

New Jersey

Outdoors



Summer 2000 • \$4.25

A Northern Oasis:

Wawayanda State Park

Yearning for Blue Claws?

Head for Cumberland County

Going for the Gold

Jersey's Bass Anglers Rise to the Challenge

Backwoods Dining Goes Global



Table of Contents

06 Jersey Sketchbook: Delaware Bay Salt Marshes

by John R. Quinn

Words and sketches reflect the author's delight in finding that the beautiful shorebirds he captured on paper as a young artist still thrive in the 40-mile stretch of grass, water and sky that rims South Jersey from Cape May to Greenwich.

09 Pro Bass Anglers Coming on Strong

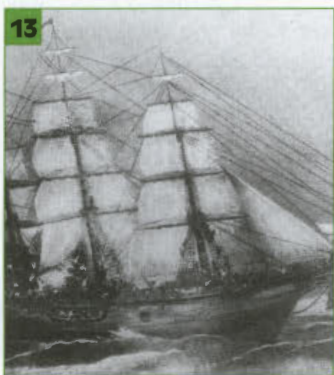
by Oliver Shapiro

Find out why New Jersey's a good training ground for competitive bass anglers, and meet some of those who are making their mark on the professional circuit.

13 A Final Chapter for the New Era

by Marie A. Sylvester

Almost 146 years ago, a ship laden with German immigrants set sail for the New World; within two months, a shipwreck off the Jersey Coast had claimed many of them. Learn the clipper ship's tragic tale and how the Fernicola brothers recovered its anchor last July after nearly 15 years of searching.



18 Wet 'n' Wild at Wawayanda

by Arline Zatz

Explore the plethora of summertime activities offered by one of the state's northernmost parks.

24 The Opti: Sailboat of Choice for the Younger Set

by Gretchen F. Coyle

They're simple, safe, and relatively inexpensive. Discover the origin of the Optimist dinghy and why it's the perfect vehicle for neophyte sailors.

28 Fair? No, Great!

Photo Essay by
Dotty Waxman

Take a pictorial stroll through the Sussex County Farm and Horse Show, which this year became the home of the New Jersey State Fair.



36 The Salty Side of Cape May

by Jay Lloyd

If your first thought upon hearing Cape May is either birds or Victorian, you're not alone. But there's another side to the Queen of Seaside Resorts—and it's a wet one! Let this article be your guide as you explore the nautical side of this seafaring town.

42 Grassroots Gardening

by Marta McDowell

What relieves stress and provides exercise, offers learning opportunities and social contact, provides resources that individuals may lack and culminates in a bountiful harvest of flowers, fruits and vegetables? Learn about community gardening and see why it's an

idea whose time has come... again...and again...and again.

46 Blue Claws on Jersey's "Other Shore"

by Gary Gresh

The Delaware Bay region offers plenty of opportunities to snag crabs from either boat or bank. Explore some of the most promising sites, then catch, cook, clean and enjoy these taste-tempters.

52 Gourmet Grub for the Trail

by Cindy Ross

Trek along a culinary trail with the author's guests as they sample some of the easily prepared gourmet and ethnic foods packaged for today's backpackers and campers.

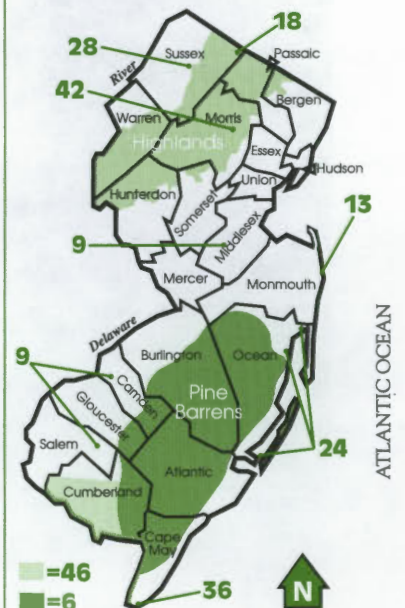
64 Eastern Box Turtle

by Jason Tesauro

Although it's adaptable with regard to habitat and enjoys a variety of foods, this turtle's longevity may mask the true picture of how well it's faring in New Jersey. Learn more about this well-armored reptile.

Story Locator

Page numbers indicated



Departments

- 2 Messages
- 3 Mailbox
- 4 News & Notes
- 57 Events

Front Cover

A "Ribbet"ing Site is this denizen of Deep Cut Park in Middletown.
© 1999 Joseph Prusky

Inside Front Cover

Gilding the Lily in Hamilton's Sayen Gardens is a colorful butterfly.
An NJO photo contest entry submitted by Michael D. Tozzi

Inside Back Cover

Artist Irene V. Bowers painted the original watercolor of the Eastern box turtle on barkpaper, which is made today, as it was in the 1300s, by the Otomi Indians. After they gather inner bark from downed fig and mulberry trees, they wash it in a stream, soak it in boiling lime water, beat the damp pliable fibers, and lay them out in the sun to dry. By using the marblizing effect of the paper, Bowers was able to detail the subject while letting the paper create the illusion of a downed log and leaves. © 2000

Back Cover

Walking at Water's Edge, protected by her large straw hat, this woman invokes memories of refreshing summers at the Jersey Shore. © Fred Cantor

From the Governor



Christine Todd Whitman,
Governor

For more than a century, tourists have flocked to New Jersey to enjoy our most famous natural resource—our 127 miles of beautiful sandy beaches. Those beaches, and the ocean waves that crash upon them, are as clean and inviting as they have ever been, so we're counting on another banner year at the Jersey Shore.

More and more, however, people are coming to know our other natural treasures. Birding enthusiasts consider Cape May Point one of the top bird watching spots in America. Hikers note that a 73.6-mile stretch of the legendary Appalachian Trail winds north and east from the Delaware Water Gap on the Pennsylvania border to Abram S. Hewitt State Forest, near Greenwood Lake on the New York border. Our ocean reefs beckon divers as well as marine life.

Nature lovers like to explore the ecological marvel that is the Pine Barrens, our country's first National Reserve. Anglers soak in the Garden State's beauty as they reel in shad from the Delaware, blues from the Atlantic, and rainbow trout from our many lakes and rivers. Cyclists like me can choose from many bike trails, and it will get even better as New Jersey fulfills a commitment I made to add 2,000 miles of trails in the coming years.

Eco-tourism is a growing part of our economy. We want to enhance eco-tourism by preserving land, protecting water, and increasing recreational opportunities statewide. But we have so much to offer already, and I invite you to take advantage of it. With 38 state parks, 11 state forests, 42 natural areas, 600 miles of trails, 14 ocean reef sites, and 87 wildlife viewing sites, there are countless ways for New Jerseyans and tourists alike to celebrate the wild side of our great Garden State.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christine Todd Whitman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

From the Commissioner



Robert C. Shinn, Jr.,
Commissioner

June used to be known as the wedding month; lately, around the Department of Environmental Protection, at least, it seems as though it's becoming the dedication month. Two new facilities—one at the Sedge Island Wildlife Management Area; the other at Wawayanda State Park—debuted in the latter half of June.

Sedge House, a historic hunting lodge once visited by such celebrities as Babe Ruth and Woodrow Wilson, has been renovated to serve as an environmental education center. Our Division of Fish and Wildlife will offer a variety of quality educational programs—teacher workshops, ecotours and more—at the center. Situated on Sedge Island in Barnegat Bay, it is the ideal location for students and educators to learn the fascinating history of the area along with the importance of conserving New Jersey's marine resources.

One of the features that attract nearly 100,000 people to Wawayanda State Park each year is its public swimming area. A state-of-the-art bathhouse, located adjacent to Lake Wawayanda, is the first permanent facility on the site featuring restrooms, a lifeguard room, a patio area and outdoor showers. In addition to the amenities it provides visitors, it is the first composting facility within the State Park System that is designed to have zero discharge, requiring no leach fields or sewer hook-ups. The composting facility is odorless and environmentally sound, and will help protect the lake and beaches from pollution.

If you're headed for the shore or the Highlands this summer, take the time to visit the Sedge Island Environmental Education Center or enjoy the refreshing waters of Wawayanda State Park.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bob Shinn". The signature is cursive and stylized, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

(Editor's note: For more information about Wawayanda State Park, see *Wet 'n' Wild at Wawayanda* on page 18.)

NJO Mailbox

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The Sands of Place

We're from New Jersey. We've been getting *New Jersey Outdoors* for quite a while—it's great. It's really great now, for this season we're in the desert. Oh, give us the sands that have the ocean breaking upon them—give us water, period!

Thank you for a great job!

James J. Bauers, Jr.
Tucson, Arizona

To Renew . . .

We are renewing our subscription to *New Jersey Outdoors*. We had decided not to renew—that is, until the Spring 2000 edition arrived. What a delight to read the articles and enjoy the pictures. Our home state is an exciting and diverse area and you paid homage to the beauty and variety of pleasures offered to us who are lucky to live here. We are looking forward to future editions!

Elinor and Malcolm Homan
Bridgewater

Or Not to Renew . . .

I've been a faithful subscriber of *NJO* for many years. I have enjoyed reading all the various types of articles you've published. I've also read amusing letters from readers who claimed that you did not pay attention often enough to the particular sports that they were interested in. Also, the letters from readers claiming you had too many of one type of article were comical. Recently, there have been very few articles on one of my favorite sports—hunting. You still publish a good magazine but its focus has shifted in my opinion.

At this time, I am not renewing my subscription for next year. If you ever decide to shift your focus back towards the hunting fraternity, feel free to send me a note asking for a new subscription.

Bill Davis
Lake Hopatcong

Editor's Note

Our 16th president once noted, "You can fool some of the people some of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." If you substitute *please* for *fool*, the thought holds true with respect to magazine content, also.

It's simply not possible to publish an article about every sport or area of special interest in each issue. *New Jersey* is, as the Homans wrote, exciting and diverse. Though we try to ensure that each issue of *NJO* pleases, the best we can do is please most of our readers—whose interests are as diverse as our state is—most of the time.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologize to those subscribers who were not pleased by their late receipt of the spring issue. A conglomeration of unforeseeable problems coincided and resulted in its unusually late delivery.

State of New Jersey
Christine Todd Whitman
Governor



Department of Environmental Protection

Robert C. Shinn, Jr.
Commissioner

Peter Page
Director of Communications

Sandy Huber
Chief, Office of Publications

New Jersey *Outdoors*

Summer 2000, Vol. 27, No. 3

This publication is dedicated to promoting and encouraging the wise management and conservation of our natural, cultural and recreational resources by fostering a greater appreciation of those resources, and providing our residents with the information necessary to help the Department protect, preserve and enhance them.

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Visit us at:
www.state.nj.us/dep/njo

Angling for a Win?

If so, grab your gear, your family and your friends, and head for Island Beach State Park. Participants and spectators alike will have a great time at the Ninth Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament, slated for Sunday, October 1, at the park.

Last year, more than 1,300 adults and children participated in the tournament. The event, held to foster a life-long commitment to marine conservation and the sport of surf fishing, generated more than \$10,000 in registration fees. The funds raised each year are used for a variety of conservation projects, such as the construction of a beach access ramp, mobile fishing education carts and specialized wheelchairs for the disabled and elderly.

For more information and registration forms write to: Division of Fish and Wildlife, 605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863 or call 908/637-4125.

Yipes, It's a Yurt!

What's a yurt? A yurt is the newest type of overnight shelter available to campers in Allaire and Swartswood state parks and Belleplain and Lebanon state forests. But although yurts are new to these state camping areas, the concept is nothing new. Mongolian nomads needed a lightweight, transportable shelter that could be set up and taken down quickly, and developed the basic domed design centuries ago.

The Division of Parks and Forestry's new shelters are roomy, all-weather facilities that measure 16' in diameter and have a 10'-high ceiling. Each circular tent is built on a wooden frame and features wooden floors, a deck and a Plexiglas skylight, perfect for skygazing. Each is equipped with two double-deck bunks, so four people can be accommodated.

Cooking facilities and picnic tables are located conveniently near the yurts and restroom facilities are located within the designated camping area. Each yurt has a lockable wooden door, window screens and flaps, and is accessible to per-

sons with disabilities.

Both Allaire State Park (732/938-2371) and Belleplain State Forest (609/861-2404) have two yurts available, while Lebanon State Forest (609/726-1191) and Swartswood State Park (973/383-5230) have three each.

The rental fee is \$20 per night, with a two-night minimum stay. In addition, a reservation fee of \$7 must be paid at least seven days in advance. All State Park Service camping facilities, including campsites, cabins, lean-tos, shelters and yurts, may be reserved up to 11 months in advance of the usage date. All facilities must be reserved and occupied by at least one person 18 years of age or older.

Reservations may be made via telephone (with payment by credit card), in person or by mail. A free brochure of cabins, group cabins, lean-tos, shelters, campsites, group campsites, yurts and wilderness campsites is available at State Park Service offices.

The comprehensive *Guide to New Jersey's State Parks, Forests, Recreation Areas and Historic Sites* also is available at state park offices for \$2 or through the mail from the Trenton office for \$4. Many additions appear in the updated, 50-page publication, including information on the state's historic sites, villages and monuments. The guidebook provides descriptive paragraphs highlighting each site, including visitor information about recreational activities, camping facilities, hiking trails, and education and interpretive initiatives.

For a free copy of the State Park Service's current *Calendar of Events* or to purchase the above mentioned guide, call 800/843-6420 or visit any Division of Parks and Forestry site near you. Text telephone users can call NJ Relay Services by dialing 711*. Additional information is available at www.state.nj.us/dep/forestry/parknj/divhome.htm.

* New Jersey recently began offering 7-1-1 dialing for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS), also known here as New Jersey Relay. TRS provides a way for those

who have hearing or speech disabilities to communicate with anyone over the phone. There is no charge to access TRS, and 7-1-1 dialing is available 24 hours a day, every day, with no limit to the number of times one can use it.

Web Wanderings

For an "insider's tour" of the Pine Barrens and surrounds, augmented by interviews with Pineys, visit <http://www.pineypower.com/>. It's full of information about the area—natural history, folklore, where to go, what to see and more—and there are lots of links to related sites.

If your canine companion is as eager to hit the trail as you are, you might want to check out www.youractivepet.com. In addition to articles, links and resources related to adventuring with your pet, the site offers quality outdoor, recreational and safety gear for the outdoors-dog. You'll find everything from life jackets to skijoring equipment and from ramps designed to help Fido get in and out of your SUV to deodorizers that will eliminate *eau de skunk*.

"Click-to-donate" Web sites, where sponsors pay a given amount for each legitimate click registered, are the latest Web trend. Many, such as www.thehungersite.com, focus on a specific cause and count only one click per visitor per day. They may also provide links to similar sites. (The Hunger Site, the Web's first "click-to-donate" site, now links to www.therainforestsite.com; both are operated by GreaterGood.com. Donations to the former are administered by the United Nations World Food Programme, while The Nature Conservancy administers contributions to the latter.) One site—www.freedonation.com—allows visitors to click as often as they want to trigger donations to a variety of humanitarian, health and ecological causes.

Unique among these sites (at least as of this writing) is www.ecologyfund.com, which has preserved more than 1,000

acres of open space to date. Visitors are able to make a free donation to any or all of four land preservation projects underway on two continents. The South American efforts are the creation of a Patagonian Coastal Reserve and the preservation of the Amazon Basin Rain Forest; North America's preservation projects focus on the American Wilderness and Canadian Wild Lands. All land is paid for by EcologyFund's sponsors; it costs nothing for site visitors to donate. EcologyFund is owned and operated by CharityMall.com, an Internet shopping mall that gives 100 percent of the affiliate shopping commissions to the charity selected by users.

Other environmental click-to-donate sites are www.saverainforest.net/, <http://rainforest.care2.com/>, www.environmentalcare.com/ and www.webleaf.com/.

New Coastal Heritage Trail Center Opens in Cape May

If you're planning to visit the Cape May area this summer, be sure to see the recently completed exhibits at the Coastal Heritage Trail's Cape May Region Welcome Center. It's located within the Ocean View Service Area on the Garden State Parkway (milepost 18.3).

Focusing on the trail's "relaxation and inspiration" theme, the exhibits provide a glimpse of the Jersey Shore, its inhabitants and history. They incorporate images and artifacts ranging from *Harper's Magazine* illustrations and a whaler's harpoon to Miss America programs and a roulette wheel. One wall illustrates the habitat and animals associated with a pristine dune and beach environment, while elsewhere a section of boardwalk has been recreated.

The New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail is a partnership project by the National Park Service in cooperation with the State of New Jersey and other public and private organizations working to preserve the state's natural and cultural heritage. The Trail extends along coastal New Jersey and is divided into five

regions—Sandy Hook, Barnegat Bay, Absecon, Cape May and Delsea—linked by the common heritage of life on the Jersey Shore and Raritan and Delaware bays. Five themes define different aspects of coastal life: maritime history, coastal habitats, wildlife migration, historic settlements, and relaxation and inspiration.

The regional welcome centers have trail orientation exhibits, an orientation video, and exhibits relating to the trail's interpretive themes. The Coastal Heritage Trail is a vehicular tourism trail with signs directing visitors to destinations such as lighthouses, nautical museums, wildlife refuges and coast guard stations from nearby highway intersections. Most destinations also have low-profile orientation exhibits as well as site-specific waysides relating the destination to one or more trail theme.

For more information, visit www.nps.gov/neje or call 856/447-0103.

WSB 2000 Honors Shared

A total of 263 species were recorded by all participants in the 17th annual World Series of Birding held on May 13, exceeding the event's historical average and beating last year's tally by three. The Nikon/Delaware Valley Ornithological Club's Lagerhead Shrikes, winners of the 1999 competition, posted the highest total (219), beating WSB founder Pete Dunne's Carl Zeiss Optical team by one species and the Swarovski Optic/Cornell Lab of Ornithology team by two. But when a later check of the Zeiss team's list showed that a write-in bird inadvertently had been left off, the Nikon team insisted that the bird be counted and shared the win.

The Swarovski team—which took first place honors in the out-of-state category—brought in \$141,700 of the almost \$600,000 netted by the annual fundraiser, handily topping their 1999 figure by more than \$25,000. Their pledges will be used to support golden-winged warbler research and habitat protection.

The World Series of Birding, created

to highlight the importance of protecting migratory bird habitat, is organized by the New Jersey Audubon Society. Next year's event will take place on May 12. For more information, call 609/884-2736 or visit www.njaudubon.org/.

Summer Reading List

Mountain Biking in New Jersey combines Wall Township resident Christopher Mac Kinnon's interest in off-road bicycling and his artistic talents to guide readers on rides through 37 areas of natural beauty. The 6- by 9-inch paperback describes and maps off-road rides from High Point State Park in Sussex County to Ocean County's Wells Mills County Park. The excursions range from "no sweat" rail trails to challenging rocky hill climbs, so there's something for everyone from novices to experienced cyclists. The book has perforated pages, so each map can be removed and taken on the ride. Published in March by Freewheeling Press, the 96-page book sells for \$13.95 at bookstores, bike shops and www.freewheelingpress.com.

Another March addition to book-sellers' shelves was the fifth edition of *New Jersey: Off the Beaten Path*, written by William G. and Kay Scheller. Subtitled *A Guide to Unique Places*, the 170-page tome offers a variety of places to go in the Garden State where you won't be just one of the crowd. The \$12.95 book includes 6 maps and 17 illustrations. It was published by Globe Pequot Press, which also made available, in May, the fifth edition of *Guide to the Jersey Shore* by Robert Santelli. This 279-page book covers the coast from Sandy Hook to Cape May—venturing even to inland points in the coastal counties—and provides a smorgasbord of leisure time options to suit all ages and interests. Whether you prefer antiquing or fishing, amusement rides or Victorian festivals, casinos or concerts, this \$13.95 book has it covered. Both books may be purchased in bookstores and via the publisher's Website, www.globe-pequot.com.

Jersey Sketchbook: Delaware Bay Salt Marshes

Story and illustrations © by John R. Quinn

Yes, it's true: New Jersey is the most densely populated and probably the most developed state in the Union. And, yeah, it's worth your life to attempt a left turn on most of the state's crowded suburban roadways, and seemingly impossible to escape the strip mall and urban sprawl clutter of civilization that has overtaken all too many areas of the Garden State.

It almost goes without saying that in a state so close to the heart of the Great Eastern Megalopolis it can be a challenge to hook up with the wilderness experience in the manner of Jack London, Robert Service or John Muir. Except, that is, for perhaps in three unique and extraordinary places.

One of these is the mountainous and densely forested northwestern quarter of the Highlands region, where a sylvan

Mother Nature still pretty much holds sway, though development edges in day by day. Another is the piney-woods fastness of the state's famous Pine Barrens region—an almost mystical locale where truth and legend become blurred and an essence of the primeval that was once New Jersey can at least be sensed.

