

NORTHEAST FISHERIES CENTER

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS



United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Fisheries Center
Woods Hole, Massachusetts 02543

JANUARY 1990

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National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Fisheries Center

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1989 STATUS-OF-THE-STOCKS REPORT ISSUED

The Center has issued the 1989 edition of its annual "Status of the Fishery Resources Off the Northeastern United States." In addition to sections detailing the population status of 33 species or species groupings, the report also includes sections on trends in: (1) commercial and recreational fisheries landings; (2) commercial fisheries economics; and (3) four broad categories of resources--principal groundfish and flounders (Atlantic cod, yellowtail flounder, etc.), principal pelagics (Atlantic mackerel and Atlantic herring), other finfish (white hake, butterfish, etc.), and skates and spiny dogfish.

A limited number of single copies are available on first-come, first-served basis. For information on contents of the report, contact Dr. Tim D. Smith, FTS 840-1251 or (508) 548-5123; for copies of the report itself, write Lynn Forbes, Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543 USA.

SEA SCALLOP & GOOSEFISH LANDINGS HIT RECORD HIGHS IN 1989

Landings of sea scallops and goosfish (monkfish, angler) in the Northeast (Maine through Virginia) during 1989 set all-time record highs. Scallop landings were 31.6 million pounds worth 125.7 million dollars in dockside value. Goosfish landings were 24.8 million pounds worth 11.8 million dollars. Other species whose landings increased in 1989 were Atlantic cod, silver hake (whiting), yellowtail flounder, swordfish, and northern shrimp. Although landings of white hake decreased in 1989, their value nonetheless increased. Atlantic cod was the most landed seafood species in 1989, replacing Atlantic herring which dropped from first to second.

The table on the next page lists the landings and values of 15 fish and invertebrate species in the Northeast for 1988 and 1989. For comparison only, the all-time record landings (and year in which they occurred) are also listed for these species. All figures are in millions. Contact Ronnee L. Schultz, FTS 840-1264 or (508) 548-5123.

(cont.)

Species	1988		1989		Recor
	Pounds	Dollars	Pounds	Dollars	Pounds (Year)
Atlantic cod	75.4	42.6	76.3	44.1	294 (1880)
Atlantic herring	89.1	5.2	73.7	4.4	201 (1902)
Silver hake (whiting)	35.2	8.5	37.9	9.4	134 (1957)
Sea scallop	28.3	120.0	31.6	125.7	32 (1989)
Goosefish (monkfish, angler)	16.6	10.1	24.8	11.8	25 (1989)
Pollock (Boston bluefish)	33.1	11.0	22.5	10.7	54 (1986)
Winter flounder (lemon sole, blackback)	17.6	21.4	14.3	20.5	35 (1981)
Summer flounder (fluke)	24.3	31.6	12.6	20.9	32 (1979)
Yellowtail flounder	9.3	11.1	11.2	14.5	83 (1963)
White hake	10.5	3.2	8.8	3.4	40 (1898)
Northern shrimp	6.8	7.5	7.4	7.6	29 (1970)
Scup (porgy)	11.6	7.6	7.1	5.9	49 (1970)
Swordfish	5.6	16.6	6.3	17.6	7 (1929)
Haddock	6.5	7.0	3.8	4.4	294 (1929)
Redfish (ocean perch)	2.4	1.5	1.2	0.8	258 (1951)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Reprints of publications and copies of reports listed below are available in limited numbers by writing to the senior Center author (whose name appears in capitals) care of: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543 USA.

ALMEIDA, F.P., T.S. BURNS, and S. CHANG. 1989. The 1988 experimental whiting fishery: a NMFS/industry cooperative program. NOAA [Nat. Ocean. Atmos. Admin.] Tech. Mem. NMFS [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.]-F/NEC-69. 16 pp.

