



SPRING 2020

*What you need to know heading into
the Summer Season with NJSGC.*



Joanna Cellary, "Over the Rainbow," Ocean City

New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium is an affiliation of colleges, universities, and other groups dedicated to advancing knowledge and stewardship of New Jersey's marine and coastal environment through innovative research, education, and extension programs. For more information and updates, please follow NJSGC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) or visit our website at njseagrant.org.

“Favorite Beaches” Survey

To keep traditions alive over the Memorial Day Weekend, NJSGC debuted its highly-anticipated “Favorite Beaches” poll for summer 2020 with [94.3 THE POINT](#).

[VOTE NOW!](#)

Throughout June, fans get to choose their favorite local “hotspots” from a list of amazing beaches located throughout the Jersey Shore’s four coastal counties – Atlantic, Cape May, Monmouth, and Ocean. NJSGC will announce the winners around the July Fourth holiday.



First established in 2008 as New Jersey’s “Top Ten Beaches,” the survey was initially designed to encourage friendly competition and camaraderie amongst popular Jersey Shore communities along the coast. Following Hurricane Sandy, the contest was rebranded “Favorite Beaches” to diversify results so that ALL areas of the Garden State’s gorgeous oceanfront are recognized, inspiring a refreshing sense of unity and support.

An overall “top beach” is still announced, with Ocean City remaining undefeated over the past several years. But will that impressive winning streak end in 2020? Asbury Park, Seaside Heights, Margate, and Brigantine have definitely proved fierce competitors over the past few years... You decide!

Be sure to share the [“Favorite Beaches” poll](#) with family and friends, and stay tuned for when NJSGC announces the official results of 2020 later this summer. NJSGC would like to send a huge thank you to [94.3 “The Point”](#) for their continued support and enthusiasm!

Our mission at NJSGC is to promote the wise use of the State’s marine and coastal resources through research, education, and outreach. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) for more updates. Please contact NJSGC’s [communications specialist](#) for more information.

“State of the Shore” Postponed

UPDATE – New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium’s 18th annual State of the Shore event originally scheduled for May 21, 2020 is now postponed until further notice.

Prior to the Jersey Shore’s busy summer season, NJSGC invites media and tourism representatives to learn more about the ever-changing conditions of our shoreline from a group of local scientists and environmental managers. Over the past several years we’ve hosted this press event at Tim McLoone’s Supper Club located on the iconic Asbury Park boardwalk, with guest speakers including NJSGC Coastal Processes Specialist Dr. Jon Miller and NJDEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe.

Due to current circumstances surrounding COVID-19, organizers made the difficult decision to postpone NJSGC’s State of the Shore event until further notice. We take the safety and health of our guests, staff, and community very seriously. We urge everyone to follow the guidelines continuously put forth by public health officials.

An official “State of the Shore” report will still be made available to the public later this month on the NJSGC [website](#). As more beach towns start providing information and protocols in regards to social distancing, NJSGC will make the decision to release a remote State of the Shore update (likely a live broadcast from Sandy Hook). Please view coverage from 2019 [here](#).



We will share more details as the situation develops. Please contact NJSGC’s Communications Specialist [Danica Bellini](#) with any further questions or inquiries.

“Jersey Shore” Photo Contest

New Jersey boasts some of the most picturesque beaches along the East Coast. If you have a great shot that celebrates and embraces the natural elements of the Garden State’s beautiful coastline, submit the image to NJSGC’s revamped [“Favorite Beaches of the Jersey Shore”](#) photo contest! Ultimately, the top twelve photos will be used to create New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium’s annual desktop calendar for 2021.



Submissions will be accepted until **Monday, June 1st** at 5 pm EST. NJSGC’s graphic design team will then select 24 finalists. These snapshots will be featured on the NJSGC website where visitors can then vote for their favorite throughout the month leading up to the July Fourth holiday.

Please view the official rules and regulations [here](#). If your submission does not meet the following guidelines, it will not be considered.

Winners will be announced prior to the July Fourth holiday. These images will be used to create the 2021 NJSGC downloadable [desktop calendar](#), which will also feature useful coastal facts and information to help locals and visitors learn more about and appreciate the Jersey Shore. To view last year’s winners, please click [here](#).

For continued updates, please visit NJSGC’s official photo contest [webpage](#).

