



SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE

President's Log



Dear Marine Fisheries Section members:

It's been some time since I last communicated with you about the Section's activities, and I find myself somewhat surprised that this will be my last column – can 2 years have slipped past so quickly? The Society is now making plans for its 134th annual meeting to be held 22-26 August in Madison, Wisconsin. During that time, the Marine Fisheries Section will hold its annual business meeting and I will be stepping down as your president. President-elect John Hoenig is preparing for his two-year service as your president, and I will work closely with John to ensure a smooth transition.

Also, at the annual meeting, the Marine Fisheries Section will be sponsoring a full-day symposium organized by Doug Vaughan, John Hoenig, Mike Prager, and Kyle Shertzer. The symposium, "Recent Advances in Abundance Estimation and Stock Assessment," will feature presentations describing quantitative methods for the understanding and management of marine and freshwater fisheries. Topics of recent interest will be emphasized, including tagging, assessments with limited data, Bayesian analysis, biological reference points and control rules, ecosystem modeling, and the interface between science and management. Seventeen speakers were selected from different agencies and universities from a wide geographic area. Symposia similar to this have been very well attended in the past [e.g., Providence (2-day symposium in 1986), Anchorage (1989), Pittsburgh (1990), Portland (1993), Halifax (1994), Hartford (1998), Charlotte (1999), Phoenix (2001), Baltimore (2002), and most recently Québec City (2003)]. If you plan to attend the Madison meeting, be sure to stop by on Wednesday and catch up with the latest thinking in this field.

Recently, the Section donated \$250 toward the AFS 4th Annual Future Fisheries Professional Colloquium. This is a 3-day meeting for fisheries students organized by graduate students at the University of Florida. The colloquium gives students an opportunity to present their research in a professional environment and to meet with other students and practicing scientists. This year's meeting will be in St. Augustine, Florida, November 5-7, 2004.

Our Student Travel Awards committee chaired by Russ Brown will be considering applications from students planning to present their research results at

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the annual meeting in Madison. The deadline for applications has been extended to 30 June 2004 and directions for applying can be found on our web site (go to www.fisheries.org and click on Units, click on Sections, click on Marine Fisheries Section, then click on Student Travel Awards). Please contact Russ (Russell.Brown@noaa.gov) if you would like to be considered for this award.

Desmond Kahn will be working with the Sette Award Committee to identify a marine fishery professional for this annual award. Criteria for selection are provided on our web page. If you would like to submit a nomination, please contact Des (dkahn@state.de.us).

On another note, I have been participating in both AFS Management Committee and AFS Governing Board activities. The Governing Board has been providing input to the Strategic Plan Committee regarding the revision to the plan. The Committee, under the expert leadership of Linda Bireley, is striving to make the strategic plan more ‘user friendly,’ easier to navigate, and more contemporary with current thinking in AFS. My principal activities on the Management Committee concern the Fisheries Conservation Foundation. We have dedicated much time to guiding the formation of the review process for proposals seeking funding from the Fisheries Conservation Foundation. To date, we have reviewed numerous pre-proposals and proposals that seek to advance public understanding of fishery conservation issues. We have considered several excellent proposals and the Foundation has so far funded two of these – one to develop an Aquatic Resource Conservation Electronic Library which seeks to provide science-based information on aquatic conservation issues to decision makers, educators, resource advocates and the public; and the other to support an international symposium and workshop that will develop an agenda for action to conserve coral reefs. We are currently in the midst of evaluating pre-proposals for the next round of awards. I am pleased to report that marine fisheries issues are very prominent in many of the proposals we considered. Conservation of marine resources is a topic of interest to the public and the Foundation.

