



# Delta Wonders

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## In southwestern Alabama, there is a collection of rivers, creeks, bayous and swamps locally known as “The Delta.”

The “Delta” or “Mobile-Tensaw Delta” – its proper name – is situated within a unique long and narrow geological formation that creates a vast wetland 12 miles in width and 30 miles in length. This area hosts a myriad of wetland-associated trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants and a wide collection of fish, birds, reptiles and mammals.

As the Tombigbee and Alabama rivers combine at the southernmost tip of Clarke County, they form the Mobile River. Most locals describe this location as the northern limit of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. As the Mobile River flows southward, the Tensaw River forks off to the east, and the Middle River forking to the southwest from the Tensaw River shortly thereafter as it continues to meander southward. Just south of

Interstate 65, the Middle joins back into the Tensaw leaving the Tensaw and the Mobile rivers as the primary rivers of the Delta. Before reaching the Mobile Causeway and Interstate 10, the Raft, Apalachee, and Blakeley rivers fork off the Tensaw River as it eventually joins the upper reaches of Mobile Bay.

This mega-wetland has natural cyclic events that influence the plant and animal communities that reside in this unique ecosystem. In winter and early spring, the large amount of precipitation that falls on over 70 percent of Alabama and portions of Mississippi, Tennessee and Georgia flows through this area. It eventually reaches the Delta where, in a typical year, it produces volumes of 80 million gallons per minute that will flow through this confined geological bottleneck. The Mobile-Tensaw represents the third largest delta system, in regards to water volume dispersed, in the lower United States.

This flooding is a vital component of this complex ecosystem. It is responsible for rejuvenating stagnant backwaters and sloughs, dislodging silt build-ups, and allowing small fish that were reared in the backwaters an opportunity to escape into the main rivers. Following the floods, the Delta recedes back to normal water flow and the process begins again.

Numerous recreational opportunities are available for those who want to experience the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. The area hosts a large collection of both fresh and saltwater species of fish for the interested angler including largemouth bass, bluegill, shellcracker, flounder, redfish and speckled trout. The Delta is also full of game for the hunting enthusiasts who are interested in pursuing squirrel, rabbit, waterfowl, white-tailed deer and wild hogs. For those who just want to be outdoors, there are boat launches located in Baldwin and Mobile counties providing access to this great natural resource. Additionally, the 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center in Spanish Fort offers outdoor recreation along waterways, woods and wetlands. The Mobile-Tensaw Delta is truly a natural wonder and one of Alabama’s most prized natural resources. If you haven’t visited the area, an extraordinary opportunity awaits you! 🌳

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