

# LITTORALLY



## SPEAKING News from the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast Chapters

Winter 2007

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## THE WORLD Is Your Oyster Shellfish Restoration on the Jersey Coast

"Why, then, the world's mine oyster, Which I with sword will open."  
(Act II, Scene II, Merry Wives of Windsor, by William Shakespeare)

Modern English distills this phrase to **the world is your oyster**. In the mid-Atlantic coastal conservation community, the oyster is becoming a larger and larger part of our world. As previously reported, our regions naturally occurring oyster population is in tatters—the victim of overfishing, disease, loss of habitat from pollution and dredging, and impacts from overdevelopment of coastal watersheds. Up and down our coast, groups are working to restore oysters and clams to our bays and estuaries.

Oysters are filter feeders and can improve the quality of the water they are in. They remove micro-algae that would otherwise cloud the water. This increases the sunlight that reaches submerged aquatic vegetation and other organisms important to the balance of nature underwater. Oysters form reef structures that provide habitat for plant and animal life that live directly on the oyster shells (including young oysters) and between



Transplanting oysters from the Mullica River to Great Bay.  
CREDIT: NJ DEP, Div. of Shellfisheries

them (juvenile striped bass, weakfish, bluefish, summer flounder, white perch, northern kingfish, black drum, black sea bass and tautog). Thus, when our coastal ecosystems failed to the point at which they could no longer sustain oysters, their loss was compounded and failure accelerated.

How can we bring oysters back to the same environments that couldn't support them before? Because we humans have done some things right—in the latter half of the 20th century, at about the same time many shellfish species were giving their last gasps, water quality had actually begun to improve. The Clean Water Act and other positive measures taken at state and local levels were working. These things and advances in scientific knowledge have made bringing back the oyster through pro-active restoration a viable proposition.

**Note from the Editor:** Beginning with this issue, we have merged the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast editions of Littorally Speaking. This will inform regional neighbors from Virginia to Maine about issues in and beyond their own backyards. It will also conserve energy, paper, and postage. We hope you enjoy this broadened scope of news from the littoral zone.

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# RESTORING

## New York State Beach Cleanup-The Effort Continues

If you were a volunteer on Beach Cleanup Day, you would have been carrying a plastic bag to fill with debris, as well as a pencil and data card to record information about the debris you put into the bag. You would have been joined by well over 10,000 enthusiastic volunteers all over New York State who filled thousands of bags of trash totaling over 272,000 pounds!

The American Littoral Society is a participant in the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) and coordinates this monumental project in New York State. The cleanup had its beginnings in 1986 motivated, in part, by concern about the ocean dumping of plastics. Amid growing awareness that marine animals were becoming entangled in discarded plastic and ingesting plastic particles they mistook for food, environmental organizations pressured the U.S. Congress to ratify Annex V of the

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution by Ships (MARPOL), banning the disposal of plastics anywhere at sea as well as ocean dumping of other forms of trash. However, our documented data suggests the great majority of debris items on most beaches comes from activities on land – much by beachgoers or pedestrians carelessly discarding their trash.

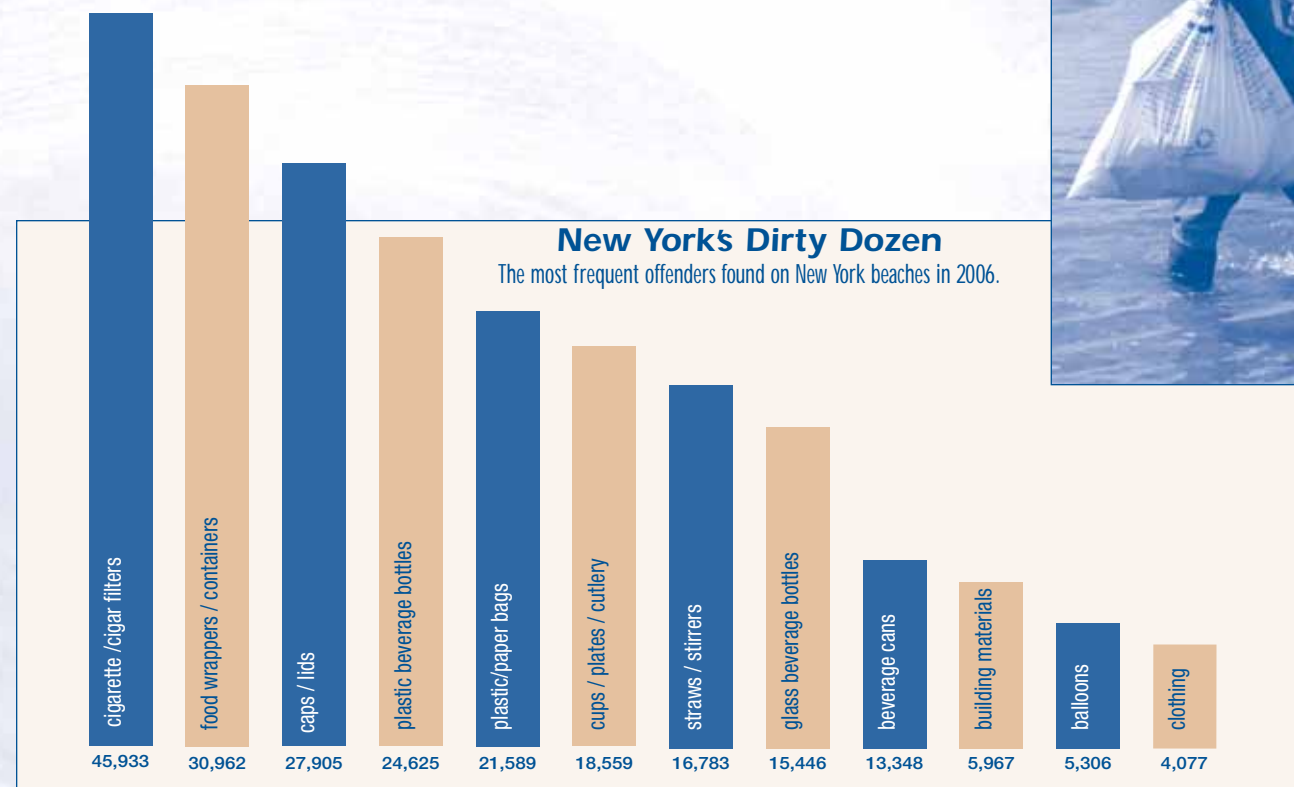
The goal of the ICC is to help people become aware of the role they play in assuring that our shores are clean. Educating the public is a strategy to change their behavior patterns and to understand that every piece of debris represents a litterer. Can we identify some of our own actions that could lead to debris on the beach? Think cigarettes, straws, glass and plastic beverage bottles, food wrappers, bait containers, fishing line, etc.

