

TIDEWATER PRESS

NEWSLETTER OF THE
TIDEWATER CHAPTER OF THE
AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

Winter 2013
Volume 28, Issue 1

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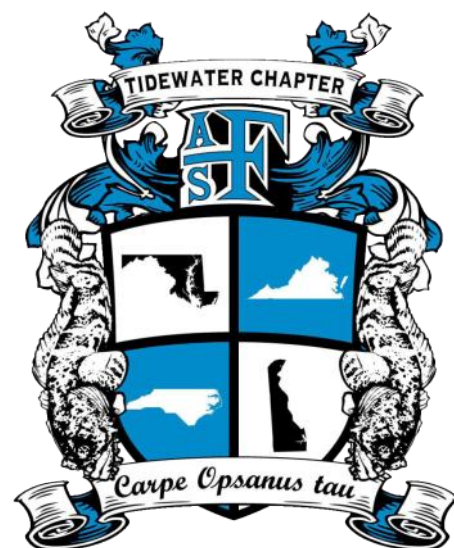
President's Corner | *Jacob Boyd*

Greetings! I hope everyone is getting back into the groove of things now that the Holidays are over. With very warm temperatures here in Beaufort, the duck hunting that usually keeps me going through January is nowhere to be found but I cannot complain when it's 70° and sunny!

With the great success of last year's annual meeting we are getting very excited for this year's meeting in Solomons, MD, March 21-24. I know Mike Wilberg and his crew have put a lot of time and effort into creating an awesome meeting. The Chapter's executive committee (EXCOM) has met quarterly this year for the first time. In years past, the EXCOM would meet semi-annually but decided to gather more often to ensure the Chapter's needs are being met. The quarterly meetings have helped the EXCOM determine how the Chapter is functioning and how can we improve it.

One major theme that stands out is student and student subunit participation and how crucial this is to the Chapter's growth and continuation.

The Tidewater Chapter is driven by student effort and participation in not only the annual meetings, but in the day-to-day operations of the Chapter. We are currently discussing incentives and other measures to increase student participation, but ultimately the student subunits have to proactively recruit and participate for the Chapter to thrive.



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It is not always easy to give 100% to any one thing when you have a million other things going on, especially when it's voluntary; however, if there is anything I have learned throughout my career and life is that you must give everything 100% or the job will not get done correctly.

As the Chapter moves forward, let's remember and utilize the quote initially made famous by JFK and altered slightly here,

*“Ask not what your Chapter
can do for you – ask what
you can do for your Chapter.”*

I hope everyone has a wonderful February and I look forward to seeing you all in March!



Treasurer's Report | Stephanie McNerny

This year, the Tidewater Chapter made a \$500.00 donation to the Tennessee Chapter to help with hosting the Southern Division Meeting. We have also decided to enroll in Liability Insurance under the AFS Parent Society to cover accidents that may occur at our Annual Meetings. This coverage was \$150.00. An old invoice for awards in the amount of \$25.00 was paid.

The Tidewater Chapter agreed to pay for the current president of the Chapter to go to the Southern Division meeting in February 2013 to represent the Chapter. The funding for his travel totaled \$776.05 which includes his registration fee, hotel, and flight.

The Chapter is still in good shape financially and stays above its operating budget of \$7,500. The

Chapter is still waiting on a check for \$569.00 from the Parent Society for dues paid to the Tidewater Chapter through the Parent Society.

If you are not currently a member of the Chapter but would like to join, a membership form can be found on the Chapter website or you can email me at Stephanie.McInerny@ncdenr.gov. Annual dues for 2012 are \$10.00. A lifetime membership is available for a onetime fee of \$150.00 and should be sent to:

Stephanie McNerny
TWC Secretary/Treasurer
209 Brigantine Ct.
Cape Carteret, NC 28584

Make checks payable to "Tidewater Chapter AFS"



Current Financial Report

Checking:	\$12,394.84
Mutual Fund:	\$ 1,253.89
Total:	\$13,348.73

2013 Tidewater Chapter Annual Meeting

March 21-23, 2013

Join us for the 27th annual Tidewater Chapter meeting! This year will be hosted by Tidewater Chapter President-elect, Mike Wilberg in Solomons, Maryland.

EVENTS

- Keynote speaker Tom O'Connell, Director of Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Service
- Opening poster social at University of Maryland Chesapeake Biological Laboratory
- Friday banquet at Solomons Island Yacht Club

CONTINUING EDUCATION—*COMPARING AND SELECTING GROWTH MODELS*

- Time: Thursday 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm
- Cost: \$10 - sign up with registration
 - Compare growth models and determine best fitting model.
 - Test for coincident curves using Analysis Residual Sum of Squares
 - Use likelihood ratios to compare nested models
 - Use Akaike Information Criteria to compare non-nested models



LODGING

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hilton Garden Inn in Solomons. Rooms will be available at a group rate of \$102 per night until the room block closes March 2 or the room block is filled up.

