

ASSEMBLY, No. 1107

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2018 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman JOANN DOWNEY

District 11 (Monmouth)

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SYNOPSIS

Designates horseshoe crab as State Arthropod.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT designating the horseshoe crab as the New Jersey State
2 Arthropod and supplementing chapter 9A of Title 52 of the
3 Revised Statutes.
4

5 WHEREAS, The horseshoe crab (*Limulus polyphemus*) is an ancient
6 arthropod, which is defined as an invertebrate animal of the Phylum
7 Arthropoda; and

8 WHEREAS, Horseshoe crabs have a hard shell, or exoskeleton, a
9 segmented body, five pairs of jointed legs, and a long and rigid tail;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Horseshoe crabs are often called "living fossils" because
12 scientists have estimated that the fossils of their prehistoric
13 ancestors date back millions of years; and

14 WHEREAS, Horseshoe crabs are important for both public health and
15 the ecosystem, especially migrating shorebirds; and

16 WHEREAS, Biomedical companies catch horseshoe crabs for their
17 blood, from which they produce Limulus Amebocyte Lysate
18 (LAL), a substance used to detect contamination of injectable drugs
19 and implantable devices and the presence of endotoxins such as *E.*
20 *coli* and *Salmonella*; and

21 WHEREAS, Migrating shorebirds, including the endangered red knot,
22 rely heavily on the eggs spawned by breeding horseshoe crabs to
23 supply energy required to complete their migration from the
24 southern tip of South America to the Canadian Arctic; and

25 WHEREAS, Over the past two decades or so, there has been a decline
26 in the number of horseshoe crabs due to the loss of sandy beaches
27 needed to lay eggs, overharvesting, and use of the horseshoe crabs
28 as eel and conch bait; and

29 WHEREAS, Although horseshoe crabs are not considered in great
30 danger right now, they have been previously, and therefore ongoing
31 efforts are in place to prevent them from becoming endangered or
32 extinct; and

33 WHEREAS, The preservation of horseshoe crabs is a particularly
34 important issue in New Jersey since the Delaware Bayshore is the
35 center of horseshoe crab spawning on the Atlantic coast; and

36 WHEREAS, The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
37 has taken steps to protect these arthropods, such as issuing a harvest
38 moratorium and conducting beach replenishment projects; and

39 WHEREAS, In 2008, the Legislature enacted a statutory moratorium on
40 the taking and possession of horseshoe crabs or their eggs in the
41 State; and

42 WHEREAS, In order to pay recognition to the importance of the
43 horseshoe crab, it is fitting and proper to designate it as the State
44 Arthropod; now, therefore,

45

46 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
47 of New Jersey:

