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Stormwater Education in Rhode Island

Suggested Use: The following list can be used to find a group that provides children's stormwater education in your town, drinking water district, or watershed. Find a field trip location or book an educator to visit the classrooms and after school programs in your town.

Organization	Contact Info	Age Group	Location	Price	Time Length
Audubon Society of Rhode Island	Kristen Swanberg education@asri.org	Students grade 2-12, teachers resources and the general public	Smithfield, Exeter, North Smithfield, Seekonk, Charlestown, Bristol	Varies, visit www.asri.org for details	2 hours outdoors for most programs
Blackstone River Coalition	Peter Coffin peter.coffin@zaptheblackstone.org	Children and the general public	Blackstone River Watershed: Public events, fairs, classrooms	To be determined	5-10 min-display mode; 30-45 min classroom program
Blackstone Valley Tourism Council	Patricia McAlpine patricia1mcalpin@yahoo.com	Students 5 th grade– high school, teacher training, public tours for all ages	Tours aboard Blackstone Valley Explorer and walking tours, Central Falls, Woonsocket and classrooms	RiverClassroom program -\$200.00 /group; Public tours-\$10/adult and \$8.00 for children	50 min River Classroom
Narragansett Bay Research Reserve	Kristin Van Wagner Kristin@nberr.org	Children and the general public	Prudence Island, classrooms, special presentations	Free	Any- from 30 min to full day

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Educators and Kids: Stormwater Education in RI Summary

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Narrow River Preservation Assoc.	MJ Kanaczet mjkanaczet@mail.uri.edu	Students K-8 and teachers	Narrow River watershed classrooms	Free for students	
Northern RI Conservation District and Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program	Gina Dimarco gina-demarco@nricd.necoxmail.com Elizabeth Berg Elizabeth-Berg@nricd.necoxmail.com	Children and the general public	Scituate Reservoir Watershed: Central Falls, Woonsocket, Scituate, Foster, Gloucester	Free for Scituate Reservoir Watershed, paid for by Providence Water	1.5 hours for classroom demonstrations
Save The Bay	Bridget Kubis-Prescott bkubis@savebay.org	Grades 3-12	Throughout the state: classrooms, after school programs, camp, festivals	\$120 for classroom or after school programs	45-60 min
URI Learning Landscape Program	Vanessa Venturini* VVenturini@mail.uri.edu	Pre-K – 8 grade	URI Outreach Center, Kingston and Roger Williams Park Botanical Center, Providence	\$7 per child	2 hours
Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association	Denise Poyer* denisepoyer@gmail.com	Elementary to High School Students and Teachers	Classroom and field trips in the Pawcatuck Watershed	Varies, see website	Varies

* Note: Contact for more information about stormwater and watershed education resources and training opportunities.

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Produced by RI Stormwater Solutions with support from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.



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Educational Program Details

Audubon Society of RI—Kristen Swanberg—Audubon offers numerous programs for schools in locations all over the state. The “Watershed Walk” program for grades 2-12 teaches students about importance of water and what a watershed is as they explore the habitats at an Audubon wildlife refuge. This exploration includes sampling of a wetland and focuses on the role of water in the lives of plants and animals. “Wetland Detectives” (grades 6-9) allows students to use nets and scientific equipment to determine the health of our freshwater wetland and what factors could be affecting this important habitat. “Life in the Wetland” (grades 2-5) allows students to journey to our outdoor classroom to explore the importance of fresh water wetlands to humans and wildlife. Students use nets and scientific equipment to discover and investigate the creatures of the wetland. “Pond and Stream” (grades 2-12) Students investigate pond and stream creatures by actively sampling wetland habitats and studying their findings. To study both pond and stream, a three-hour field trim is recommended. In “Coastal Explorations” (grades 2-12) students can take a walk down our quarter-mile boardwalk to Narragansett Bay for hands-on discovery. This program heightens students’ awareness of marine habitats as they venture to the shore for scientific exploration.

