

Long Island Sound Stewards: Engaging Students as Citizen Scientists

The Long Island Sound Stewardship (LISS) Initiative was created, and continues, to fulfill a mission to protect and restore lands around the Long Island Sound that are important for maintaining a healthy environment for marine animals and humans. Projects conducted through LISS are restoring important habitats and ecosystems.

The LISS New York Outreach Coordinator developed the Sound Stewards program to promote stewardship among K-12 and college students through involvement in citizen science research projects in Long Island Sound Stewardship Areas.

NYSG works closely with LISS and partners, including the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, to develop citizen science research projects that allow students to learn about the problems facing Long Island Sound and ways to address those issues, while simultaneously collecting data that will be used by partner agencies.

The data collected through the LISS program at Sunken Meadow State Park in the Nissequogue River Stewardship Area adds to a larger database that spans more than a decade and highlights ecosystem changes there over time. The data has also quantified post-Hurricane Sandy restoration of migratory fish species following the restoration of the tidal flow that had been restricted due to storm damage.

More than 230 students participated in LISS programming in 2018. Since the program began in 2008, more than 4,000 students have been involved in these citizen science research projects. New York Sea Grant shares the impact of this work, highlighting biodiversity, water quality, habitat changes, and other key environmental sustainability factors with stakeholders and elected officials.



Middle school students seine for organisms as part of the Long Island Sound Stewards program. Photo: NYSDEC

Partners:

- Long Island Sound Study
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

***The Sea Grant Focus Areas for this project are
Healthy New York Coastal Ecosystems
and Environmental Literacy &
Workforce Development for NY***

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.

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