

Natural Resources Protective Association

Coalition Against Water Disposal of Contaminated Sediments

Post Office Box 050328 • Staten Island, NY 10305



In Memory of Edward "Kerry" Sullivan

SUMMER 2017

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**Please join
or renew
your NRPA
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TODAY
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THE BILLION OYSTER PROJECT IS COMING TO CONEY ISLAND

By Ida Sanoff

About fifteen years ago, encouraged by successful oyster restoration in Chesapeake Bay (the largest oyster producer area in the U.S.), the Billion Oyster Project was formed with the objective of restoring oyster reefs in New York Harbor. Their goal is to have 100 acres of oyster reefs in local waters, containing a billion oysters, by 2035. Since the harbor is cleaner than it has been in decades, this is within reach.

This is very good news for marine ecology, because oyster reefs create habitat for fish and crustaceans that can hide in their nooks and crannies. But oysters improve water quality too. A single oyster can filter fifty gallons of water a day, removing particles, nitrates, bacteria and other noxious materials. And if all of this wasn't a reason to love oysters, their reefs can reduce storm surge damage too!

So how does oyster restoration work? In the first stage of their lives, oysters are tiny, free swimming larvae. Then they settle out of the water and hopefully land on a suitable surface where they can attach and begin to grow. When they attach, they are called spat. It takes about a year for an oyster to reach the point at which it can reproduce and about two to three years before they are large enough to be harvested for food.

Working with local schools, the Billion Oyster Project is setting up small oyster "gardens" at various locations around the city. Empty oyster shells are collected from restaurants around the city, because they provide the perfect surface for growing new oysters. After the shells are seeded with spat they are transferred to various cage-like frames and lowered into the water at piers and docks.

The Coney Island will be at the end of a fishing pier at West 31st St. Five steel "filing cabinets" about ten feet long by two feet wide will be placed into the water and about once a month, volunteers will pull them up and check to see how the oysters are doing. When the oysters mature, they will be added to existing reef areas. It will be interesting to see what happens next year!

OAKWOOD BEACH CLEANUP

By Jim Scarcella

NRPA performed a spring cleaning at Oakwood Beach Park and Bluebelt in May. The cleanup was almost jeopardized by some serious rain the previous evening, but (mostly) clear skies prevailed.

The Tarlton Street turnaround was our meeting location, there's usually some illegal dumping going on due to isolation. We had great support from the Parks Department. Vin Cascella and Alicia Torres arranged for a Parks Dept. garbage truck to ride with us to a serious illegal dumping spot at the outfall jetty. Near the outfall jetty, we removed an outdoor gas grill frame, a beach chair, an auto seat, cushion and frame from 1980, a sandy area rug, plywood, closet framing and a tire. Sadly, there is still plenty more to remove.

The beach debris included an overload of plastic, with bottle caps, straws, pens, markers, applicators and more. There were 40 single use plastic bags per 400 linear feet. We climbed a guardrail, and picked up a Sony TV, a 25 gallon metal auto gas tank, six auto brake disks and pads, aluminum gypsum wall board framing studs and tracks, trim, Styrofoam, clothing, PVC pipe pieces, a 5 gallon bucket, and a 3/4 full bottle of Chambord French Black Raspberry liqueur.

Our spirits were also greatly lifted by a visit from the Staten Island Borough Park Commissioner, Lynda Ricciardone, who expressed her gratitude for the NRPA's

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Borough Parks Commissioner Lynda Ricciardone, center, with volunteers

continuing efforts to keep our beaches and parks clean. When we alerted Ms. Ricciardone to the deteriorated trash receptacle, it was replaced by the end of the day. Thanks, Lynda and team!

The salt marsh and creek behind the beach was flooded, the birds included Canada Geese, Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, Barn Swallows, Boat-tailed Grackle and Glossy Ibis. There usually is a muskrat family nearby, feeding on fiddler crabs and plants.

