





# Oysters Deserve a Shell-ebration!

**Oysters are saltwater superheroes.** The unassuming oyster is a highly valued member of North Carolina's coastal ecosystems. They provide a myriad of benefits to people and wildlife alike.

-  They build their own habitat, known as oyster reefs, to shelter themselves and other aquatic critters
-  Oyster reefs help stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion during tides and storms
-  They support major food webs that include shorebirds, commercial fisheries, turtles, crabs, and more
-  Oysters filter up to 50 gallons of water per day, which is the same amount of water that fills a typical bathtub!

*Not to mention - some folks find them pretty tasty, too. Whichever way you shell-ebrate, we wish everyone a happy oyster season!*





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**Unfortunately, not all oyster reefs can be opened for harvest due to high bacteria levels,** such as those found in our tidal creeks. Help keep bacteria out of waterways by always cleaning up after pets and soaking in stormwater runoff wherever possible!



**What are your favorite oyster memories and moments?**

Email your stories to [healourwaterways@wilmingtonnc.gov](mailto:healourwaterways@wilmingtonnc.gov)

For more ideas, visit our website or follow us on social media.