Hilton Garden Inn Solomons
13100 Dowell Road
Dowell, Maryland
USA 20629
Tel: +1-410-326-0303
Fax: +1-410-326-0366



To register online, visit http://www.sdafs.org/tidewater/AFSTidewater/Annual_Meeting.html

Deadlines:

Abstract submission: February 15

Early registration: March 2

Group rate for lodging: March 2

For more information contact Mike Wilberg at wilberg@umces.edu

In search for stripers: a winter cruise | Amy Comer

Graduate student, Amy Comer, embarked on a 10 day Cooperative Winter Tagging Research cruise in early January. This multi-agency cooperative cruise's principal partners are the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Maryland Department of Natural Resources-Fisheries Service, National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center (Beaufort and Pascagoula laboratories), North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Northeast and Southeast Regions, Maryland Fishery Resources Office, and South Atlantic Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office). This year's cruise was took place January 7-17 on the National Science Foundation (NSF) research vessel the R/V Cape Hatteras. The primary mission was to catch, tag, and take scales from striped bass as a part of a coast wide striped bass

tagging program for stock assessment. We predominantly used anchor tags which each contain a unique code, and a phone number to call if an angler catches the fish in the future. Other side projects helped us get familiar with horseshoe crabs, skate, spiny dog fish, flounder, hake, weakfish, butterfish, black sea bass, bay anchovy, alewife, cutlassfish, croaker, kingfish, and many more species.

The cruise departed out of Beaufort, NC and headed north to coastal Virginia waters, which is where we received word that fishermen were catching stripers. The days on the water started out beautiful, with idyllic sunrises and sunsets, fairly calm seas, whale sightings almost every day, and small catches with our 65' Trawl system. One 15 minute period changed that for this cruise. We landed the mother-load in one 15



Amy Comer holding a female striped bass. Image courtesy Amy Comer.

minute tow, with a catch of over 500 striped bass! We had many other tows with striped bass in the teens, but this tow took the proverbial cake. Sadly, after working up this large tow, the stripers moved, and it took us a few hours before we caught another. The adrenaline rush from such an amazing catch is something that cannot be described.

About 5 days into our journey, our idyllic weather changed into heavy fog, with sometimes zero visibility, and the waves started to pick up. However, this didn't put a damper on the never-ending hunt for striped bass, as we worked day and night searching for them. There's nothing like trying to sleep with a loud fog horn blasting every minute, as the seas not-so-gently rock you in your bunk. This left a few of the crew/scientists with tired eyes and bodies in the days to come. We had a few larger tows, catching up to 45 stripers in one 15 minute tow, but nothing like the 500 caught earlier in the cruise. We did however, find an American lobster



Views from the cruise: sunrise over the Atlantic Ocean and dense fog. Images courtesy Amy Comer.

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R/V Cape Hatteras. Image courtesy of rvcapehatteras.org

with hundreds of eggs, and even got to see a spiny dog fish give birth. These are things I will not soon forget.

As the cruise winded down, the weather lifted, and we once again had gorgeous days at sea. We had Northern Gannets join in the festivities, as they tried to eat some of the small fish that we were releasing. It was quite interesting to watch their diving activities and how precise they can be. Pictures cannot do justice, but trust that it

as a beautiful site seeing a large group of them forage for food.

In the end, we contributed to a coast wide tagging program and provided data for many organizations. We tagged a total of 921 striped bass, although we caught about 300 more that we were unable to tag due to holding tank capacities. We also tagged 140 winter skate and 3 mature male horseshoe crabs. In addition to tagging we collected otoliths from spot, Atlantic croaker, northern kingfish, summer flounder,

weakfish, and we collected alewives for research out of East Carolina University. Lastly, we collected 25 species for the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences tissue collection.

Although I'm a graduate student who has been at sea for over 160 days in my career thus far, this was by far my favorite research cruise. The crew, the scientists, and the graduate students all came together, worked like a fine tuned machine, and made this an amazing experience. I think we can all say that we had a delightful time, with wonderful memories. I want to send a thank you and a shout out to everyone who was involved in getting this cruise together, especially the chief Scientist Mr. Laney Wilson (USFWS-ES/FR), as none of this would've come together without them. I believe everyone involved is looking forward for the cruises to come in the upcoming years.



