

CONSERVATION

Monofilament Recycling Program

by Katie Sellers, Conservation Scientist

Monofilament line may not be a common household name, but it is a critical part to a popular past time in America: fishing. Made of a single fiber of plastic, monofilament line is the most commonly used form of fishing line on the market today. Unfortunately, either by accident or through neglect, some of this monofilament line can make its way into our waterways and can take over 600 years to decompose! This fishing line not only spends a long time in the environment but can also be very hazardous to marine life, bird life, scuba divers and even boat propellers. In an effort to reduce the amount of monofilament fishing line that ends up in our local waterways, The Wetlands Institute has developed a Monofilament Recycling Station Program in alliance with the “Reel in and Recycle” effort initiated by Boat U.S. Foundation.

Wetlands Institute staff and volunteers have installed an initial batch of 12 monofilament recycling stations at marinas and fishing piers throughout Southern New Jersey (SEE MAP). In an effort to properly dispose of the material (keeping it out of landfills), the Wetlands Institute is responsible for maintaining these recycling stations and disposing of the fishing line on a regular basis.



Monofilament Recycling Station Locations in Southern New Jersey



Monofilament line collected by The Wetlands Institute is sent to the Berkeley Conservation Institute to be recycled into new plastic products such as park benches or tackle boxes. Through this program, the Wetlands Institute hopes to inspire anglers to be more responsible when utilizing monofilament fishing line and to promote understanding on how monofilament line can become a hazard when lost to the natural environment.

If you would like to help by picking up monofilament from the stations, or know of other locations where monofilament stations would be beneficial, please contact Katie Sellers at conservation@wetlandsinstitute.org.

“To promote appreciation, understanding and stewardship of wetlands and coastal ecosystems through our programs in research, education and conservation.”

Founded in 1969 by Herbert Mills, executive director of the World Wildlife Fund

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Hours:

October 1 - April 14

Fri., Sat., and Sun. 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Closed Monday - Thursday
Open most holidays - Check website

General Admission:

Members *Free*
Nonmembers *\$8 Adults \$6 Children 3-12*

Views From the Tower is the quarterly newsletter of the Wetlands Institute and can also be found on our website.

1075 Stone Harbor Boulevard
Stone Harbor, NJ 08247-1424
609-368-1211
www.wetlandsinstitute.org

MARSH MUSINGS

by Dr. Lenore Tedesco, Director

Greetings Wetlands Institute friends and supporters. The seasons are turning and the days are getting shorter, but it's a wonderful time to be at the Wetlands Institute. The marsh grasses are taking on golden shades and the sunsets are incredible. As I write this column, we are in full fall migration and there seems to be something pretty amazing happening every day. Our visit by a Marbled Godwit was enough to get all the staff away from their computers and out to the spotting scope deck. It's so important to stop and smell the roses - I mean notice the birds that are all around us. And the Wetlands Institute is a great place to do that. Those few moments can calm the soul.

October marked my one year anniversary with the Wetlands Institute and it has been a pretty amazing year. We are still in the midst of great transformations. A notable change is that we have adopted new winter hours. We will now be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from October 1 - April 14. We will be open on the "Monday holidays" and other times when kids are out of school. We are planning a great set of educational programs and experiences for Thanksgiving weekend. Lunch and Learn will remain an important event for us - but will switch to Fridays. Covered dish dinners will also continue as always (see Winter Happenings). We hope that these new hours will better serve our members while at the same time allowing staff more time for grant writing, research and program development. Come see us and see if you agree. There will always be staffed events for you to enjoy.

Our education program is undergoing a major overhaul. We will be bringing on a new program director this winter and adding new education staff in the spring. It was time to renew and refresh the educational programs and this transition is a great time to make some changes. Look for an increased focus on experiential learning in school programs and outreach. Institute programs will be revamped to include new offerings, while the aquarium will include more active learning programs. A key to improving science aptitude in our youth is engagement in inquiry-based education and programs of exploration and discovery in the natural world. The Wetlands Institute is an amazing classroom and program changes will take advantage of our location in significant new ways. Our conservation programs are expanding and creating linkages between conservation and education programs will be a priority of new program initiatives. The Wetlands Institute has so much to offer and we will be offering it in amazing new ways.

As we settle into fall, we are excited to celebrate our great volunteers and all they do to advance the mission of the Institute. So far this year, our 293 volunteers logged 4,828 hours of service. They did everything from answering phones, to greeting visitors, to leading hikes and tours, to helping with classes, leading teaching tank demonstrations, keeping the animals in the aquarium happy and healthy, helping in the Tidepool Shop, and working in so many ways with our special events that they are too numerous to mention. The value of this volunteerism is priceless - but the State of New Jersey has a value for volunteer hours - and their service to the Institute is valued at \$121,726 - by these measures. Simply remarkable. They enrich our programs and all of us. We hope it brings them joy as well. To show our appreciation in a very small way, we hosted a thank you dinner for our volunteers on October 19th. Thanks to all of you for all you do. If you would like to become a Wetlands Institute volunteer, we welcome your participation. Call the Institute or check out information on the website.

