

RIGHT WHALE NEWS

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The Glass Is Half Full: Weakened Ship Speed Rule Becomes Effective December 9

After a delay of 20 months, the National Marine Fisheries Service has decided to require ships 65 feet and over to slow down in the vicinity of right whales. At the insistence of the Vice President's Office of Domestic Policy, the final published rule is weaker than what NMFS originally proposed. For example: Protective zones around mid-Atlantic ports have been reduced from 30 nautical miles to 20, speed reductions outside the port zones, such as where high-speed ferries operate, are voluntary, and the rule expires in five years. The requirements of the final rule are summarized in the following chart, with the caveat that there are exceptions, including exceptions for navigational safety and for federal vessels.

Location (North to South)	Effective Dates	Distance from COLREGS coastline	<i>Federal Register</i> Vol. 73, No. 198: page numbers
Great South Channel, MA	April 1 - July 31	Varies	60188 (text) & 60191 (map)
Race Point (east of Cape Cod), MA	March 1 - April 30	Varies	60188 (text) & 60191 (map)
Cape Cod Bay, MA	January 1 - May 15	Varies	60188 (text) & 60191 (map)
Block Island Sound, R.I.	November 1 - April 30	Varies	60188 (text) & 60190 (map)
Ports of New York/New Jersey	November 1 - April 30	20 nm	60188 (text) & 60190 (map)
Delaware Bay	November 1 - April 30	20 nm	60188 (text) & 60190 (map)
Chesapeake Bay, VA	November 1 - April 30	20 nm	60188 (text) & 60190 (map)
Beaufort and Morehead City, NC	November 1 - April 30	20 nm	60188 (text) & 60190 (map)
20 nm north of Wilmington, NC to Sapelo Island, GA	November 1 - April 30	Varies	60187 (text) & 60190 (map)
Sapelo Island, GA to south of St. Augustine, FL	November 15 - April 15	Varies	60187 (text) & 60189 (map)

For details, please consult the *Federal Register* 73(198): 60173-60191; October 10, 2008 (available at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/shipstrike).

Unanswered Questions

There are still many unanswered questions associated with the new ship speed rule. Who will enforce it? Will enforcement result in civil or criminal action? What are the penalties for violating the rule? Where will the money come from to monitor its effectiveness? Will money be available to increase the precision of necropsies, which are necessary for accurately determining the cause of death? Will monies be diverted from paying NMFS staff to fund needs considered more critical?

Getting Out the Word on the New Rule

NOAA Fisheries has just released a [Compliance Guide for the Right Whale Ship Strike Reduction Rule](#), which summarizes the details of the rule and can be kept on the bridge for quick reference. Laminated copies of the compliance guide are in production and will be available for distribution in the near future. In the meantime, the electronic version (see above link) will at least facilitate a better understanding of the new regulations and assist shipping interests in providing guidance to a crew and/or fleet.

Litigation Puts Fishing Gear Regulations Back into Effect

Once again, it has taken litigation to force the National Marine Fisheries Service to protect right whales – this time by prohibiting the use of floating ground line between lobster and crab pots. In 2007, the Humane Society of the United States sued NMFS to create stricter fishing gear rules to protect right whales, humpbacks and fin whales. The agency agreed but delayed some measures until October 2008. Bowing to pressure from commercial fishing interests, NMFS then delayed implementation until April 2009. This prompted the Defenders of Wildlife and the Humane Society to sue again in Federal District Court to force NMFS to institute the protections. On September 30, the Court agreed, issuing a Preliminary Injunction so the protective rules are back in place.

Navy Sonar Training off Calving Ground May Threaten Right Whales

The U.S. Navy has proposed to build and operate an undersea warfare training range off the north Florida coast in waters between 120 and 900 feet deep. The need for such a facility – to keep sailors proficient and ready to deploy – was first identified in 1994. Studies narrowed the desired location from the Gulf of Mexico and Western North Atlantic down to four sites (off Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida) and then one site: off Jacksonville. While the training range will be well to the east of the

right whale calving ground, the operations may affect the species. Navy ships – exempt from the new speed restrictions – pass through the calving ground when entering or leaving Jacksonville. Also, mid- and high-frequency sounds will be generated in the area as part of the training. The Navy has agreed not to set off these sounds in the critical habitat, but that doesn't prevent the sounds from traveling into the calving ground. Also, the Navy has not agreed to stop training during the calving season.