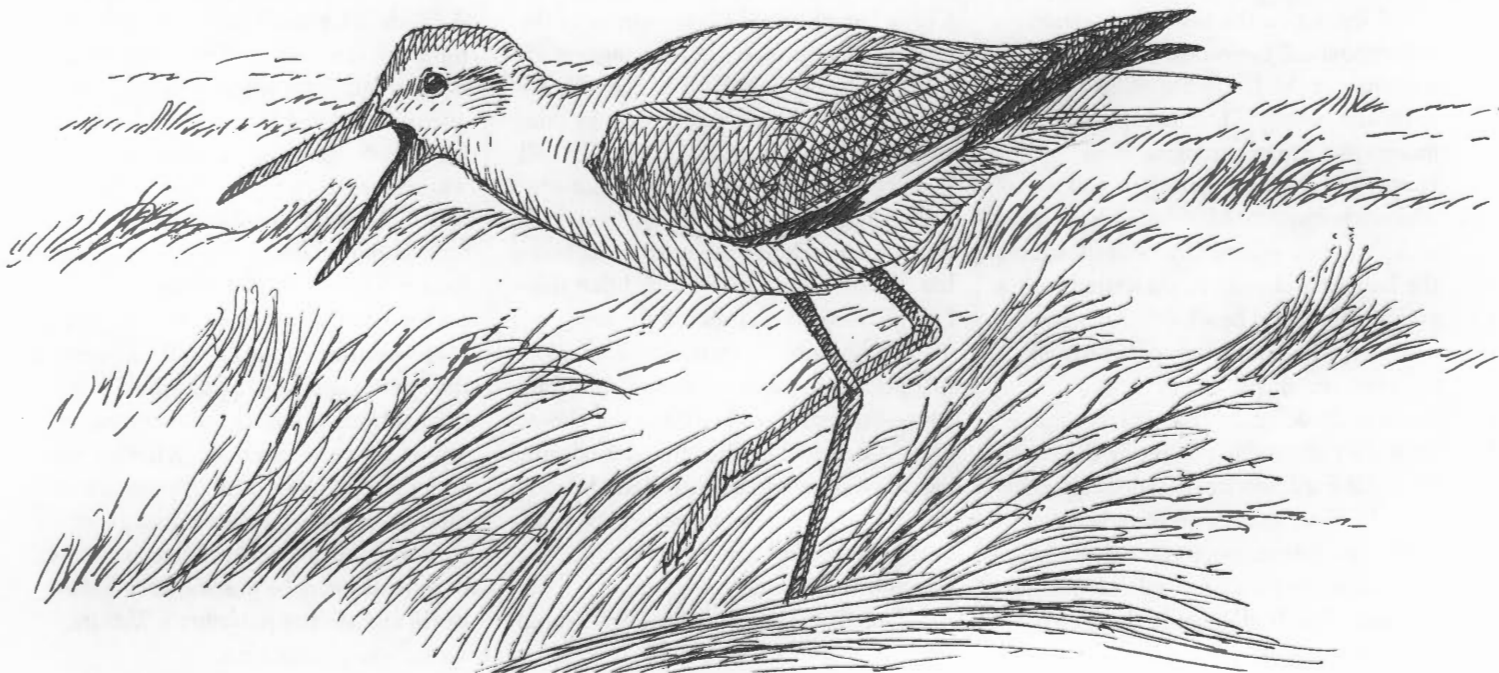
And then there are the wide, windy and green expanses of the salt marshes that flank the New Jersey side of Delaware Bay. This prairie-like tidal wetland terrain rims the bay for roughly 40 miles, from Reed's Beach of shorebird migration fame on the Cape May peninsula west to the wonderfully obscure hamlet of Greenwich (a place name most people associate with upscale southeastern Connecticut) on the Cohansey River. In between lie thousands of acres of one of

the most beautiful—and crucial—habitats on earth: the marine nursery of the estuarine wetland, most of which falls within the boundaries of Cumberland County.

My own attachment to this marvelous part of our state goes back some 35 years. I first visited the Delaware Bay marshes back in the mid-1960s. Then, as a young artist and exhibits designer with Philadelphia's Academy of Natural Sciences, I was asked to execute a series of color drawings of the stages of growth of the willet. Large, colorful shorebirds with striking black and white wings, willets bred prolifically in the expansive *Spartina patens* (marsh hay, saltmeadow cordgrass) swards surrounding the small fishing port of Fortescue.

A couple of other budding naturalists and I attempted to find the nests of this

Willet scolding near nest





Delaware Bay landscape
(Fortescue area)

noisy (*pill-will-willet!*) and conspicuous wading bird by walking across the flat marsh about 50 feet apart and watching for the explosive flush of the sitting hen. This was not as easy as it sounds. The wary creatures, well aware of our presence, would skulk from their nests long before we got near them and then take flight, calling loudly, as far as 100 yards away. But in spite of these avian diversionary tactics, we managed to collect (under the museum's federal permit) one egg from the four in each nest found. We incubated the eggs in a standard poultry incubator and I then made detailed color studies of the birds as they grew to adulthood. At maturity, the captive-reared willets were donated to the bird collection of the Philadelphia Zoo.

These adventures were fondly recalled when my wife and I paid a visit to the Bay Shore last summer. Driving south on the Turnpike and then angling to the southeast on Route 55 out of Deptford, we quickly found ourselves crossing an agricultural and rural New Jersey that has not yet been swallowed up by the "Bos-Wash Megacity." The closer

we got to the hopeful little city of Millville, hard by the Maurice River, the more we could believe that at one time—about 80 years ago—some 70 percent of Garden Staters actually did live in gardens or, rather, on farms. Today just one percent do.

Our base of operations for last year's sketching foray was a new Comfort Inn in Millville. Virtually indistinguishable from any other anywhere in the world, it offered us a good night's sleep and handy access to our destination. From there, early the next morning, we headed south toward the bay and some of the most beautiful country on the East Coast.

You can tell you're approaching a unique piece of the natural world when you begin spotting *Caution—Muskrat Crossing* signs along State Route 553 (listed as a state scenic route), just west of Mauricetown. Through the passing scrim of trees, scattered farmsteads and crossroads, a glimpse of what's to come is offered by the pungent scent of salt air, tantalizingly brief stretches of marsh slipping by and the unbroken horizon to the south, reaching all the way to the bay

and beyond.

To me, the essence of the Delaware Bay marshes will be found in still-isolated South Jersey "fish, clam and cut bait" settlements such as Fortescue, Gandy Point and Money Island, all bordered by a seeming infinity of grass, water and sky. As we left the busy state marina at Fortescue behind and wound our way over a rickety bridge to the turnaround of a sand road at the edge of the Fortescue Wildlife Management Area, the true scope and sweep of this saltmarsh complex was impressed upon us.

Stroked by the sea wind off the distant bay, we stood and scanned a horizon that seemed much too flat and distant to be a part of New Jersey. Miles away, across the wind-rippled sward of rich green salt hay, tiny fishing shacks, summer cottages and the occasional hummock of darker green trees shimmered like mirages. So ethereal and evanescent were they that they appeared perched at the very edge of the known world. An osprey crossed the marsh about a mile away, heading inland and carrying a fish, doubtless "bringing home the bacon" to

waiting young. Terns traded back and forth and laughing gulls ambled about near a low-tide channel, hunting for unwary fiddler crabs.

And then, as we strolled along a rough path beaten through the wiregrass marsh, I heard that nearly forgotten—but instantly remembered—sound. A high, clear *pill-will-willet!* reached us on the wind; a second later the cry's author skimmed in over the salt hay on flashing black-and-white wings and landed 40 feet away. Standing on a grass tussock, the dove-gray willet bobbed nervously, incessantly repeating its namesake call. I knew immediately it must have a nest nearby; this was confirmed when a second willet joined it.

The sight and sound of these beautiful birds, here in virtually the same place I had seen them 35 years earlier, was of great comfort to me. With wetlands yet disappearing at an alarming clip nationwide, it was satisfying to know that beautiful green fields at the edge of the bay had survived, and their remarkably beautiful birds along with them. For me, this was the single most rewarding day of the summer—the willets are on eggs, and all's right with the world.



Artist-naturalist John R. Quinn, a natural resource specialist with the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission, has published many books on nature and science. He periodically portrays segments of New Jersey's environment in words and sketches for New Jersey Outdoors.

Spartina alterniflora
East Point salt marshes

Pro Bass Anglers Coming on Strong

by Oliver Shapiro

The quintessential picture of an angler tends to depict a solitary figure in a small boat on a still, peaceful pond, fishing rod in hand. The scene is quiet, contemplative, serene.

You can pretty much forget all that in the world of tournament bass angling.

Competing against other anglers to catch the largest mass of fish after a day or two of fishing has intensity, strategy, glitz, hard work, success, failure, exhilaration, disappointment and a host of other characteristics wrapped up intimately with one of America's favorite pastimes.

Exciting? You bet.

The new sport owes its existence to one man: Ray Scott, founder of the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, widely known as B.A.S.S. In the late 1960s, Scott, an insurance salesman, conceived the idea of a competition for bass anglers. The concept proved to be wildly successful, and today the organization boasts more than a half-million members and a full schedule of tournaments held all over the nation. Big-name competitors on this new pro circuit have garnered almost as much celebrity status as any major league baseball or football star.

Since the phenomenon's birth, the sport has been dominated by Southerners. It made sense: bass angling is practically a way of life south of the Mason-Dixon line, and many of the lakes and impoundments suitable for large-scale bass tournaments are located in those warmer climes. And besides having "home field" advantages, residents of those states were simply in a better position geographically to travel to and from the tournaments.

But the Southern stranglehold on the sport is slowly and inexorably being loosened. Though Pennsylvania's Randall Romig first placed in 1983 (and has

placed 8 times since then—once in the #2 slot), the advent of anglers like Michigan's Kevin Van Dam and Bryan Kerchal, a Connecticut resident, made tournament followers sit up and take notice. Van Dam hit the bass angling world by storm and hasn't let up, having been named Angler of the Year in 1992, 1996, and 1999. Kerchal took the whole ball of wax in 1994, winning the BASS Masters Classic—the Super Bowl of the sport—before his tragic untimely death in an airplane accident later that year.

Now it's our turn. A handful of Garden State residents have astounded the bass angling world by their consistently outstanding performances within the past few years. New Jersey might be one of the last places from which most people would expect a fishing onslaught, but those who have made it into the upper echelons aren't surprised at all.

A Good Training Ground

"Being a New Jersey resident gives a real advantage," points out Mike Iaconelli. "The fishing pressure is very high, especially in lakes. Fishing here forces you to learn how to deal with the pressure and the small lakes."

This unassuming young man has proven his mettle time and again, going so far as to finish sixth in the 1999 BASS Masters Classic and to prevail in the Vermont BIG Kmart BASSMASTER Top 150 at Lake Champlain in Vermont this past September—winning an impressive \$100,000 in the process.

Another advantage he points out is the unusual diversity of fishing conditions to be found close to home. Because a tournament angler must contend with widely varying conditions from one location to another, these local laboratories provide convenient training grounds.

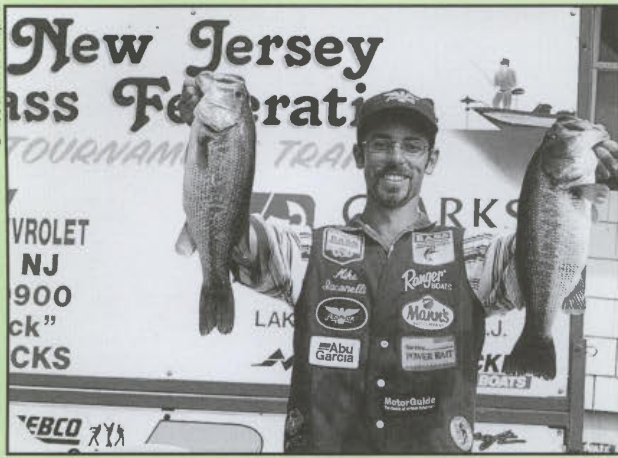
"Near Runnemede (his residence before relocating to Woodbury Heights), there's a branch of the Delaware River with tidal waters," Iaconelli observes. "There's clear water, muddy water, sand bottoms, cedar lakes, bogs . . . It helps to set up for different conditions."

Pete Gluszek agrees. Another phenomenon on the BASSMASTER Tournament Trail, Gluszek holds claim to being the first Garden State resident ever to qualify for the BASS Masters Classic (in 1997); he made it there again in 1999. Another major accomplishment was his victory in February 1999 at the Alabama BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational at Lake Martin, from which he went home \$42,000 richer.

"If you're successful here," he points out from his Pittsgrove residence, "that means you're versatile. We have all sorts of water: reservoirs, glacial lakes, rivers, and lots more."

Another edge that New Jersey gives its homeboys is the unusually strong structure of the B.A.S.S. Federation here. Anybody who has a B.A.S.S. membership card and a handful of buddies with similar membership can start a B.A.S.S.-affiliated club, and many states have a federation that organizes all such chapters in the state. Our own group, the New Jersey B.A.S.S. Federation, provides an effective venue to develop tournament anglers through its own yearly tournament program (which, incidentally, provides an alternate route by which a berth to the Classic may be obtained).

"Other states are talking about New Jersey," says Bob Soley, of Helmetta. A full-time pro on the bass circuit since September 1999, Soley consistently places in the rankings—and in the money—including a recent showing in the prestigious Classic. "All of us have



Mike Iaconelli with two of the fish that gained him the largest total weight record for one angler at a single NJ BASS Federation tournament.



At a recent BASS tournament, Bob Soley shows that he knows the right stuff, too.

come through the federation ranks, and other states just don't have as strong a federation. New Jersey has a very competitive federation, providing stronger competitors. And that's better for everybody here. It's a huge advantage."

"The federation program is the biggest asset to the state," adds Williamstown resident Mark Schafer, who despite his recent placings in professional contests has not yet made the leap to the full-time circuit.

All the pros with whom I spoke agree that being from New Jersey is a big advantage, but there are one or two downsides. "We have a short fishing season compared to the South; we're down from late November through February," Gluszek explains. "Also, sponsors are harder to find; they seem to be more comfortable with Southerners."

It's a Great Life—But Not for Everyone

The grueling trials that have produced these determined competitors have spawned an unusual sense of camaraderie among them. Although technically they compete against each other, they also help each other by rooming together when on the road, providing information and, in general, cooperating on a level that is unheard of in other states.

Attractive as the professional angling circuit may be to innumerable fishing fans, it isn't necessarily for everybody. Long hours on the water, plenty of time on the road, and isolation are all occupational hazards.

"There's a lot of travel," asserts Gluszek, "about 200 to 250 days per year." And since, as Schafer points out, it takes typically a day or day-and-a-half to drive to each location, "it's like being a glorified truck driver."

"There's a lot of isolation," continues Gluszek. "Driving, fishing . . . You have to be comfortable with that, and with yourself. And when you're on the water, it's sunrise to sunset most days. Then there's the stress of competition itself, especially when you get started."

Although these four men, and others who have made it this far, agree that it isn't easy, they nevertheless offer advice to anybody who thinks that the bass tournament life is for him.

"Make sure you're ready for the next level," offers Soley. "Start with a bass club, then go through the federation, and take it from there. And be sure that's what you want; you've got to be hungry. There are a lot of good anglers—it's almost scary how good they are. On the Top 150 Trail (in B.A.S.S.), everybody can cast and find fish."

"Be aware what the job, and task, is," says Gluszek. "You also have to have a lot of endurance. There are lots of peaks and valleys, so you need a tremendous amount of staying power. Those who give up—and there are lots—simply won't stick around. And in individual tournaments, sometimes the last 15 minutes is what counts, so you have to fish as hard at the end as you do at the start."

Iaconelli also preaches the importance

of going through the ranks. "Do it the same way I did," he advises. "Don't just jump right in. Go through each level, to see them all and learn from each one. Clubs, the federation—they're all part of the process."

Gluszek points out the public relations nature of such a position, and cautions that people don't overlook it. "You're a spokesman for the industry. You teach people; you sponsor products . . . It's like an entertainment industry . . . today's (professional) athletes are much better speakers and interviewers than they used to be. It's a good idea to stay in school and pursue a degree in marketing or advertising."

Clearly, the lifestyle isn't for everybody. But if it still seems like your calling, Iaconelli and Schafer say to go for it. "A big thing to realize, being from this region," Iaconelli notes, "is that it can be done. There are really no barriers or limitations."

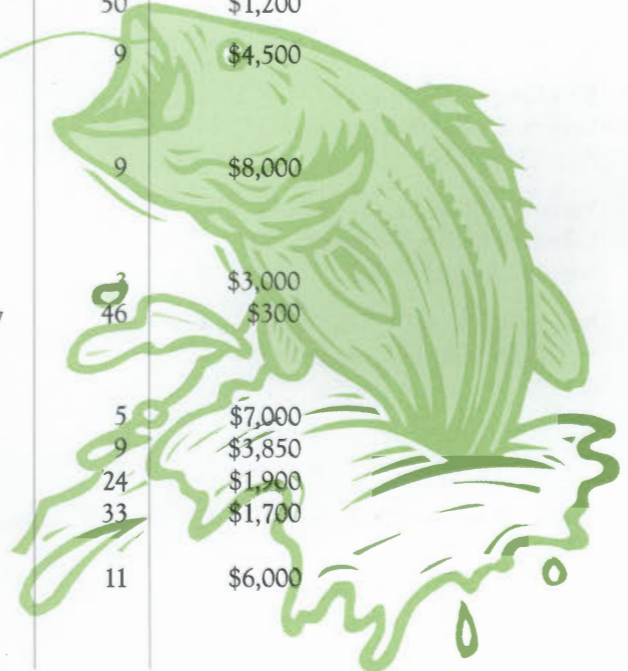
"If anybody thinks they want to do it," chimes in Schafer, "then do it. People are afraid to take the next step, at the national level. If you believe, then you can compete."

When asked if they had any second thoughts about the path they've chosen, each man responded with a resounding "no." That is, except for Schafer, whose only regret, as he puts it, is not having started sooner.

Oliver Shapiro, a freelance writer who resides in Livingston, has contributed both hunting and fishing articles to New Jersey Outdoors.

New Jerseyans' Finishes in Recent BASS Tournaments

<u>Event</u>	<u>Competitor</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Winnings</u>
Georgia BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational Lake Hartwell, Hartwell, GA Nov. 21-23, 1996	Robert Uhrig	29	\$1,800
	Rich Schneiderei	32	\$1,700
Georgia BASSMASTER Top 100 Lake Sinclair, Milledgeville, GA Mar. 6-8, 1997	Pete Gluszek	4	\$15,000
Wrangler/B.A.S.S. National Championship Red River, Shreveport, LA May 1-3, 1997	Richard Swisstack	30	\$300
Alabama BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational Lake Guntersville, Guntersville, AL May 8-10, 1997	Ted Soley	39	\$1,600
BASS Masters Classic Logan Martin Lake, Birmingham, AL Aug. 7-9, 1997	Pete Gluszek	25	\$4,000
New York BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational St. Lawrence River & Lake Ontario, Clayton, NY Sep. 8-10, 1997	Mike Iaconelli	28	\$2,800
	Keith Kurpicki	55	\$500
Kmart BASSMASTER Top 100 Lake Gaston, South Hill, VA and Littleton, NC Oct. 16-18, 1997	Pete Gluszek	7	\$9,000
Virginia BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational Buggs Island Lake, South Hill, VA Oct. 23-25, 1997	Mike Iaconelli	4	\$9,000
	Dominick Bizzari	33	\$1,700
	Mark Schafer	50	\$1,200
BASSMASTER Invitational Santee Cooper Reservoir, Summerton, SC Feb. 19-21, 1998	Bob Soley	9	\$4,500
Kmart BASSMASTER Top 100 Russell Lake, Elberton, GA Apr. 9-11, 1998	Pete Gluszek	9	\$8,000
Wrangler/B.A.S.S. National Championship Ft. Loudoun and Tellico Lakes, Knoxville, TN Apr. 16-18, 1998	Ted Soley	3	\$3,000
	Dennis Cumiskey	46	\$300
Virginia BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational Buggs Island Lake, South Hill, VA Oct. 1-3, 1998	Mike Iaconelli	5	\$7,000
	Bob Soléy	9	\$3,850
	Mark Richards	24	\$1,900
	John Erickson	33	\$1,700
Alabama Kmart BASSMASTER Top 150 Lake Logan Martin, Pell City, AL Oct. 21-23, 1998	Pete Gluszek	11	\$6,000

