

## Pivers Island Partners Team Up for Invasive Species Detection Project

Thirty-two conservation professionals, graduate students, and advanced undergraduates studying marine biology and policy with the Duke University Marine Lab's [Marine Conservation Summer Institute](#) brought a global perspective to a local priority at the Rachel Carson Reserve this July as they helped develop rapid detection protocols for invasive species found at the Reserve. The Institute's Global Fellows worked with Central Sites Manager Paula Gillikin, Duke University professor Dr. Doug Nowacek, and Dr. James Morris of the NOAA Beaufort Lab to establish sampling stations and monitoring protocols for three known invasive species found in the upland, intertidal, and subtidal areas of the Reserve's estuary: French tamarisk (*Tamarixgallica*), Asian shorecrab (*Hemigrapsussanguineus*), and Asian tiger shrimp (*Penaeusmonodon*). Using net and quadrat sampling techniques, the Fellows helped determine where and how to look for these invasives, creating a rapid detection protocol that allows for early detection and response by Reserve staff.



*The students headed out the Rachel Carson Reserve*

The collaborative invasive species project combines one of the primary themes of the Institute with a priority need of the Reserve. Because the Institute is designed to bring a new class of Fellows to Beaufort for the next ten years, Dr. Nowacek, Dr. Morris, and Ms. Gillikin created a long-term monitoring project where students could contribute to data collection and consider the impacts of invasive organisms in a local ecological system. The data gathered each summer will be used by the Reserve to respond to occurrences of invasive species, and will also be included in natural history and invasive species records. After the initial sampling session, Ms. Gillikin was impressed with the Fellows' passion for the project. "The Global Fellows are a dynamic team and I was excited by all of the existing professional knowledge they brought to the design and implementation of the invasive species monitoring project."



*Marine Conservation Summer Institute students in the marsh*