

LITTORALLY speaking



Littoral: The region along the shore; the intertidal zone

News from the American Littoral Society

Spring/Summer 2016

Delaware Bay Reef Dedicated to US Military Veterans

Hurricane Sandy devastated New Jersey's Delaware Bay region in 2012, wrecking beaches crucial to horseshoe crab spawning and migrating shorebirds. Efforts to restore those beaches were marked with an emotional celebration in November of last year.

On November 11, the American Littoral Society and partner organizations held "Veterans Day on the Bay" to dedicate the man-made reef at South Reeds Beach in honor of military veterans.

The dedication ceremony recognized all US military veterans and highlighted those veterans who had direct involvement in the effort to restore New Jersey's Delaware Bayshore. Much of the work on the reef, which was built to help preserve habitat important to both horseshoe crabs and migrating shorebirds, was



Event attendees honored military veterans by inscribing the person's name on a shell, which was later placed on Veteran's Reef.

done by veteran interns employed by the American Littoral Society.

Event attendees honored

their own military veterans by inscribing that special person's

Continued on Page 5

Society Focused on Protecting Public Beach Access



A recent court decision eliminated protections for public access to beaches and waterfront in New Jersey.

With the beginning of spring many start to plan for spending time on the water. In New Jersey, that is sometimes easier said than done, especially since a court decision in December 2015 threw out the state's public access regulations.

In response to the court's decision, Senator Bob Smith and the NJ Senate Environment Committee have created a task force — co-chaired by Littoral Society Director Tim Dillingham — to develop and present legislative recommendations for public access.

The appellate court decision said New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection did not

have authority to require coastal developers to provide public access to beaches and waterfronts.

Made up of a broad suite of invested parties, the task force is co-chaired by Debbie Mans of the NY/NJ Baykeeper, Michael Egerton of the state Chamber of Commerce and Sara Bluhm of the NJ Business and Industry Association, in addition to the Society's director. The Task Force is due to submit its recommendations to the Legislature by the end of April; the Legislature will then consider further action needed.

The Society believes that the fundamental goals of the recommendations

Continued on Page 4

From the Executive Director's Desk

It's tempting to fall back on the tried and true metaphor of spring as the time of awakening.

Indeed, it is: the ospreys are returning to the Hook, herring are being found in Wreck Pond, and the horseshoe crabs are just waiting for water temperature to rise a few more degrees before they begin emerging.

Of course, our winters are full of life as well; it's not as if the coast goes to sleep. Seals show up on beaches, sea ducks and brant appear in bays, snowy owls emerge up and down the North-east, and snow bunting pass the time



Tim Dillingham, Executive Director

before making their arctic migration.

The Society, likewise, doesn't disappear during the winter months (much as we might be tempted to make like Brother Bear). We tag

fish almost year round. But we also walked the beach on New Year's Day, went waterfowl watching in foul weather and fair, and forge ahead with the Wreck Pond restoration through heavy snow and high tides.

Come spring, we simply, like all life along the coast, shift a bit: we move to building reefs, tagging horseshoe crabs, planting beach grass, cleaning up marine debris.

Only the struggle to care for the coast and protect it from harm seems constant.

So keep your eyes open for the spring cast making its way on stage, and stay tuned in for opportunities to help, educate and advocate – it's all new in spring, but the same.

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Society Urges Planning Body to Protect Ocean

At the most recent ocean planning meeting American Littoral Society staff urged the organization drafting the plan for the mid-Atlantic region to clearly define how the agencies involved in the process would work together.

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body met on March 21-24 in Baltimore, MD. The meeting focused on the planning body's work toward creating an Ocean Action Plan that will rely on robust science and foster collaboration between regulatory agencies and others with a stake in ocean and coastal resource decision-making. The meeting gave stakeholders like the Society the chance to share our views on the importance of the plan's contents before the planning body develops, and then releases a draft for public review this June.

The Regional Planning Body is made up of representatives from mid-Atlantic states, federal agencies, and tribal

nations. The body is one of several working to create a National Ocean Policy for the US coast and territorial waters. The gathering in Baltimore is expected to be the last Mid-Atlantic RPB meeting before release of the draft plan.

The American Littoral Society believes that the best path toward protecting our ocean and coasts is through a forward-thinking regional planning effort.

The Society urged the planning body to ensure that the draft plan and its actions clearly show how agencies are going to work together to move ocean planning forward to ensure healthy ocean ecosystems, protect Ecologically Rich Areas (ERAs), and maintain sustainable uses in the Mid-Atlantic.

