



## AFS Estuaries Section Newsletter Fall 2014

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greeting Estuaries Section Members,

It's getting chilly on Cape Cod as Fall winds down and Winter approaches. The Spartina grasses are golden brown, the Brant (*Branta bernicla*) have arrived and can be seen munching on widgeon grass (*Ruppia maritima*) at low tide, and recreational oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) harvest is in full swing in many towns.

But before we move on to Winter I want to take a moment to report on the Summer. The AFS Annual Meeting in Quebec City was a blast and on August 17<sup>th</sup> Estuaries Section members gathered for the annual business meeting.

### Issue Highlights

#### **SECTION NEWS**

President's Message  
Treasurer Hello's and Good-Bye's  
Website Update  
Seeking Nominations  
Student Travel Award Winner

#### **2014 NANCY FOSTER AWARD WINNERS**

#### **CALL FOR SYMPOSIA FOR PORTLAND**

#### **MONSTERS OF STOCK ASSESSMENT!!!**

#### **INTERNATIONAL OTOLITH SYMPOSIUM**

#### **ESTUARIES SECTION BIRTHDAY NOTES**

#### **MEETING NEWS**

As you can see from the meeting minutes and this edition of the newsletter, we are moving forward on many of the ideas discussed there.

We also did some celebrating! The Estuaries Section is 20 years old and after I presented a slide show about our accomplishments (see page 8), we all took time to reflect on our personal career accomplishments in that time span, and to think about what we want to accomplish in the future.

Read the article on page 5 and you'll see that the answers to these questions are impressive and ambitious. They are also just the beginning. The Estuaries Section currently has 211 members, so the 18 people at the meeting represent only 8.5% of the whole Section.

I invite you all to add your thoughts to this project. Please take a few minutes to reflect and write up some answers to the following questions:

***During the period 1994-2014, what in your career are you most proud of?***

***What Estuaries Section accomplishments do you want to celebrate in 2024?***

Please email me your answers at [aarcher@barnstablecounty.org](mailto:aarcher@barnstablecounty.org). If you prefer to be anonymous please click on the link to the Survey Monkey version. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BSVH8WL>

The Winter newsletter will contain the results, and we'll discuss how to move forward with the ideas at the next annual meeting in Portland, Oregon.

Until then - Stay warm!  
Abigail

#### **TREASURER HELLO'S AND GOOD-BYE'S**

*Thank you Anthony Overton!*

Estuaries Section member Anthony Overton has served as Treasurer since 2007. In August he decided to step down as he was about to take a new academic position at Alabama A&M University. He is now the Chair of the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences there. We thank Anthony for his years of service, wish him the best of luck in Alabama, and look forward to seeing him at AFS meetings.

*Welcome Konstantine Rountos!*

At the annual business meeting in Quebec City, the Estuaries Section's Executive Committee used its authority under the AFS Estuaries Section Bylaws to appoint member Konstantine Rountos to carry out the rest of Anthony's term (ending August 2015) as Treasurer.

#### **WEBSITE UPDATE**

The Estuaries Section has an outline for a new website, but we are waiting for the AFS parent society to roll out its new website first. Once that happens, Sections will be able to use the same software and format for their websites. The latest estimate is that everything will be operational by February 2015. Please stand by for updates.

#### **SEEKING NOMINATIONS**

Looking to practice your leadership skills? Want to contribute to the Society? Know someone with great ideas and charisma?

Then consider nominating yourself or a friend for an Executive Committee position with the Estuaries Section! In early 2015 we will conduct an election for the positions of President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Please contact Abigail Archer with any questions ([aarcher@barnstablecounty.org](mailto:aarcher@barnstablecounty.org)) or to throw your hat in the ring! Nominations are open until January 20. Our Winter 2015 newsletter will feature information about the candidates and statements about why and how they would like to lead the Section.

**--Abigail Archer, President, Estuaries Section**

### STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD WINNER

University of Florida Ph.D. student Geoffrey Stevens (photo below) was awarded the Estuaries Section Student Travel Award at the annual business meeting on August in Quebec City. Geoffrey presented his talk, "*Dietary Overlap between Non-native Pike Killifish and Juvenile Snook in Tampa Bay, FL*" in the Contributed Papers in Fish Ecology symposium. The feature article in the Winter Newsletter will be about Geoffrey's research.  
--Abigail Archer, President, Estuaries Section



Student Travel Award winner Geoffrey Smith with a snook, *Centropomus undecimalis*.

