



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Gateway National Recreation Area to Host BioBlitz

## Scientists, Naturalists, and Nature Lovers to Catalog Park Biodiversity on September 18-19

The Gateway National Recreation Area BioBlitz will be part contest, part educational event, part festival, and part scientific endeavor. While scientists race against the clock to identify as many species as they can in 24 hours, individuals and families will enjoy free fun and educational activities that will take them into the coves and onto the trails of Sandy Hook. This event is co-sponsored by the American Littoral Society and National Park Service.

Those wishing to work with scientists and naturalists are invited to sign up for 4-hour shifts that meet their availability and area of expertise or interest. Limited overnight accommodations may be available for volunteers working multiple shifts. Inquire if interested.

Sign up here: <http://shbioblitz15.ciesin.columbia.edu/>

**Scientists** will be working to catalog the many species present at Sandy Hook in the following taxa:

- Plants (terrestrial and marine)
- Fungi
- Invertebrates (terrestrial and marine)
- Birds
- Fish
- Reptiles and Amphibians
- Mammals

**Amateur Naturalists and Educators** will help with education programs and assist scientists in the successful collection and identification of species.

**General Volunteers** can lend a hand with social media, setup, registration, cooking, making coffee, etc.

**Public programs** will be available on both Friday and Saturday for adults and children of all ages. Activities will be free, open to the public and require no registration. All events will begin at BioBlitz Basecamp at Building 18, Hartshorne Drive, Sandy Hook.

The following are some of the **free public events** that are planned:

### Friday, September 18th

- Sunset Seining, 6 - 7:30 PM: Participants are invited to help pull our 40 foot seine net through the bay, and experience the excitement of learning about the fish and other marine life caught. Wear clothes and shoes you don't mind getting wet.

- Plum Island Natural History Hike, 6 - 7:30 PM: Walk with a park ranger around the marshes of Plum Island, and learn about the native flora and fauna.

- Family Sky Watch, 9 - 11 PM: Learn tips, tricks, and stories of what you see, how best to see, and where to go to see the best the sky has to offer. Telescopes will be set up to look at the moon, planets and other celestial objects visible that night. Attendees are encouraged to bring folding chairs, flashlights, binoculars, hot chocolate and to dress for the weather. Marc Rogoff, NJDEP

### Saturday, September 19th

- Family Seining, 9:30 - 11 am: Participants are invited to help pull our 40 foot seine net through the bay, and experience the excitement of learning about the fish and other marine life caught. Wear clothes and shoes you don't mind getting wet.

- Old Dune Trail Walk, 10 am - 11:30 am: Learn about the maritime forest, dunes, and swale environment.

- Biodiversity Fest, 11 am - 3 pm: Learn about horseshoe crabs, plankton and shell ID, plant pressing and more from experts working to protect New Jersey's biodiversity.

- Holly Forest Walk, 1 pm - 3 pm: Learn about the maritime forest, dunes, and swale environment.

**The 24-hour event** will conclude at 3 p.m. with a closing ceremony.

For more details visit [www.littoralsociety.org](http://www.littoralsociety.org) or contact Stevie Thorsen: [Stevie@littoralsociety.org](mailto:Stevie@littoralsociety.org) or 732-291-0055.

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*Leaders in coastal conservation since 1961, the American Littoral Society, a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization, promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, protects the coast from harm, and empowers others to do the same.*

*Federal Tax ID: 22 173 1073*