Map
MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Hudson-Raritan Estuary

For the complete maps with media resources, visit:
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/maps/hudson-raritan-estuary/

The Hudson-Raritan Estuary is a system of bays and tidal rivers where the Hudson, Hackensack, Passaic, Rahway, and Raritan rivers meet the Atlantic Ocean. It includes New York's pristine Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, as well as the busiest harbor in the entire world, Upper New York Bay. Development along the shoreline has caused much pollution to build up in the estuary over time, particularly from the large cities around the estuary, including New York City and Newark, New Jersey. Many groups have changed their practices and experimented with new techniques to improve the health of the estuary system, including planting beds of oysters, a shellfish that filters pollutants out of the water.

The Hudson River gets its name from English explorer Henry Hudson who sailed his ship, the Half Moon, up the waterway along with his crew of Dutch and British sailors up towards present-day Albany, New York on September 3, 1609. Hudson and his crew thought it might be a new route to the Far East region of Asia. The Half Moon had been searching for that route, the Northwest Passage, from Scandinavia to present-day Maine and South Carolina.

The Raritan River takes its name from an Algonquin word. Algonquin is a language group shared by many tribes in the eastern United States at the time of Henry Hudson's arrival to the area.

QUESTIONS

- New York City is made up of five "boroughs," or districts, that can be found on the map. What are the names of these five boroughs?
  The five boroughs of New York City found on the map are the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island.

- The map includes light shades of red and green. What do those colors represent?
  The colors on the map represent different types of land cover or land use found throughout the region. Red colors represent areas were cities, suburbs, or other development have built up. Green colors represent areas that are still forested or undeveloped.

- The Hudson River has a large watershed, or an area of land which drains into the river. The watershed of the Hudson River includes parts of New York and which four other states? You can use the watershed locator map to find out.
  The Hudson River watershed includes parts of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont.

For Further Exploration

Articles & Profiles
- National Geographic Magazine: Before New York
Interactives
- The Hudson: The River That Defined America

Worksheets & Handouts
- New Netherland Museum: Juet's Journal of Hudson's 1609 Voyage

Websites
- Hudson River Maritime Museum
- Poughkeepsie Journal: The Hudson River—Past and Present
- National Geographic Animals: Oyster