Scenes from the research cruise aboard the R/V Cape Hatteras. Jeff Kipp (left) from ASMFC works up a striper. Images courtesy Amy Comer.



Close up of a striped bass tagged on the cruise. Image courtesy Cecilia Krahforst.

Virginia State Update | Kevin Spanik



Image courtesy VMRC

State Record Swordfish Landed

A 446-pound swordfish, caught on September 1, 2012 by Joseph T. Harris, of Virginia Beach, VA, has been certified as the new State Record by the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament. Harris' catch surpassed the existing 30 year old record of 381-1/2 pounds, formerly held by James Alexander of Virginia Beach.

Harris made his record-setting catch off Virginia Beach and south of the Norfolk Canyon, while fishing with Captain Justin Wilson aboard the Lynnhaven Inlet based 34-foot charter vessel Just Right. The huge swordfish hit a drifted whole squid. Harris was using a custom built 50-pound class stand-up rod mated to a Shimano TLD 50 reel and loaded with 50-pound test Ande monofilament

line. Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament State Record Committee member Ken Neill, III, of Seaford, verified weight, length, and girth measurements and positively identified the swordfish, in accordance with the Tournament's State Record procedures, and completed the State Record Application. *VMRC*

Virginia Oyster Industry Rebounding, Anticipating a Big Boom

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) has approved an expansive program to plant oyster shells on a variety of public oyster grounds, anticipating a \$2 million influx of funds through Governor Robert McDonnell's proposed 2014 state budget. If approved by the Virginia General Assembly, this would be the largest appropriation for oyster replenishment in state history. The oyster harvest has increased ten-fold over the past decade, and every \$1 spent on oyster replenishment yields \$7 in economic benefit when the oysters grow to market size and are harvested. *VMRC*



Virginia oyster reefs at low tide. Photo: Cory Janiak



"Off" year for Striped Bass production

Preliminary results from a long term survey conducted by researchers at Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) suggest poor striped bass production in Virginia tributaries of Chesapeake Bay in 2012. The 2012 year class represents the group of fish hatched last spring, which will grow to fishable size in 3 to 4 years

Poor production was also reported in 2012 for the upper Bay and its tributaries in a sister survey conducted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

The VIMS Juvenile Striped Bass Seine Survey recorded less than 3 fish per seine haul in 2012; significantly lower than the historic average of roughly 7 fish per seine haul. This is a notable decrease in annual recruitment when compared with recent years in which catches of young fish were rated average or above average. Just last year in 2011, an exceptionally strong year class was produced in Virginia waters. Year-class strength was also high in 2011 in Maryland and North Carolina. *Dave Malmquist, VIMS*

Duke University Student Subunit Update | *Lauren Latchford*

The Duke Student Chapter of the American Fisheries Society has had a very productive fall semester. We now have over 20 new members from the MEM class of 2014 and new Ph.D. students. On October 5th-7th, the chapter held their annual fish taco stand at the North Carolina Seafood Festival and sold over 700 fish and shrimp tacos as well as drink koozies, providing the chapter with over \$1,000 in profit. Members from the Duke University Marine Lab and the Durham campus came down to help for the weekend. We even got to take pictures with Miss North Carolina at our taco stand!

In November, we had Captain Jess Hawkins, president of Crystal Coast Ecotours, Inc. and former marine biologist with the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries come speak to DukeFish members about sustainability and gamefish for North Carolina species. This talk sparked lively debates in both Durham and Beaufort.

Recently, members went to the ASMFC's Gillnet Bycatch

Workshop. The workshop focused on current data and research and brainstorming new ideas to reduce turtle and sturgeon bycatch in commercial gillnets.

The 2013 spring semester's speakers and field trips are in the works. We are looking forward to hosting a screening of FishMeat, a documentary on aquaculture from

Fish Navy Films. We also have planned a fishing trip, a river cleanup with our fellow group The Coastal Society, and presentations from prominent people in the fisheries industry. If you are in the Beaufort area and want to partake in any of our activities, please email lauren.latchford@duke.edu.



From left to right: Ainsley Smith, Lauren Latchford, Taylor Pool and Kelsey Duckow.

Photo by Leland Moss

Do you have something to share with us? Let us know!

