



ESTUARY NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DELAWARE ESTUARY: A NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

Shucking Our Way to a Cleaner Bay

By Jennifer Adkins, Executive Director, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

Getting and keeping shellfish thriving is good for everyone – from communities and watermen on the bayshores in New Jersey and Delaware, to restaurants, water companies, and breweries in Pennsylvania. The Delaware Estuary and its tributaries were once full of bivalve shellfish, including freshwater mussels in local rivers and streams, ribbed mussels in salt marshes, and oysters in the bay. They all filter water and form dense reefs, beds, or marshes that give life to other fish and wildlife and help make local areas more resilient to storms and flooding.

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Eastern oysters rest on a sorting table after farmers at Sweet Amalia Oyster Farm harvested them from Delaware Bay near Green Creek, New Jersey in November of 2014.



Credit: Lisa Calvo

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Two New Sanctuaries to Save Wildlife



Credit: Sarah Bouboulis of the PDE

The communities of Gandy's Beach and Money Island, New Jersey became official horseshoe crab sanctuaries on May 16. This will help to conserve the largest breeding population of horseshoe crabs in the world, located in Delaware Bay. It will also help to conserve the shorebirds that depend on their eggs for food, chief among which is the red knot.

This announcement came during the Downe Township Horseshoe Crab Festival. This festival celebrates horseshoe crab spawning season, when these descendants of dinosaurs crawl ashore to lay and fertilize eggs.

The Ecological Research & Development Group (ERDG) created the sanctuary program, officially known as the Backyard Stewardship™ Horseshoe Crab Sanctuary Program, in 1999. Participants include the communities of:

Delaware

- Broadkill Beach
- Camp Arrowhead*
- Fowler Beach
- Kitts Hummock Beach
- Pickering Beach
- Primehook Beach
- Slaughter Beach

*not open to the public

South Jersey

- Fortescue
- Gandy's Beach
- Money Island

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary supports the ERDG by purchasing educational signs (pictured). The PDE also informs educators about horseshoe crabs.

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

The PDE Welcomes New Talent

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary (PDE) added three employees and six new board members this year.

Sarah Bouboulis is the nonprofit's new science planning specialist. One of her chief duties is to track the success and evolution of the "Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Delaware Estuary" (CCMP). Bouboulis will play an important role as the PDE works with its partners to revise the CCMP over the next two years.

Allison Ostertag brings almost a decade of experience to the organization as its new habitat project specialist. She will plan, design,

install and monitor a variety of clean water investments. Examples include green schoolyards, rain gardens, and restored shorelines.



Credit: Shaun Bailey of the PDE

Please join the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary in welcoming, from left to right, Allison Ostertag, Andréé Tyagi, and Sarah Bouboulis.

Andréé Tyagi is the organization's first full-time office manager in many years. This requires her to manage equipment, files, finances, inventories, and much more.

The PDE will also benefit from the time and expertise donated by six new members of its Board of Directors. They include:

- David Athey of AECOM
- Danielle Bower of the Philadelphia International Airport
- Carol Collier of The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University
- Brenda Gotanda of Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox
- Gus Mergenthaler of Tetra Tech
- Rose Schilling of Day & Zimmerman

Get to know the rest at DelawareEstuary.org/Board_of_Directors. ■