

## NEW GRANTS - EXCITING NEW PROJECTS

by Dr. Lenore Tedesco

### New Grants Lead to Launch of Education and Research and Conservation Projects

The Wetlands Institute (TWI) is pleased to undertake three new projects as a result of receiving funding from a series of competitive grants. The Education Department, under the direction of Brooke Knapick, has been awarded a grant from the US State Department to develop a wetland education center exchange program with Russia. In a creative partnership, TWI will work with World Wildlife Fund – Russia in Moscow and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in the United Kingdom. The program will create a peer-to-peer dialogue among wetland education centers in the US and in Russia. Historically, Russia has protected wetlands largely by closing wetland preserves to the public. New policies have opened these preserves to visitation and created a network of wetland education centers throughout the country. This project will bring together three wetland centers in the US and three centers in Russia to exchange best-practices and transfer



expertise in environmental education from the US where there has been a long history of outdoor education and engagement. Partner wetland centers in the US will be recruited via the steering committee of Wetland Link International, on which Executive Director Lenore Tedesco is a member. Meetings of the team will initially occur via Skype with exchange visits to Russian

wetland centers this spring and Russian exchange visits to the US in the fall 2015. TWI will host an international conference and webinar to share case studies of best practices. The educational activities and practices will be made available in both Russian and English and disseminated via an international wetland center network and TWI website.

The Research and Conservation Department, under the direction of Dr. Lisa Ferguson, is beginning work on two different projects both funded through the Department of the Interior through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grants Program. The first project will work to enhance nesting and roosting habitat at Stone Harbor Point for several species of birds with threatened or declining populations. The project will

harvest sand from the intertidal areas of Stone Harbor Point and create areas of higher beach elevations that will remain above high water during spring tides and moderate storm events. This increased



Black Skimmer colony on Stone Harbor Point

elevation is designed to prevent flooding and loss of nests especially of Piping Plovers, Least Terns and Black Skimmers, as well as provide safe resting habitat for migratory shorebirds including Red Knots and others. The project will also work to reduce predation on nests and build a coastal resilience dune along the northern portion of Stone Harbor Point. We are pleased to partner with NJ Audubon Society, Niles and Associates, Conserve Wildlife Foundation, NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, The Borough of Stone Harbor, and Richard Stockton College on this project.

The second project tests beneficial uses of dredge material from existing dredge projects to enhance and restore degraded wetlands. The project is led by NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife with The Nature Conservancy, Green Trust Alliance, and Richard Stockton College, partnering with the US Army Corp of Engineers. The first pilot project was completed late this summer and used sand from the



Dredge material being applied to marsh in process called thin layer placement

Continued on next page →

*"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 14 - April 30**

Open 9:30 – 4:30 - Friday, Saturday & Sunday  
Closed Monday through Thursday  
*Check our website for Holiday Hours*

### General Admission:

Members: *Free*

Non-members: *\$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 Blvd  
Stone Harbor, NJ 08247  
609-368-1211

[wetlandsinstitute.org](http://wetlandsinstitute.org)



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Black Skimmer foraging

will also be tested. Additional project sites are the marsh behind Avalon and a site near Fortescue on the Delaware Bay. Rounding out our involvement in this project, TWI's Education Department and Cape May Regional High School are exploring ways to bring these components of ecological resiliency to life in the classroom.

These new projects are opportunities for TWI to diversify and strengthen the Education and Research and Conservation Departments. These projects will support additional staffing and will be translated into public education programs. They are important ways for TWI to continue to provide problem-solving solutions and be a resource for the community.

dredging of the Intracoastal Waterway to build a sandy bar on Ring Island to create nesting habitat for Black Skimmers. Thin layer placement, a process of applying 3-6" of dredge material on the marsh to increase elevation but allow marsh grass to regrow, was tested in two areas on Ring Island as well. TWI provided guidance on skimmer habitat design and will monitor avian response to the project. A third practice, marsh edge restoration,



Black Skimmer habitat

## MARSH MUSINGS

by Dr. Lenore Tedesco, Executive Director

As I write this column, The Institute has just shifted to our winter hours. It's a bitter sweet time for us. The Institute is quiet most of the week and we all miss the energy, excitement and discovery of our visitors.

It's an important time for the Institute as staff shift their attention and focus to strategic endeavors related to planning and implementing new programs, increasing operational efficiencies, and updating and maintaining the physical plant and our programs.