Stop by and enjoy the quiet times in the marsh and at the Institute. Follow us on facebook and twitter and post some of your Wetlands Institute photos on Pinterest. There is something new to see with every visit whether it's a cyber-visit or a stroll in the marsh. We continue to implement new programs and *Make No Small Plans*. Be a part of it!



WINTER HAPPENINGS

Preregistration is required for many events and may be made by calling the Institute at 609-368-1211. We're sorry, but refunds are not available for programs with prepaid registration. Unless otherwise noted, prices are listed per person with the discounted member price first, followed by the nonmember price. ☞ means kid-friendly!

☞ FEATURED CREATURES

We'll highlight a different live animal Saturdays and Sundays! Get up close with terrapins, crabs, turtles, sea stars, and horseshoe crabs. On Fridays it's a special Science Feature, with info on a wide range of conservation topics.

Fridays, Saturday, and Sundays at 2:15
All ages

Free with admission

☞ AQUARIUM FEEDINGS

Help us feed the fish, or just watch them gobble down their food. Every Saturday we'll open the aquarium so you can see how we keep our critters full, happy, and healthy.

Saturdays: 12:00 pm
All ages

Free with admission

☞ KIDS N CRAFTS

Paper plates, popsicle sticks, and googly eyes, Oh my! Come make some crafty critters with us while learning some fun facts about them.

Take home a different critter each week!

Saturdays: 1:00 pm
All ages

Free with admission

☞ SEASHELL SUNDAYS

Starting a shell collection? Want to know where shells come from? Can't figure out what that thing you found on the beach is? Bring it in, and we'll tell you all about seashells and how to collect them without harming the environment.

Sundays: 10:00 - 11:00 am
All ages

Free with admission

LUNCH & LEARN

Join us for a weekly exploration of topics of importance to our coastal and wetland ecosystems. Bring your lunch and the Institute will provide coffee and dessert. We will feature a different speaker each week. Check our website for details or call the Institute

Fridays, 11:45 am, January 11th - March 22nd
except on dates of Covered Dish Dinners (January 25 and February 22)

WETLANDS INSTITUTE QUILTERS DINNER

This is the night to show our appreciation for our dedicated quilters and to draw the winner of this year's raffle quilt "Turtle Dance". Quilt raffle tickets will be available up to the time of the drawing for \$1 each. An order form and information appear in this newsletter. This is a covered dish dinner so please bring an entrée, salad or dessert to share with at least eight people.

Friday, December 7th at 6:00 pm
\$7/\$12, plus a covered dish
Reservations by December 6th

COVERED DISH DINNERS:

Please bring an entrée, salad or dessert to share with at least eight people.
\$7/\$12, plus a covered dish

TIED UP IN KNOTS - THE BATTLE TO SAVE THE DELAWARE BAY SHOREBIRD STOPOVER

Join Dr. Larry Niles, Delaware Bay Shorebird Project Director, as he discusses the critical shorebird stopover and horseshoe crab breeding ground in Delaware Bay and its hemispherical importance.

Friday, January 25th at 6:00 pm
Reservations by January, 24th

EXPERIENCES IN WATER RESOURCES AND WETLAND CONSERVATION ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Join Dr. Tracy Baker from Richard Stockton College as she discusses her work on African wetland systems and their potential role in food and water security and the challenges related to conservation and development there.

Friday, February 22nd at 6:00 pm
Reservations by February 21st

THE AMERICAN OYSTER - AN ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC ENGINE POWERING A FISHERY, AQUACULTURE AND RESTORATION

Come meet Dave Bushek, director of the Haskins Shellfish Laboratory of Rutgers University. Dr. Bushek will discuss efforts at oyster restoration, aquaculture and fisheries in Delaware Bay and compare and contrast different approaches.

Friday, March 29th 6:00 pm
Reservations by March 28th

Please check our website calendar for schedule updates!



RESEARCH

The Institute Receives Its 2nd Disney Worldwide Conservation Award by Dan McLaughlin, Research Coordinator

In September, The Wetlands Institute was awarded a grant from the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund (DWCF) for its Jersey Shore Terrapin Conservation Project. The Institute is among 80 projects selected this year for their efforts to inspire people and collaborations to protect the world's wildlife, and to connect children and communities to nature. The grant is part of the DWCF's \$20 million milestone in conservation giving since its inception in 1995.

