



FISHERIES CENTRE

THE UNIVERSITY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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The University of
British Columbia

FishBytes

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FISHERIES CENTRE AT UBC

ABORIGINAL INITIATIVES

By Nigel Haggan

The UBC Fisheries Centre (FC) and the UBC First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) (longhouse.ubc.ca/) joined forces in 1996 to make university science more accessible and responsive to Aboriginal Communities. The objectives are:

- To establish the world's first Endowed Chair of Aboriginal Fisheries;
- The respectful cross-validation of traditional knowledge and university science;
- A new graduate course in Aboriginal Fisheries with significant community involvement;
- To accelerate the enrolment of Aboriginal students in post-graduate fisheries-related science.

Partnerships

In December 1997, FC and FNHL signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission (www.bcafc.org/). A February 18th information session to be held at the BCAFC Annual General Meeting in Kelowna will set directions and priorities. The new partnership will provide an additional avenue of communication with First Nations, and will also assist the partners in accessing funding for research projects and educational programmes which satisfy academic and First Nations criteria.

1997/98 Programmes and Projects

Back to the future - Strait of Georgia Ecosystem Reconstruction - Using ecosystem modelling, the project aims to reconstruct the Strait of Georgia ecosystem as it might have been 100 and 500 years ago. Results of a 1995 Ecopath model were used as a basis for dialogue between Aboriginal Elders, university and government scientists, commercial and sport fishers. These inputs were then combined with archaeological sources and "grey literature." The results will demonstrate the potential of ecosystem modelling to integrate different traditions of knowledge. The study will also indicate past productivity of commercially and culturally significant resources compared to present levels. (See *FishBytes* 3(4).)

Back to the future - Hecate Strait Ecosystem Reconstruction - Funded by UBC Research, students working under the direction of Daniel Pauly and Carl Walters will use Ecopath to construct a preliminary model of Hecate Strait. Results will be presented at a workshop in Prince Rupert and inputs from Aboriginal and other sources will be used to adjust the model. A brochure presenting the philosophy and tools will be prepared to build awareness of the potential of ecosystem modelling to integrate different knowledge traditions.

Aboriginal Graduate Student - \$15,000 in UBC funding has been accessed to support an Aboriginal graduate fisheries student. The successful applicant can help coordinate research and training projects with First Nation communities.

Overall Benefits

The FC/FNHL collaboration has been instrumental in increasing awareness of the Aboriginal dimension and of the role which fisheries had and continue to have in sustaining Aboriginal communities. Exposure to the culture and meeting individuals has been particularly instructive. Real partnerships have already been developed, on and off campus; these can only grow as the Aboriginal and academic communities develop relationships of trust and respect through these initiatives and others yet to come.

Further Information

For more information, please contact Nigel Haggan (email, nhaggan@fisheries.com). The Opening the Doors concept, Strait of Georgia Reconstruction Project and Memorandum of Understanding are described on the FC website, <http://www.fisheries.com>. See also the First Nations House of Learning site at <http://longhouse.ubc.ca/> and the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission site at <http://www.bcafc.org/>

Australia Acknowledges that Marine Fishes can be Wildlife Too

By Marie-Annick Moreau

Australia officially recognised its marine fishes as wildlife on September 5th, 1997. All species of the suborder Syngnathoidei (Family Syngnathidae: seahorses, seadragons and pipefishes and Family Solenostomidae: ghost pipefishes) are to be removed from Schedule Four of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA) as of 1 January 1998. Under the amended legislation, all exports of these fishes will require government issued

permits, which will only be granted for exports of animals derived from captive breeding programs or from approved management plans. Prior to this landmark ruling, all marine fishes in Australia were listed on Schedule Four of the WPA, and thus exempt from controls on international trade.

Australia is to be congratulated both for setting an important precedent in recognising that fishes can be wildlife too and for adopting a precautionary stance in the face of the excessive and ever-increasing worldwide exploitation of syngnathids. Australian waters harbour one-quarter to one-third of all seahorse species, many of which are heavily fished in other parts of their range for use in traditional medicines and as aquarium fishes and curios. The number of seahorses in exploited populations throughout Asia appears to be declining markedly, and Australia, in moving to protect these animals, may help to ensure their long-term survival.