Back on the beach, we found an orange cylindrical DOT traffic guidepost, broken glass, beer bottles, DEP Water Treatment Plant pump soap residue, and, sadly, 10 hypodermic needles. There was also a large Striped Bass skull, and a Red Fox carcass. There was great evidence of horseshoe crab exoskeleton molt, a pair of playful American Oystercatchers, and Laughing Gulls, along with other waterfowl.

Special thanks to Richie, Howie, Nicole Doz, Chuck Perry, Michael and Miya, Dominic, Igor and Bill Fitzgerald. All of these folks helped and we removed 600 lbs. of debris from the marsh and beach. Thank you for making the beach and our Parks a better place.

CONFERENCE HOUSE PARK AT PAGE AVENUE CLEAN UP

By Jim Scarcella

On May 20, the dedicated volunteers of NRPA cleaned Page Avenue

beach at Conference House Park. The location is also the site for the 'Living Breakwaters' as detailed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement issued by NYS Governor's Office of Storm Recovery, which was covered in the NRPA Spring 2017 newsletter.

The waters here are fairly shallow, the Raritan Reach Channel is about 800' offshore. The old dock piling field serves as evidence of the not-too-distant past when seaside resort hotels were located near the adjacent Surf Ave, for bathing, fishing, sailing and fresh oysters and clams.

The sun was shining when we set up the table, banner and supplies for the cleanup. On hand were Stephanie, Howie, Leslie, Bill Fitzgerald, Chuck Perry, Tony from Kayak Staten Island and a Native American, Andrew (he lives nearby and was glad we were there to help) and Lucia with her daughters.

An Osprey (fish hawk) soared overhead, going searching for a fresh fish to feed to its youngsters.

It was low tide, we walked out to the sandbar at the old hotel Pier location. The debris once again was multi-sourced, some bait (menhaden) transport bags with beverage bottles, cellophane wrappers, Styrofoam, DEP Water Treatment Plant soap, pieces of boating safety vests, garbage pail lids, a 5 gallon Igloo water cooler missing a cover, a 'M. C.' Baseball cap, a golf ball, 2 tennis balls, a brass connector for an old gas grill, cigarette butts and packaging, straws, and Heineken and Corona beer bottles.

About 40 minutes into the cleanup, the sky darkened and rain showers moved in, light at first and then fairly heavy. I was a half-mile north of Page Ave, up by Butler Manor, when I fortunately came upon an outdoor rain repellent hat that quickly got put to good use.

At the edge of the dune, where the vegetation started, I bent down to pick up several single-use plastic bags and was startled to find an American Toad, with its mottled markings and yellow and black eyes. The toad was a master of disguise,

searching for the moth pupa (caterpillars) that were emerging. The birds included Seaside Sparrow, Mallards, Herring Gulls and terns. The rain sent several volunteers home early, but we still managed to remove 150 pounds of garbage and recycle an additional 5 lbs. of glass and aluminum.

Special thanks to all who participated, it was far from ideal conditions but we made the park better.

GRANITEVILLE POND AND FOREST

By Jim Scarcella

On May 21, the NRPA cleaned the Graniteville Forest at Forest Avenue and Morrow Street, from the Theater Road. There is now a pond along Morrow Street, the proposed project for lead address 534 South Avenue (under evaluation by NYC City Planning) obliterates the Pond and puts Morrow Street at a different location to accommodate a new retail center, gas station, bank and stores.

The Graniteville Forest and pond is full of wildlife and mature trees and as a show of good faith, we cleaned up the illegal dumping at the parcels. The debris included single use plastic bags (30), plywood, PVC piping, a microwave, cassette tape deck mixer, garbage bags, a boogie board, cigarettes, two auto tires, 4 cement masonry hollow building blocks, a 5 gallon pail with expired cement, beverage bottles, plastic water bottles, aluminum soft drink containers, and much more. On Forest Avenue, we brought the wood fence pieces that had been illegally dumped to the curb for Dept. of Sanitation pick-up. Overall we cleaned up about 300 lbs. of trash and recycled an additional 12 lbs.

The wildlife was plentiful, especially the birds, with Blue Jays, Robins, Sparrows, mallards and a Whippoorwill. The reptile world was represented by an eight inch garter snake and red-backed salamanders.

