

## Encouraging Environmental Stewardship throughout Long Island Sound Watershed

In 2008, New York Sea Grant joined Brookhaven National Laboratory's Open Space Stewardship Program to increase stewardship throughout Long Island Sound (LIS).

New York Sea Grant worked closely with partners such as NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Stony Brook University, and the Long Island Sound Study to develop research projects that allow students to learn about the problems facing LIS, while collecting data that will be used by partner agencies.

### Project Highlights

**Hauppauge High School students** collected water quality and species composition data at sites along Sunken Meadow Creek, an area highly impacted by a culvert that restricts tidal flow to the surrounding wetlands. This work will continue over the next few years and will provide valuable data for Sunken Meadow State Park staff as they investigate the effects of restoring tidal flow to the area.



Left: Students collect water quality data off the docks in Mt. Sinai harbor; below: Asian shore crabs are one of the many invasive species found in LIS. Photos: Miller Place Middle School.



NYSG's Larissa Graham helps students identify wetland plant species at Mt. Sinai harbor. Photo: Miller Place Middle School.

### Miller Place Middle School students

investigated wetlands loss in Mt. Sinai Harbor. They collected data on these wetlands and compared them to a healthy wetland nearby. Teachers from this school have applied for funding to purchase additional sampling equipment for 2009-2010.

**Kings Park High School students** began mapping invasive plants throughout Nissequogue River State Park. In 2009, students will remove and monitor the invasive plants in their plot.

**Middle Country High School students** are monitoring Asian shore crab populations at Flax Pond in Stony Brook. In 2009, students will begin independent projects related to Asian shore crabs.

To date, nearly 450 students have participated in these research projects. In 2009, this work will be extended into NYC to students in Bronx and Queens. These activities increase student knowledge of LIS and appreciation for the estuary's many valuable resources.

New York Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the State University of New York and Cornell University. Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. This project summary was written by Larissa Graham, Long Island Sound Study Outreach Coordinator, 631-632-8730, ljpg85@cornell.edu, www.nyseagrant.org.