

## Aqua Kids come to Connecticut



The Aqua Kids television show's theme song tells you that they travel around the world to discover new things about the ocean, and that their theme is "Keep it Green and Blue". Recently, the show's cast and crew visited Connecticut for the second time and in two days filmed four new episodes for their show last week at the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus in Groton. On the next day, they filmed baby sea lions at Mystic Aquarium.

Connecticut Sea Grant filmed its first episode with Aqua Kids last September. Guests were Dr. Robert Whitlatch, Nancy Balcom, and me. We showed the kids sea squirts, invasive crabs, and seaweed. That show aired in January 2009 and again in June. Their visit in June 2009 will result in four shows that will air around December 2009.

Molly McKinney, who is 22 and has been with the show since she was nine, and James Dorman, who is 16, host the show. Their target audience is pre-teens and teens.

Featured experts in the new Aqua Kids episodes are Dr. David Avery

and Dr. Heidi Dierssen, UConn Department of Marine Sciences faculty, Dr. Charles Yarish, UConn Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Marine Sciences, Thaxter Tewksbury, director of Project Oceanology, and Drs. Jennifer Mattei and Mark Beekey, faculty at Sacred Heart University. Topics were, respectively, zooplankton, light in the ocean, seaweeds, lobsters, and horseshoe crabs.



Molly McKinney, co-host of Aqua Kids, works on introductions for the show.

A new Aqua Kid, Katie Mulligan, appeared in all 4 episodes. Katie is 13 years old and hails from Ivoryton, Connecticut. She was recommended by her teacher at the John Winthrop Middle School in Deep River. Other Aqua Kids included Scott Isbell, who was born in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, Jill Fasano, and Isabelle Boehling.

The shows will air nationwide on dates to be announced, likely in December or January. In Connecticut,

by Peg Van Patten

the show is broadcast on MyTV 9 except in Fairfield county, on Saturdays at 8:30 am.

Aqua Kids, produced by George Stover and Adventure Productions Inc., is a top-rated educational series that teaches kids of all ages the importance of protecting our nation's aquatic environments. The show is syndicated and distributed to 89,000,000 households.

Teens ages 13-16 can join the Aqua Kids EcoHero Club online for free. Members may possibly be selected to be included in future Aqua Kids episodes.

To see the complete national listings, go to their web site, <http://www.aquakids.tv> and click "Showtimes".



Dr. David Avery shows zooplankton to the Aqua Kids in his lab.