A new Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the preferred location was published in October 2008 (available at www.projects.earthtech.com/USWTR). A Final EIS is expected in May 2009. A Record of Decision is expected in July 2009.

Petition Seeks Protection for Great South Channel

A petition is being considered by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) that will, if adopted, provide additional protection for right whales off the Massachusetts coast. The petition seeks to have the Great South Channel identified as an Area to be Avoided. If the IMO approves the petition, it will go into effect next summer. The Great South Channel is already a critical habitat for right whales and much of it is also protected by the new ship speed rules and by Mandatory Ship Reporting requirements.

Areas of Critical Habitat for the North Atlantic Right Whale May Be Revised

In 1994, under the authority of the Endangered Species Act, the National Marine Fisheries Service designated three areas off the east coast of the United States as “critical habitat” for what was then called the Northern Right Whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*). The areas included the southern calving ground off southern Georgia and northern Florida, and the feeding grounds of Cape Cod Bay and the Great South Channel off Massachusetts. The boundaries of these three critical habitat areas were developed by Scott Kraus of the New England Aquarium and Hans Neuhauser, Chairman of the Right Whale Recovery Team, based on sighting information; the proposal was endorsed unanimously by the Recovery Team and accepted by NMFS.

In 2002, the Ocean Conservancy petitioned the NMFS to expand the designated critical habitats based on regular sightings of right whales in adjacent waters, but the agency deferred action pending further analysis of sighting data, and no further action was taken. The members of the Marine Mammal Commission's North Atlantic Right Whale Program Review panel also recommended that the current critical habitat designations be reevaluated, citing “major advances...over the past decade toward understanding habitat features that are important to right whales, especially in the calving and feeding areas off eastern North America.”¹

¹ Reeves et al, 2007. Report of the North Atlantic Right Whale Program Review. Marine Mammal Commission. At page 23.

As a result of re-listing the North Atlantic right whale as an endangered species separate from the North Pacific right whale (see *Federal Register* 73(45): 12024-12030; March 6, 2008), the NMFS will re-designate critical habitat for the species. The agency's current requirements for critical habitat designation are different from those used in 1994. Now, the specific area(s) must "contain physical or biological features essential to conservation, and those features may require special management considerations or protection." In other words, the designation must be habitat-based instead of distribution-based.

Instead of publicly asking scientists and others for recommendations on what areas should be designated as critical habitat, the agency's plan, as announced at the Southeast Implementation Team meeting on October 23, is to "consult secretly" and then release a proposed regulation next spring.

More Calves!

Monica Zani of the New England Aquarium reported at the October 23 SEIT meeting that 23 calves were produced during the 2007-2008 calving season, up from the 19 calves previously reported (see *Right Whale News* 15 (2):4). The 23 calves include two known dead (calves of #1301 and #3180). Of the four new additions, one calf was first sighted off North Carolina in May (#1321 + calf) and three were first sighted July and August in the Bay of Fundy (#3115, 1123 and 1208, each with a calf). The calving interval increased from 2.9 to 3.2 years.

Southeast Implementation Team Will Be Reorganized

The Southeast Regional Office (SERO) of the National Marine Fisheries Service is creating a "Framing Committee" to help coordinate right whale recovery initiatives in the southeast. The committee will bring together a group of stakeholders selected by SERO, who will be asked for advice and to develop creative solutions. The Southeast U.S. Right Whale Recovery Plan Implementation Team (SEIT) will morph into the Framing Committee and at least three working groups (at present, the working groups are: communications related to the Early Warning System, education and outreach, and passive acoustics). The Framing Committee will have 15 members: representatives from the states of Florida and Georgia, a liaison with the SERO, one scientist/whale biologist, one environmental non-governmental representative, one representative from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, one representative each from the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, two representatives from the shipping industry, one representative from the Grays Reef National Marine Sanctuary, one person from South Carolina, one person from North Carolina (the SC and NC members will not necessarily be state agency representatives), and a representative of the small vessel industry. The first meeting of the Framing Committee is anticipated before the May 12, 2009, SEIT meeting. The Framing Committee meeting and subsequent meetings may not be open to the public. The "terms of reference" that will form the starting point for the