As this will be my last column as MFS president, I want to extend my gratitude to all the volunteers who have helped make my term rewarding, enjoyable, and fun! I highly recommend participation in AFS units as it provides an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues, exchange information, and make a difference for fisheries. If you would like to become more involved in the Section, or in AFS, please contact me or any of the officers. Opportunities are abundant and your help is needed. A special “thank you” to the Executive Committee of the MFS – Anne Richards (Past-president), John Hoenig (President-elect), Deb Murie (Secretary-Treasurer), Martha Mather (Northeastern Division representative), Fred Scharf (Southern Division representative), Mike Markels (Western Division representative), and Donna Johnson (newsletter editor). Thanks also to Russ Brown and Des Kahn for their long-term leadership as MFS Committee chairs. See you in Madison?!

Mary.

NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS...



Northeastern Division



STRIPED BASS RESEARCH AT MaCFWRU AND MDMF

By Martha Mather

Martha Mather and Kristen Ferry recently completed a study of factors driving distribution of migratory striped bass across Massachusetts estuaries focusing on implications for multispecies management. This study, undertaken in conjunction with Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, quantified predator prey interactions between coastal migratory striped bass and estuary prey. In the 1980s, natural and anthropogenic stressors led to the highly visible collapse of striped bass, a historically important component of marine fisheries and estuarine ecosystems. Although effective management and favorable recruitment resulted in the restoration of the coastal migratory stock in the mid-1990s, resource managers now face intense pressure to concurrently manage this restored top predator population for commercial and recreational yield while conserving important prey populations. Presently, record numbers of striped bass feed in Massachusetts's estuaries during their annual foraging migration.

In this study, we sought to better understand patterns and mechanisms for striped bass distribution in these Massachusetts estuaries because foraging conditions here may affect the health of the entire migratory stock. Specifically, for spring, summer, and fall of 1999, we (a) compared striped bass relative abundance among 13 Massachusetts estuaries, (b) examined how factors affecting feeding success and growth are related to predator distribution, and (c) evaluated the relationship between striped bass predators and their prey. Based on diets of > 2000 striped bass, we found that across seasons, striped bass were consistently abundant in northern Massachusetts's estuaries. In spring, the relative proportion of invertebrates and fish in the diet best explained variation in striped bass distribution. In summer, temperature, diet components, and potential consumption explained up to 98% of variation in predator distribution. In fall, the proportion weight of fish prey was of key importance. The sand shrimp, *Crangon*, provided a diet staple for striped bass in all seasons, but, in fall, menhaden was the primary diet item.



An example of a mixed fish invertebrate diet from a striped bass feeding in Massachusetts estuaries in 1999.



Assessing diet with non-lethal gastric lavage (stomach pumping). Over 2000 fish were sampled and released from the 1999 study.

Our spatially and temporally explicit estimates of where and when striped bass are feeding, what and how much they are consuming, how these migrants choose habitats, and growth implications of habitat selection can help identify explicit strata for effective predator monitoring, improve estimates of growth and size at age, pinpoint time periods of prey vulnerability, and provide the basis for a multi-species community models.

Ferry, after graduating from University of Massachusetts- Amherst in 2003, went to work for the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Anisquam River Laboratory as a fisheries biologist. Mather works with the Massachusetts Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit in the Department of Natural Resources Conservation at UMASS, Amherst. For more information, contact Mather and Ferry at the following addresses: Kristen Ferry, kristen.ferry@state.ma.us, 978-282-0308, X 119; Martha Mather, mather@forwild.umass.edu, 413-545-4895.





Southern Division



CURRENT TOPICS OF INTEREST IN MARINE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN THE SOUTH

By Fred Scharf

Southern Flounder in North Carolina

Due to considerable declines in stock biomass during the past decade, an advisory committee was formed to advise the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission in the development of a fishery management plan (FMP) for southern flounder harvest within state waters. The advisory committee consists of commercial and recreational fishers, as well as scientists from other agencies and academia, with meeting discussions being led by biologists from the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries. A draft of the FMP has been completed, which proposes a 30% overall reduction in the harvest of southern flounder. To achieve the harvest reduction, the advisory committee recommends a 14-inch size limit on fish landed commercially, combined with a seasonal closure of the commercial fishery between November 8 and December 30. In addition, proposed management actions include placing bag limits on the recreational gig and hook and line fisheries, as well as gill nets used by recreational-commercial gear license holders. There are currently no bag limits on these components of the southern flounder fishery. The draft FMP for southern flounder is currently being reviewed by the commission and will be sent out for public review.