This winter we are busy repairing and updating the Tower, implementing new operations to support research programs, creating new terrapin-based activities for teachers, designing new signage for the walkway, and creating some new exhibits in the aquarium. We remain very busy and it's refreshing to change our focus seasonally.

It's also a time for reflection. We have had an amazing year and have accomplished so much. We have all of you, our members and supporters to thank. The walkway has provided unparalleled access to the marsh we all love without overly impacting it.

Your support and donations have made the walkway a reality and enriched all that we do.

We are so thankful to the people that have contributed to our Capacity Building Initiative and supported the growth in staff and the enhancement of our facilities to support the diversification of programs. Special thanks to Ray and Ellen Burke, The Davenport Family Foundation, Dr. Connie Dent, Bert DeVries, Anne Galli, Dr. Ann Gundry, Julian and Betsy Miraglia, Wayne and Kay Renneisen, Chip and Nancy Roach, Hank and Julia Schellenger, Jim and Barbara Summers, Spike and Mary Yoh, and Ken and Jennifer Zeigler.

Major gifts have made it all possible, but we still have a long way to go. Your contributions make a difference for the plants and animals of coastal and wetland ecosystems every day and fuel the achievement of our mission.

If you would like to learn more about the Capacity Building Initiative and how you can help, please contact me. We are **making no small plans**, and our progress is evident every day. Join us on the road to excellence.



# WINTER HAPPENINGS

Even though it might be cold outside, it is always warm inside at The Wetlands Institute! Please join us for activities on the marsh every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from now until April 30, 2015. Unless otherwise stated, all activities occur onsite at The Wetlands Institute. Questions? Please call The Wetlands Institute at 609-368-1211.

## SEASONAL SCIENCE ACTIVITIES AND CRAFTS

We believe children and adults learn a great deal through moments of self-exploration. Each week we will offer a new self-guided science activity or craft related to seasonal changes in nature. We provide the supplies and you create the learning! Possible activities related to migration, geology, outdoor exploration, nature crafts, simple science experiments and much more!

**Free with admission.**

**Friday, Saturday & Sunday 10:00am - 4:00pm**

## CREATURE FEATURE AND CRAFT

We will highlight a different live animal or group of animals each day! Get up close with turtles, fish, crabs, sea stars and urchins, mollusks, horseshoe crabs and the animals of Finding Nemo. After the presentation, create a take-home craft related to that day's Creature Feature!

**Free with admission. Friday and Saturday 2:00pm**

## AQUARIUM FEEDING

Act as an Aquarist for a day and help us feed the local marine life! We will open up feeding each weekend so you can see the turtles chasing minnows and the horseshoe crab eating shrimp. As you watch them gobble down their food, use our animal feeding surveys to record their behavior so we can make sure all our animals are happy and well fed. Not all animals are fed every day.

**Free with admission. Saturday 11:00am**

## AQUARIUM TEACHING AND TOUCH TANK

There is no better way to learn about the local creatures found in the salty waters of the ocean or New Jersey back-bays than to experience them firsthand! Come join a Wetlands Institute educator for a unique, interactive learning experience as they teach about whelk, skates, sea urchins, sea stars, mud snails, and more! Please come prepared to touch the animals by not having any bug spray, hand sanitizer or lotion on your hands. If needed, hands can be washed with mild soap and water in The Wetlands Institute restroom before the program.

**Free with admission. Sunday 11:00am**

## SCIENCE FEATURE AND ACTIVITY

Each Sunday we will focus on a different conservation issue or science "hot topic"! Some of the topics include Marine Debris, Osprey Conservation, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Seafood, Horseshoe Crab Conservation and Terrapin Conservation. After the presentation, participate in a hands-on activity related to that day's Science Feature!

**Activity recommended for ages 8 and up, but younger children are welcome to attend.**

**Free with admission. Sunday 2:00pm**



### A YEAR IN REVIEW

**Friday, December 5 at 6:00pm**

While the new adventures of 2015 are quickly approaching, The Wetlands Institute invites you slow down and join us for A Year in Review as we celebrate through pictures, stories, videos and discussion all the twists, turns, achievements and efforts we have made over the course of 2014. This is a covered dish dinner, so please bring an appetizer, entrée, salad or dessert to share with at least eight people.

