



# NEGRIL MARINE PARK NEWS

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## World Wetlands Day

World Wetlands Day is celebrated annually on February 2. This year, 2007, marked the third annual celebration of World Wetlands Day at the Negril Royal Palm Reserve (RPR). The RPR is run and operated by the Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT) and the activities for World Wetlands Day were planned by them with the collaboration of NCRPS.



A lake at the Royal Palm Reserve in the Negril Great Morass

The theme for World Wetlands Day 2007 was "Wetlands and Fisheries," to highlight the integral role wetlands play in all coastal ecosystems and the fish they support. There was a guest speaker, Brooke Anderson of NCRPS, and booths from many different organizations represented. Schools participated in a number of different competitions including drum painting, drama competition, quiz competition, essay competition, and the poetry competition.

Schools that participated in the day included: Sheffield All Age, Negril All Age, Little London High, Little London Primary, Green Island Primary, Revival All Age, St. Paul's Primary, Churchill Primary, Cave Valley All Age, Cacoon All Age, and Braughton Primary. Among the winners of the competitions were Sheffield for the Drama Competition, St. Paul's for the Quiz Competition, Little London High for the Drum Painting, plus individuals from different schools for the poetry and essay competitions.

The Great Morass is home to a great number of species, and provides nursery habitat for many fish species that are being harvested and is therefore important to the fishing community. Wetlands provide many services including: acting as a barrier against hurricanes, providing protection against flooding, filtering water by removing excess nutrients and particulates that are detrimental to coral reefs, providing recreation and tourism to areas, and serving as reservoirs of water among other functions. Please do your part in protecting the valuable wetlands of Jamaica!

### Did you Know...

- The green sea turtle, a species found in Jamaica, can migrate more than 1,400 miles to lay their eggs!
- The skin of sharks was once sold and used as sandpaper!
- Electric eels produce enough energy in one shock to light up every room in your house!



(from left) Students observing the waterfowl species at the RPR, participating in the quiz competition, and learning about Wetlands and Fisheries from the guest speaker.

Prepared by:  
Brooke Anderson  
Negril Coral Reef  
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Come out to celebrate **EARTH DAY** at the Norman Manley Beach Park on **Friday April 20, 2007** from 8:30-3! The theme this year is "A Call for Action on Climate Change."

## Saving Lives

On Friday January 5, 2007, Miss Petroneita Martin of Montego Bay was enjoying a day swimming at the Norman Manley Beach Park with her extended family. She had been swimming close to shore and went down, her family thinking she was simply diving, but really she was drowning and lost consciousness. A man pulled her out of the water and laid her on the shore.

On patrol that day for the Negril Marine Park were rangers Linval Gettien and Vernon Sommerville. They were just pulling onto the beach to unload their gear before taking the boat up the river where it is kept when Ranger Gettien suddenly ran towards a crowd of people, having been hailed over by one of the bystanders. When Ranger Sommerville realized what was happening, he beached the boat so he too could go investigate and see what there was he could do to help.

Arriving at the scene they found that the crowd had gathered because a girl had drowned and was no longer conscious, laying on the beach. Arriving first, Gettien placed the victim in the recovery position where the water from her lungs could most easily drain out. When Sommerville arrived and finding her without a pulse, he did a sweep of her mouth to ensure the passage to her lungs was clear and then administered CPR which saved the young woman's life. Sommerville gave the young woman chest compressions which eventually restarted her heart and she began breathing on her own. An ambulance came and after getting the situation report from Ranger Sommerville they took Miss Martin to the hospital in Savannah-la-Mar. When they took her away from the beach she still had not regained consciousness, but at the hospital she did recover and she is now doing fine.



Ranger Sommerville

As a requirement of the Marine Park, all rangers must obtain their lifeguard and CPR certifications. Rangers here at NCRPS have preformed rescues in the past, but generally of people who are having difficulty swimming and need help making it to shore, not victims of drowning. In this instance, however, the training of the rangers was fully utilized, and Sommerville was able to save a life. He has stated that he was very nervous, so much pressure coming in from all sides as people were crowded all around him, but he was able to keep a calm head and remember his training. After performing abdominal thrusts to clear out most of the water from her lungs, it took approximately thirty chest compressions before the girl's body finally responded and Vernon could feel a heartbeat.

We encourage people to learn how to swim and always take precautions when in the water. If you are not a strong swimmer, stay in an area where you can still touch the sand, and do not swim to the point that you are too exhausted to make it to the shore. Also when you are at the beach with family and friends, make sure you know where everyone is and that no one is having trouble in the water and needs assistance. If you have the chance you can also learn to be a lifesaver by taking classes and becoming CPR certified if the time were to ever come that you too could save a life.

## Water Hyacinth

## User Fees

Soon to come will be a water hyacinth pond as a tertiary treatment to wastewater at the Negril Sewage Treatment Facility. Water hyacinth is a fast growing plant that efficiently removes nutrients from water such as nitrogen and phosphorus. These two elements are contributing to the algal growth on the coral reefs when the water leaves the Sewage Treatment Facility, entering the South Negril River and eventually the sea where the reefs are located. The installation of this project is being funded by the EFJ and the Japanese Embassy and being implemented by NCRPS, a project proposal is also currently out to NOAA. Besides the costs of pond construction, funds are also needed to acquire an aquatic harvester. Besides reducing nutrient impacts, part of the project will be to encourage organic farming by composting the water hyacinth and using that as fertilizer.



