Celebrating 60 Years (1960 - 2020)

MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

GREEN HERITAGE

The Newsletter of Monmouth County's Open Space, Parks & Recreation Agency

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Cloudspotting

Clouds are not like other elements of nature, mostly fixed in place and changing only incrementally to mark the seasons or shifts in light or weather. They are ungrabable, impermanent, fleeting and unpredictable. They have no defined edges and no firm shape. To describe a cloud is almost as elusive as the thing itself: "… so ephemeral–all vapor and crystal"[1] or "…an illusion, a conspiracy of liquid masquerading as a floating, solid, object."[2] There's also a poem by Percy Bysshe Shelly called, "The Cloud" (1820), with many worthy excerpts:[3]

> "I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
> And the nursling of the Sky:
> I pass through the pores of ocean and shores;
> I change but I cannot die…

By definition, clouds are water droplets (or ice crystals) pulled into shape or pattern by wind and atmosphere. They are shape-shifters, and maybe that's what makes them so interesting. Clouds are referenced constantly in print and image as a metaphor for mood and feelings, as a literary concept for expansiveness in thought, as a symbol for paradise or heaven, and more recently, a location for remote data storage.[4]

Clouds inspire authors, artists and everyday people. Since 2004, there's even a Cloud Appreciation Society, founded in the UK by Gavin Pretnor-Pinney who also authored **"The Cloudspotter's Guide: The Science, History and Culture of Clouds."** He felt clouds were somewhat maligned, and sums it up as follows, paraphrased from the book's back cover:

> *Clouds are nature's poetry. They express moods of the atmosphere that can be read like a person's countenance. Clouds are for dreamers, and their contemplation benefits the soul.*[5]

All this may explain why people like to take pictures of clouds in the parks. Our photo archives are loaded with scenic landscapes featuring clouds of all kinds… stormy, shapely, lonely, majestic, colored, tumbling, angry, wispy, strange, you name it. Clouds are always in the background, and even when they aren't its worthy of note. Clear skies, anyone? (One park cloudspotter reports fewer than 10 truly cloudless days [dawn to dusk] in our area each year.)

Weltz Park (Ocean Township)

Charleston Springs Golf Course, South (Millstone)

Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park (Long Branch)

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Clouds form the foundation of every outdoor landscape, yet like ambient lighting in a room, they're so ordinary, so everyday, you may not even notice them. That is, until they shift into something foreboding or unusual, or you read an article like this one. Then you can't help but look up and take notice…

At this time, months into an ongoing pandemic, circumstances may have us seeking out new methods to gain perspective as we try to find our footing. Maybe looking upward will help us find some comfort, guidance, or even just a few minutes of soft, pillow-y relief on a sunny day. According to Pretor-Pinney, American Essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson described the sky as "the daily bread of the eyes…the ultimate art gallery above."[5]

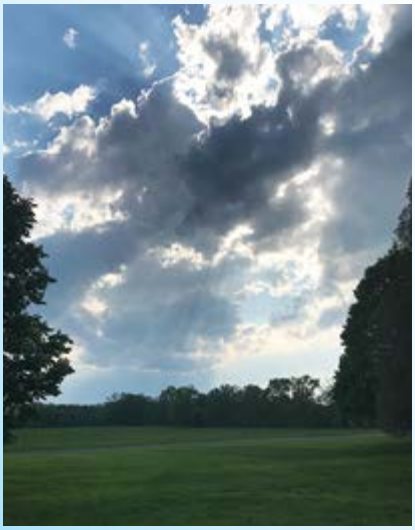
Cumulus clouds are "little, tender sheep pastured in fields of blue" in the words of American Poet Maria White Lowell.[5]

Staring up at the sky could again become a contemplative outdoor past-time like it was in the past. Especially since the usual impulse to look down at our phones and check headlines or scroll social media doesn't seem to provide the peaceful distraction we now need.