Current data indicate that terrapin hatchlings migrating from their nest site to the salt marsh during the fall (August to October) and spring (March to June) frequently fall into curbside storm drains and become trapped in large numbers. With extraordinary assistance from local volunteers, we discovered and rescued over 4000 terrapin hatchlings from storm drains in just two barrier island communities since 2009. We affectionately refer to these babies as "Storm Drain Survivors".



With these funds, Wetlands Institute staff will work with a team of community volunteers comprised of members of the local community and high school students to monitor storm drains throughout the area including Sea Isle City, Stone Harbor, Avalon, and Wildwood Crest. If you would like to be part of the volunteer network, contact Dan at research@wetlandsinstitute.org. Volunteers will receive training and equipment to monitor storm drains in an assigned area and rescue and release trapped baby terrapins.

Before 2009, the Institute was unaware that hatchlings were being trapped in storm drains.



The DWCF grant will also support our long-term research on the ecology, natural history, and conservation of diamondback terrapins, a species of special concern in New Jersey. During the 2013 nesting season (June and July), student researchers will conduct daily road patrols in search of female terrapins crossing local roads. During the course of the 38-mile drive along the salt marsh they will help terrapins across the road and recover turtles that were killed by motor vehicles. Eggs collected from road kill females will be incubated at The Wetlands Institute and the resulting hatchlings will be reared for one year at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. Most will be microchipped so we can assess the impact of this program of diamondback terrapin populations. These hatchlings will then be released back to the marsh by school children, community groups, and Institute supporters.



Renewed support from Disney will also enhance a pilot program funded by DWCF in 2011-2012 to develop and distribute terrapin conservation-based learning activities designed by grade school teachers for grade school students. In 2012, four local teachers worked alongside staff, student research interns, and volunteers during our summer research and conservation activities. The teachers later developed learning activities based on these experiences and will be presenting the material at four statewide conferences throughout the year. We are pleased to be working with DWCF to expand our programs which provide the community with opportunities to participate in meaningful and impactful conservation efforts.

How many tickets? _____ @ \$1
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Please include this stub with your check or call (609) 368-1211 to order tickets.

The Wetlands Institute
1075 Stone Harbor Blvd.
Stone Harbor, NJ 08247-1424

QUILT RAFFLE
Drawing: December 7
8:30 PM
Get your tickets today!

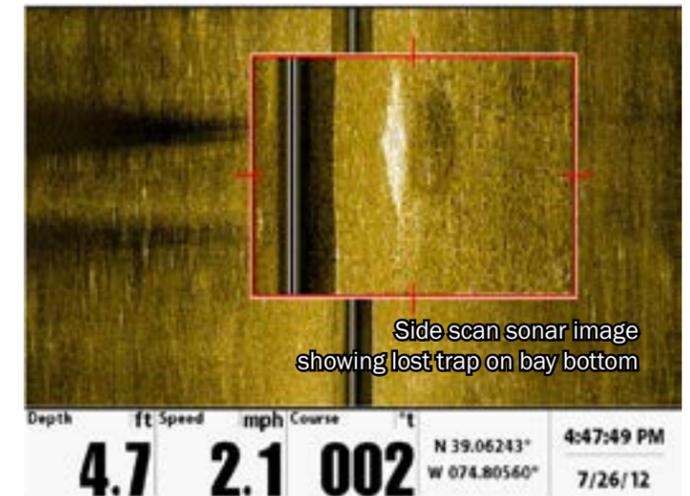
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No substitution of the offered prize may be made.

Turtle Dance Handmade Quilt
\$1,000 Value

VISITING SCIENTISTS

Ben Atkinson Studies Impact of Derelict Traps

Ben Atkinson, a PhD student from University of Florida and former Coastal Conservation Research Program intern, spent this past summer at the Institute as a Visiting Scientist. Ben's PhD research involves removing abandoned commercial crab traps from salt marshes around the Wetlands Institute to understand the impacts of derelict traps on populations of diamondback terrapins, crabs, and other animals that die in these lost and forgotten traps. During the summer, Ben and Dan McLaughlin surveyed large areas of the back bay tidal creeks and Grassy and Jenkins Sound in search of abandoned and lost traps.



They were able to identify and map 55 abandoned crab traps in local salt marshes using a side-scan sonar device. Ben will return to the Institute in November and work with Institute staff to remove the abandoned traps and collect the skeletal remains they contain. It is necessary for this work to be completed at the end of November and December when the commercial crabbing season is closed so that all located traps that still remain in the creeks and bays are positively identified as derelict traps.

