

President's Column

Why Did You Join NEERS?

Stephen Hale

The Executive Committee put together a list of reasons to be a NEERS member (printed over there to the right). We plan to use this to help recruit new members. Admittedly, the list sounds a bit stuffy. We offer the following checklists to help you remember other reasons why you joined.

Some people have gone astray googling "NEERS" and joined by accident:

- Stuck in an intertidal mudflat as the tide was coming in, I googled "NEERS" on my iPad, looking for the New England Emergency Response System (www.neers.com).
- I hurt my shoulder lifting a benthic grab out of the water and googled for the "Neer's Test" shoulder exam procedure (www.shoulderdoc.co.uk/article.asp?article=747)
- I needed some sand for a method I devised where I construct a quicksand trap in a salt marsh, hoping to capture the person poaching my Datasondes (www.neerssandandgravel.com).
- I'm into underwater Greek sculpture and I was looking for Richard Neer's "The Emergence of the Classical Style in Greek Sculpture" (olponline.wordpress.com/.../new-book-richard-neers-the-emergence-of-the-classical-style-in-greek-sculpture)

Students perhaps have different reasons for joining and attending meetings:

- I'm a grad student and felt like a barnacle spat looking for a place to settle. I needed to pick a spot where chances of a favorable environment for survival, growth, and reproduction were high. NEERS gave me that chance.

Three Reasons to be a NEERS Member

The New England Estuarine Research Society (NEERS) was established in 1969 to bring together people actively engaged in estuarine and coastal research and management for informal discussion and exchange of ideas. Members come from scientific and educational institutions; federal, state, and municipal agencies; nonprofit organizations; and consulting organizations in New England and New York. NEERS has an open and friendly camaraderie and a tradition of being supportive of students and works in progress. We are serious about our estuaries and our research but informal at our meetings.

Get connected

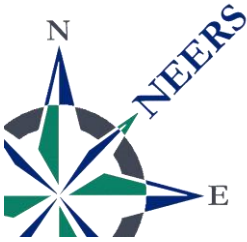
- Network with coastal researchers and environmental managers from New England and New York.
- Coordinate and collaborate with researchers and environmental decision-makers who share your interests.
- Exchange information with your peers from regional research institutions.
- Get information on regional activities and resources.
- Learn about NEERS activities from the Newsletter and Members Listserver.
- Join NEERS Listserver that is open to all and publishes interesting finds, poses questions on identification of species, and posts job openings.
- Browse NEERS website containing many resources for estuarine and coastal researchers and managers.
- Access members database.
- Be a member of an Affiliate Society of the international Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF).

Participate in science meetings

- Attend a NEERS meeting (spring of every year and fall of even years). Meetings usually begin with a special symposium that focuses upon the state of science regarding a topical issue, followed by a day and a half of regular meetings, and then field trips.
- Present a paper or poster.
- Foster communication and collegiality in the New England estuarine research community.
- Get inspired by invited regional, national, and international keynote speakers.
- Try for an award such as the NEERS Achievement Award or the Stickleback Award.
- Learn about new equipment from vendors who set up displays.

NEERS News

Winter 2012



NEW ENGLAND
ESTUARINE RESEARCH SOCIETY

<http://www.neers.org>

NEERS is an affiliate society of the
Coastal and Estuarine Research
Federation (CERF)

<http://www.erf.org>

JOIN NEERS

Student dues are \$5.00 and regular dues
are \$20.00. To register, see

<http://www.neers.org/main/join.htm>

Team NEERS

President - Stephen Hale, US EPA Atlantic
Ecology Division
Past-President - Pam Morgan, Univ. of New
England
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Connecticut



Nixon Lab reunion at CERF 2011 in Daytona Beach, FL

President's Column (cont.)

- Tired of living on vending machine food, I was desperate for one of the free banquets given to all students presenting a talk or poster at meetings.
- Like hanging around off-season coastal resort towns I couldn't otherwise afford
- Thought I could collect all the data needed for my dissertation on one of the field trips
- Staying up late, dancing madly, making the first talk of the Saturday session, and then winning the NEERS Stickleback Prize has been my life-long dream
- Thought NEERS stood for Not Every Estuary Reeks of Sulfide
- Over-confident I would win prize for best student oral presentation or best poster
- Nobody's ever given me student travel money before
- Major professor told me NEERS would look awesome on my CV

If you joined NEERS for some reason that doesn't show up on one of these lists, please let us know. Or, if you know an estuarine scientist in the NEERS region who is a member of the national Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF) but is not a member of the affiliate society NEERS, please ask them: Why not? Maybe we can do something to make NEERS more useful for them.

