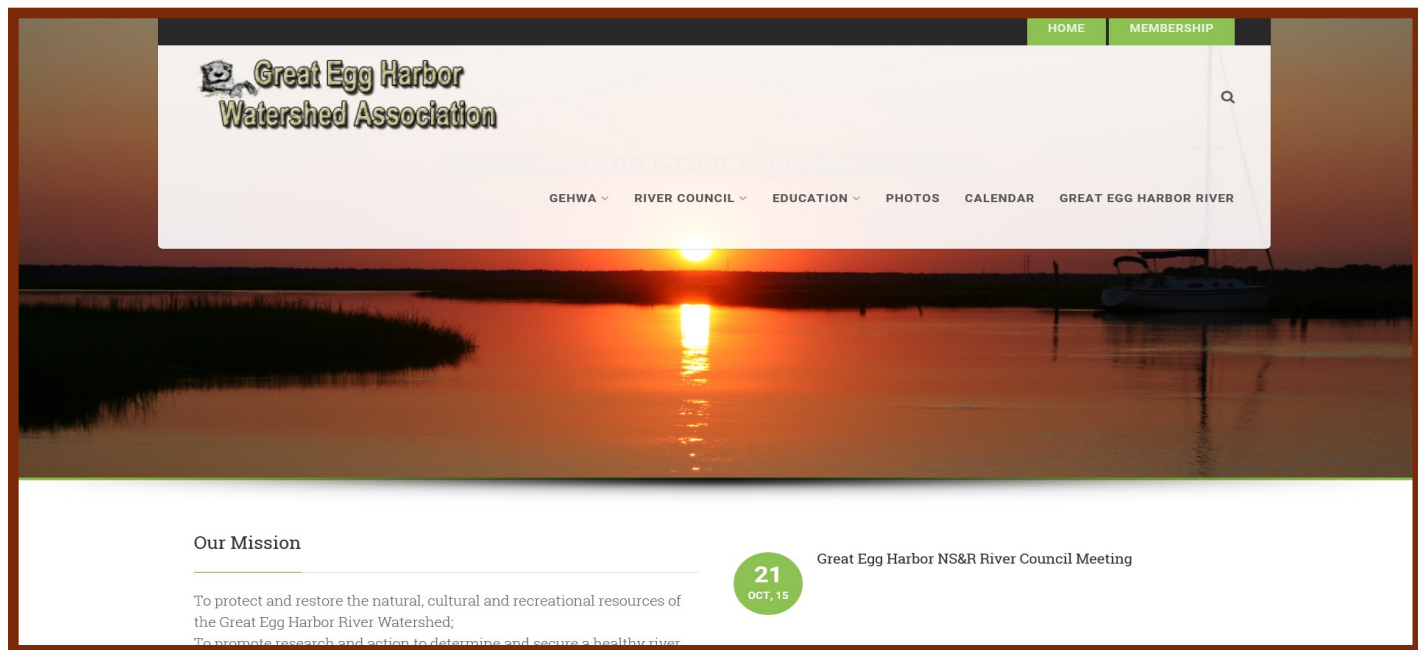




River Currents



The Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association's website has a new look. Check us out.



National Park Foundation 2014 Impact Grant



From the River
Administrator's Desk

In 2014 the National Park Foundation, with support from Subaru of America, awarded an "Impact Grant" of \$22,600 to the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River. The grant enabled the River Council to conduct eight field sampling/trawling expeditions upriver, with students, in known anadromous fish habitat to collect fisheries data, water quality data, and avian species data. Two hundred and forty 7th grade students, along with 61 adults, "found their park" in this Impact Grant project. For many of

the students, it was the first time they had been in a boat on the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River! A total of 41 tows of the 16 foot trawl net were made, 2,502 marine creatures representing 30 species were caught, counted and released, and 26 different bird species were observed and identified.

The goal of the 2014 National Park Foundation Impact Grant project was to conduct scientific fisheries sampling and data collection combined with service-based student learning to help determine if fisheries resources in the Great Egg Harbor River and Estuary, a designated unit of the National Park System and a component of the Wild and Scenic River System, are adequate to provide a multiple-species, sustainable ecosystem. The simple answer is no, they are not.



Students following an active day on the river.



Hauling in Trawl Net

The significant absence of River Herring, and current conservation concerns for River Herring and other species like striped bass, American eel, catfish and perch, are all cause for serious concerns about the sustainability of the Great Egg Harbor River ecosystem for fish, birds and other wildlife.

Historically, fish species have been managed on a single species basis, and the interdependence and connection of these single species to the surrounding

ecosystem has not been considered. Also historically, ecosystem values for forage species like River Herring, American eel, catfish, and perch have been substantially disregarded or ignored, and these species have not been protected for either their own sustainability or ecosystem sustainability.