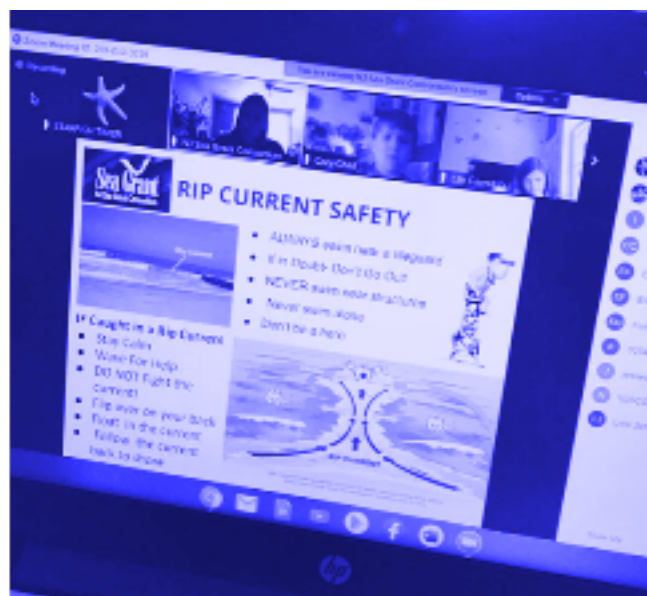


Sharks vs. Rip Currents *(Goes Virtual)*

The new, virtual edition of NJSGC's [Ocean Hazards and Beach Safety](#) program allows students to play an interactive, Jeopardy-style game entitled "Rip Currents vs. Sharks." The program is designed to teach students about constant dangers that lurk in the ocean, especially rip currents (NOT sharks). Instead, participants will simultaneously learn about the importance of sharks in our oceans ecosystems. Our goal is to have everyone enjoy and appreciate the ocean, while ultimately saving lives.

Below are some general guidelines to have prepared and ready to make the most out of this **FREE** online program presented by NJSGC's education staff.

- Appropriate for grades K-12. Please have a teacher or staff member available to supervise the video conference.
- Currently, we only use the video/web conferencing platform **Zoom**. We'll send all meeting information and details once a program is confirmed.
- The program lasts approximately 45 minutes - 1 hour, but timing can be flexible based on class schedules. A maximum of three sessions per school (up to 25 students per session) allowed.
- Sessions are still available throughout June on Thursdays (10am-2pm) and Fridays (11:30am-3pm). Scheduling dates/times can be flexible based on availability.



If interested, please contact NJSGC's [Communications Specialist](#) for a request form. For more information and materials on NJSGC's Rip Current Awareness program, please visit our [website](#).

NJSGC can continue offering this program free-of-charge in 2020 thanks to a grant provided by the [Investors Foundation](#), an organization which supports initiatives in the arts, youth development, health and human services, education, and affordable housing.

Ocean Fun Days Postponed

Due to the current situation surrounding COVID-19, organizers have made the difficult decision to postpone Ocean Fun Days until Fall 2020. NJSGC and [New Jersey Natural Gas](#) take the safety and health of our guests, staff, and community very seriously. We urge everyone to follow the guidelines and protocols put forth by public health officials.



Ocean Fun Days - originally scheduled for May 16th at Island Beach State Park and May 17th at Fort Hancock's Gateway National Recreation Area, Sandy Hook - will now take place in **October 2020**. The setting and format are still to be determined. Please visit the official [OFD website](#) for more up-to-date information as details are finalized.

Other News...

Unfortunately, several important functions which make the heart of NJSGC whole - special events, field trips, educational gatherings (including NJSGC's [college program](#)) - have been cancelled due to COVID-19. However, the staff at NJSGC continues working hard to acclimate during these unprecedented times. We've already revamped our [resources for educators](#) webpage to assist students, teachers, and parents with remote learning materials, and we hope to offer even more virtual opportunities soon. We're also in the midst of planning alternatives for our popular [marine science summer day camp](#) program. So please stay tuned - we appreciate your continued support and dedication.

Knauss “Spotlight”

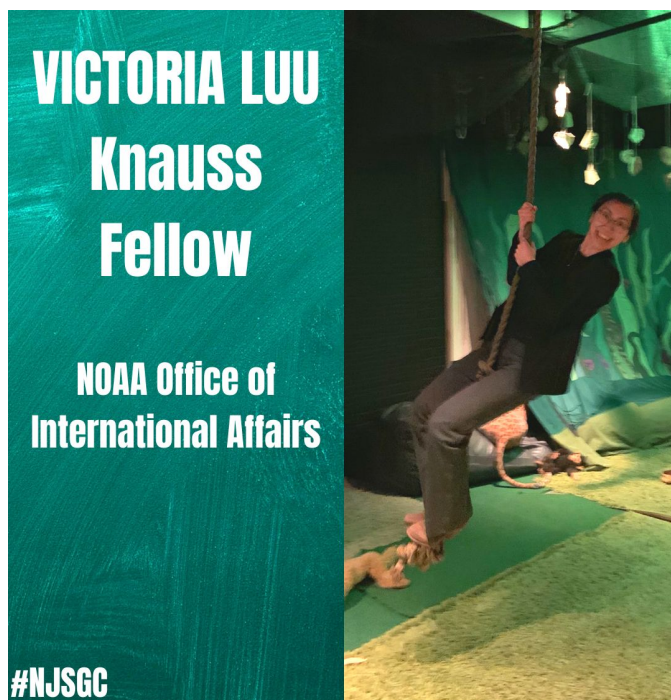
As a 2020 Knauss Fellow representing NJSGC, Victoria Luu (Princeton University) is currently working in the [NOAA Office of International Affairs](#) under Director Elizabeth McLanahan. Check out what’s going on!

