MIT

Marine Bioinvasions

■ MIT Sea Grant has been awarded funding from the National Sea Grant College Program to conduct outreach on exotic species. While certain marine bioinvaders, such as zebra mussels, are well known to the public, others are less familiar. Educating people about how marine bioinvasions occur—and how they can be prevented—is paramount for better protecting fragile marine ecosystems. MIT Sea Grant will be launching a web site that focuses on marine exotics in the North Atlantic; the site will also serve as a clearinghouse for related materials.

In addition, plans are under way for a January 1999 national conference on marine bioinvasions. The conference will focus on routes of entry, with particular emphasis on ballast water, and on the impacts of introduced species to both natural and aquaculture marine communities. Sessions will look at management of introduced species from policy and engineering and technical approaches. Individuals interested in submitting abstracts or learning more about the conference should contact Judy Pederson, MIT Sea Grant Center for Coastal Resources manager, by e-mail at jpederso@mit.edu.

Sounds of the Sea

■ Sound plays a crucial role in information exchange in the marine environment, both for marine mammals and for scientists exploring the deep. Underwater sound is the subject of a major exhibit being developed by MIT Sea Grant, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and the New England Aquarium. Slated to open in late 1998, this educational exhibit is aimed at informing the public about the nature and significance of sound in the oceans. After its stay at the Aquarium, the National Science Foundation–funded project will travel to aquaria throughout the country.

NEW YORK

Examining Bluefish Predatory Habits

■ A New York Sea Grant study suggests that an abundance of spring- and summer-spawned bluefish is coexisting on the continental shelf, that wind transport may be positively affecting recruitment of the spring-spawned bluefish, and that prey fisheries, including squid and butterfish, are impacted more by bluefish predation than by commercial fishing.

In the study on bluefish recruitment, David Conover, SUNY at Stony Brook Marine Sciences Research Center professor, and Michael Fogarty of the National Marine Fisheries Service at Woods Hole Laboratory in Massachusetts, focused on bluefish predation and population dynamics on the continental shelf. The recently completed study, "Recruitment and Predation by Bluefish On the Continental Shelf," indicates that bluefish are extremely important predators on other continental shelf fishes, primarily preying on bay anchovy, squid, butterfish, striped anchovy, and round herring.

Scientists consider predation a chief cause of mortality in the early life history of fishes. Earlier studies had indicated that bluefish get a head start on growth, primarily because they are spawned in the south Atlantic in early spring—two months before local species begin their spawning season. And a study regarding bluefish predation, conducted three years ago in the Hudson River estuary, suggested that the mortality of young striped bass may be attributed largely to bluefish predation.

The Conover-Fogarty study results indicate that prey biomass consumed annually by bluefish is eight times the biomass of the bluefish population, with the bluefish consuming a higher biomass of squid and butterfish than is harvested by commercial fishing.

Survey Results Will Guide *Nor'easter* Into the Next Decade

■ Periodically, we survey our readers to find out what you think of *Nor'easter* magazine. Your responses help us know who is reading *Nor'easter* and thus guide the look and content of the magazine in the future.

In our latest survey, we found that most of our readers are between the ages of 30 and 65, predominantly male, well-educated, heavily represented in educational occupations, and generally satisfied with the magazine.

Of those who responded to the survey, 94 percent reported that *Nor'easter* does an excellent or good job of bringing marine and coastal issues before the public. Those readers felt that as a result of reading *Nor'easter*, they have increased their awareness of coastal issues, gained a greater awareness of Sea Grant efforts on behalf of the marine and coastal environment, and developed a better understanding of, or appreciation for, marine science (top three responses).

In addition to educating themselves (41 percent), many of the respondents share the knowledge gained from reading the magazine to educate others, such as in a classroom or conference setting (27 percent), while 33 percent use *Nor'easter* in their profession/work.

Since *Nor'easter* is used as an educational tool, it was reassuring to find that 94 percent of those surveyed felt that the information in the magazine was presented at about the right level and that the quality of the writing was either excellent or good (87 percent).

Another educational tool is *Nor'easter* on-line. The on-line version has been available since April 1996. Interestingly, most survey respondents said that they had not seen the on-line version. Many gave as the reason a lack of Internet capabilities or lack of awareness that *Nor'easter* was on line.

Is there anything that *Nor'easter* could do better? Our readers would like the magazine to come out more often and to feature more in-depth articles on important coastal issues, such as coastal hazards, ecosystem function, and fisheries research. As *Nor'easter* enters a new decade, these comments will help us to shape the magazine and to fit the ways you use it. We hope you continue to enjoy *Nor'easter* in the years ahead.