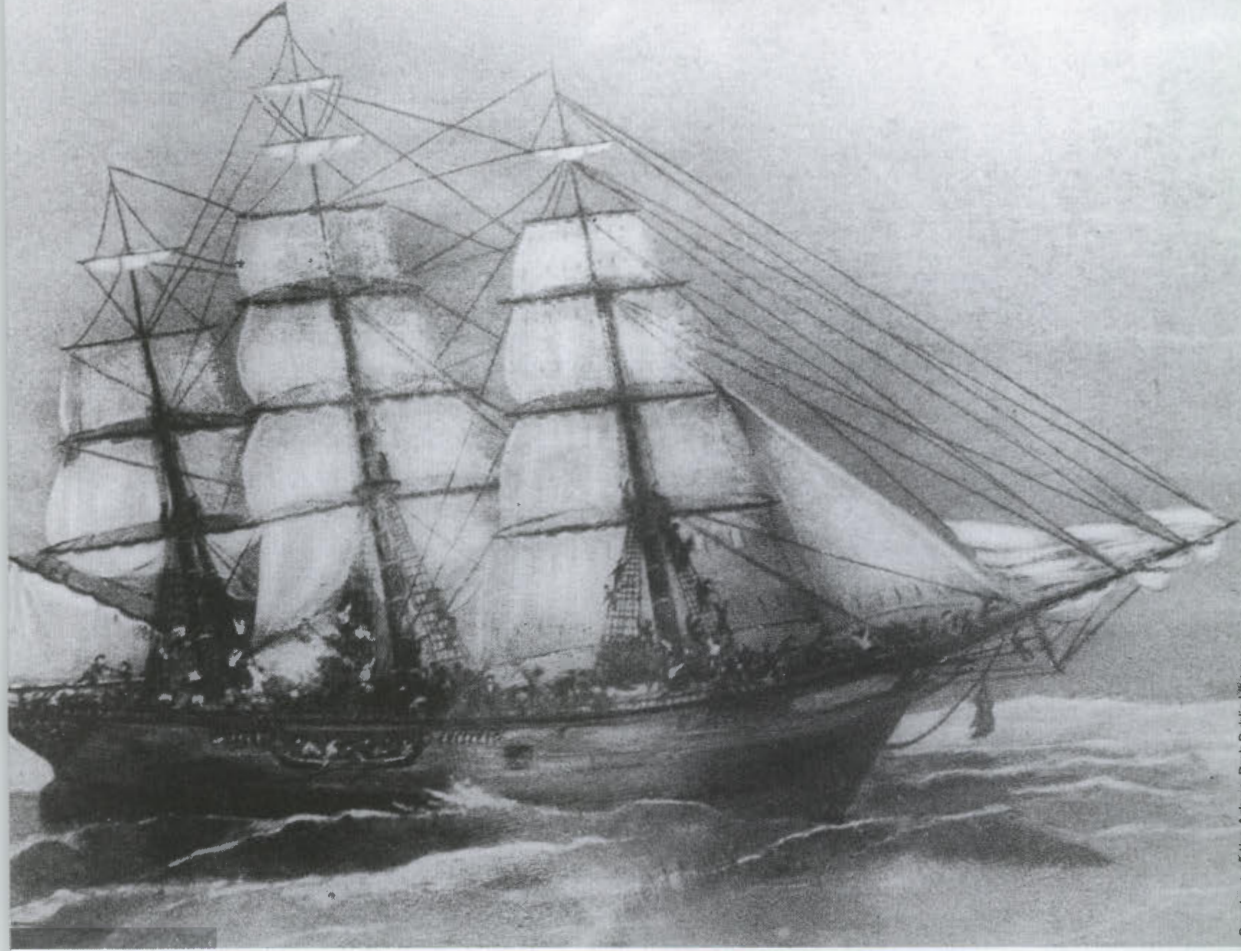


continued

New Jerseyans' Finishes in Recent BASS Tournaments

<u>Event</u>	<u>Competitor</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Winnings</u>
BASS Masters Classic High Rock Lake, Greensboro, NC Aug. 6-8, 1998	Ted Soley, Jr.	unlisted	\$4,000
Florida BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational Lake Okeechobee, Okeechobee City, FL Dec. 3-5, 1998	David Hadley	8	\$4,500
	Ted Soley, Jr.	19	\$2,000
	Bob Soley	26	\$1,800
	David Mansue	38	\$1,600
Florida BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational St. Johns River, Polatka, FL Jan. 21-23, 1999	Mark Schafer	10	\$3,700
	Mike Iaconelli	11	\$3,200
	David Frost	20	\$2,000
	Bob Soley	36	\$1,600
	Pete Gluszek	46	\$1,400
Alabama BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational Lake Martin, Alexander City, AL Feb. 11-13, 1999	Pete Gluszek	1	\$42,000
	Mike Iaconelli	5	\$7,000
	Tim Roach	14	\$2,250
	Bob Soley	36	\$1,600
Nevada Kmart BASSMASTER Top 150 Lake Mead, Las Vegas, NV Apr. 7-10, 1999	Pete Gluszek	11	\$6,000
Wrangler/B.A.S.S. National Championship Red River, Shreveport, LA Apr. 22-24, 1999	Mike Iaconelli	1	\$15,000
BASS Masters Classic Louisiana Delta, New Orleans, LA July 29-31, 1999	Mike Iaconelli	6	\$6,000
	Bob Soley	22	\$4,000
	Pete Gluszek	31	\$4,000
BIG Kmart-BASSMASTER Top 150 Lake St. Clair, Mt. Clemens, MI Aug. 25-28, 1999	Mike Iaconelli	20	\$4,000
	David Mansue	39	\$2,800
Vermont BIG Kmart BASSMASTER Top 150 Lake Champlain, Burlington, VT Sep. 15-18, 1999	Mike Iaconelli	1	\$100,000
	Bob Soley	26	\$3,200
New York BASSMASTER Eastern Invitational St. Lawrence River, Clayton, NY Sep. 22-25, 1999	Mike Iaconelli	16	\$2,000
	Bob Soley	23	\$1,900
	George Hutchinson	42	\$1,433
	Jeff Caldarudo	48	\$1,400

Source: Bassmaster magazine, 1997 through 1999 issues.



Courtesy of the Asbury Park Public Library

A Final Chapter for the New Era

by Marie A. Sylvester

Bathers at Loch Arbour beach one quiet Friday last July may have thought they were seeing an oceanographic documentary in the making. In a sense, they were. A small boat, anchored about 200 yards off shore, was helping to write the final chapter in a very important and tragic shipwreck that took place 144 years earlier.

The red and white dive flag was raised and two divers fell backwards into the water over the side of the boat. They remained descended for about fifteen minutes, then returned, one at a time, after attaching a tow line to the relic that rested below them in 20 feet of water. A handful of surfers floated nearby, straddling their boards and asking questions. The small boat bobbed up and down as the divers sat on deck looking south, waiting for the 110-foot *Atlantic Surveyor*, en route to help the Fernicola brothers bring a 15-year pursuit to a successful ending, to come into view.

Richard and Gregory Fernicola had spent the past three years preparing to bring

the anchor of the clipper ship *New Era* to the surface. And now their dream was becoming a reality. Shortly before 2:00 p.m. that afternoon, the *Surveyor's* 17-ton capacity crane began to slowly hoist its catch to the surface. Everyone waited—the divers on the lead boat, the crew of the *Surveyor* and the spectators on shore. Finally, it burst from the sea, sparkling in the brilliant sunlight: a 1,200-pound anchor of the most classical character, complete with swaying seaweed and a warm orange hue. A round of applause could be heard on the beach, and as the crew of the *Surveyor* lowered the anchor onto the deck. Champagne corks popped, welcoming this important artifact to a world where it can now be appreciated.

The Tragic Voyage

The year 1854 saw a marked increase in the amount of German immigrants risking their lives by seeking an improved life in America. The packet ship *New Era* not only transported goods but also afforded reasonable, while not luxurious, accommodations to those seeking passage. It departed Bremen,

(Previous page) The ill-fated clipper ship *New Era*, as drawn by a local artist the morning after the wreck.

(Below) The *Atlantic Surveyor* raises the anchor from the sea after 144 years.

(Bottom) A crew member prepares to assist as the anchor is lowered onto the deck.

claiming 46 lives while the ship kept her course toward American shores.

In the early part of October the *New Era* battled a string of heavy gales. The strong winds and rain caused severe damage, including the loss of most of the galley supplies and a lower level leak that required constant pumping. Still the vessel, now in the fifth week of her voyage, continued on course. Close now to her destination, it may have appeared the worst was over.

A thick fog shrouded the ship as she neared the coast of New Jersey on November 12. Though some historians think he'd been seeking refuge in the Deal Lake inlet when the ship grounded 300 feet off Deal Beach (now known as Asbury Park), the captain said he believed the vessel to be off the coast of Long Island.

A great deal of sadness surrounds the wreck of the *New Era*—many lives were lost; atrocities and cruelties were reported to have taken place. Eyewitness accounts tell of the captain and crew rowing off towards the shore after cutting the holding lines, ignoring the desperate cries of drowning passengers and beating back those who attempted to climb into their boats. Almost as disturbing were the reports of theft from the bodies of the victims that washed ashore.

Abner Allen, who kept up a volunteer life boat station near Deal Lake—a national life saving service had not yet come into existence—discovered the wreck the next day while performing his morning check of the beach. In his own words, "I immediately spread the news to get people together to render assistance." Since rough seas and gale winds prevented the dispatch of surfboats, several attempts were made to launch a line to the ship in the hopes of pulling in passengers. Unfortunately, the only line to land on deck was in a deteriorated condition, and snapped after it was secured.

The surviving passengers clung to the masts in the frigid cold. As the hours passed,

Courtesy of Jersey Shore Publications



© Don Stine



Germany, on September 28, 1854, with 427 people on board, 374 of them traveling in steerage. After a brief stop in Liverpool, England, the *New Era* set out for New York. Though the cramped living quarters provided little comfort, the first two weeks of the transatlantic voyage passed without incident. The lack of an adequate food supply, ventilation and sanitation, however, may have led to an outbreak of cholera the third week into the voyage. The disease spread rapidly among the crew and passengers,

Aboard the *Atlantic Surveyor*, brothers Gregory and Richard Fernicola, (wearing sunglasses) celebrate the anchor's recovery with friends.

the ship settled to her side. The sea splashed over the deck, washing many to their deaths, while those on shore could do little but listen to their agonizing cries for help. Local residents kept fires blazing on the beach throughout the night to remind the suffering souls they were not alone.

By sunrise the next day, the storm had eased and surfboats were able to reach the wreck. Local residents quickly came to the aid of the survivors, offering food, clothing and shelter. Abner Allen's boarding house took in the largest number of survivors. In later accounts many of the survivors praised the kindness and generosity of the Allens who owned the tract of land now known as Allenhurst.

It also became the task of local men to patrol the beach and retrieve bodies as they began to wash up, some as far north as Long Branch. The tenpin alley at Allen's boarding house was used as a temporary morgue. Local carpenters worked furiously to construct the large number of pine boxes needed for burial, and a steady stream of carriages transported the victims to the mass grave at the West Long Branch Cemetery. By week's end, the plot would become the final resting-place for 240 victims of the tragedy.

At first, a simple wooden tablet marked the burial site. But in 1891, a group of compassionate citizens of German descent organized the New Era Monument Association to raise funds for a suitable monument. The new marker was dedicated on November 20, 1892, and the organization has continued to maintain the gravesite and conduct yearly memorials.

Until this and similar tragic events proved the need for a more organized effort, the extent of lifesaving operations along the Jersey shore was very limited. Just one month after the New Era tragedy, Congress appropriated funding to provide annual salaries for the station keepers. In the mid-1880s, additional funding enabled all lifesaving stations



© Don Stone

to be better equipped and staffed with paid crews; the foundation was laid for what would become part of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915.

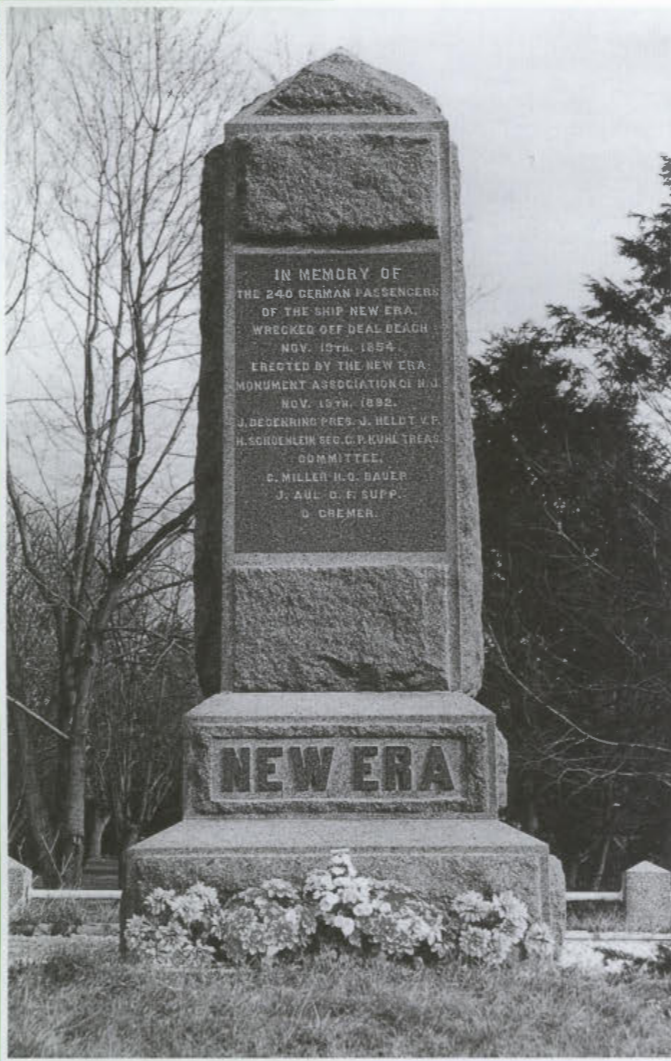
How to find an anchor

Richard Fernicola, a pain management physician, and his brother Gregory, a corporate attorney, have been involved in underwater archaeological projects since the 1980s. Together they served on the board of the Subaquatic Historic Preservation Corporation and the Nova Caesaria Maritime Preservation Society. Their interest in the *New Era* relates to the fact that it is one of New Jersey's most tragic early ship disasters as well as one of its most mysterious, since no substantial artifacts from the wreck had previously been uncovered.

Dr. Fernicola explains, "Oftentimes a vessel in distress would attempt to lighten itself by tossing off some of its heavier cargo. The anchor would be sacrificed only if

The marker at the mass grave in the West Long Branch Cemetery was erected in 1892 with funds raised by a group of caring local residents.

© Marie A. Sylvester



absolutely necessary, or in an attempt to station the ship at that location.” In the case of the *New Era*, he thinks the anchor was hastily thrown from the ship to lighten up. That assumption is supported by the absence of the anchor’s chain and the depth of the water in which it was found—some 23 to 25 feet—

which he believes is the depth at which a ship the size of the *New Era* would begin to ground.

Many years later there was some debate over the exact location of the wreck. But during the 50th anniversary memorial service, Edward Wardell pointed to where the 6th Avenue jetty ended. That, said the wreckmaster of the underwriters and general agent of the American Coast Wrecking Company, was the site. Wardell, a lifelong shore resident and experienced seaman, was the first to set foot upon the wreck’s deck and directed the rescue of those still alive, so his account was believed to be correct.

Possessing an almost exact location of the wreck site would seem to be all that was

needed to locate the anchor. Unfortunately, obvious physical remains of the vessel had long since disappeared. An expedition in the early 1900s reported finding the remains of the hull, but nothing else. It is theorized that the floating, smoking hulk of the infamous *Morro Castle*, which drifted ashore in Asbury Park in nearly the exact location 80 years later, scraped away whatever remains there may have been.

In 1985, the Army Corps of Engineers began a magnetometer survey of the area in order to identify and locate potential archeological sites prior to the start of the sand replenishment program. Utilizing data recorded by the Army Corps, the Fernicola brothers were able to target their efforts to an area that indicated a high concentration of metallic presence. Coincidentally this area was at the rumored site of the wreck—250 yards out, and just south of 6th Avenue. An initial series of dives began in February of 1996 at a depth of 23 feet. Just a few days later the anchor’s curved stock was discovered protruding from the ocean floor.

With 95 percent of the 1,200-pound anchor securely imbedded in sand and debris, recovery would prove to be a difficult and lengthy process. Many shifts of digging in frigid winter temperatures became even more discouraging when it was found that the anchor was tangled in a commercial fishing net in addition to the natural sedimentation.

For the next two years the brothers worked to free the anchor whenever their time permitted. During the winter and early spring of 1998 they began experimenting with different devices to cut the net. As it turned out, due to the precarious position of the anchor and the dangerous potential of the debris under the sand, a superior grade kitchen knife proved to be the most maneuverable and effective choice.

By December 1998 the nets toward the top had been cut away but the anchor was still securely lodged in the ocean floor.

Governor Whitman and Dr. Richard Fericola discuss the significance of the *New Era* wreck.

Gregory and Richard, both experienced divers, labored to free the arms of the anchor in order to raise it with the use of air compressors. After several attempts with a single 1,000-pound lift bag, one fluke of the anchor lurched from the sand, but it was evident there was still not enough lift to free it completely. By adding four 100-pound lift bags, the anchor was raised enough to stress the remaining netting upwards, allowing for it to be cut. It was now possible to pull the anchor into an upright cross-position where it remained for the next several months.

As the spring of 1999 neared, the staging area for the sand replenishment project began to take shape on the beach. The process, which displaces sand from the ocean floor, put the anchor in danger of being lost at sea for a second time. Just two days before the replenishment program was to begin, the immediate goal of the brothers shifted from recovery to relocation. This was made possible by securing four 55-gallon air-filled steel drums to the anchor, and dragging it just a half-mile north to rest in the shallow waters off Loch Arbour Village beach. A white buoy marked the spot for several days until a commercial diving operation could make final recovery a reality. Dive Masters, Inc., of Toms River, which also assisted in the search and rescue operations of the TWA Flight 800 tragedy, gladly responded to the Fericola's plea for assistance via local newspapers.

After the Recovery

Following initial work to rid the anchor of encrusted sea life and the remaining netting, it was viewed for a brief time by both local residents and elected officials. Governor Christine Todd Whitman, interested because a predecessor (Governor William Newell) founded the U.S. Lifesaving Service, took advantage of an opportunity to see the freshly salvaged anchor following a local address.

Although the anchor has no surviving markings, many factors—its location, age,

style and the fact that its weight class is appropriate for the vessel's tonnage—lead its salvagers to conclude that this relic is indeed from the ill-fated *New Era*. After careful examination in December 1999, Vince Bologna of the Maritime and Northwest Historical Society concluded that the anchor predates 1860.

Corrosive salts are being removed to halt further deterioration.

It is hoped that, when it is ready, the anchor will be displayed in a park in the Borough of Allenhurst as a reminder of lives lost as well as lives dedicated to the rescue of those in peril at sea.

Author's Note: Special thanks to Dr. Richard G. Fericola and Gregory A. Fericola, Esq., for sharing their wonderful experience with me.

Though new to *New Jersey Outdoors*, Marie Sylvester's work has appeared in both newspapers and books. Intrigued by the tragic tale of the packet ship, the Interlaken resident followed and documented the salvaging of its anchor.



Courtesy of Jersey Shore Publications



© Joel Zatz

Wet 'n' Wild at awayanda

by Arline Zatz

(Above) Playing wet 'n' wild at Wawayanda State Park

(Opposite page, top) Relaxing on sandy beach

(Opposite page, bottom) View of exquisite lake

Wawayanda State Park, a 13,422-acre wooded paradise, is aptly described in a Division of Parks and Forestry brochure as an "oasis for nature and recreation away from the stress of the busy world." Its name—alternately pronounced *Wah-way-ahn-duh*, *Way-way-ahn-duh*, and *Wah-wah-yon-duh*, with either the first or third syllable stressed—is believed to be the phonetic interpretation of the Lenape Indians' phrase for winding, winding water. But no matter how they pronounce it, visitors are bound to agree that it's one of the most refreshing destinations in the Garden State.

Situated above the Wawayanda Plateau along New York's border, the

park offers a multitude of wet 'n' wild activities for all ages and abilities. In the summer, Wawayanda Lake is cool and crystal clear, just the ticket for visitors who want to swim and splash. It's also ideal for those who want to relax on the white sand beach beside the 265-acre lake, for the young-at-heart who love making sand castles, or anyone who simply wishes to sit and gaze out upon the scenic tree-lined and boulder-strewn shoreline.

Lunch can be enjoyed in the shade of trees that adorn the picnic area, only steps away from the beach. Bring charcoal and fixings for a barbecue; grills are next to the picnic tables. Plan on staying for dinner if you're angling for a tasty morsel in Wawayanda Lake, which offers



© Joel Zatz

... an “oasis for nature and recreation away from the stress of the busy world.”

a wheelchair accessible fishing dock, or one of the park’s smaller water bodies. Fishing is excellent because trout are stocked and the waters abound with other game fish. Among the fighters are largemouth bass, trout, smallmouth bass and pickerel.

Boating on Wawayanda Lake is another unforgettable experience. In fact, it’s so exciting that I keep returning with my kayak time and time again to explore the perimeter of this beautiful 11/2-mile-long, 3/4-mile-wide lake. I once spotted a water snake darting beneath the surface, and I always enjoy the antics of the ducks and geese that congregate in and around the bright yellow lily pads and grasses in the shallow sections.

Feel free to launch your own boat from the ramp (with or without electric motor; gasoline motors are prohibited), or rent a rowboat, paddle boat, kayak, or canoe at the boathouse for a reasonable fee. Take water, a snack, definitely a camera, and be adventurous. When you’re ready to take a break, search for a good place

to land. Scrambling up to the top of one of the huge granite rock outcrops is well worth the effort—for once you reach the top and gaze out at the fabulous scenery and breath in the fresh air, you’ll surely feel like king or queen of the mountain!

Steeped in History

The park, officially opened in 1963, is steeped in history. During the 19th century, a thriving iron works and village stood at the northern end of Wawayanda Lake, which was then known as Double Pond. Today, all that remains is the tall blast furnace that Oliver Ames and his sons built in 1846. The iron ore, brought in from a nearby mine on mule-drawn wagons, was melted at extremely high temperatures and used for making shovels and railroad car wheels, with swords added during the Civil War. When in blast, the furnace burned more than 500 acres of timber each year.

