

# LITTORALLY *Speaking*



Littoral: The region along the shore; the intertidal zone

News from the American Littoral Society

Fall/Winter 2015

## National Ocean Policy is Necessary for Healthy Oceans

Everyone needs healthy oceans. But, we do not always have them because of chronic pollution and increasing demands to industrialize the ocean. Our great fish stocks and fisheries, in particular face the loss of nursery areas, destruction from power plants, and new threats from hormone mimics in the water.

Full implementation of the U.S. National Ocean Policy is necessary to address the complicated and inter-related issues affecting the ocean and coastline and everyone can play a role in making that happen.

The Atlantic and its seacoast is woven into the fabric of our lives. Most of us have cherished memories of days on the beach, hours fishing, surfing or sailing the waters.

Many still make a living from our ocean and bays; the fish and shell-



Cont'd on Page 6

Nearly 350,000 acres off the coast of New Jersey will be leased for wind farms.

## Tagging Program Gets Phone App

For iPhone and Android

The American Littoral Society will mark the 50th anniversary of its fish tagging program with computer code rather than gold. Thanks to a major gift from Captain Al Anderson, who has tagged more than 60,000 fish, an intern from Rutgers University is developing a custom application to help recreational anglers post their recapture data in real time. The app is planned for release on iPhone and Android. Anderson, also known as Captain Al, has been part of the Littoral Society's

tagging program since its inception. He has operated the Rhode Island charter vessel "Prowler" for 48 years. In addition, he has authored more than 200 articles and is working on his sixth book, which is about tagging fish with electronic tags. In March 2016 the fish tagging app will reach the beta stage and be ready for testing. Look for more information on the app in the near future. Not a tagging member? Sign up today at [littoralsociety.org](http://littoralsociety.org).

## Littoral Giant Passes Away

It is with sadness that we note the passing of Bill Feinberg, one of the first members of the American Littoral Society and a long-time trustee for the Society. Bill died Monday, Nov. 2, 2015.

Bill has been referred to as a Littoral Giant, not just for his long involvement with the Society, but also because he was a fierce defender of the coastal environment. For more information go to [littoralsociety.org](http://littoralsociety.org).

## From the Executive Director's Desk

Protecting the ocean and coast is a long-term effort. Good stewardship of the life and resources of the sea requires deep understanding of ocean ecology in the broadest sense, particularly because so many people want to live, work and play around those waters.

Working to understand interaction between living things and the physical environment is crucial, because an ocean isn't just saltwater populated with plants and animals. Those briny deeps are a living and breathing thing. The oxygen in two of every three breaths we take is generated by the ocean, and that capacity requires harmony among every component of this complicated system.

Reaching this understanding requires commitment. A commitment not just to science, but also to realistic evaluation of how different uses will impact the environment and its inhabitants, followed by careful planning of how to reach a balance which accommodates some human demands while still protecting this crucial ecology.

Unfortunately, nations tend to be notoriously bad at planning. In large groups, people have a hard time thinking very far ahead. Combine that with the commitment required to understand the ocean and coast, as well as the ever-increasing demands for use of those resources, and we are presented with a tremendous challenge.

For the American Littoral Society, protecting marine life and its habitat is our starting point and most fundamental mission. Our efforts to achieve this mission lead us to being advocates for good planning, which brings to mind the old admonition, "make no small plans." We advocate for good planning of land use along the coast. We advocate for the



Tim Dillingham, Executive Director

restoration of coastal habitats after centuries of mismanagement and bad decisions. And, increasingly, we advocate for proper planning to protect our oceans.

Each of these efforts share common strategies: do good science to understand the ecology, create blueprints which, first and foremost, respect and protect the ecology of these regions, and encourage the public to support a balanced vision for the future of this essential resource.

We are faced with immediate demands to drill the Atlantic for oil and gas, to build industrial liquified natural gas facilities offshore, to use a quarter million acres of the ocean for wind energy development, and to dredge the places where fish live and breed in order to put sand back on eroded beaches.

In response, we must increase calls for good planning and strong protective policies of the ocean. At the same time, we continue our work to protect the seashores and their estuaries. As I said, make no small plans.

The support and engagement of our members and others who care for the coast are critical to the success of these efforts. Thanks for all you have done and please keep up the work, because protecting the ocean and coast is a long-term effort.

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## Remembering

Thanks to all those who have made contributions to the Society in memory of loved ones.

### In Memory of:

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## Littoral Society Makes Babies for Barnegat Bay

The American Littoral Society was making babies this summer in Barnegat Bay. Oyster babies, that is.

The Society staged events to grow oysters in a spat tank and seed a reef built in April. The special events, which mixed a bit of entertainment with science, not only helped connect area residents with the project, they also drew a great deal of media attention to the plight of oysters in New Jersey and the Society's efforts toward addressing those problems.