We do not need the flooding and air pollution the proposed project will

**Join NRPA
Today
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bring. Please let our officials know we realize jobs are important, but our air, soil and water are our lifelines.

Special thanks to Tony, Howard, Michael De Vito Jr. and his brother Scott Mishley, and Miesha for their support.

LEMON CREEK PARK AT SHARROTT AVENUE FISHING PIER - WORLD OCEANS DAY CLEAN UP

By Jim Scarcella

On June 3rd, NRPA and friends from Bay Terrace Improvement Group and NOAA cleaned up the Lemon Creek Sharrot Avenue Pier beach for World Oceans Day. After a surprise morning shower, the weather was perfect for a cleanup, moderate temperatures and sunny skies. The first person we encountered was a guy dragging rocks off the beach for a private 'fire pit'.



Lemon Creek Park, Sharrot Avenue Fishing Pier cleanup volunteers

We started the cleanup with just 4 to 6 persons, some headed south to the NY State Mt. Loretto property, while others headed north towards what is left of the once beautiful Camp St. Edward.

Near Mt Loretto property is a salt and freshwater tidal pond, I was able to wade in and set a 'minnow trap', a funnel shaped, two-halved basket, to see if we could find 'killifish'. More on this later.

The volunteers (Richie, Danny, Howie, Chuck and Rob) began to clean the mess of garbage on the beach. Included in the debris were the usual suspects: cigarette packaging, cellophane wrappers, straws, beverage bottles, beer cans, pieces of Styrofoam, Dunkin Donuts Polystyrene cup pieces, plastic sheeting, pieces of fishing line, fishing bobbers, single-use plastic

bags, household items, two-part epoxy sealant canisters, bait packaging, dead menhaden pieces and more.

We were soon joined by Carl Alderson of NOAA, Ron, Dylan, Tommy Abenante and Nick Cardona from Bay Terrace Improvement Group.

All told, we removed 330 lbs. of debris and recycled another 8 lbs. of metal, plastic and glass for World Oceans Day at Lemon Creek Park.

The fish trap I set yielded over 40 mummichogs of different sizes, and co-incidentally NOAA and DEC were performing 'the Great Fish Count' for NY State, Carl and Chris Bowzer of DEC were able to use these beautiful fish in the discovery presentation, which with seining, included Grass Shrimp, Calico and Blue Crab, Periwinkle, Northern Pipefish, Menhaden and more.

Please join us for our next clean up, you will be glad you did.

DEP FLOATABLES SURVEYS

By Jim Scarcella

This year, the NRPA is again performing floatable debris beach surveying to help the NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection track the volume and possibly the source of the garbage that floats up on our harbor estuary shorelines. Approximately once per week, at low tide, the volunteers survey a 200' portion of beach at Brighton Beach, Brooklyn (Ida Sanoff) at Gateway Great Kills Park (Linda Cohen) and Fort Wadsworth (Jim Scarcella). The reports document the weather, tide, rainfall, wildlife, water quality, plastics, glass, wood, latex, Styrofoam, cellophane, and more.

Recently I had the chance to visit Fort Wadsworth beach for preparation of a beach survey report.

There were some people fishing at Battery Weed, named for Civil War General Steven Weed. First, I saw plastic bags and sheeting suffocating the exposed tidal shoreline. In the tidal pool, there was a male Horseshoe Crab looking for escape, but he would have to wait an hour for the incoming tide. An American

Oystercatcher was making wild calls in the rip-rap. After ripping the sheeting and dumping the sand and detritus out, some fiddler crabs were scrambling.

Back up the beach, the garbage was plentiful, 'Doritos' bags, (product of Canada) silversides packaging, anti-freeze container, car parts, remains of the old concrete pier, tugboat rope, Styrofoam dock pieces, pieces of old rims and tires, rusted irons, and someone's leather insulated jacket. Also, there were tampon applicators, straws, cigarette butts, condoms, strapping bands, Heineken cans, a 'Tanqueray' and 'Fireball' mini bottles, caps, cellophane, a golf ball, two tennis balls, and more.