- [CONSERVATION & UTILIZATION DIVISION, NORTHEAST FISHERIES CENTER.]
1989. Report of the Fall 1989 Stock Assessment Workshop
(Ninth SAW). [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.,] Northeast Fish. Ctr.
Ref. Doc. No. 89-08. 71 pp.
- CONSERVATION & UTILIZATION DIVISION, NORTHEAST FISHERIES CENTER.
1989. Status of the fishery resources off the northeastern
United States for 1989. NOAA [Nat. Ocean. Atmos. Admin.]
Tech. Mem. NMFS [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.]-F/NEC-72. 110 pp.
- ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES DIVISION, NORTHEAST FISHERIES CENTER.
1989. Response of the habitat and biota of the inner New
York Bight to abatement of sewage sludge dumping: second
annual progress report--1988. NOAA [Nat. Ocean. Atmos.
Admin.] Tech. Mem. NMFS [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.]-F/NEC-67. 47
pp.
- MAYO, R.K., J.M. McGlade, and S.H. CLARK. 1989. Patterns of
exploitation and biological status of pollock (Pollachius
virens L.) in the Scotian Shelf, Georges Bank, and Gulf of
Maine area. J. Northwest Atl. Fish. Sci. 9(1): 5-11.
- SANO, M.H., and C.P. Fairfield. 1989. Evaluations of differences
in sea surface temperatures between 1987 and 1988 for use in
study of sea turtle strandings along the southeast U.S.
coast. [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.,] Northeast Fish. Ctr. Ref.
Doc. No. 89-09. 28 pp.
- STEIMLE, F.W. 1990. Benthic macrofauna and habitat monitoring on
the continental shelf of the northeastern United States. I.
Biomass. NOAA [Nat. Ocean. Atmos. Admin.] Tech. Rep. NMFS
[Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.] 86. 28 pp.
- WILLIAMS, A.B. (Chair.), L.G. Abele, D.L. Felder, H.H. Hobbs, Jr.,
R.B. Manning, P.A. McLaughlin, and I. PEREZ FARFANTE. 1989.
Common and scientific names of aquatic invertebrates from the
United States and Canada: decapod crustaceans. Amer. Fish.
Soc. Spec. Pub. 17. 77 pp.

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FEBRUARY 1990

IN THIS ISSUE:

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SHELLFISH BIOLOGY SEMINAR HELD; ABSTRACTS AVAILABLE

The Northeast Fisheries Center's Monthly Highlights is an administrative report on key Center research activities during the month. The report focuses on the practical applications of research findings to fisheries resource and habitat management. A name and telephone number have been included at the end of each research highlight to contact for more information.

CRUSTACEAN SHELL DISEASE MAY BE AGGRAVATED BY ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS

About two years ago, when sewage sludge dumping shifted from the 12-Mile Dumpsite in the New York Bight apex to the 106-Mile Dumpsite beyond the continental shelf-slope margin, many offshore lobstermen and deepsea red crabbers in the vicinity of the 106-Mile Dumpsite felt that there was a significant increase in the prevalence and severity of shell disease in their catches. Shell disease is characterized by darkening, pitting, even penetration of the exoskeleton of these crustaceans. While there is no evidence that the disease affects the wholesomeness of these animals as seafood, it may affect their marketability due to discoloration/disfiguration, and conceivably it may affect their population distribution, abundance, and productivity.

The Center has just issued two reports on this topic. The first report, "Shell Disease of Crustaceans in the New York Bight" (NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/NEC-74), emanated from a joint NOAA and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-sponsored scientific working group composed of federal, state, and university scientists. The report finds that: (1) shell disease is a natural phenomenon; (2) its prevalence and severity, however, may be greater in polluted or stressful habitats, suggesting that various stresses, including pollution, can trigger and/or aggravate the disease; and (3) there aren't enough data yet to determine if or how much the disease has population-level effects.

The second report, "Shell Disease among Red Crabs Inhabiting Submarine Canyons of the New York Bight" (NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/NEC-77), finds shell disease prevalence to be 92, 92, and 86 percent, respectively, among crabs in Hudson, Block, and Atlantis Canyons. A comparison of specimens collected in 1988 with those collected in 1884 and subsequently stored in the Smithsonian Institution shows that shell disease also occurred more than a century ago. Copies of either report are available upon written request to: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Water St., Woods Hole, MA 02543. Technical inquiries on shell disease should be directed to: Dr. Carl J. Sindermann, (301) 226-5193.

TEMPERATURE TRENDS IN NORTHEAST WATERS DOCUMENTED

A report on "Surface and Bottom Temperature Distributions from the Northeast Fisheries Center Spring and Fall Bottom Trawl Survey Program, 1963-1987," has been issued as Northeast Fisheries Center Reference Document 90-03. The report shows that, in general, water temperatures in the 1960s were quite cold, in the early to mid-1970s were warmer, in the late 1970s to early 1980s were intermediate between the two previous extremes, and in the mid-1980s were warm again. These data have important applications in fisheries ecology and management. (continued)

Copies of the report are available upon written request to: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Water St., Woods Hole, MA 02543. Technical inquiries on water temperatures should be directed to: Dr. David G. Mountain, FTS 840-1271 or (508) 548-5123.