North Carolina Shrimp

Several issues are expected to be addressed during the development of an FMP for North Carolina's shrimp fishery. An advisory committee has recently been formed and public meetings to discuss important issues have begun. North Carolina has management responsibility for multiple species of shrimp (brown, white, and pink shrimp) harvested in marine waters inshore and out to three nautical miles. In the coming months, the central issues for the development of a shrimp FMP will be: 1) reducing bycatch of non-target species; 2) minimizing user group conflicts, both within the shrimp fishery and with other fishery groups; 3) economic considerations, especially as they relate to the increased market share for imported shrimp; and 4) a rethinking of the overall management strategy for shrimp in the state.

Student Research in the Southeast

Chip Collier is a M.Sc. student at UNC-Wilmington working on the age, growth, reproduction, and genetics of the kingfishes (*Menticirrhus spp.*) found in the coastal waters of North Carolina. An active fishery occurs in the near shore waters, with an expansion of fishing effort during the past decade. A lack of basic biological information has inhibited resource managers from assessing the impacts of increased fishing effort on the population dynamics of the three species of kingfish that are found along the North Carolina coast. Chip's work is aimed at filling in data gaps for the upcoming kingfish fishery management plan that will be developed by resource managers in North Carolina.

The kingfishes are short-lived fishes that demonstrate fast growth and early maturation. Some individuals begin maturing at age 0 and all fishes are mature by age 3. Few fishes have been found over the age of 4 years with the maximum age estimated to be 7. Most growth occurs during the first two years of life. Although meristic counts and coloration can be diagnostic, these features are often damaged or obscured by harvesting practices. Chip developed an unambiguous molecular marker to distinguish among the three kingfish species that occur sympatrically in North Carolina waters. DNA sequencing of a fragment of cytochrome B revealed substantial genetic variation among species with divergence estimates ranging from 9.5% (*M. americanus* vs. *M. saxatilis*) to 16% (*M. saxatilis* vs. *M. littoralis*). A restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) was developed to accurately identify each species. Currently, Chip is completing age, growth, and reproductive analyses for each species, attempting to determine the timing of

annulus formation and reproductive seasonality.

Jim Morley is a M.Sc. candidate at N.C. State focusing his research on the bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) population dynamics in the South Atlantic Bight. Bluefish have long supported a valuable recreational fishery along the U.S. Atlantic coast, however, the past decade has seen considerable decline in the recreational catch compared to the 1980's. Efforts to understand this variation have focused on recruitment dynamics and survival of age-0 juveniles. Larval sampling and research in the Middle Atlantic Bight have shown that young-of-the-year bluefish recruit to coastal habitats in two distinct pulses. The first pulse is from spawning events that occur during spring. The second is produced from a summer spawning event. In the past, both spring and summer-spawned bluefish have been shown to contribute to the adult population, however, data from the last decade indicate little contribution from the summer-spawned cohort.

Despite extensive research that has taken place on juvenile bluefish in the Middle Atlantic Bight, very little work has been done once bluefish migrate south to overwinter south of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. Jim's research goals are to examine juvenile bluefish winter ecology and to evaluate the hypothesis that overwinter mortality impacts the recruitment success of summer-spawned bluefish. Jim examined abundance patterns of bluefish from trawling surveys conducted in Onslow Bay, NC during October 2001 through May 2002 and September 2002 through June 2003. He sampled up to four transects each month ranging from 0.25 to 10 miles from shore. Energy storage dynamics were assessed through lipid analysis throughout the winter season for both 2001 and 2002 bluefish year-classes.

