



I FISH NY: Sharing the Facts & Fun of Fishing in New York City and Long Island

Though New York City (NYC) and its surrounding metropolitan areas make up 57 percent of New York's population, only a fraction of natural resource allocations go to this region. To address this problem, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) partnered to create I FISH NY, an urban recreational fishing program that encourages NYC and Long Island (LI) residents to conserve aquatic resources by learning about and going fishing. In 2005, NYSG hired two full-time recreational fisheries specialists, one in NYC and one in LI, to implement and augment the groundwork established by NYSDEC staff. Independently, each specialist addresses the unique challenges of their region.

I FISH NY — New York City

I FISH NY-NYC maintains its presence in city schools, visiting more than 1,400 students with an in-class program that is followed by a fishing trip. More importantly, the program has created innovative teaching materials, including a Go Fish! card game that introduces students to the diversity of the fishes found in New York State.

Through partnerships, the program has expanded its outreach. For example, to create long-term relationships with students and help realize the stewardship mission, I FISH NY-NYC worked with the NYSDEC After School Conservation Club.



This young cub scout shows off his first fish, caught at an I FISH NY Boy Scout clinic. Photo: NYSDEC

I FISH NY's public programs have also expanded. Eight public events in 2007 will double the number held in 2005-2006.

I FISH NY — Long Island

With schools facing tight budgets and time restraints, I FISH NY-LI has partnered with the Board of Cooperative Education Services in Nassau and Suffolk counties to offer free in-class programs to supplement existing party boat fishing trips. Students are introduced to local fish species, proper fish handling techniques, and safety procedures during a pre-trip visit. Aboard fishing vessels, I FISH NY covers internal anatomy, fishing regulations, and stewardship practices. During our first year in the classroom, we fished with more than 1,100 students. As the program grows, we plan to provide resources for teachers, including teacher training, loaner rod programs, and online lesson plans.

New York Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the State University of New York and Cornell University. Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

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