



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### December 12th:

Lunch n' Learn -  
Shellfish, Barnegat Bay and  
You  
12:30 pm @ the Tucker-  
ton Seaport

\*We are doing are best  
to reschedule the two  
following programs that  
we cancelled due to  
Hurricane Sandy\*

#### November 2nd:

Out and About -  
Discover Seven Bridges  
Van Tour

#### AND

#### November 7th:

Ecological Evenings -  
Beneath the Garden State:  
Exploring Aquatic New  
Jersey

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## JC NERR in the Fall

Warm greetings volunteers,

Our Reserve and the surrounding communities have certainly seen their fair share of ups and downs this fall.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy it is certainly all too easy to see the 'down' side of things, but the response from local communities, the people of New Jersey and those in other states has been refreshingly and incredibly uplifting. In the days that followed the hurricane, friends, families and strangers banded together to mobilize continued aid in order to support those in need. In the midst of the devastation and destruction, one of the most heartening things to see is the tremendous outpouring of donations of food, clothes, cleaning crews and supplies and the surge in volunteerism to assist those who lost so much to Sandy.

Here at JC NERR we are still standing and getting ourselves back on track after the storm. The Education Center fared well and we are patiently waiting for our phone system that was damaged in the power outage to be restored. Due to storm impacts we had to cancel two of our public programs (see 'Upcoming Events' on the sidebar to your left) and we are doing our best to reschedule these. Our field equipment; data loggers and telemetry equipment that collect water quality, meteorological and nutrient data, were the hardest hit. But surprisingly, as recovery and repair efforts of equipment continue, we are finding that more have weathered the storm than originally thought. Our field technicians, Gregg and Gina, have been

diligently working to retrieve and repair data loggers and have found that many have survived and continued to log data throughout the storm.

Given the circumstances, our excitement to have these data may puzzle some, but our passion for the Reserve's mission - to Improve



**View to Little Egg Inlet from  
the Rutgers Marine Field Sta-  
tion in less stormy times**

the Management of New Jersey Coastal Environments through Science, Education and Public Outreach - becomes more important than ever to us in times like these.

Collecting scientific data is our first step in being able to inform and educate policy makers, as well as our communities so that we can learn from such a devastating event. Our job at JC NERR is not only to collect data and conduct research within the Reserve, but to make that research available to educate and teach our coastal decision makers and the public what we have found, so that we can all make the best possible decisions about the protection of our coastal environment and our coastal communities.

If we can use these data to help inform our decisions we can hopefully restore our coastal environ-

ment and rebuild in the most sustainable way possible for all parties involved. This is certainly not an easy task.

What is best for the environment oftentimes does not work for people of the community, and what works for people of the community can often be detrimental to the environment. It is a problem that coastal communities throughout NJ, our country and the world face. We and others who inhabit coastal environments choose to live there because of the wealth of benefits bestowed; whether they be economic, recreational, or part of our history, ancestry and livelihood. The fact that so many lives are intertwined with coastal environments means that making decisions regarding their preservation is difficult. In such cases there are no black and white answers, and no one person or organization can do it on their own. But here at JC NERR we remain hopeful and optimistic as we look toward the future.

We are hopeful that those who were affected so greatly by Sandy can find peace and comfort as we strive towards restoring our homes and communities.

We are hopeful that, just as communities came together in the aftermath of the hurricane to help those in need, those same communities as well as coastal decision makers and environmental organizations can come together to work towards restoring our precious coastal environment and its resources.

~ Kim

## Reserve Current Events - The Grassle Marsh



**New signage - An Ocean County Natural Lands Trust sign has been erected on the corner of Great Bay Blvd. and Oak Lane denoting the preserved wetlands/marshland behind it.**

One of the 'ups' for JC NERR this fall was the dedication of our newly acquired land to two prominent and world renowned scientists who are part of the Rutgers marine science community. Earlier in the year, we were

proud and excited to announce that the Reserve, in conjunction with the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust, acquired 15.29 acres of wetlands and marsh habitat that is adjacent to the JC NERR Education Center off of Great Bay Boulevard.

On October 11th, the Grassle Marsh was dedicated to Fred and Judy Grassle, two researchers who have made significant and groundbreaking contributions to marine

science and oceanography, particularly benthic ecology. Currently Fred Grassle is a professor emeritus and Judy Grassle is a research professor in Rutgers' Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences.

One of the goals that JC NERR has for this land is to build an educational boardwalk trail that will loop through the marsh. Our Reserve manager, Mike DeLuca and Coastal Training Program Coordinator, Lisa Auermuller put a large amount of time and effort to acquire this land and we are expectantly looking at the future possibilities for the marsh.

Most notably we are happy that this land will be preserved. In light of Hurricane Sandy, the issue of marsh/wetland preservation again comes to the forefront when talking about storm mitigation. Shortly after Sandy, the Grassle Marsh was

featured in a CNN news article discussing just that.

'Marshes and malls: Migration to the U.S. coast heightens impact of storms' delves into the problems faced by increasing numbers of people migrating and living in coastal areas and the increased personal and economic impact that we will have with such powerful storms as we just experienced, as well as erosion, sea level rise and increased water temperatures.