In April, using 120 cubic yards of whelk shell, a reef was constructed off Good Luck Point, in the Bayville section of Berkeley Township. In June an oyster nursery, also known as a spat tank, was built on a pier in Ocean Gate Borough, just off the Toms River.

On June 26, as part of a special ceremony, more than 2 million oyster larvae were put into the tank while singer Bill Brown crooned Marvin Gaye's classic "Let's Get It On."

In addition to the light entertainment, those in attendance — which included staff from US Congressman Tom McArthur's office and many Ocean Gate residents — learned about the life cycle of oysters. Oyster larvae attach to hard surfaces that contain calcium carbonate — the key ingredient in shells. Once attached, baby oysters are called oyster spat. By the

time they are two to three years old, they will be filtering up to 50 gallons of water a day.

"If you think of each shell as being an apartment for oysters,

sometimes you can have families of five or a single person living there so it's the same thing for oysters," said Christine Thompson, restoration scientist for the Society.

In late July the shell, carrying live oyster spat, were carried to the reef site by a parade of boats. More than a dozen craft ferried the babies to their new home in the bay; accompanied by society staff, Monmouth University students, and area residents, along with reporters and cameramen from local and statewide media.

The oysters aren't meant for human consumption; they're a pilot project



A spat tank in Ocean Gate, NJ served as nursery for oyster babies.

intended to demonstrate that non-farm oyster populations can be re-established in New Jersey's coastal water.

Decades of pollution, accelerated by rampant development, have decimated the oyster population all along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts. According to some estimates, 99 percent of oyster reefs have disappeared since Europeans settled in North America. Oysters act as natural water filters, and their reefs serve as speed bumps for waves during storms and protective habitat for numerous other creatures.

While the goal is to build more reefs in locations around New Jersey, the Society will continue to monitor and expand the Good Luck Point reef.

The Good Luck Point oyster restoration project, funded by NOAA and Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), is a collaborative effort led by the American Littoral Society, with support from Ocean Gate and Berkeley Township. Other partners include Monmouth University's Urban Coast Institute, which executed baseline mapping of the reef site using remote operating underwater vehicle (ROV) and side scanning techniques, and ReClam the Bay, which provided support for biological sampling and assistance with spat tank assembly.



In July a parade of boats delivered our oyster babies to their new home in Barnegat Bay.



Student Conservation Association members remove debris from Little Egg Island in Jamaica Bay, NY, as part of the NY State Beach cleanup led by the Northeast Chapter of the American Littoral Society.

## NY State Beach Cleanup Clears 140 Miles of Shoreline

Since 1980, a cornerstone of the American Littoral Society's work has been our management and promotion of New York's participation in the annual International Coastal Cleanup. We have taken this grassroots program from 100 volunteers at 4 sites in New York City to over 6,891 volunteers at 248 sites statewide in 2014.

The New York State Beach Cleanup is held every September. The program engages people to remove debris from beaches and waterways, identify sources of the debris, change the condition that caused the debris, and modify the behaviors that cause pollution.

While the activities on the day of the cleanup are important and receive much publicity, the compilation, analysis and dissemination of the data collected have an even greater and longer-term impact.

The cleanup is unique in that volunteers document on data cards what they remove. This information is summarized for individual sites, and data summary cards are sent to the Ocean Conservancy for analysis. The resultant studies produce strategies to combat marine pollution and to inform policy makers, the media, and the public about recommended changes.

The totals for this year's cleanup are yet to be finalized, but a preliminary report indicates that over 4,500 people participated in collecting more than 42,000 pounds of debris. Together they cleaned 140 miles of shorelines in NY State.

While we are very proud of these figures, the data is still incoming and we expect to far surpass these amounts.

Congratulations to our Beach Captains and all of our volunteers for a successful NY State Beach Cleanup, the largest all volunteer event affecting the coastal zones of New York.

We also thank our partners, funders and sponsors for their support of this program.

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**NY State Dept. of Environmental Conservation**  
**Peter & Carmen Luia Buck Foundation**  
**The Port Authority of NY & NJ**  
**Quebec Labrador Foundation**  
**Judy & Josh Weston**

## Name That Fish

It's November, our migrating coastal fishes are back again, just passing through on the way to their southern wintering grounds, and once again it's time to play everyone's favorite fishy guessing game: "Name that Fish!"

In our spring newsletter we chose a somewhat common inhabitant of mid-Atlantic bays, estuaries, and marshes; threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*). Society member John Humphreys, relayed to us that its common name in Great Britain is "Tiddler," of which he caught many as a boy.

Sticklebacks are one of the most diverse genera of fishes, with no less than 32 named and distinct species. Due to this prevalent speciation and diversity, sticklebacks have been extensively studied by evolutionary biologists. Threespine sticklebacks can be readily identified from others by their three bony dorsal spines (occasionally four and rarely five), with the first two noticeably larger than the third, each with a small triangular fin membrane, and by their very slender tail. They do not possess scales; instead they are armored by protective bony plates. Threespine sticklebacks grow to a maximum size of around 4 inches.