On Cloud Classification

Some people love the naming and identifying of things; for them, sorting and cataloging is a great pleasure. This process is critical for the purposes of science. Others prefer to just sense and know a thing, look at it, study it, and enjoy it…but not label it. And this process is often preferred, creatively. So when it comes to clouds—part predictable weather pattern, part inspiration–there's a natural tension. For now, perhaps it's enough to know there are ten major groups or genera of clouds with Latin names, sorted by height and four basic shapes (cumulus-heap, cirrus-curl, stratus-layer and nimbus-rain). [2,6]

A Cloudspotting Collection From the Parks

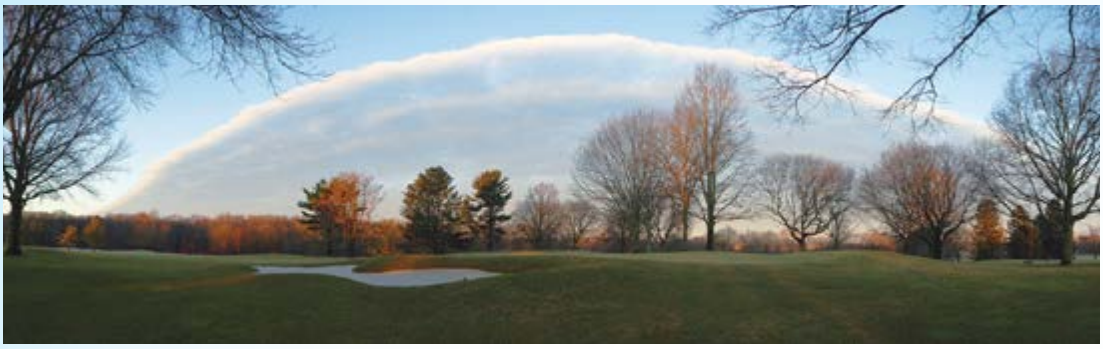


That shiny silhouette may be where the term "silver-lining" comes from. Thompson Park.

Clouds take shapes that stir the imagination. GS Parkway, South.

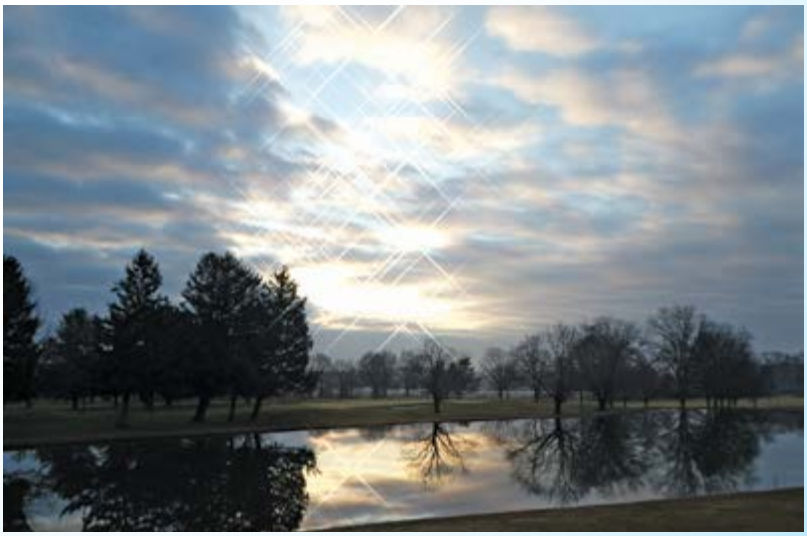
The darkening approach of storm clouds on the horizon provides us with clear warning to take cover. Thompson Park (Lincroft)

Clouds create spectacular sunrises/ sunsets of course, but also these gorgeous faint pink hues when sunlight hits at just the right angle. Historic Walnford (Upper Freehold), Big Brook Park (Marlboro), and Hominy Hill Golf Course.



We've had cloud formations so weirdly beautiful we took time to investigate. This billow cloud at Hominy Hill (Colts Neck) is actually a cross section view of rare Kelvin- Helmholtz Waves, when hot and cold air meet up in an unstable way causing wind shear. Mammatus clouds (right) are made by upside-down pockets of cold air over Manasquan Reservoir (Howell).

