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Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve

## Welcome, New Volunteer Docents!

*The Wells Reserve docent program provides a diversity of opportunities to share the importance of estuaries and nuggets about the natural world with a variety of groups from local schools to the general public. Here, Vivian Howe shares her thoughts about being a school programs docent.*

Welcome New Volunteers,

The great thing about being a Wells Reserve docent is you get to introduce or reinforce the value of the estuary and the natural world to visitors. Often, children don't have the same close contact with the outdoors as they used to, and as docents, we get the chance to do something about it.

The training sessions are terrific and provide the opportunity to gradually develop and practice skills. Before we know it, we become knowledgeable and confident! Having been a teacher is probably a plus, but many of us never were and we do just fine.

It's great to spend a morning on the Reserve's trails, putting in our own words, the information we've acquired. Our Exploring Estuaries groups consist of around 10 students plus teachers and/or chaperones. We, and often a co-docent, take our group of students from station to station and share different aspects of the estuary and its surroundings.

There is no better way to influence the next generation than through interactive nature education. And we learn so much in the process.

Vivian Howe  
Wells Reserve Docent



*Vivian lives in Scarborough, Maine and has been a Wells Reserve docent since 2006. During her time as a docent, Vivian has guided both spring/fall school ecology field trip programs like Exploring Estuaries, and other nature- and beach-focused walks in the summer. Vivian is a wonderful naturalist who truly enjoys sharing the secrets of the outdoors that she has discovered on her journey as a lifelong learner. You should ask her about some of her favorite books and her international birding trips to locations such as Vietnam and Australia. Thanks, Vivian, for all your great work! And thank you, new volunteer, for becoming a part of our docent team!*