The decision is especially important given the recent proposals for large-scale seahorse aquaculture in Australia. The conservation value of these culturing efforts is often questionable. Seahorse aquaculture projects have very poor success in rearing young, with dependency on repeated removals of adults from the wild. Moreover, these projects ignore the threat that such large-scale activity may pose to Asian subsistence fishers, who must rely on seahorses to feed their families. The new government restrictions should provide much needed checks and balances on the aquaculture projects.

The Australian decision reflects the increasing political support for syngnathid conservation. On June 1st 1997, the EU began monitoring all imports of seahorses, and Hong Kong is considering doing the same. Hopefully the Australian government will uphold its commitment to marine conservation by administering the new controls well, undertaking appropriate research and management initiatives.

(Marie-Annick Moreau can be reached at: Dept. of Biology, McGill University, 1205 Ave. Dr. Penfield, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3A 1B1, (514) 398-5112.)

FishBytes is the newsletter of the Fisheries Centre at the University of British Columbia. Contributions and queries should be sent to Melanie Power, *FishBytes* Editor, Fisheries Centre, 2204 Main Mall, UBC, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6T 1Z4, or by email to melanie@fisheries.com.

Dr Norman Joseph Wilimovsky

1925 – 1997

The Fisheries Centre marks with sadness the passing of Dr NJ Wilimovsky on December 31, 1997. Dr Wilimovsky was a professor of Animal Resource Ecology at UBC for thirty years.

He obtained his B.Sc. (1948) and M.A. (1949) in biological sciences from the University of Michigan, following which he worked as an associate ichthyologist on a Brazilian fishery survey. He then went to Stanford University to study for his Ph.D., which he received in 1956. His doctoral research focused on arctic hydrobiology.

Upon completion of his doctorate, Dr Wilimovsky joined the Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska, serving as Chief of Marine Fisheries Investigations – Alaska. He joined the faculty of UBC in late 1960, and served as Director of the Institute of Fisheries

between 1963 and 1966, studying Arctic Alaska, Canada and the Aleutian Islands. He took a leave in 1967, during which time he served as a Senior Staff Member of the US President's Council on Marine Resources and Engineering Development, and later worked on European and Asian fisheries.

He returned to UBC in 1968, where he continued as Professor at the Institute for Resource Ecology and University Curator of Fisheries until his retirement in 1990. His teaching focused on graduate courses in ichthyology and fisheries management, and as Curator he developed a computerised database system for the fisheries collection.

Dr Wilimovsky's associations and other activities were varied and considerable. He was a President of the Alaska Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a fellow and governor of the Arctic Institute of North America. Other activities included a position on the Environmental Impact Board which studied the environmental impact of the proposed pipeline construction in northern Canada and was an elected representative on the panel monitoring the Alaskan pipeline. He also chaired American government panels representative of industry, conservation groups and the government, was a member of the Fisheries Task Force of the Pacific Economic Cooperative Conference, co-chaired the Ocean Studies Council, and represented UBC on the International Recruitment Investigations organisation. Other organisations included the American Fisheries Society, the Arctic Bibliography Directing Committee, the Arctic Environmental Council, the Bamfield Marine Station Advisory Council, the Ichthyology Society of Japan, the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, and the Vancouver Public Aquarium Association.

Diverse research interests included systematic ichthyology, fisheries, aquaculture, intertidal dynamics, science policy, ice ecology, archaeology, and underwater instrumentation. In 1978 Dr Wilimovsky was awarded a Senior Killam Fellowship to study policy and data management in fisheries.

Dr Wilimovsky published over 95 papers and directed 33 graduate theses: M. Kutty (Ph.D. 1963); AE Peden (M.S. 1964); GIM Cowan (M.S. 1965; Ph.D. 1968); CD Gordon (M.S. 1965); JL Peppar (M.S. 1965); FE Wood (M.S. 1966); GS Arita (M.S. 1967); CD Levings (M.S. 1967); JM Green (Ph.D. 1967); RO Boyd (M.S. 1969); R Nakamura (Ph.D. 1970); HW Khoo (Ph.D. 1971); JD Minchin (M.S. 1972); MR Morrell (M.S. 1973); DE Wilson (M.S. 1973); T Sudjastani (M.S. 1974); JB Marliave (Ph.D. 1975); BM Leaman (M.S. 1976; Ph.D. 1988); RD Stanley (M.S. 1977); I-Hsun Ni (Ph.D. 1978); GJS Craik (Ph.D. 1978); EC Chondoma (M.S. 1979); DK Nomura (M.S. 1979); DJ Furnell (M.S. 1982); G Kingston (M.S. 1982); MJ Rosenfeld (M.S. 1983); SE Campana (Ph.D. 1983); MD McGurk (Ph.D. 1985); SA Strasdine (M.S. 1988); YD Mgaya (M.S. 1989); KL Yamanaka (M.S. 1989).

