

N.C. Coastal Reserve &
National Estuarine Research Reserve

Tidal Flat

Winter 2015



Greetings! Please enjoy our Winter 2015 edition of The Tidal Flat. In this edition, we share our highlights from 2014, provide a more in-depth look at the 2014 joint Reserve-N.C. Sea Grant Coastal Research Fellowship recipients, describe how red-cockaded woodpeckers are using the Buckridge Reserve, and learn from a dedicated volunteer why he spends his time at the Rachel Carson Reserve. In 2015, we will be continuing our work to update the management plan for the N.C. National Estuarine Research Reserve, advancing our training and research on estuarine shorelines and living shoreline stabilization alternatives, incorporating research, monitoring, and stewardship information into our teacher education programs, and highlighting more of the research that we and partners conduct on Reserve sites. Look for updates on these initiatives in upcoming editions of the newsletter. Thank you to all of our partners, volunteers, program participants, and visitors for making 2014 a success; we look forward to another productive year sharing our special places and programs with you!

Sincerely,
Rebecca Ellin
Reserve Program Manager

Reserve Celebrates National Estuaries Day & National Public Lands Day

In September the Reserve celebrated National Estuaries Day and National Public Lands Day with education and volunteer events in Beaufort and Wilmington. The day was spent celebrating the breathtaking beauty of our coast and the important role that estuaries and public lands play in our lives. Enjoy a [photo album](#) of inspiring images.



Facebook Favorite: Participants in the Harvest Moon Paddle enjoyed a spectacular sunset and moonrise as they cruised down Masonboro Inlet.

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In This Issue

[National Estuaries Day](#)

[Red-cockaded Woodpeckers at Buckridge](#)

[Fall Lecture Series Comes to a Close](#)

[Catching up with our Coastal Research Fellows](#)

[A Volunteer's Perspective](#)

[Numbers from Nesting Season](#)

New Faces



Meet the Reserve's new Research Coordinator, Dr. Brandon Puckett! Brandon has a B.S. in Environmental Science from NCSU, a Master's in Fisheries Science from University of Maryland, and a Ph.D. in Marine Science from NCSU. His recent work includes a blend of field ecology, oceanography, and population modeling to assess the function of marine reserves and design of reserve networks, as well as developing decision-support tools for ecological restoration.



Red-cockaded Woodpeckers at Buckridge



Jan Goodson, a Wildlife Biologist with the environmental consulting firm, Dr. J.H. Carter III & Associates, has been studying red-cockaded woodpeckers, or RCWs, for the last 25 years. In 2011 and 2012, while conducting aerial surveys for RCWs west of the Alligator River, Goodson and her associates were surprised to find a few clusters of these endangered species at the North Carolina Coastal Reserve's largest component, Emily and Richardson Preyer Buckridge Reserve. To understand why Buckridge seems like an odd habitat choice for RCW's, [click here](#).

Facebook Favorite: A group of enthusiastic elementary students exploring Rachel Carson Reserve can't wait to share why estuaries are important.



Close of Fall Lecture Series



We'd also like to introduce our new Communications and Project Management Specialist, Emily Woodward. Emily has a B.A. in English from NCSU. She cultivated her communications skills while promoting local marine science research at UNC Institute of Marine Sciences. She then transitioned to The Nature Conservancy where she focused on spreading awareness about issues with water quality and migratory fish in the Cape Fear River.

Upcoming Events

February 12: SciREN Coast at the N.C. Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores

March 10 & 11: Oyster Summit at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh

March 14: Feather Friends Event at Masonboro Island Reserve

April 9: Terrapin Tally Training at the University of North Carolina Wilmington Center for Marine Science

Visit our [events calendar](#) for information about these events and more.

Reserve in the News

Reserve Research Biologist Byron Toothman was recently featured in a segment on UNC-TV's N.C. Science Now. The story focuses on the important role tidal creeks play in our coastal ecosystems. [Watch it here!](#)

[This article](#) by the North Carolina Coastal Federation explores the



Blue crabs, oysters, and scallops were a few of the highlights from the North Carolina Coastal Reserve's evening lecture series held this past fall at the University of North Carolina - Wilmington Center for Marine Science. Speakers from the Reserve, UNCW, and the local community gave visitors insight into the fascinating animals and important research impacting

North Carolina's coast. [Read more](#) about these insightful lectures.

Facebook Favorite: A vivid fall sunrise greets visitors at the Rachel Carson Reserve.



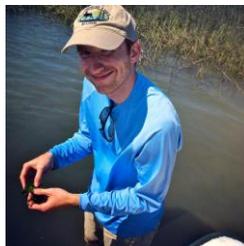
Catching up with our Coastal Research Fellows



Shannon Brown of North Carolina State University, and Justin Ridge of University of North Carolina Institute of Marine Sciences, were recipients of the 2014 Coastal Research Fellowship offered by North Carolina Sea Grant and N.C. Coastal Reserve. For the past year they have been conducting research at Rachel Carson Reserve.

Ridge is studying the growth of intertidal oyster reefs along saltmarshes

and Brown is exploring how different underwater sounds are impacting organisms within a particular habitat. [Click here](#) to learn more about what they've been up to!



Facebook Favorite: A loggerhead hatchling at Masonboro Island Reserve embarks on lifetime of adventure

history of our Buxton Woods Reserve site and highlights the natural features that make it unique.

Our Coastal Training Program's Living on a Barrier Island workshop offered to real estate professionals was featured in the [Coastal Services Magazine](#), published by NOAA's Coastal Services Center.

2014 Accomplishments

433 coastal professionals were trained on a variety of topics through the Reserve's Coastal Training Program

Roughly **3,000** students, teachers, and community members participated in educational programs and outreach events

Over **210,000** water quality, meteorological and nutrient measurements were collected as part of the Reserve's System-Wide Monitoring Program

Volunteers spent a total of **2,850** hours helping improve coastal and estuarine ecosystems while participating in Reserve outreach events

Find out about additional [2014 Reserve accomplishments here](#).

More Information

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[Event Calendar](#)

[Reserve News Archive](#)



[N.C. Coastal Reserve](#)



[Rachel Carson Reserve](#)



[Masonboro Island Reserve](#)



A Beaufort Local's Passion for Volunteering is Contagious



Dr. Stan Rule, a dedicated Reserve volunteer and talented photographer, reflects on his experience working with the Reserve and explains why he enjoys participating in SEANET, a program that brings together scientists and citizens in an effort to identify threats to shorebirds. Every two weeks volunteers conduct bird

mortality surveys at Rachel Carson Reserve as part of the program. Read about his experience [here](#).

Numbers from Nesting Season

This past summer volunteers contributed over 1,000 hours to sea turtle monitoring efforts at Masonboro Island Reserve. Thanks to their hard work and dedication we had a highly successful nesting season.

- 19 sea turtle nests were built at Masonboro Island Reserve
- 10 nests belonged to loggerheads, and 9 to green turtles
- ZERO nests showed signs of predation from foxes, raccoons, or ghost crabs



We would like to thank our volunteers for helping to protect the valued species that frequent our sites each year!