

Great NYS Fair Provides Perfect Venue for Great Shipwrecks of NY's "Great" Lakes Exhibit

New York's freshwaters hold fascinating shipwrecks spanning three centuries. The 2014 Great New York State Fair which drew nearly one million visitors provided a spotlight venue for showcasing these recreational and tourism treasures, and more!

NYSG Responds

New York Sea Grant, in partnership with the Great New York State Fair, Great Lakes Research Consortium (GLRC), Great Lakes Seaway Trail, and others, created The Great Shipwrecks of NY's Great Lakes Signature Exhibit that was set in the mini-NY State Park with access to its reflecting pool at the Fair.

The exhibit filled a 60-foot tent with interpretive panels, photos, video, and artifacts of shipwrecks in Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Lake George, Lake Champlain, Finger Lakes, and the St. Lawrence River.

Manniquins sported three decades of scuba diving gear. Visitors inspected a French and Indian War-era bateau replica. The 2014 Discover Clean and Safe Boating campaign mouseboat displayed all the gear required for clean, safe and legal boating on NY waters, while Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers displays educated viewers about slowing the spread of unwanted invasive species.

Children dug into a "treasure chest" for small prizes. U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary mascot Coastie, the "talking tugboat," was a hit with all ages and viewers of News Channel 9's Bridge Street show.

A seven-foot-long sturgeon mount joined the exhibit in the second week of the 12-day event. Cornell Fisheries Biologist Tom Brooking, a NY Sturgeon for Tomorrow volunteer, commented, *"Being part of this exhibit is a wonderful opportunity to educate the public about New York State Department of Environmental Conservation efforts to re-establish the fish in such numbers that it can be removed from Threatened and Endangered Species lists."*

An underwater ROV (remotely-operated vehicle) was built on site; daily demonstrations located "sunken" items in the pool. Weather watchers enjoyed the GLRC's floating 24/7 data-sensing buoy.



Visitors entered the Great Shipwrecks of NY's Great Lakes exhibit at the 2014 Great New York State Fair through a "porthole."
 Photo: Brian P. Whattam. See more exhibit photos online at nyseagrant.org/shipwreck.

"A great deal of New York State history can be found underwater. We are pleased to help share some of that history with the people of the state (with this) exciting and stimulating exhibit. You will learn something surprising!" — Great New York State Fair Acting Director Troy Waffner

The Great Shipwrecks of NY's Great Lakes exhibit has been adapted as a traveling showcase for 2015.

Partners:

- Great New York State Fair
- Great Lakes Research Consortium
- Great Lakes Seaway Trail
- H. Lee White Marine Museum
- Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
- National Aquatics Services
- National Scenic Byway Program (funding)
- New York Sea Grant Launch Stewards Program
- New York State Divers Association
- NY Sturgeon for Tomorrow
- Pirate's Cove Marina & Resort
- SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry
- U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
- Various Cub Scout troops

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is New York Resilient Communities and Economies

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.

New York Sea Grant Extension

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