Framing Committee are in draft, and according to the SERO, are nearly completed. When released, these are expected to contain background, purpose and objectives, roles and responsibilities, and terms of service.

Research Permits: Online Application System Announced

On October 8, the National Marine Fisheries Service announced the availability of an online application system for Authorizations and Permits for Protected Species (APPS). APPS covers permits and authorizations for a variety of different species including marine mammals, sea turtles, Pacific salmonids, shortnose sturgeon, and white abalone.

Researchers can use APPS to apply online for new permits as well as to submit modification requests, personnel changes, filming authorizations, and annual reports. A customized Portfolio page displays a researcher's current and previous permit actions. Researchers have the ability to track an application online as it moves through the review and clearance process.

APPS offers a variety of features for permit holders, as well as for the general public, including: a Pre-Application Guide that assesses the type of permit needed, general information on permitting laws and regulations, a list of actions that are currently available for public comment, and the ability to search the APPS database.

Researchers who were previously or are currently a Permit Holder, Principal Investigator, Co-investigator, and/or Primary Contact for a NMFS permit, will already have an APPS account. A temporary password will be required in order to access an account. To request a password, contact your permit analyst or call the Office of Protected Resources' Permits Division at 301-713-2289.

For more information:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/apps.htm>

http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/permits/apps_factsheet.pdf

To visit APPS:

<https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>

Right Whale Naming: 15 New Names

In June of 2008, New England Aquarium staff initiated a right whale naming effort (see also *Right Whale News* 15(3): 6-9). The importance of naming right whales was described as: (1) continue to aid researchers with identifications in the field; (2) help the public, managers, and politicians connect with these animals and their plight; and (3) help to recognize individuals and events. In October, contributors to the catalog were asked to submit individuals for naming, and shortly thereafter, a list of 15 individuals was

compiled and a vote was taken. Results were announced at the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium Meeting on November 5:

Catalog #	Winning Name	Count of votes for that name
1209	El	8
1620	Mantis	6
1703	Wolf	4
1802	Legato	7
1817	Silt	5
2330	Celeste	5
2645	Insignia	6
2660	Gannet	5
3010	Binary	6
3020	Giza	5
3115	Harmony	3
3190	Panama	4
3193	Toothbrush	5
3230	Infinity	7
3240	Orion	5

Names were nominated by 19 different people from 15 organizations. Any person who needs to recognize an individual in the field, and is capable of doing so, was eligible to vote, which led to 26 eligible voters from 10 organizations. Some groups had just one vote; NEAQ and NMFS had 10 and 3 votes respectively. A total of 15 people from 9 organizations voted on names. The number of votes per whale ranged from 7 to 14; with a range of 27 to 54% of eligible voters. Whales 1209 (El) and 2660 (Gannet) got the most interest with 14 votes each, and 3020 had the least with just 7 votes.

The suggested names generally followed the guideline that names should be a mnemonic device linked to a physical feature that will be useful for recognizing whales in the field. The winning names have various appeals, and often have a musical or celestial flavor, with an occasional whimsical tone. In the case of #1802, Legato means “tied together.” In music, it means that the notes are played or sung smoothly, and 1802’s islands smoothly connect to her bonnet. Staccato was 1802’s mother, and Legato is the opposite of the meaning of Staccato’s name. For #2330, Celeste is suggested by the two white circular scars on the right lip, which look like a planet and a moon – celestial bodies. Also, Celeste is the female elephant from the Babar books. For #2660, Gannet is named after the bird-like scar on the left head. And lastly, for #1209, her three islands form a perfect “L.”

