

# Continuing Efforts



## Pea Patch Island

The Pea Patch Island Special Area Management Plan is reaching its goal of a broad, ecosystem-based approach in management of the island's special resources. The June 2001 progress report highlighted efforts to protect and improve the resources that support the heronry, and strategies have been developed to address issues affecting the herons.

In April 2002, Pea Patch Island Nature Preserve was designated as a Continentally Important Bird Area by the Audubon Society's Important Bird Area Program. The heronry is one of the largest of mixed species of herons and egrets on the East Coast, containing great blue herons, great egrets, little blue herons, snowy egrets, cattle egrets, yellow crowned night herons, black crowned night herons, glossy ibis, and green herons.

## Artificial Reef

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Division of Fish and Wildlife has an artificial reef program designed to enhance fisheries habitat and benefit structure-oriented fish such as tautog, seabass, scup, spadefish and triggerfish, as well as provide fishing opportunities for anglers. The Division has used recycled materials



to build 11 permitted sites – eight of them in the Delaware Bay. The sites are charted in the updated 2002 Reef Guide available from the Division.

Since 1995, over 42,000 tons of concrete and ballasted tire units, 86 decommissioned military vehicles and six tugboats and barges have been placed on the artificial reef sites. The donation of 400 subway cars by New York City Transit in 2001 has provided over one million square feet of surface area for attachments of blue mussels and other invertebrates that support reef fish.

## Recycling Grants



Photo by DSWA

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, in cooperation with the Recycling Public Advisory Council, has \$50,000 in matching grant funding available for the fiscal year 2005 Recycling Assistance Grant Program. The matching grant funding is available to local governments and community organizations to help boost recycling in Delaware. Recipients must provide 25 % of total project funding either in cash or an equivalent valuation of in-kind services.

Projects already funded by the grant program in Delaware City, Camden and Rehoboth Beach are recovering tens-of-thousands of pounds of recyclables that otherwise would have been discarded.

## Conservation Coordination Initiative

In October 2004, Governor Minner signed Executive Order 61 relative to green infrastructure. This Order, with DNREC as the lead agency, calls for a coordinated approach between non-governmental organizations, private landowners and state agencies to ensure that the green infrastructure necessary for Livable Delaware is achieved and preserved during a time of intensive development in the State. Through a cooperative and coordinated approach, agencies can leverage resources and expertise to better accomplish the goals and objectives of Livable Delaware. The strategy includes on-the-ground habitat restoration, protection and enhancement in critical resource areas as defined by the State's Livable Delaware Green Infrastructure maps as well as public education, outreach, and private landowner incentives.

## Ecological Restoration and Protection

In the fall of 2003 the Department established an Ecological Restoration and Protection Team comprised of individuals possessing expertise in understanding and reproducing stream and wetland habitats utilizing various restoration techniques. The primary responsibilities of this team are to implement on-the-ground restoration projects that maximize the environmental benefits derived from every project. Some of the key goals include: enhance fish and wildlife habitats, improve water quality, restore degraded natural stream systems, reduce sediment loading, introduce native plant species and eradicate invasive plant species. The Ecological Restoration Team serves as the "implementation arm" to the Green Infrastructure Conservation Coordination Initiative.



Wetland restoration project at the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Hunter Education Training Center located in Ommelanden, New Castle County