Water Hyacinth

There has long been a proposal out for a User Fee System within the Negril Marine Park. With a user fee system in place, the Negril Marine Park and NCRPS will become a more economically sustainable institutions, where the money gained by the user fees will help sustain our activities such as ranger patrols, environmental projects, and administration of the day-to-day management of the park. User fees of varying amounts would be for scuba diving, snorkeling, mooring, and photography/videography. Funding for user fees has yet to come through and thus implementation of the fees has not yet come through. There will be a community meeting on the User Fee System to be held soon at the newly remodeled Negril Community Center.

## Education Programme

The Education Programme headed by NCRPS is up and running. There have been many visits to schools as well as school groups coming to the Negril Marine Park. We encourage schools and other institutions such as hotel environmental teams to utilize our education branch of NCRPS and have workshops/seminars on environmental topics. You can also visit us at our headquarters, located next to the Craft Market near the roundabout off Norman Manley Boulevard. We can arrange for groups to take glass bottom boat tours and see the underwater world pass by beneath them, or go out snorkeling seeing the marine life close up.

Classes from schools from many different parishes have come to the Marine Park, such as from St. Elizabeth, Manchester, and Clarendon. In addition we have been continually working with the schools within the Negril Environmental Protection Area, 18 in all, 12 of which are a part of the NEPA Junior Ranger Programme. The Junior Ranger Programme is not as active this year, but we hope that in the next school year we are able to educate and initiate many new Junior Rangers. There will be a Junior Ranger Summer Camp held this year as in years past to include things such as swimming lessons, junior lifesaver lessons, and environmental education.



| <b>Important Dates!</b>  |
|--|
| <b>March 22:</b> World Water Day   |
| <b>April 20:</b> NCRPS Earth Day 2007 Celebration at Norman Manley Beach Park  |
| <b>April 22:</b> Earth Day   |
| <b>April 1-June 30:</b> Caribbean Spiny Lobster Closed Season- do not catch or purchase any lobsters during this time so they have a chance to reproduce and grow! |
| <b>May 22:</b> International Day for Biological Diversity  |
| <b>May 23:</b> Labour Day  |
| <b>June 3-9:</b> National Environmental Awareness Week   |
| <b>June 5:</b> World Environment Day   |
| <b>June 8:</b> World Oceans Day  |

## Beach Restoration

Beach erosion has long been a problem along the coast of the Negril area, particularly Long Bay Beach and Bloody Bay. To address this problem, Smith Warner International, a company specializing in Coastal & Environmental Engineering, has done an assessment of the situation through data collection and a historical analysis of the beach in Negril over the past 40 years. The project started on 18 September, and throughout the months of October and November data were collected including topographic surveys (profile measurements), bathymetric surveys (seabed depths), current patterns, tides and wave heights, and other measurements. NCRPS facilitated the consultants who were in Negril conducting their work by providing a boat, divers, dive gear, and securing their accommodations provided by Hedonism II and Charella Inn. The data they have collected is currently being analyzed and Smith Warner is slated to present its findings to the Negril Community upon completion. The two proposed ways of addressing the problem include beach nourishment, where sand will be taken from offshore locations to widen the beach by approximately 27 metres, and also placing structures offshore that will help break up the energy of the waves and thereby reduce the amount of sand being removed.



Beach erosion in Negril after Hurricane Wilma.

## Marine Park Regulations

Under the NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ACT, the Marine Park Regulation 22, specifically states, the Authority may, as it thinks fit, zone areas of a marine park and may (a) assign a name or other designation for each zone; (b) make provision with respect to the purposes for which each zone may be used; and © attach conditions with regard to the use of each zone..

All users of the Negril Marine Park should endeavor to become more aware of the Park, so as to become conscious of the potential threats to the reef and other natural marine resources in general. If you have any questions regarding the NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ACT, please call the National Environment & Planning Agency (754-7543), stop by the Negril Marine Park Headquarters or call NCRPS at 957-3735.



For our children's children.....

*The Mission of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society is to protect and preserve coral reef ecosystems, locally, regionally, and globally, through education, research, training, monitoring, lobbying, and the creation of marine protected areas.*

## Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society

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## Join NCRPS and Support the Negril Marine Park!

You can support the Negril Marine Park and help protect the fragile coral reef ecosystem by becoming a member of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society.

Members receive newsletters.

I wish to become a member of NCRPS (Membership fees are for a one year period)

- Business Membership, \$3000 JA (Jamaican residents)/\$50 US (Overseas residents)
- Family Membership, \$2000 JA (Jamaican residents) /\$35 US (Overseas residents)
- Full Individual Membership \$800 JA (Jamaican residents) /\$15 US (Overseas residents)
- Student Membership, \$100 JA (Jamaican residents) /\$5 US (Overseas residents)

I wish to make a tax deductible donation to NCRPS to benefit the Negril Marine Park

(NCRPS is registered as a non-profit, charitable organization in Jamaica, West Indies)

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ E MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to: NCRPS, Negril P.O. Box #2563, Westmoreland, Jamaica, West Indies



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(membership good for one year from the above date)

### US TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS THROUGH FRIENDS OF JAMAICA USA

NCRPS works in partnership with Friends of Jamaica (FOJ) USA, a US based organization dedicated to providing economic assistance to organizations in Jamaica. FOJ is recognized by the US Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit charitable organization, 501 (c) (3). All contributions made to NCRPS through FOJ are US tax deductible. FOJ will retain 5% of all contributions for administrative purposes. Those wishing to make donations to NCRPS through FOJ will become members of FOJ and receive membership benefits. [www.friendsofjamaicausa.org](http://www.friendsofjamaicausa.org)

Please make cheques payable to Friends of Jamaica USA, 1312 W. Empire Street, Freeport, Ill. 61032