So far, he's found bluefish recruitment patterns to be more complex than previously believed. In addition to spring and summer-spawned cohorts, a third cohort, spawned in late summer, was found to be abundant in North Carolina waters during the winter. Bluefish energy reserves peaked in November with larger fish having disproportionately more energy, however, by midwinter there was little difference in energy storage between the cohorts. The results suggest that larger fish deplete a greater portion of their energy stores as the season progresses, while smaller fish defend their energy stores. Spring catch data indicates that the summer and late summer cohort do survive the winter despite having lower energy reserves entering the winter. The magnitude of overwinter mortality remains uncertain, and Jim hopes that additional years of data will increase our understanding of bluefish winter dynamics.

Kara Schwenke is also a M.Sc. candidate at N.C. State. The goal of her graduate research is to determine age and growth of dolphin (*Coryphaena hippurus*) off North Carolina. Due to the recent increase in both recreational and commercial landings of dolphin in the western Atlantic, it's been hypothesized that dolphin life history parameters may have changed due to increased exploitation. Since dolphin are economically valuable before size at first maturity, increased fishing pressure may lead to recruitment overfishing and a decrease in spawning stock biomass. Kara's objectives are to collect a range of dolphin sizes from recreational landings during all months that dolphin are captured (from May 2002-May 2004), and to collect samples of under represented dolphin sizes (small age-0 dolphin) through fishery-independent sampling. She has been aging all dolphin using scales, and has aged dolphin < age-1 through microstructural analysis of otolith daily rings. She plans to perform marginal increment analysis to validate annuli and to calculate basic reproductive information (e.g., batch fecundity, gonadosomatic indices) on the dolphin she samples from the recreational catch.

To date, Kara has sampled more than 730 dolphin. Preliminary results suggest that no major change in growth rates has occurred due to increased fishing pressure since the last age and growth analysis was conducted for dolphin in the early 1960's. Of importance, Kara has identified five age classes of dolphin from her data, whereas only four age classes were detected in the previous study. Gonadosomatic indices developed from the recreational samples indicate a late spring/early summer spawning period. Once completed, Kara's findings should provide an updated age and growth profile, along with current estimates of reproductive metrics that can be used to improve population assessments for dolphin in the western Atlantic.



NOW IT'S TIME TO MEET THE CANDIDATES:President-Elect Candidates:**J. Jeffery Isely**

Jeffery Isely is the Assistant Unit Leader of the South Carolina Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Clemson University in Clemson, SC. Jeff received his Ph.D. in Fisheries Science from Texas A&M University (1984) and conducted post-graduate research at North Carolina State University on juvenile fish recruitment to estuaries. He joined the National Marine Fisheries Service as a stock assessment biologist in 1988, and moved to the Coop Unit program in 1992. He teaches graduate courses in fisheries management and fish ecology, advises graduate students, and conducts basic and applied research. He recently won Clemson University's Award of Excellence in Graduate Education. His research interests focus on age and growth of juvenile and adult fish, estimating fish abundance in large populations, and evaluating movement patterns in a number of species including striped bass and shortnose sturgeon. Jeff has authored or coauthored 50 peer-reviewed publications on subjects ranging from Florida bass in ponds and reservoirs to size selective mortality in larval marine fish. Jeff has received best paper awards for coauthored presentations at Florida, Texas, and South Carolina Chapter, and Early Life History Section meetings.

Jeff joined the American Fisheries Society in 1980 and became a life member in 1984. He recently completed his tenure as President of the Early Life History Section, has served as President of the Texas A&M Chapter, Newsletter Editor for the Education Section, Southeast region representative for the Early Life History Section, and Associate Editor of the North American Journal of Fisheries Management. As a member of the Executive Committee of the Parent Society, Jeff was elected to the Management Committee. He served as host and program chair for the 28th Larval Fish Conference and has served the Parent Society and the Southern Division on several committees.

