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## **Alligator found dead at Grand Lake with jaws tied shut**

By [Jim Morris](#)

Staff Writer

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The discovery of a dead alligator on a boat ramp at Grand Lake St. Marys tells me two things I already knew:

- Some people are unbelievably stupid.
- There's another reason for not wanting to swim in Grand Lake St. Marys.

Unless there is some secret canal running from the Everglades to Grand Lake St. Marys, there is only one way an alligator could get into an inland Ohio lake: Somebody dumped it there.

The 4-foot reptile was found Friday on a West Bank ramp. It was found with fishing line wrapped around its jaws. Officials speculated it died because it could not eat or because of the cold water in the lake.

"It probably was somebody's pet and it got too big. This is a problem in the state of Ohio and other places. People want exotic pets, and when they get too large, they just dump them," Dave Sheets, area supervisor for the Ohio Division of Wildlife, told the Celina newspaper.

Not only was that person cruel to the animal, but he or she didn't care about the danger posed to people who might go in or near the lake. Had this creature been lurking in the lake when the water was warm, there could have been some serious injuries.

But, then, thoughtless people don't think about others or even the well being of their own "pet."

### **Hiking author to visit**

Area outdoor enthusiasts should plan to spend a little time indoors next week to hear author and adventurer Jeff Ault of Cincinnati talk about his experiences hiking the U.S., specifically the Appalachian Trail.

Alt, author of *Walk For Sunshine* and *A Hike For Mike*, will speak at 1 p.m. at the Huber Heights Gander Mountain store, 8001 Old Troy Pike.

He will talk about his own adventures on the 2,160-mile Appalachian Trail, the 218-mile John Muir Trail and a trip across Ireland, and he hopes inspire others to carry out their dreams.

If you have a hike planned or have only thought about it, Alt's ideas and experiences should prove helpful.

For more information about Alt or his free presentation, visit [jeffalt.com](http://jeffalt.com) or call (937) 236-9786.

### **Short shots**

**Boating course:** The Ohio Division of Watercraft is offering an eight-hour Ohio Boating Course on April 14 and April 21 at the Wayne Twp. Municipal Building, 650 N. Clarksville Road, Waynesville.

Classes will be 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day and you must attend both days to be certified. There is a \$5 fee. For information or to sign up, call (937) 323-1582.

**River cleanup:** Volunteers are needed for the 17th annual Five Rivers Cleanup, which will be held April 21 from 9 a.m. to noon. Participants will receive a T-shirt and lunch and are welcome to participate in Earth Day activities at Island MetroPark following the cleanup. The deadline for signing up is April 13. Call (937) 275-PARK.

**Parks need help:** Ohio State Parks are seeking volunteers to work in a variety of capacities in 2007 from assisting naturalists with educational programs to planting flowers and greeting campers.

To sign up, contact any Ohio State Park office or visit [ohiostateparks.org](http://ohiostateparks.org).

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