Many more stunning and unusual formations are captured in the parks as they come and go in the landscape. Holmdel Park, after Superstorm Sandy at Seven Presidents, a roll cloud at Big Brook Park.



Finally, a treat for the eyes. . . cloud rainbow (Charleston Springs GC) clouds reflected in water (Freneau Woods Park) and a photo sparkles in the clouds (Hominy Hill).

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Shoring Up Our Shorelines… Restoring A Coastal Bluff Along The Navesink

Portland Place is a National and State registered historic site within Hartshorne Woods Park, perched on 20 ft. bluffs above the Navesink River in Middletown. During Superstorm Sandy, the shoreline along this property was impacted by storm surge, wind and wave action. Approximately 650 feet of shoreline experienced significant erosion and slope failure, including the loss of several large trees.


The bluff at Portland Place, 1 month and 8 months after Superstorm Sandy.

Planning a Shoreline Protection Project

Park System design staff decided to use a bank stabilization technique that included a living shoreline that could also serve as a model for other property owners along the Navesink River. A living shoreline re-creates lost habitat and vegetation instead of installing hardscape engineered/constructed stabilizers such as bulkheads and riprap.

The goals of this project were to restore the shoreline, reduce the potential for future erosion and slope failure to protect the Portland Place property, and enhance the existing tidal habitat along the river's edge.

Waterfront projects have complicated pre-construction and permitting requirements; in this case conceptual plans and a shoreline protection report as well as detailed design studies that include information from tide/storm surge/wave height analysis and drainage assessment to accommodate 100-year storm runoff.

Construction Gets Underway, Then… Conservation Calls

The construction contract was awarded in summer of 2019 and work began in the fall. By November, the Park System was contacted by NJDEP Division Fish and Wildlife with new bald eagle habitat restrictions that would be taking effect in January. These restrictions would run through the end of July, basically preventing the project from being completed because more than half of the site fell within the restricted area.

The contractor ceased all activity by early January 2020, but was still able to complete approximately 65% of the work, including installation of:

- **Two upper "green wall" systems.** This required excavation of the existing bluff to a depth of 12 feet in order to construct a stable base (left). After the base was installed, the green wall was laid in courses by hand.


- **Gabion basket protection around large oak tree.** Between the two green walls is a large specimen oak tree. It survived the original storm and was perhaps crucial to holding the remaining bluff together. This tree was incorporated into the stabilization plan to save the tree and retain its aesthetic value in the landscape. A gabion (rock) basket wall for protection was installed around the base of the tree. Topsoil was backfilled behind the basket for protection and to encourage future root growth.

- **Base material for the lower slope protection.** The lower slope was graded and a protective black geotextile fabric was installed and temporarily secured with tires.


The Park System secured special permission to install plantings for the green wall system and the wetland shoreline early in May 2020, as long as the contractor did so by hand without heavy machinery, so as not to disturb the nesting eagles.

By the time this article appears in print (or online), the last stages of the project should be complete, the lower slope covered with top-soil and seeded with a native coastal grass mix.

Wildlife Impact

This project required review by the NJDEP for compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Rules and a General Permit for Living Shoreline. The latter included the protection of sensitive habitat for state/federal listed wildlife species.

- The original permit included protections for the **osprey**, a state listed species which has a 300 meter restriction for five months from April 1 –August 31 of each year. There was no known active nest at this site.
- The NJDEP subsequently added a change to include protective measures for the **bald eagle**, which carries a different standard, a 200 meter (660 ft.) buffer for seven months from December 31 –July 31 of each year. There was an active nest near this site.

Osprey and eagles are competitors in a given territory, so it is not likely to see both nests in the same area. In this case, the active eagle nest made the project more difficult because it restricted construction for the first seven months of the year.