February 2020

Tori started out her fellowship by jumping straight into a major international meeting. On the first day she flew to Oslo, Norway to participate in the biannual meeting of the Arctic Council’s Protection of the Marine Environment Working Group as part of the United States delegation. The Arctic Council is an effective high-level forum for cooperation and coordination whose work ranges from developing factsheets and reports to establishing binding treaties. Later that week, Tori was already working actively with the team to edit a zero order draft of the Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter in the Arctic. Fortunately there was time for some fun after all the hard work, and the meeting participants all got to enjoy an evening at the Norwegian Maritime Museum.

March 2020

Almost all of the Knauss Fellows are now teleworking, but the work doesn’t stop for Tori. Everyone has been incredibly resourceful - video chats, webinars, and conference calls have become the new normal. Tori has still gotten to help staff in some high-level meetings with RDML Tim Gallaudet, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Deputy NOAA Administrator, as well as help facilitate and moderate some sessions of the Arctic Science Summit Week in its new virtual form. International collaboration is still happening within NOAA, it’s just that scheduling is now trickier not always being in the same time zone!



Knauss “Spotlight” *(continued)*

Knauss Fellow
Brittany Schieler

Rutgers University
Biological Oceanography
Marine Microbiology

Legislative Fellow
Chris Coons
US Senator, Delaware



What's going on in DC with NJSGC Knauss Fellow, Brittany Schieler? While she's now working remotely, Ms. Schieler continues making progress, especially in regards to international conservation and wildlife trafficking.

April/May 2020

Although still teleworking, [things] have been ample and exciting. The [CARES Act](#) includes disaster relief for fisheries, and Brittany has had the opportunity to work closely with Delaware fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders to answer their questions, hear their stories, and help facilitate their access to applicable assistance. In addition, she's still working heavily in the wildlife trafficking space; knee deep in bill writing and working with many stakeholder groups to refine the legislation. The topic is getting a lot of attention and Brittany's had the opportunity to write memos, questions, and talking points for events and briefings the Senator has taken part in.

The Trump administration put out an Executive Order on advancing the American seafood and aquaculture industry in early May, so Brittany's now working with her team to understand the implications of the order and see where they can work legislatively to support it. She's also supporting the team's efforts in the Senate Climate Solutions Caucus and hopes to plan an event (or write a bill) on blue carbon as a natural climate solution. While continuing to make major connections through virtual coffees and happy hours, Brittany's also currently researching online courses to help augment her learning experiences in DC.

NJSGC appreciates all Knauss fellows as they continue working hard and diligently, despite the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19. Click [here](#) to learn more about NJSGC's Knauss Class of 2020, which includes Michael Acquafredda (Rutgers University) and Brittany Schieler (Rutgers University)

Spotlight & Random Notes

Small, but Mighty: Seabeach Amaranth Making a Comeback in New Jersey

Bridget Macdonald, Public Affairs Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (North Atlantic-Appalachian Region)

More and more coastal towns in New Jersey are making space for seabeach amaranth – a small but mighty native plant – thanks to work the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium supported back in 2016. With a grant provided by NJSGC, the [Pinelands Preservation Alliance](#) (PPA) began implementing so-called “compromise” beach management plans. The compromise: towns set aside 10 percent of their beach for conservation – just a narrow strip in back where few people linger because the sand is too hot – and they continue with “normal” beach business as usual on the remaining 90 percent (raking, driving, sand castles, etc).



Doing so helps strengthen the coast by making space for a species that provides the foundation for natural dune-building to begin. Last year was a banner year for seabeach amaranth in New Jersey, and the [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#) is now supporting an expansion of the PPA’s work with communities.

Learn more about the full story [here](#) (from “[Conserving the Nature of the Northeast](#)”).

Spotlight & Random Notes

Sourish Jasti, a Senior at Holmdel High School, was named this year's recipient of NJSGC's "Top Environmental Paper" at the [Jersey Shore Junior Science Symposium \(JSJSS\)](#). Jasti also claimed this award in 2019.

Jasti established a nonprofit and used any monetary awards received to purchase water filters and travel throughout India to distribute them in schools. Learn more about his incredible work with the [Jasti Clean Water Initiative](#).

JSJSS presentations and events were cancelled in March due to COVID-19. Learn more about the results and overall mission [here](#).



Who's up for a little marine-inspired scavenger hunt? Get ready for NJSGC's "[Sea Creatures in your Neighborhood](#)" campaign! Here's the plan.

- Draw and color a picture of NJSGC's "animal of the week" and Include a "fun fact" about this creature.
- Hang your masterpiece in a front window, door, or yard. Snap a photo to post on social media with the hashtags #SeaCreaturesInYourNeighborhood, #NJSGC, and #SeaGrantSTEM. Be sure to include the name of your city or town. Feel free to send photos directly to NJSGC by contacting our [Communications Specialist](#).
- On your next ride or walk around the neighborhood (while respecting the rules of social distancing), take pictures of any #SeaCreaturesInYourNeighborhood you notice. Or search and discover more virtually.
- Encourage friends and family to do the same and be sure to share your findings with us. Stay safe and have fun while learning about our favorite sea creatures found along the Jersey Shore!