Over upcoming months the Society will continue to engage fellow stakeholders in advance of the draft plan's release.

Follow our progress at MidAtlanticOceanPlanning.org.



More than 34 million people live and work along the Mid-Atlantic coast. Many more visit every year. The ocean is facing increasing demands. Ocean planning is crucial for making smart decisions about future uses, as well as strengthening the ways we can protect the ocean and coast we both need and love.

Abrams and Huber Depart Board of Trustees

Board members Don Abrams and Sam Huber recently announced their resignations. They and their families have made incomparable contributions to the Society during many years of service.

During more than 40 years with the Society Don Abrams has served in many roles. Among them: constant member, guardian, steward, head repairman and protector of building 18; president of the board; longtime trustee; one of the leaders of the clamming gang; Society historian; cheerleader; and partner-in-crime and close confidante of former executive director Dery Bennett.

Don's wife Gail has been just as much a part of the Society. She provided valuable legal services to the Society during its early days, including getting Don and other Littoral members out of jail when they fought to stop ocean dumping.

In announcing his resignation, Don said: "I have had the most wonderful education and have been able to meet the most accomplished and intelligent people. I have benefited immensely from my membership on the Board. I will miss all of you."

To say that Don and Gail will be missed is a gross understatement. Fortunately, Don and Gail have promised to remain loyal members of the Littoral Society.

A deep dive back into old editions of "Underwater Naturalist" shows that it has been more than 50 years since a Huber was not a Littoral Society trustee. Before Sam joined the board, his father — Michael W. Huber — was a member, trustee and longtime caretaker of the Society.

Michael Huber joined the Society and became a board member in the early 1960s. Sam recalls that his father also became a close friend of Dery Bennett's family.

"Over the years, my parents' friendship with Dery and [his wife] Barbara grew beyond the confines of the Society," according to Sam. "But many of the things they would do together — clamming, exploring tidewaters in canoes, birding — were effectively extensions of their mutual love for the natural world. My father



Don Abrams



Sam Huber

remained an enthusiastic Trustee up until he died in January 2009." Sam's initial experience with the Society came early in his childhood, when he would volunteer at the Sandy Hook office to stuff envelopes or clean nets and buckets.

"In 1973, when I was 14, I learned to scuba dive, and connected with a bunch of much older divers who had coalesced around the Society. We dove mostly along the Jersey shore, mostly at the inlets: Shark River, Manasquan, Toms River, etc."

Sam lost touch with the Society for a number of years after going

away to school, but was drawn back in by Don Abrams.

"Don approached me soon after my father died," he said. "I was proud to take up my father's legacy, and served on the board from April 2009 through our January 2016 meeting."

Having grown up with the Society since childhood, Sam took up his father's mantle with panache. Sam led the Board governance committee, helped shape the Strategic Plan, and was often an active participant in field activities and Society events. Sam has brought indomitable energy and enthusiasm to the Society and has been a force to be reckoned with to ensure that the Society stays the course well into the future.

Unfortunately for the Society, Sam is taking a larger role with the Huber Corporation, which will prevent him from continuing as Vice President of the Board of Trustees. The Huber Corporation's gain is the Society's loss.



The American Littoral Society, in partnership with The Sandy Hook Foundation and National Park Service, fielded a float in the 4th Annual Rumson St. Patrick's Day Parade. The float showed a cross-section of the life one might see swimming off Sandy Hook, NJ and emphasized that everyone has to be green in order to keep those waters clean and full of life. Pictured walking the parade route are [L-to-R] Pim Van Hemmen, assistant director of the American Littoral Society, and Executive Director Tim Dillingham.

Society Board Member to Hold Johnson Family Chair at Rutgers

The Rutgers Board of Governors has appointed Richard G. Lathrop Jr., professor of environmental monitoring and restoration ecology at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, as the inaugural holder of the new Johnson Family Chair in Water Resources and Watershed Ecology.

Lathrop is a long-time member of the American Littoral Society Board of Trustees.

Besides his teaching responsibilities, Lathrop, a professor in the Department of Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources, is the faculty director of the Rutgers Ecological Preserve. He also directs the Grant F. Walton Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis.

As the Johnson Family Chair,



Prof. Rick Lathrop

Lathrop will lead an interdisciplinary program to study how human activities in upland watersheds affect

downstream aquatic ecosystems and how that knowledge can be applied to promote restoration and better stewardship of water resources.