Currently, the Tidewater Press is published twice annually, in January and June. If you or anyone you know has any news, upcoming events, or opportunities related to Tidewater fisheries or research we would love to share it with our readers! Please contact Cory

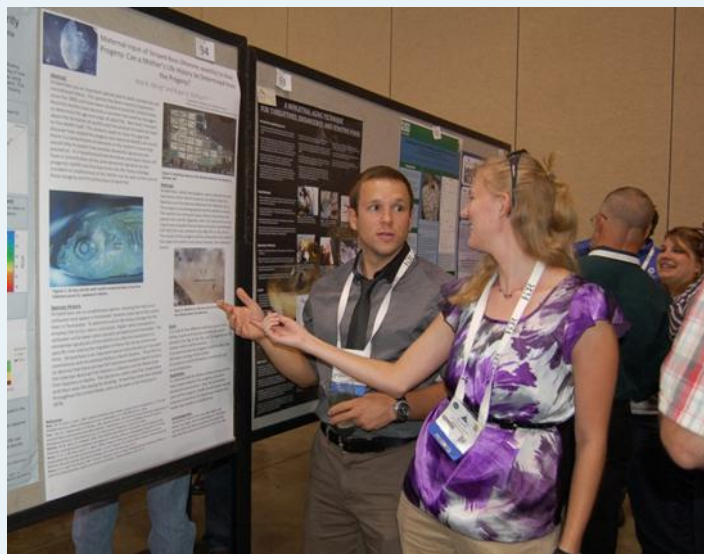
Janiak, newsletter editor, at cory.janiak@gmail.com with any announcements you would like to place.

To share or keep updated through the Tidewater AFS listserv, see page 11 for details.

East Carolina University Student Subunit Update | *Brie Elking*

The East Carolina University student subunit of AFS had members present oral and poster presentations of their research at the national meeting in Minneapolis/ St. Paul. One of our faculty advisors, Dr. Joe Luczkovich, co-chaired a symposium titled, "The New Food Web: Emerging Methods for Bringing Together Social and Ecological Networks."

For our monthly meetings in the fall semester, our members presented their research and jobs. Chuck Bangely presented his research on coastal sharks while Jillian Osborne talked about her experiences working at a salmon fish hatchery in Alaska. We just finished our first meeting of this semester with speakers Steve Jackson from the Edenton National Fish Hatchery and Jeff Evans of the Watha State Fish Hatchery.



Brie Elking (right) presenting her poster to Jeff Dobbs (left). Photo taken by Coley Hughes.

AFS Student Writing Contest: get your writing published in Fisheries

The Student Writing Contest recognizes students for excellence in the communication of fisheries research to the general public. Undergraduate and graduate students are asked to submit a 500- to 700-word article explaining their own research or a research project in their lab or school. The article must be written in language understandable to the general public (i.e., journalistic style). The winning article will be published in *Fisheries*. Students may write about research that has been completed, is in progress, or is in the planning stages. The papers will be judged according to their quality and their ability to turn a scientific research topic into a paper

for the general public and will be scored based upon a grading rubric.

For examples of past winning papers, see *Fisheries* 32(12): 608 & 609 and *Fisheries* 34(1):39. Please include your full contact information (i.e. address, e-mail, phone, etc.) to complete the package.

Submission deadline:
April 1, 2013

Contact:

Walt Duffy, Committee Chair
CA Cooperative Research Unit
Humboldt State University
Arcata, CA 95521-8299



Phone: (707) 826-5644
Fax: (707) 826-3269
Email: wgd7001@humboldt.edu

University of Maryland Chesapeake Biological Laboratory Student Subunit Update | *Danielle Zaveta*

The past summer and fall proved to be very productive for the University of Maryland subunit. First, we would like to congratulate Adam Peer for successfully defending his doctorate degree and welcome our new members Alex Atkinson and Matt Siskey. University of Maryland was well represented at the national meeting in Minneapolis in August. Talks were given by Adam Peer, Dave Loewensteiner, Danielle Zaveta, Mike O'Brien, Jason Robinson, Sarah Rains and Jennifer Humphrey with an additional poster presented by Jason Robinson.

The subunit was involved in several community outreach events this past semester. In June, the

subunit participated in the Senator Bernie Fowler Patuxent River Wade-In. This event focuses on the reduced visibility in the Chesapeake Bay and explores the causes, effects and steps to be taken to work toward a healthier ecosystem. In October the subunit had a fun time volunteering at the 35th annual Patuxent River Appreciation Days. Blue crabs were the highlight of the display put on by the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory. As an iconic and delicious part of Maryland culture, it was great to see Maryland natives and visitors alike learn about blue crab biology and their recovering population.

Former subunit president, Nicole Bransome Mehaffie, has



Alex Atkinson at Patuxent River Appreciation Days.
Photo courtesy of Debbie Hoffbeck.

been recently selected for a 2013 Knauss Marine Policy fellowship. She will serve as the Inaugural Knauss fellow for the Ocean, Coastal and Great Lakes Coordination Team in the Office of Policy Analysis at the U.S. Department of the Interior. Her position will support the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force and the National Ocean Council in its implementation of the National Ocean Policy. Nicole is excited for the unique opportunity to see how the federal government manages fisheries and a diversity of other natural resources.

