

Scientists

Are

Looking

For



The Clinging Jellyfish

And They Need Your Help

The clinging jellyfish has been spotted in our rivers and at least one person has been stung. Scientists are trying to figure out what to do about it, but first they need more data.

Here are three ways you can help:

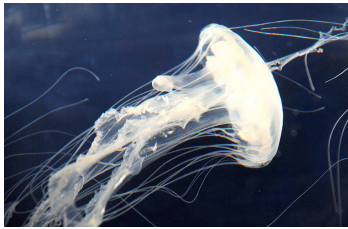
- 1) Report sightings of clinging jellyfish by either emailing photos and the locations to zack@littoralsociety.org or via the Marine Defenders App (downloadable for iPhone).
- 2) Only if you feel you can do it safely, capture the clinging jellyfish in a jar for pick-up, contact us at [732-291-0055](tel:732-291-0055) and we will get it to the jellyfish team at Montclair State University. Obviously, do not touch a stinging jellyfish with your bare hands. We suggest you wear rubber gloves, and use a net to scoop the jellyfish up, then deposit it in a clean glass jar in river water and screw the lid on. They are more active at night so shining a light into the water will help.
- 3) Allow your dock or bulkhead to be sampled for clinging jellyfish by calling or emailing us at the above email and phone number.

American Littoral Society, 18 Hartshorne Drive, Suite 1, Highlands, NJ 07732, 732-291-0055

Jellyfish Identifier

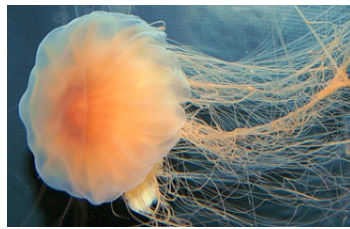
Clinging Jellyfish (*Gonionemus vertens*)

Clinging jellyfish are small, about dime sized. They mostly come out at night around shallow docks. They spend their days hanging onto vegetation and substrates like shells. Unlike some other jellyfish they do not have long tentacles, but they have 60-90 of them that can extend up to a diameter of 3 inches. It is those tentacles that contain the nematocysts, or stinging cells, that can cause significant pain.



Atlantic Sea Nettle
(*Chrysaora quinquecirrha*)

- Abundant in the Two Rivers
- May feed on clinging jellies
- Tentacles can be long
- Sting can last as long as 20 minutes
- Up to 20 inches long



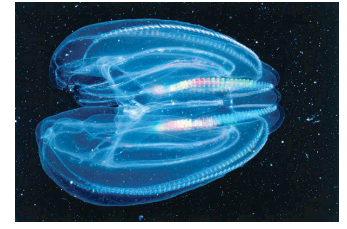
Lion's Mane
(*Cyanea capillata*)

- Can grow to be enormous, but tend to be smaller in the river
- Less common than moon jelly and sea nettle, but more common than clinging jellyfish



Moon Jelly
(*Aurelia aurita*)

- Common locally
- Can be mistaken for clinging jellyfish
- Sting is mostly harmless or not detectable by humans
- Short tentacles along its fringe



Comb Jelly
(*Ctenophore*)

- Can be as small as 1/32 of an inch and as large as 5 feet
- Other jellyfish may eat them
- There are 100 to 150 known species

Why are there so many jellyfish in our rivers?

The exact reasons for the proliferation of jellyfish in our rivers is not 100% clear. Most likely it is a combination of factors, but the recent increase in jellyfish blooms in high population areas points to some likely culprits. Human activities—specifically, pollution (sewer and storm-run-off), seafood harvest (reducing jellyfish predators), eutrophication (caused by excessive use of fertilizer on our lawns, which cause algae blooms that jellyfish thrive on), hard substrate additions (the increase in docks and bulkheads), introduction of invasive species (via ships) and climate change, are throwing off the natural equilibrium of our rivers.



The American Littoral Society

Headquartered at Sandy Hook, the American Littoral Society has been protecting the coastal environment since 1961. For more information about the Society and its works, to join, donate, or volunteer, please go to www.littoralsociety.org, call 732-291-0055 or email us at info@littoralsociety.org