Although the federal government removed the bald eagle from its Endangered Species List in August 2007, both bald and golden eagles are still protected by multiple federal laws, such as the **Bald and Golden Eagle Act**, the **Migratory Bird Treaty Act** and the **Lacey Act**, as well as state and municipal protections.

American Bald Eagle. CREDIT: Dennis Ruffe *and Osprey*

Breeding Bald Eagles Protected in NJ

In New Jersey, the bald eagle is listed as endangered during breeding season and threatened during non-breeding season. They remain on our state's endangered species list due to their sensitivity to environmental contaminants, habitat loss and human disturbance.

In our area, the nesting period runs from January-July. Eagles are sensitive to human disturbance and will abandon a nest site if humans encroach especially during certain stages.

- Courtship and nest-building begins in January which is the most sensitive time for disturbances.
- Egg-laying at the end of February continues to be a sensitive time.

A breeding pair of Bald Eagles tend their nest. CREDIT: Aubrey Miller.

An eagle incubating the egg on the nest near Portland Place.

- Spring incubation and hatching (March-April) is when the birds sit in the nest to protect the eggs. If they are disturbed enough to leave, that will expose the eggs to hazards.
- During the early nesting period from 4- 8 weeks into May, the chicks are protected and fed by adults who alternate care. Disturbances can cause disruption in feeding, but abandonment is less likely.

Young eaglet chicks. CREDIT: Dave Menke, USFWS

- Late nesting period for another eight weeks into June is a sensitive time again. Chicks are vulnerable to disturbances and may flush from the nest before they can fly and care for themselves.
- By the end of July, chicks have fledged and dependence on a secure nesting site is reduced; birds are able to tolerate more activity with no ill effect.

Eagles tend to pair for life, live 20 to 30 years and will return each year to their territory. For the non-nesting period, eagles migrate to wintering grounds, often communal roosts, where open water habitats can provide suitable food sources.

Deep Cut Gardens
Home Gardener

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Middletown, NJ 07748

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A World Of PLANTS In One Location

Tanya Dinova, Park Ranger/Horticulturist

If COVID-19 put a stop to your vacation plans this summer, don't give up just yet. Visiting a local horticultural park may be the perfect opportunity to meet at least some of your travel needs. There are serene places to sit and relax with soothing water features. Stroll the trails to take in some fresh air or visit the formal rose garden to admire the blooms while you connect with family and friends. Explore with your children the meadows, woods and small creek for wildlife activity. This site also has a rich history worth hearing about (please ask us!) featuring a real, miniature volcano. Surrounding all of that, are countless unique plants from around the world.

Plants, a Portal to Learn About Other Cultures

Just as you might feel curious surrounded by unrecognizable flora while on vacation in a distant part of the US, Europe, or Asia, you might have the same feeling of being "transported" if you are unfamiliar with the trees, vines, and shrubs of Deep Cut Gardens. For children especially, flowers have a way of capturing attention and triggering curiosity. "What flower is that?" they'll ask, while excitedly pointing out a bloom that's caught their fancy.

There are plants at Deep Cut Gardens that can take you to every corner of the world. Take a walk with this in mind and explore our collection. (A digital "World Tour" created for this activity is in development. Visit the Deep Cut page at **monmouthcountyparks.com** for updates.)

Italy. Florence Fennel. (*Foeniculum vulgare var. azoricum*)This native of Italy is sometimes known by its Italian name finnochio; in markets, it's labeled sweet anise. The feathery fronds have a dill-like flavor and are used to perfume fish and soups. **All America Display Garden and raised beds by the potting shed**

England. Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) Though native to the Mediterranean, this plant is commonly grown in English gardens as an ornamental. It is popular for its colorful flowers, fragrance and ability to survive with low water consumption. Apparently, it is also attractive to bees. **Parking Lot island near main entrance walkway**

France. Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*) This herb is essential in French cooking, and also popular in Greek, Cajun and Creole dishes. As a plant, it is perfect for walkways, patios and decks where its scent can be enjoyed. In medieval France, thyme plants were thought to be home to fairies, and gardeners set aside a little bed for them. **All America Display Garden**

India. Cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*) Cultivated for at least 3,000 years, the cucumber originated in India, and was introduced to Europe by the Romans. The earliest records of cucumber cultivation in North America date to the mid-16th century. Pictured, cucumber is a vine plant, not the tiny cucumber in its earliest stages of growth with flower still attached. **All America Display Garden and raised beds by the potting shed**

Americas. Marigolds (*Tagetes spp.*) are the most popular annual in the US today, and are native to this continent. Once a sacred flower of the Aztecs, they recorded using marigolds for hiccups, lightning strikes and to safely cross a river/water (this last use suggesting some belief in its magical properties) *in the De La Cruz-Badiano "Aztec Herbal of 1552."* **All America Display Garden**

Africa. Lily-of-the-Nile (*Agapanthus*) These sun-loving plants have large spherical flowers in brilliant shades of blue and white. They are a landscape staple in warmer regions. A perennial in the southern United States, agapanthus grows best in USDA Zones 7-11. In cooler areas, where winters can be hard, container plants can be stored indoors over winter for repeat blooming the following season. **Outside the All America Display Garden and facing the Greenhouse**

Central America. Clamshell Orchid (*Prosthechea cochleata*) is native to Central America, Columbia, Venezuela and Southern Florida. It is the national flower of Belize, where it is known as the black orchid. **Greenhouse (second room)**

South Africa. Blue Plumbago (*Plumbago capensis*). This woody climbing shrub features delicate, baby-blue flowers in small clusters at the branch tips. They are composed of a long, thin tube which opens to five, delicate blue lobes. In spite of their delicacy they are surprisingly strong, often used for leis (flower necklace) or as garland decorations. **All America Display Garden, lining the front border**

South East Asia. Pitcher Plants (*Nepenthes*) are tropical natives that thrive in humid conditions. The "pitcher" itself is a modified leaf. Unsuspecting insects are lured inside by a sweet nectar secreted around the rim and lid. The insect is then digested by the liquid enzymes produced by the plant – and the circle of life continues. **Greenhouse**

Hawaii. Frangipani (*Plumeria acutifolia*). This popular and recognizable tropical flower is used to make leis because it is long lasting and fragrant. The scientific name is derived from the French botanist Plumier. In India and Ceylon, where it is extensively grown, it is known by the romantic name frangipani. A white species with yellow center (*P. obtuse*) is called Singapore plumeria, although it is also of American origin. **Greenhouse (third room)**

Madagascar. Crown of Thorns (*Euphorbia splendens*). This plant is proclaimed by quantities of very long, sharp thorns on round succulent stems. The flowers appear in all seasons in small bunches on longish stems. What appears to be two red petals is actually a pair of bracts. **Greenhouse**

Malaysia. Chinese Hibiscus. Five red petals form a bell shape, and about five inches across from that rises a long staminal column. The flowers last a single day, yet for that day they remain fresh even without water. **Koi Fish Pond and Greenhouse (front entrance)**

Some of Deep Cut's other plants originating from around the world include: Lemon tree (North Eastern India), Rhododendron (Nepal), Crepe Myrtle Tree (Australia), Iris (Belgium), Tulips (The Netherlands), Carnation (Portugal), and Daffodil (Wales).

Bring Your Garden "Travel" Experience Home

Here are some fun ideas to continue exploring plants of the world at home:

- Research the origin of your favorite house plants, many of them are tropical cultivars.
- Pair your findings with a theme song of that region, a dish from the local cuisine, and/or a famous person or recent event.
- Set a scene around that plant, celebrate the region it represents – go all out with flags, maps, or print out famous landmarks.
- Complete the experience by designing a greeting postcard to share with friends and family. (Send one to us if you'd like!)

c/o Monmouth County Park System
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How Do Plants Travel?

For the best answer to this question, and to follow the travel theme, take the islands of Hawaii for example. This unique ecosystem is a hot spot of global biodiversity.

