

# Volunteer for the Sound

WORKING TOGETHER TO RESTORE AND PROTECT THE SOUND



April 14, 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!

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## Happy National Volunteer Week!

Did you know that April 10-16, 2016 is National Volunteer Week?

According to [President Barack Obama](#),

**This week, we celebrate the selfless individuals around our country who channel their civic virtues through volunteerism, and we encourage more people to make service an integral part of their lives.**

**Volunteers help drive our country's progress, and day in and day out, they make extraordinary sacrifices to expand promise and possibility. During National Volunteer Week, let us shed the cynicism that says one person cannot make a difference in the lives of others by embracing each of our individual responsibilities to serve and shape a brighter future for all.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 10**

through April 16, 2016, as National Volunteer Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by volunteering in service projects across our country and pledging to make service a part of their daily lives.

On behalf of the Long Island Sound Study, thank you for your volunteerism and contributions to further restore and protect Long Island Sound. We appreciate your efforts!

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## Long Island Sound Citizens Summit



Registration for the Historic 25th Annual Long Island Sound Citizens Summit is now open! The Summit will be held on Friday, June 3rd at Stony Brook University's Student Activities Center.

The 25th Annual Long Island Sound Citizens Summit will focus on the very citizens who are taking action to protect the Sound. We will celebrate their efforts, roll out new innovative tools for understanding the Sound's health, and dedicate an entire afternoon of workshops to citizen science monitoring, data analysis, and communicating science with clarity and impact.

**NEW THIS YEAR!** High school and college student poster session during the 9:00-9:30am Registration and 10:40-10:55am Networking Break. If you are interested in presenting a poster of your Long Island Sound citizen science project, you and a chaperone can attend for free (NOTE: If you plan to stay for lunch, there is a \$20 charge for students and \$30 charge for adults until Earth Day, Friday, April 22nd). If you are interested in presenting a poster, please contact Brittany Chamberlin-Martin at [bchamberlin-martin@savethesound.org](mailto:bchamberlin-martin@savethesound.org).

For more information and to register, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/2016LISCitizenSummit> (Early registration rates end on Earth Day, Friday, April 22nd.)

This year's Citizens Summit is being organized by Save the Sound, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Long Island Sound Study, New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission, Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, and the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science.

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Save the Date: June 4-5, 2016 is National Trails Day Weekend



Shaun Roche, a visiting services manager for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, at Sheffield Island, part of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is holding a volunteer event on June 4.

### ***What is National Trails Day?***

American Hiking Society's National Trails Day (NTD) is a celebration of America's magnificent Trail System, occurring annually on the first Saturday and Sunday in June. NTD features a series of outdoor activities, designed to promote and celebrate the importance of trails in the United States. Individuals, clubs and organizations from around the country host National Trails Day events to share their love of trails with friends, family, and their communities. NTD introduces thousands of Americans to a wide array of trail activities: hiking, biking, paddling, horseback riding, trail running, bird watching, and more. For public and private land managers alike, National Trails Day is a great time to showcase beautiful landscapes and special or threatened locales as thousands of people will be outside looking to participate in NTD events.

### ***Enjoy Trails Day at Long Island Sound Stewardship Areas***

#### **ACTIVITIES AT OR AROUND CONNECTICUT STEWARDSHIP AREAS:**

- [Dodge Paddock and Beal Preserve](#)—near Barn Island Stewardship Area (volunteer planting to restore marsh), June 4
- [Sherwood Island](#) (birding, kayaking, flying radio-controlled model planes and drones, archaeological and nature walks), June 4
- [Norwalk Islands](#) (explore historic lighthouse and help restore nature trail and remove invasive plants on Sheffield Island), June 4
- [Lower Connecticut River](#) (hike The Preserve, Westbrook), June 4
- [Lower Connecticut River](#) (walk the Turtle Creek Preserve in Old Saybrook), June 5

#### **ACTIVITIES AT OR AROUND NEW YORK STEWARDSHIP AREAS:**

- [Pelham Bay](#) (birding-hawk watch at Pelham Bay Park), June 4
- [Stony Brook Harbor](#) (sunset walk at West Meadow Beach), June 5

If you have a Trails Day event planned at or near a Long Island Sound Stewardship Area, please contact [Robert Burg](#), LISS Communications Coordinator, to be included on the [trails day website](#).



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## Upcoming Connecticut Volunteer Events

**Saturday, April 16, 2016** at 1:00pm-3:00pm – SoundWaters Coastal Clean-up. Join SoundWaters to participate in Coastal Clean-up Day at Cove Island Park, Stamford, CT. This clean-up is critical for protecting habitats of birds and marine life that often mistake a small piece of trash or debris for food, which can lead to their death. This is a perfect opportunity for families and friends to protect and enhance Cove Island Park. The day includes a beach and park clean-up. Meet at the SoundWaters Coastal Education Center at Cove Island Park on Weed Avenue and Cove Road, Stamford, CT. SoundWaters will supply gloves, bags, and forms to record what it picked up. For more information, contact SoundWaters at 203-323-1978 or visit [www.soundwaters.org](http://www.soundwaters.org).