Given all the ecosystem threats today, including climate change, state and federal fisheries managers need to be far more protective of natural resources, and adopt ecosystem management for all fish species instead of single species management. The long term sustainability of existing ecosystems needs to be the focus.

This year the Mid-Atlantic Fisher Management Council accepted a Forage Fish White Paper with a comprehensive list of forage fish species that could possibly be exploited in the future, and took action to close all potential new fisheries for commercial exploitation until sustainable fisheries management plans were developed first to enable adequate controls.

Based on the example of the unsustainable rules and regulations for River Herring and the subsequent collapse of that fishery, the NJ Bureau of Fisheries Management should consider a more proactive approach for the protection of all species in state waters with no specified creel limits by creating sustainable specifications for forage species in state waters. *Additional pictures on next page.*



Catch from Trawl Net

The final report for the National Park Foundation "Impact Grant can be found at <http://www.gehwa.org/2015/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Great-Egg-Harbor-River-National-Park-Foundation-2014-Impact-Grant-Final-Report.pdf>



Alder Avenue Students Install Osprey Platform

By Lynn Maun and Fred Akers

Back in the 1970's, New Jersey's osprey population was in serious decline. By 1975 this once abundant species had been reduced to 68 nesting pairs throughout the state. Historic accounts document this bird at 500 nesting pairs. The decline of the osprey resulted from habitat loss due to human settlement along the coast, the eradication of nesting trees, egg collection and being shot. As a result of its decline, in 1974, the osprey was placed on New Jersey's Endangered Species list. It was the first animal that New Jersey listed in its newly formed program.



Today New Jersey's osprey population is thriving. During a state wide survey in 2013, 542 nesting pairs of osprey were counted. Their success is due in part to the installation of osprey platforms throughout the state.



On Friday, June 12, 2015, John Jones' sixth grade students from the Alder Avenue Middle School in Egg Harbor Township partnered with Atlantic County and the Great Egg Harbor River Council to install an osprey platform at the new Lakes Creek Wetland Mitigation site, which is also in Egg Harbor Township. This site is a state of the art wetlands mitigation bank where new wetlands were created and existing wetlands were restored. The installation of an osprey platform was a habitat enhancement

that was planned for the site by Atlantic County.

The Alder Avenue students spent many classroom hours preparing for the unique outdoor classroom provided by the wetland mitigation site, by learning about stormwater runoff, groundwater, the osprey and the site itself. It was the first year of a pilot program for this unique site and group of partners. In the coming years the students plan to survey both the plant and animal life inhabiting this new site to assist with the five-year monitoring plan.

The osprey platform erected by the students makes it the 41st platform west of the Garden State Parkway,

... continued on page 5



...continued from page 4 which the Great Egg Harbor River Council monitors and maintains for the State of New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. It is important that the osprey structure is built to the state specifications and properly located for bird use and maintenance access.

The Great Egg Harbor River Council completed its 2015 survey of osprey nests on Tuesday, July 7. The number of active nests and osprey young in the Great Egg Harbor Estuary were down from the previous year. There were 25 active nests in 2014 and 20 in 2015. There were 57 young counted in 2014 and 34 in 2015. It will be interesting to see the data for the rest of the state. Was the weather a factor in the decreased number of young? Did the amount of rain in June result in too many days where the water was too



cloudy from stormwater runoff, which would then hamper the adult osprey's ability to find enough fish to feed their hungry young? Based on volunteer precipitation reports in June for Atlantic County to the Community Collaborative Rain, Snow and Hail Network (www.cocorahs.org) for Atlantic County, there were, on average, 18 days in June where there was measurable precipitation. Questions such as these support the need for the continued monitoring of this special bird.

Calendar of GEHWA and GEHRC Meetings 2015

Please make a note of the new meeting time.