The cleanup has proven to have an impact on participants – influencing their concept of litter in general and strengthening recycling resolves. It also opens a world of beauty to many inner city school children and scouts who never had the opportunity to visit a beach and learn to appreciate the natural environment.

Everyone can take part in keeping our shores pristine, healthy, and beautiful. Become an advocate for clean beaches and help others to be aware of their actions.



Removing debris from Canarsie Pol, Jamaica Bay. CREDIT: Don Riepe



# ADVOCATING

## Delaware Enacts Horseshoe Crab Moratorium

After many months of attending and testifying at hearings, distributing action alerts, mounting a special web site and even a radio ad blitz (thanks to generous support from the Regina Frankenberg Fund), the state of Delaware has joined New Jersey and enacted a two-year total moratorium on the harvesting of horseshoe crabs for bait. Governor Minner and Secretary Hughes of the Delaware Natural Resource and Environment Commission (DNREC) have joined Governor Corzine and Commissioner Lisa P. Jackson of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection as environmental leaders for our region by implementing a policy significantly stronger than the minimum requirements recently set by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Of course, our work is not done. In June, the South Jersey Watermens Association and a group of seafood companies sued to overturn the moratorium in New Jersey. In November, the Society was granted Intervenor status by the Appellate Division of the New Jersey Superior Court. This makes us full parties to the case with our own interests and grants us more direct participation than the amicus curie (friend of the court) status under which we frequently litigate. Commercial interests have filed a similar suit in Delaware and we'll support Delaware's moratorium as we are able.

These two decisions were the culmination of years of struggle by the Society to get stakeholders to recognize the ecological interrelationships between the living resources of Delaware Bay, and indeed, the hemisphere. It is a real world victory for the growing effort to shift to "ecosystem management." Our elected and appointed officials have gone

beyond the artificial political boundaries – boundaries which ignore ecological interrelationships - that have resulted in bad decisions in the past. Now the long-lived horseshoe crab and intrepid red knot have a fighting chance. It is very safe to say that, without the American Littoral Society's involvement, this would not have happened.

**NY Bigger Better Bottle Bill Update:** We're getting closer! With the election of Eliot Spitzer as Governor, our hopes of enacting the provisions of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill (adding the nickel deposit to containers for non-carbonated beverages of water, juice, iced tea, and sports drinks, as well as designating unredeemed nickels to flow to the Environmental Protection Fund) are greatly buoyed. Last year the expansion bill passed the State Assembly but not the Senate. This year the new Governor put the expansion and its revenue into the Governor's Budget, which makes it a "budget bill" rather than a "program bill" (in NY we do not need a program bill if the program is part of the Governor's budget and is thus an appropriations or budget bill). The implication is that the Republican Senate will then have to negotiate the program out of the Budget (against both an Assembly and a Governor who support it) rather than, as in the past, have to proactively pass a program bill. This new situation greatly enhances the chances of NY having an expanded bottle bill passed this year. The new Governor is even more supportive of the expansion than the Assembly that has passed it two years running. Thus, your lobbying efforts are still vital. So call (or preferably write) your representatives in the New York State Assembly and Senate to support this initiative. For news on bottle bills in various states, go



to Container Recycling Institute (CRI) at [www.bottlebill.org/legislation/campaigns](http://www.bottlebill.org/legislation/campaigns)

**Federal Courts Favor Fish:** On January 25, 2007, the United States Court of Appeals Second Circuit handed down a decision that will save trillions of fish nationally and billions at the Jersey shore and Delaware Estuary from destruction in the cooling water intake structures of nuclear power facilities. The American Littoral Society and our affiliate, Delaware Riverkeeper, challenged EPA regulations that permitted nuclear power facilities such as Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station (Ocean County) and Salem Nuclear Generating Station (Salem County) to consider dollar costs over environmental costs when selecting cooling technology and permitted operators to perform habitat restoration as mitigation for killing trillions of fish annually. We sued EPA for failing to properly enforce the Clean Water Acts requirements to protect fish from the negative impacts of power plant cooling systems. The decision struck down in part and remanded in part for further clarification of the flawed regulations. This victory will protect fish, the fishermen who depend on them, and the ecology of Delaware and Barnegat Bays and other imperiled estuaries. It will also force power plant operators to face up to their responsibilities under the law and stop destroying important recreational and commercial fisheries.