"As the Johnson Family Chair, one of my keystone projects will be to co-lead the Sustainable Raritan River Initiative," said Lathrop, who lives in Bridgewater. "The initiative works with various stakeholders in the watershed to balance social, economic and environmental objectives toward the common goal of restoring the Raritan River, its tributaries and its estuary for current and future generations."

"My objective," he added, "will be to ensure that Rutgers University's scientific, policy and technical expertise is brought to bear to address issues of critical significance to the Raritan River Watershed."

"The establishment of this endowed chair is one of the most significant in recent Rutgers history," said Robert Goodman, executive dean of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. "It aligns the Johnson Family's passionate commitments to environmental education and restoration of the Raritan watershed with the singular role of Rutgers as a home of world-class research in restoration ecology and water resources."

"Rick brings the whole package to this position. He's a gifted educator, a research scholar of uncommon breadth and someone who knows as few do what it takes to translate knowledge into actionable public policy," Goodman said.

Public Beach Access

Continued from Page 1

should be to increase and protect public access to the waterfront throughout New Jersey, and to re-establish state authority for ensuring such access.

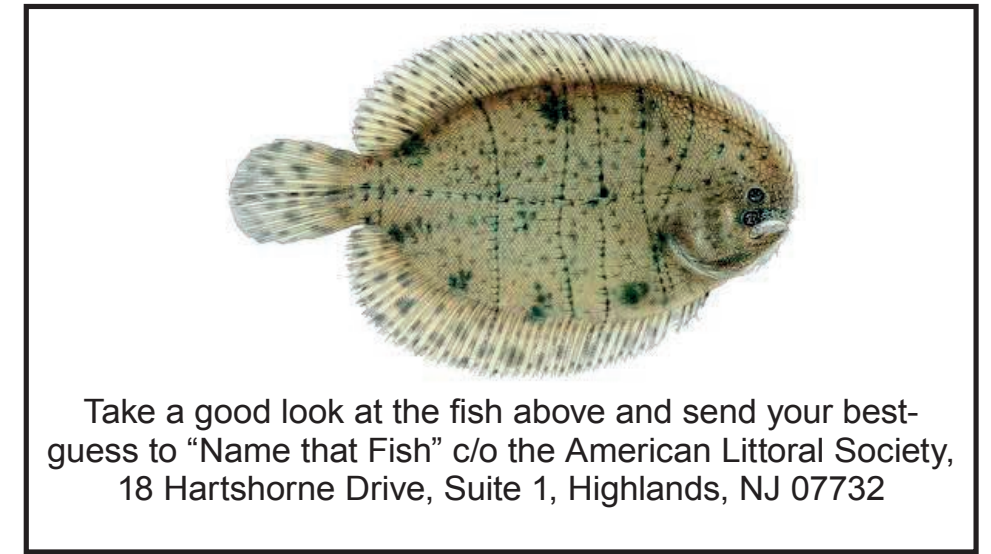
The Littoral Society is concerned that without state authority, coastal developers, industrial waterfront users, municipalities or other government agencies will not consistently provide or protect access for swimmers, surfers and recreational fishermen/women.

Name That Fish

Happy Spring fellow fish aficionados. Spring has sprung and it is time again to play "Name that Fish". In our last newsletter we highlighted a "forage fish," well known to anglers in the north-eastern United States. The American sand lance (*Ammodytes americanus*), also known as the inshore sand lance, or sand eel, of the family Ammodytidae.

American sand lances are small to medium sized fishes, growing to a maximum length of around 7 inches. They range the NW Atlantic coast from Newfoundland, southward to Cape Hatteras, NC. They are usually colored olive, brownish, or bluish green above, with silvery sides and a duller white belly. Coloration can vary depending upon the color of the substrate in which they are found. They are masters at disappearing, hiding, and camouflage.

American sand eels are usually found inhabiting shallow coastal areas (often 6 feet deep or less) that possess a sandy, or fine gravel bottom. If alarmed, they quickly dive into loose substrate, vanishing in an instant. Sometimes they can be observed, buried in sand with only their pointy little heads sticking out. They have also been known to bury themselves on the beach, above the low-water mark at high tide, and



Take a good look at the fish above and send your best-guess to "Name that Fish" c/o the American Littoral Society, 18 Hartshorne Drive, Suite 1, Highlands, NJ 07732

stay contently buried on a seemingly dry tidal flat, until the next flood tide.

American sand eels generally feed on plankton and small marine animals such as copepods, mysids, salps, urochordates, animal eggs and larvae, dinoflagellates, and diatoms. In turn they are an important forage species for dogfish, skates, haddock, flounders, bluefish, striped bass, and even finback and humpback whales.

