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A Day At Dubos Point

By Judah Asimov, Outreach Coordinator, Rockaway Waterfront Alliance



On Saturday, July 23, the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance (RWA), C+C Management, and L+M Development Partners came together for a beach clean-up led by the high school interns in RWA's Shore Corps service learning program.

"We were thrilled to join RWA and lend a helping hand on beach clean-up day," said Raquiba LaBrie, director of community investment for L+M Development Partners. "We are committed to being good stewards of the environment and ensuring that the Rockaways remain beautiful and intact for future generations to enjoy."

The cleanup took place in one of Rockaway's many unique spots: Dubos Point Wildlife Sanctuary. The park was named in honor of environmentalists Dr. Rene Dubos and his wife Jean. Dr. Dubos was the primary developer of modern antibiotics and originator of the phrase "think globally, act locally." Although an often overlooked piece of Rockaway, Dubos Point plays an important role in protecting Jamaica Bay's unique environment, as its meadowlands help filter water pollution and prevents erosion. Dubos Point, as a stop along the Atlantic Flyway, is also home to many local and migratory birds.

Aside from cleaning the beach, L+M and C+C employees had the chance to kayak. The inlets and marshland of Dubos Point, much of it only accessible by water, offered a sheltered and beautiful setting. The younger members of the team also had the opportunity to go sein fishing. Much to the delight of the assembled children, Shore Corps collected a wide range of local Jamaica Bay wildlife including killifish and Atlantic silversides. After a quick look at the sea life in RWA's sample jars, the fish were released back to the bay.



At the end of the cleanup, the team had successfully filled 25 bags with garbage ranging from old shoes to fishing hooks. Today, the shores of Dubos Point are already looking a little bit cleaner.

Projecting into Jamaica Bay at a northeasterly angle, the peninsula measures 35.9 acres. The site is bounded by Sommerville Basin on the eastern side, Grass Haddock Channel on the west, and DeCosta Avenue on the south. In 1991, an additional 2.1 acres between Beach 65th Street and Beach 63rd Street were acquired through the purchase of private land. In 1997, 8.7 acres of shorefront property between Beach 69th Street and Beach 63rd Street were acquired. The additions are part of the New York City



Audubon Society's drive to "Buffer the Bay," a project that helps preserve over 700 acres along the shores of Jamaica Bay.

The wetlands provide a unique environment for both wildlife preservation and urban recreation. Enclosed by the Rockaway Peninsula and protected from the Atlantic Ocean, the region currently hosts over 325 species of birds, 50 species of butterflies, and 100 species of finfish. A favorite stop for migratory waterfowl, the area is an integral part of the larger, regional ecosystem. One of New York City's most extraordinary natural resources, Jamaica Bay remains largely undeveloped.

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