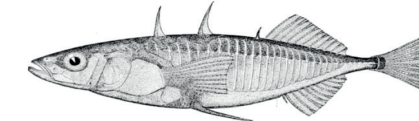
The threespine stickleback is a coastal and sometimes inland (freshwater) fish that can only be found in the northern hemisphere, north of latitude 30 degrees, present in both



Take a good look at the fish above and send your best-guess to "Name that Fish" c/o the American Littoral Society, 18 Hartshorne Drive, Suite 1, Highlands, NJ 07732

North America, Greenland, Iceland, northern Europe and along the Pacific coast of Asia. They can live in fresh, brackish, or salt water; locally they are most often found in marine habitats.

They are an anadromous fish; meaning that they venture into freshwater to spawn — like salmon, shad, and striped bass. They are prolific



Threespine stickleback

nest builders, with the males gluing together plant material with spiggin (a protein produced in their kidneys). Males perform a zig-zagging courtship dance to entice a female to enter the nest and deposit her eggs. The male then chases the female out and ferti-

lizes the eggs. Afterwards, he guards and ventilates the eggs and young.

Anadromous threespine sticklebacks usually die of exhaustion after the spawning cycle. Freshwater individuals are sometimes able to complete several cycles within one year or sometimes over several years. We had many correct answers last go around, with only one incorrect answer of four-spined stickleback. Many simply guessed stickleback, but with so many species in the genera, only those entries that specified threespine were included in the drawing.

The winner, drawn from the correct entries placed in the Tagging Program hat, is Society member Beth Bailey. Congratulations, you may now wear said hat with ichthyologic pride.

## End of Summer Party a Rousing Success

This year two long-standing Sandy Hook partners, the American Littoral Society and the Sandy Hook Foundation, joined together to raise support for our national and natural treasures on Sandy Hook.

The party, attended by close to 400 guests, was a rousing success and netted \$60,000 for the two organizations. The party was held at the exclusive North Beach location with its upper deck overlooking New York Harbor. The view of the tower light tribute was beautiful and very moving.

Set up would not have happened without the assistance of the National Park Service. Lusty Lobster's feast,

Bahr's bisque, Salt Creek Grille's ribs, Whistling Onion's catering, Opici's & Rumson Buy Rite's wine and liquors, desserts by two talented committee members, lively auctions, and the live Bobby Lynch band provided scrumptious food and entertainment for the evening.

The American Littoral Society will use proceeds to continue to care for our coast and work to restore hundreds of miles of coastal and wetland shores to healthy, resilient habitats.

Thanks to all our event sponsors including Jeanne and Frank Shanley, Ricci Brothers Sand Company,



Two River Community Bank, H4 Enterprises, Valley National Bank, Builder's General Supply Company, United Airlines, Wickberg Marine Contracting, Dr. Lori Rubin and Seth Frank, and J. McLaughlin.

# National Ocean Policy is Necessary for Healthy Oceans



The proposed Port Ambrose project, which would involve a 22-mile undersea LNG pipeline off Long Beach, NY, is part of the industrialization of the Mid-Atlantic region.

## Cont. from Page 1

fish they produce, or the harbors and ports they provide. The Mid-Atlantic marine economy brings \$2 trillion (over 14% of U.S. gross domestic product) into the U.S. economy. In New Jersey alone, recreational fishing brings in over \$1.9 billion in sales to the state and generates over 13,000 full and part-time jobs.

Clearly, there are powerful emotional and financial reasons to keep our ocean and coasts healthy.

Good stewardship of our ocean and coasts demands strong laws and policies, within a comprehensive framework designed to balance many competing interests. However, decisions affecting the ocean have long been made by a multitude of state and federal resource agencies. Unfortunately, we have seen the inability of these bodies to break free of the decades-old, specie-by-species, agency-by-agency decision-making approach. That fragmented process has led to conflict with and mistrust by citizens, industries and even other decision-making bodies. Amidst that, our ocean and coast have suffered.

Implementation of our comprehensive U.S. National Ocean Policy, in part brought to life through regional ocean planning, aims to change the process to reflect what fishermen and coastal citizens already know: our ocean and coasts are intertwined and require a more coordinated manage-

ment approach based on solid data and local stakeholder involvement.

Ocean planning is exactly what it sounds like: creating a plan for how to sustainably use and protect our ocean and coastal regions. It doesn't create new laws or regulations; there are enough of those already. Instead, it creates a process that puts all agencies, state and federal, with existing authority to protect and manage our ocean and coastal resources, in a room with stakeholders with the directive that they work collaboratively and efficiently to ensure a healthy Mid-Atlantic ocean for this and future generations.