**RSVP requested by December 4.**

**Admission:** A covered dish plus \$7 for members and \$12 for non-members.

## LUNCH AND LEARN

Join us for a weekly exploration of topics important to our coastal and wetland ecosystems. Bring your lunch and The Wetlands Institute will provide coffee and dessert. Each week we will feature a different speaker and topic of discussion! Please check our website for complete details.

**Admission: \$3 for members and \$5 for non-members**

**Friday: 11:45am**

**January 9 - March 20** except on dates of Covered Dish Dinners (January 30 and February 27)

## COVERED DISH DINNERS

Nothing could be better than an evening filled with meeting new people, eating great food and engaging in scientific discussion! Join us the last Friday of each month, January - March, as we bring in guest speakers from around the region to share their knowledge of important issues in the field of environmental science and biology. In the spirit of covered dish dinners, please bring an appetizer, entrée, salad or dessert to share with at least eight people. Please check our website for complete details.

**Admission: A covered dish plus \$7 for members and \$12 for non-members. RSVP requested.**

**Friday: 6:00pm**

**January 30, February 27, and March 27**

**visit [wetlandsinstitute.org](http://wetlandsinstitute.org) for details**

**Looking for a Way to Share Your Talents?** Volunteering at The Wetlands Institute covers a variety of tasks including assistance with aquarium care, working in public education and outreach, answering the phones and administrative work, greeting and interacting with visitors, special events staffing, research and conservation project assistant, and much more! We are excited to offer 3 different options for volunteering based on the level of commitment you feel you can give to The Wetlands Institute. None of what we accomplish every day would be possible without the dedication of our wonderful volunteers! Find out more at [wetlandsinstitute.org](http://wetlandsinstitute.org).

Find us on



# RESEARCH & CONSERVATION

by Dr. Lisa Ferguson  
and Brian Williamson



## The Wetlands Institute receives 4<sup>th</sup> grant from Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund

For the fourth consecutive year, The Wetlands Institute has received a grant from the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund. This award, in the amount of \$24,900, will help us to continue our many diamondback terrapin research and conservation projects, which include road patrols during the nesting season, our storm drain rescue project, terrapin barrier fence installation and maintenance, as well as bycatch reduction device (BRD) distribution.

The grant also provides resources to continue and expand our ghost trap removal program, which will allow us to further reduce the threats derelict crab traps pose to terrapins in the salt marsh. To further our goal of educating the public on local conservation issues, The Wetlands Institute will work closely with local teachers to develop comprehensive terrapin-based learning modules that will be available on our website and also be distributed at various meetings and workshops. We are incredibly grateful to have received the support of Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund to help us in our education, research, and conservation efforts.



## Farewell Katie Sellers!



It is with heartfelt thanks that The Wetlands Institute staff bids Katie Sellers farewell as she departs our midst for a new position in Maine. A Middle Township native who grew up fishing the local waters, Katie explored her interests in coastal management and policy while earning her undergraduate and Master's degree in Marine Affairs and Policy at University of Miami.

Katie has worked at the Institute since 2003 in a variety of roles - from her early beginnings as junior volunteer helping at the front desk, to leading boat-based educational SEAS programs, to her most recent position as a Conservation Scientist managing horseshoe crab and fisheries projects, terrapin rescues and releases, and GIS projects - and has been a keystone member of The Wetlands Institute family.



We know our members, visitors, volunteers, and partners who have enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with her will join us in thanking Katie for all her contributions and in wishing her the best in her future endeavors.



Give the gift of conservation with one of our adoption programs:

**Adopt-A-Terrapin** or  
**Adopt-A-Horseshoe Crab**

Available for online purchase at  
[wetlandsinstitute.org/conservation](http://wetlandsinstitute.org/conservation)  
For more information or to purchase  
by phone, call 609-368-1211

### Memberships Make Great Gifts!

An annual membership is more than just a simple gift - it's a whole year of great benefits!



Now available for purchase and renewal online!



# RESEARCH & CONSERVATION

by Dr. Lisa Ferguson

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## Better Windows For Birds

Each year in the United States, an astonishing 100 million – 1 billion birds are estimated to die after colliding with homes, public buildings, and highrise buildings. Of particular risk to birds are windows and glass panes, which are near invisible to the birds as they flit about searching for food, cruise to evade predators, or become attracted to brightly lit windows. Their surroundings are reflected in the expanses of glass, creating a seamless yet risky scene for navigation. The issue of window strikes for birds has been an active field of study, with The Wetlands Institute's board member Dr. Daniel Klem of Muhlenberg College leading the way, and there are many simple recommendations for making your home or office less of a danger zone for our feathered friends. New advances in window design are on the market, and several low-cost solutions are available for upgrading your existing windows for birds.