As we look forward to this upcoming spring semester, we are proud to announce that we will be hosting the 27th Annual Tidewater Meeting! It should be a fun meeting covering a diverse range of topics with a variety of posters and talks. We encourage everyone to spread the word and meet us in Solomons to indulge in great science and camaraderie!



From left to right: Mike O'Brien, Meghann Niesen, Senator Fowler, Debbie Hoffbeck and Nicole Bransome Mehaffie at the Bernie Fowler Wade In. Photo courtesy of Debbie Hoffbeck.

Delaware State University Update | *Cory Janiak*

DSU was well represented at AFS Twin Cities this past year. Former Tidewater president Dr. Dewayne Fox co-chaired the session, "Collaboration through fisheries networks: sturgeon and paddlefish populations," Andrea Stoneman presented her research on ocean acidification effects on fish otoliths, and Cory Janiak received the John E. Skinner Memorial Scholarship runner-up award.

This past fall, four new fisheries graduate students joined us at DSU Aquatic Sciences and they dived right into their new roles. Hillary Dean is collaborating with the NOAA Living Marine Resource Cooperative Science Center on a menhaden project. Jimmy Kilfoil is studying recreational beaching effects on sand tiger sharks and Symone Johnson is developing a conservation plan for the same species. Amy Comer left Hawai'i to study the recently ESA-listed



Jimmy Kilfoil tags a sand tiger shark for his thesis research. Image courtesy of Jimmy Kilfoil.

endangered Atlantic sturgeon using side-scan sonar. In early January she took part in a collaborative research cruise out of North Carolina—see page 4 for details.

On January 12th Jimmy and Amy were featured on Jeff Corwin's Ocean Mysteries nationally syndicated television program. The episode highlighted our

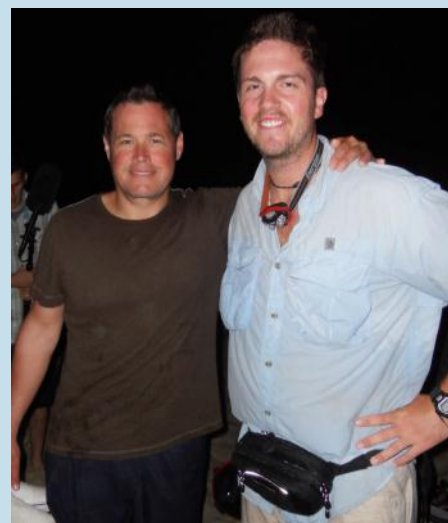
collaborative tagging efforts for sand tiger shark conservation and Jimmy's research was also featured. You can also see Dewayne and former graduate student Matt Breece (now a PhD candidate at University of Delaware) on the YouTube clip for the episode at: <http://youtu.be/srwrZ5XiID4>.



Cory Janiak and Andrea Stoneman taking advantage of the free Sequay rides at AFS Twin Cities. Photo courtesy of Cory Janiak.



Amy Comer on board the R/V Cape Hatteras holding a newborn spiny dogfish. Photo courtesy of Amy Comer.



Jeff Corwin and Jimmy Kilfoil pose during the filming of Ocean Mysteries on a Delaware Beach. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Kilfoil.

AFS Tidewater Chapter Executive Committee

President: Jacob Boyd

President Elect: Mike Wilberg

Past President/ Nominating Committee

Chair: Leonard Machut

Treasurer/Secretary: Stephanie McNerny

At-Large Members

North Carolina: Paul Ruderhausen

Virginia: Kevin Spanik

Maryland: Bob Murphy

Student subunit presidents

Duke: Lauren Latchford

ECU: Brie Elking

UMCES CBL: Danielle Zaveta

UMES: inactive

UNCW: inactive

Student representatives

DSU: Cory Janiak

UD: vacant

Awards & Scholarship Committee Chair:

Ron Klauda

Webmaster: Chad Smith

Newsletter Editor: Cory Janiak



The 143rd Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries society will be held this year in Little Rock, Arkansas. This year's theme is "Preparing for the Challenges Ahead".

Abstract submission deadline is March 15, 2013.

Get updates via the Chapter LISTSERV!

TO SUBSCRIBE

E-mail to: LISTSERV@LISTSERV.ECU.EDU and enter SUBSCRIBE TIDEWAFS in the body of the e-mail.

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