The maximum life-span for the American sand lance is estimated at 12 years.

It became obvious to us that this fish is well known to many fish enthusiasts, given the large amount of correct responses that we received. We vow



American sand lance

not to make that same mistake with our next Ichthyological mystery guest.

The winner of the last round of Name that Fish, drawn from an American Littoral Society Tagging Program hat is; Society member David Blue of Whiting, NJ. Wear the hat with pride David, even when fishing for pickerel in the deserted cranberry bogs of New Jersey's Pine Barrens.

Veterans Day

Continued from Page 1

name on a shell and placing that shell on "Veterans Reef." Those in attendance also helped study the wildlife living in this new reef with hands-on, interactive marine science activities like seining, trapping, trawling, and species identification.

"We are rebuilding habitats along Delaware Bay in order to strengthen the ecology, communities and economy of that area. Grants for the project enabled hiring several military veterans, and they continue to play a valuable role in the work," said Tim Dillingham, Executive Director for American Littoral Society.

Volunteers and veterans worked alongside American Littoral Society and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of

New Jersey to establish a near-shore reef at South Reeds Beach in Cape May Court House on the Delaware Bayshore in April 2015. The reef was built to prevent sand loss from wind-driven waves. The conservation groups will continue to monitor whether the reef bars help reduce beach erosion and create calmer water for spawning horseshoe crabs.

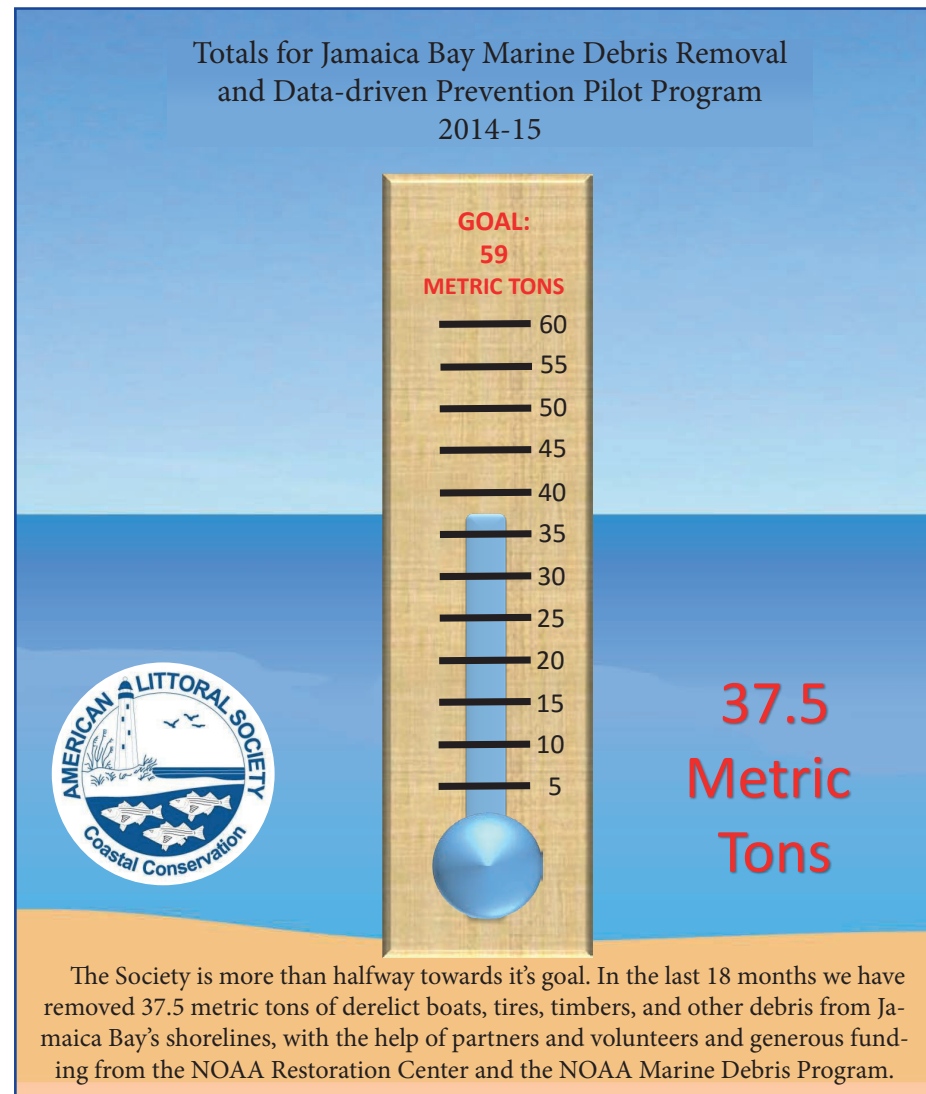
The South Reeds Beach Oyster Reef is one of the many projects that American Littoral Society is working on to restore the ecology and economy of the Delaware Bayshore.