NEERS in Florida

At the CERF Governing Board meeting last November, we approved the final version of Visions III, a strategic guide for CERF in the next few years. We also endorsed the hiring of Mark Wolf-Armstrong to take over from Joy Bartholomew as the CERF Executive Director. Thanks, Joy, for everything. Welcome, Mark. Also welcome to NEERS President-Elect John Brawley, now the NEERS representative on the CERF Board. Congratulations to the top NEERS finishers in the CERF'11 5K Fun Run who ran on the beach with high surf and gobs of washed-up *Sargassum* weed: Leslie Smith for women and Jim O'Donnell for men. Jim was also the second overall adult male.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Spring Meeting, 12-14 April, in Plymouth.

Three Reasons to be a NEERS Member (cont.)

Students

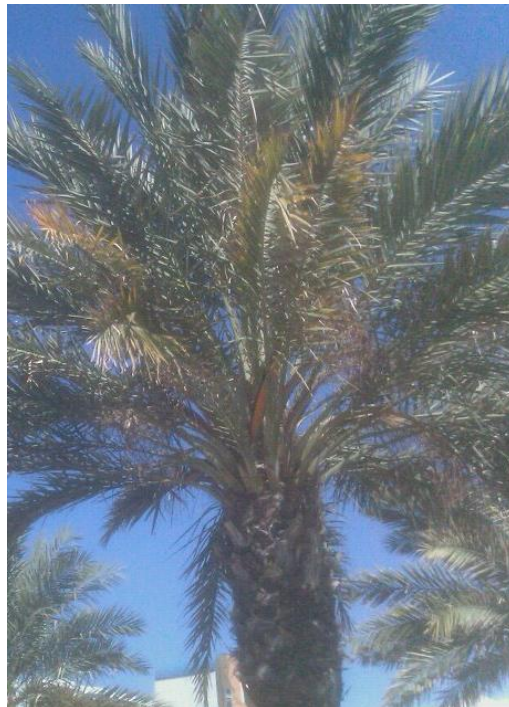
- Bask in the NEERS tradition of support to students; NEERS meetings are friendly places for students to give that first talk at a scientific meeting.
- Contend for a presentation prize. Four \$100 prizes are given for the best graduate and undergraduate oral and poster presentations.
- Enjoy a free banquet if you are lead author on an oral or poster presentation.
- Get a travel award. Students are eligible to compete for one of three \$100 travel awards and one full travel award to support their participation in NEERS meetings. Additionally, NEERS provides two \$500 travel awards for NEERS student members presenting at biennial CERF conferences.

Get involved and develop professionally

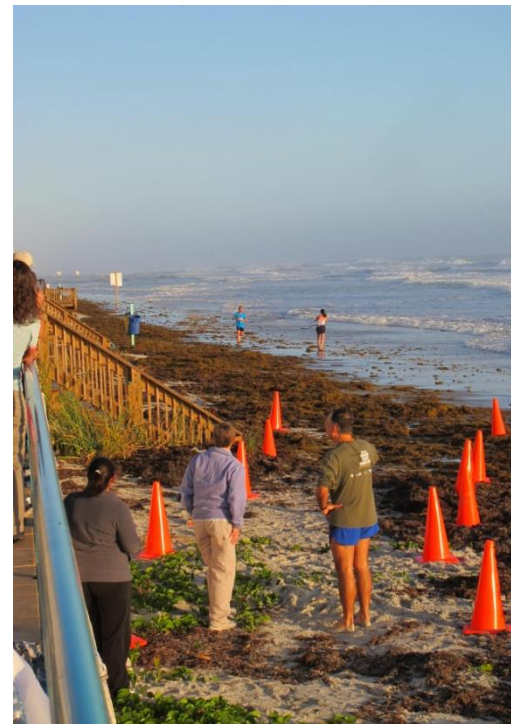
- Make a difference in estuarine research, education, management, and conservation.
- Lead. Become an officer of NEERS or join a committee.
- Host a meeting. You choose the topic for Special Symposium and invite keynote speaker(s). CERF provides travel funds for invited speaker(s).
- Judge student presentations that are contending for prizes at meetings.
- Participate in the policy arena. Provide scientific information to environmental managers.
- Contribute articles to NEERS Newsletter or posts to listserver that provide information on issues regarding regional estuaries.
- Collaborate with other institutions on regional research projects.
- Learn about position announcements, ranging from undergraduate research and internship opportunities to professional positions for senior scientists.
- Build your professional network.