**Debra Murie**

This August, Debra Murie will have served the maximum of two terms (4 years) as the Secretary-Treasurer for the Marine Fisheries Section, and has been a member of the American Fisheries Society since 1987. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences at the University of Florida and her research and teaching focuses on coastal marine fisheries. She is particularly interested in production and population dynamics of groupers, grunts, sheepshead, and the marine/estuarine life stage of Gulf sturgeon. After completing her Ph.D. in rockfish ecology, she worked as a Fisheries Biologist for the British Columbia Blackcod Fishermen's Association and completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship working on lingcod abundance and age/growth at the Pacific Biological Station, Fisheries & Oceans Canada. She is a member of the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council Finfish Stock Assessment Panel and the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council Scientific and Statistical Committee. She was also co-chair for the program committee for the 2001 Southern Division Meeting of the AFS in Jacksonville, FL.

She is honored to be nominated as President-Elect for the Marine Fisheries Section. In this position, she will strive to increase participation by marine fisheries biologists, students, and scientists in the Marine

Fisheries Section. She believes that our improved website is great (“a big thanks to our website gurus!”), and with some further development and modification, it will allow us to reach out, inform, and mentor both undergraduate and graduate students at all levels. She believes these students are our future, and we would be prudent to provide them with guidance and mentorship that allows them to reach their career goals having a vision of the wise use of our fisheries resources in their hearts.

She also thinks that there is a general perception that if the annual AFS meeting is inland (or the midyear divisional meetings), that marine fisheries interests are put on the back-burner and that we have limited opportunities to interact with other marine fisheries biologists and scientists because of limited attendance. To counter this, she believes we need to ensure that every AFS conference has one or two symposia and multiple contributed sessions of direct interest to MFS members, and ones that would encourage non-members to attend as well. She thinks a great example of this is the upcoming annual AFS meeting in Madison, in which Doug Vaughan (Chair) and several other members of the Marine Fisheries Section have organized a symposium on *Quantitative Methods and Applications in Fisheries Science*. She applauds their efforts and would actively help and encourage our section members to continue to pursue these essential activities.

Debra believes that as members of the Marine Fisheries Section, we are under an ever increasing spotlight that covers everything from sustainable fisheries management, the endangered species act, essential fish habitat legislation, to name but a few. By having a membership that embodies sound and objective scientific exchange, we have much to offer in the years to come. She thanks everyone for this opportunity to continue to be part of it.



Roger A. Rulifson

Roger Rulifson is a Professor in the Biology Department and Senior Scientist at the Institute for Coastal and Marine Resources, East Carolina University, in Greenville, NC. A native of Iowa, Roger received his BS degree (1973) from the University of Dubuque, Iowa, and his MS (1975) and PhD (1980) degrees from N. C. State University in Raleigh. Roger’s research interests center on the life histories and ecology of long distance migrators, especially striped bass, shads and river herrings, American eel, and the spiny dogfish shark. Rulifson has worked extensively with commercial fishermen to develop gear for reducing bycatch in various estuarine and marine fisheries, and with state and federal fisheries management agencies in developing fishery management plans.

Roger is the coordinator of the North Carolina Gillnet Observer Program, targeting primarily the inshore flounder fishery. In the classroom, Roger teaches undergraduates and graduate students in marine biology, fisheries techniques, and a course on current marine-related issues. An AFS member since 1974, Rulifson was a charter member and first elected president of the Tidewater Chapter (the only marine-based chapter in AFS), and currently serves as historian and newsletter editor. He also serves as the faculty advisor for the ECU Student Subunit of AFS, and has served on numerous committees at the Division and Parent Society levels. Roger has long been an advocate of AFS to students, and would like to see efforts by the Marine Fisheries Section in helping retain those students as AFS members upon entering the workforce in both marine and freshwater employments.

Secretary/Treasurer Candidates:



Lee Benaka

Lee Benaka has worked at NOAA Fisheries in Silver Spring, MD, since 1999. In his current job as a Fishery Management Specialist in the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Lee reviews fishery management plans for Gulf of Mexico fisheries and coordinates national bycatch policy.