> **"Every flower and plant in Hawaii is a traveler or the descendant of a traveler."***

This chain of islands arose in the center of the ocean from boiling masses of lava (magma) driven up from the Earth's molten mantle. So, how did this rock-covered land turn into rainforest with lush tropical growths and wide open grasslands?
Each kind of plant must have crossed at least 2,000 miles of saltwater to get there–by air, on water, or aboard some carrier.

Seeds with wings - Some seeds have parachutes or wings like a glider that slow them down as they fall from the mother plant. The seeds are then carried away from the mother by air currents. Dandelion seeds are a great example.

Hitch-hiker seeds (Aelwyn, wikicommons)

Hitchhikers - Have you ever arrived home after a field trip and found your socks or clothing covered with sticky or prickly seeds? These seeds are now in a new place because you carried them. Animal fur and feathers are also good places for a seed to stick to and catch a ride.

Going with the Flow - The seeds of some plants that live in the water, or close to it, can float. A coconut for example, falls from its mother plant onto the beach. When the tide comes up or there's a swell, the ocean picks up this floating seed. Ocean currents then take the seed to another beach, where it can grow into a coconut palm tree. A local example would be a "devil's head" seed on our beaches.

Devil's head seeds on the beach (Palisades Interstate Park Commission https://www.njpalisades.org/devilsHeads.html)

Palm trees (Robert Young, wikicommons)

Animal Transport (Internal) - Finally, some seeds need a little help from animals. They have to be eaten first to get started. It might not seem like a great way to start life, but they end up in a pile of "natural fertilizer" to get a jump on germination. Robins are a good example of a seed disperser. They eat the seeds of Poison Ivy and later deposit them in a new place to grow. Humans are also seed dispersers. Raspberry and Blueberry seeds have for a longtime been carried and planted after a person dines on these sweet fruits.

Robins are good at seed dispersal.

*Kuck, Loraine E., and Richard C. Tongg. "Hawaiian Flowers & Flowering Trees." (1980).Charles E. Tuttle Co, Inc. U.S.

Composting From An Eco-Perspective

Kate B. Lepis, Ph.D., Horticulturist

Compost is a valuable, soil-boosting resource you can make at home, just by saving your yard and kitchen debris (plants only) that would otherwise end up in the garbage. As this organic material decays, it becomes a food source for microorganisms that break down the nutrients within it and make them available to plants. It ceases to be a vegetable peel, leaf or branch and transforms into compost.

If you were to allow that organic matter to age and decay even further it would become topsoil. Due to its rich dark color and ability to improve the quality of any soil, farmers refer to compost as "black gold."

Transformation. The three-bin composting system at Deep Cut Gardens showing the first bin that receives fresh plant waste and the third bin housing the finished compost.

The Nutrient Cycle

When you allow the plant-based garbage that your family generates to remain on your property and decompose, you are mimicking nature. Think about an autumn forest; all those leaves that fall create a layer of debris just above the roots. The dead leaves decay to feed countless invertebrates and microorganisms, and these in turn breakdown the nutrients further. Ultimately, the nutrients in last year's leaves become available to the trees again. This is the nutrient cycle.

When we generate compost at home, we jump start this cycle by providing a food source for the beneficial microorganisms in soil. You can provide all the nutrition your plants require by annually replenishing your beds with compost. Conversely, when you throw away your organic matter, it goes to the landfill where very little decomposes. To save space, garbage is packed so tightly that a minimal amount of water and oxygen is available to support the decomposers. Much of our organic waste simply mummifies.

The Ecological Viewpoint

Generating and using compost in your yard boosts biodiversity, that is, the amount and variety of life in your yard. Increased biodiversity improves the health of an ecosystem because each added species contributes a different set of interactions to the process. Adding species is like adding threads to a woven cloth, each thread contributes to the strength and resilience of the system.

Biodiversity in the Compost Bin. A large earthworm (invertebrate) and an Eastern Red-backed Salamander.

