

I FISH NY: Fishing Facts & Fun in NYC and on Long Island

Despite unprecedented threats to the world's ocean and water resources, thanks to video games and dancing celebrities, NY residents have never been farther removed from their own nearby marine environment. In densely populated Long Island and New York City (NYC), many people do not even realize that there is literally an ocean next door. To address this problem, I FISH NY, a joint program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York Sea Grant, encourages participants to develop a personal stake in NY's aquatic resources through fishing.

I FISH NY New York City

In 2009, I FISH NY began a concerted outreach effort to outdoor educators. That effort resulted in an ongoing commitment from I FISH NY to train New York City Urban Park Rangers to conduct fishing outreach events of their own and teach the Rangers about the ecology of local fishes. To date, the program has trained more than 80 Rangers, with many more programs planned for 2010. The arrangement also led to collaboration on three major and successful fishing outreach events in 2009.

This new effort complements a move towards increased program flexibility, which, in 2009,



NYC Urban Park Rangers learn the dropper loop knot from I FISH NY Program Aide Darin Alberry at Inwood Hill Park, NYC. Photo: James MacDonald, NYSG



Three Girl Scouts enjoy themselves during an I Fish NY fishing clinic at Camp Edie Lake, Town of Bayport, Suffolk County, NY. Photo: Ann TeNyenhuis, NYSG

introduced the I FISH NY program to new audiences including non-English speakers.

I FISH NY Long Island

To assist educators, in 2009, I FISH NY lesson plans became web-accessible. With the assistance of New York Sea Grant's Communications Department, a "For Teachers" page on the I FISH NY website was created, which features in and out-of-classroom lesson plans. I FISH NY lesson plans come equipped with background information, vocabulary definitions, accompanying handouts, and additional resources.

Along with in-class visits to schools on Long Island, I FISH NY specialists created teacher packages to accompany complementary activities and games to be used prior to or post I FISH NY programs.

Complementing existing efforts to produce more "do it yourself" anglers, a series of instructional videos are in development and projected to be available in 2010.

This project meets the performance measures of Sea Grant's Coastal and Ocean Literacy focus area.

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