Minister of Fisheries & Oceans Speaks at UBC

On January 20th, Canada's Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, David Anderson, presented the inaugural lecture in the Irving K. Fox Series, on the topic of the "Implementation of the New Federal Oceans Act on the Pacific Coast". The series was created in honour of the first director of the Westwater Research Unit.

Dr Les Lavkulich (Institute for Resources and the Environment) introduced the series, and Dr Michael Healey (Westwater) introduced the speaker.

Minister Anderson's affiliation with the University of British Columbia runs deep – a UBC graduate, he sat for seven years as a Senate alumni representative. He was first

elected to federal parliament in 1968 and founded the Standing Committee on Environmental Policy before turning to BC provincial politics in 1972. Prior to his 1993 election as MP for Victoria, he taught at the University of Victoria and consulted on environmental and marine issues. Appointed to Fisheries and Oceans in 1997, he first served as Minister of Revenue and of Transport.

The Minister began by stating his overarching fisheries priority of conservation. Five principles were listed – environmental sustainability, economic viability, a smaller future fishery, international competitiveness, and self-reliance.

Not surprisingly, the lecture focussed on west coast concerns. The Minister noted that in 1997 sea temperatures reached record highs, salinity declined, and unusual species (such as mackerel and even a great white shark) were seen in BC waters.

The Pacific Salmon Revitalisation Plan (the 'Mifflin Plan'), used license stacking and retirement to require a decrease in fleet size; Minister Anderson said that there were 31% fewer commercial boats in 1997 than there would have been had the Mifflin Plan not been implemented.

Special attention was given to coho salmon. The marine survival of this species has declined and there has been a drop in the number of spawning fish. Central is the desire to provide access to the 'abundant' Fraser River sockeye without harming the coho stocks. Thus, in 1997, there was no directed coho fishery in the area, and there were strict regulations aimed at reducing the coho bycatch.

The Minister noted that the 'oceans' aspect of the DFO mandate has often been minimised. The Canada Oceans Act, which entered into force about one year ago, is meant to encourage sustainability, integration, and transparency, centred around the precautionary principle.

Marine Protected Areas in British Columbia are under joint development between Ottawa and Victoria. The Minister remarked that MPAs are not panaceas, but rather 'tools', and indicated that at least some 'test' MPAs are needed as 'showcases'.

From both coasts, the Minister has launched 1998 as Canada's International Year of the Oceans. He stated that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which entered into force in 1994, does not go far enough on conservation, especially for straddling stocks. Thus, under the Oceans Act, Canada's new EEZ extends beyond the 1977 limit.

Minister Anderson closed by indicating that every decision of the DFO is closely scrutinised for any negative aspects. Questions followed, on such issues as stakeholders, quotas, industry-pay systems, aquaculture, and whether Canada will ratify the Law of the Sea. Closing remarks were made by Ivan Head, a UBC Professor of Law and Political Science.

The Director in Oz

(Editor's Note: Dr Tony Pitcher, Director of the Fisheries Centre, is currently on sabbatical in Australia [see FishBytes 3(5)]. Below is the first of his reports on his Aussie experiences.)

Just back from a trip to the Snowy Mountains National Park, where we watched baby emus tended by their dumb dad, hundreds of alert grey 'roos, an echidna gobbling ants, a rare parrot called a gang-gang acting suitably rare and flying off immediately once spotted, and huge yellow-tailed black cockatoos with young. Saw Australia's one 100m square patch of permanent snow. Also visited Goulburn, a town in the heart of NSW sheep country that has the benefit of a monster, grotesque 4 storey fibreglass Merino sheep with cafe, trinket shop, etc., below. Nice country though.

