

# The Peacock Planet

## Saint Peter's University Sustainability Council Newsletter

March 2021

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In celebration of Women's History Month, we would like to highlight some articles from black women who bring understanding and awareness to environmental racism and how there's no climate justice without racial justice.

Women's voices need to be heard when fighting for the environment because we bring forth both the challenges and solutions to solving the environmental crises.

- [Learning from Black voices in marine conservation](#)
- [Want to Be an Environmentalist? Start With Antiracism](#)
- [Why Every Environmentalist Should Be Anti-Racist](#)
- [Why Women's Lands Rights Are Actually Key in the Fight Against Climate Change](#)

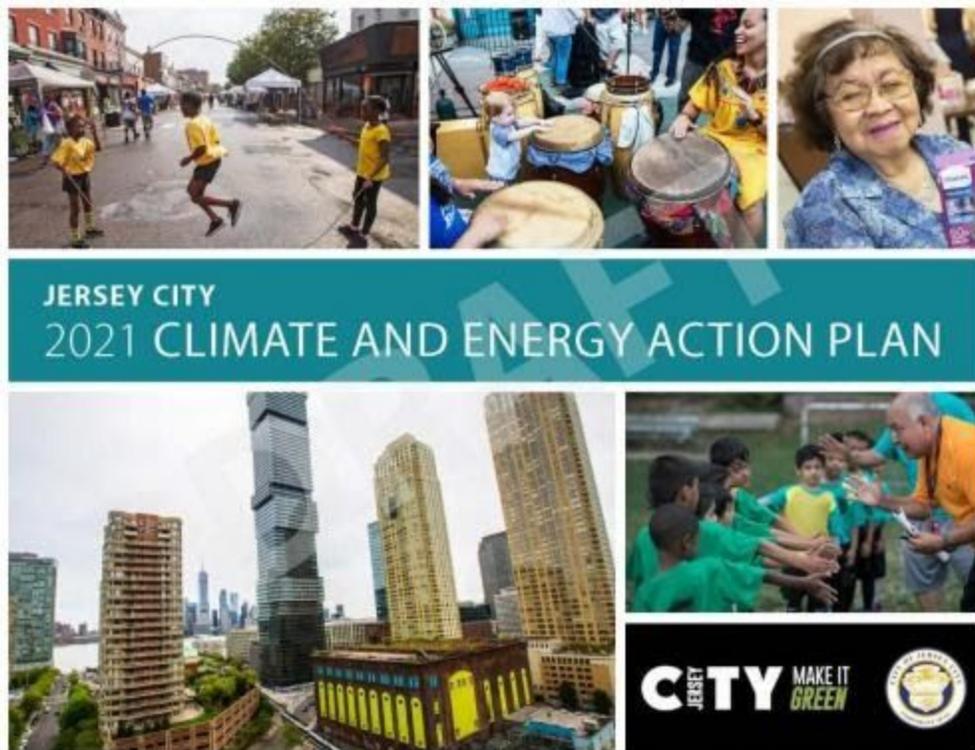
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**March Events: Save the Date**

- Wednesday, March 3 at 12pm: [Sustainability 101 – The 2021 Texas Grid Power Failure](#) presentation by Dr. Jack Hampton
- Friday, March 5 at 11am: [Botany, Race, and Power: The History of Expeditions to Cuba](#)
- March 6, 7, 13 and 20 from 10am to 1pm: [Jersey City Neighborhood Cleanup](#). Click on the link to volunteer for any one of these 4 local Jersey City clean-up events
- Thursday, March 11 at 11:30am: Webinar on [Environmental Justice for the Public's Health](#)
- Ongoing dates: [Volunteer with NJ Audobon Society](#)

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## Jersey City Publishes Draft of 2021 Climate & Energy Action Plan



Jersey City's Office of Sustainability recently published a draft of the city's new [Climate & Energy Action Plan](#). Enter the [Climate Action in JC Sweepstakes here](#) for the chance to win a \$100 giftcard.

