

NYSG and DEC, alongside many partners, coordinated a seven-event series to celebrate the continuing recovery of three of New York's unique sturgeon species

2022 NY Statewide Celebration of Sturgeon

Sturgeon are ancient fishes, often referred to as “living dinosaurs.” Statewide, New York is home to three species of sturgeon: lake, Atlantic and shortnose. Populations of all three species suffered near extirpation in the late 1800s due to impacts from overfishing, water pollution, and dam construction. By law, New York State protects all three species (Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon are also federally protected). All three fish have important ecological, cultural, and historical significance.

Alongside fisheries managers, scientists, stakeholders, and communities, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) has supported the conservation of sturgeon. Through the efforts of these partnerships, the populations of all three species of sturgeon in New York are rebounding. NYSG plays an important role in sharing the story of sturgeon and increasing public awareness of these New York-native fishes and the habitats which they rely on to survive and thrive.

In the fall of 2022, NYSG collaborated with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and several partners statewide to develop, coordinate, and offer a seven-event Celebration of Sturgeon series. More than 1500 people attended the interactive, educational events in locations spanning from Massena in the rural northern region of the state to urban areas along the Hudson River, in Rochester, and in western New York State. As part of the events, attendees were made aware of NYSG's *Lake Sturgeon Intermediate Curriculum* for middle school educators.

This 2022 Celebration of Sturgeon event series harnessed the power of collaboration to reach new audiences to increase awareness of sturgeon conservation and interest in New York fisheries statewide.



A young visitor to the 2022 Sturgeon Fest event at Nicandri Nature Center, Massena, NY. Photo: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Lake Sturgeon Intermediate Curriculum:
<https://www.nyseagrant.org/lakesturgeon>

Partners:

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York Power Authority and Nicandri Nature Center
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • U.S. Geological Survey
- Aquarium of Niagara • Seneca Park Zoo • New York Sturgeon for Tomorrow
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Sustainable New York Fisheries, Aquaculture & Seafood Businesses.

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.
Contact: New York Sea Grant Extension, 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; www.nyseagrant.org.

Project summary was written by NYSG Great Lakes Fisheries & Ecosystem Health Specialist Stacy Furgal, 315-312-3042, [slf85@cornell.edu](mailto:sjf85@cornell.edu).