Went to the Magic Flute free opera on the beach here in Cronulla on Australia day, followed by fireworks, etc. Australians are very comfortable with themselves. The Australian of the year is Cathy Freeman, the athlete and Aborigine, a good touch at a time with much controversy over Aboriginal rights and land claims. There is a racist party here run by Pauline Hanson which has criticised this choice, but, judging from the newspapers and telly, she has very little support although that's yet to be tested in an election.

The Australians are choosing a new flag, *sans* Union Jack, from 100 designs - generating a similar intense debate as when Canada got its Maple leaf flag. Oddly for an outsider, nearly all the flag designs are based on the southern cross, most of the stars of which are nowadays barely visible from big cities like Sydney on account of the city lights. Only a few designs include the obvious 'roo and a few incorporate elements of the aboriginal flag.

Congratulations to **Dr Carl Walters** on his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada!

Visiting at the Fisheries Centre: Dr Jackie Alder spent December and January as a visiting scientist from Perth, Australia's Edith Cowan University. Jackie's interests are primarily in community based management of coastal and marine areas, in particular marine protected areas, and she has recently co-authored a book with Dr R. Kay, *Coastal Planning and Management*. Jackie spent much of her time at the Centre working on the Hong Kong Artificial Reef Project, reviewing Australian artificial reefs and looking at options for the management of the proposed artificial reefs. She also presented a seminar, "Square Planning for Round Holes: Integrated Marine Planning at Cocos-Keeling Atoll".

Tom Okey has joined the Fisheries Centre as a Visiting Scientist, working with Dr Daniel Pauly on developing trophic flux models (Ecopath) of Prince William Sound, Alaska, before and after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. Tom received his BS in Biology and Environmental Studies from St. Lawrence University and his MS in Marine Science from Moss Landing Marine Labs at Monterey Bay, California, and he has focused on the ecology of natural and anthropogenic disturbances in nearshore marine systems throughout the Pacific. He also founded the Conservation Science Institute. Since 1996 he has worked as the Pacific Fisheries Program Manager for the Center for Marine Conservation.

New to the Fisheries Centre: Dr David Ralph Matthews has recently come to UBC after 26 years at McMaster University. A sociologist, Ralph is based at the sociology department and is teaching the Fisheries Centre module, "The Applicability of Sociological Analysis to Fisheries Research" this term. His research interests, aside from fisheries, include health and the environment, and he has published two books dealing with fishing communities and resettlement, *Communities in Decline* and *There's No Better Place Than Here*.

Welcome back: to **Ingrid Ross**, as she resumes the position of Graduate Secretary.

Farewells: Dr Reg Watson came to the Fisheries Centre in September to work on the Hong Kong Artificial Reefs Project. He returns the Fisheries Department of Western Australia. (See *FishBytes* 3(4))

Dr Luis E. Calderon Anguilera also joined the Fisheries Centre in September as a visiting scientist (see *FishBytes* 3(4)). He has been appointed Director of the Centre for Wetland Studies, Bahía Magdalena, Baha California Sur, one of six International Centres of the Schools for Field Studies (Boston University).

Toshio Katsukawa joined the Fisheries Centre as a visiting scientist in June. He has recently returned to Japan, having accepted a teaching position at the Division of Population Dynamics of the Ocean Research Institute of the University of Tokyo.

Eden Fellner has been with the Fisheries Centre since July 1997 as Graduate Secretary. We thank her for all of her work here as she moves to UBC's Office of the Health Sciences Co-ordinator, a Division of Continuing Medical Education.

Conference Calls:

Puget Sound Research '98, a forum on marine and coastal zone research and links between science and policy, to be held at Seattle's Washington State Convention and Trade Center March 12 and 13, 1998. Consult www.wa.gov/puget_sound for more details. For information on the conference program, contact Dave Sale at (360) 407-4282, email dsale@psat.wa.gov. To register, contact Joanie Pop or Stacie Hart at (360) 357-8044, email edi@halcyon.com.

Publications:

Forage Fishes in Marine Ecosystems (Alaska Sea Grant College Program publication number AK-SG-97-01). Includes 56 research contributions and one workshop report, from the 14th Lowell Wakefield Symposium in 1996. Visit www.uaf.edu/seagrant, or call (907) 474-6707, fax (907) 474-6285, or email FYPUBS@aurora.alaska.edu.



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