



The Golden Cod

Official Newsletter of the Gilbert Bay MPA



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The Golden Cod newsletter is dedicated to informing the public about the Gilbert Bay Marine Protected Area (MPA). The newsletter is sponsored by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca) on behalf of the Gilbert Bay Steering Committee (GBSC).

Don't forget to visit our website at: www.gilbertbay.com

Foreword

Gilbert Bay was officially designated a Marine Protected Area (MPA) on October 11, 2005 (refer to Figure 1, below, to view the Gilbert Bay MPA regulatory zones).

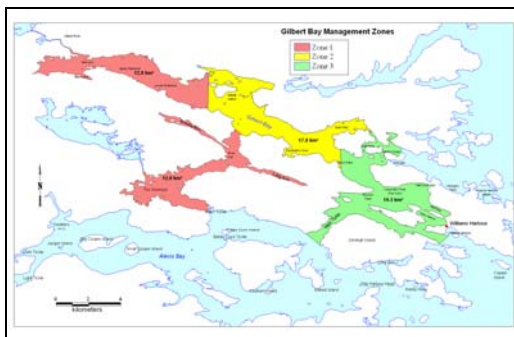


Figure 1. Gilbert Bay MPA regulatory zones.

The regulations governing the use of the MPA can be found online at: <http://canadagazette.gc.ca/partII/2005/20051019/html/sor295-e.html>, or you can contact the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) for a copy.

Research in Gilbert Bay

DFO has continued with its collaborative research in Gilbert Bay, and this past summer was a busy one.

Dr. John Green and Corey Morris (DFO) continued with their external tagging and monitoring program, which they have been conducting on the Gilbert Bay cod population since 1998. Dr. Green and Mr. Morris plan on continuing with their work in Gilbert Bay this upcoming summer, and hope to expand the receiver array that they currently use to track Gilbert Bay cod. This expansion would help them to monitor the movements of the fish when they are outside the MPA.

Also this past summer, Corey Morris (DFO) and Ian Bradbury (Dalhousie University) included Gilbert Bay as one of its research sites in a project comparing the genetics of Shorthorn sculpin from various locations throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

In addition to this, Gilbert Bay is being included in an international study on gene flow in Orange-footed sea cucumbers. The study is a joint project between the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DFA), the Canadian Centre on Fisheries Innovation (CCFI) and Memorial University (MUN). The study is being conducted by Justin So, a Masters student at MUN's Ocean Sciences Centre. The study's purpose is to determine how closely different populations of sea cucumbers are linked.

Dr. Joe Wroblewski (MUN) also headed a couple of research projects in Gilbert Bay over this past season, with help from DFO. In his research on the scallop fishery in Gilbert Bay, he hired local student Corinna Russell from August – September to gather data on: shell height (see Figure 2, below), meat yield, and the predator-prey relationship between starfish and the scallop population in Gilbert Bay.



Figure 2. Corinna Russell measures scallop shell heights as part of Dr. Joe Wroblewski's research on scallops in Gilbert Bay.

And in October, Dr. Wroblewski and his associates Dr. Evan Edinger, Allison Copeland, and Liuming Hu, visited Gilbert Bay to ground-truth the multi-beam survey completed there in 2002. The equipment used to do this included: underwater cameras, sifters (see Figure 4, on page 2) and benthic grabs, to sample the bottom. Data from this research will eventually be used to develop a map of the benthic habitats in Gilbert Bay.



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Pictures from Gilbert Bay:



A Ocean sunfish, photographed in Gilbert Bay on August 20th, 2006.

(Photo credit: Maurice Smith)



A starfish feeding on a scallop.

(Photo credit: Wayne Russell)



A mass of copepod, an important source of food for young cod.

(Photo credit: Wayne Russell)



Corey Morris (DFO), hauls a CTD apparatus to the surface during the process of profiling the water column.

(Photo credit: Wayne Russell)

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DFO also conducted its monitoring of William's Harbour's sewage outfall again this summer. This is done each year in order to assure that the outfall is not having any negative effects on the Gilbert Bay MPA, or on any of the marine life there. Findings thus far have shown that the effluent from the outfall is within acceptable limits.

Notice to Recreational Fishers

The tagging and recapture program being conducted by Dr. John Green and Corey Morris (DFO) is very important in estimating the biomass and health of the Gilbert Bay cod population. As such, it is very important that you return any tags found in fish that are captured this upcoming summer. They can be returned to Wayne Russell at P.O. Box 14, William's Harbour, NL, A0K 5V0, or at your local DFO office. The tags are located just below the dorsal fin (see Figure 3, below).



Figure 3. Illustration showing the positioning of spaghetti tag in Gilbert Bay cod.

There is a \$10 reward for the return of these spaghetti tags + an additional \$50 reward for the return of sonic tags. Sonic tags are approximately the size of an AA battery and are black. They can be found by examining the contents of the fish's abdominal cavity, after it is cut open.

In submitting your returns, please include: your name, location where the fish was captured, and the length of the fish.

Scallop Logbooks

Last summer marked the second time that scallop fishing enterprises were asked to complete a log of their scallop fishing activities in Gilbert Bay. The purpose of

the logbook is to gather much needed data on the scallop fishery in Gilbert Bay. With the hope being, to get local fishermen involved in a scallop conservation project leading to a sustainable scallop fishery.



Figure 4. Allison Copeland and Liuming Hu sift through a sample of bottom sediment in Gilbert Bay during the process of ground-truthing the multi-beam survey.

A Note from the GBSC

The GBSC would like to thank everyone who participated in our work in Gilbert Bay this summer by returning their cod tags to DFO. We would also like to thank the fishing enterprises that completed and returned a log of their scallop fishing activities in Gilbert Bay, your information is vital to our study of this important natural resource.

If you have any questions or concerns that are not dealt with in this publication, or if you do not receive our newsletter and would like a copy, feel free to contact us at:

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