

The Lobster Conservancy

Sustaining a thriving lobster fishery through science and community

Autumn 2009

Dear Volunteers and Friends of The Lobster Conservancy,

The Lobster Conservancy's mission is to strive to sustain a thriving lobster fishery through science and community. Our quarterly newsletter keeps members and volunteers informed of recent research, education and outreach activities.

News from the Board of Directors

Grants and Membership Donations Help Keep The Lobster Conservancy's Programs Strong
The Lobster Conservancy received a \$20,000 grant from the Darden Restaurants Foundation to support research on growth rates and survival of juvenile lobsters in a changing environment.

For the past 17 years scientists and volunteers at The Lobster Conservancy have followed the progress of individual lobsters for up to six years by implanting coded-wire tags in juveniles ranging from approximately 1 to 5 inches in length. The benefit of internal tags is that they are retained through molting.

The newly-funded project will allow University of Maine graduate student Marissa McMahan to measure tag retention under carefully controlled conditions. Marissa's project increases the value of our field-based data that measure how long it takes a Maine lobster to reach harvestable size and allows us to start making estimates of how many survive to marketable size. As with all crustaceans, there is a limited ability to determine the age of lobsters. This puts a premium on studies of lobster growth because without a better understanding of growth rates the linkages between juvenile lobsters and the harvest can be problematic.

The family of Darden Restaurants includes Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze, and Seasons 52. Lobster is the iconoclastic crustacean that appears as the name sake for Darden's Red Lobster Restaurants and makes its attractive logo. Lobster is eponymous to Darden as it is to the Gulf of Maine. For more information, visit the foundation's website at www.darden.com.

The UpEast Foundation contributed a \$5,000 grant to help defray the costs of continuing The Lobster Conservancy's volunteer-based census of juvenile lobsters on Allen Island and related research in the Muscongus Bay region.

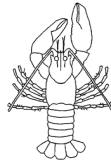
The Lobster Conservancy sent out our annual appeal for memberships in late July/early August. The response has been excellent – a huge thanks to those of you who have renewed your memberships and welcome to our new members! If you are receiving this newsletter and haven't yet renewed or become a member, please do so today! We count on your support to maintain our existing programs and initiate new projects.

Juvenile Lobster Monitoring Program

Volunteer-based Juvenile Lobster Census Continues in Spite of Nasty Weather

June, July and August tides presented huge challenges for some of our volunteer lobster-census takers as they headed out in search of this year's juvenile lobster story. From what data we managed to get while battling with stubborn weather that arrived just at the wrong times, it looks like the juvenile population remains strong and abundant and that postlarval settlement began at the expected time of year – July and August.

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Postlarval lobster on fingertip



First-year lobsters in palm of hand

Summary table of lobsters found in Jun-Aug 2009 for each site where sampling was possible and data were entered. Locations are listed from Northeast to Southwest. Sites where settlement occurred are bold faced. Sites where lobsters less than one year old were found are italicized.

Site Name	State	Date	# Quad	# Lobs	Min Size (mm CL)	Max Size (mm CL)	Density (#/m ²)
Dobbins Island	ME	6/25/2009	26	50	18	64	1.9
		7/23/2009	27	12	20	45	0.4
		8/21/2009	20	12	21	45	0.6
Beach St. Cove	ME	6/25/2009	10	19	23	55	1.9
Coast Guard Beach	ME	6/24/2009	20	26	30	50	1.3
		7/23/2009	20	16	22	47	0.8
		8/21/2009	20	5	33	43	0.3
<i>Lanes Island</i>	ME	6/27/2009	6	7	31	40	1.2
		7/23/2009	10	25	10	67	2.5
Waterman Point	ME	6/25/2009	20	16	22	80	0.8
		8/21/2009	20	11	24	65	0.6
<i>Drift Inn Beach</i>	ME	6/24/2009	10	35	18	61	3.5
		7/22/2009	10	26	19	41	2.6
		8/22/2009	10	19	7	55	1.9
<i>Allen Island</i>	ME	6/24 & 25	19	63	9	57	3.3
		7/24/2009	9	19	22	77	2.1
		8/20 & 21	18	44	13	55	2.4
Friendship Long Is	ME	6/23,24&25	13	75	8.5	66.2	5.8
		7/22 & 23	11	62	9.7	55.8	5.6
		8/20 & 21	10	63	5	44.7	6.3
Pratt Island	ME	6/25/2009	17	42	11	50	2.5
		7/23/2009	18	45	15	56	2.5
		8/21/2009	19	41	6	45	2.2
Cundys Harbor	ME	6/27/2009	11	9	19	50	0.8
		7/25/2009	14	22	10	64	1.6
		8/22/2009	16	18	5	30	1.1
Long Cove	ME	6/25/2009	23	68	10	63	3.0
		7/25/2009	22	34	13	46	1.5
		8/22/2009	19	53	5	41	2.8
Lowell's Cove	ME	6/24 & 25	16	81	11.3	52.1	5.1
		7/23 & 25	16	78	11.6	49.3	4.9
		8/20 & 21	11	49	5.5	57.5	4.5