Fortunately, over the years, the trees have grown back and the dense woods offer complete solitude. Located within



© Joel Zatz



Kayaking solitude

the park are three natural areas. The 2,167-acre Wawayanda Swamp Natural Area features a rare inland Atlantic white cedar swamp, a mixed oak-hardwood forest and Laurel Pond, a glacially formed spring-fed lake where hikers might spot a beaver. Bearfort Mountain Natural Area's 1,325 acres boast a variety of forest communities, including swamp hardwood, hemlock-mixed hardwood, and chestnut oak. The summit offers a 360-degree panoramic view and is a key location for observing the red-shouldered hawk, one of New Jersey's threatened avian species. Wawayanda Hemlock Ravine Natural Area, at 399 acres the smallest of the three, rises 300 feet from Doublekill Creek and is home to several endangered plant species, including Dewey's sedge (*Carex deweyana*), white-grained mountain ricegrass (*Oryzopsis asperifolia*) and witch hobble (*Viburnum alnifolium*).

Trails of All Types

This year-round wooded paradise offers more than 40 miles of trails for hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers and snowmobilers, plus a 19.6-mile section of the Appalachian Trail that's open only to hikers. There's no need to worry about getting lost, because each trail is clearly marked with blazes, and free maps are available at the park office. The only problem you may have is deciding which trail to take because so many are available. The trails vary in length from .4 mile to 6 miles for a round trip and range from easy to difficult. They are not only interesting, but also a good way to escape from everyday stresses. And during the heat of the summer, the trees provide a natural canopy that can reduce the temperature by at least 10 degrees.

One of my favorite hikes combines the Laurel Pond Trail with the Wingdam Trail. This 4-mile round-trip gem includes close-up views of huge rock for-

mations, gushing water, a beautiful spring-fed lake, and the remains of the 19th century charcoal blast furnace. To experience this hike, park near the boat-house and walk east along the shore. (Wawayanda Lake will be on your right.) The furnace will appear on the left in about a quarter of a mile.

As you walk, be aware that this is black bear territory, but have no fear. They're normally vegetarians, and will usually scamper off as soon as they smell or hear you. Sighting one, however, is impressive — for the black bear, a symbol of the last remaining wilderness areas in New Jersey, stands about 5 to 6 feet tall and can weigh up to 300 pounds. The coyote, gray fox, red fox and bobcat often frequent these woods, but even if you're not lucky enough to spot one, you'll delight in the serenade the birds provide.

After reaching the furnace, turn south; look for a bridge over a small pond leading to the yellow-blazed Laurel Pond Trail. Linger here for a while; watch for fish flipping high out of the water, listen to the sound of the swaying reeds, and awaken your senses taking in one of Mother Nature's finest displays. Off in the distance is an impressive hemlock stand that's believed to be the only virgin timber left on this mountain, and ahead to the right of the trail stands a huge wall of granite boulders estimated to be one billion years old. Throughout this area, rhododendrons burst into color during late spring and summer.

When you reach Laurel Pond, the silence—broken occasionally by an animal rummaging among the ground cover, an overhead plane or a barred owl sounding its familiar *hoo, hoo, ahoo*—is incredible. The pond, adorned with an abundant supply of cattails, is home to bullfrogs; each spring, the males can be heard singing their loud courting song to attract a mate. At the "T", where the trail intersects with Cherry Ridge Road, turn back,

watch for blue blazes indicating a trail junction and the Wingdam Trail, turning left. In this area, club moss grows profusely between the massive boulders as the trail climbs to a hilltop and then descends.

The sight and sound of the water, tumbling from the dam as it makes its way down from Wawayanda Lake, is sensational—especially after a heavy rain. As you walk the remaining quarter-mile back to the starting point, you may—if you're lucky—spot one of the river otters that hang out in this area. These sleek critters bear their young in the spring, another glorious time to visit the park because the wildflowers and rhododendron put on a special show. On a sunny day, there are usually dozens of turtles sunning themselves on the rocks or tree roots.

If children still have energy to spare

after your hike, it's no problem. Let them take another dip in the lake, toss a Frisbee or bicycle the mile from the park's main entrance to the campsite road on the level bike-riding path. For the younger set, there's a large playground opposite the beach that's reserved for children two to five years old.

Remnants of an Agrarian Past

For history buffs who want a glimpse of what life was like in Sussex County more than a century ago, a visit to the Barrett Farm Museum and High Breeze Farm is inspiring. The 160-acre Barrett farmstead, known as High Breeze Farm, had been a working mountain farm in use by four generations of Barretts from 1860 to 1981, and although it now lies still, it is proof of a bygone era in agricultural life.

High Breeze Farm was always a suc-

Lake, line, lure, luck . . .



© Doty Waxman



(Above) Castles under construction

(Below) Two trekkers

(Opposite page) Angling for dinner



successful operation despite the fact that Luther Barrett, the last family member to own and operate the farm, refused to modernize. This, and the fact that he lived without indoor plumbing or electricity, earned him the reputation for being a stubborn traditionalist. Until his death in 1986, Luther ran his farm the same way his family had for over a century—raising hay and corn, using oxen or horses to pull his old-fashioned mower, cultivating fruit trees, hunting—and continuing as the area's primary blacksmith.

Barrett's house and farm buildings are now crumbling, but contain many of the tools he made and used on the farm. Both his farm and house, located next to a former horse and carriage path dating to the 1700s, are significant, especially because most of the farms in the area have been turned into housing developments and since his land borders Wawayanda State Park and the Appalachian Trail. For this reason, the state annexed the land in 1981, promising Luther lifetime use. Upon his death, however, all the structures were slated for

destruction so that the fields could eventually return to forest. These plans were scrapped when Ronald J. Dupont, Jr., then president of the Vernon Township Historical Society summed up the importance of saving the farm, stating, "High Breeze is a time capsule of farming in rural New Jersey in the late 19th century." His outcry was heard. So were those of local residents who thought the farm to be "the priceless relic of a vanishing age of farming." In 1992, High Breeze Farm was placed on the state and national registers of historic places; it will be kept in its original condition except for the restoration of the buildings.

The museum building, a short distance up the road from the Barrett farm and house, is believed to have been where Luther Barrett's grandson lived. Completely modernized, it was occupied until recently by a park ranger, and is now leased to the Historical Society by the New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry. Although small, it boasts interesting exhibits, including one containing the skulls of local animals (the black bear, opossum, raccoon, and eastern coyote); a blacksmith display with a few of the tools the Barretts used; 19th century hats; and caning displays.

The chestnut forest that once surrounded the building that now is the museum is long gone, but here you can also see an interesting mini-display of a chestnut fence typical of those built by area farmers inside the museum. Impressive stone walls that defined the properties still stand. Building these without modern-day machinery was an amazing feat, considering that some of the rock fences on the farm weigh more than 2,000 pounds per running foot! To build a stone fence, rock was pried from the ground using bars forged of local iron, loaded on a stone 'boat,' dragged by a draft horse to the fence in progress, and lifted by hand a second time to be

positioned onto the wall. The rocks displayed in the museum's stone boat weigh approximately 10 pounds each, but can you imagine the work that went into piling 200 rocks on the wall before lunch and yet another 200 in the afternoon? It amounted to lifting and setting into place about 2 1/2 tons and, day after day, the farmers would clear a tiny bit of field, taking the stones to lay another couple of feet of stone fence.

Generations of Barretts lived in an age when horses really did provide the horsepower, long before the advent of gasoline lawn mowers, noisy blowers and roaring diesel tractors. While exploring the museum and farm, you can almost picture Luther out in the field cutting his hay, listening to the birds, and enjoying just the sound of the blades of his horse-drawn mower.

Today High Breeze stands as a living monument to the beauty, history and charm of Sussex County's rural traditions and brings the past to life. And fortunately, because Wawayanda State Park has escaped from the development that surrounds it, it is the perfect year-round getaway. Each season offers a new variety of wet 'n' wild pleasures. Summer months beckon the swimmers and sailors; spring and fall are ideal for bird watchers, leaf peepers, and botany lovers; and the high elevation's earlier snowfalls lure cross-country skiers, snowshoe enthusiasts, ice skaters, and snowmobile folks. By the time you leave the park, you'll understand why the Lenape called the area Wawayanda. You'll also most likely be planning your next trip here to try another trail!



If You Go . . .

Wawayanda State Park's main entrance is located at 885 Warwick Turnpike, 4 miles north of West Milford, in Hewitt. The park is open year-round from dawn to dusk. The boathouse is open during summer from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. A parking fee is charged from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The new bathhouse is fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Three group campsites with pit toilets are available for a minimum of seven people per site. The total capacity for the three group campsites, which are open from April 1 through October 31, is 150 people. Water is not available at the campsites, but may be carried in from the maintenance building approximately a half mile away. A reservation fee of \$7 is required; the fee for camping is \$.75 per person per night.

For additional information about hours and facilities, call 973/853-4462.

The **James Barrett House Museum**, which houses the Vernon Township Historical Society, is located at 173 Barrett Road in Vernon. It is generally open from 1 to 5 p.m. on weekends, but it's best to call (973/875-9562) ahead, since hours are subject to change. Tours of High Breeze Farm are available at certain times; call for an appointment.

*A frequent contributor to **New Jersey Outdoors**, Arline Zatz is the award-winning author of numerous books about the Garden State and ways to enjoy New Jersey's outdoors. Her books and articles frequently feature photographic images by her husband, Joel L. Zatz, in addition to her own.*

The Opti

Sailboat of Choice
for the Younger Set



Article and images by Gretchen F. Coyle

Like bathtub toys they bob up and down in the water, small white sails moving in all directions. Their hulls are adorned with boat names and stickers, and they carry colorfully dressed children in life preservers intent on learning to sail. What are these 7¹/₂-foot boats that can be seen on many of New Jersey's bays, lakes and rivers? They are (officially) Optimist dinghies, but they're better known as Optis to the growing number of youngsters who participate in the sport of sailing.

"Optis are simple, safe and fun," says

Chuck Maschal of Beach Haven, the current president of the United States Optimist Dinghy Association (USODA). "Since they weigh only 77 pounds, they are extremely easy to transport. Two young children can move a boat. Properly inflated (each dinghy carries three flotation bags), an Opti will not sink. Kids like these boats because there is only one line (main sheet) to handle, making them easy to sail."

Wanted: A Nautical Soapbox Car

Florida boat builder Clark Mills designed the first Opti more than 50 years ago at the behest of the Clearwater chapter of Optimist International. The group wanted a dinghy that could be built easily and cheaply; that was safe and easy to sail; and that would entice area youth to spend time on Clearwater Bay rather than cruising the town's streets in soapbox cars. The result, originally called the Optimist Pram because of

the shape of its snub-nosed bow, was a plywood boat that could be assembled in a garage with screws and glue.

According to Bill Douglas, editor of USODA's class magazine *Optinews*, Mills is a humble, unpretentious guy who doesn't appear to be impressed with being called the Father of the Optimist. In fact, he has never collected any royalties for the Optimist dinghy, since he donated the design.

Although now manufactured in some 30 countries around the world, all Optimist dinghies must be built according to the rules of the Optimist class and the International Sailing Federation. This helps keep the cost down since all Optimis, regardless of builder or year built, now are "created equal" and there's no longer a need to upgrade to a new model or buy a more expensive import.

"Aside from the safety and convenience factors, Optimis are very inexpensive for a family to buy. In some areas they are called the grandparents' boat, as grandparents who summer at the shore tend to buy the boats for the kids' enjoyment," Maschal says. "A new boat runs around \$2,300 while a used one costs from \$1,500 to \$1,700. The growth in Optimis sailing from the Gulf Coast to Maine is absolutely amazing."

Yacht clubs along the Jersey coast have adopted the Optimis as the boat of choice for the younger set. Racing is fun for many children while others just enjoy learning to sail and avoid competition at all costs.

Learning to Sail—and So Much More

"I have two lives and two sets of friends—summer and winter friends. Sailing Optimis with my friends is very special," says Josh Robinson from Potomac, Maryland, who summers in Beach Haven and is one of the top junior sailors at the Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club. Optimis regattas



Caitlin Stevens, of Beach Haven, readies her boat for a morning of sailing.

and races take place almost every day of the summer in New Jersey.

Children from age 8 to 15 are eligible to race in fleets based on age or ability. Beginners (of any age up to 15) start out in a special novice group called the green fleet. Once they win three green fleet trophies (in any combination of 1st, 2nd or 3rd place), they move into the appropriate age-based fleet. Optimis skippers who are 10 years old or under on a regatta's opening day compete in the white fleet. The blue fleet is for those who are 11 or 12, while those aged 13 to 15 compete in the red fleet.

Seventy Optimis sit on racks along the docks at Little Egg. Club counselors teach the ins and outs of sailing five days a week during the summer in the Junior Sailing Program. "Starboard, starboard, I have the right-a-way!" exclaims an excited youngster.

"Each time I sail I get a little better and learn a little more," says Betsy Pritchard, age 10, who has sailed her Optimis for two years in regattas. Claiming

she really doesn't care how well she does in the races, she values the sense of pride she gets from competing, and enjoys being with her friends.

Betsy's 9-year-old sister, Rachael, has a similar opinion. "In my first regatta at Toms River all the kids went swimming together in the river and the mothers served the best pizza," she says. "At first there was no wind to race, then it came up so much that I was afraid to go out. But all of us were given a trophy just for trying, so my day was lots of fun."

That event, the No Tears Regatta, has been hosted annually since 1993 by the Toms River Yacht Club. Open to white fleet skippers and the younger sailors in the green fleet, its aim is to build confidence and discipline while fostering fun. Everyone is a winner here—kids, coaches, volunteers and parents. The No Tears Regatta can attract almost 200 youngsters, and all are given T-shirts, tossed candy as they cross the finish line, and called up individually to receive a trophy at the awards ceremony.

Sportsmanship is stressed at every turn. The USODA tries to enforce a code of conduct for all young skippers. "Our message regarding honesty, integrity, safety, fun and sportsmanship needs to be communicated to all of our young sailors, not just to those who race," says Maschal.

"My kids like going to regattas in our big Suburban with their friends while we tow a nine boat Opti trailer. They all come home enthusiastic, wanting to stop at any fast food place, and have sleepovers. All of us parents are hot and exhausted," says Opti mom Chris Pritchard of Beach Haven. "Friendship and sailing go hand in hand for the younger set."

"Sailing is a sport that can be enjoyed by the whole family, whether in Optis or in larger boats," adds her husband Russ.

Optis Not Only for "Shorebirds"

YMCAs in several cities also have chosen the Opti as a learn-to-sail boat. Their Optis are free for children to use in their programs, making sailing available to children who might never have the opportunity. And every child who has ever left dock to sail alone seems to sport a smile and feel a sense of great accomplishment.

Teachers explain the rudiments of seamanship and sailing before the children venture out on the water. Novice skippers watch demonstrations of rigging, launching, and capsizing and, for the first few sails, instructors or other competent sailors accompany them.

Excitement reigns, even as learning takes place. "I'm actually moving!" shouts a 7-year-old beginner who has moved away from the dock for the first time. "The flag tells me the wind is behind me."

Bumper cars might well describe a bunch of beginners who are continually

running into each other, but that's fine—it's all part of the learning process. And besides, Optis are pretty indestructible when equipped with fender-bender padding around the bows known as *snootboots*.

White sails show their reflection on the ripples of sky blue water. Bright colored sunglasses and zip-up life vests (with whistles attached in case a child needs help) are just as sure signs of an Opti sailor as are his faded shorts and T-shirt. Each boat name is unique to the child who sails it. Names such as *Crazy* and *Captain Hook* are painted in big letters across both sides of the boats. Such individuality is imperative, as sometimes it is hard to tell one child from another at a distance.

Sailing just for the pleasure of being out on the water is the aim of children who do not care about competition, and there are many more of them than there are competitive sailors. Two friends may sail in one boat to explore a nearby island



Their skippers beached these Optis at *Little Beach Farm*, the author's home, to enjoy some fun on terra firma.

or just go out for an afternoon's frolic, stopping to swim along the way. Destinations are fun places where kids go for picnics or ice cream. In Beach Haven it is not unusual to see a fleet of Optis beached somewhere, children laughing as they feast on soggy sandwiches, warm boxed juice, and half melted Oreos.

Moms Love 'Em, Too

Opti sailing is not just for youngsters. Every Thursday night in the summer a dozen or more mothers can be found sailing Optis in the Sea L'Eggs program at the Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club. The ladies feel comfortable in their kids' boats, find them quick to maneuver in and out of the water, and easy to sail. A special bond exists between children and their mothers who sail the same boat—they speak the same boating language and are better able to understand the pitfalls and success of sailing.

Sometimes they practice sailing drills, the kids sure they are much better

than their mothers are. Other times the moms just head out for a relaxing evening sail. Men, however, tend to find the Opti confining; their weight keeps the boat low in the water and unable to move very well.

Optis look like little floating bathtubs to adults used to sleek sailboats and fast moving powerboats. Yet this fastest-growing one-design boat in the world—there are approximately 350,000 in existence, and New Jersey is home to about 1,000 of them—creates confidence, independence, pride, and fun for our children.

Freelance writer Gretchen Coyle, whose articles about seashore gardening and Tucker's Island were published in the Spring 1997 and Summer 1998 issues of New Jersey Outdoors, spends the warmer months in Beach Haven on Long Beach Island and winters in Florida.

TO LEARN MORE . . .

✉ Write to: United States Optimist Dinghy Association (USODA)
PO Box 150127
222 S Westmonte Drive, Suite 101
Altamonte Springs, FL 32715-0127

🖨 Check out the USODA Web site (<http://usoda.org/>) and request an Opti Pak, which includes a copy of *Optinews**, an Optimist bumper sticker, a brochure, a membership application and a material order form.



* *Optinews* magazine, published eight times a year, is mailed free to USODA members.



Optis are docked while regatta participants take a lunch break at the Metedeconk River Yacht Club.



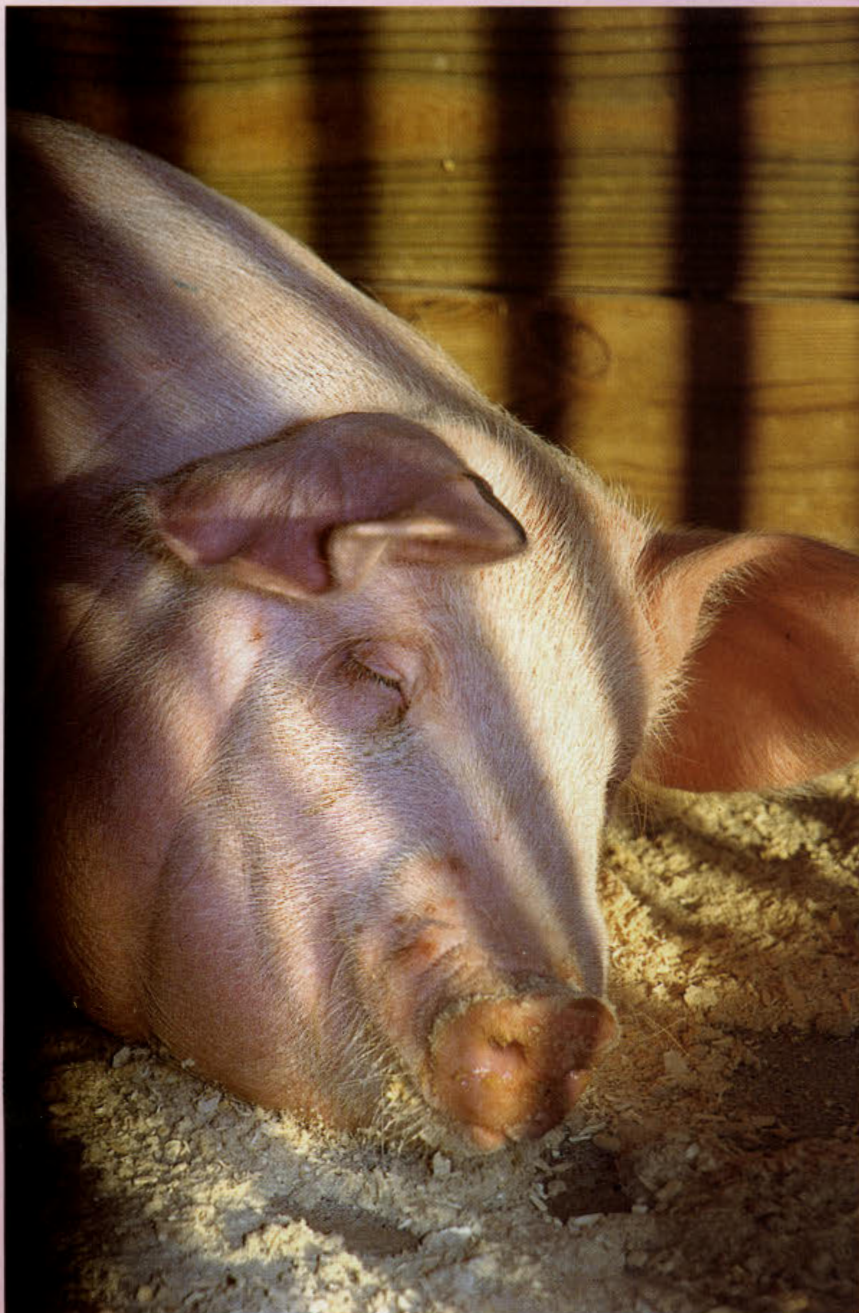
Photographer Dotty Waxman's granddaughter, Heather Lehrman, enjoys cotton candy at the 1999 event.

Fair? No, Great!