Over the summer, The Wetlands Institute applied horizontal stripes to our lower level office windows where bird strikes were known to occur. These stripes, pieces of bird tape from American Bird Conservancy



spaced two inches apart, make the windows visible to quick-moving birds. Since taking this measure, our staff has not reported a single bird strike – and the view from our building is even more enjoyable with this safeguard in place. We will continue to evaluate our needs and options for retrofitting other windows across our building to make our grounds a safer place for birds.

For more information on the issue and steps to reduce the risk of bird collisions at your home or office, check out the American Bird Conservancy ([abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/collisions/glass](http://abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/collisions/glass)) and Fatal Light Awareness Program ([flap.org](http://flap.org)).

## THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

by Christine Mattera

The dedication our volunteers show to helping further our mission is an inspiration to all of us. Their generous contributions of time and talents are instrumental to our success. We recently held a celebration to thank these individuals but we wanted to further acknowledge them by sharing some of their accomplishments.

This year alone, 51 Junior Volunteers gave a total of 1473 hours; 59 Adult Volunteers providing us with 1830 hours of service; and 37 One Day Volunteers assisted us for 133 hours. Together, these devoted individuals were responsible for an aggregate 3436 donated hours.

Several of our volunteers helped at the front desk or with special events. Others gave their time teaching or assisting in the Aquarium and with Summer Nature Programs. Some also helped with terrapin projects such as spotting nesting females, installing nest exclosures to protect eggs from predation, and monitoring the nests for hatchlings.

Our top junior volunteer for the year was Taylor Tedesco who gave 132 hours of service. Taylor's contributions expanded from planting marsh grass to tagging terrapins and horseshoe crabs. She joined in on reTURN the Favor walks and helped to conduct horseshoe crab surveys. Her dedication to recapturing

terrapins for our monitoring projects lead her to focus on diamondback terrapin habitat and conservation in her coursework this semester.

Our top adult volunteer for 2014 was Dianna McFadden with 238 hours donated. Dianna volunteers a significant amount of her time helping at the front desk and in our Tidepool Shop. She also helps with special events and this year, she lent her amazing ear for birds to the Marshketeers by joining them for the World Series of Birding.

The contributions of our volunteers are extremely valuable. The Wetlands Institute Staff and Board of Trustees are deeply grateful to these generous individuals for their selfless commitment.

***Thank you for all that you do!***



*Some of our top volunteers at our Volunteer Celebration*



# EXCITING EVENTS

## FALL Migration — FESTIVAL —

THE WETLANDS INSTITUTE • NEW JERSEY

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Fall Migration Festival was a resounding success! It was the perfect weekend and our visitors were treated to some outstanding birding, nature exploration, wildlife interactions, back-bay boat and kayak tours, crafts, and more.

This year, we included Monarch tagging activities and expanded our offerings to include other pollinating insects by offering tours and tips on gardening to attract them.

The **Philadelphia Zoo** visited us with a few of their winged friends. **Cape May Point State Park** brought a wide array of reptiles and other creatures. They gave presentations and allowed visitors to hold some of the animals while learning about them. **Cape May County Beakeepers Association** highlighted their bee conservation projects with a live bee hive display. **Jim Temmermand** donated his time and supplies to show visitors how to tie their own fishing fly. Kids even got to take part in a special autumn terrapin release!



**Special Thanks to our Fall Migration Festival Corporate Sponsor: Kindle Auto Plaza**

*To see more pictures and videos of our events and activities, visit us on Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram*

## WETLAND WONDERLAND

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29 - 9:30AM TO 3:00PM

Spend the day discovering the winter wonders of the wetlands! Whether through hibernation, dormancy, migration or 'toughing it out', animals on the marsh have unique strategies for surviving the colder winter temperatures.

Throughout the day, we will have family fun activities including a very special live animal presentation *Built to Survive* by the **Philadelphia Zoo**, aquarium feedings, extended teaching and touch tank demonstrations, a special appearance by Scute, winter activities, crafts, games and more! For tickets and additional information, visit our website at [wetlandsinstitute.org](http://wetlandsinstitute.org).