# REGARDING NATURE

## Enjoying the Winter Beach

The very first rule of coastal winter is: Get out of the house. Once the door slams behind you, the rest is easy—

**On the Beach:** Mid-Atlantic winters are almost always windy at the shore, so dress accordingly. If your plan is to walk the beach at the water's edge, keep the wind in your face for the first half of your journey. Then, when you turn back, that breeze will feel almost balmy. Your stride will quicken and lengthen as eyes, ears, nose, and cheeks thaw. The beach itself looks different in winter, often more steep and narrow as stronger waves pull sand off the beach and into deeper water. There will often be sandbars offshore and a gully between them and the beach.

Only the cold weather gulls are on the beaches – big black backed and herring gulls and smaller ringbills, all facing the wind so they are ready for a fast getaway. There may be winter ducks offshore, mostly red breasted mergansers and maybe rafts of scoters and scaup and if you're lucky harlequin ducks (try Barnegat Inlet). Beach running shorebirds will be sanderlings, with possible purple sandpipers picking sustenance from rock jetties.

**Up from the Beach:** Back in the grassy dunes you may luck across snow buntings, flocks of small robin size showing a lot of white when they fly. They are sometimes accompanied by horned larks. These, and the waterfowl, are down here from the Arctic. They will be gone by April.

**Back in the Bays** – from Raritan Bay to the inland bays of Delaware – we are blessed by the annual winter visit of brant, a small, dark goose, also here from the Arctic. They arrive



Winter at Horseshoe Cove

around November 1 and seem to time their departure for Canada and Greenland for Memorial Day weekend. They feed on sea lettuce and eel grass and swim and fly in flocks. On the water their call is a gentle nattering. The other bay ducks are blacks, long tails (formerly politically incorrect old squaws), golden eyes, buffleheads, scaup, and canvasbacks). All but the black ducks will disappear north with spring.

**On the way to the shore,** keep your eye out for red tailed hawks. You will see them on the Garden State Parkway, Rt. 195, and the NJ Turnpike often halfway up bare trees. They're much taller than a crow, brown backed with a white chest that usually tips off their presence. It is commonly believed they are watching for prey (squirrels are a favorite) along the woodland edge, though they are not adverse to a roadkill meal.

**Fish and Fishing:** The days of winter do not favor the angler. Gone south, offshore, or upriver to sleep are tuna, striped bass, bluefish, fluke, and weakfish. Even the blue crabs make their absence felt: they are dug in the

mud. But there are several piscatorial possibilities – deep sea and ice fishing.

Deep sea fishing in winter is for cod, pollock, ling, sea bass, and tautog (blackfish). Boats usually run all-day trips, with some offshore cod trips up to 18 hours (they go way out). It's often cold and choppy. You will accompany other heavily garbed, determined anglers, and the day can be crystal clear, with gannets diving and maybe a whale sighting. The boats have fishing tackle, bait, heated handrails, maybe a few cigar smokers, hot beverages, and helpful mates. These are called head or party boats: show up, climb aboard, pay your fare. Charter boats need reservations (captain, mate, and usually six anglers). Boats from ports from Raritan Bay to Cape May fish all winter. For details, go to [www.njfishandwildlife.com/prtyboat](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/prtyboat). Or you can take a mid-day walk on the beach and then show up when the boats come in and buy fresh fish (you're allowed to haggle).

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# RESEARCHING

## Society Launches Atlantic Sturgeon Research Program

What species is found on the bottom of the Delaware Bay, predates the dinosaur and is declining in numbers? If you said the horseshoe crab, you would be right; however, you'd also be right if you said the Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*), the subject of our latest research project. We launched this 3-year study in February in partnership with the NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA, and Salty's Enterprises, a commercial fishing operation. The Atlantic sturgeon (species name) once supported a robust fishery for both its flesh and for its eggs (caviar), with peak harvests of nearly 7 million pounds around the turn of the 20th century. By the 1920s, however, annual harvests were reduced by 90% due to overfishing and habitat destruction and degradation. By 1998, the stock was so depleted that the Atlantic Marine Fisheries Commission implemented a 40-year total ban on the harvest of Atlantic sturgeon in Atlantic coastal waters. At the time, the species was considered for listing as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) but was not listed. While it remained a listing candidate, it was considered a species of concern by the National Marine Fisheries. It is now being reconsidered under the ESA.

Beginning in the April 2007 spawning season, we will tag Atlantic sturgeon with a Common Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag injected into the musculature near the base of the dorsal fin. Recaptures will be scanned with a "reader" and will allow sturgeon researchers to identify previously tagged sturgeon using the same detection platform for multi-year periods. Fish will also be tagged with two common external tags to enable commercial fishermen and other

researchers to report recaptures in the first one to two years after tagging.