Ecosystems can be difficult to visualize. For instance, where does one end and another begin? And how does your property fit into all that? A different way to look at it is to recognize the watershed that your property is a part of, that is, the area of land that drains into a particular body of water. This could be a lake, stream, river, bay or even an underground aquifer.

Watersheds are often mapped, and have distinct boundaries, determined by the contour of the land and the gravitational pull of water down slope. Like Russian dolls, smaller watersheds are part of larger ones. The small area that drains into a creek is also part of the larger watershed of the river it feeds into.

When it rains, do you know which body of water your property drains to? You may find you live within the watershed of your favorite fishing spot, or one that provides your drinking water.

*The **Swimming River Reservoir Watershed** outlined in green (the reservoir itself noted with white dots, right). The red outlines designate smaller watersheds of streams and brooks that feed into this source of drinking water. (Map courtesy of NJ American Water Co.)*

This matters when you consider that some local landscapes or farms may rely heavily on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides to achieve lush gardens and/or a bounty of crops. Those properties are also connected to the overall watershed system, and the synthetic boost of productivity on one property can come at the cost of productivity elsewhere in the system. Oxygen-depleted dead zones, for example, can be caused by nutrient pollution (fertilizers washing off of land). These aquatic areas become devoid of oxygen, causing creatures within to suffocate and die. Making and using compost is a great way to achieving beautiful gardens at home, without fertilizer.

Want to Learn More?
Check out Deep Cut Gardens' fall program, *Composting 101*, in the **Parks & Programs Guide** or online.

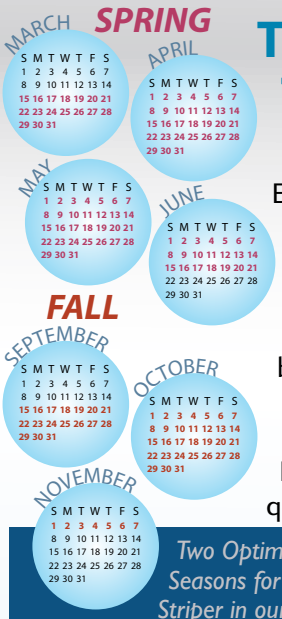
Nature Corner: Striper Season

Retired Park Naturalist, Sam Skinner

The striped bass is arguably NJ's most sought after saltwater game fish. It's also known as the Atlantic striped bass, rockfish, striper, and linesider. Its scientific name is *Morone saxatilis*. An anadromous fish, the striped bass lays its eggs in fresh water rivers and streams, then moves out to sea and lives its life in saltwater.

Juvenile striped bass.

Striped bass migrating out to sea.



Tracking Stripers: Temperature & Location

Every spring along the Atlantic seaboard from North Carolina to Cape Cod the striper action can be followed, starting in the south and progressing northward as the fish seek out water temperatures between 55°F and 68°F. The fish take this opportunity along the way to head up the rivers, bays and estuaries to spawn. New Jersey fishermen usually start their quest in mid-March and the striped bass fishing can be good well into June, until the water temperatures rise above 68°F.

Two Optimal Seasons for Striper in our Area: Mid-March-June and September-late October/ early November.

Scattered fish may be found all summer, but then in the fall the bass are on the move again as the water temperatures cool. In September, favorable temperatures return and good striper fishing can be found until late October and early November. This also is the time that large schools of bait fish, such as peanut bunker and silversides, can be found in the bays and rivers. The large majority of the migrating stripers end up in the deeper cool waters off of the North Carolina and Virginia shores for the winter.

This striper was caught just offshore near Sea Bright-Long Branch in mid-May.

Sizeable Stripers

A world record striper was caught in Atlantic City, New Jersey in 1982 and weighed 78 pounds 8 ounces, it was 53 inches long and had 34.5 inch girth. This record lasted 29 years and was broken in August 2011 when a Connecticut fish was weighed in at 81 pounds 14 ounces.