### MEMBER:

**\$8 Adult, \$6 child, \$25 family pack of 4\***

### NON-MEMBER:

**\$10 Adult, \$8 child, \$30 family pack of 4\***

\*Family pack of 4 valid for 2 adults and 2 children or 1 adult and 3 children.



# AROUND THE MARSH

Find us on



## Welcome Heather Gee!



We are pleased to introduce Heather Gee, The Wetlands Institute's newly appointed Director of Development. Heather will be responsible for our fundraising and donor stewardship programs.

Heather has dedicated her entire career to philanthropy, most recently in the Philadelphia and tri-state area.

She is a dynamic professional with an extensive background in nearly all aspects of advancement. She has served in leadership positions in a wide variety of nonprofit organizations including health and human services, performing arts, higher education and philanthropic and professional services.

Throughout her career Heather has participated in ongoing educational training both as a student and as a presenter. She is a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) and a Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP). She regularly presents to various audiences and has been a leader in the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Greater Philadelphia Chapter (AFP, GPC) where she has also served as President of the Board.

Heather will occupy a critical position on the leadership team. She will be instrumental in our efforts to move forward and further our plans to establish the Institute as a leader in coastal research, education and conservation. Stop in and meet Heather next time you visit.

### Donations Were Received in Memory of:

- Geoffrey Moskowitz
- John D. Ohls
- Agnes Robinson
- Patricia Schroeder
- Thomas Swank

### Donations Were Received in Honor of:

- John Ohls
- Donna and Craig Rothman
- Marge Corson



**EarthShare New Jersey** is the **only environmental campaign** for workplace giving in the state of New Jersey. Employees of participating organizations can elect to have donations deducted from their pay check. For more information, call Paula Aldarelli at 609-989-1160 or e-mail [paldarelli@earthsharenj.org](mailto:paldarelli@earthsharenj.org).

## TIDEPOL SHOP

by Joyce Ferguson

Make the Tidepool Shop the **FIRST** stop for your Holiday gift buying!

We offer a personal shopping experience and free gift wrapping; all of your purchases support the mission and programs of the Wetlands Institute. A gift card to the Tidepool Shop is always a welcome gift and, remember, the purchase of a Federal Duck Stamp is sure to please any conservation enthusiast.

You will find a full line of guide books and other nature books for adults and children. Our specialized T-shirts, sweatshirts, fleece jackets and vests are available in adult and youth sizes.

Look for locally made products on our shelves. We carry several honey varieties from Busy Bees and beach plum and aronia berry jam from Jalma Farms. Also, you will find handcrafted glass by Wheaton Arts of Millville, NJ and unique decorative tiles from Rowe House Tile of Cape May Court House.

During the Holiday shopping season we will feature 20 to 30% sales on selective items and we are **OPEN** from 9:30 to 4:30 every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Stop by for a visit and see the Shop our summer visitors were thrilled with!

***Can't decide what to give? We now have gift cards!***

Redeemable for anything from general admission to merchandise, memberships, summer nature programs, event tickets, and more!





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

## SAVE THE DATE!

### 2015 SUMMER NATURE PROGRAM

The Wetland Institute's Summer Nature Programs are a great way for kids to spend summer discovering the New Jersey Shore in a fun and hands-on way.

But, don't just take our word for it; see what other parents and grandparents are saying! →

You don't want to miss it! Programs for children age 4-13 begin July 2015. Complete details including weekly theme descriptions, pricing and registration information will be available on our website mid-January 2015. [wetlandsinstitute.org](http://wetlandsinstitute.org)

“ Field trips and beach days for older kids are a nice twist! ”

“ Thank you for a fantastic week! Educational and fun! ”

“ It's great that the kids can get down and touch their natural world; their discoveries lead the lesson and they are exposed to the idea of conservation. Thank you! ”



### 3 SIMPLE WAYS TO Go Paperless



- 1: EMAIL US AT [staff@wetlandsinstitute.org](mailto:staff@wetlandsinstitute.org)  
OR 2: TEXT THE KEYWORD **PAPERLESS** TO 42828  
OR 3: SIGN-UP AT [WETLANDSINSTITUTE.ORG/ABOUT-US/NEWSLETTERS](http://WETLANDSINSTITUTE.ORG/ABOUT-US/NEWSLETTERS)