



## Catching up to bycatch

At the Bycatch Workshop are (l. to r.): NYSG recreational fisheries specialist and workshop coordinator Mark Malchoff; Tom Hurst, legislative advisor to State Senator Owen Johnson; Bill Wise of the Marine Sciences Research Center (MSRC) at SUNY Stony Brook, chair of the Marine Resource Advisory Council and panel moderator; John Turner, legislative advisor to Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli; and John Mason of NYSDEC, who presented updates on Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council bycatch activities.

On March 19, 1999, Danford's Inn in Port Jefferson was the site of a workshop led by New York Sea Grant fisheries specialist Mark Malchoff to discuss the problem of bycatch in New York's waters. Bycatch is the inadvertent capture of non-target fish and other organisms during commercial fishing operations. The number of organisms caught in such a way is unknown, and the difficulties in getting accurate bycatch data was one of the issues the workshop was designed to address. Recreational hooking mortality—subsequent death of fish released alive by recreational anglers—was also on the workshop agenda. Although hooking mortality is excluded from the concept of bycatch in federal fisheries legislation, it was included on the agenda because it, too, produces an unknown amount of waste of fishery resources. Attendees, who included commercial and recreational fishermen, researchers and legislators and/or their advisors, also learned of developments in research leading to successful bycatch

reduction strategies. Guest speakers included Dr. Joseph DeAlteris of Rhode Island Sea Grant and Henry Milliken of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) at Woods Hole. Dr. DeAlteris reviewed presentations given at the 1995 East Coast Bycatch Conference and Mr. Milliken presented an overview of trawl gear modifications that have successfully reduced bycatch of fish and mammals in several Northeast fisheries.

Bycatch reduction plans are mandated by federal law, and in New York State each session of the legislature sees the introduction of various bills proposing bycatch reduction strategies. The workshop was a joint effort between Sea Grant and the Bycatch Reduction Workgroup of the Marine Resource Advisory Council (MRAC). Assistance in planning the workshop was provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, Rhode Island Sea Grant, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and MRAC.

## ... and working hard to restore clams



At Danford's on February 26, New York Sea Grant, the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council and the NYSDEC sponsored a *Workshop on Hard Clam Population Dynamics—Research Priorities for the South Shore of Long Island*. This session provided a forum where knowledgeable individuals could define and discuss what is known and what needs to be known about hard clam population dynamics as applicable to restoring and enhancing the dwindling hard

clam resource and its fishery. With research goals in focus, New York Sea Grant will administer \$450,000 in hard clam research funds from NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service after a recent appropriation initiated by Congressman Michael Forbes.

**Top photo:**  
SUNY at Stony Brook Marine Sciences Research Center (MSRC) biologist Bob Cerrato (left) with Bob Malouf, Director of Oregon Sea Grant, a former NYSG director and shellfisheries biologist at MSRC.

**Bottom photo:**  
At the hard clam workshop, New York Sea Grant Director Jack Mattice (left) and workshop steering committee chair Jeffrey Kassner, Director, Division of Environmental Protection, Town of Brookhaven.

All photos by Barbara A. Branca