Photos © 1999 Dotty Waxman

The Sussex County Fairgrounds, located in Augusta, is the site of a veritable smorgasbord of activities from March

through November. Whether you're looking for a fishing derby or a quilt workshop, a circus or a bike race, a polka-fest





or a pre-17th century historical re-creation, an Indian powwow or a dog show, you're sure to find it on the schedule of events.

The annual event for which the fairgrounds is probably most famous, though, is the Sussex County Farm and



Horse Show, a 10-day fair that takes place each August. You'll find everything from farm animals and vegetable shows

to needlework and prepared food competitions. There's daily entertainment, amusement rides and a midway full of



food, merchandise and games of chance to tempt fair-goers of all ages and tastes. Touted as New Jersey's Best Fair,

it offers all the traditional features of a state fair—which probably is why this year it is the New Jersey State Fair!

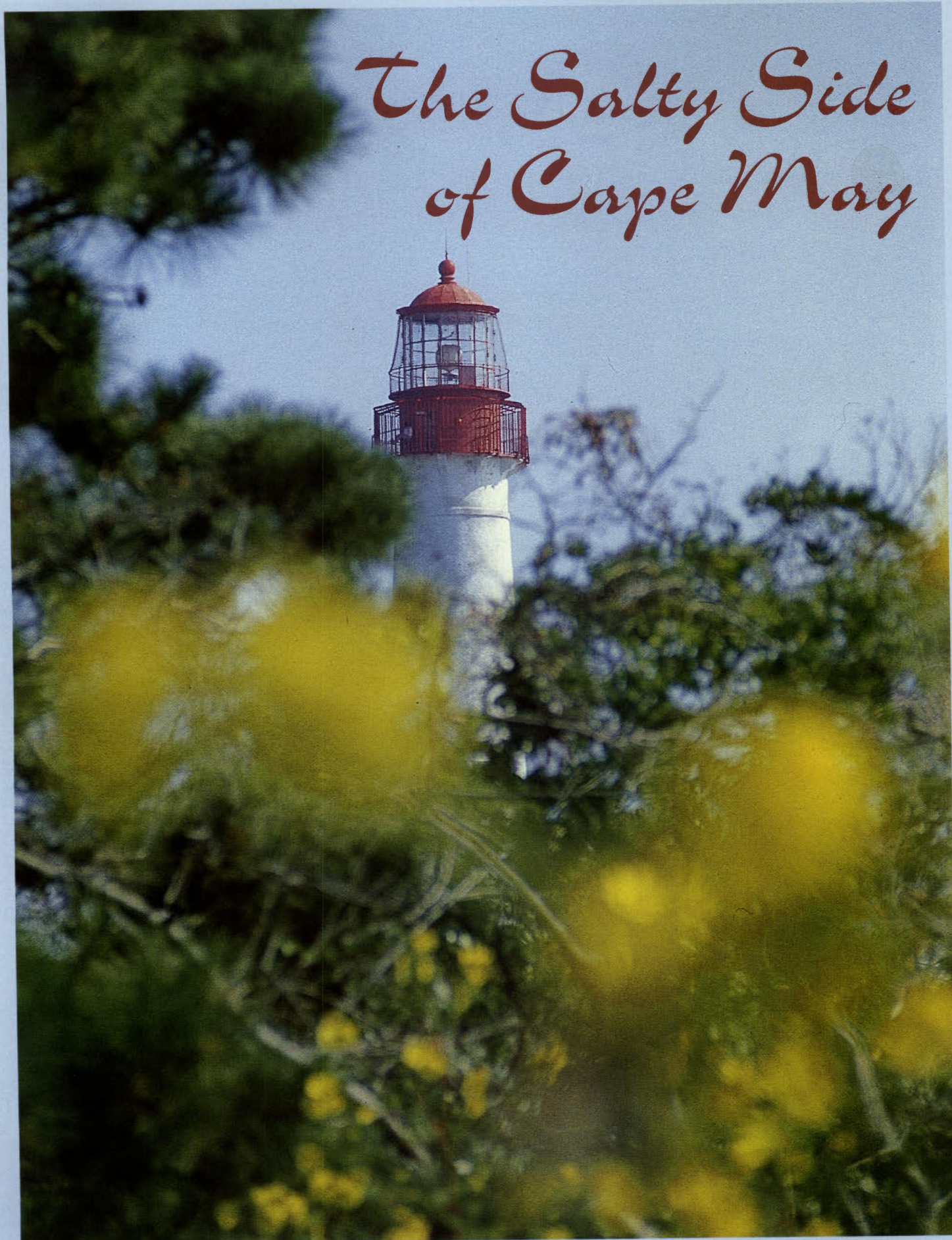


Enjoy these scenes from the 1999 Farm and Horse Show.





*The Salty Side
of Cape May*





Article and images by Jay Lloyd

Blockade runners and rumrunners, men-of-war trading broadsides, a sprinkling of privateers and pirates—Cape May has seen them all, been of comfort to some and crushing defeat to others. But that's the way of a seafaring town, a home port to mariners since the early part of the 17th century. Cape May is a salt tinged burg with a Victorian flare. If it were floated offshore, it would be called Nantucket.

Today this southern tip of New Jersey, washed by the confluence of the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, is a far different place than greeted Captain Cornelius Mey, the first Dutch sailor to drop anchor off its sandy shore. Great scattered fleets of pleasure boats, tour boats, private and commercial fishing boats and transient sailors dominate the offshore waters by summer. In winter, the mounting seas are left to a major fishing

fleet that courts danger to harvest the ocean. Cape May is also home to America's largest Coast Guard base, a welcome presence on a heavily traveled and frequently turbulent patch of sea.

Modern sailors, running from a threatening storm, seek out the inlet jetties that signal the protection of Cape May's embracing harbor. It was driving rainsqualls and rising seas that sent the *Welsh Rover*, on which I was a crew member, racing for cover through the broad Cape May inlet during a passage to New England. But once inside, as our 52-foot ketch made its way along the channel past the Coast Guard base, the split personality of this seashore resort town with a nautical tilt came into focus. As we carved through the somewhat tamer harbor waters, the breeze, which had been a squall at sea, carried with it the unexpected sounds of a piano and brass, sig-

(Above) The Atlantic surf pounds the Cape May seawall.



naling the Saturday night dance at the Corinthian Yacht Club. And as the music cascaded from the sweetness of a clarinet high to the brooding richness of a solo baritone sax, anchored boats were doing a gentle aquatic mambo to the tune.

Across the harbor, lights were blazing in the Lobster House restaurant, but diners had fled the broad outdoor patio and deck of the schooner *America* for the shelter of dining rooms with a roof. Now the lowering skies outside competed with the bright lights, the chatter, and the ding and scrape of fork against plate.

The sea is what it's all about here. So let's take a nautical tour by boat—if you have one available—or by land, of the salty side of Cape May. Each place described that provides eye-filling sights from the water can also be reached by car and bicycle.

The Journey Begins

Cape May is now an island severed from the mainland by a broad canal that serves as a back door from the Delaware Bay. It was carved there during World War II for the Coast Guard cutters that needed swift access to both the bay and the sea. Between the two there are sights that touch on every element of the region's sea-centered history from its commercial fisheries and imposing lighthouse to the migrant seabirds that are drawn by its shoreside sanctuary.

With the sun rising on the port bow, an early morning departure through the deep water inlet to begin the circumnavigation is a reminder that this channel to the sea will remain dredged and clear as long as it's needed for operations of the largest cutters and the fishing fleet. For sailors and the jetty fisherman who cast



(Top) The Cape May Lighthouse throws a beam 19 miles to sea.

(Above) Waiting for a handout at the schooner *America* alongside the Lobster House Restaurant



their lines from the long stone breakwater, it's a recreational bonus from Uncle Sam.

With a favorable onshore breeze, it's a brisk 6-mile sail from the inlet to Cape May Point in the shadow of a towering 157.5-foot lighthouse that throws its brilliant beam 19 nautical miles to sea.

Since 1823 there's been a lighthouse at this point to guide mariners into the Delaware Bay and the 10-mile reach between Cape May and Cape Henlopen, Delaware. Construction began on the present white tower, topped with an identifiable red cap, in 1857; it was completed two years later. Since then it was darkened only during the Second World War to deny its use to prowling German U-boats.

A few years earlier, as America went nearly dry during prohibition, the rum-runners would anchor just outside the 3-

mile limit here, waiting for darkness and fog to make a dash past the patrolling Coast Guard. Some made it, to keep the speakeasies of Philadelphia and Atlantic City in business. Others were taken during daring chases and put to government use in the rum war, or burned and sunk.

Between the inlet and the lighthouse, you'll cruise past a closely packed beachfront row of Victorian mansions and homes that served as resorts for the gentry of Philadelphia and Washington and notables such as then-congressman Abe Lincoln. It was an era when summer crowds arrived by steamer, traveled by carriage and enjoyed evenings cantering through the surf on horseback. Ladies in long dresses, carrying brightly colored parasols, strolled the pristine beach that curved over four miles to the Cape May Light. Joined now by seashore hotels, the

(Above) Coasting past Cape May Point



gingerbread-trimmed structures stand solidly behind a protective seawall that holds back the ocean during all but the most challenging storms.

Stop at the Light

While on shore, take time to visit the lighthouse. If your legs are limber, start climbing. There are 199 spiraling stairs to the watch deck that completely encircles the lantern. Carry a pair of binoculars for a breathtaking look at the Atlantic, the Delaware Bay and the distant Delaware shoreline. Then take a chance on a bit of vertigo. Go ahead. Look straight down the tower wall into the bird sanctuary and nature preserve that nestles against the lighthouse grounds at the faithfully maintained Cape May Point State Park.

The park's nature trails provide a fascinating glimpse of the colorful profusion of growth in this freshwater marsh

that shelters nearly 20 species of migrating hawks and numerous varieties of waterfowl and shorebirds, along with the native wildlife. Behind a lush veil of reed grass, a spur of one trail leads to a photography blind. It offers a rare chance to capture those once-in-a-lifetime pictures of the birds and mammals, the pipers and red fox that thrive in this protective environment.

The shifting sands of time are no more apparent than at the park beachfront. A chipped and stained World War II coastal defense bunker stands on the edge of the surf. The weather-beaten gun emplacements are now encrusted with barnacles and submerged. When it was newly built in 1942 to guard against enemy submarines, the looming gray structure was 900 yards inland. In just 58 years erosion has placed it in the sea.

From the lighthouse, set your course around Cape May Point. But know your

(Above) Artists are attracted to the seascape at Sunset Beach.



draft and pay attention to the charts. It was here that the British learned a painful lesson during the War of 1812, when an unwary skipper grounded his sloop of war on Crow's Shoals and lost it to an American flotilla patrolling the bay. It was a symbolic turnabout from Revolutionary days when the British had bottled up Yankee shipping and the privateer Stephen Decatur, Sr., father of a later U.S. naval hero, was running the Royal blockades through the Delaware Bay as captain of the sloop *Fair American*. He would make it a point to stop under the enemy's nose for a brief visit with his mother in Cape May.

As you steer round the point and look to starboard, another relic of a past war comes into view. Clearly marked on your chart is the hulk of the concrete ship *Atlantis*. Now broken and resting on the bottom, it was a World War I experiment to cheaply produce ships of concrete that would carry the machinery of war to the European theatre. Part of its bow and superstructure are still seen above water right off Sunset Beach where gleaming stones, polished by the converging waters of the ocean and bay, are gathered by the thousands for homemade jewelry and fish tanks.

If you notice the glint of binoculars from the sand, it's likely that the often-present beach artists, under broad brimmed hats with brush and pallets, are adding the image of your boat to their canvas. Painters love Cape May Point for its diamond scavengers, fishermen, nautical appearance and seascape. Frequently passing in view are the Cape May-Lewes ferries, among the most modern in the country.

The Last Leg

It's less than 1 1/2 nautical miles from the sunken *Atlantis* to the 30-foot buoys that mark the entrance to the Cape May canal. Larger sailboats should stay clear of the canal and use the Oceanside inlet. Two bridges offer only a 55' clearance. The *Welsh Rover* needs 65'.

Tucked just inside the canal entrance and to port is the sprawling ferry terminal that gathers thousands of passengers each day to make the voyage with cars, bicycles and by foot to Lewes, Delaware, just across the bay. The ferry *Twin Capes* is the newest and most modern. Rising five decks, it carries passengers in lounges and restaurants with picture window views of the unfolding seascape. An outdoor upper deck bar is a favorite summertime spot and the ferry is designed with numerous observation points. Many folks make the round trip in a day. The experience of the passage is justification enough to get on board.

Once past the ferry terminal the channel narrows and there's a 6-knot speed limit. Recently returning through the canal as an observer on a 47' Coast Guard patrol boat, I watched the skipper of a cabin cruiser ahead drop his speed to match the limit. The Coast Guard coxswain who wanted to make a bit of time remarked, "They always do that when they know there's a cop behind them. Watch what happens when there isn't."

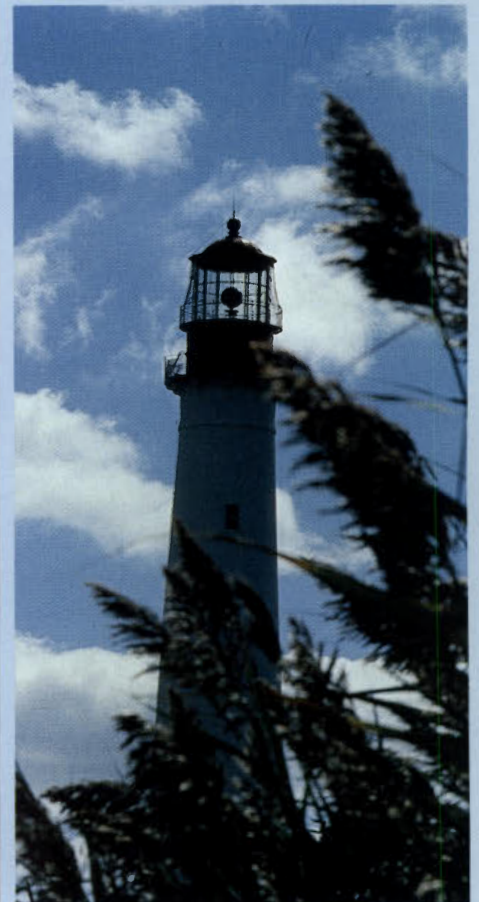
Speed here is frowned on not only because of the danger in turning high-speed boats loose together in a constricted area. It's also barred because of the erosion that results when the fragile shoreline is battered by the destructive wakes of power boat operators in too much of a hurry.

Once through the canal, the circumnavigation is complete. A favorite spot to tie up for lunch or an evening meal is dockside at the Lobster House restaurant. Indoors the eatery is a veritable museum containing a photographic history of Cape May's seafood industry and meticulously crafted models of the whalers and schooners that shipped from this enduring port. Outside, there's dining on the deck of a 1920s-era schooner or at umbrella-shaded tables alongside a raw bar. Here it's as real as it gets. The tables are in the shadow of the working vessels in today's modern, but grizzled, fishing fleet—ships straight from the pages of

The Perfect Storm packing their catch into the cavernous processing house that is part of the restaurant complex.

Cape May, in its millennium summer, remains one of New Jersey's most resilient bastions of tradition and living history, a place where the sea attracted its earliest settlers and continues to provide its strength, environmental vitality and economic life.

New Jersey Outdoors is pleased to welcome veteran journalist Jay Lloyd, whose credits include KYW News radio and television, as well as publication in local, regional and national magazines, to its ranks of contributors. The former Coast Guardsman, an active freelance writer who specializes in sailing, sailed the *Niagara* from Newport, Rhode Island, to Philadelphia, and then in the *Parade of Sail* during OpSail 2000.





GRASSROOTS GARDENING

Article, photos and plot plan by Marta McDowell

It's May, and the 100-plus plots at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum's community garden in Morris Township are just germinating. Gardeners look over newly seeded beds and transplants with the intensity of new parents in a nursery.

Who are these people and why aren't they gardening in their own back yards? Community members of varying ages and backgrounds, they may be there because they lack the space or the sun for a kitchen or cutting garden—or simply because they enjoy gardening with others.

Once the estate of the Frelinghuysen family, the property was bequeathed to the Morris County Park Commission, which uses the mansion as an administration building. The arboretum has an extensive collection of trees, shrubs and other

plants. You'll find the community garden diagonally across Hanover Road from the rest of the arboretum. It is a rectangular piece of property, wedged between Interstate 287 on the east and the water treatment plant on the west. It's not exactly prime real estate—in fact, it used to be the Frelinghuysens' trash heap.

From Trash to Treasure

Its new incarnation is much more productive. A little more than 20 years ago, in 1979, the Park Commission first offered garden plots for rent at \$15 per season. Gardeners had to haul water from the Whippany River, which meanders along the edge of the property.

Today, the rectangular parcels converge on a communal pump house and, since 1999, a central axis of faucets that line the central path. As a tenant of the community garden, you get a 10' x 20' patch of rototilled dirt, a selection of seeds, and all the water you can carry.

Pamela Wilson, a horticultural program specialist at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum is the gardeners' mentor. She teaches new gardeners, provides advice and makes the annual seed selection. Her practical approach is evident throughout.

"I order the seeds in bulk from Burpee, because we try to keep costs down. The groundhog doesn't seem to like Swiss chard, so I'm including that. Winter squash is off the list because no one seemed to grow it last year."

Her thriftiness pays off. A garden costs just \$35 for the April through November time span. Bargain hunters take note: the Community Gardens at Frelinghuysen have the best rent in Morris County at \$6 per month, including utilities.





Garden plots are Rorschach tests of horticultural creativity. Each plot is different. Some people plant a Mondrian-like canvas with rows of one or two crops, tomatoes being the most common. Others experiment with a dazzling variety of plants: heirloom lettuce, herbs, oriental vegetables, a salsa garden, a cutting garden. Personalities enter the landscape as people do exterior decorating with birdhouses, whirligigs, special stepping stones, and lawn chairs.

Like all community gardens, this is a cooperative venture. Gardeners are allowed the use of the common areas, water and mulch in addition to their own sunny tillage. In exchange, they agree to plant by the rules, keep the weeds down in their gardens, and maintain the paths that separate the garden plots.

Of course, community gardening takes stick-to-itiveness. "A lot of people just don't get weeding," says Wilson. "It's worse than housework. Like dirty laundry, it's always there." She's famous for her

little postcards: an *attaboy!* if your garden is neat and a weedy garden reminder if it's time to bring the hoe.

Community gardening has a long history. Medieval European towns had communal gardens inside the city walls. During the Industrial Revolution, as rural people moved to factory jobs in cities like London and Paris, many had access to allotment gardens (as well as a steady supply of fertilizer from the working horses) to grow their own vegetables. In the United States, the first community gardens appeared in the late 19th century, as workers moved from farm to factory. Through two world wars and the Great Depression, these cooperative ventures were named liberty gardens, relief gardens and victory gardens. The most recent upsurge in community gardening occurred in the 1960s and '70s as people looked back to nature and inflation drove food costs up.

What's the Payoff?

First of all, you get the produce. My husband, Kirke, and I have been gardening at Frelinghuysen since 1993. We have spring salads, summer bouquets, and pesto from the freezer all year long—not to mention the Jersey tomatoes. What a terrific payoff for about 3 hours per week of labor!

When asked what keeps him coming back, one gardener said, "I like eating." Pamela says, "What I grow, I eat. All summer long, I buy very few vegetables." The community garden connects you to the food system in a way that the supermarket can't.

Gardening is good for your health, both physical and mental. In addition to the nutritional boost, it is a mildly aerobic outdoor activity. Depending on the task, you can burn between 200 and 500 calories an hour working in the garden. We get as much exercise cultivating our bit of earth as we would playing golf

(without a cart and carrying our own clubs). It is also a productive way to release stress. As Faith Teeple, one of the experienced folks at the garden put it, "Gardening is enjoyable: to work the earth, see plants grow, and be part of a community of gardeners."

Community gardening has the advantage of a social side as well. It's rare to go to the garden and not find at least one other gardener at work. Over the years, my parents have helped weed, water and plant. Our goddaughter Emily has helped to pick peas and plant beans. And we've introduced several friends to the garden who now have their own plots. In short, community gardening brings people together—people of all generations and cultures, bound by common instinct and interest to the land.

We have learned about the local ecosystem from our tenure at the community garden. It is an excellent place for birding. My husband is great at spotting our Garden State bird, the goldfinch, swooping through the garden and the adjacent field. There are stories of a killdeer that made a nest in one plot. Gardeners have reported hawks, great blue herons and whippoorwills. Butterflies congregate in the rows of flowers.

There is also a dark side to this ecological education. Did you know that groundhogs climb chain link fences? Our

community garden groundhogs sometimes take up residence in one or more plots and consume a prodigious amount of produce. Smaller rodents, voles, mice and rabbits, have the annoying habit of taking one bite out of a ripe tomato and then leaving it right under the plant. And of course, that many vegetables in one place attract garden bugs of all shapes and sizes. If you didn't know about biodiversity, the insect population alone at the community garden would make it all become clear. But luckily, the chain link fence that provides the jungle gym for the groundhogs does keep the deer population at bay.

A community garden is a great place to learn about plants. We get to look at what other gardeners do and ask questions. When I tried growing pumpkins, I found that mine weren't bearing fruit. A neighboring gardener taught me the difference between male and female blooms and how to pollinate my pumpkin patch. It made me feel like I was an obstetrician doing assisted reproduction. The garden is where I learned that I could save seeds from year to year, but only from non-hybridized varieties. It has been my horticultural primer.

