



CONTACT: Karen Livingstone or
Public Information
(732) 842-4000 ext. 4256

klivings@monmouthcountyparks.com

Jim Foligno
Visitor Services
(732) 842-4000 ext. 4242

jfoligno@monmouthcountyparks.com

GRANT HELPS PARK SYSTEM OFFER CLASS TRIPS

PORT MONMOUTH— For students it was a class trip to remember! For Monmouth County Park System staff, it was an experience to be proud of. Over the course of a week (September 23-30) 400 fifth graders from small school districts in the Bayshore region visited Monmouth Cove Marina in Port Monmouth and learned about local ecosystems first hand. Working with a \$12,400 EPA education grant, the Park System sponsored these outings for students from Keansburg, Atlantic Highlands, Highlands, Keyport and Union Beach. With school budget restraints, many districts have reduced or eliminated field trips.

Focusing on the Raritan Bay-Sandy Hook Bay estuarine region of the county, the trips took students on a boat ride with a Park System Naturalist. Once aboard, students explored estuarine habitats and learned about water quality. On shore, they rolled up their sleeves for seining, beachcombing and identifying plankton. Besides being great fun, these activities help youngsters connect with nature and gain an understanding of their impact on the environment.

The kids weren't the only ones learning. Teachers from participating school systems attended a free Park System workshop on the ecology and biology of the urban estuary. The workshop highlighted ways teachers can incorporate hands-on activities into their curriculum. Working with schools through class trips, workshops and presentations, is just one of the ways the Park System helps people of all ages connect with nature and promotes environmental stewardship.

For more information about the Monmouth County Park System, please visit www.monmouthcountyparks.com or call (732) 842-4000. For persons with hearing impairment, the Park System TTY/TDD number is 711. The Monmouth County Park System, created in 1960 by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders, is Monmouth County's Open Space, Parks, and Recreation agency.

#



PICTURED – Park System Naturalist Joe Reynolds led 5th grade students as they explored local estuarine habitats during a recent class trip.