A bit further south, a Black-Crowned Night Heron evacuated its roost with a wing 'clap'. Sadly, there was a deceased box turtle on the beach, far removed from its element. I finished the notes and quantity of the floatable debris and completed the report. It takes about 15 minutes.

If you are interested in monitoring a beach near you, call Robert Gans at 917- 658-2380 and/or email: ozonelayerllc@me.com.

LEMON CREEK- SEGUINE REVISITED

By Jim Scarcella

In June, NRPA undertook a cleanup of Seguine Point, Princes Bay. Specifically, we targeted the former



Debris found at Lemon Creek Park, Seguine Avenue

campground of a homeless family. The contents of the camp had been on the beach since late winter 2017. There was clothing and blankets everywhere, along with household goods, hospital bed pans, shelving, a stroller, a scooter, books and cooking utensils. We loaded these items and tent assembly pieces, canvases and rugs into large garbage bags of about 60 lbs. each and walked the garbage 300' off the beach to the garbage pickup area. Parks had requested our help, because the camp was on private property abutting the park.

Anglers are equally guilty of littering the beach, with plastic bags, bait

packaging, beverage bottles (glass and plastic), hook packaging, cigarettes and straws.

Special thanks to Nicole Doz, Leslie Chu, John Muller, Rob Carrano, Howard and Mary Fishbein and Richie Chan. This was not an easy clean up. Vinny Cascella from Parks Dept. stopped by to support our efforts.

This cleanup was dedicated to Lou Figurelli, Kerry Sullivan, Art Dennis Sr. and Carmine from PBBA (Princes Bay Boatmen's Association).

REBUILD BY DESIGN – LIVING BREAKWATERS AND DUNE IN TOTTEVILLE

By John Malizia

Staten Island, NY - In the most recent Community Advisory Committee meeting, the Project Team updated stakeholders on the on-going environmental review and permitting process. The team answered questions about the project's design refinements, including public access and safety, the location of the Water Hub, groins versus breakwaters, boat and navigation safety, and what materials will be used to construct breakwaters. The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery expects to issue its final Environmental Impact Statement in the fall. To learn more, check out the [presentation](#) from the meeting.

Upcoming Events:

- **Tuesday, September 5, 2017** NRPA monthly meeting at the Blue Heron Nature Center, 7:30 PM.
- **Saturday, September 16, 2017** NRPA beach cleanup at Lemon Creek, Sharrot Ave Pier from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, with PPOW for International Beach Cleanup Day. Gloves, bags, refreshments provided, Community Service hours certified. For more info contact Jim 718-873-4291.
- **Saturday, September 30, 2017** NRPA beach cleanup Lemon Creek Seguine Beach cleanup and ecology class from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM with NRPA and NYCH2O. Gloves, bags, refreshments provided, Community Service hours certified. For more info contact Jim 718-873-4291.
- **Tuesday, October 3, 2017** NRPA monthly meeting at the Blue Heron Nature Center, 7:30 PM.
- **Saturday, October 7, 2017** NRPA beach cleanup at Oakwood Beach cleanup from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Meet at bottom of Tarlton Ave. Gloves, bags, refreshments provided, Community Service hours certified. For more info contact Jim 718-873-4291.
- **Tuesday, November 7, 2017** NRPA monthly meeting at the Blue Heron Nature Center, 7:30 PM.
- **Tuesday, December 5, 2017** NRPA Holiday Gathering at the Blue Heron Nature Center, 7:30 PM.

Dedicated to preserving the marine environment, the Natural Resources Protective Association is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

All memberships expire on December 31, so please renew NOW!

(All memberships paid after October 1 will also receive credit for the upcoming year)

Are You A Member? Have You Renewed? Please Join Us NOW!

\$15.00 Individual

\$25.00 Organization

\$500.00 Lifetime Member

\$20.00 Family

\$100.00 Sponsor (after 5 payments you become Lifetime member)

YES! I/We want to join the fight!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mail to: Natural Resources Protective Association
C/O Richard Chan, Treasurer
Post Office Box 050328
Staten Island, NY 10305