Teachers should check out the “Bay Animals Like it Clean and Salty” Curriculum available through Audubon, which includes labs with hands-on activities that focus directly on stormwater pollution issues in Narragansett Bay. Contact Kristen Swanberg at education@asri.org or call (401) 949-5454 x3014. www.asri.org

Blackstone Valley Tourism Council—Patricia McAlpine –The RiverClassroom Program targets groups from 5th grade to high school with an outdoor component as well as a classroom presentation. The outdoor presentation can include a walk or a boat tour, with stormwater included in the discussion. Children get the chance to perform water quality tests on the Blackstone River. The in-class presentations include slide shows and hands-on presentations. Teachers can take tours aboard the Blackstone Valley Explorer where materials from the Blackstone River Coalition are shared. One example of a RiverClassroom program, the “River Science Investigation,” which targets ages from K-adult, teaches about the ecosystem of the river and includes a component on pollution and actions to take to keep the river clean.

www.tourblackstone.com/education.htm

Blackstone River Coalition- Peter Coffin- The BRC uses education and outreach in an attempt to target stormwater, the major issue impacting the Blackstone’s water quality, and a large hurdle in achieving the goal of a Fishable/Swimmable River by 2015. Educational programs use the Envirosapes watershed model either as a display for public events and fairs, or for a hands-on classroom program. The BRC also teamed up with teachers from Pawtucket Academy and Mount St. Charles High Schools under an E.P.A. Environmental Justice grant.

The Tackling Stormwater Initiative is a four-pronged approach serving municipal decision makers, developers, businesses, and homeowners. This program is grounded in the data generated by the BRC’s watershed-wide volunteer water quality monitoring program, which supports 76 volunteers monitoring 74 sites throughout the watershed on a monthly

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basis. Outreach materials include a “Homeowner’s Guide to Protecting Water Quality,” a “Horse Owner’s Guide” and a “Small Farm Owner’s Guide” with 9 factsheets each. Currently in publication is a “Developer’s Guide to Low Impact Development.”

The BRC sponsored a Blackstone Watershed Stormwater Management conference in January 2006, which highlighted Open Space Residential Design (OSRD) and Low Impact Development (LID) to reduce stormwater impacts. They offer “Stormwater 101” presentations to interested communities to help them revise their bylaws and regulations to allow and encourage OSRD and LID, or develop a stormwater management bylaw. The “In Business for the Blackstone” initiative is a voluntary leadership program that educates small and mid-size companies in the watershed on the detriments of polluted stormwater runoff and encourages the adoption of good housekeeping practices that can reduce the risk of pollutants in their runoff. www.zaptheblackstone.org

Narragansett Bay Research Reserve—Kristin Van Wagner –The NBRR works with all age groups in numerous venues including the NBRR facility on Prudence Island, classrooms, camps, teacher workshops, festivals and public presentations. Kristin gives tours on Prudence Island and discusses stormwater and watersheds at the water quality monitoring station. Kristin uses and highly recommends the Envirosapes model, which teaches the concept of stormwater by showing how pollution flows in a watershed and relating it to students by asking “Would you want to eat fish or swim in that water?” Kristin is willing to lend out her Envirosapes model to anyone who wants to use it, although it is located on Prudence Island. www.nbnerr.org

Narrow River Preservation Association—Mary-Jane Kanaczet- The NRPA provides stormwater outreach to children through storm drain marking and also by providing education in classrooms and at the Environmental Day at the Beach in Narragansett. The Narrow River Handbook is an outreach guide for homeowners to reduce stormwater pollution in the Narrow River Watershed, including environmental do’s and don’ts for households. www.narrowriver.org