NEERS President Stephen Hale's barefoot *Sargassum* run



Palm tree outside the conference center



Running between the waves and the wrack line

Spring 2012 NEERS Meeting

Thursday, April 12-Saturday, April 14

John Carver Inn

Plymouth, MA



Register by March 28th!

NEERS is heading to America's Hometown this spring! We're hoping for a warm (but not too warm) April so everyone can enjoy the Plymouth waterfront. Plymouth has many interesting historical and natural sights to see within walking distance of the conference hotel, including (the somewhat diminutive) Plymouth Rock, the Mayflower, and Brewster Gardens (along the restored Town Brook - the herring should be running!)

The **Thursday Symposium** will focus on shellfish aquaculture, which is central to the immediate region (Duxbury, Wellfleet, the rest of Cape Cod, and soon to be very active in Plymouth) as well as northeastern estuaries at large. Talks will focus on shellfish aquaculture and restoration activities, including the social, cultural, and economic influences of these activities. Water quality, pathogens, disease, and other environmental conditions are central to this theme. Topics will include biology and natural history of shellfish, conservation and restoration, aquaculture, and potential impacts of these activities.

On **Friday night**, we will have our awards banquet at the meeting site, the John Carver Inn. During dessert, we will be treated to a slideshow by Marshall Pregnall about a recent trip - "In the Wake of Drake, Cook and Darwin: Exploring Coastal Patagonia at the End of the Americas". Following the banquet, we will head down the hill to downtown Plymouth to play "Minute to Win It" at T Bones Roadhouse.

For more details check out the NEERS website (<http://www.neers.org>)

Hosted by the Massachusetts Bays Program South Shore and Saquish Scientific
Patrons: The Nature Conservancy, Woods Hole Sea Grant, YSI
Sponsors: EcoAnalysts Inc., Sinauer Associates Inc. Publishing

Discuss the following:

Estuarine Myth #1: Phragmites is always evil.

Not true. Judith Weiss of Rutgers University, in a talk last spring to the Rhode Island Natural History Survey, stated that a Phrag marsh may have better ability to keep up with projected rates of sea level rise than a *Spartina* marsh. Also, in her study area, biodiversity and abundance of benthic communities in Phrag marshes were higher than in *Spartina* ones.

Estuarine Myth #2: Conversion of former salt marshes from present-day freshwater wetlands back into salt marsh wetlands is always good.

Not true. Two-thirds of Earth's surface is sea water. Do we really need more? Freshwater is more of a limiting factor.

Estuarine Myth #3: Nitrogen loading is always harmful.

Not true. Scott Nixon of the University of Rhode Island noted that, over a certain range, fish production increases with increased nitrogen loading.

Estuarine Myth #4: Anoxia is always bad.

Not true. Arthur Gaines of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Sheldon Pratt of the University of Rhode Island point out benefits from naturally-anoxic bottom waters that include: biodiversity of organisms that specialize in anoxic systems, stratified sedimentary record in anoxic basins that can hold information about the history and climate of an area (often destroyed by bioturbation in oxygenated environments), sequestering of certain pollutants from the human food chain, and stopping some nutrients from contributing to further eutrophication.

Estuarine Myth #5: Artificially hardening natural shorelines to adapt to sea level rise is usually a bad thing.

Trick question. It's true.

The NEERS newsletter is always looking for contributions, including photos, articles, or anything else you think might be of interest.

The publishing schedule is (roughly) late winter and late summer.

If you would like to contribute, please contact Sara Grady, Newsletter Editor at sara@nsrwa.org.