Striper Regulations

According to the recently published ***Fisheries of the US Report*** by NOAA, the US recreational fishing industry brings in approximately 5.6 billion dollars per year. To ensure this resource is sustainable, state and federal regulators have been protecting fish populations, including striped bass since 1990 when an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) was established. This prohibits the taking of striped bass between 3 and 200 miles off of the US coastline. Individual states set size and quota limits each year and the regulations can vary from state to state.

2020 Marine Fishing Regulations
https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2020/maregsum20.pdf

The New Jersey regulations for 2020 allow only one fish per person per day; and only fish between 28-38" long are legal to harvest. This means that many or even most of the stripers caught this season will be released back into the ocean.

This "slot" sizing will protect the large breeding females and thus future populations. These new regulations may ensure the 2011 world record lasts for a good, long time. Even with only one fish per day limit, NJ anglers are predicted to continue targeting this meaty, table-pleaser.

How to Catch a Striper

Striper action

Striped bass feed on wide variety of critters such as clams, eels, bunker and other small fish. They will hit an even larger variety of artificial lures when presented at the right time of year, during the right time of day or night, and if you happen to be holding your mouth in the just right position. Stripers are known for their strong strike and a "bull rush" that will have your fishing reel screaming as the line is stripped off on that first major run.

Catch limits and size restrictions ensure that the fish population is protected from over-fishing. As a result, many stripers hauled in are "catch-and-release" (safely de-hooked and promptly returned back into the ocean).

There are two main ways to go after striped bass. Fishing from a boat/kayak and fishing from the shoreline, piers, jetties, beaches etc. Boat fishing is by far the most productive method as one can move around to try and locate the schools of bass. However, finding the bass is not always that easy. Once you find them do you have the "right" bait? Many times the fish are keying on particular bait and will ignore other offerings.

You don't need a big boat to catch big striper. My friend and I took kayaks into the upper reaches of Raritan Bay in mid- May. He caught a lot of fish that day, all of them 20 lb. plus, but the picture shows the largest one (est. 45-50 lbs). My kayak was right next to his but I only caught three and they were all small.

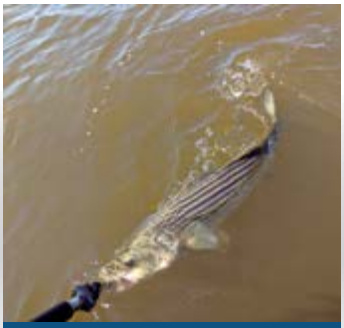
Shoreline fishing is not for the easily discouraged. Shore/beach anglers are a hearty group. Many cruise up and down the Jersey shore night and day, frequently stopping at tactical observation posts to look for the "telltale" signs of bass activity. This could be large eruptions on the surface, visible fish on the surface or large flocks of birds diving on the water picking out morsels of bait left by "blitzing" bass busting schools of bait fish.

Live-Lining Bunker

"Live lining" bunker is one of the more popular ways to fish for striped bass and is a favorite of both boaters and shore fishermen. It is fairly simple: hook a live bunker to your line and let it swim around in the water. The bunker goes about its business somewhat encumbered by the hook and the trailing fishing line. However, when a striper detects this odd-swimmer, the chase is on.

This striper was one of 30 (all a good size) caught in early June while live-lining bunker in Sandy Hook Bay, upper reach near Perth Amboy. Of course, we only kept 1 fish each per limits.

Bunker



A striper caught from live-lining.

Lures

There are fishermen that will not use live or dead bait but prefer to fish only with artificial lures. There are as many different types of artificial lures as there are fish in the sea. They come in a wide variety of materials: wood, hard plastic, soft plastic and metal. There is no limit to the size, shape, color and action. As always, the lure manufacturers' main target is the fisherman and not so much the striped bass. Picking the right lure for the right time of the year, day, night and water condition is a science all itself.

The striper in the kayak photo was caught with a custom- made wooden lure, yellow 7.5" metal lip swimmer. Here's a photo of similar lures. (Source: AfterHoursPlugs.com)

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