

2009 Annual Report: Woods Hole Sea Grant Program

The Woods Hole Sea Grant Program is part of NOAA's national Sea Grant network of 32 programs that promote 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 2009, Sea Grant supported nine projects at WHOI and other institutions that focused on topics ranging from toxic *Alexandrium* blooms in the Nauset Marsh to molecular indicators of dioxin sensitivity in birds. Houshuo Jiang and Peter Traykovski are examining wave energy dissipation over muddy seafloors, while Jesús Pineda and colleagues are investigating the accumulation of zooplankton in internal waves 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 in quahog populations.

More than one-third of Woods Hole Sea Grant's budget is dedicated to outreach and education, including the translation and dispersion of research to the general public. Sea Grant reaches its audience through one-on-one advice, training programs, web sites, workshops and lectures. The program continues to publish its joint newsletter with MIT Sea Grant, *Two If By Sea*. Collaboration with the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension service brings outreach and demonstration projects to local communities in fisheries and aquaculture and coastal processes. Successful projects in 2009 included a Fundamentals of Shellfish Farming class that is being repeated in 2010.

In the ocean science education field, Woods Hole Sea Grant has developed workshops for K-12 teachers and 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.

Woods Hole Sea Grant is proud of its track record of creating opportunities to promote effective research—through outreach partnerships with WHOI, as well as initiating efforts to reduce marine debris and plastics in the ocean. In 2009, marine debris efforts included the organization of several beach cleanups with coastal residents as well as a partnership with the Friends of Sengekontacket on Martha's Vineyard aimed at reducing shore-based trash through education and mitigation.

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

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[Enlarge Image](#)

Sea Grant Coastal Processes Specialist Greg Berman looks on as Daniel Cressey, a WHOI Ocean Science Journalism Fellow, looks through a transit while profiling Stony Beach in Woods Hole. The fellows spent a day with Berman and Aquaculture Specialist Diane Murphy, learning about the work that Sea Grant does. (Photo by Tom Kleindienst, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)



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At the December 2009 "Topics in Oceanography" teachers' workshop on ocean acidification, middle school science teachers Carolyn Sheild (Jonas Clarke Middle School, Lexington, Mass.) and Christopher Ratley (Swampscott High School, Swampscott, Mass.) try out a laboratory exercise presented by WHOI researchers Sarah Cooley and Heather Benway. Woods Hole Sea Grant presents professional development workshops twice a year, bringing teachers together with researchers working at the forefront of ocean science to explore how ocean research can be incorporated in classroom teaching. (Photo by Tom Kleindienst, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)

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