



NY and CT Senators Send Letter Requesting Repeal of Law Requiring Sale of Plum Island

On April 1, Senators Schumer, Gillibrand, Blumenthal and Murphy sent a letter to the Appropriation Committee asking for the repeal of the 2009 law that requires the sale of Plum Island and the [Plum Island Animal Disease Center](#) in order to help with the funding of the new [National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility](#) in Manhattan, Kansas. The Senators explain that the original financial reasoning to sell Plum Island no longer makes sense, and it's in the best interest of the country to conserve this magnificent island. We thank the Senators for this crucial undertaking, and their ongoing efforts to protect the natural resources of Plum Island. To see the full letter click [here](#).

Congressman Zeldin Re-Introduces Legislation to Protect Plum



On April 17, Congressman Lee Zeldin, representing the 1st district of New York, announced that he re-introduced legislation to protect Plum Island, previously sponsored by his predecessor, Congressman Tim Bishop. The legislation will reverse the law that mandated the public sale of Plum Island by the federal government to the highest bidder. Congressman Zeldin said he has always supported keeping the Plum Island Animal Disease Center open, as well as conserving the natural resources on the island. He wishes to work with his colleagues in the tri-state area, on a bi-partisan basis, to get the bill passed. To read the press release click [here](#). We thank Congressman Zeldin for taking this action.

The Mystery of Plum Island's Wildlife Will Soon Be Revealed

In a recent interview, Matt Schlesinger, Chief Zoologist of the [New York Natural Heritage Program](#), reported that he, along with seven biologists, and other experts and volunteers, will be embarking on a comprehensive, year-long survey of the fauna and flora of Plum Island beginning this spring. Up until this point, access has been limited to Plum Island due to security restrictions, resulting in an incomplete scientific understanding of the wildlife on the island and its surrounding waters. "We know a fair amount about the bird populations and plant species of the island", said Schlesinger, "but relatively little is known about the mammals, amphibians, reptiles, insects and fish of the island. I am really excited, because it is not often that you get to explore a place that has not been thoroughly studied before, and where there is so much potential to find undiscovered rare species." To learn more about the comprehensive survey and see Matt Schlesinger's full interview click [here](#).

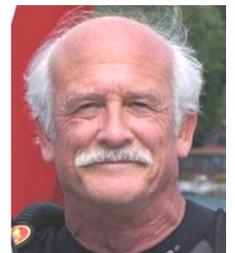


Save the Sound Says They Are Free to Move Forward with Lawsuit

On January 5, 2015, Save the Sound, a bi-state program of [CT Fund for the Environment](#), and member of the [Preserve Plum Island Coalition](#), along with [Soundkeeper](#), filed a [60-day Notice of Intent to Sue](#) to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the General Services Administration (GSA), informing the federal agencies that the organizations intend to file suit under the Endangered Species Act. The organizations allege that the agencies have failed to protect endangered and threatened species while pursuing a public sale of the federally-owned island. The 60-day period has now passed, and Leah Schmalz, Program Director for Save the Sound, said, "We received responses from DHS and GSA, but they were not substantive and did not address our complaints. We are now free to move forward with our lawsuit." Stay tuned for more news on this issue in the coming months.

A Plum Site to Plumb The Coast, In Depth

With [construction](#) of the new National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility in Manhattan, Kansas soon underway, it appears a possibility that the Plum Island Animal Disease Center may someday close. But, Steve Resler, retired scientist and avid diver, envisions that Plum Island and its surrounding marine waters would be a perfect place to locate an underwater exploration research facility, possibly as a collaboration among regional research institutions and the federal government. To read Steve's article, click [here](#).



Steve Resler

Outreach Coordinator Begins Plum Island Presentations



Chris Cryder, Outreach Coordinator for the [Preserve Plum Island Coalition](#), gave his first presentation, titled, "Preserve Plum Island for Future Generations", to a crowd of 65 people at the Clinton Public Library in CT in March. He took the audience on a "virtual tour" of Plum Island, and discussed the efforts to conserve the island. Since then he has presented at UCONN-Avery Point and at the Groton Public Library, CT. Please come to an upcoming presentation!

- 1) **Friday, May 1**, 6pm at the Floyd Memorial Library, 539 First Street, Greenport, NY;
- 2) **Friday, May 22**, 7pm at the Avalon Park & Preserve, 200 Harbor Road, Stony Brook, NY;
- 3) **Wednesday, May 27**, 7pm at the East Lyme Public Library, 39 Society Rd, Niantic, CT; and,
- 4) **Friday, June 19**, 7pm at the Shelter Island Public Library, 37 N Ferry Rd, Shelter Island, NY

If your organization would like to schedule a presentation please contact Chris at ccryder@savethesound.org

Artist and Photographer Take Their Plum Island Show on the Road

Artist, John Sargent, and Photographer, Robert Lorenz, have had the great opportunity over the past year to see Plum Island in different seasons, and at daybreak and nightfall. They have documented their journeys on Plum Island in a fantastic art & photo show, titled, "The Natural Beauty of Plum Island, NY". Beginning this past January, the duo has taken their show to several Connecticut libraries and in April it is on display at the Groton public library. The show moves to New York in May and there are 2 simultaneous shows:

- 1) **Friday, May 8 — Saturday, May 30**, Southold Historical Society, Reichert Family Center Gallery, 54127 Main Road (route 25), Southold, NY. **Opening Reception on Friday, May 8, 5:30 — 7:00pm.** Exhibit open Thurs. thru Sat. 1 to 4pm. Call 631-765-5500 to confirm gallery schedule.
- 2) **Tuesday, May 5 — Monday, June 15**, Floyd Memorial Library, 539 First Street, Greenport, NY. **Opening Reception on Saturday, May 9, 3:00 — 5:00pm.** Call the library at 631-477-0660 for more information.

To read an article in The New London Day about the making of the art & photography show please click [here](#). (You may need to answer a one-question survey to see it)



Maritime bluffs © Robert Lorenz



Terns —John Sargent

Join the Preserve Plum Island Coalition

We are glad to announce our newest members of the Coalition, [Connecticut — Rhode Island Coastal Fly Fishers](#) and [Defend H2O](#). Our [list of members](#) is growing, and we would like your organization to join too. If you are interested, please contact Stella Miller. You may contact Stella at stella.miller63@yahoo.com.

In the coming months we will need organizations and individual activists to support a number of advocacy efforts focused on the preservation of Plum Island. Thanks!

To learn more about the Preserve Plum Island Coalition go to <http://preserveplumisland.org/>. Join our Facebook page [here](#). To remove your name from our mailing list, please [email](#).