



NEW JERSEY FIELD OFFICE

FIELD NOTES

OCTOBER 2015

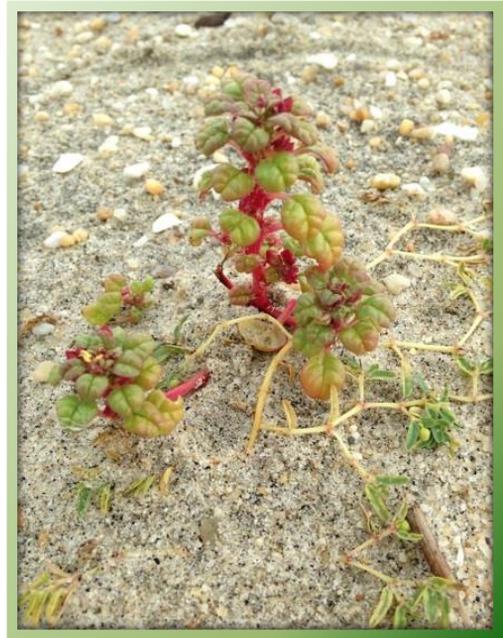


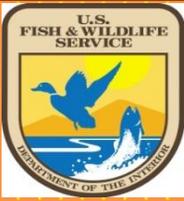
Seabeach Amaranth

By Wendy Walsh and Katie Conrad

On September 30, a team from the National Park Service helped Wendy Walsh and Katie Conrad collect over 2,000 seeds of the threatened plant seabeach amaranth. The seeds will be germinated and grown out by the North Carolina Botanical Garden to produce many more seeds, which will be used for restoration projects on National Wildlife Refuges in New Jersey. With the help of the Park Service crew, seed collection was completed ahead of storm surges from Hurricane Joaquin that will likely flood many of the remaining plants. Congressional Districts 2, 6

Photo credit: Katie Conrad, USFWS





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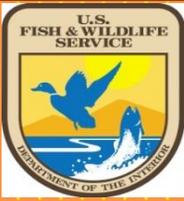


6th Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group Meeting By Wendy Walsh

In September, the NJFO's Wendy Walsh attended the 2015 meeting of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group, including a special session on piping plovers and several talks on red knots. Red knot researchers and conservationists were in attendance from across the species range including Canada, Delaware Bay, Virginia, Texas, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile.

Congressional District: All





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Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Detail By Melissa Foster

Contaminants Biologist Melissa Foster spent 4 days on a detail at the Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office helping to sample fish on Lake Erie, the Buffalo River, and Irondequoit Bay off Lake Ontario. The sampling is done on an annual basis to help with the early detection of Eurasian ruffe (*Gymnocephalus cernuus*) and other exotic fish species. To increase the probability of detecting new invasives, the sampling incorporated a variety of methods including Fyke nets, bottom trawling, and electrofishing. While no Eurasian ruffles or other new exotics were collected, round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) were frequently caught in Fyke nets and bottom trawlers. This invasive species is endemic to the Black and Caspian seas in Eastern Europe and is believed to have come to America in the ballast water of ships. The round goby competes with native bottom dwelling fish and eats the eggs and young of native sport fish. It is now present in all five Great Lakes and has begun to invade inland waters.