**Saturday, April 23, 2016** at 9:00am-12:00pm – Arbor Day Tree Planting. Join the Urban Resources Initiative for an Arbor Day tree planting at Cherry Ann Park, 150 Cherry Ann Street, New Haven, CT. We will be planting 7 trees followed by an Arbor Day/Earth Day ceremony with refreshments in the park. Please wear clothes that can get dirty, closed-toe shoes, and layers. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**May – July 2016** – CT Horseshoe Crab Monitoring. Dates vary by site, sites all around Long Island Sound. For more information, visit [CT Horseshoe Crab Monitoring](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 10:00am-2:00pm – Hyde Pond Planting Day. Please bring work gloves if you have them and wear boots that can get wet and muddy. Meet at the Barnes Moving and Storage in Mystic, CT. For questions and to RSVP, email [restoration@savethesound.org](mailto:restoration@savethesound.org).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 8:30am-12:00pm – Tree Planting Day at Yale Alumni Day of Service. Join the Urban Resources Initiative for tree planting at 340 Prospect Street, New Haven, CT. Please wear closed-toe shoes and bring drinking water. We will plant 4 trees with the Yale Alumni Day of Service, the Yale Club of New Haven, and Human Resources at Yale in recognition of Yale Employee Service Milestones. Parking is available at 380 Edwards/ 301 Prospect Street in New Haven, CT. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

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## Upcoming New York Volunteer Events

**Sunday, April 17, 2016** at 10:00am-12:00pm – North Fork Coastal Cleanup Day. Join the Group for the East End for a coastal cleanup at Wildwood State Park in Wading River, NY. Everything that is collected will be repurposed into life-size sculptures of wildlife that are impacted by the large amounts of debris in our coastal waters. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Sunday, April 24, 2016** at 9:00am-1:00pm – Bronx River Forest Restoration. Volunteer with the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation's Stewardship Team to care for trees in Bronx Park! Volunteers will remove invasive species such as corydalis, and spread fresh seed. Volunteers will be trained in forest ecology and proper removal techniques. Come dressed in sturdy workboots or shoes, and clothing that can get dirty. Meet at Bronx Park, Burke Ave., E. 180 St. bet. Dr. Kazamiroff Blvd., Southern Blvd. and Bronx Park E., Unionport Rd., Bronx, NY. For more and information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, April 30, 2016** at 8:00am-12:00pm – Annual Spring Oyster Bay Harbor and Beach Clean-up (rain or shine). At this event, volunteers patrol the shoreline by foot and the water by boat to collect debris that accumulated during the winter at Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Park, Centre Island beach, and Stehli beach in Oyster Bay. This event is organized by the Town of Oyster Bay, the North Oyster Bay Baymen's Association (NOBBA), and the Friends of the Bay. All are invited to participate. Please call 516-677-5943 for more information.

**Saturday, April 30, 2016** at 9:00am-1:00pm – Pelham Bay Tree Planting. Volunteer with the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation's Stewardship Team to plant trees in the forest in Pelham Bay Park! Trees provide so

many benefits to New Yorkers such as improved air and water quality, reduced pollution, and lower energy costs. Volunteers will be trained in proper planting techniques, while furthering the efforts of MillionTreesNYC. Come dressed in sturdy boots or shoes, long pants, and clothing that can get dirty. Meet at Pelham Bay Park, Hutchinson River, Long Island Sound bet. Bronx County Line and Middletown Rd., Watt Ave., Bronx, NY. Space is limited and registration is required for this event. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**May – July 2016** – NY Horseshoe Crab Monitoring. Dates vary by site, sites all around Long Island Sound. For more information, visit [NY Horseshoe Crab Monitoring](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:00am-12:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Caleb Smith State Park, Smithtown, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with gardening, invasive plant removal, and painting. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:30am-12:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Caumsett State Park Preserve, Lloyd Harbor, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with bittersweet clipping and beach clean-up. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:30am-12:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Nissequogue River State Park, Kings Park, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with clean-up of litter and debris. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 10:00am-2:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Orient Beach State Park, Orient, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with various projects. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:00am-12:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park, Oyster Bay, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with garden and trails clean-up, including weeding and mulching. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:30am-2:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Sunken Meadow State Park, Kings Park, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with building wooden picnic tables, weeding and mulching butterfly garden, and shoreline beach clean-up. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:30am-4:30pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Walt Whitman Birthplace Historic Site, Huntington Station, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with gardening maintenance, power-washing, and painting. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 9:00am-12:00pm – NY State Parks' "I Love My Park Day" at Wildwood State Park, Wading River, NY. Volunteers are needed to help with beach clean-up. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 7, 2016** at 10:00am-12:00pm – North Fork Coastal Cleanup Day. Join the Group for the East End for a coastal cleanup at Iron Pier Beach and Hallock State Park Preserve in Jamesport, NY. Everything that is collected will be repurposed into life-size sculptures of wildlife that are impacted by the large amounts of debris in our coastal waters. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 14, 2016** at 10:00am-12:00pm – North Fork Coastal Cleanup Day. Join the Group for the East End for a coastal cleanup at Inlet Pond County Park in Greenport, NY. Everything that is collected will be repurposed into life-size sculptures of wildlife that are impacted by the large amounts of debris in our coastal waters. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Saturday, May 21, 2016** at 8:00am-5:00pm – Volunteer Stewardship Day at Great Gull Island. Assist in the mapping of terns' nesting locations. For more information and to register, visit <http://tinyurl.com/greatgull>.