Northern RI Conservation District—Gina DeMarco—NRICD holds a number of outreach events that engage the entire community, primarily in the Scituate Watershed, and funded by Providence Water. They held a watershed-wide poster contest last year for students in grades 3-8. Teachers were provided with a packet of information to disseminate to students, and the winners of the contest were featured in a calendar that was distributed to the community. An ongoing project involves high school students building an urban rain garden in Woonsocket as a first-hand experience with stormwater control. The students are publicizing the rain garden and encouraging the community to build more rain gardens in the Blackstone River area. A rain garden walk and talk for adults is scheduled for the Fall and another stormwater-themed walk and talk was held last year in the Village of Scituate. The NRICD educates all of the third and fourth grade classrooms in Scituate, Foster and Gloucester about stormwater. The programs include a powerpoint presentation and an “all the water in the world” demonstration. Finally, they give a demonstration utilizing the Envirosapes model and allowing each student to add pollution to the watershed. Afterwards,

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the students brainstorm about ways to reduce water pollution in their watershed. NRICD has donated their used Enviroscapes models to the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council, the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association and the Southern RI Conservation District.

Another component of NRICD's stormwater outreach involves a series of demonstrations set up at local businesses in Scituate. A local veterinarian is displaying and utilizing a poop scooping station with the NRICD sign, logo and website for more information, a local restaurant has allowed them to put in a demonstration rain garden, and a local gutter contractor is demonstrating rain barrels. They held a rain barrel sale and sold 82 rain barrels this spring. They are also implementing a stormwater BMP that will be part of the walk and talk. www.nricd.org

Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program- Gina DeMarco—The *Water Festival* is an annual interactive event that teaches about 300 second and third graders water conservation and stewardship. The festival, held in conjunction with RI Drinking Water Week Celebrations includes different stations with relay races, crafts, stories and prizes. A few of the games focus on stormwater pollution including the “water drop roll” in which students don a water drop suit and roll down a ramp, collecting felt representations of pollution sources like fertilizers and motor oil as they go. Another game involves scooping up dog poop to reduce stormwater pollution. Bristol County also holds a watershed festival. These games are available in a packet to any group wishing to utilize them. www.nricd.org/landwaterconnection

Save The Bay- Bridget Kubis-Prescott- STB has numerous stormwater-related educational programs in the classroom, for after school programs and as field trips. “Walk in your watershed” uses a watershed model to allow students to build a town and then pollute it to see how actions on land affect our rivers and the Bay. The water cycle program also mentions stormwater. The “Life in your Watershed” program (Grades 3-12) explains how you are linked to Narragansett Bay. Through the use of a watershed model, students build a town and then pollute it to see how our actions on land affect our rivers and the Bay. www.savebay.org

Save Bristol Harbor- SBH uses an Enviroscapes model (donated by the city of Bristol) to teach about stormwater in their “Sense of Pride” program. Elementary and high school classrooms participating in this program will be given a watershed model demonstration and then complete a community service project. Examples of service projects include marking storm drains and shoreline cleanups. www.savebristolharbor.com

URI Learning Landscape Program- Vanessa Venturini- The Learning Landscape program incorporates a stormwater education component into the Eco-Exploration environmental field trip, using the EnviroScape watershed model. Did you know that the same water that we drink today was around when dinosaurs walked the earth? From rain drop to reservoir students dive in to the water cycle. What does cutting your lawn, walking your dog and washing your car have in common? All of these actions could have negative effects on the quality of our water. By viewing a model of a watershed and adding



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“pollutants” students can witness how water travels from the storm drain on your street all the way to the ocean. www.uri.edu/cels/ceoc/YouthPrograms.html

Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association – Denise Poyer- WPWA offers several programs on watershed education ranging from hour long classroom presentations to day long field trips. Options include information on groundwater, wetlands, aquatic animals, and water quality testing. Field trips can include kayak programs on the Wood River. Every other year WPWA conducts a 3-credit teacher training course based on the AWESome Curriculum, usually available to teachers for no fee. www.wpwa.org

***More stormwater educational tools are available from the RI Stormwater Solutions at:**
www.ristormwatersolutions.org

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