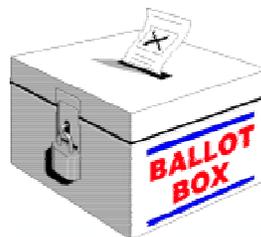
Prior to working at NOAA Fisheries, Lee was the first American Fisheries Society (AFS)/Sea Grant Fellow. As an AFS/Sea Grant Fellow, Lee organized an international symposium on fish habitats and edited a proceedings volume based on the symposium. Lee currently serves as Treasurer of the AFS Estuaries Section and is a Past-President of the AFS Estuaries Section and Potomac Chapter.



Daryl C. Parkyn

Daryl Parkyn first joined the AFS as a member in 1988 in the Western Division prior to initiating his dissertation research in ecological physiology and behavior of fishes. Now located in the Southern Division at the University of Florida, he is a Research Assistant Professor interested in various aspects of the biology of anadromous and marine migratory fishes. As such, he has studied behavior, population dynamics, and physiology of many species including salmon, red drum, white grunt, and Gulf of Mexico sturgeon. This is his first time running for office in the Marine Fisheries Section and the AFS, although he has volunteered input to several panels throughout the society.

He believes the Marine Fisheries Section and the AFS, in general, have important roles to play in the on-going changes we are seeing in our coastal fisheries. In particular, he thinks the marine fisheries in many states and provinces are shifting from regional commodity-based enterprises to a more widespread, recreational and tourist-based industry. Daryl believes this has been driven, in no small part, through key-pieces of legislation (e.g., gear-type and catch-sales restrictions) and lobbying efforts of special interest groups, often with little input from fisheries professionals. Together, he believes, with our varied interests and expertise, the Marine Fisheries Section can provide a voice on all aspects of the impacts of proposed and on-going changes in marine fisheries in North America. It would be a privilege for him to have the opportunity to serve the membership of our section as Secretary-Treasurer over the next two years.



CAST YOUR VOTE TODAY!

To VOTE Simply Go To :

<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/mfselection.pl>

~ **OR** ~

Mail this form to me (D. Johnson) no later than **August 1, 2004**

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2004 BALLOT FOR AFS-MFS OFFICERS

CANDIDATES:

- **President-Elect**

J. Jeffrey Isley

Debra Murie

Roger A. Rulifson

- **Secretary/Treasurer**

Lee Benaka

Daryl Parkyn

- **Northeastern Division Representative**

Martha Mather

Write-in _____

- **Southern Division Representative**

Fred Scharf

Write-in _____

- **Western Division Representative**

Michael Markels

Write-in _____

- **North Central Division**

Write-in _____

Special Science Workshop Slated for AFS Meeting

To help develop a solid scientific foundation for the National Fish Habitat Initiative, a workshop will be held in conjunction with the annual American Fisheries Society (AFS) meeting August 22 in Madison, Wisconsin. The workshop "Healthy Fish Habitats: Creating Benchmarks For Success" is sponsored by AFS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Workshop organizer Andy Loftus describes the session as

"an intensive interactive forum to set the stage for establishing scientific criteria for measurement of aquatic habitat health."

If you are interested in the workshop, contact Andy at 410/295-5997, aloftus501@aol.com, and stay tuned for more details.



Announcement and Call for Papers



The Florida State University and Mote Marine Laboratory are hosting the Fifth Mote International Symposium in Fisheries Ecology.

This year's theme is aptly titled: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Integrating Marine and Human Ecology into Fisheries Management.

The symposium runs from November 9 –11, 2004 in Sarasota, Florida.

For details regarding: Symposium theme, Registration, Lodging etc...

please go to: <http://www.bio.fsu.edu/mote/current.html>



Coastal Zone Canada

2004, JUNE 25-30 (Youth Forum) and June 27-30 (Main Conference)
LOCATION: St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

Coastal Zone Canada 2004 is an international conference on the theme of All Within One Ocean: Co-operation in Sustainable Coastal and Ocean Management. This conference marks the tenth anniversary of the conference series and will provide an opportunity to review the progress that has been made in coastal zone management over the last decade. The conference will address the challenges of effective coastal zone management at local, regional, national, and international levels, and will present leading-edge tools and techniques for today's coastal zone managers and researchers. For further information, go to: <http://www.czca-azcc.org/index2.htm>

The AFS Governing Board Mtg.