Field operations for this project will be directed by Captain Brick Wenzel of Salty's Enterprises, LLC. With more than 20 years' commercial fishing experience in New Jersey waters, Captain Wenzel was a licensed sturgeon fisherman until the moratorium, after which he participated in the USFWS tagging

genetically discrete according to the location in which they spawn and there is evidence that the Hudson River and Chesapeake strains of Atlantic sturgeon are migrating into the Delaware.

In addition to the pure research, we will reach out to the NJ commercial fishing community to increase recapture reporting and reduce bycatch mortality. We will also work through Bayshore



Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*) CREDIT: USFWS

program both as a tagger and in reporting recaptures through a NJ DEP administered program. Fish will be captured in NFWS-approved, large-mesh gill nets set at four locations in the Delaware Bay near the mouth of the Maurice River. Captain Wenzel and his crew will monitor these nets daily. On May 1, he will remove the nets.

Using photographs, written observations, tag data, and fin clippings, we will collect, compile, and submit data about abundance, migration, growth, condition, and generally observable genetic data needed by established programs of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and NJ DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife at Nacote Creek; we will submit DNA-level genetic data to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in North Carolina. A key objective of the genetic research will be to determine the size of the remaining Delaware populations of sturgeon. Anadromous fish are

area public schools educating students about the nature and state of Atlantic sturgeon, its habitat, and how human behavior in the Delaware watershed impacts this species.

This project represents the first year of a three-year effort, contingent upon successful fundraising. This program has been made possible with a grant from the Delaware Estuary Watershed Grant Program and from a generous donation from a Society member.

# THE WORLD Is Your Oyster Shellfish Restoration on the Jersey Coast

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Organizations working to restore oysters and other filter feeders such as clams to our bays and estuaries include federal, state, academic, non-profit, and community organizations working both individually and in partnership with each other. The Society has partnered (or is in the process of forming partnerships) to support the following projects by providing in-kind services or through direct financial support.

## Rebuilding Past Glories:

As far back as the mid-1800s, transplanting oysters was a standard procedure in the New Jersey oyster industry. It was then that oystermen realized that the more saline bays produced significantly larger oysters in less time than the less saline rivers. What those 19th century oyster farmers did not face, however, were 20th century diseases like Dermo and MSX. Dermo (*Perkinsus marinus*) is a protozoan parasite originally thought to be a fungus. MSX (*Haplosporidium nelsoni*) is a single-celled parasite. Both of these have caused high mortality in oysters in the mid-Atlantic



Oyster cluster from Navesink River reef evidences success of NY/NJ Baykeeper's program. CREDIT: NY/NJ Baykeeper

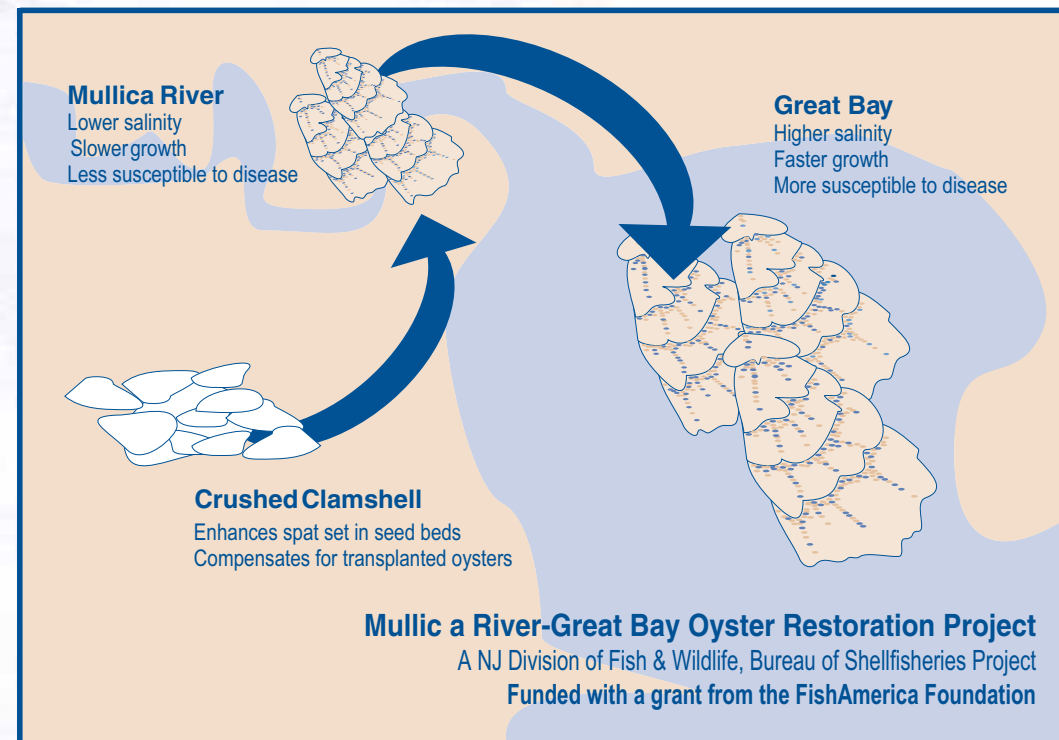
in the latter half of the 20th century. Higher salinity water renders oysters more susceptible to these diseases.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJDFW), Bureau of Shellfisheries, is currently working to restore historic oyster beds in Great Bay at the mouth of the Mullica River. Unlike some estuaries in which the oyster populations have been virtually eradicated, the Mullica River still supports a viable population of wild oysters. NJDFW biologists Dr. Gustavo Calvo and Jeffrey Normant have spearheaded this effort to restore some of the historic oyster market beds at the mouth of the Mullica River. This effort began as a pilot project in 2001 through a grant from the South Jersey Economic Development District that was secured by the Rutgers Cooperative Extension. In 2001, they transplanted approximately 2,000 bushels of oysters from the Mullica River oyster seedbeds to a small four-acre area on one of the historic oyster beds. The effort was deemed a success. The oysters grew to market size and—most important—survived. In 2004, the bed was opened for the first public oyster harvest on the Atlantic Coast of New Jersey in over 20 years. Today, oysters from that initial restoration effort continue to thrive along with subsequent generations; it is on its way to being self-sustaining.