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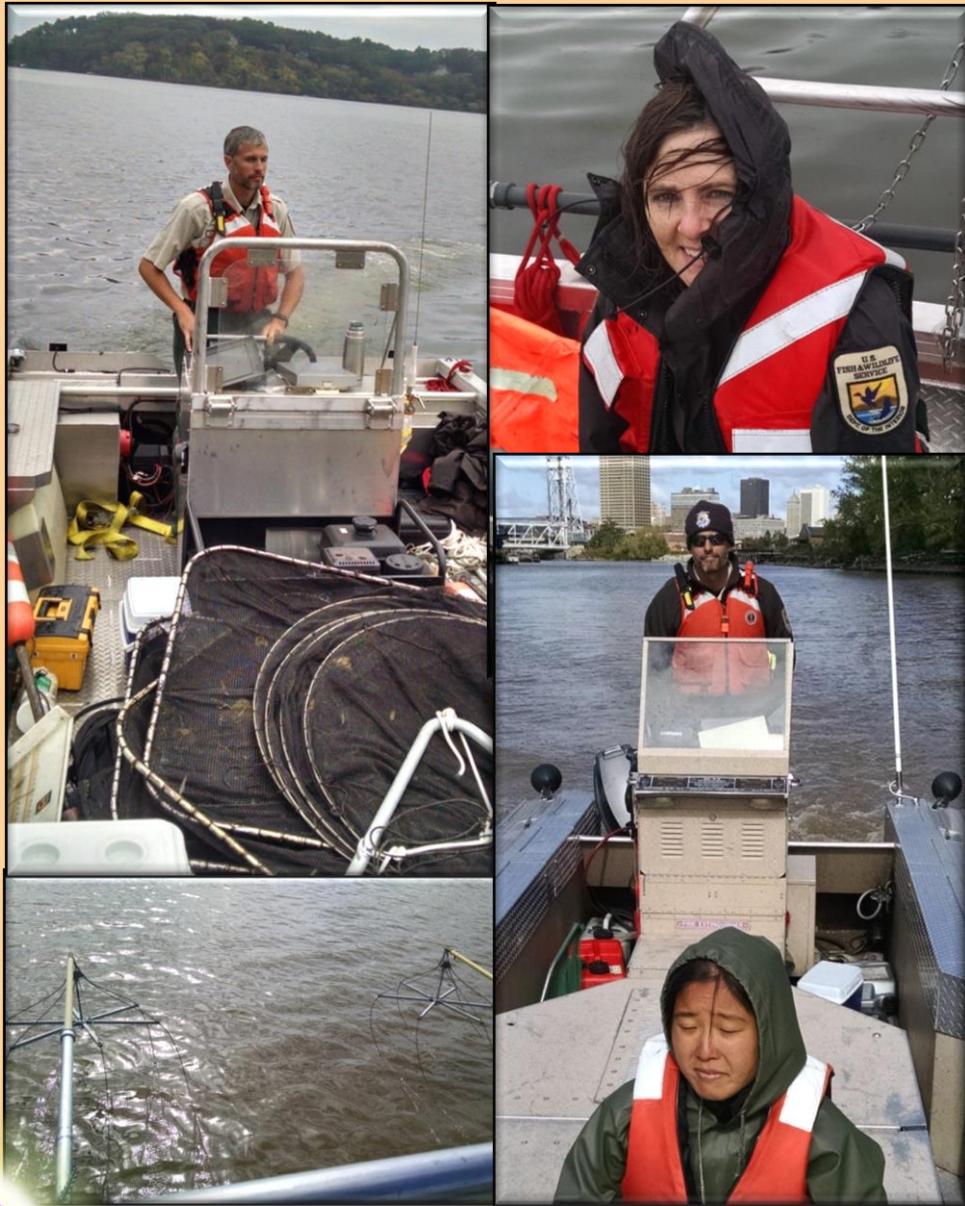
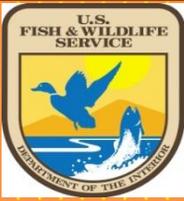


Photo Credits: Melissa Foster and Toni Mikula





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Gandy's Beach Oyster Reefs By Brian Marsh

Volunteers and staff from the NJFO, New Jersey TNC, PDE, and Rutgers worked together to build two oyster castle reefs and two oyster shell bag reefs at Gandy's Beach in Downe Township along Delaware Bay. Katie Conrad has been working on the project out of the NJFO under Superstorm Sandy funding. Many more similar reefs will be constructed at this site during the early spring and midsummer next year. The reefs will be colonized by oysters and halt the rapid erosion of the beach and tidal marsh of TNC's Gandy's Beach Preserve. The reefs are spread out in a pattern that will allow horseshoe crabs to continue to spawn on the beach and not disrupt shorebirds, such as red knots, from foraging on the horseshoe crab eggs. Oyster reef castles are constructed on site with interlocking concrete blocks brought to the site by barge. The structures are entirely submerged at high tide. Congressional District 4.

Photo Credits: Brian Marsh, USFWS; Mike Shanahan, TNC



Kings and Queens of the Oyster Castle