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NJSEA Atlantic Coast Leopard Frog Study Shows Encouraging Results on Critical Meadowlands Species

“Using Passive Acoustic Monitoring to Assess the Distribution of a Rare Frog in the NJ Meadowlands” Published in Urban Naturalist Journal

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(LYNDHURST, NJ) - A recently published New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA) study on the Atlantic Coast leopard frog population in the Meadowlands shows that the important amphibian is maintaining its presence across historic sites, and that there is evidence that the region is a stronghold for a species in decline.

Michael Turso, a Wildlife Biologist in the NJSEA’s Meadowlands Research and Restoration Institute (MRRI), conducted the study with support from his colleagues. His findings were published in the peer-reviewed Urban Naturalist journal. The Atlantic Coast leopard frog is critical; it is the last remaining frog species with a substantial population occupying freshwater habitats in the Meadowlands. The presence of this rare frog species emphasizes the importance of protecting the freshwater habitats of the Meadowlands.

Turso’s research found that the Atlantic Coast leopard frog has maintained its presence in the Meadowlands for more than a decade. In addition, the acoustic recording units that identified the frogs led Turso and fellow MRRI staff to discover new habitat sites.

“MRRI has been a tireless supporter of improving wildlife habitat in the Meadowlands so that diminishing species such as the Atlantic Coast leopard frog will thrive in the future,” said John Ballantyne, Chairman of the NJSEA Board of Commissioners.

“The NJSEA is proud of the efforts of our top-notch researchers in MRRI who improve and enhance the Meadowlands crucial environment,” said Paul Juliano, President and CEO of the Authority. “Their numerous published studies, such as the report on the Atlantic Coast leopard frog, help communicate the significance of the Meadowlands wildlife habitat to the scientific community and the general public.”

“Kudos to MRRI for a tremendous job in researching a noteworthy species and explaining its significance through the paper published in the Urban Naturalist journal, said Commissioner Anthony Scardino, Jr., Chairman of the NJSEA Science and Environment Committee. “These studies will inform future best practices by the NJSEA so that frogs and other species flourish in the Meadowlands.”

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