The Mid-Atlantic States, federal agencies, and the region's federally recognized tribal nations realize this and are now on track to complete the region's first ever ocean action plan next year. This is an incredible milestone for our state and region, as the plan will guide future conservation and sustainable use of our ocean and coastal resources. It is also a perfect opportunity for citizens and ocean users from around the region to become involved. Ocean planning, like anything, comes down to what people put into it.

We have an unprecedented opportunity to ensure this plan reflects our input and becomes a tool we can all use to ensure our government is careful and wise in how it manages and protects our region's diverse

marine ecosystems and the marine wildlife that depend upon them.

The American Littoral Society is responding by increasing our focus on National Ocean Policy advocacy and planning. As part of that, two new staff were recently hired to help Sarah Winter Whelan, our Healthy Oceans Coalition director, coordinate and manage the work.

Together they will help advance the Littoral Society's call for a strong, comprehensive plan in the mid-Atlantic and nationally. Such planning is crucial in light of several recently announced industrial projects off the Atlantic coast. Among them are:

- US Interior Department authorization for seismic testing, oil and gas exploration,
- the Department of Interior plan to lease nearly 350,000 acres off the coast of New York and New Jersey for wind farms, and
- the push for more Atlantic liquid natural gas facilities, such as the Port Ambrose project, which is off the New Jersey coast.

The Society believes the ocean is best dedicated to natural, sustainable, and non-polluting uses. Oil and gas exploration, drilling and extraction fit none of those criteria.

The Society does favor clean power from sources such as wind. However, careful consideration must be given to where windmills are sited in order to avoid harming commercial and recreational fishing areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and marine life, such as whales and sea birds.

In the end, the answer to the failure of current practices and policies is not to keep complaining about what does not work, but to create new pathways to better and more effective management. Full implementation of the National Ocean Policy and Mid-Atlantic ocean planning is one such pathway. As the communities most closely tied to the ocean, we should embrace ocean planning and urge our elected officials to do likewise.

Because the one thing on which we should all be able to agree is that everyone needs healthy oceans.

## Upcoming Events and Trips

### November

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 1-4 p.m.  
Thursday, Nov. 12, 6:30-8 p.m.  
Saturday, Nov. 14, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Sunday, Nov. 15, 10 a.m.- Noon

Reeds Beach, NJ  
Millville, NJ  
Jamaica Bay, NY  
Fort Tilden, NY

Veterans Day on the Bay  
Fix-a-Leak Workshop  
Winter Waterfowl Workshop  
Explore the Mysterious Back Woods  
Assateague/Chincoteague Trip

Thursday-Sunday, Nov. 19-22

Assateague, VA

### December

Thursday, Dec. 3  
Sunday, Dec. 6, 10 a.m.- Noon  
Saturday, Dec. 12, 5-9 p.m.  
Saturday, Dec. 19, 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Bridgeton, NJ  
Floyd Bennett Field, NY  
Broad Channel, NY  
Jamaica Bay, NY

CAWA Meeting  
Dead Horse Bay  
Annual Holiday Party  
Winter Birds and Survival

### January

Friday, January 1, 11 a.m.  
Friday-Sunday, January 8-10

Sandy Hook, NJ & Ft. Tilden, NY  
Montauk, NY

New Years Day Beach Walk  
Montauk Winter Weekend

### February

Saturday, February 27  
Saturday, Feb. 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Sandy Hook, NJ  
Jamaica Bay, NY

Winter Seal and Waterfowl Walk  
Winter Thaw Bird Walk

### March

Sunday, March 20, 5 p.m.  
Saturday, March 26, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Sandy Hook NJ  
Jamaica Bay, NY

Spring Equinox Walk  
Early Spring Bird Walk

### April

Saturday, April 16, 1-5 p.m.  
Saturday, April 23, 4 p.m.

Sandy Hook, NJ  
Asbury Park, NJ

In Artful Honor of Mothers  
(Earth and Others)  
Langosta Lounge Lobster Trot  
(5k for the Coast)

## Littoral Society Partners with J.M. Huber Corp.

The J.M. Huber Corporation is partnering with the Littoral Society in order to offer their employees opportunities for volunteerism and team building. Events such as dune grass planting, invasive species removal, and other outdoor activities will be planned for spring 2016.

In the interim, Huber corporation staff volunteered to mail the recent



Underwater Naturalist, and J.M. Huber donated the cost of the mailing. The J.M. Huber Corporation was

founded in 1883 by Joseph Maria Huber, an immigrant from Bavaria, Prussia. The family-run company is headquartered in Edison, NJ.

Samuel Huber, Vice President of the Society, is the grandson of the company's founder.

Thank you, J.M. Huber Corp.



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The American Littoral Society promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, defends the coast from harm, and empowers others to do the same.

Caring for the Coast Since 1961