The AFS Governing Board held its Mid-year meeting in Bethesda, Md., March 17-19. Part of the program included a "Visit to the Hill" by AFS Officers who met with Reps. Gilchrist (Mad.) and Saxton (New Jersey) and the staff of Sen. Snowe (Maine).

The visit was followed by a joint briefing on Essential Fish Habitat by AFS, Estuarine Research Federation, and the Ecological Society of America. Several Congressional staff participated as well.



The Electronic Initiative

To improve communications for all involved in the National Fisheries Habitat Initiative, SFBPC and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Program staff are developing a website to list communications tools, links and fact sheets.

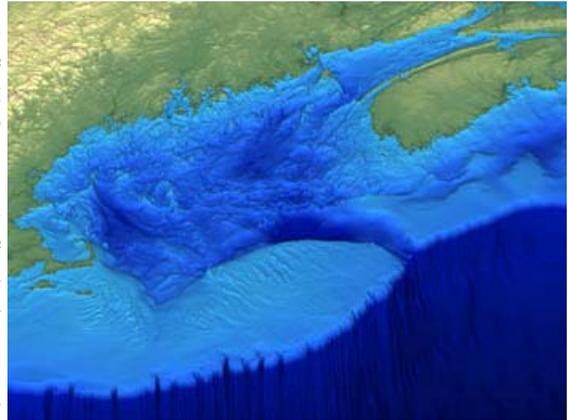
This information can help agencies, stakeholders and partners in their roles as Initiative ambassadors in their regions. We will share more information with you about the website in coming weeks!



Talking About a Revolution: The Gulf of Maine Mapping Initiative

Talk about new technologies indeed! Capabilities have already arrived providing accurate and cost effective mapping to large areas of the sea floor. Since its introduction in the 1990's, multibeam sonar mapping has catapulted the science from piecemeal WWI era aerial photography to clear fine detailed views.

The technology is important for coastal managers, says Susan Snow-Cotter, assistant director of the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, because with only crude maps of the seafloor to assist with decision making, "agencies that have the responsibility to manage ocean habitat have been managing virtually blind."



Yes, the right tool has arrived. "Recent technological advances allow seafloor mapping on an unprecedented scale," says Tom Noji, division chief of the Ecosystems Processes Division of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service and co-chair of the Gulf of Maine Mapping Initiative (GOMMI) Scientific Steering Committee.

New technologies are enabling researchers to survey large underwater areas to produce high-resolution bathymetric, geological, and ecological maps, which can be extremely useful as a tool for coastal and marine resource management and research.

Multibeam sonar, satellite remote sensing, Compact Airborne Spectrographic Imager (CASI), Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR), side-scan sonar, single-beam sonar, laser line sonar, and subbottom profiling all are technologies that can be used to map the near- and offshore seabed. "The technology to do this exists now and is improving rapidly," Noji says.

For more details and to read the entire article please go to <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/magazine/2004/02/gom.html>. For more information on GOMMI, point your browser to <http://sh.nefsc.noaa.gov/gommi/>. To view mapping data, images, and information from Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, go to <http://woodshole.er.usgs.gov/project-pages/stellwagen/>. For a directory of information about seafloor mapping in the Gulf of Maine, go to www.gulfofmaine.org. You also may contact Susan Snow-Cotter at Susan.Snow-Cotter@state.ma.us.

