



# The River & Carl Schurz Park

## FACTS

The East River and Carl Schurz Park are adjacent ecosystems with rich aquatic and terrestrial lives. Together, they contribute to the character and environmental health of the Upper East Side.

The East River is not actually a river, but rather a 16 mile salt water tidal strait that connects the New York - New Jersey Harbor to the Long Island Sound.

It is part of the New York - New Jersey Estuary, made up of channels, islands, harbors and rivers, which is one of the most biologically diverse and productive systems in the world.

The inlet at the north end of the Park has proven to be the most fertile section of the East River.

Carl Schurz Park is also a rich ecosystem and protective habitat.

Although intrusive man-made structures have disrupted natural networks between the water and the land, there continues to be a beneficial connection between the two ecosystems.

- Water birds are the largest proportion of bird species in the Park, where they find nourishing habitat.
- Both the River and the Park are essential to the migratory corridor that supports birds and insects.



## FOCUS

Oysters are helping to clean the East River and restore species diversity. It is the cleanest it has been in a century.

Until recently the East River was considered unhealthy. The water and its marine populations were ravaged by chemicals, sewage runoff, and pesticides. In the last few decades, new regulations, clean-up initiatives and restoration projects have helped to renew the biodiversity of aquatic life.

The East River ecosystem includes numerous fish species, eels, shrimps, several species of clams, diverse marine algae and other aquatic plants.



LEARN MORE ABOUT BILLION OYSTER PROJECT:



Billion Oyster Project is leading river renewal by reintroducing oysters.

Why Oysters?

- In the process of feeding they remove particles, acting as water filters.
- Oyster reefs increase aquatic diversity by providing critical habitat.
- Oysters, once an important part of the city's economy, have the potential to be so again.
- Oysters form 3-dimensional reef structures that can help shield the city's edges from extreme storm events.

18 Oyster Research Stations, at the 90th Street NYC Ferry Dock, have proven the most successful.



## FUTURE

The East River and Carl Schurz Park have both been transformed in recent years through restoration initiatives. Climate change adds new threats that demand further action.

Both the River and the Park remain vulnerable to extreme temperatures, floods, severe storms, and species decline, brought about by a changing climate.

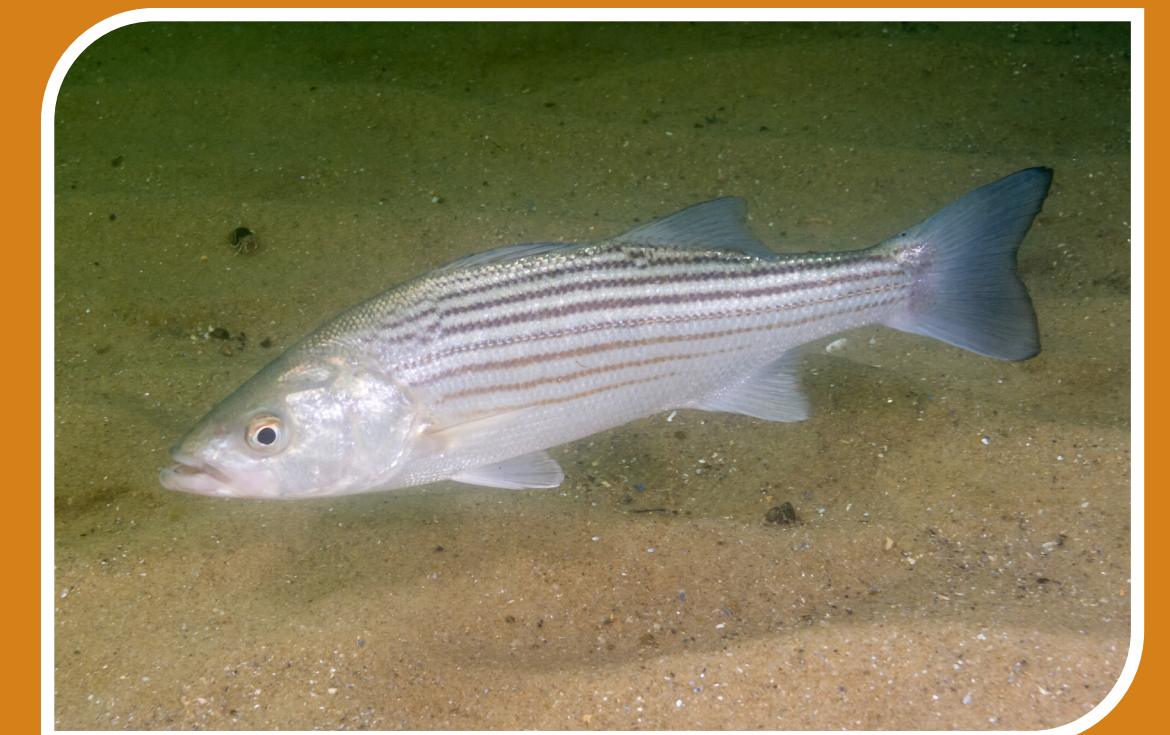
Billion Oyster Project and Carl Schurz Park Conservancy have undertaken new efforts to mitigate damage and ensure the adaptability and resiliency of their respective ecosystems.

- Billion Oyster Project is increasing the number of oyster reefs to help mitigate shoreline damage and reduce species decline.
- CSPC is emphasizing native plantings to restore vital habitats and healthier soils, to help absorb storm water and prevent contaminated runoff into the East River.

Steps you can take to join the effort:

- Participate in the Billion Oyster Project by adopting an oyster cage with a class or a community group.

- Support Carl Schurz Park Conservancy: [www.carlschurzparknyc.org](http://www.carlschurzparknyc.org)



BILLION OYSTER PROJECT AT WORK:



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