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Volunteer for the Sound

WORKING TOGETHER TO RESTORE AND PROTECT THE SOUND



January 29, 2016

DO YOUR PART - VOLUNTEER FOR THE SOUND!



There are many organizations in Connecticut and New York that need your help restoring and protecting Long Island Sound!

Long Island Alewife Monitoring Training Sessions

Learn about the river herring's migration and take part in monitoring its spawning activity. All are welcome to attend and participate in this citizen science project. No experience required.



Credit: NOAA

- **Monday, February 29, 2016** at 4:30-5:30pm at the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum, 301 Main Street, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724. Contact Cassie Bauer and Amy Mandelbaum at lisstewards@gmail.com or 631-444-0474 to RSVP and for more information. [Click here](#) for the flyer.
- **Thursday, March 3, 2016** at 5:30-6:30pm at the Town of North Hempstead Town Hall, 220 North Plandome Road, Manhasset, NY 11030. Contact Cassie Bauer and Amy Mandelbaum at lisstewards@gmail.com or 631-444-0474 to RSVP and for more information. [Click here](#) for the flyer.

Citizen Science Around the Sound

Are you concerned about beach closures at your local beach? How about horseshoe crabs spawning along Long Island Sound? If you're interested in solving an environmental problem in your community or studying the world around you, then citizen science is for you. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "citizen science is a vital, fast-growing field in which scientific investigations are conducted by volunteers."



The winter 2015-2016 issue of *Sound Update* presents citizen science projects from both Connecticut and New York that investigate various aspects of Long Island Sound. [Read it today!](#)

Habitat Restoration and Protection Database

The Long Island Sound Study website has a new database that highlights the bi-state effort to restore and protect the region's natural habitats. Since 1998, this work has resulted in more than 1,750 acres of habitat restored, more than 5,000 acres protected through acquisitions and easements, and more than 350 miles of streams reconnected to the Sound for fish passage by removing dams and building fishways.

Users can search the database for project details or click on the interactive map to search for projects by location. The details include the type of habitat restored or protected, its size, and the partners involved in ensuring the project's completion.

The database can be accessed at www.lisshabitatrestoration.com.



Save the Date: Upcoming Volunteer Events

Mark your calendars for these 2016 volunteer events:

- Great Backyard Bird Count: February 12-15, 2016
- Horseshoe Crab Monitoring: May-July 2016
- National Parks BioBlitz: May 20-21, 2016
- National Park Week: April 16-24, 2016
- Earth Day: April 22, 2016
- Arbor Day: April 29, 2016
- International Migratory Bird Day: May 14, 2016
- World Fish Migration Day: May 21, 2016
- National Trails Day Weekend: June 4-5, 2016
- NY Invasive Species Awareness Week: July 2016
- National Public Lands Day: September 24, 2016
- International Coastal Clean Up: September 2016
- National Estuaries Week: September 2016

Volunteer Spotlight

Article by Nicole Cantatore, the Harbor Watch Lab Director at Earthplace, and Sarah Crosby, PhD, the Harbor Watch Director at Earthplace, as featured in the winter 2015-2016 issue of Sound Update:



Volunteers Karen and Gerry LaRocque aboard the *RV Annie*. Credit: Harbor Watch

Just as the oyster and clamming boats are starting up their engines to begin harvesting for the day, and the recreational rowers are finishing up their early morning workouts, the *Research Vessel (RV) Annie* can be seen anywhere on Norwalk Harbor, Connecticut, from the upper end to out past the mouth. At 7:00 am, citizen scientist volunteers board the research vessel, a converted oyster scow, with oxygen, temperature, and salinity probes. They visit multiple sites in the Harbor, where they lower the probes into the water and take readings at the surface, at a half meter below the surface, and at each subsequent meter until the harbor bottom is reached. Norwalk Harbor is an estuary with both residential and commercial infrastructure along its shoreline. At each site, volunteers can determine where the salt wedge lies, how oxygen is dispersed throughout the water column, and how temperature changes from upriver to the harbor mouth and from the surface to the bottom.

Later that same day, the *RV Annie* can be spotted again, flying a black hourglass-shape flag above the cabin to signal that something is astern of the vessel in the water. As the trawl buoy bounces along the surface, a group of Wilton High School (WHS) Marine Biology Club members clad in life preservers take GPS readings, monitor boat speed, and alert the captain when the three-minute trawl is complete. The net is retrieved and the student volunteers take turns sorting and identifying the catch. These student volunteers are examining the juvenile benthic species composition and abundance of Norwalk Harbor. The WHS Marine Biology Club is the largest contributor of volunteer crew members for this project, which runs from May through October annually. Every two years, the student crew members present their findings at a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Flatfish Biology Conference. They are consistently the youngest presenters and are always well received among the career scientists present.

Since its inception in 1987, Harbor Watch, the water quality research program at Earthplace in Westport, Connecticut, has used citizen scientists ranging in age from high school sophomores through senior citizens to monitor sites for a variety of physical and biological parameters. Hundreds of volunteers, approximately 60 per year, have traipsed from site to site donned with oxygen and conductivity meters to conduct weekly research on

waterways throughout Fairfield County, with the Norwalk River and Harbor being our longest data set. Many volunteers assist on multiple projects throughout their tenure with Harbor Watch and return year after year. Through letters and social media, we have been able to stay in contact with many of our volunteers who have credited their experiences with Harbor Watch as a catalyst to pursue careers in science. We plan to continue building our data sets and explore how species composition has changed and how shifts in the community may be related to environmental changes. All of this critical research of Norwalk Harbor would not be possible without dedicated citizen scientist volunteers!

If you would like to share your story of how someone is making a difference around the Sound, please contact Amy Mandelbaum, Long Island Sound Study Outreach Coordinator, at 631-632-9216 or acb328@cornell.edu.

If your organization would like its volunteer event advertised in this volunteer e-newsletter, our [Volunteer Opportunities web page](#), or our [Facebook page](#), please send Amy Mandelbaum, Long Island Sound Study Outreach Coordinator, an [email](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Long Island Sound Volunteer Opportunities](#)
- [What You Can Do To Protect Long Island Sound](#)
- [Long Island Sound Study Website](#)

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