

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### June 14th:

Ecological Evening -  
'Bioluminescence and  
the Deep Sea'  
6:30 - 8:30 pm

#### June 18th:

Special Opportunity -  
Macro Invertebrate  
Training  
12:00 - 4:00 pm

#### July 5th:

Creature Feature -  
Dandy Dolphins  
9:00 - 11:30 am

#### July 6th:

Summer Fun - Outra-  
geous Reptiles  
1:30 - 3:30 pm

#### July 12th:

Creature Feature -  
Rockin' Raptors  
9:00 - 11:30 am

#### July 19th:

Creature Feature -  
Plankton Party  
9:00 - 11:30 am

### HIGHLIGHTS THIS ISSUE:

What's Happening  
This Month 1

Reserve Events 1

Super Bridgenet  
Sampling 2

Black Sea Bass  
research 2

Looking Ahead 2

Learn more about  
the Reserve on our  
website:  
<http://jcnerr.org/>

Archived Articles of  
JC NEWS now online

## JC NERR in May and June

Hello volunteers!

I am the new Volunteer Coordinator at JC NERR and am very pleased to be here and to continue the volunteer newsletter. I apologize for the May hiatus, but things were a little hectic getting myself up and running in the position. In response to that, this newsletter is a combination of both the months of May and June, hence, 'Issues 5 & 6'.

The summer season has brought on a slew of festivals and educational events here at JC NERR. The Ocean Fun Days festival took place on May 21st at Island Beach State Park. This was a festival geared towards children and teaching them about the coastal environment. Children could learn to seine, plant dune grass and go bird watching.

## Reserve Current Events

The first week of June, JC NERR hosted the annual Manager's meeting for the NERR (National Estuarine Research Reserve) system. Currently there are 28 NERR's across the US and one in Puerto Rico. The venue for this meeting changes yearly, and this time our very own Jacques Cousteau was responsible for hosting the event.

24 managers ranging from Alaska to Puerto Rico were in atten-

tion. Kids enjoyed JC NERR's interactive seagrass diorama as well as picking up coloring books, calendars and word puzzles all related to the marine environment. The Barnegat Bay Festival was held in Island Heights on June 5th and was filled with environmental exhibitions from NJ DEP, Save Barnegat Bay, Ocean County Master Composters and much more. JC NERR added a new fish tracking exhibit that highlighted the points of our fish tagging and tracking program that has been ongoing since 2002.

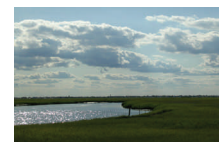
Here at the Reserve we kicked off May with an Ecological Evening presentation 'Virtual Tour of the Mullica River Headwaters' given by Nina Sassano, the Watershed Ambassador for the Mullica River watershed. We

followed this virtual tour up by hosting a driving tour of Seven Bridges Road (aka Great Bay Blvd) to explore animal and plant life and also to teach some history and culture of the area. We have a bunch more summer programs coming up and festivals too! For more information see the side box of the newsletter or the 'Looking Ahead' section on page 2.—**Kim Capone**

I wanted to express how grateful the staff here at JC NERR is to all of the volunteers that helped that week. We had volunteers assisting with putting together packet materials and setting and cleaning up food both here at the Education Center and the Rutgers field station, with some arriving at 7 am to insure things ran smoothly. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! Thank you!



Kids at Ocean Fun Days festival  
(Photo courtesy of festival website)



dance. In addition to regular meetings, managers were treated to a tour of Batsto Village in Wharton State Forest and a tour at the Forsythe Wildlife Refuge, in Oceanville.

All were very impressed with our extensive marsh system and open space we have here in southern NJ. We even convinced a few people who had never been, to give up all those negative stereotypes of NJ!

## Super BridgeNet Sampling with Super Volunteers



Story by Jamie Caridad—Rutgers Graduate student

Bridge net sampling is a project that many volunteers have been involved with for over 20 years. Once a week during night flood tides, researchers at RUMFS set a plankton net off of Little Sheepshead Creek Bridge on Great Bay Blvd, with the goal of catching larval fish coming into the Great Bay/Mullica River estuary. With this large and consistent data set, scientists have found many patterns with important fish in the estuary, such as summer flounder, American eels, and Atlantic croaker.

This past year, as part of my graduate thesis work, expanded

this sampling program to see if there is any variation in larval fish abundance throughout the estuary. Once a month, starting from May 2010 – April 2011, we ran the same sampling program at Jimmy's Creek and Little Thorofare. This required a full crew for each of the bridges, ranging from 3 – 6 people per bridge, with about 4 – 8 volunteers coming out each sampling event (which is why these nights were "super"! ). The summer months brought gnats, broken nets, and A LOT of algae, while the winter months provided low numbers

of fish, freezing temperatures, and quite a snowstorm. Through it all, volunteers sacrificed sleep for a few vials of fish, while also donating quite delicious snacks to help fuel everyone through the night. **I am very much appreciative of the hours that many of you have given to help me further my research.**

Though super bridge net sampling has ended, RUMFS will still continue the regular weekly sampling off of Little Sheepshead Creek and we always welcome new volunteers! - **Jamie Caridad**



Volunteers, friends and grad students fishing for Black sea bass on the Miss Beach Haven (photo courtesy of Orion Weldon)

## Black Sea Bass Research Underway

Olaf Jensen, a new assistant professor at RUMFS has started a new research project on black sea bass (BSB). BSB are a highly managed, commercially and recreationally important species. They are an interesting fish — they can change their sex! Most are born female (as far as scientists know) and some of them turn to male as they get larger. Olaf, and his two grad students, Mikaela Provost and Talia Young, are interested in finding out if fishing for BSB disproportionately

removes more of one sex. And if so, how does this affect their reproduction and future generations of fish? Their aim is to tag 1500 BSB in southern NJ in hopes of recapturing fish to see if they have undergone a sex change.

This is where our volunteers come in! On May 23rd and 31st, Olaf, his grad students, JC NERR volunteers and their friends went out fishing on the 'Miss Beach Haven' party boat out of LBI. May 23rd brought a

cloudy, windy and choppy day on the water with an early return—but a successful fishing day with 39 BSB caught! May 31st brought beautiful skies and seas, but not as many fish. Regardless of the weather, all of our volunteers, their friends and RU grad students had a great time out on the water! A big **thank you** is in order to all JC NERR volunteers and friends that helped in the fishing effort! Stay tuned for fishing dates in June, July and August!

## Looking Ahead

### Special Opportunity:

**June 18th:**

Macro Invertebrate Training

### Festivals:

**August 17th:**

US Coast Guard Auxiliary Boating Safety and Environmental Festival

### October 2nd:

Cattus Island Nature Festival (Tom's River)

### October 9th:

Coast Day in Cape May

If anyone is interested in volunteering at these festivals please let me know!

609-812-0649 x203

capone@marine.rutgers.edu

Until next month! Enjoy the long summer days!

- Kim Capone



Pulling up Black sea bass, tagging with a floy tag (in orange) and releasing (photos courtesy of Orion Weldon)