

2008 Annual Report: Woods Hole Sea Grant Program

The Woods Hole Sea Grant Program is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's national Sea Grant network of 32 programs. Collectively, Sea Grant promotes cooperation between government, academia, industry, scientists, and the private sector to foster science-based decisions leading to better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

More than half of Woods Hole Sea Grant's annual budget of \$1 million supports multi-year research projects in environmental technology, estuarine and coastal processes, and fisheries and aquaculture, as well as smaller, "new initiative" grants. Sea Grant research addresses local and regional needs, and many projects have national or even global implications.

In 2008, Sea Grant-supported nine projects at WHOI and other institutions that focused on topics ranging from understanding alternative nitrogen cycling pathways and their relationship to eutrophication (overloading with nutrients and algal growth,) to studies of mercury sources and cycling in the local estuary Waquoit Bay. Jesús Pineda and colleagues are examining the accumulation of zooplankton in internal waves in the sea, and how this affects the foraging behavior of fish and humpback whales. Other studies are focused on processes related to salt marsh dieback on Cape Cod, and the dynamics of QPX disease, a parasitic infection in quahog populations.

More than one-third of Woods Hole Sea Grant's budget is dedicated to research translation, outreach, and education. Sea Grant reaches its audience through one-on-one advice, training programs, publications, Web sites, workshops, and lectures. Collaboration with the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension Service brings outreach and demonstration projects to local communities in fisheries and aquaculture and coastal processes.

As a partner with the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program and the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Woods Hole Sea Grant participates in the Massachusetts Coastal Training Program, designed to enable communities to better manage their coastal resources. With funding from the National Sea Grant Law Center, Woods Hole Sea Grant collaborated with the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions to develop a coastal training module for conservation commissioners in coastal communities. With this course, all conservation commissioners will have access to up-to-date information for making scientifically sound and regulatory-based decisions.

In the ocean science education field, Woods Hole Sea Grant has developed workshops for K-12 teachers and has provided innovative publications directed at a general audience, such as *Beachcomber's Companion*®, an award-winning publication and Web site highlighting common Atlantic marine invertebrates. For more than a decade, Woods Hole Sea Grant has partnered with colleagues at New Hampshire Sea Grant to provide marine career information to students. Woods Hole Sea Grant is also participating in a WHOI effort to promote effective research-outreach partnerships and is initiating efforts aimed at reducing marine debris and plastics in the ocean.

—[Judith E. McDowell](#), Program Director

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Volunteers empty bags of juvenile oysters into the wild as part of a "remote set" restoration project. During a remote set, oyster seed attaches to old shell that has been bagged in mesh and placed into hatchery tanks. Once viable, the bags of old shell are moved to the area where oyster restoration is most needed and released. With the support of Woods Hole Sea Grant, natural resource managers are increasingly turning to remote set to improve their restoration efforts. (Photo by Diane Murphy, WHSG and Cape Cod Cooperative Extension)



Woods Hole Sea Grant Coastal Processes Specialist Jim O'Connell reviews the impact of a November storm on the dunes of the Cape Cod National Seashore. Sea Grant's continued partnership with Cape Cod Cooperative Extension provides local governments and the public with a wealth of subject matter expertise and advisory capability. (Photo by Jeffrey Brodeur, WHSG)