

# The Lobster Conservancy

*Sustaining a thriving lobster fishery through science and community*

December 2006

Dear Volunteers and Friends of The Lobster Conservancy,

The Lobster Conservancy's (TLC's) mission is to sustain a thriving lobster fishery through science and community. This newsletter keeps our friends and volunteer research team informed of our activities. Here's what we've been up to over the past few months.

## Research Publication

Diane Cowan, our Executive Director and Senior Scientist, is an author on a recently published article:

Hodgins-Davis, A., S. Roberts, D.F. Cowan, J. Atema, C. Avolio, J. Defaveri, and G. Gerlach. 2006. Characterization of SSRs from the American lobster, *Homarus americanus*.

### Molecular Ecology Notes.

PDF files are available upon request.

## Staffing Update

Diane continues as Executive Director and Senior Scientist. Diane lost a very close race (51% to 49%) for the Maine House of Representative seat from Friendship, Cushing, Union and Warren to the incumbent. Diane ran an excellent campaign, and we were all very proud/relieved over her very narrow loss. We unfortunately were not successful in securing grants to keep Dan O'Grady on staff, but we are very grateful that Dan will continue to census and tag lobsters at Lowell's Cove for the foreseeable future.

## Research

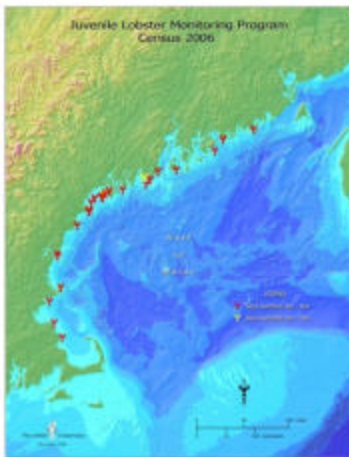


Fig 1. Map of Sites for 2006 Lobster Census

TLC received a challenge grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) for a Juvenile Lobster Habitat Mapping Project. The scope of the project is to identify and describe habitats critical to juvenile lobster. The project will create interactive GIS-based maps that will be useful to policy makers, resource managers, lobstermen, and others. JLMP volunteers will distribute the maps to local community stakeholders throughout the Gulf of Maine. We hope to have the maps completed and available for distribution by February 2007. We are grateful to the Darden Restaurant Foundation, the Boston Foundation Fund for the Environment and the Anderson Foundation for providing matching monies toward the NFWF grant. The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment is also sponsoring the project.

## Juvenile Lobster Monitoring Program (JLMP)



Fig 2. Volunteers Beth Howe and Mac Passano at Chebeague Island, Maine

The volunteer-based Juvenile Lobster Monitoring Program wrapped up its 10<sup>th</sup> season in November 2006. This year, 109 volunteers monitored 23 juvenile lobster nursery sites from Dobbins Island in Downeast Maine to Green Harbor, MA. Two additional sites were monitored by TLC scientists who also tag and recapture juvenile lobsters. The JLMP pre-dates TLC. While TLC volunteers finished their 10<sup>th</sup> sampling season – one location – Lowells Cove in Harpswell completed its 14<sup>th</sup> year of monthly sampling. One additional site – Friendship Long Island – is also sampled year round.

A hearty thanks to all TLC volunteers for their dedication and hard work.

Based upon the preliminary results of the volunteer sampling, 2006 was another record- breaking year for abundance of juvenile lobsters at many of our intertidal nursery sites. Lobsters in their first year of life were detected at *all* sites this summer and/or fall – that’s an exciting first!



Fig 3. Volunteers Rod Thibodeau, Alyssa Fiore, Denise Fiore, Jack Arnold, Mitch Wondolowski, and Nick Wondolowski at Gerry Island, Marblehead, MA

In 2006, the following sites recorded their highest average density of lobsters/ m<sup>2</sup> for an individual month since the inception of sampling at their site:

*Maine:* Dobbins Island off Beal Island, Coast Guard Beach on Little Cranberry, Beach Street Cove in Winter Harbor, North Beach on Allen Island, Pratt Island in Southport, Gun Point in Harpswell, Bennett Cove on Chebeague Island, Broad Cove in Cape Elizabeth, and Goose Rocks in Biddeford