**Saturday, May 21, 2016** at 10:00am-12:00pm – North Fork Coastal Cleanup Day. Join the Group for the East End for a coastal cleanup at Dam Pond Preserve in East Marion, NY. Everything that is collected will be repurposed into life-size sculptures of wildlife that are impacted by the large amounts of debris in our coastal waters. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

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## Volunteer Spotlight

Article by Jennifer Mattei, PhD, and Mark Beekey, PhD, Biology Professors at Sacred Heart University, as featured in the winter 2015-2016 issue of Sound Update:



Adam Rudman and SHU students answering questions of students from Unquowa School. Credit: T. Deer-Mirek

Every spring, the American horseshoe crab, *Limulus polyphemus*, comes up to spawn along hundreds of miles of coastline in Connecticut and New York. Over a million people encounter this ancient species when they visit the beaches of Long Island Sound (LIS). If we had a way to collect their observations, our understanding of horseshoe crab ecology would be greatly enhanced. However, horseshoe crabs have an image problem. When people see them they are usually repulsed by their long stinger-like telson, armored shell, and weaponized claws. As such, education is imperative for our citizen science program to succeed. As soon as students/volunteers understand that horseshoe crabs are the most benign creatures they will see at the ocean, that can neither sting nor pinch, and when they realize their importance to the ecology of LIS and to their own health, they immediately ask how they can help.

Over the past 15 years, hundreds of K-12 and college students, members of non-profit organizations, and local aquariums have contributed thousands of hours to Project *Limulus*. By tagging over 88,000 horseshoe crabs, resighting more than 20,000 individuals, and conducting more than 1,800 spawning surveys, they have helped researchers understand the population ecology of the American horseshoe crab in LIS. This amazing effort has enabled Drs. Jennifer Mattei and Mark Beekey from Sacred Heart University to answer a number of questions such as:

### **1) What are the general movement patterns of horseshoe crabs in LIS?**

Within a spawning season, 73% of recaptured crabs are recaptured on the same beach where they were tagged. Beyond that initial spawning season, only 22% of crabs were recaptured on the same beach where they were originally tagged. About 3% of the crabs tagged on the Connecticut coastline are recaptured on the north shore of Long Island and an additional 3% are recaptured outside the Sound in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. A few crabs tagged in LIS have been reported in New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia, although we surmise that these crabs had assistance in traveling to these states.

### **2) What are the characteristics of the LIS horseshoe crab population?**

Females are 25-30% larger than males and their relative body sizes have not changed in LIS during our 15

years of measures. Male to female sex ratios have decreased slightly since 2006. Alarming, the number of single females (no attached male or satellite males nearby) appearing on beaches during spawning seasons has been on the rise since 2007. This increase corresponds with a decrease in mating pairs of horseshoe crabs and multiple mating groups (one female with two or more males attempting to mate with her). Finally, the number of new recruits into the adult spawning population is much lower than one would expect for a stable or increasing population.

### **3) Is the LIS population increasing, decreasing, or stable?**

Based on the tagging and spawning survey data, we have concluded that the population density of horseshoe crabs in LIS is so low that we are beginning to see a serious shift in population characteristics indicative of a severely degraded population. Further decreases due to over-harvesting or habitat loss could push the LIS population over the threshold where recovery would be a significant challenge.

Citizen science, outreach, and education along with habitat conservation and restoration are imperative to the survival of this species. The data collected by citizen scientists associated with Project *Limulus*, [www.projectlimulus.org](http://www.projectlimulus.org), are communicated to state managers and federal management agencies in addition to being published. Our most recent publications are two chapters in a new book on horseshoe crab conservation entitled: *Changing Global Perspectives on Horseshoe Crab Biology, Conservation and Management*. Our latest work includes an investigation of juvenile horseshoe crab habitat needs and coastal habitat restoration.

***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](mailto:acb328@cornell.edu).***

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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](#)

#### **Amy Mandelbaum**

Long Island Sound Study Outreach Coordinator  
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631-632-9216

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