They Nourish in More Ways than One

Community gardens nourish a neighborhood. The American

Community Gardening Association calls it "the greening of a community." Bette Midler recently mobilized support for neighborhood plots in New York City. And the Big Apple isn't alone. Trenton has a slew of community gardens, and the Camden Garden Club runs several. Denville sports one next to the public library. The one that gets my prize for the best name is South Central Los Angeles with its program called Food from the 'Hood. Anywhere there is a community garden, it is clear that there are people with roots of more than one kind planted there.

If you are not sure if your town has a community garden, call your local agricultural extension service. If you don't have one in your area, consider rounding up a group of gardeners and finding a sponsor with some land. Community gardening brings the basic ingredients of gardening together. The organization provides the dirt, water and sunshine. The participants add the labor, the tools and the creativity. Put it together, and you'll make a grassroots garden.

First-time contributor Marta McDowell, a corporate executive by day, has been practicing her avocation—gardening—for 17 years. She gardens at her home in Chatham as well as at the arboretum, teaches gardening classes and has written gardening articles for newsletters and magazines.

COMMUNITY GARDENING RESOURCES

For links and more information on how to start a community garden in your town or at your company, a good place to start is:

American Community Gardening Association
100 N. 20th Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1495
Phone: 215/988-8785
Fax: 215/988-8810
www.communitygarden.org

Rutgers Cooperative Extension has a variety of publications that are available free or for a small fee. Contact your County Cooperative Extension Office or the Rutgers Urban Gardening Office (162 Washington Street, Newark, NJ 07102; 201/648-5958) for information on the availability of these resources.



mar 19 03

basil

(Spring:
Broccoli
Raab)

basil

basil

basil

holy basil

coriander

shallots (Fall:
Broccoli
Raab)

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Pakchoi

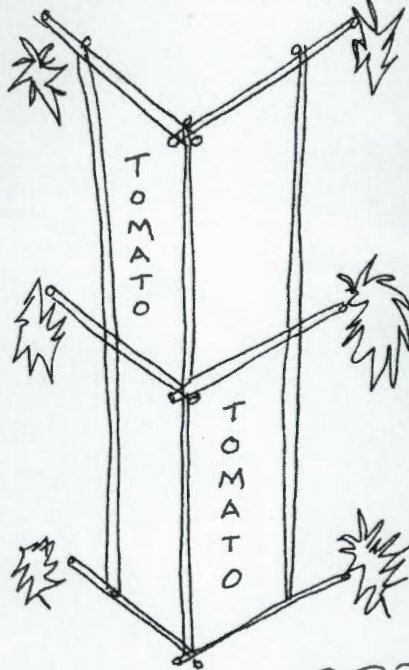
swiss chard

peas
luffa

beets

mar 19 03

mint



lettuce / salad

salad / lettuce


lettuce / salad

potatoes

flowers

hot peppers chives

PILOT PLAN



Blue Claws on Jersey's "Other Shore"

© 1999 Mary O'Connor

by Gary Gresh

The New Jersey side of the Delaware Bay has long been justly famous for its fishing opportunities. But just as deserving of recognition are crabbing opportunities. It's a good place to introduce the family to some excellent crabbing action.

Most tidal creeks and rivers along the bay offer great crabbing, though access can sometimes be difficult. Many creeks flow through wilderness marshes, and crabbing is not permitted on many of the bridges over tidal waters in south Jersey. Nonetheless, the Greenwich area is always a hot spot, with considerable bridge access. They offer great crabbing over a long season. The one over Stow Creek deserves mention. Back Creek crabbing is usually dependable, and a boat ramp is located at Husted's Landing. Crabs there can run late into the fall,

coinciding with a great white perch run.

There also is some public access to the Cohansey River. Crabbers can launch at Bridgeton or farther down the river at Hancock's Harbor. As in other tidal waters in the region, crabbers might also encounter channel cats, carp, white perch and striped bass if they toss in hook and line.

The area around Fortescue offers some fine crabbing opportunities. You can rent or launch a boat and crab right up Fortescue Creek. You needn't go far—boat renters often just crab the first ditch past the mouth of Fortescue Creek. Those who know the area sometimes head up the creek past the bridge.

The bulkhead and jetty at the mouth of Fortescue Creek are also popular with crabbers. Street parking's just a short walk away and you can grab the incoming

tide and move up the bulkhead with it. This is also a good surf fishing location, should you want to double-dip. Weakfish, bluefish, fluke, spot and, in the fall, striped bass can be had there.

There is a small beach next to the jetty. Bait and tackle shops, dumpsters and portable toilets are within walking distance across from the marina in the creek. There is plenty of street parking, but do not block entrances to the marinas or private driveways.

Also in Fortescue, you can crab right from the bridge over Fishing Creek, at the end of the town. There's plenty of street parking before the bridge, and again the incoming tide is best. Once the creek starts to fill, the action should start and stay hot until flood tide. Use traps here because the current is too strong for hand lines. This is another area that

offers good surf fishing, including eels, summer flounder and even weakfish right off the bridge.

The best crabbing in Fortescue usually starts after the horseshoe crabs leave. Otherwise, you'll be pulling up traps full of breeding horseshoe crabs. It should be good from early July until well into the fall. Crabs molt their shells and grow larger during the summer, so the later in the summer, the bigger the crabs.

I have even caught crabs right from the beach in Fortescue. When the bay is calm, wade out to your knees and toss out box traps. You'll be surprised how many crabs you can catch, even on an outgoing tide. I've caught many crabs this way while surf fishing. A few crabs and a couple of fish in the cooler make for a nice day—and an even nicer meal.

Moving Inland a Bit . . .

Some inland tidal creeks offer dynamite crabbing. The crabbing at the small bridge in Newport can be great. Turn off of Route 553 onto Route 610; the bridge is located near the cemetery between Route 553 and Methodist Road. I've had good catches in Newport as early as Memorial Day weekend. You'll have fast action all season long and by September you'll be catching lots of big crabs here. Incoming tide is best, but have patience—it can sometimes take a while for the crabs to start feeding here. You can also catch jumbo carp, nice channel cats, white perch and Norfolk spots here at times. There are some parking spots along the road, and trash cans to help keep the area clean. Local outdoorsman Bill York claims that this is the place to be for crabs in September.

There are rental boat facilities by the marina on Newport Landing Road and right on 553 between Newport and Dividing Creek at Beaver Dam. Expect good crabbing at both locations. Veteran crabber Phil Reilly points out that Beaver Dam is one of those waters that can be

gangbusters on the outgoing tide, while areas closer to the bay are only productive on the incoming tide.

Nearby, Turkey Point offers plenty of access to the bank and bridge crabber. Make the turn off of 553 for Turkey Point, then make another right when the road comes to a "T" and continue back into the marsh. Many crabbers do well at the first bridge. Others continue back to the dead end. At the dead end you will be in the Egg Island Wildlife Management Area. The road there is rough. I'd advise that you use a four-wheel drive vehicle from the first bridge back.

The rewards can be great at Turkey Point—I've never seen a boater return with less than a bushel here. You can crab at the bridge and banks of the dead end. A crude ramp allows you to launch small boats there.

Other crabbers cross the bridge and walk back the trail over some extremely productive footbridges. Some of these streams are very narrow and shallow but really produce once the incoming tide fills them up.

I use a hand truck to help carry my traps, basket and other gear back along the trail. Or you can use the net traps on rings. They take up no space and are easy to carry. Here, just as at many locations along the bay, you will need plenty of insect repellent.

The crabs start running here early in the season, but many of the early season crabs are small, so be sure to check their size. If you don't, a conservation officer might.

You can rent and launch boats at the two marinas on Dividing Creek along Route 553. Bait, tackle and food are available. Dividing Creek has great crabbing over a long season, so it's wise to call for reservations on weekends. An added bonus is the great fishing for white perch, catfish, carp, spot and throwback stripers that you can enjoy at the same time. The mouth of Maple Creek is

(Opposite page) Keep crabs cool and moist to keep them alive until you're ready to prepare them.

(Below) Steve Crane hands son Josh the crab pot to empty into the sorting box.



another good bet; you may even take an occasional weakfish or two at this spot.

The Maurice River also offers some great crabbing opportunities. There is public access in Mauricetown, where there's a small pier and parking lot in Mauricetown Park. Other crabbers may try their luck from the banks around the Mauricetown Bridge; some even launch small boats from an unimproved ramp underneath the bridge. This area of the river is also home to white perch, channel cats, monster carp and striped bass of all



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A crab pot is pulled from the bay.

sizes, so take along a fishing rod if you are so disposed.

You can launch a boat at any of the marinas in Leesburg, Matts Landing, Port Norris, Bivalve and other river ports. You can even rent boats for river crabbing and fishing at one marina. There's also public access at the municipal wharf in Port Norris.

Best Baits

The trick to catching a mess of bay-side crabs is to use fish bodies or bunker for bait instead of chicken. Chicken won't

always do the trick here. Save the frames from fish you fillet or get them from anglers cleaning fish at the docks. You can put them in bread bags and freeze them until you need them. Frozen bunker can be purchased at almost every bait shop. Cut them in half and poke them with the point of your knife to let out more juices that will attract crabs.

If you are fishing and want to try catching a few crabs, don't despair. As any bay angler will tell you, blue claw crabs are very fond of squid. Put it on a hand line—or even hook and line—and retrieve it very slowly if you feel extra weight on the end. That's a blue claw hanging on to his lunch.

Mackerel will also entice crabs. When high winds cut short Phil Reilly's fishing plans, a stop at Beaver Dam put some crabs in the cooler. "Most of the crabs were taken on mackerel on a hand line. It outperformed the bunker," reported the angler turned crabber.

Change your bait frequently, especially if minnows and crabs have been working on the guts. Fresh bait has more scent and will attract the crabs.

Boaters often do best with hand lines but bank and bridge crabbers should use traps. They are easier to handle in the current, and you may not be able to reach far enough over the bridge with a dip net. Incoming tide is almost always best, though some inland waters see good crabbing on both stages of the tide.

It's easy to make your own hand lines. Wrap heavy twine or crab line around a stick or a piece of scrap wood. Tie a snap-type metal shower curtain hook to the end. Snap open the shower curtain hook and slide the open snap through a hole in your sinker. Then push the opened end through your bait and snap it shut. That way, your sinker and bait are secured, and changing your bait is a "snap." These shower curtain hooks are also easy to use on crab traps. Open

the hook, slide it through the wire or line on the bottom of your trap, slip on a sinker, push on some bait and snap it shut. That way you avoid tying on sinkers and bait with string or wire, and it makes changing them a breeze.

Depending on the current, you could need a substantial weight to hold your lines or traps on the bottom. Five- or six-ounce fishing sinkers work well, but some resourceful crabbers may resort to any old weight at all, such as heavy nuts and bolts.

The trick to using hand lines is to slowly retrieve the line so the crab does not get scared and let go of the bait. After you have retrieved the hand line bait to within sight, leave the crab in the water and net it from underneath. Put the net into the water and bring it up underneath the crab before he realizes what is going on.

Keep 'Em Cool, Calm and Collected

To keep crabs alive, keep them cool and moist in the shade. Peach and bushel baskets, cheap laundry baskets and even five-gallon buckets and coolers work well. In a basket or bucket, cover the crabs with some tall marsh grass. It will help keep them cooler and settle them down. Without the grass, they are much more likely to fight. This means dead crabs before you can get them to the cooking pot, and you must never cook a dead crab. Sprinkle saltwater or brackish water on them occasionally. If you have a long ride home, cover the basket with a wet burlap sack or section of newspaper to keep the crabs damp.

If you keep them in a cooler, be sure to use ice or ice packs. The cold will stun the crabs and they may appear dead; if so, remove them from the cooler at home and let them sit at room temperature for a few minutes. They should revive quickly. You'll notice the mouth and eyes moving first. While crabs kept damp and out of



the sun can survive overnight, you should really cook them as quickly as possible.

So pack your crab traps along with your fishing pole when you head down to the Delaware Bay. The ingredients for stuffed flounder might be a little easier to come by than you think.

*Freelancer Gary Gresh, of Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, spends enjoyable—and productive—hours fishing and crabbing in the Delaware Bay area. Among his previous contributions to **New Jersey Outdoors** was a Summer 1997 article on fishing the Maurice and Cohansey rivers.*




Cleaning & Cooking Blue Claws

There are as many ways to cook crabs as there are crabbers. Take a large pot and add about an inch of water. Add a hearty splash of white or cider vinegar. Add some seasoning to the water—either pre-mixed crab boil, the favorite Old Bay or something hotter. Bring the water to a boil. Add the live crabs using tongs, since the crabs expand rapidly in the heat. Put the lid back on the pot and steam the crabs for 15 to 20 minutes.

To clean them after cooking, pry open and pull back the belly section of the crab. Then, with your thumb under the top shell, pull the shell off. Rinse out the insides—the hepatopancreas—and break the body in half. Break the halves into sections and pull each section apart or use the point of a knife to push out the meat. Save the claws and crack them with pliers or the handle of a knife. Confession—I bang them with pliers to crack the shell. Don't smash the shell on the claws. Use just enough power to crack the shell and then peel it off.

If you prefer to clean your crabs live—recommended for soft-shelled crabs—take great care, as their pincers are very powerful. You can put them on ice to stun them first. Or just use heavy crab gloves to grab the crab from behind. Use a clam or bait knife to pry up the top shell and pull it off. Rinse out the hepatopancreas and they are ready to cook. This way you do not have to rinse away any of the seasoning or flavor by cleaning them after cooking, and you eliminate any toxins that would have accumulated in the hepatopancreas.

Along the bay, most crabbers like their crustaceans hot. I add black pepper, crushed red pepper, dry mustard and cayenne pepper to the water and then sprinkle more on the crabs. Adjust the amounts as to how spicy you like your crabs.



In recent years, garlic crabs have become popular. This is easy to make with cleaned crabs. Place a roasting pan on the stove. Turn on burner to medium. Add oil—olive oil or an olive oil mixture

is good—and a little butter or margarine if you wish. When oil is hot, add cleaned, uncooked crabs and a very generous amount of fresh garlic. Try not to burn the garlic. Sauté the crabs until they are

red and the meat is cooked. Add chopped fresh parsley, salt and pepper, then pour the oil and crabs over your favorite cooked pasta. Mix thoroughly and enjoy.

Points of Interest

Regulations

Crabs may be taken recreationally (with hand lines, manually operated collapsible traps or scoop nets) without a license.

A non-commercial crab pot license is required for the use of not more than two non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots or two trotlines to harvest crabs. A non-commercial crab dredge license also is available. The possession limit and sale prohibition apply under both licenses.

It is illegal to harvest or possess more than one bushel of crabs per day per person or offer for sale any crabs without having in your possession a valid commercial crabbing license.

All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately. Minimum sizes

of crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:

- Peeler or shedder crab — 3"
- Soft crab — 3¹/₂"
- Hard crab — 4¹/₂" (possession)
- Hard crab — 4³/₄" (for sale)

Recreational trotlines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits. All trotlines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.

Terrapin excluders and biodegradable panels are required on Chesapeake-style crab pots. Non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots, whether used for recreational or commercial purposes, must be licensed and marked with the gear identification number of the owner. All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours. No floating line may be used

on any crab pot or crab pot buoy. No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.

Crab pot/trot line seasons for waters not closed to their use:

- Delaware Bay and tributaries — April 16 to Dec. 14
- All other waters — Mar 15 to Nov 30

Only the owner, his agent or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.

For complete information, please refer to the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Digest, available online

(<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/dig-mar00.htm>) as well as at Division of Fish and Wildlife offices and most coastal bait and tackle shops, or call 609/748-2020.

Health Advisory

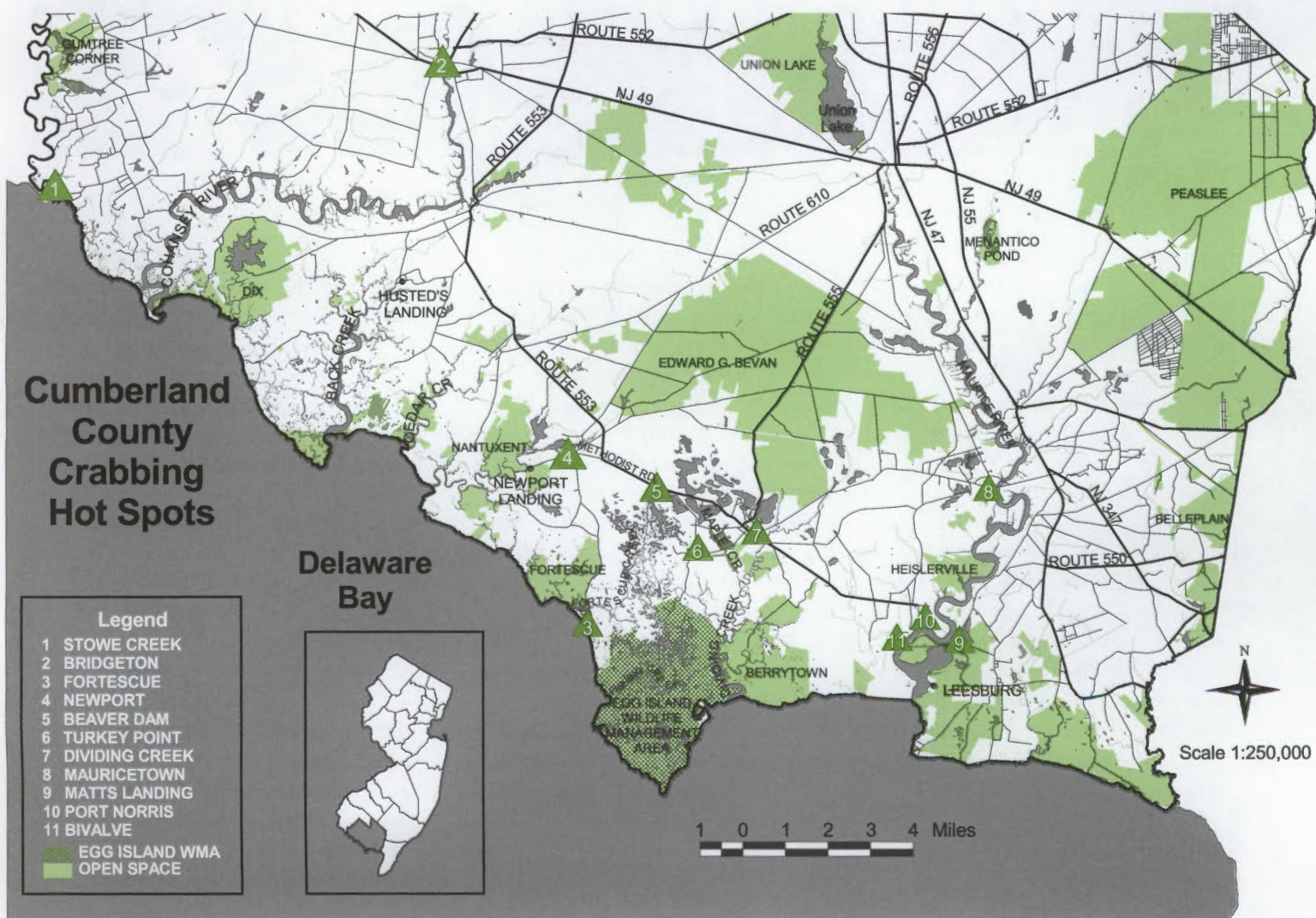
Fish and shellfish are an excellent source of protein, minerals and vitamins and play a role in maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet. However, research has shown elevated levels of potentially harmful contaminants in certain fish and crabs in some New Jersey waters, and advisories have been adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

You can reduce the level of PCBs, dioxins and most other chemicals (but

not mercury) by observing the health advisory charts (applicable to fish, shellfish and crustaceans) published in the *New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Digest*. With respect to blue crabs, please be aware that eating, selling or taking (harvesting) blue crabs from Newark Bay Complex is prohibited, and no one should eat those taken from Camden area waters. If blue crabs are taken from any other water bodies, the following preparation techniques can be followed to reduce exposure

to some contaminants:

- Do not eat the green gland (hepatopancreas); the highest levels of chemical contaminants are found here. It is the yellowish-green gland under the gills.
- Remove green gland (hepatopancreas) before cooking. After cooking, discard the cooking water.
- Do not use cooking water or green gland (hepatopancreas) in any juices, sauces or soups.



GOURMET GRUB FOR THE TRAIL



Article and images by Cindy Ross

When the guests enter the log house in the woods for the dinner party, Johnny—acting as headwaiter, dressed in formal attire with a red velvet vest and a towel over his arm—greeted them. He leads them to their seats at the banquet table, which accommodates 20. Candlelight illuminates the 4-foot-wide table, but something is different here.

The napkins are colorful cloth bannanas. Plastic water bottles take the place of crystal pitchers. In the background, the sounds of the wilderness come over the speakers—loons calling, water falling, owls hooting. The center of the cloth-covered table is decorated with an arrangement of oak leaves, pine branches and birds' nests, with realistic-looking toy frogs, snakes, spiders and other critters hiding in the foliage.

The menu lists 32 entrées from around the world but the guests will make no selections. They will eat all of them. And the chef needs only to boil water to prepare the food. What is going on here?

This is what you do when you are a writer and must test the products of six different companies who manufacture outdoor food—and it's winter, and you cannot get into the backcountry to eat the food in the environment it was meant for. You invite your most outdoorsy-minded friends (even a few who run outdoor retail stores) and ask them to taste test the food with you.

