



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
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## **An Introduction to the Marine Environment and Geology of City Point: A Model for Experiential Teaching>**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 84.06.07  
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This unit basically deals with the area in New Haven called “City Point”. It is based on research done in and around the New Haven Harbor and mostly includes the tidal marshes at City Point and their accompanying mud flats.

Mud flats and salt marshes are inseparable as estuarine subsystems connected as they are by the ebb and flow of the tides. The many organisms that make this their world and the various species of birds that also abound, are included in the unit for study. A brief geological history going back to the glacial period and its impact on Connecticut is also included.

What the main thrust of the unit is however, is a hands-on approach to scientific research utilizing the City Point area as a classroom. Thus, field trips and specimen collecting along with all of the suggested Lesson Plans are very important. Clemente Middle School finds itself situated with a mile of City Point and therefore is very accessible to me for this type of a unit. However, other schools in New Haven will also find it very easy to find and in these troubled financial times, a very inexpensive way to have students interact with nature. Students can have a first hand experience with a subject that is right in their own backyard. The importance of New Haven Harbor is directly explained and many of the lessons herein are practical, exciting and with the teacher’s guidance easy for the students to do. Many environmental lessons are also included, conservation and historical preservation is stressed.

The Appendix is of particular interest, in that the teacher has a list of agencies upon which to call for help in the teaching of this unit. The slides of City Point study, which I developed, will be available at the Institute’s Office. These are 35mm. color slides which depict the important aspects of the site, typical daily scenes of the neighborhood, topography and the natural habitats of birds and fishes at City Point. The City Point marshes are also depicted and there is a brief commentary for every slide.

I personally found this to be an exciting and rewarding unit to develop.

(Recommended for Earth Science classes, grades 6 through 8, and Environmental Studies classes, grade 6)

### **Key Words**

*Ecology Environmental Science Connecticut Geology General West River*

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