A good portion of the article focuses on Little Egg Harbor, Ocean County and our National Estuarine Research Reserve system. You can find a copy of this article on the JC NERR volunteer website-

<http://www.jcnerr.org/volunteer.html>



**Unveiling the signs - The Grassle Marsh sign will be placed directly on Great Bay Blvd next to the marsh.**



**Aerial view of JC NERR's newest land acquisition — The Grassle Marsh. Great Bay Blvd is in the forefront.**

**JC NERR Reserve Manager Mike DeLuca (left) and Coastal Training Program Coordinator Lisa Auermuller (right) pose with Judy Grassle (center), one of the honorees for which the marsh was dedicated.**

*Photos courtesy of Dee Samuels*

# Volunteers Seining on Great Bay Boulevard

In a joint collaboration between JC NERR and RUMFS (Rutgers University Marine Field Station), seine sampling at two sites within the Reserve began in August of this year and continued through October.

The goal of this project is to get a more detailed look into southern species of fish and crabs found in our waters here in New Jersey. Data collected seining will supplement RUMFS' (Rutgers University Marine Field Station) long-term otter trawl sampling data. The particular interest is to seine for possible species that are not obtained through otter trawling, which is done in deeper waters. Seine netting allows sampling of shall-

lower subtidal shorelines, better targeting smaller juvenile fish.

Through RUMFS' long-term ichthyoplankton (larval fish) and otter trawling (adult fish) data sets, it has been possible to track changes in fish composition and water temperature for a period of over 20 years. A trend that had been shown is that an increasing number of southern species have been collected, possibly correlated with increasing water temperatures. Seining on Great Bay Boulevard previously took place in the early 1990's with RUMFS collecting over 300 samples in shallow habitats.

With these existing data, the expectation with the present

sampling is to be able to compare seine data from 20 years ago to data collected today in order to ascertain patterns and changes in southern species composition and increasing water temperatures.

Volunteers are an integral part of seine sampling. JC NERR volunteers are conducting the vast majority of the field work; and thus this project is largely made possible by their involvement. Volunteers came out sampling in hot greenhead-infested weather as well as cooler fall weather and water temperatures. Thank you again for all of your hard work and dedication to the project!



**Volunteers pulling the seine net (top & middle) and sorting through the catch (bottom) at Graveling Point, Little Egg Harbor**

## RUMFS Open House



**Volunteers assisting Open House visitors**

This year, our fall season kicked off on September 15th when we once again opened the doors to the Rutgers University Marine Field Station (RUMFS) to the general public to learn about what research and education projects are happening within the Reserve and at Rutgers.

This year RUMFS celebrated their 40th anniversary of being of being an active research station. Visitors were able to learn about the Reserve as well as tour the field station and learn about larval fish and otoliths (fish ear bones), the history of the Field Station, black sea bass, sea nettles, blue crabs and

our underwater robot, REMUS. This year we added laminated photographs of marsh flora and fauna to spots on the causeway walking up to the Field Station. Visitors were able to stop along their walk up to the lab buildings to learn a little more about our marsh inhabitants.

I wanted to express my appreciation and thanks to all of the volunteers for all of their hard work. Volunteers manned the JC NERR information, t-shirt sale, fish-printing and exit survey table as well as led tours through the Station and helped with set up and break down of materials.

We had a total of 360 visitors throughout the day, and all of our dedicated volunteers made everything run smoothly! Without your help, we would not be able to run such an educational activity for the public. Of people who participated in our exit survey (111 total), 98.2% of visitors rated their overall experience as 'Very Good' or 'Excellent.'! The most popular part of the tour was blue crab research but all others were not far behind and quite a few people indicated every part of the tour as their favorite! Overall the day was a success!

# Looking Ahead

## Thanksgiving

As Thanksgiving approaches we realize that it may be hard or impossible for some affected by Sandy to celebrate Thanksgiving. Fortunately there are local organizations that are providing warm and welcoming dinners for all who are in need.

While not on Thanksgiving day itself, the Tuckerton Seaport is hosting a Community Gathering on **Saturday November 24th**.

The Seaport is inviting all local families to come together to enjoy a meal and give thanks. The event will be taking place in a heated tent with food entertainment and family activities. For more information call **609-296-1623**

On Thanksgiving, the MICA (Mystic Island Cooperative Association) in Little Egg Harbor is hosting a Thanksgiving dinner. For more information call **609-296-0591**

## Volunteer Holiday Party

It is that time again for spreading volunteer holiday cheer!

We are still setting a date for the Volunteer Holiday Party, but we are thinking of the end of the second week of December or the beginning of the third week. Please keep it on your radar :)

A formal invitation will follow and we hope to see you there!

## NERRS Annual Meeting

Next Monday (26th) the staff JC NERR will be heading to West Virginia for an annual meeting with all other Reserves in the NERR (National Estuarine Research Reserve) system. We will out of the office until Friday (30th).

During this time there will be limited access to the building, although we do anticipate quite a few RUMFS staff and technicians to be there (see below).

## RUMFS Update

The Field Station sustained significant structural damage to its docks and causeway. The buildings themselves, thankfully did not receive any water or structural damage.

Currently the Station is running on minimal generator power since the electricity has not been restored yet. The septic system also will need to be replaced. As such, RUMFS staff and technicians have been working out of the RUMFS dormitory and JC NERR offices. Progress has been slow, but steady and they look forward to getting back out to the Station full time.



*Happy Thanksgiving*