POTENTIAL MIXING OF MAINE AND NOVA SCOTIAN HERRING LARVAE IN THE GULF OF MAINE

Preliminary estimates from an early January survey throughout the Gulf of Maine show that 95 percent of the gulf's larval Atlantic herring are concentrated from Mt. Desert Island, Maine, across the gulf to the southeastern Scotian Shelf. This distribution of larval herring suggests a potential mixing and interchange of larvae which will ultimately produce spawners either along the Maine coast or the Nova Scotia coast. The findings imply that U.S. and Canadian herring fisheries can have some effect on each other.

The survey was a cooperative effort among the Center, University of Rhode Island, and Bigelow Laboratory of Ocean Science (West Boothbay Harbor, Maine). Contact John R. Green, FTS 838-6240 or (401) 782-3240, or Jerome Prezioso, FTS 838-3277 or (401) 782-3277.

SHELLFISH BIOLOGY SEMINAR HELD: ABSTRACTS AVAILABLE

The Center held its 10th Shellfish Biology Seminar on 27 February in Milford, Conn. Over 140 shellfish biologists from 12 states attended the seminar. Coverage included adverse impacts of toxic algal blooms, marina use for aquaculture, new culture methods, and genetic selection for disease control. Copies of the program and abstracts are available. Contact Dr. Walter J. Blogoslawski, FTS 642-5235 or (203) 783-4235.

J. Carlson

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MARCH 1990

IN THIS ISSUE:

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NEW MARINE MAMMAL INVESTIGATION IN CENTER

MARINE FISHERIES REVIEW 50 YEARS OLD; SPECIAL ISSUE ON HISTORY OF MARINE FISHERIES

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GLoucester, Mass., Top New England Port in '89 Landings; Detailed Landings & Values Figures Available

Preliminary figures for 1989 show Gloucester, Mass., again leading other New England fishing ports in annual landings with a total of 99 million pounds. These 1989 landings for Gloucester were down, though, by 9 million pounds from 1988. New Bedford, Mass., again led in value with landings worth \$141 million in dockside, or "ex-vessel," prices -- virtually the same level as last year.

For New England as a whole, 1989 landings were down by 5 million pounds, but up by \$15 million. Preliminary figures for total New England landings and values by state, port, and species, as well as for lobster landings by state, are available upon written request to: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543. For other information on fisheries statistics in the New England and/or Mid-Atlantic area, contact Ronnee L. Schultz, FTS 840-1264 or (508) 548-5123.

EFFECTS OF CONTAMINATED SITES ON WINTER FLOUNDER REPRODUCTION DOCUMENTED

The Center has issued a report on "A Three-Year Assessment of Reproductive Success in Winter Flounder...in Long Island Sound, with Comparisons to Boston Harbor: 1986-88." The report finds that "general site contamination appears to be associated with the occurrence and severity of pathological effects...throughout the life cycle: adults, eggs, embryos, larvae, and juveniles."

The six sites where adult winter flounder were collected in Long Island Sound were Norwalk, Milford, New Haven, and Madison, Conn., and Hempstead and Shoreham, N.Y.; the two sites in Boston Harbor were Deer Island and "Long" Island. The most adverse effects in adult spawners were seen at the two Boston Harbor sites; the greatest effects in embryos and larvae were observed at the New Haven site.

Copies of the report are available. Contact Dr. Anthony Calabrese, FTS 642-5209 or (203) 783-4209.

INDO-PACIFIC CRAB REPORTED FROM NEW JERSEY

An egg-bearing female of a western Pacific crab, Hemigrapsis sanguineus, was found in the Cape May, N.J., area this past September by a Franklin and Marshall College biology student. This crab species, a noncommercial "shore" crab, is one of the commonest crabs in Japan, and is known from Sakhalin, Korea, and China south to Hong Kong. Larvae from the captured crab were reared through the early life stages. (cont.)