### 2014 NANCY FOSTER AWARD WINNERS

The Estuaries Section has been working with the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation and AFS to continue the Dr. Nancy Foster Habitat Award. On November 3, 2014, at the Restore America's Estuaries & The Coastal Society Summit outside of Washington, DC, the award was given to three people: Dr. Kenneth Able, and Kelly Hepler and John Cooper.

The presentation (photo below) was made by NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator Eileen Sobeck, who delivered some heartfelt comments about her experiences working with Dr. Foster. Thank you to Section member and 2013 Student Travel Award winner Shame Ramee for reviewing nomination packages on behalf of the Estuaries Section.

From the [Dr. Nancy Foster Habitat Conservation Award Website](#):

Dr. Kenneth Able is a Distinguished Professor of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University in New Jersey, and director of Rutgers University Marine Field Station. He has dedicated 37 years to research and teaching the science of biology, ecology, and restoration of fishery habitat resources. Dr. Able is recognized nationally and internationally as an expert on fish habitat, striving to better understand fishery survival in a changed environment and to help improve management of fishery resources.

John Cooper and Kelly Hepler led the implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan and Partnership. During Kelly Hepler's tenure as Chair of the National Fish Habitat Board, they completed the first national fish habitat assessment and the second edition of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. Kelly has also had a long career with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Serving in both federal and state resource agencies in South Dakota, John Cooper devoted himself to fish and wildlife management. As the first Chair of the National Fish Habitat Board, he cultivated partnerships among multiple groups to reach habitat conservation goals.



**NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator Eileen Sobeck delivers the Nancy Foster Habitat Conservation Award to Kelly Hepler.**

#### **CALL FOR SYMPOSIA FOR PORTLAND**

It's that time of year again! What symposia would you like to organize for the 2015 meeting in Portland? Proposals are due by January 16 and the details can be found on the [AFS Portland website](#):

So far, Treasurer Konstantine Rountos is organizing one on, "Resolving the Multiple Impacts of Anthropogenic Eutrophication on Coastal Fish and Fisheries," and President-Elect Karin Limburg is working with Ben Walther (new President of the Marine Fisheries Section) on a symposium entitled, "Frontiers in Otolith Chemistry: Insights, Advances and Future Directions."

Send your ideas in to Abigail, or post them on the Section's LinkedIn site. (That's how the Anthropogenic Impacts symposium got its start!)

**--Abigail Archer, President, Estuaries Section**

#### **MONSTERS OF STOCK ASSESSMENT!!!**

Did you ever want to take a stock assessment overview course featuring some of the best and innovative professors from the top science programs around the country? Well, you can at a planned continuing education class planned for the 2015 AFS meeting in Portland.

The Estuaries and Marine Fisheries Sections are organizing a class called The Monsters of Stock Assessment, which would feature professors giving their favorite ~20 minute lectures on different aspects of stock assessment science, including mortality, selectivity, growth, recruitment, genetics, ecosystem considerations, isotopes, Bayesian methods for mark-recapture assessment.

The overall goal of this class is to provide a broad look at some of the key topics in stock assessment along with future directions. However, we need your help! If you would like to give a talk, or suggest a dynamic and brilliant professor (early career or experienced), please contact Lee Benaka ([lee.benaka@noaa.gov](mailto:lee.benaka@noaa.gov)) and Lynn Waterhouse ([lwaterho@ucsd.edu](mailto:lwaterho@ucsd.edu)) as soon as possible with your interest or suggestions.

And most importantly, 100% of proceeds from the modest class registration fee will fund student travel awards by the Estuaries and Marine Fisheries Sections.

**--Lynn Waterhouse, Secretary, Estuaries Section**

## INTERNATIONAL OTOLITH SYMPOSIUM

Every four to five years, a “group that is not a group” holds a week-long conference on the science and application of fish otolith research. It’s an odd topic for a conference, given its specificity of study item. And yet, otoliths, the tiny ear-stones that form part of the hearing and balance system in fishes, with their growth bands that form fascinating shapes and entrain myriad chemistries, have been found to solve many puzzles, at the same time raising more questions. People who study otoliths as “windows into science” have pushed our knowledge in many areas, from migration histories to demographic connectivity, evolution, archaeology, stock identification, and of course stock assessment.

The fifth otolith conference was held this fall, October 20-24, on the Spanish island of Mallorca, otherwise known as a vacation destination for Germans. Situated in the Mediterranean Sea, the venue provided a beautiful setting for some serious scientific exchanges. Four days of meetings and one day of workshops made for a considerable dose of intense information. But interspersed were moments of fun, good food, and relaxed recreation. Mallorca is fairly isolated, with steep mountains that drop away toward the aquamarine sea, and many villages to explore.

