



Downe Township, New Jersey is entering its first migratory season as a member of the Backyard Stewardship™ Horseshoe Crab Sanctuary Program. This bayside burg in Cumberland County became the Garden State's first participant when it created the Fortescue Horseshoe Crab Habitat last September.

The purpose of the Backyard Stewardship™ Horseshoe Crab Sanctuary Program is to declare beaches as habitat shared by both humans and horseshoe crabs. Instead of new laws, this

program relies on a willingness among participants to serve as caretakers and educators. Communities that enroll take on the responsibility of informing visitors about the need to conserve Delaware Bay's horseshoe crabs, or *Limulus polyphemus*. This is often done with signage, census counts, and beach closures during spawning season (May and June).

The Backyard Stewardship™ Horseshoe Crab Sanctuary Program was created in 1999 by ERDG, or Ecological Research & Development Group, of Dover, Delaware. In addition to Downe Township, there are currently seven community-based horseshoe crab sanctuaries in coastal Delaware. These include: Broadkill Beach, Camp Arrowhead (not open to the public), Fowler Beach, Kitts Hummock Beach, Pickering Beach, Primehook Beach, and Slaughter Beach.

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary has helped to support ERDG's Backyard Stewardship™ Horseshoe Crab Sanctuary Program by purchasing educational signage. The PDE also informs educators about horseshoe crabs during its annual Delaware Estuary Watershed Teacher Workshop.

Please visit HorseshoeCrab.org to learn more about ERDG and its growing sanctuary program. ■