These are brave outdoors folk, because what they will be eating tonight is all exotic-tasting food...more ethnic inspired as opposed to standard fare. No beef stew or chicken and noodles on this menu. We're looking for something

unique and new—something that will chase away the supper blahs on the trail. Many of the people here tonight are of the Pennsylvania German extraction—real meat and potato lovers, as in plain roast beef and plain potatoes. Salt and pepper are spices to them. They prefer no sauces or mixtures of foods. So the fact that they are even going to eat this food is a leap of faith towards the outdoor food manufacturers. And you can be sure that the recipes they enjoy will be real crowd pleasers for the rest of you more open-minded outdoors folks.

Johnny announces each entrée (as best he can) in the accent of the country where it originated. With pot in hand, I deliver a portion on each person's plate (or spoon, if it's particularly soupy). At each tester's seat is a stack of cards, each bearing a number from 1 to 10. They'll use these backwoods versions of the

(Opposite) in warmer times, the author's children, Sierra and Bryce, wait patiently for a treat being prepared by Chuck.

(Below) Bryce, enjoys a taste.

Olympic scoring indicators to judge each entrée after they try it. Our kids, Sierra and Bryce, had written *Barf, Gag me!* and similar comments on the ones and *Yummy!* or *Scrumptious* on the 10s, lest the testers get confused.

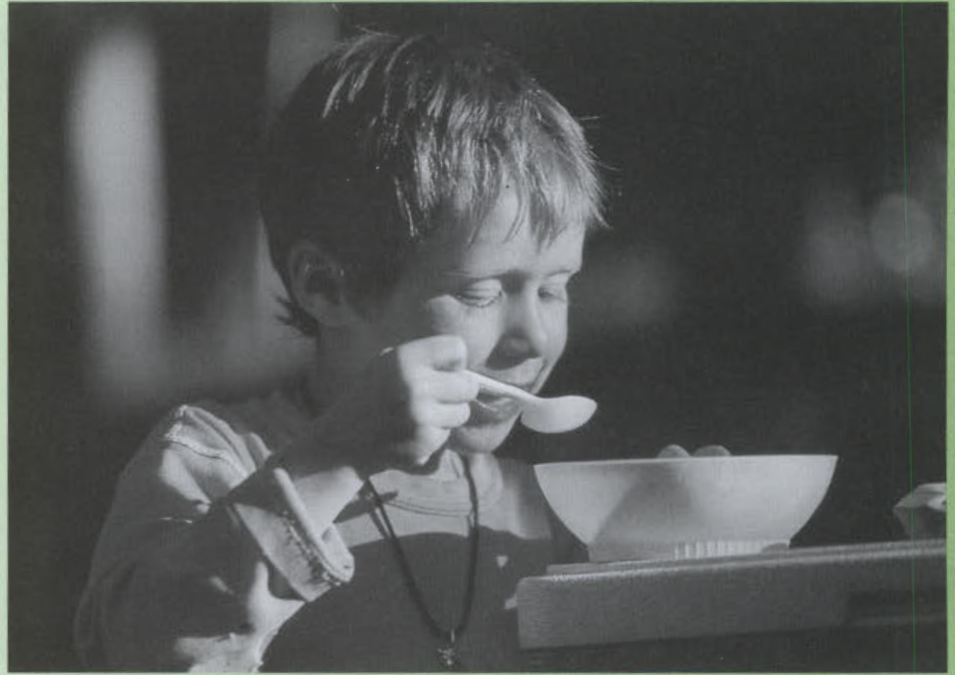
My husband, Todd, sits at the head of the table with a chalkboard. He tallies up the votes, which will later be averaged. Each tester also has a typed menu of all 32 entrées with space available for comments. After every 5 tastes, Johnny and I bring around little balls of lemon sherbet to cleanse the palate, just as in the finest gourmet restaurants.

Towards the end, the groans and moans intensify, as I place yet another spoonful of food on their plates. Their saturated taste buds are fomenting rebellion. When all is said and done, I serve a delicious chocolate cake and ice cream (made from scratch with fresh ingredients)—quite a contrast from the rest of the meal.

Some friends say I should have stopped around entrée 15, but I tell them they were not here to enjoy themselves, they were doing me a favor. We later get reports of bad cases of flatulence, and one guest needed to ingest 8 Tums on the car ride home—I hope their friendship knows no bounds.

In looking over the comments, we chuckle, mostly over the negative ones . . . "Tastes somewhat decayed." "It would save your life if you needed it." "I'd quit backpacking." "Spicy in a nasty way." "Popeye wouldn't eat this (spinach dish)." Seven-year-old Bryce's comments make us laugh the most, though . . . "It tasted yummy and shrimp." "It tasted macaroni and cheesy." "It looked beany and tasted beany." "I liked the flavor but I really didn't like the vechdibols." "It looked like dog vomit after eating grass."

So what we're going to present to you is a summary of each manufacturer's offerings, a little background on the man-



ufacturer, what is unique about them and our tried-and-true favorites. We'll keep "the neggies" to ourselves because, after all, it is just a matter of opinion.

Tasty-Bite

What initially inspired this story was the discovery of shelf-stable (18 months, non-refrigerated) ready-to-eat Indian and Thai entrées. They are marketed, under the Tasty Bite and Thai Table brand names, by Preferred Brands International. The products are all natural (no preservatives and no additives) and are sold in the country's premium natural and gourmet stores. The Tasty Bite line is manufactured in India and offers a selection of nine heat-and-eat Indian meals; three entrees and a soup, all made in Thailand, are available in the Thai Table line.

Both use retort pouch packaging, an innovative food packaging format that allows fresh tasting food to be carried in slim packages that don't need refrigeration. The products require only minutes to prepare. Campers need only to heat

the food, not cook it.

Our testers were eating this food at full strength, when traditionally it is eaten over rice or noodles or with bread. (We didn't want our testers' tummies to get full and prevent them from sampling all the entrees, so they had to eat it undiluted.) We all agreed that it would make a perfect combo if a camper would boil up a pot of instant rice to accompany it. This will keep the cost of the meal down, stretch it, and make the meal even more enjoyable.

They are heavier than freeze-dried or even dried foods because the moisture is included in the package. You never need to add water to any of these foods. You simply insert the bag into the boiled water and let it soak up the heat. Since these foods are on the heavy side, they would work best for overnight and weekend trips, not extended trips where weight is an issue.

These entrées are for adventurous camper palates, those who already know they enjoy exotic food. Everyone pre-

ferred the Indian food to the Thai entrées. They all tended to be spicy, with lots of cumin, curry, ginger, etc. The variety—eggplant dishes and spinach with cottage cheese, for example—was unlike any other food we had tasted. Everyone enjoyed the fact that the food did not taste like pre-chewed mush but had real chunks of vegetables that were clearly discernible. Our favorites are *Bombay Potatoes* (potatoes and chickpeas in a tomato-onion-pepper sauce); *Madras Lentils* (lentils and kidney beans in a creamy sauce of onions, tomatoes, ginger, cumin and herbs); and *Agra Peas & Greens* (peas simmered in a purée of creamed greens, onions, tomatoes, cashews and spices).

One entrée, complemented with a few cups of cooked instant rice, would be a very hearty and inexpensive meal for two. Each has a suggested retail price of \$2.19 and weighs approximately 11 ounces.

MSR (Mountain Safety Research)

MSR makes some of the finest backcountry stoves and pots and pans in the business. So when Mary Jane Butters, a wilderness ranger turned organic farmer approached the company with an idea for gourmet backcountry food, she got attention.

MSR is unique amongst all the food manufacturers, for only they create meals that are all organic. The line, initially marketed under the name EcoCuisine and now called MSR Gourmet, is all vegetarian. MSR feels when you're exercising hard, you want food that's nourishing and filling. If you fuel your body with the same purity your lungs are receiving, you'll be rewarded with extra energy and top performance. And what's good for you is good for the earth. With every organic bite, you're helping farmers make the choice to grow food in a healthier, environmentally nurturing way.

MSR Gourmet meals are low in sodium, big in flavor and contain zero chemicals. Most are prepared by mixing the ingredients with boiling water and letting them sit for a few minutes, giving you the convenience of dehydrated foods without the chemical components. They are packaged in burnable brown paper, so there's no messy trash to pack out. *Armenian Pilaf* (bulghar and lentils with bell peppers, onions, herbs and spices) and *Southwestern Couscous* (a melange of black bean flakes, couscous, tomatoes, corn, onions, peppers, herbs and spices) are just two of the exotic offerings

Our favorites are *Curried Lentil Bisque* (a flavorful bisque starring lentils, pinto bean flakes, cheddar and onions); *Smoked Spuds and Roasted Garlic* (potato flakes, cheddar and Parmesan cheeses and natural flavors); and *Garlic Fry Bread* (flavored with garlic and basil). The *Smoked Spuds* tasted "just like Mom's,"

Bob knows there is nothing like a good meal! It's important to enjoy and look forward to the foods you eat after a long, adventurous day outdoors.

(Inset) Closeup view of pots and pans used for cooking outdoors.



someone said, and most found their foods to be not overly spicy, but just right.

In addition to an impressive array of accompaniments, MSR Gourmet now offers 25 different meals, each serving two light eaters or one voracious thru-hiker. Prices range from \$4.95 to \$7.95 and each weighs from 3.5 to 6.25 ounces. Some of the entrees are also available in single-serving packages that are designed to serve as a bowl (and which are somewhat more expensive per serving) and in bulk packages that can save you almost 50 percent.

Alpine Aire

Alpine Aire has been around for a long time (1979) and is one of the leading producers in the industry. Alpine Aire's poly-coated foil packaging is unique—a re-sealable Quick Zip pouch makes preparation convenient. Before this, a camper who wanted to prepare his food right inside the bag had to either bring along a wooden clothespin to hold the bag closed, or haphazardly fold it down while a lot of the heat escaped.

Alpine Aire offers a huge assortment of foods—all the meals, with accompanying side dishes, soups, fruits and desserts. They also offer individual items such as cooked, freeze-dried meats, mushrooms, and tomato and cheese powder. Our favorites were *Pasta Roma* (pasta in a creamy tomato sauce with Romano and Parmesan cheese); *Shrimp Newburg*, which smothers shrimp, pasta and vegetables in a delightful dill sauce; *Wild Tyme Turkey* (grains, brown rice, turkey, vegetables and wild rice in a tangy sour cream sauce); and *Teriyaki Turkey*, which features turkey, snow peas and noodles in a teriyaki sauce.

Entrees run about \$7 and weigh around 6 ounces. They serve a skimpy two or a starving one.

Backpacker's Pantry

Backpacker's Pantry is another tried-and-true company that has been around for years. It is a family owned and operated business dedicated to exploring and preserving our environment. The company feels strongly that the outdoor experience is a vital part of life, to be respected and cherished. As a result, a portion of every sale is given to organizations dedicated to preserving our planet for future generations. Overall, this company's offerings had some of the highest ratings out of all the food we tested. These were some of the few entrées of which testers said they could have eaten a whole bowl—and quite a few asked for seconds (the real test). Our favorites were *Jamaican BBQ Chicken* (brown rice, black beans, chicken and vegetables mixed with a special Jamaican BBQ sauce)—our most finicky tester loved this the most; *Vegetable Risotto with Turkey* (a delicious blend of rice, turkey, Parmesan

cheese, broccoli, corn and other veggies); and the all-star meal for the entire banquet: *Hawaiian Rice and Chicken*, white rice, chicken, pineapple, red and green bell peppers and onions in a tangy tomato and ginger sauce.

Entrées cost from \$3.90 to \$7.50, weigh around 8 ounces, and serve the normal starving one or two light-eaters.

Natural High

Natural High, a line introduced in 1990 by Richmoor, another great family-owned company, has no MSG, no artificial ingredients, preservatives, colors, flavors or anything. This is gourmet food at its finest and incorporates many international and Old World recipes. No cooking is required; just add water, stir and let sit for about 10 minutes. The parent company has been around for 35 years and is the leader in lightweight camping foods for groups (complete meals for four).

(Below) John, sampling the delicious pre-cooked foods



Since backpackers are notorious for being thrifty, Richmoor helps them out by offering a \$5 rebate to those who buy three Natural High entrées. In the store, look for products with the appropriate mail-in stickers. If you request and order from their catalog, you'll also find a "buy \$20 and get \$5 back" coupon. The same is true for on-line purchases. (Both offers expire September 30, 2000.)

Our favorites are *Chicken Monterey*—chicken, rice, red and green peppers in a spicy Mexican sauce with sour cream and cheddar cheese; *Spicy Thai Chicken*—broccoli, spinach and chicken in a spicy peanut sauce with noodles; and *Sun-dried Tomato Pasta*—sun-dried tomatoes, broccoli, carrots and spinach over fettuccine in a lightly spiced sauce. Their *Vegetable Curry and Rice*, a blend of lentils, spinach, red bell peppers and rice with a hint of apples and raisins in a savory curry sauce, also gets high ratings for its unusual taste. The

Spicy Thai Chicken turns out to be the evening's favorite for Todd and me, while our kids agree that the *Sun-dried Tomato Pasta* is the one they liked best.

There currently are 28 Natural High entrées available, plus breakfast items and desserts; they keep for at least two years, if stored in a cool, dry location. Entrées cost from \$5.75 to \$6.75, weigh between 5 and 7 ounces and make 3 cups of food to satisfy one starving or two normal eaters.

Freelancer Cindy Ross, who lives with her family in New Ringgold, Pennsylvania, has written numerous articles and authored several books about hiking and outdoor recreation for families. Her previous contributions to New Jersey Outdoors include articles about tandem biking along the Delaware and Raritan Canal (Fall 1999) and Batsto (Spring 2000).

TO ORDER OR LEARN MORE . . .

Preferred Brands Inc.
Tasty Bite - Thai Table
1445 E. Putnam Ave.
Old Greenwich, CT 06870
203/698-4042
www.tastybite.com
E-mail: asgkk@aol.com

MSR (Mountain Safety Research)
P.O. Box 24547
Seattle, WA 98124
206/624-7048 or 800/877-9677
www.msrcorp.com

Infinet Communications, Inc.
National Distributor for Alpine
Aire Foods
8551 Cottonwood Road
Bozeman, Montana 59718
Phone: 406/585-9324
Fax: 406/585-0671
www.alpineaire.com
To order online, go to:
www.worldshop.com/cgi-bin/v582/itemlist.html
Backpacker's Pantry

6350 Gunpark Drive
Boulder, CO 80301
303/581-0518 or 800/641-0500
www.backpackerspantry.com

Richmoor
6923 Woodley Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91406
818/787-2510 or 800/423-3170
www.richmoor.com

Events

General information is provided here for frequently mentioned event sponsors. The bold-faced name is all that will appear in an events description.

Albert – Albert Music Hall, 125 Wells Mill Rd. (Rte. 532), 1/4 mile west of Rte. 9, Waretown; 609/971-1593; ♿; \$

Allaire – Allaire State Park/Historic Allaire Village/Allaire Nature Center/Pine Creek Railroad, Farmingdale; www.AllaireVillage.org; 732/938-2253 (park and village), 732/938-2003 (nature center), or 732/938-5524 (railroad)

Cold Spring – Historic Cold Spring Village, 720 Rte. 9, Cape May; 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily through Labor Day, then only on weekends in Sept.; donation requested; 609/898-2300

Great Swamp – Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham; weekend and evening nature hikes and other seasonal activities are available in addition to listed programs; 973/635-6629

Hermitage – The Hermitage Education & Conference Center and Museum, 335 North Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus; 201/445-8311; www.thehermitage.org

Horse Park – Horse Park of New Jersey, Route 524, Stone Tavern (Millstone Township, Monmouth County); open to spectators for equine events, but horseback riding and/or lessons are not available; <http://njhorsepark.com/>; 609/259-0170; ♿

Indian King – Indian King Tavern Museum, 233 Kings Highway East, Haddonfield; 856/429-6792

Trailside – Trailside Nature & Science Center, 452 New Providence Rd., Mountainside; 908/789-3670

Waterloo – The Historic Village of Waterloo, 525 Waterloo Road, Stanhope; 973/347-0900 (unless otherwise noted); open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday to Sunday from mid-April through mid-November; \$

Wetlands – Wetlands Institute, 1075 Stone Harbor Blvd., Stone Harbor (3 miles east of the Garden State Parkway exit 10B); 609/368-1211; www.wetlandsinstitute.org; \$

Wheaton – Wheaton Village, 1501 Glasstown Rd., Millville; Closed on New Year's, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, and on Mondays and Tuesdays from January through March; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; 856/825-6800 or 800/998-4552; ♿; \$

Notes:

Information listed was accurate at the time it was submitted to *New Jersey Outdoors*. Before traveling to an event, readers are advised to call the number listed to confirm the information provided and obtain any additional information desired.

Where the sponsor has provided such information, symbols have been used to indicate that the event is handicapped accessible (♿), that an entrance or participation fee will be charged or a donation will be requested (\$), and that preregistration is required (📧). Lack of the indicative symbol may mean either that the opposite is true or that the sponsor did not provide the information. Please call the contact number for any event about which you have questions.

Events

Ongoing • August

Ongoing

Sundays except Christmas, New Year's and Easter

PLANETARIUM SHOW Trailside; \$

Sundays, January through May and September through December

FAMILY NATURE PROGRAM Trailside

First Saturday of Every Month except January, February and December

TRAILWORK DAY Volunteers needed; Trailside; 🍷

August

Through August 29 (Sundays and Tuesdays only)

SUMMERFEST 2000 5 p.m. on Sundays and 7 p.m. on Tuesdays; CRRNJ Terminal Plaza, Liberty State Park, Jersey City; 201/547-5522

Through September 3 (Wednesdays through Sundays)

RECREATING FLOWERS: THE GLASS WONDERS OF PAUL J. STANKARD Noyes Museum of Art, Lily Lake Road, Oceanville; 609/652-8848; 🍷; \$

Through September 10

(Wednesdays through Sundays)
CAPTURING THE JERSEY SHORE: WORKS OF ANTHONY J. RUDISILL Noyes Museum of Art, Lily Lake Road, Oceanville; 609/652-8848; 🍷; \$

Through October 22

20TH CENTURY GLASS ANNUAL EXHIBITION Museum of American Glass at Wheaton

Through October 31 (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays)

OCEAN COUNTY FROM THE EXPLORERS TO 1950 Exhibit; Toms River; 732/341-1880

18

MUSIC IN THE GARDEN: LIBBY RICHMAN TRIO 7 p.m.; Ringwood State Park; 973/962-9534

18 through 20

FESTA ITALIA BY THE SEA Boardwalk, Bradley Beach; 732/389-9204

19

PINELANDS NATURE HIKE AT WHARTON STATE FOREST 10 a.m.; Hammonton; 609/567-4559

MINIATURE GARDENS 2 p.m.; lecture; Noyes Museum of Art, Lily Lake Road, Oceanville; 609/652-8848; 🍷; \$

CAMPFIRE PROGRAM 7:30 p.m.; Worthington State Forest, Delaware Water Gap; 908/841-9575

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-4909 or 908/459-4366

CULTURAL CANOE TRIP 9:30 a.m.; Swartswood State Park, Swartswood; 973/383-5230; \$; 🍷

NJ FRONTIER GUARD OF 1756 noon; Swartswood State Park, Swartswood; 973/383-5230

WOLF VISIONS Kittatinny Valley State Park, Andover; 973/786-6445

19 and 20

ANTIQUE AUTO SHOW Cold Spring

HEREFORD INLET CRAFT SHOW 1st & Central Avenues, North Wildwood; 609/522-4520

25TH ANNUAL CLEARWATER FESTIVAL Sandy Hook; www.clearwatermc.org; 732/872-9644; 🍷

GARRISON WEEKEND 10 a.m.; Fort Mott State Park, Pennsville; 856/935-3218

IRON WALKING TOUR 1 p.m.; Allaire; 732/938-6707

JERSEY FRESH FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL Noon to 5 p.m.; Four Sisters Winery at Matarazzo Farms, Belvidere; www.matarazzo.com; 908/475-3671



20
ANTIQUÉ FIRE APPARATUS SHOW & MUSTER Wheaton

REPTILES Great Swamp

FESTIVAL OF HORSES Horse Park; 609/984-4389

24
SPRING LAKE TRAIL HIKE 10 a.m.; Swartswood State Park, Swartswood; 973/383-5230

25
SKYWATCH 8 p.m.; Main Athletic Field near Lake Nummy, Belleplain State Forest, Woodbine; 856/293-1584

Events

August-September

25 through 27

NEW JERSEY STATE 4-H HORSE SHOW
Horse Park; 732/932-9705

26

STARWATCH AT WHARTON STATE FOREST Hammonton; 856/627-3043

CAMPFIRE PROGRAM 7:30 p.m.;
Worthington State Forest, Delaware
Water Gap; 908/841-9575

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny
Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-
4909 or 908/459-4366

LAKE ECOLOGY CANOE TRIP 9:30 a.m.;
Swartswood State Park, Swartswood;
973/383-5230; \$; 🍷

26 and 27

HARVEST DAYS **Cold Spring**

6TH ANNUAL BLUES MUSIC FESTIVAL & OKTOBERFEST BY THE SEA Wildwood;
609/729-6818

26 through October 7

RMAA 35TH ANNUAL FALL OPEN JURIED EXHIBIT 1 p.m.; Ringwood State Park;
973/962-7031

