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Volunteer for the Sound

WORKING TOGETHER TO RESTORE AND PROTECT THE SOUND



May 23, 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!

National Trails Day Weekend is June 4-5, 2016



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 on June 4-5, 2016!

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:

- Edith G. Read (volunteer workday at Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary), June 4
- Pelham Bay (birding-hawk watch at Pelham Bay Park), June 4
- Oyster Bay (Bay Day at The WaterFront Center), June 5
- Lloyd Neck (grassland restoration project at Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve), 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.

Long Island Sound Citizens Summit

Save the Date
Historic 25th Annual
Long Island Sound Citizen Summit



CITIZEN SCIENCE:
Translating Science into Action for
Long Island Sound

Friday, June 3, 2016
Stony Brook University
9:00AM - 3:30PM

Registration for the Historic 25th Annual Long Island Sound Citizens Summit is still 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 \$30 charge for students and \$40 charge for adults). If you are interested in presenting a poster, please contact Brittany Chamberlin-Martin at bchamberlin-martin@savethesound.org.

For more information and to register, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/2016LISCitizenSummit>.

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.

Upcoming Connecticut Volunteer Events

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, June 4 – Sunday, June 5, 2016 – National Trails Day weekend at [Long Island Sound Stewardship Areas](#).

Upcoming New York Volunteer Events

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 28, 2016 at 9:00am-3:00pm – Coastal Steward Beach Cleanup. Join Coastal Steward for a beach cleanup at Centennial Park Beach in Port Jefferson, NY. Gloves, bags, water, and snacks will be provided. Don't forget your sunscreen, tick protection, and a sun hat. For more information, please call Pat at 631-334-6824.

Wednesday, June 1, 2016 at 8:00am-1:00pm – Shellfish Restoration with Coastal Steward. Meet at the Coastal Steward dock in Mt. Sinai, NY. For more information, [click here](#).

Saturday, June 4 – Sunday, June 5, 2016 – National Trails Day weekend at [Long Island Sound Stewardship Areas](#).

Saturday, June 4, 2016 at 10:00am-12:00pm – North Fork Coastal Cleanup Day. Join the Group for the East End for a coastal cleanup at Orient Point County Park in Orient, 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, June 5, 2016 – Community Volunteer Day. Join the Queens Botanical Garden to work as a team to keep their gardens looking beautiful in Flushing, NY. From mulching flower beds, to weed removal, planting bulbs, and raking leaves, this is a chance to bring a friend, get your hands dirty, and give back to your local botanical garden. Pre-registration required. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Saturday, June 11, 2016 at 10:00am-1:30pm – Volunteer Stewardship Day at Sunken Meadow State Park. Assist in the construction of a new salt marsh by planting *Spartina alterniflora* grasses. Please bring work gloves if you have them. Wear waders, tall boots, or water shoes that can get wet and muddy because we will be planting in a wetland area. For questions and to RSVP, email restoration@savethesound.org.

Saturday, June 25, 2016 at 8:00am-1:00pm – Shellfish Restoration with Coastal Steward. Meet at the Coastal Steward dock in Mt. Sinai, NY. For more information, [click here](#).

Volunteer Spotlight

Article by Monica Marlowe, a Science Teacher at Sachem North High School and an Oceanography Professor at Suffolk County Community College, as featured in the [winter 2015-2016](#) issue of Sound Update:



Sachem North High School students planting smooth cordgrass at a volunteer planting day in June 2015 at Sunken Meadow State Park. Credit: Monica Marlowe

Sunken Meadow Creek, located within Sunken Meadow State Park in Kings Park, New York, was a free flowing tidal tributary to the Nissequogue River and Long Island Sound before it was impounded by a dike in the 1950s, with two culverts restricting flow. To restore tidal flow, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), along with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, planned to remove the restrictive culverts and allow for natural ecosystem restoration to 132 acres of former estuarine habitat that had transitioned to a freshwater marsh environment. In Fall 2012, Hurricane Sandy naturally restored tidal flow to Sunken Meadow Creek.

NYSOPRHP partnered with New York Sea Grant, NYSDEC, and local schools, including **Sachem North High School** and **Suffolk County Community College**, to develop a long-term, habitat monitoring program to document changes in Sunken Meadow Creek, before and after tidal flow restoration. Both baseline data, collected years before the Hurricane Sandy breach, and ongoing, post-restoration monitoring data have been collected.

The results show that since the restoration, the Creek has experienced an expected significant increase in salinity and an unanticipated significant increase in nitrates. The increased tidal flow and salinity served to remove the invasive *Phragmites australis*, or common reed. The freshwater species of fish that once utilized the Creek are now absent and have been replaced by marine organisms, including winter flounder, oyster toadfish, American eel, and sea robin. This habitat restoration project has improved fish access to spawning areas, provided important nursery habitat for estuarine-dependent, economically important species, increased the abundance of prey fish, and improved habitat for migratory birds. These documented changes are the beginning stages to a successful salt marsh restoration. The one concerning result was the significant increase in nitrates after the restoration. A logical explanation for the increase was the loss of common reed.

In an effort to mediate the increased nutrient levels, associated harmful algal blooms, and eutrophic events, native *Spartina alterniflora*, or smooth cordgrass was planted in June 2015. Along with nitrogen absorption, the smooth cordgrass will help manage stormwater, promote sediment accretion, and provide improved habitat. The planting was a collaborative effort, led by Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound with funding received by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and included many state and local organizations, community members, and student volunteers.

The ongoing restoration of Sunken Meadow Creek has not only served to restore vital ecosystem services of a

Long Island Sound estuary, but has also helped to raise awareness and provide environmental education opportunities to local high school and community college students. From my personal experience, as well as the enthusiastic testimonials of students, I am confident that these hands-on experiences are the most effective way to inspire young people to continue environmental advocacy and scientific research in their future.

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.

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](#)

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