Fundraising](#) [Grand Isle](#) [Grassroots Mapping](#) [Gulf Aid](#) [Gulf Relief Foundation](#) [Hurricane season](#) [Isle Grand Terre](#) [Istrouma](#) [Lafitte](#) [Murphy Oil Refinery](#) [Murphy oil spill](#) [Oil Spill](#) [Oil Spill Crisis Map](#) [outreach](#) [Panama City](#) [Pensacola](#) [Plaquemines](#) [Port Sulphur](#) [public health](#) [Queen Bess Refinery accidents](#) [Residents for Air Neutralization](#) [Shreveport](#) [St. Bernard](#) [St. Bernard Citizens for Environmental Quality](#) [stories](#) [Technology](#) [Ushahidi](#) [Venice](#)

## • Past blog posts...



## • Search the LABB blog

To search, type and hit ente

## • Blogroll

- [Communities Empowerment for Change](#)
- [Concerned Citizens Around Murphy](#)
- [Environmental Integrity Project](#)
- [Environmental Support Center](#)
- [Grassroots Mapping](#)
- [Louisiana Bucket Brigade Facebook Page](#)
- [Louisiana Bucket Brigade Flickr account](#)
- [Louisiana Bucket Brigade Twitter](#)
- [Louisiana Bucket Brigade Website](#)
- [Oil Spill Crisis Map](#)