27

VINTAGE BASEBALL GAME **Waterloo**

18TH ANNUAL BARNEGAT CRAB RACE & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL Seaside Heights;
732/349-0220

ANNUAL 10K RUN Avalon; 609/368-4444

ANTIQUÉ AUTO SHOW 8 a.m.; **Allaire**

BASIC MAP AND COMPASS SKILLS 1 p.m.;
Cheesequake State Park, Matawan;
732/566-3208

MUSHROOM HIKE 1:30 p.m.; High Point
State Park, Sussex; 973/875-4800

DANCING AND DINING WITH THE DOLPHINS
Evening dolphin watch to benefit the
Marine Mammal Stranding Center; 7
to 9 p.m.; Gardner's Basin, Atlantic
City; 609/266-0539; ♣; \$



September

Through October 22

20TH CENTURY GLASS ANNUAL EXHIBITION
Museum of American Glass at
Wheaton

Through October 31 (Tuesdays,
Thursdays and Saturdays)

OCEAN COUNTY FROM THE EXPLORERS TO 1950 Exhibit; Toms River;
732/341-1880

1 through 25

OCEAN COUNTY HISTORIC SITES ART EXHIBIT & CONTEST Ocean County
College, Toms River; 732/255-0400,
ext. 2098, or 732/929-4779

2

16TH ANNUAL ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES FAIRE Ocean County
Historical Society, Toms River;
732/341-1880

SMOKEY BEAR'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

9 a.m.; Interpretive Center, Belleplain
State Forest, Woodbine;
856/293-1584

LAKE ECOLOGY CANOE TRIP 9:30 a.m.;
Swartswood State Park, Swartswood;
973/383-5230; \$; 🍷

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny
Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-
4909 or 908/459-4366

2 and 3

ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW **Cold Spring**

HANDCRAFT UNLIMITED LABOR DAY CRAFT SHOW Convention Center,
Wildwood; 717/656-3208

LABOR DAY CRAFT SHOW Wildwood
Crest; 609/522-1669

2 through 4

BFK DRESSAGE **Horse Park**;
908/253-9138

3

SCANDINAVIAN FEST **Waterloo**

RECREATING FLOWERS: THE GLASS WONDERS OF PAUL J. STANKARD Noyes
Museum of Art, Lily Lake Road,
Oceanville; 609/652-8848; ♣; \$

3, 5 and 10

CAPTURING THE JERSEY SHORE: WORKS OF ANTHONY J. RUDISILL Noyes
Museum of Art, Lily Lake Road,
Oceanville; 609/652-8848; ♣; \$

4

EATONTOWN ANNUAL 5 KILOMETER RACE Eatontown; 732/389-7607

8 through 10

KAYAK FESTIVAL Ocean City;
609/525-9300

9

PRESCHOOL SENSORY AFTERNOON
Great Swamp

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny
Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-
4909 or 908/459-4366

Events

September

9 and 10

REVOLUTIONARY WAR ENCAMPMENT
Cold Spring

FLY AWAY CLASSIC KITE FLYING FESTIVAL
Belmar; 732-280-8084

SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT North
Wildwood; 609/522-2955

10

VETTES IN GLASSTOWN ALL-CORVETTE
SHOW Rain date: Sept. 17; **Wheaton**

TRAIL VOLUNTEER PROJECT Shark
River Park, Neptune; 732/842-4000,
ext. 4283

19TH ANNUAL IRISH FEIS Festival
Waterloo

NEW JERSEY BRED ALL BREED HORSE
SHOW **Horse Park**; 908/996-2544

13TH OCEAN COUNTY BLUEGRASS FES-
TIVAL Noon to 5 p.m.; **Albert**

15

FIREMEN'S WEEKEND CRAFT SHOW
Wildwood Crest; 609/522-1669

15 through 17

FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL WEEKEND Sea
Isle City; 609/263-Tour

16

PINELANDS NATURE HIKE AT WHARTON
STATE FOREST Hammonton;
609/567-4559

BEACHWHEELS 2000 Beach recreation
day for the physically challenged,
Long Beach Island; 609/597-6993 or
609/492-0222

HEREFORD INLET LIGHTHOUSE CRAFT
SHOW North Wildwood; 609/522-4520

ANGLESEA SURF ANGLERS SURF FISH-
ING TOURNAMENT The Wildwoods;
609/ 22-1526

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny
Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-
4909 or 908/459-4366

16 and 17

CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT **Cold Spring**

FALL WINE & CHEESE CLASSIC AND
WATERLOO ANTIQUES FAIR **Waterloo**

FESTIVAL 2000 Smithville Mansion
Courtyards, Eastampton;
609/265-5068; ♿

WINGS 'N WATER FESTIVAL **Wetlands**

ESDCTA TEAM COMPETITION & DRES-
SAGE CHAMPIONSHIP **Horse Park**;
908/647-5801

16 through October 11

JURIED ART SHOW Smithville Mansion
Annex Gallery, Eastampton;
609/265-5068

17

LENAPE LIFE **Great Swamp**

A VISIT BY GEORGE WASHINGTON
Performance and open house;
Indian King

DOLPHIN WATCH CRUISE 1 p.m.;
aboard *Cruisn' 1*, out of Gardner's
Basin, Atlantic City; 609/266-0539; ♿; \$

18

ESDCTA SPORT HORSE BREEDING SHOW
Horse Park; 908/439-9149

4TH ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC Golf out-
ing and buffet dinner to benefit the
Marine Mammal Stranding Center; 1
p.m. shotgun start; Marriott Seaview

Country Club, Galloway;
609/266-0539; \$; ♿

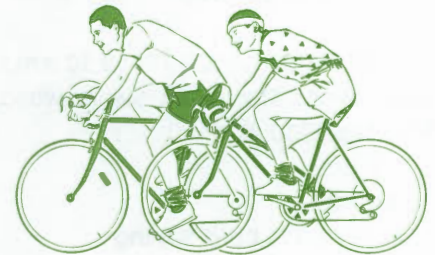
21

TRAIL VOLUNTEER PROJECT
Hartshorne Woods Park, Locust;
732/842-4000, ext. 4283

23

SEAFARERS CELEBRATION Sunset Lake,
Wildwood Crest; 609/522-1669

MS Bike-A-Thon Ocean City;
609/525-9300



17th Annual Beachfront Run Cape
May 609/884-9565

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny
Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-
4909 or 908/459-4366

23 and 24

18TH ANNUAL OCEAN COUNTY DECOY
AND GUNNING SHOW Tip Seaman
County Park, Pinelands Regional
Middle School and High School (all in
Tuckerton); 609/971-3085

APPLE DAY 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Terhune
Orchards, Princeton; [www.terhuneor-](http://www.terhuneorchards.com)
[chards.com](http://www.terhuneorchards.com); 609/924-2310

23 through October 31

FALL HARVEST CELEBRATION Alstede
Farm, Pleasant Hill Road, Chester;
908/879-7189

24

HARVEST FESTIVAL **Trailside**; ♿; \$

Events

September-October

STANDARD BRED PLEASURE HORSE ASSOCIATION SHOW **Horse Park**; 732/370-5322

24 through 27

CAPE MAY FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL
Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

30

ASTRONOMY PROGRAM 8 p.m.; Jenny Jump State Forest, Hope; 908/459-4909 or 908/459-4366

ANNUAL FALL CRAFTERS' MARKET

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Allaire Village, **Allaire**

30 and October 1

DOLL & DOLLHOUSE SHOW
Hermitage; 6; \$

CHOWDERFEST WEEKEND; Bayfront Park, Beach Haven; 609/494-7211 or 800/292-6372

NJ BEACH BUGGY ASSOCIATION SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT North Wildwood; 609-522-1526

THUNDER ON THE LAKE POWER BOAT RACES Sunset Lake, Wildwood Crest; 609/523-8051

HARVEST FESTIVAL Terhune Orchards, Princeton; www.terhuneorchards.com; 609/924-2310

FESTIVAL OF FINE CRAFT **Wheaton**; \$

30 through November 12

47TH ANNUAL LBI SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT Beaches of Long Beach Island; 609/494-7211 or 800/292-6372

October

FALL HARVEST CELEBRATION Alstede Farm, Pleasant Hill Road, Chester; 908/879-7189

Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

OCEAN COUNTY FROM THE EXPLORERS TO 1950 Exhibit; Toms River; 732/341-1880

Through 22

20TH CENTURY GLASS ANNUAL EXHIBITION
Museum of American Glass at **Wheaton**

Through November 12

47TH ANNUAL LBI SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT Beaches of Long Beach Island; 609/494-7211, 800/292-6372

1

1770S FESTIVAL Somerset County Environmental Education Center, Basking Ridge; 908/766-2489, ext. 0; 6

DOLL & DOLLHOUSE SHOW
Hermitage; 6; \$

CHOWDERFEST WEEKEND; Bayfront Park, Beach Haven; 609/494-7211 or 800/292-6372

7

6TH ANNUAL PINE BARRENS JAMBOREE Wells Mills County Park, Waretown; 609/971-3085

6 through 8

2ND ANNUAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
Wildwood; 609/523-2467



7

PENNSAUKEN SURF FISHING CLUB TOURNAMENT North Wildwood; 609/486-9180

7 and 8

HARVEST FESTIVAL AND WEAVER'S GUILD SHOW Terhune Orchards, Princeton; www.terhuneorchards.com; 609/924-2310



8

AMERICAN WHEELS CAR SHOW Rain date: Oct. 15; **Wheaton**

6TH ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL Belmar; 732/681-2900

ANTIQUE SHOW Convention Hall, Cape May; 609/884-5404 or 800/275-4278

SAND SCULPTING CONTEST Ocean City; 609/525-9300

USES OF NATIVE PLANTS 1 to 4 p.m.; **Great Swamp**

14

HRH OF NEW JERSEY SHOW **Horse Park**

14 and 15

FALL HARVEST FESTIVAL Noon to 5 p.m.; Alba Vineyard, Finesville; 908/474-4460 or 800/524-0043

Events

October-November

HARVEST FESTIVAL Terhune Orchards, Princeton; www.terhuneorchards.com; 609/924-2310

FALL HARVEST FESTIVAL Main and Church Streets, Allentown; 609/259-7064; ♿

15
GSH&CS PLEASURE DRIVING SHOW
Horse Park; 732/928-7477

FUNGUS FEST 2000 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Environmental Education Center, Basking Ridge; 908/647-5740; \$

20
HARVEST MOON HAYRIDE Alstede Farm, Rt. 24, Chester; 908/879-7189

21
KIDS PARTICIPATE Wheaton

9TH ANNUAL PUMPKIN FESTIVAL
Cold Spring

SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT Municipal Marina, Sea Isle City; 215/855-3411

TRAIL TALES 6 to 7:30 p.m.;
Great Swamp

21 and 22
N.J. HORSE TRIALS **Horse Park**;
215/362-6130

HARVEST FESTIVAL Terhune Orchards, Princeton; www.terhuneorchards.com; 609/924-2310

22
MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY TRAIL VOLUNTEER PROJECT Tatum Park, Middletown; 732/842-4000, ext. 4283

23
8TH ANNUAL PUMPKIN FESTIVAL
Cold Spring

26 through 29
COLONEL BENGT LJUNQUIST MEMORIAL CHAMPIONSHIP **Horse Park**;
908/647-5801

27 through 29
NJ AUDUBON AUTUMN WEEKEND/THE BIRD SHOW Cape May; 609/884-2736

28
SOUTH JERSEY SURFCASTING FISHING CLUB TOURNAMENT North Wildwood; 609/886-6314

FALL BEACHSWEEP Ocean City; 609/525-9331

HALLOWEEN SHOW & COSTUME CONTEST 7:30 to 11:30 p.m.; **Albert**



3RD ANNUAL HARBOR SEAL 5K RUN/WALK Competitive event for runners and walkers over the age of 12 to benefit the Marine Mammal Stranding Center; 9 a.m.; Island Beach State Park, Berkeley Township; 609/266-0539; ♿; \$; 🍷

28 and 29
WATERLOO FOLIAGE ART AND FINE CRAFT FESTIVAL **Waterloo**

FOUR CENTURIES IN A WEEKEND . . . A Journey through Union County's History Heritage festival; throughout Union County; 908/558-2550

HARVEST FESTIVAL Terhune Orchards, Princeton; www.terhuneorchards.com; 609/924-2310

29 and 30
25TH ANNUAL WILDWOOD AHEPA GREEK WEEKEND Convention Center, Wildwood; 609/522-7157; \$

November

Through 12
47TH ANNUAL LBI SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT Beaches of Long Beach Island; 609/494-7211, 800/292-6372

1
GREAT PUMPKIN SAIL **Trailside**; ♿; \$; 🍷

3 through 5
DOLL DAYS 2000 **Indian King**

VICTORIAN HOLMES WEEKEND Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

4
NOVEMBER ARTS & CRAFT FESTIVAL Convention Hall, Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

EXPLORING THE WORLD OF NOCTURNAL ANIMALS 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.;
Great Swamp

ANNUAL MINIATURES, DOLL & DOLLHOUSE SHOW AND SALE Toms River Intermediate School East, Toms River; 732/341-1880; \$

LEGEND OF THE JERSEY DEVIL SHOW 7:30 to 11:30 p.m.; **Albert**

5
MINERAL CLUB SHOW **Trailside**; ♿; \$

10 through 12
CAPE MAY JAZZ FESTIVAL Cape May; 609/884-7277; ♿

QUIET FESTIVAL Ocean City; 609/525-9300

Events

November-December

WOODEDGE AT THE PARK Horse Park; 856/235-5623

12

TRAIL VOLUNTEER PROJECT Turkey Swamp Park, Freehold; 732/842-4000, ext. 4283

16 through 18

A FESTIVAL OF TREES, WREATHS AND TOPIARIES Van Vleck House and Gardens, Montclair; 973/744-4752

17 through 19

HOLIDAY PREVIEW WEEKEND Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

18

STAR GAZERS 7 p.m.; **Great Swamp**

HOMEPLACE FESTIVAL 7:30 to 11:30 p.m.; **Albert**

18 and 19

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES SHOW Pennsville; 856/678-4453 or 856/678-6429; \$

19

3RD ANNUAL RIDE AND DRIVE Horse Park; 732/446-6245

24 and 25

HOLIDAY CRAFTS FAIR Convention Hall, Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

24 through January 6, 2001

THE HOLIDAYS AT WHEATON VILLAGE **Wheaton**

29 through December 3

'Twas THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS A Victorian Christmas house museum tour; 6 to 9 p.m.; Kuser Farm Mansion, Hamilton (Mercer County); www.hamiltonnj.com; 609/890-3630

December

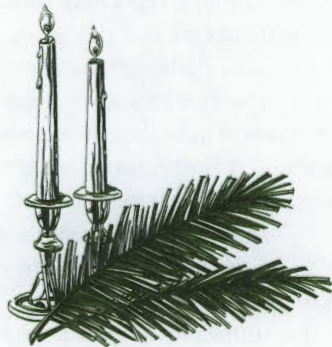
Through January 6, 2001

THE HOLIDAYS AT WHEATON VILLAGE **Wheaton**

2

CRAFTS AT CHRISTMAS SHOW Convention Hall, Cape May; 609/884-9565

27TH CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT HOUSE TOUR Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278



2 and 3

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE All merchants, Allentown; 609/259-0725 or 609/208-0919; ♿

3

NATURE BOUTIQUE **Trailside**; ♿

TOURS BY CANDLELIGHT Church Landing Farmhouse Museum, Pennsville; 856/678-4453 or 856/678-5994; \$

6 through 10

Twas THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS A Victorian Christmas house museum tour; 6 to 9 p.m., except noon to 3 p.m. on Dec. 9; Kuser Farm Mansion, Hamilton (Mercer County); www.hamiltonnj.com; 609/890-3630

8 through 17

FESTIVAL OF TREES Somerset County Environmental Education Center,

Basking Ridge; 908/766-2489, ext. 0; ♿; \$

9

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTMAS **Indian King**

27TH CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT HOUSE TOUR Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT HOME AND TOWN TOUR 3 to 9 p.m.; Historic Rancocas Village, Westampton Township; www.geocities.com/rancocasvillage; 609/267-2641; \$

10

TRAIL VOLUNTEER PROJECT Turkey Swamp Park, Freehold; 732/842-4000, ext. 4283

TOURS BY CANDLELIGHT Church Landing Farmhouse Museum, Pennsville; 856/678-4453 or 856/678-5994; \$

16

27TH CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT HOUSE TOUR Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

HISTORIC CHRISTMAS HOUSE TOUR Dennisville; 609/861-1338; \$

17

TOURS BY CANDLELIGHT Church Landing Farmhouse Museum, Pennsville; 856/678-4453 or 856/678-5994; \$

27

27TH CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT HOUSE TOUR Cape May; 609/884-5404, 800/275-4278

31

FIRST NIGHT Ocean City; 609/399-1412

The Eastern Box Turtle

by Jason Tesauro

The Eastern box turtle subspecies known as the common box turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*) is familiar to many New Jerseyans. The high-domed carapace and the yellowish-orange starburst pattern on each scute (shell segment) distinguish it from other turtles. Found from the northern part of the state down to the Delaware Bayshore, it is most at home in habitats featuring a mosaic of forest, early successional fields, and wet meadows.

Emerging from hibernation in late March or early April, box turtles spend much of the spring and early summer daylight hours basking in nearby forest or meadow areas or traipsing throughout their habitat in search of food and/or mates. In July and August, when temperatures become oppressive—box turtles cannot tolerate extreme heat or cold—activity generally is restricted to mornings or rainy days. When at rest, box turtles nestle in excavated shallow depressions called forms.

Ready to reproduce at four to five years of age, they usually mate in May. Six to eight weeks after mating, gravid females begin their quest for egg-laying sites in open, elevated patches of dry, loamy soil, often at the edges of agricultural fields. They excavate a 3- to 4-inch flask-shaped cavity with their hind feet, deposit from 3 to 8 thin-shelled white eggs, and cover the nest with soil. The mating season continues through the summer and early fall, and multiple clutches—the average is two—may be laid. Sex determination is linked to nest temperature: cooler ones (less than 81 degrees Fahrenheit) tend to produce males, while more females emerge from eggs laid in warmer nests.

About 80 days after the eggs were laid, nickel-sized hatchlings will emerge and disperse into the forest. They'll remain there, camouflaged in the leaf litter, for most of their juvenile years. If hatching coincides with cold weather, hatchlings will remain in the nest until the following spring.

In mid to late October, box turtles return to their hibernacula, which may consist of old mammal burrows or excavated forms in sand and/or leaf litter, soft wetland muck or underneath rotted stumps or logs. The colder it gets, the deeper they bury themselves, sometimes digging up to two feet down.

Box turtles have a broad-ranging palate. As juveniles, they subsist primarily on invertebrates such as slugs, worms, beetles and grasshoppers. Once mature, they become more herbivorous, preferring berries, seeds, flowers of plants such as mayapples and jack-in-the-pulpit, mushrooms and young vegetative shoots.

As turtles go, box turtles are a long-lived species. Although the average life span is probably 40 years, some researchers have reported individuals living more than a century. A Burlington County resident reported that a box turtle he had marked in 1940 appeared in his front yard in 1998 to feed on fallen berries from his mulberry tree.

Box turtles fare better than most other turtle species in suburban landscapes. Their relatively small home ranges (less than 3 acres), broad diet, and unspecialized habitat requirements render the parks, woodlots, abandoned farm fields and minimally managed backyards of the suburban setting adequate habitat. Moreover, unlike other terrestrial or semi-terrestrial turtles, the adult box turtle is less vulnerable to predators such as raccoons, skunks and opossum because it possesses a hinged plastron (bottom part of the shell). This enables it to withdraw all of its vulnerable soft tissue parts into its shell and close it almost completely—becoming, in essence, a miniature armored tank.

Although the box turtle is common, not much is known about the health and viability status of many populations within New Jersey. The longevity of box turtles may foster an erroneous perception of how well populations are faring. Most that are frequently encountered are older; it is possible that many populations now are

not reproducing successfully. Nest predation may also be a factor—because juveniles' shells have not fully calcified, predation by mammals and birds, such as crows and gulls, are very real threats.

Collection for the pet trade and road mortality are other threats to the box turtle. Each year tens of thousands are illegally removed from the wild in the United States and sold or traded overseas. In response to the wanton collecting, the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species and the International Union of the Conservation of Nature recently listed the box turtle as a Category 1 species, making it a federal crime to export them. Nonetheless, the black market trade is a billion-dollar industry and continues to pose a severe threat.

Road mortality takes the lives of many box turtles each year, and the construction of new roads through their habitat can, over time, extirpate populations. If you encounter a box turtle on the road and are able to stop to rescue it, it's best just to move it to the side of the road in the direction that it was traveling. Relocating box turtles to parks or reserves where they will be 'safer' is usually harmful, as they may be disoriented by the new terrain and attempt to travel back to their home.

Despite these threats, it is encouraging that the box turtle persists around human settlements where the landscape retains some of its pre-development integrity. You can make your backyard hospitable to box turtles and other wildlife by minimizing the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and encouraging the growth of native flora, especially berry producing plants.

Jason Tesauro, an assistant biologist with DEP's ENSP, works in the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Hedge Haven (Northern Region) Office in Hampton. Among his responsibilities are the conservation and management of bog turtle populations statewide and surveying, assessing and monitoring populations of rare butterflies and moths and the Jefferson/blue-spotted salamander complex.



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