*Massachusetts:* Plum Cove in Gloucester and Gerry Island in Marblehead

Other sites recording strong densities this season include Waterman Point in South Thomaston, Potts Point in Harpswell, Spar Cove on Peaks Island and Kettle Cove in Cape Elizabeth, ME, Odiorne Point in Rye and Fort Stark in Newcastle, NH, and The Glades in Scituate, and Blue Fish Cove in Green Harbor, MA. Juvenile densities decreased at Little Harbor and Lowell's Cove in Harpswell, ME and at Deep Cove on Friendship Long Island. The Pratt Island team in Southport, ME found the greatest number of lobsters during one sampling tide—85 lobsters in 20 quadrats. Gerry Island in Marblehead and Gun Point in Harpswell were also in the hunt for finding the most number of lobsters in one tide. Densities were surprisingly high at many sites in November. The Gerry Island team could not resist braving the elements in December, based upon their high November census.

The move to new locations for the Downeast Maine team and the Little Cranberry team was fortuitous as both teams now sample more productive nursery habitats. A special TLC thanks goes to Lynn Alley and her high school science students for scouting the Dobbins Island site. We continue to be amazed by the dedication of our JLMP volunteers.

Welcome aboard to new volunteers Erin Fernald Gray and Hallie Marbet at Coast Guard Beach, Barbara Lally at Pratt Island, Carole Lord at Potts Point, Hannah Finegold and Ian Tubby at Kettle Cove, and Nick Wondolowski, David Fanning and Kevin Shea at Gerry Island.

Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Day was held on Friendship Long Island in late August. The weather was spectacular this year: substantially warmer and less windy than forecast. Hard to believe as we write this in mid December that our volunteers were grumbling that it was too warm for how they were dressed—but it's true! It was great to spend time with our JLMP volunteers.



Fig 4. Enjoying Lobster Feast on Volunteer Appreciation Day

We will conduct in-depth analyses during the winter months after all data have been received and proofed. We look forward to seeing our volunteers next spring at our Annual Kick Off Meetings and providing them the detailed results of the 2006 season at that time.

### Outreach, Presentations and Education

2006 Outreach and Education Activity				
Organization	Location	Date	Title	Presenters
Muscongus Among Us Share Fair	Waldoboro, Maine		The Lobster Conservancy Education Offerings	Linda Archambault
Bristol Consolidated School	Bristol, Maine	Feb 1-Mar 31	Lobster Larvae in the Classroom (3 <sup>rd</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades)	Linda Archambault
Benthic Ecology Meetings	Quebec City, Canada	Mar 8-12	Temperature and Lobster Abundance	Diane Cowan
Curtis Memorial Library	Brunswick, ME	Mar 29	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Diane Cowan
Muscongus Bay Forum	Waldoboro, Maine	Mar 25	Lobsters and lobstering in Muscongus Bay	Linda Archambault
The Lobster Conservancy	Hahn Community Center, Friendship, Maine	Apr 7	Juvenile Lobster Monitoring Program 2006 Volunteer Season Kick-off	Jane Roundy, Diane Cowan
The Lobster Conservancy	Seacoast Science Center, New Hampshire	Apr 8	Juvenile Lobster Monitoring Program 2006 Volunteer Season Kick-off	Jane Roundy, Diane Cowan
Midcoast Marine Stewards	Damariscotta, Maine	Apr 24	Lobster Literacy: What every coastal resident should know	Diane Cowan
Pen Bay Marine Stewards	Maine Maritime Museum Searsport, Maine	May 11	Lobster Literacy: What every coastal resident should know	Diane Cowan
So. Thomaston Historical Society	So. Thomaston, Maine	May 11	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Diane Cowan
Harpwell Islands School	Harpwell, Maine	May 17	Lobster Life Cycle	Diane Cowan
Friendship Village School	Friendship, Maine	May 19	Lobster Larvae in the Classroom (4 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> grade)	Diane Cowan, Sarah Lash
Friendship Village School	Friendship, Maine	Jun 1	Lobster field trip	Diane Cowan, Sarah Lash
Spruce Head Community Club	Spruce Head, Maine	Jul 10	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Diane Cowan
Southport Yacht Club	Southport, Maine	Jul 17	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Diane Cowan
Penobscot Marine Museum	Searsport, Maine	Jul 19	Lobster Science Camp	Sarah Lash
Penobscot Marine Museum	Searsport, Maine	Jul 26	Lobster Science Camp	Diane Cowan
Penobscot Marine Museum	Searsport, Maine	Jul 26	Women and the Sea	Diane Cowan
University of Maine Darling Center	Walpole, Maine	Jul 27	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Diane Cowan
Friendship Day	Friendship, Maine	Jul 29	Touch Tank	Diane Cowan, Sarah Lash, Mark Havener
Penobscot Marine Museum	Searsport, Maine	Aug 2	Lobster Science Camp	Sarah Lash
Volunteer Appreciation Day	Friendship Long Island, Maine	Aug 26	Temperature and Lobster Abundance	Diane Cowan, Jane Roundy
ERAC Committee re. Pesticide Legislation	Augusta, Maine	Sep 13	Molting: It's Different for Lobsters	Diane Cowan

