



New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

New York State has 3,400 miles of diverse coastline and is the only state in the U.S. bordering both the Great Lakes and Atlantic Ocean. More than 85% of NY's population lives in a coastal region.



New York Sea Grant regional offices provide innovative research, technical assistance, and outreach on such issues as water quality, coastal resilience, marine & freshwater fisheries, invasive species, algal blooms, aquaculture & seafood, coastal literacy, and shoreline community development.

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NYSG Focus Area
for this project summary:
Environmental Literacy
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in New York

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New York Sea Grant Marine Camp Connects Youth to the Outdoors

New York Sea Grant organizes a marine camp for youths from underserved communities in New York's Nassau County.

New York Sea Grant (NYSG) educators are skilled at utilizing New York's diverse shorelines as outdoor classrooms to teach lessons about coastal ecosystems to audiences of all ages. This place-based educational strategy often describes ways to mitigate adverse human impacts, and empowers communities to participate in coastal conservation efforts. While it may require less than twenty minutes for Long Island residents to travel to the shoreline for recreation, many low-income and immigrant households seldom have the opportunity to benefit from this local resource.

In 2024, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) continued its leadership in a partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County and the Jones Beach Energy & Nature Center to organize marine camp for underserved youth in low-income communities, teach lesson plans about shoreline ecology, and highlight common coastal and marine wildlife for camp participants.

More than 300 students from twelve youth support service organizations attended marine camp classes at the Jones Beach Energy and Nature Center. This was the largest annual student enrollment in the seven-year history of this marine camp program. Eight one-day classes were offered, including opportunities to use a seine net to catch-and-release fish, hike to learn about dune ecology, tour the natural history museum display, and receive an introduction to green energy sources. Ten youth support service organizations received more than \$10,000 from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Connect Kids to Parks Field Trip Grant program to offset transportation costs.

This NYSG marine camp partnership provides 'hands-on' experiences to engage youth from low-income households in marine and coastal education programming.

Project Partners/Funders:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County
- Jones Beach Energy & Nature Center



Marine Camp students explore their seine catch before release. Photo: Antoinette Clemetson/NYSG

New York Sea Grant: Bringing Science to the Shore Since 1971