"Restoring beach habitat on the Delaware Bay benefits Red Knots because it provides important feeding habitat for a bird threatened with extinction. The restored beach and oyster reef also protects the local community by providing increased resilience to future storms. Projects

like these that help fish and wildlife, in addition to supporting local communities, are a priority for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service," explained Eric Schradung, Field Supervisor for the New Jersey Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The reef will attenuate waves but still allow for horseshoe crab breeding. On protected beaches, horseshoe crab egg densities can be up to ten times higher than on unprotected beaches.

Projects like the South Reeds Beach oyster reef are being funded by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through their Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Grants Program, and are being developed in partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife.



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The American Littoral Society would like to thank all those who generously contributed to the 2015 Annual Appeal.

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Bold indicates present or past board member.
We apologize for any misspellings or omissions.

Upcoming Trips and Events

April

Wednesday, April 13, 5:30 p.m.
Wed., Apr 13, 15, 17, 24, 27, 30
Friday, April 15, 4 p.m.
Saturday, April 16, 1-5 p.m.
Saturday, April 16, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Saturday, April 16, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Saturday, April 16, 8 a.m.-Noon
Saturday, April 23, 4 p.m.
Wednesday, April 20, 1-3 p.m.
Friday, April 29, 4 p.m.

Bridgeton, NJ
Sarasota, FL
Sandy Hook, NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ
Queens, NY
Jamaica Bay, NY
Sandy Hook, NJ
Asbury Park, NJ
Sarasota, FL
Sandy Hook, NJ

Rain Barrel Workshop
Kayak Trips
Holly Forest Walk
Honor Your Mother Art Show
NY Cares Day beach cleanup
Spring Bird Migration Event
Surf Fishing Clinic
Langosta Lounge Lobster Trot
Care-free Learner Eco-Tour
Arbor Day Tree Walk

May

Friday, May 2, 6-9 p.m.
Saturday, May 14, Noon-4 p.m.
Saturday, May 14, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Saturday, May 14 8 a.m.
Friday, May 19, 6-9 p.m.
Friday, May 20, 6-8 p.m.
Saturday, May 21 5-8 p.m.
Sunday, May 22, 9 a.m.-Noon.

Toms River, NJ
Cape May Courthouse, NJ
Englewood, FL
Jamaica Bay, NY
Harvey Cedars, NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ
Jamaica Bay, NY
Jamaica Bay, NY

Ocean Frontiers II Screening
Fix-a-Leak Workshop
Marine Life Exploration
International Bird Migration Day
Ocean Frontiers II
Horseshoe Crab Walk
Jamaica Bay Sunset Eco Cruise
Horseshoe Crab Walk

June

Friday-Sunday, June 3-5
Friday, June 3, 6-8 p.m.
Saturday, June 11, 9:30 a.m.
Saturday, June 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Monday, June 20, 6 p.m.
Friday, June 24 9:30 a.m.

Manor House, NY
Sandy Hook, NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ
Englewood, FL
Sandy Hook NJ
Chatsworth, NJ

Montauk Spring Weekend
Horseshoe Crab Walk
Members Day
Marine Life Exploration
Summer Solstice Walk
Paddle the Pine Barrens

July

Monday, July 11, 6 p.m.
Monday, July 18-Friday, July 22
Monday, July 25-Friday, July 29

Sandy Hook, NJ
Long Beach Island, NJ
Long Beach Island, NJ

Sunset Seining
Summer Camp
Summer Camp

August

Monday, Aug. 8-Friday, Aug. 12
Wednesday, Aug. 10, 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Aug. 24, 6 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 22, 9:30 a.m.

Sandy Hook, NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ

Summer Camp
Sunset Seining
Sunset Seining
Shore Birds & Wild Edibles Walk

September

Friday, Sept. 9
Thursday, Sept. 22, 6 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 23-24
Sunday, Sept. 25

Sandy Hook, NJ
Sandy Hook NJ
Sandy Hook, NJ
Red Bank, NJ

End of Summer Party
Summer Solstice Walk
Sandy Hook BioBlitz
Guinness and Oyster Fest



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The American Littoral Society promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, defends the coast from harm, and empowers others to do the same.

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