It's not known whether this capture represents a freak capture of the only individual of this exotic species, or the first capture from an established population. If the latter, it's not known what ecological effect this exotic species might have on the Northeast's tidal community. The Cape May area should be monitored for the occurrence of this species. Contact Dr. Austin B. Williams, FTS/(202) 357-2639.

LEAFLET AVAILABLE ON NUTRITIONAL CONSTITUENTS OF SEAFOOD SPECIES

The Center has issued an information leaflet on "The Seafood Way to a Healthy Heart." The one-page leaflet includes a listing of the cholesterol, fat, and Omega-3 content in cooked, four-ounce portions of 27 Northeast seafood species/products. (Omega-3 is a category of polyunsaturated fatty acids which are found in fish oils and which have a therapeutic effect in the prevention of heart disease.)

The leaflet is the first in a series of informational leaflets to be issued by the Center which will summarize the practical applications and implications of Center research findings to current popular concerns. For copies of the leaflet, write: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543. For further information on Center research on nutritional constituents of seafood species/products, contact Judith Krzynowek, FTS 837-9226 or (508) 281-9226.

NEW MARINE MAMMAL INVESTIGATION IN CENTER

A new Marine Mammal Investigation has been established by the Center and assigned to the Fisheries Ecology Division. The Center has been conducting marine mammal studies, largely through contracts with academic and private research institutions, for years. Increasingly frequent and more comprehensive requests by resource and environmental managers for marine mammal information, however, have prompted the elevation of these studies into a formal investigation.

The new investigation's research will focus on: (1) the indirect interactions between marine mammals and commercially and recreationally important fish stocks through competition for space and food; (2) the incidental take of marine mammals during fishing operations, and the effects on whale populations of whale watching operations; and (3) the current status of Northwest Atlantic marine mammal populations. Contact Dr. Tim D. Smith, FTS 840-1251 or (508) 548-5123.

"MARINE FISHERIES REVIEW" 50 YEARS OLD; SPECIAL ISSUE ON HISTORY OF MARINE FISHERIES

The 50th anniversary issue of Marine Fisheries Review (formerly Fishery Market News and Commercial Fisheries Review) has just been released. In commemoration of this anniversary, the issue appropriately focuses on a single topic -- the history of marine fisheries, fisheries science, and fisheries management. The collection of articles and notes may well be the most extensive description of this field available. This issue of MFR includes thorough coverage of the Center's Woods Hole Laboratory Centennial in 1985. Copies (Volume 50, Issue 4) are available for \$5.50 (U.S.) from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Contact Roger B. Theroux, FTS 840-1253 or (508) 548-5123.

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APRIL 1990

IN THIS ISSUE:

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BOTTOM TRAWL SURVEY CATCHES UP; "FISHERMEN'S REPORT" AVAILABLE

SLOPE WATER RECEIVES BULK OF SEWAGE SLUDGE DUMPING

NEW YORK BIGHT AND LONG ISLAND SOUND PROBLEMS RANKED

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CAPE MAY/WILDWOOD, N.J., TOP MIDDLE ATLANTIC PORT IN '89 LANDINGS & VALUES: DETAILED FIGURES AVAILABLE

For 1989, Cape May/Wildwood, N.J., again led other Middle Atlantic and Chesapeake ports in annual landings, and replaced Hampton Roads, Va., as the leader in value. The southern New Jersey port landed 54.0 million pounds worth \$30.8 million in dockside or "ex-vessel" prices. For the Middle Atlantic - Chesapeake area as a whole, 1989 landings were up seven percent, from 890.7 to 949.2 million pounds, and value was up one percent, from \$281.8 to \$285.3 million.

Detailed figures for total Middle Atlantic - Chesapeake landings and values by state, port, and species, as well as for Atlantic surfclam landings by state, are available upon written request to: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543. For other information on fisheries statistics in the Middle Atlantic or New England area, contact Ronnee L. Schultz, FTS 840-1264 or (508) 548-5123.

BOTTOM TRAWL SURVEY CATCHES UP: "FISHERMEN'S REPORT" AVAILABLE

The Center's 1990 spring bottom trawl survey caught 25,000 pounds more fish than last spring's survey. The increase was due almost exclusively to spiny dogfish. Other species with significantly increased catches were Atlantic mackerel, ocean pout, and white hake. Atlantic cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder catches were also higher. The largest catches of pollock and haddock were from the Northeast Peak of Georges Bank (Canadian waters).