Responding to a call for sponsorship, the AFS Estuaries Section donated 200 Euros toward prizes for the best student oral and poster presentations. This was matched by the Early Life History Section as well, so that the sections together presented the awards.

The otolith conferences have a custom of

having some fun together. This time, convener Beatriz Morales-Nin and her team organized a “spectacle” for the final closing ceremonies: a traditional, Mallorcan demon dance! Clearly, otolith researchers know how to have a good time!

--Karin Limburg, President-Elect, Estuaries Section

Photo links:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/5th-International-Otolith-Symposium/554693247957436>

<http://www.fishecology.es/news/a5th-international-otolith-symposium/>



Karin Limburg presenting the award for Best Student Oral Presentation at the IOS. Note the Estuaries Section logo on the screen!



Demonic dance at the final closing ceremonies. Convener Beatriz Morales Nin is in the center (leg up).

## ESTUARIES SECTION BIRTHDAY NOTES

At the 2014 Estuaries Section Business Meeting in Quebec City, President Abigail Archer asked attendees to respond to two 20<sup>th</sup> birthday questions. Below are the questions and responses:

### ***From 1994-2014, what in your career are you most proud of?***

I got my Master's degree, and published my first first-author paper!

Contributed to assessment science and retired with excellent young scientist now working.

1994-2014 Finally addressing the river herring issue coast-wide and looking at importance of estuaries on watershed level.

Discovered markers of migration and hypoxia in otoliths.

Helped draw attention to declines in diadromous fishes.

Conducting an improved assessment of the blue crab stock in Delaware Bay.

Developing the concept and gaining approval for a fisheries survey in Delaware Bay for shad & striped bass.

Leading a stock assessment of weakfish.

Started the Penobscot River Estuary Survey.

As a young scientist (grad student), it was great to receive funding from the Estuaries Section and then to be able to

become an active member in the organization.

Highlights of my career include assisting in establishing two new National Fish and Wildlife Refuges (Roanoke River, Alligator River) and being a part of the team that successfully negotiated American Eel Passage at the gateway dam on the Roanoke River Rapids Dam where over 800,000 eels were passed upstream in 2013.

Most proud of training new graduate students in estuarine ecology.

Proud of our progress protecting estuaries and other habitats of finfish and shellfish.

We progressed from individual permit review to watersheds, ecosystems, and other larger scales.

Helping to launch the Marine & Coastal Fisheries Journal.

Having the opportunity to be the founding director of NMFS/SWFSC Santa Cruz laboratory beginning in 1998 until retirement in 2011.

Conveying the importance of forage fish in coastal ecosystems.

### ***What accomplishments do you want to celebrate in 2024? What goals do you have for the Estuaries Section?***

Accomplishments in 2023 looking ahead – hope to see some portion of the Conservation Blueprint developed by the South Atlantic Landscape Cooperative implemented.

Goals – try to secure water rights for all U.S. estuaries.

We have focused much on habitat quantity (acres of wetlands, river miles) but with less focus on quality. We need more emphasis on chemistry, underwater sound, acidification, and other issues. Our future must include quality!

For 2023: Lots of awesome training sessions and workshops.

More \$ for student grants.

2023 Accomplishments – We will have restored estuaries along the Atlantic coast.

Critical habitats will be on the rebound due to climate change and new innovative management strategies.

# of restored estuaries > # of degraded estuaries.

Maintain a tally of removed dams and returns of diadromous fish.

Develop a tool that is of extreme use and value (don't know what it would be...).

Membership of 500!

Keep up interesting, stimulating, interdisciplinary research at the nexus of land and sea and river.

Hopefully I can continue to take a more active role in the section and hopefully be a professor in my own right bringing my own students to the meeting (and hopefully they are winning awards).

Increase student mentorship/membership.

Involve more marine and coastal AFS members. Give them a reason to want to join.

At 69 years old in 2014 I hope to still be on the right side of the grass in 2023 and still contributing to AFS and fishery science.

Having published papers over the decade influencing stock assessments.

#### MEETING NEWS

**Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit**  
January 25-28, Cape May, NJ  
<http://delawareestuary.org/Summit>

**American Fisheries Society**  
145th Annual Meeting  
August 16-20, 2015, Portland, OR  
<http://2015.fisheries.org/>

**Estuarine Coastal Sciences Association Conference**  
September 6-9 2015, London  
<http://www.estuarinecoastalconference.com/index.html>

#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY SLIDE SHOW

In addition to pondering successes and writing future goals, Business Meeting attendees celebrated the Estuaries Section 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday by drinking beer and wine, snacking on crudité, and watching President Archer deliver the following Powerpoint slides. The slides were prepared by Michelle (Mick) Walsh and Abigail Archer.