To ensure that the seedbeds remained healthy and viable, the scientists closely monitored the seedbeds during the transplant harvest and then enhanced them with clean surfclam shell (cultch) to enhance future spat (larval oysters) set. This would increase the number of oysters on the seed beds with the

intent of replacing the oysters that were taken during the transplant.

This success helped secure funding from the FishAmerica Foundation and fostered the current program of planting 2,000 bushels of oysters to another four-acre parcel at the mouth of the Mullica River in the spring of 2006. Unlike the pilot program, this restoration site will remain closed to commercial harvest for a period of five years to enable NJDFW biologists and outreach partner, Richard Stockton



College of New Jersey, to conduct in-depth monitoring of conditions and growth of the transplanted oysters. They will also study the new oyster reefs' effectiveness as fish habitat. Students from Stockton have helped monitor oyster settlement in the bay and conducted finfish trawl surveys to assess the value of the newly created habitat.

In November 2006, the NJDFW transplanted an additional 2,000 bushels of oysters to a third four-acre parcel adjacent to the original transplant site in November 2006. When these grow to market size, the beds will be opened to both commercial and recreational harvesters. Here again, the team planted crushed shell on the seedbeds to ensure that future generations of the seedbed oysters will have the habitat needed to flourish. Provided

that the seedbeds remain viable, the NJDFW plans to continue the program in the Mullica River and eventually expand efforts to other historic beds in other estuaries such as the Great Egg Harbor River and Barnegat Bay.

**Re-Clamming Barnegat Bay:** Up the coast, the focus widens to include clams, where the Barnegat

Bay Shellfish Restoration Program is restoring historic clam beds through its program "ReClam the Bay." A partnership between the NJDFW and the Rutgers Cooperative and Research Extension (RCRE), this community-based program engages local volunteers to carry out the project. According to Jef Flimlin of the RCRE, this is the most critical element of this project. "This community involvement ensures the public forms a closer, more protective relationship with the bay." He continued, "They also learn first hand about the relationship between human behavior on land and the health of the bay."

In Barnegat Bay, hard clam populations have been declining for years, making it difficult to rely upon present stocks as a restoration source. ReClam the Bay purchases young clams smaller than a grain of rice and cultivates them in upwellers, shallow tanks that can be suspended from docks and monitored for progress. This protects the young bivalves from their natural predators such as sea stars, crabs, skates, and blackfish.

In summer 2006, volunteers helped monitor upwellers placed in waters off Barnegat Light, Surf City, Bonnet Island, Brant Beach, Waretown and Seaside Park. In the fall, they helped plant the clams under predator-protection screening in leases established by NJDFW in Barnegat Bay. Approximately a year from planting, clams will be harvested from these "nursery" beds and spread over larger areas of Barnegat Bay. To test an alternate clam restoration approach, NJDFW biologists have also planted a five-acre parcel in the Sedge Island Marine Conservation Zone with more mature clams (15 to 25 mm) purchased from a commercial grower.



ReClam the Bay volunteers invested hundreds of hours building upwellers to nurture young oysters. CREDIT: ReClam the Bay

Once the final planting beds are successfully established, clams would become available for recreational harvest. Future plans include adding more oysters to the mix. In 2006, some 100,000 seedling oysters were grown in upwellers. The plan is to increase that amount to 250,000 in 2007. Those oysters will be planted on historic oyster habitat currently devoid of oysters but with firm bottom and approved water quality classification according to sanitary standards within Barnegat Bay.

**How Does Your Oyster Garden Grow?** A short trip north to the more urbanized Raritan Bay near Keyport and the Navesink River near Red Bank, we find the highly successful, seven-year-old NY/NJ Baykeeper Oyster Restoration program. This program uses "oyster gardening" and "remote setting" as its two main approaches to oyster cultivation. The oyster gardening component engages school groups, scout troops, marinas, fishing clubs, families, and civic organizations to nurture 3/4 inch seed oysters for a year in floating cages. Each summer, volunteers from selected locations join Baykeeper staff to transplant their oysters (by this time about 1 1/2 inches long) to oyster reefs around the Estuary. As with ReClam the Bay, this program involves people at the water's edge to become advocates for the estuary.