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Our Favorite Hikes:

## Washington Valley Park

By Marybeth Duong, Class of 2021



The Washington Valley Park located in Bridgewater, New Jersey is a great trail for all ages and throughout all of the four seasons! The park is well known for containing the Washington Valley Reservoir and the Chimney Rock Hawk Watch, which is exceptional for viewing the sky during sunset. There are [four different trails](#) to choose from but my favorite is the yellow trail because it takes you to Buttermilk Falls! Parking is not an issue at all but I would recommend wearing shoes you don't mind getting wet in, as some parts of the trail could be muddy, depending on the forecast. I also suggest crossing the rock path over the water to get a closer look of the waterfall!

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## What We're Reading & Watching

Here are some media recommendations from Council Members:

- [Kenyan recycles plastic waste into bricks stronger than concrete](#) article
- [A Tale of Two Chickens](#) video
- [Recycling in America Is a Mess. A New Bill Could Clean It Up](#) article
- [Why the US Rejoining the Paris Climate Accord Matters at Home and Abroad – 5 Scholars Explain](#) blog
- [Incredible footage of turtle hatchlings en masse in the Amazon](#) video
- [To Help Save Bumble Bees, Plant These Flowers in Your Spring Garden](#) article
- [Monterey Bay Aquarium Live Jellyfish Cam](#) video
- [New Jersey Jobs in Conservation, Wildlife, Ecology, Forestry](#) job board
- [This 'Small World' is Packed with Animated Beauty](#) video
- [How We Can Beat the Plastic Pandemic](#) TedTalk on YouTube

- [3 Unexpected Effects of Plastic Pollution](#) video
- [A Plastic Ocean](#) Netflix documentary
- [Recycling! Is it BS?](#) - a podcast from How to Save a Planet (a Spotify original)
- [Count Down: How Our Modern World Is Threatening Sperm Counts, Altering Male and Female Reproductive Development, and Imperiling the Future of the Human Race](#) - book by Shanna H. Swan

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Monthly Challenge:

## Can you Survive without any Single-Use Bags?

By Dr. Wanlu Li, Assistant Professor of Chemistry



Can you survive without any single-use bags? Your challenge for this month is to stop consuming single-use bags. Bring a foldable tote bag with you all the time. Some of the foldable bags are lightweight and can be tucked into an attached pouch when not in use!

Here are some web resources:

- [How to turn plastic sacks into a recycled tote?](#)
- [How to avoid single use plastic when eating and drinking on the go?](#)

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One Small Step:

## Focus on Gratitude

By Dr. John Ruppert, Assistant Professor of Biology



Perhaps you're sensing an Ignatian theme in my posts, but what works, works. Without gratitude, we get stronger feelings of sacrifice, resentment, and envy. In a world of limited resources and significant economic and environmental issues, a focus on gratitude helps us all be more willing to see progress in the moments and build a coalition of positive thinking around us. Not only does it help our sustainability cause, but it also helps us form better relationships with others, lovers and 'foes' alike. It's this relationship building that cements humans' place in the world, not our basic biology. Our relationships are the foundation of our teamwork and without it, we would not be the evolutionary success we have become. While our teamwork is a profound capacity, we also suffer from malice and greed, particularly if circumstances change and are not ideal. Right now, we are a suffering people and this focus on suffering and the resentment and envy it brings are not only eroding our teamwork but hardening the core of our culture. In my post in January, I talked about culture as the adaptive mechanism of modern human evolution, but it is a delicate thing that rests on human cooperation built on a collective gratitude. With gratitude, we can steer ourselves through the hardship to find new opportunities: allow ourselves, our world to change.

So what's step one to a focus on gratitude: today, ask yourself 3 times, where are you seeing love, compassion, resolve, hope in the world? Then give thanks for that moment of clarity in the imperfection of life. It's not all so bad. :)

A thought to leave you with.....

**"The more grateful I am, the more beauty I see"**

- Mary Davis

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The Saint Peter's University Sustainability Council, founded in 2012, is a group of students, faculty, and staff who strive to make our campus community and our world more sustainable for future generations.

Your feedback, photos, event notices, and story ideas are always welcome. Please email them to [skeller1@saintpeter.edu](mailto:skeller1@saintpeter.edu)

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