A Fishermen's Report, based on the spring survey, is available by writing to: Resource Surveys Investigation, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543. The report lists catches by weight for 24 commercially and recreationally important species at 322 sites between the western Scotian Shelf and Cape Hatteras. The report includes information on location (latitude & longitude bearings and LORAN C line of positions), tow direction, time of day, water depth, and bottom temperature of the sampling sites. This spring's survey was conducted aboard the NOAA R/V Delaware II during 5 March - 18 April. Contact Linda I. Despres-Patanjo, FTS 840-1346 or (508) 548-5123.

SLOPE WATER RECEIVES BULK OF SEWAGE SLUDGE DUMPING

Sewage sludge dumping at the 106-Mile Site off New Jersey/New York began in 1986 commensurate with the phase-out of sludge dumping at the 12-Mile Site. Concerns over the fates and effects of the sludge at the 106-Mile Site have heightened, in part, because of reports by fishermen and scientists (see February 1990

issue of "Monthly Highlights") of increased shell disease in American lobsters and red deepsea crabs in the vicinity of the deepwater dumpsite.

The fate of the sludge is largely determined by which of the three water masses that alternately occupy the site actually receive the sludge. Using NOAA satellite infrared temperature data and EPA sludge dumping records, Center scientists have determined the amounts of sludge dumped into each water mass during 1989:

Water Mass	Amount Dumped (million gallons)	Percent
Shelf water	152.6	8.7
Slope water	1,425.6	81.5
Gulf Stream/warm- core ring water	171.6	9.8

Slope water, which received 81.5 percent of the sludge, is the water mass normally occupying the submarine canyons where the Mid-Atlantic's offshore lobster and crab fisheries primarily take place. For information on water masses receiving sludge dumping, contact Lt. Margaret Sano, FTS 838-6290 or (401) 782-3290. For information on shell disease in offshore crustaceans, contact Dr. Carl J. Sindermann, FTS/(301) 226-5193.

NEW YORK BIGHT AND LONG ISLAND SOUND PROBLEMS RANKED

For Long Island Sound, the New York - New Jersey harbors, and the New York Bight, the most pressing problems are: nutrient/organic enrichment in the sound, pathogens in the harbors, floatables in the harbors and bight, toxics in the harbors and systemwide, and habitat alterations in all three areas and systemwide. That's the consensus of government (including the Center), industry, academia, and the public participating in an EPA-sponsored conference, "Cleaning Up Our Coastal Waters: An Unfinished Agenda," held at Manhattan College during 12-14 March.

Other problems mentioned by conference participants were overfishing, spills, solid waste disposal, inadequate public access, growth & development, and aesthetic deterioration. Participants also developed a preliminary list of research and management needs to address these problems. Conference proceedings will be published soon. Contact Robert N. Reid, FTS 342-8220 or (201) 872-3020.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Unless otherwise indicated, single copies of the publications and reports listed below are available--subject to supply--by writing to: Information Services Section, Northeast Fisheries Center, Woods Hole, MA 02543 USA.

- ALMEIDA, F.P., S. CHANG, and T.S. BURNS. 1989. Summer distribution of regulated species on Georges Bank with reference to the 1988 experimental whiting fishery. NOAA [Nat. Ocean. Atmos. Admin.] Tech. Mem. NMFS [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.]-F/NEC-70. 25 pp.
- DESPRES-PATANJO, L.I., T.R. AZAROVITZ, and C.J. BYRNE. 1988. Twenty-five years of fish surveys in the Northwest Atlantic: the NMFS Northeast Fisheries Center bottom trawl survey program. Pages 69-71 in R.B. Theroux, ed. The Woods Hole Laboratory, 1885-1985: a century of service. Mar. Fish. Rev. 50(4).
- EDWARDS, R.L. 1988. Centennial lecture I: history and contributions of the Woods Hole Laboratory. Pages 13-17 in R.B. Theroux, ed. The Woods Hole Laboratory, 1885-1985: a century of service. Mar. Fish. Rev. 50(4).
- HOLZWARTH, T., and D. MOUNTAIN. 1990. Surface and bottom temperature distributions from Northeast Fisheries Center spring and fall bottom trawl survey program, 1963-1987. [Nat. Mar. Fish. Serv.,] Northeast Fish. Ctr. Ref. Doc. No. 90-03. 62 pp.
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