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# NewsShorts

## HORSESHOE CRABS HELP OUT IN SPACE

I'm a doctor, not a marine biologist! If NASA's current experiments are successful, Dr. McCoy might have to eat his words. Tricorders could become a reality, thanks to the amazing horseshoe crab. NASA is working on LOCAD-PTS, a medical diagnostic lab on a chip the size of a dime. The acronym stands for Lab-on-a-Chip Application Development-Portable Test System. This will enable astronauts to diagnose illnesses in space in a matter of minutes instead of the 2 to 3 days required by the current grow-a-culture-in-a-petri-dish method. LOCAD-PTS will determine whether or not an illness is viral, bacterial, or fungal, if it can be treated with antibiotics and, if so, which one.

The device relies on four enzymes extracted from horseshoe crab blood. Horseshoe crabs have an exceptionally sensitive immune system and extracts from their blood have long been used in medical research to test the viability of drugs and devices. The new device is being developed in the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville Alabama, and is scheduled to be tested on the International Space Station this winter. At this point, scientists know that their new device will deliver a rapid response. This next round of testing will indicate if it will be accurate. If successful, LOCAD-PTS technology has the potential to be used to test for life on Mars and to monitor microbial life in closed space environments. To learn more, visit [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov) and enter horseshoe crab in the search field.

## IN PRINT

• **Jamaica Bay** by Daniel M. Hendrick is a recent Arcadia publication in its "Images of America" series. It's chock full of photos of the natural and unnatural history of the bay. If you purchase the book from the American Littoral Society for \$20 (plus \$1.60 shipping), part of the funds will benefit the Northeast Chapter. [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

• **Welcome to the Housatonic River Estuary** guide, and other publications, can be downloaded from the Housatonic Valley Association website [www.hvatoday.org](http://www.hvatoday.org)

## SAIL CLEARWATER WITH ESSA

Sail aboard the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater on June 23rd and 24th, 2007, with the Elementary School Science Association (ESSA). Learn about the history and ecology of the Hudson River or just relax and enjoy. For more information on cost and availability, contact Gail David (718) 225-6420 [gidavid@aol.com](mailto:gidavid@aol.com). Last day to register is April 28th. This program is co-sponsored with Alley Pond Environmental Center and the United Federation of Teachers Outdoor Education Committee.

## HOLIDAY FUND RAISER RAISES EYEBROWS

Who says you can't have fun while doing good things? ALS supporters who attended the annual holiday fundraiser enjoyed a walk led by Lenore Swenson, great food, great company, and entertainment. The latter included Don Diego (a.k.a. Don Riepe) and his flamenco troop and a belly dancer(!) who engaged the audience in her performance. The success of the party was ensured by the cooperation of the members for

their donations of food, raffle prizes, Ugly Auction items, help decorating, selling raffle tickets, and serving dinner. A special thanks go to those who couldn't attend the affair but sent a donation anyway. A special, special thanks go to those who attended and made an extra donation.

Expenses for the event were lessened by generous contributions from **D'Agostino Supermarkets, London Lennies Restaurant** (Rego Park), **Prima Pasta Restaurant** (Howard Beach), **Dannys Szechuan Garden** (Howard Beach), **Whole Foods** (Jericho), **Kentucky Fried Chicken** (Brooklyn), **Starbucks** (Howard Beach), **Trader Joe's** (Hewlett), **Newman's Own, Queens Theatre in the Park, Kupferberg Center for the Arts** (Queens College), **BJ's Wholesale Club** (Brooklyn), and **COSTCO** (Lawrence). We hope you will patronize these establishments.

## MORE WAYS TO HELP US MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

To accomplish our work of empowering others to care for the coast, we rely on foundation grants and the support of members like you. We couldn't do it without you. We especially want to thank all who contributed to our 2006 year-end appeal. Your generosity will help us accomplish even more work in 2007. Here are some other ways you can support our work:

**Employer Match** – Many employers will match their employees' contributions to charities. Check with your Human Resources Department to see if your employer participates. If they do, fill out the form and they will match any donations you make to us.

**GoodSearch** – This "search engine for change" will donate a portion of its advertising revenue to charities designated by its users. Select American Littoral Society as your charity of choice and Goodsearch will donate 1 cent to the Society for every on-line search you make. You have the option to select HQ or the Northeast Chapter to receive your donation. The more people who use Goodsearch in our name, the more we earn. You can use Goodsearch for internet research at work or at home. Tell your friends, family and co-workers that while they are researching for work or fun, they can also be helping to care for the coast.

**Printer Cartridge Recycling-Help** keep our landfills clear of the toxins and plastics contained in your desk-jet printer cartridges and help the Society generate revenue. Send us your cartridges and we will recycle them. Start a campaign at your workplace—collect them in a can or box. Mail them or, better yet, bring them on Members Day or to one of our field trips and one of our staff will be glad to take them off your hands.

**Changes of Address**—Keeping our mailing database current saves us hundreds of dollars in postage and time. If your name, mailing address, e-mail, or other contact information changes, please let us know. Contact our Director of Member Services at [maryann@littoralsociety.org](mailto:maryann@littoralsociety.org), 732.291.0055 X107, or write Mary Ann Griesbach at Sandy Hook, Highlands, NJ 07732. If writing, we suggest you type or print your new information.