SUNSET SOIREE & GOLF EVENT

The 22nd Annual Golf Tournament
Monday, June 11, 2012 at the Stone Harbor Golf Club
Thank you to all who came out to support the Wetlands Institute.

Special thanks to our Sponsors, especially:
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AROUND THE MARSH

Delaware Bay Shorebird Recovery Project

On Saturday, September 8th The Wetlands Institute hosted one of four Delaware Bay Leadership Meetings held by Manomet's (Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences) Shorebird Recovery Project (www.manomet.org/SRP) to address social marketing ideas to be used for shorebird conservation along the shores of the Delaware Bay. This was a facilitated and focused meeting that included 18 participants from important local stakeholder groups: Sportsmen, Local Government, Small-local Business, Students, and Faith-based Institutions. The primary goal of this session was to gain local input and perspective on messages that could be used to motivate an organization or individual to take action to conserve shorebirds or other important species of the Delaware Bay. This meeting also sought to understand actions local stakeholders were willing to take in order to conserve important Delaware Bay species and how such stakeholders value the Bay. With the aid of all who attended, many social marketing ideas were refined and many others were added to the social marketing strategy that will be used for shorebird conservation along Delaware Bay.



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Earth Share New Jersey

Earth Share New Jersey is a workplace giving campaign, similar to the United Way, where employees choose to have donations deducted from their pay checks. Each member's organization works to conserve the natural environment in New Jersey. Whether you're an employee or a CEO, please explore a campaign in your workplace. Call Earth Share's Paula Aldarelli at 609-989-1160 or e-mail paldarelli@earthsharenj.org.



MEMBER CORNER



2012 Photography Contest Winners Announced

Thank you to everyone who submitted over 70 beautiful images for the Institute's 2012 Photography Contest. All entries were displayed at the 30th Anniversary of the Wings 'n Water Festival on July 12 and 13, 2012 for hundreds of visitors to view. Winners were determined by the number of votes received via facebook. The first place winner for each category and their submitted image are listed below. Stay tuned for details of the 2nd Annual Photography Contest coming in March 2013!

Adult Categories Left to Right:

Adult Local Wildlife—Eagles by Eddie Tate
Adult Travel Wildlife—Cheetah by Cathy Herr
Adult Local Scenic—Cape May by Charlotte Herr
Adult Travel Scenic—Hirundo Wildlife Refuge by Cathy Herr

Youth Category—Marsh Wren by Jack McDonough, Age 10



TIDEPOL SHOP

by Joyce Ferguson

The Tidepool Shop is OPEN 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM every Friday, Saturday and Sunday throughout the winter months.



Kick-off your holiday shopping with the 25% store-wide sale over the Thanksgiving weekend, excluding consignment and green dot items. All Wings'nWater posters are available at a 50% discount. Also, denim long sleeve shirts with terrapin embroidery and fleece vests are on sale at a 40% discount.

The Tidepool Shop is filled with nature related books and gifts for adults and children. You will find a wide assortment of our popular T-shirts, sweatshirts, jackets and hats. Moonbird is a fantastic book detailing an amazing journey of a bird that stops in Stone Harbor! You might consider a Federal Duck Stamp as the perfect gift for someone interested in supporting habitat conservation and education. A Tidepool Shop gift certificate is another gift idea that is sure to please!

Of course we will be open for all special events and school group visits. You can call 609-368-1211 Ext.20 to schedule an appointment to shop at a more convenient time for you. In addition, we are happy to take telephone orders and mail your purchase to you.

The Tidepool Shop staff will be working over the winter months to find new merchandise and develop new custom products to greet you on your return!



1075 Stone Harbor Blvd.
Stone Harbor, NJ 08247-1424

or Current resident



A not-for-profit education and research organization studying, preserving and protecting wetlands and coastal ecosystems

Summer Nature Camps

Don't miss all the great summer camps coming in 2013. The Summer Nature Camp program is being renewed and refreshed. Look for great new camp topics and exciting new offerings.



Classes for K-9th Students begin June 24th. Complete program details will be available in mid-January.

Visit www.wetlandsinstitute.org for updates as information become available.



Wetland Wonderland

Wetlands Institute is celebrating the start of the holiday season with two-days of fun and exciting programs for children and families.

Crafty critters, featured creature specials, expanded teaching tank demonstrations and so much more. Come meet our new octopus and experience the wonders of the wetlands as the seasons change!

Make handmade recycled wrapping paper and food for the birds in your yard.

Celebrating 90 Years of Community Service.



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**Friday and Saturday
Thanksgiving Weekend**
November 23rd and 24th
9:30-4:30
\$5 Adult/ \$5 Child

Sponsored by Sturdy Bank