House Resources Holds Hearing On Ehlers Harmful Algal Bloom Legislation

Feb. 26 -HR 1856, the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Amendments Act (introduced by Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), continued its path through a maze of committees this month as the House Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans held a hearing on the bill. The biggest battle for this legislation, as with Ehlers invasive species legislation, will be clearing the multiple committees with jurisdiction in the House. The bill was introduced in April 2003 and has been referred to three House committees: Science, Resources, and Transportation and Infrastructure. The Science subcommittee on Environment, Technology and Standards (which Ehlers chairs) approved the bill on June 5. The bill was then reported out of the full Science committee on July 22 and has since been dormant. Some agricultural groups expressed concerns over any new involuntary regulations aimed at controlling nonpoint source pollution. However, as Ehlers told the committee, the bill does not mandate any specific regulatory actions: "It is purely a research bill, with the goal of improving our understanding of these phenomena so that we can predict their occurrence and develop tools for improved detection and mitigation of these problems."



Testimony from the hearing can be viewed at http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/archives/108/fcwo/02_26_04.htm.



Marine Fisheries Section Newsletter
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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/mfs/>

The Marine Fisheries Section (MFS) is a professional, interest based, subunit of the American Fisheries Society. The intent of the MFS is to further the Society's objectives within marine fisheries science and practice. MFS members wish to attain further knowledge about marine fisheries, and to identify and publicize issues and problems related to development and management of marine fisheries. MFS also addresses research and education needs associated with biological, economic, social, and other aspects of marine fisheries.

Through the MFS Newsletter, and web page, the Section:

- encourages and facilitates the exchange of knowledge and ideas
- updates members on current research, issues, publications, and meetings
- communicates Section and AFS business and concerns

The Section also fosters the exchange of knowledge and ideas through:

- organizing meetings/symposia usually at the AFS Annual Meeting
- publishing conference and symposia proceedings
- ad-hoc committees created to comment on specific issues

To facilitate communication among members the Section provides a periodically updated membership directory.

AFS - Catch of the Day

- So Much Shrimp; Sure, it's abundant. But it's hard for a consumer to know where it's from, how it's raised and if it's safe, by Walter Nicholls, The Washington Post, Feb. 25, 2004, p. F1
- [letters to nature] Mangroves enhance the biomass of coral reef fish communities in the Caribbean, by Peter J. Mumby et al, Nature, 427, Feb. 5, 2004, p. 533
- [meeting] Shark Flexes Its Teeth for Tough Meals, by Elizabeth Pennisi, Science, 303, Feb. 13, 2004, p. 950
- [letters] More on Mercury Content in Fish, by A.H. Stern; R. J. M. Hudson et al; s. Ekino et al; and responses by H. H. Harris et al, Science, 303, Feb. 6, 2004, p. 763
- [news] Pacific dolphins make waves for US policy on Mexican tuna, by Virginia Gewin, Nature, 427, Feb. 12, 2004, p. 575
- [news] Carp virus crisis prompts moves to avert global spread, by Helen Pearson, Nature, 427, Feb. 12, 2004, p. 577 (AFS member Ron Hedrick, '83, quoted)
- [news feature] The fabulous fish guy, by Alison Abbott, Nature, 427, Feb. 19, 2004, p. 672 (*Finding Nemo* movie and Adam Summers, consultant on fish biomechanics)
- [letters to nature] Changes in fisheries discard rates and seabird communities, by Stephen C. Votier et al, Nature, 427, Feb. 19, 2004, p. 727
- [News Focus] As the West Goes Dry, by Robert F. Service, Science, 303, Feb. 20, 2004, p. 1124 (impact of warming on habitats)
- [Random Samples] Better Than One?, Science, 303, Feb. 20, 2004, p. 1134 (experiment on zebrafish in Taiwan produced offspring with two heads)
- [letters to nature] Conventional taxonomy obscures deep divergence between Pacific and Atlantic corals, by Hironobu Fukami et al, Nature, 427, Feb. 26, 2004, p. 832
- [Random Samples] Fishy Figure, Science, 303, Feb. 27, 2004, p. 1287 (non-human predators of fish)
- [Letters] The Sudden Death of a Coral Reef, by Bert W. Hoeksema et al and Response by N. J. Abram et al, Science, 303, Feb. 27, 2004, p. 1293