**On-line Payment**—Just a reminder that we now offer on-line purchasing of new, gift, and renewal memberships on our web site at [www.littoralsociety.org](http://www.littoralsociety.org). Click Join Us at the top of the home page.

## THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER

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Through remote setting, Baykeeper grows oysters to support its ongoing restoration efforts including providing the oyster gardeners with seedlings. The remote setting process cultivates hatchery-raised oyster larvae onto shell substrate. Microscopic oyster larvae are released into 450 gallon tanks of saltwater that contain volunteer-made mesh bags full of shell. The larvae attach themselves to the shell and grow in this protected environment, safe from predators. Once the oysters have "set" on the shell, and grown for about two months, they are ready for release onto newly established oyster beds around the region. Baykeeper runs this program with funding provided by the American Littoral Society and built the remote setting facility in partnership with Bahrs Landing Restaurant, Brookdale Community College Sandy Hook Field Station, and the NOAA Restoration Center at Sandy Hook. Meredith Comi, Baykeeper's oyster program manager, is excited about the progress of the program and explained that "The oyster clusters such as the one from the Navesink reef pictured here show that the oysters are growing and forming mini-reefs." She continued, "That reef is now reproducing on its own."

This program differs in a very important way from the other two programs: the waters in which it operates are closed to shellfishing. While it is certainly a long-term dream of the Baykeeper that conditions in its estuary will improve to the point at which its oyster gardeners can reap the flavorful fruits of their labor, at this time the program exists to educate the public and restore the species for its ecological values: providing habitat for other species and improving the health of the estuary.

Each of these programs has achieved a tangible success and is poised to restore an important historical and natural resource to the littoral zone. Each positions the oyster (or clam) as a lodestone that draws people to meet the needs of the bay. This is an important complement to the improvements the shellfish themselves will bring. Contrary to the common misconception that filter feeders can cleanse the waters of pollutants and other impurities, their ability to do this is negligible. Their primary filtering function, as stated earlier, is to remove algae from the water. The rest is up to us.

### To Learn More

Mullica River-Great Bay Oyster Restoration Program: [www.nj.gov/dep/fgw](http://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw)

Re-Clam the Bay: [www.reclamthebay.org](http://www.reclamthebay.org)

NYNJ Baykeeper Oyster Restoration Program:  
[www.nynjbaykeeper.org/programs](http://www.nynjbaykeeper.org/programs)

# EXPLORING Trips, Walks, Talks

**New York City and Vicinity** – Sponsored by the Northeast Chapter, including partnership programs with NYC Audubon and Gateway National Recreation Area

## Hiking the North 40

### Natural Area - March 17

Meet Mickey Cohen at 10 AM at the Main Entrance Ranger Station at Floyd Bennett Field and carpool to the trailhead. Seek out birds and other wildlife, as well as signs of early spring. Insect protection recommended. Call Gateway NRA at (718) 338-3799 to reserve.

### NYC Audubon Early Spring Bird Walk - March 24

Meet Don Riepe at 10 AM at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for a hike around the ponds to look for the first ibis, laughing gull, osprey, egret, and other birds returning in spring. Free. Call Gateway NRA at (718) 318-4340 to reserve.

### New York Aquarium - March 31

Meet at 10 AM at aquarium entrance in Coney Island for a 2-1/2 hour "Behind-the-Scenes" tour given by marine educator Bob Cummings. See sea otters, penguins, sharks, walrus, sea turtles, local and tropical fish. Cost: \$25 (adults), \$15 (kids under 16). To reserve, call Don at (718) 318-9344.

### Exploring Dead Horse Bay - April 15

Meet Mickey Cohen at 9 AM at the Main Entrance Ranger Station at Floyd Bennett Field to explore this unusually named site. Adequate footwear recommended. Call Gateway NRA at (718) 338-3799 to reserve.

## Earth Day: Plumb Beach

### Restoration Cleanup and Planting - April 22

With help from National Park Service, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, and many other groups, we will remove several tons of timber and other floatable debris from the site, as well as plant over 100 beach plum, shadbush and other shrub species, plus several hundred culms of beach grass. This project will continue through April 27. Meet at 10 AM at the Plumb Beach parking lot off the Belt Parkway in Brooklyn near Knapp Street (Exit 9). As this site is not easily accessible by public transportation, carpooling can be arranged. Groups welcome. For information, call Don at (718) 318-9344.

### Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge - April 29

Leave by bus at 10 AM from 23rd Street and 6th Avenue in Manhattan to visit the world famous Raptor Trust in New Jersey run by Dr. Len Soucy. Hike around the swamp to look for wood ducks, blue birds and early spring wildflowers. Cost: \$55 includes bus and guided tour. Leaders: Don Riepe and Yigal Gelb. Call NYC Audubon at (212) 691-7483 to reserve.

### The Glory of Beach Plum Blossoms at Plumb Beach - May 5

Meet Mickey Cohen at 9 AM at the Plumb Beach Parking Lot off the Belt Parkway in Brooklyn. The shifting

dunes, classic salt marsh, and extensive mudflats are dynamic marine habitat. In May, the beach plums are in full blossom! Call Gateway NRA at (718) 338-3799 to reserve.