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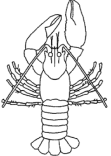
Site Name	State	Date	# Quad	# Lobs	Min Size (mm CL)	Max Size (mm CL)	Density (#/m ²)
<i>Potts Point</i>	ME	6/25/2009	10	44	10	41	4.4
		7/25/2009	10	45	10	42	4.5
		8/22/2009	10	40	7	54	4.0
<i>Bennett Cove</i>	ME	6/24 & 25	20	33	20	52	1.7
		7/23 & 25	21	36	16	46	1.7
		8/21 & 22	18	22	14	51	1.2
<i>Spar Cove</i>	ME	6/24/2009	18	22	21	57	1.2
<i>Maxwell Point</i>	ME	6/25/2009	19	13	25	51	0.7
		7/25/2009	20	11	19	42	0.6
<i>Goose Rocks</i>	ME	6/24/2009	16	33	12	60	2.1
		7/25/2009	14	39	14	58	2.8
		8/21/2009	12	40	11	54	3.3
<i>Odiorne Pt</i>	NH	6/26/2009	20	18	17	45	0.9
		7/25/2009	20	13	18	49	0.7
		8/22/2009	20	9	13	37	0.5
<i>Fort Stark</i>	NH	6/25/2009	19	61	16	67	3.2
		7/25/2009	14	37	12	54	2.6
Plum Cove	MA	6/24/2009	18	23	12	62	1.3
		7/22/2009	20	33	10	54	1.7
		8/20/2009	20	30	7	40	1.5
Gerry Island	MA	6/24 & 25	13	33	14	47	2.5
		7/23/2009	16	51	5	48	3.2
		8/22/2009	11	22	17	53	2.0
Blue Fish Cove	MA	6/25/2009	20	23	16	58	1.2
		7/25/2009	20	31	20	53	1.6
		8/21/2009	20	40	6	44	2.0

Table Explanation:

We sample square meter quadrats along a transect line. The density is the average number of lobsters in the squares. CL is carapace length – the same length lobstermen measure with gauge from rear of eye socket to rear of body shield. TL is total length from tip of rostrum (thing most people think is the nose, but it isn't) to end of abdomen (tail). Smallest lobster found was 5 mm CL (a little less than ¼" in total length). The largest was 80 mm CL or almost harvestable size that is 82.5 mm CL.

Recent Activities

The Lobster Conservancy				
Jun – Sep 2009 Outreach and Education Activity				
Organization	Location	Date	Title	Presenters
The Lobster Conservancy	Georgetown, Maine	Jun 2	Locate new lobster nursery, begin tag retention study	Marissa McMahan, Jim McMahan, Diane Cowan
Waterman's Association	North Haven, Maine	Jul 13	Fisheries Panel Discussion	Diane Cowan and colleagues; moderated by Speaker Hannah Pingree
Town of Friendship	Friendship, Maine	Jul 25	Touch Tank	Diane Cowan and Robert Percy
Kennebunk Newcomers	Kennebunkport, Maine	Sep 10	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Diane Cowan


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Jun – Sep 2009 Media Coverage and Publications			
Publication/Media	Date	Title/Link	Author / Interviewer
Dafna Michaelson's 50in52journey	May 29	50 in 52 Journey http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zmrTd-mL3w	Dafna Michaelson
Village Soup Knox	Jul 8	Lobster talk launches Herring Gut lecture series	Editor
Village Soup Knox	Jul 13	Friendship Day features races, parade, fireworks	Editor
Village Soup Knox	Jul 17	Perfect Pick	Diane Cowan
Ocean Minds: The Ocean Blog	Jul 23	With A Little Help From My Friends http://www.oceanminds.com/blog/?p=256	Nicolas Danan
Shogren9	Aug 23	Three-Clawed Lobster www.facebook.com/people/Diane-Cowan/1220043329	Beth Shogren
Seacoast Online	Sep 3	Kennebunk Town Column http://www.seacoastonline.com/articles/20090903-LIFE-909030348	Shelley Wigglesworth
CBS Sunday Morning (rerun)	Sep 12	The Steamy Side of Lobsters http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMCti-1Ljm8	Mary Lou Teel Mika Kosinski
Village Soup Knox	Sep 12	Lobster Conservancy receives \$20,000 grant	Diane Cowan
Portland Magazine	Reprint from 2008	Lobster Lover http://www.hirechrisladd.com/clips/ladd_portl_and_cowan.pdf	Chris Ladd

Yours in TLC,

Diane F. Cowan, Ph.D., Executive Director
 Jane Roundy, Volunteer Coordinator
 Marissa McMahan, Graduate Student