### 2006 Media Coverage and Publications

Publication/Media	Date	Title	Author / Interviewer
Commercial Fisheries News	Jan	Counting Lobsters: 2005 Census	Diane Cowan
Discovery Channel	Jan	Animal Planet Report: Lobster Lady	Animal Planet
Commercial Fisheries News	Jan	Counting Lobsters: 2005 Census	Diane Cowan
Commercial Fisheries News	Feb	Juvenile Lobster Monitoring Program: Can it predict future landings?	Diane Cowan
Commercial Fisheries News	Mar	Gynandromorph Lobsters	Diane Cowan
The New York Sunday Times Op-Ed	Mar 5	Robbing the Lobster Cradle	Diane Cowan
Commercial Fisheries News	Apr	Can we expect an early lobster molt?	Diane Cowan
Courier Gazette	Apr	Doing Science with the Lobstering Community	Kim Lincoln
Commercial Fisheries News	May	2005 Maine Lobster Landings by County	Diane Cowan
Commercial Fisheries News	Jun	Lobster Claw Grows in Mouthpart	Diane Cowan
Boston Globe	Jun 16	Whole Foods Market Bans the Sale of Live Lobsters	Liz Austin, Associated Press
National TV and Radio Stations including ABC, NBC and CBS and local stations	Jun 17	Related stories on lobster sales	Various prime time newscasters
Rhode Island Local Television	Jun 20	Whole Foods Saga continues	Raina Smith
Courier Gazette	Jun 22	Lobsters Boiling Over	Kim Lincoln
Nation Restaurants News	Jul 2006	Animal Wrongs	Brett Thorne
Commercial Fisheries News	Jul 2006	Lobsters Heating Up	Diane Cowan
Marine Biology (scientific journal)	Aug 1	Thermal Histories of Brooding Lobsters in the Gulf of Maine	Cowan <i>et al.</i>
Courier Gazette	Aug 1	The Lobster Conservancy Touch Tank on Friendship Day	Editor
Science (journal of American Association for the Advancement of Science)	Aug 11	Tag Team: In the Deep Blue Ocean	Laura Blackburn
Courier Gazette	Sep 21	The Black Cat: Announcement re. America's Underwater Treasures	Editor
Ocean Futures Society	Sep 20, 27	America's Underwater Treasures PBS special: narrated by Robert Redford	Jean Michel Cousteau
Courier Gazette	Sep 30	Live Lobster Looks Cooked at The Lobster Conservancy	Kim Lincoln
Portland Press Herald (Editorial)	Nov 15	Maine Needs Strong Laws to Protect Lobster Fishery	Diane Cowan
Molecular Ecology Notes (scientific journal)	Nov 15	Characterization of SSR's from the American lobster, <i>Homarus americanus</i>	Hodgins-Davis <i>et al.</i>

## Other Thanks

We were very fortunate to have the assistance of Jack Boak, a TLC friend and volunteer, to compile our 2006 Annual Appeal mailing list. We could not have accomplished the mailing without his assistance. We also extend a special thanks to Al Stewart and Karl Jankowski for their web site and technical support assistance, and to all the other TLC friends who have volunteered their services or supported our organization.



Fig 5. Winter Scene at Lobster Life Studies Center

Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season!

Yours in TLC,

Diane Cowan, Jane Roundy, and Sarah Lash