### NYC Audubon Sterling Forest Hike - May 5

Leave by bus at 10 AM from 23rd Street and 6th Avenue in Manhattan (return 6 PM). Visit the nature center and hike the wooded trails around Sterling Lake to look for hooded, blue-winged, cerulean, and golden-winged warblers, plus many other colorful species. Bring binoculars and lunch. Cost: \$55 includes bus and guided hikes. Leaders: John & Mary Yrizarry, Don Riepe. Call NYC Audubon at (212) 691-7483 to reserve.

### NYC Audubon Spring Migration Bird Walk - May 12

Meet Don Riepe at 10 AM at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program and walk during peak spring bird migration. Learn about bird migration and see many species of colorful migrants. Free. Call Gateway NRA at (718) 318-4340 to reserve.

### Horseshoe Crab Walk - June 2 and June 16

Meet Don Riepe and Mickey Cohen at 9 AM at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center and carpool to the North Channel Bridge. Learn about the behavior and biology of this prehistoric creature. Bring boots and binoculars. Kids welcome. Free. Call Gateway NRA at (718) 318-4340 to reserve.

## Jamaica Bay Sunset Cruise - June 2 and June 16

Leave Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn at 5 PM on the Dorothy B VIII for a 3-hour tour. Learn the history and ecology of the 9,000 acre Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, a part of Gateway National Recreation Area. See nesting peregrine falcon, osprey, oystercatcher, egrets, ibis and many other species. Cost: \$45 includes narrated tour, wine & cheese, fruit, and other snacks. Leaders: Mickey Cohen and Don Riepe. This is a cooperative program with Gateway NRA. Send check to Don to reserve. If you need further information, call Don at (718) 318-9344.

## Montauk Weekend - June 8-10

Explore the beaches and bluffs of Montauk during peak orchid, beach rose and heather blossom time. Activities include hiking, birding, seining, and an optional whale watch. See butterflies, tide pools, rocky cliffs, and Montauk Light. Cost: \$345 includes 2 nights at the luxurious Montauk Manor House (pools, Jacuzzi, sauna, spacious lobby), 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening lectures, star watch, and free pickup at LIRR station. Leaders: Mickey Cohen, Steve Finn, Mike Bottini, and Don Riepe. Call Don at (718) 318-9344.



Montauk Lighthouse CREDIT: Don Riepe

# REGARDING NATURE

Continued From page 4

If you are new to it, ice fishing can be a two-step process. First, find a frozen lake with fishermen on it (especially heavy fishermen who have thus proved the ice is thick enough), walk out, and strike up a conversation. This, alone, may be enough of an outdoor experience for you. But the conversation can lead to serious consideration of a real ice fishing trip. This means investing in gear; your new acquaintance can be your guide. But imagine the excitement: walk out on the ice, chop a hole, drop in a baited hook or jig, sit down on a spackle bucket which holds a sandwich, thermos, and four extra layers of clothing, stare at the hole in the ice for several hours, and then pack up and go home. A waste of time? Hardly; you might have stayed inside watching television.

**Odd and Ends:** Parks and undeveloped beaches along the seashore are especially good in winter. Try Sandy Hook, Island Beach State Park, Barnegat Light, the north end of the city of Brigantine, Corson Inlet below Ocean City, Stone Harbor Point, above the Wildwoods, and Cape May Point. And, of course, there are the Pine Barrens (hiking on sand roads) and Brigantine Wildlife Refuge, especially in the late afternoon when the snow geese fly into the ponds.

**NEW JERSEY TRIPS**, Sponsored by Mid-Atlantic Chapter. These trips are described in detail in Ebb & Flow, the local field trip guide mailed to Mid-Atlantic Chapter members and at [www.littoralsociety.org/trips](http://www.littoralsociety.org/trips). To request a copy of **Ebb & Flow**, to make reservations or get more information, e-mail [pat@littoralsociety.org](mailto:pat@littoralsociety.org) or phone 732-291.0055.

**March 15**  
Art in Nature – Charcoal Drawing on Sandy Hook

**March 21**  
Spring Equinox Shore Walk, Sandy Hook

**April 21**  
Island Beach State Park by Bike

**May 6**  
Members' Day, Sandy Hook

**May 16**  
Art in Nature, Watercolors on Sandy Hook

**May 20**  
Meadowlands Walk Cruise Hike, Lyndhurst NJ

**June 1**  
Horseshoe Crab Walk, Rumson, NJ

**June 9**  
Northern NJ Lighthouse Tour

**June 17**  
Family Fossil Hunting at Big Brook

**June 21**  
Summer Solstice Shore Walk, Sandy Hook

**June 29**  
Pine Barrens Canoe Trip

**June 29 – July 1**  
Pine Barrens Weekend

**July 10 – Aug. 4**  
Family Night on Sandy Hook (Tuesday Evenings)



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# News From The MID-ATLANTIC AND NORTHEAST CHAPTERS

Editors: Eileen Kennedy and Barbara Toborg

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## Join Us Today!

Become a member of the American Littoral Society and receive Underwater Naturalist, Coastal Reporter, Littorally Speaking, special publications, and a membership card. Complete this form and mail with your check or credit card details to: American Littoral Society, Sandy Hook, Highlands, NJ 07732. Payment is accepted in US funds only. Make check payable to American Littoral Society. Contributions are tax deductible.

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