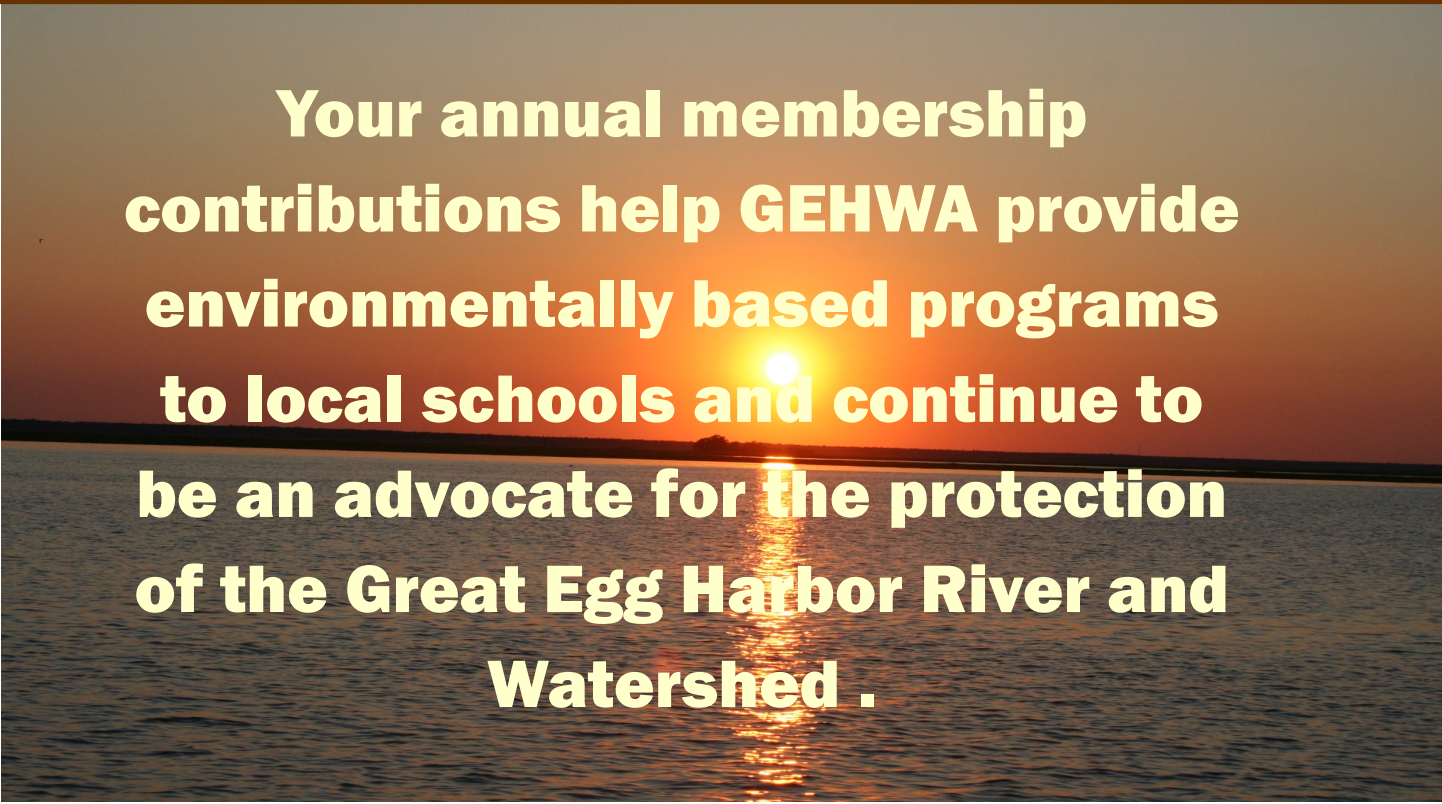
*All meetings held at the Warren Fox Nature Center in Estell Manor
will begin at 6:30 PM.*

Wednesday, October 21, 2015 - Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 24, 2015 - GEHWA Member Meeting – Program to be announced.

Wednesday, December 16, 2015 - Great Egg Harbor NS & R River Council & Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association Trustee Annual Meeting

Please plan on attending these events.



Your annual membership contributions help GEHWA provide environmentally based programs to local schools and continue to be an advocate for the protection of the Great Egg Harbor River and Watershed .

GEHWA Membership - Donation Information

Memberships and donations support our mission and ensure our survival as a non-profit advocate, as we work to protect and preserve the Great Egg Harbor River and Watershed throughout the year. Your support is needed now more than ever. Without you, we could not exist.

Thank you for your support!

Name/Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Yes, I would like to receive notices by Email.

Annual Membership: Individual: \$10; Family: \$15; Supporting: \$35; Patron: \$50; Corporate: \$100

Donation: _____

Please mail this form along with your check to: Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, Membership - Donation, P.O.109, Newtonville, NJ 08346-0109

or

Join or Donate electronically by going to the GEHWA website www.gehwa.org/membership and clicking **Join or Donate.**

Your annual membership contributions are tax deductible.

The Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association's Environmental Programs

The Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association provides a variety of



St. Vincent DePaul student puppet show

environmentally focused programs to schools, scouts and other groups. We offer programs about wildlife, environmental issues and other topics. Our programs can take place both inside or outside the classroom. If you would like additional



Student holding a Dragonfly Nymph

information please contact Lynn Maun, Education Outreach Coordinator at 856-649-2792 or lynnkmaun@comcast.net.

Our environmentally focused programs are FREE!



Students from Alder Avenue School searching for macroinvertebrates

Contact Information

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**To report an environmental incident impacting NJ, call the Toll-Free 24—Hour Hotline
 1-877WARNDEP, 1-877-927-6337**

**If you should see debris or shoaling while traversing on New Jersey waters please call:
 1-877- WARNDEP (1-877-927-6337)**



Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
PO Box 109
Newtonville, NJ 08345-0109