Personnel

Owen Nichols of the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies writes the following tribute to John Ambroult, owner of Ambroult Aviation in Chatham, MA, and well-known to the Northeast right whale research community, who died May 18, 2008, when his aircraft

crashed shortly after taking off to begin a bird survey near Eagleswood, N.J. (see Right Whale News 15(2):8).

John and his pilots flew his Cessna Skymasters during ten years of aerial surveys for right whales in Cape Cod Bay, conducted by the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies and Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries from 1998-2008. I had the privilege of working with John for several of those years, and along with his family and so many others, will miss him dearly. John brought the skill and intuition of both a military-trained airman and a Cape Cod fisherman to the tasks we asked of him. Whether it was aircraft configuration and maintenance or his weather eye, he gave us more than we ever could have asked. He flew for thousands of miles for us, always with good humor – he was part of our small, tightly-knit family of people dedicated to the study of right whales, readily taking part in the camaraderie and banter that comes with spending that much time together in a tiny Cessna cockpit. He joined us for coffee and lunch before and after flights, whether we were waiting for thick fog to clear or still spinning after hours of circling over an entangled whale, and always was the first to ask when the end-of-season party was to be held so he could plan accordingly.

William J. Brennan replaces Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher as under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and acting administrator of NOAA. Brennan holds a Ph.D. in ecology and environmental sciences from the University of Maine (2002). The position is acting and is subject to political appointments by the Obama administration.

Changes at *Right Whale News* Editor Hans Neuhauser Steps Down

Hans Neuhauser has been the one and only editor of *Right Whale News* – a history that spans 15 years and 55 issues. This issue marks the final one under his leadership.

Hans was born in Boston, went to Middlebury College, and migrated south in 1964 to attend graduate school at the University of Georgia. He stayed in Georgia. His career is intertwined with the history of right whales in the southeastern United States (SEUS) and right whale recovery.

For historical perspective, consider that during the term of president of Jimmy Carter, the Naval Submarine Base at Kings Bay was established in southeast Georgia in the late 1970s. The dredging of the 21-mile long channel across the shallow coastal shelf brought attention to turtles and later, to right whales. In 1981, while working for the Georgia Conservancy, Hans and Cathy Sakas (currently at the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary) recovered a neonate right whale calf on Little St. Simons Island. In September of 1983, a researcher at the New England Aquarium matched photographs of a Georgia female with calf to a female, *Fermata*, photographed in the Bay of Fundy. This became known as the “Georgia Match” and represented the first confirmation of the north-south connection. As information continued to emerge suggesting the role of the SEUS habitat as the calving ground, Hans arranged for funding from the Marine Mammal

Commission and hosted the Southeastern U.S. Right Whale Workshop, February 18-20, 1986, on Jekyll Island, Georgia. The goal of the meeting was to generate prioritized strategies for protecting right whales. These strategies included the formation of a recovery team and the development of a recovery plan; establishing a coordinated conservation network; the revitalization of the sighting and stranding report network; and the development of a communications network among and between scientists, field personnel, state and federal agencies, conservation organizations, and interested citizens.

Hans was appointed chairman of the recovery team, and the recovery plan was published in December 1991. The SEUS implementation team was formed in 1993. Hans began *Right Whale News* in August 1994. Initial funding came from the University of Georgia, where Hans was by this time on the faculty.

Through the 15 years and 55 issues, editing and publishing *Right Whale News* has had its challenges. In one year, Hans paid for the postage from his own pocket. In early 2006, *Right Whale News* was involved in a skirmish with the National Marine Fisheries Service over editorial policies. At that point, Hans reaffirmed the newsletter's role as an independent voice for right whale recovery, clarified the separation between editorial policies and financial support, and began electronic distribution (rather than mailed distribution) of *Right Whale News*.

In many ways, Hans Neuhauser and *Right Whale News* have been the voice and the history of right whale recovery.

Patagonia Right Whale Deaths the Highest Ever

Bill McLellan of the University of North Carolina – Wilmington reports that the number of dead Southern Right Whales (*Eubalaena australis*) at Peninsula Valdez, Argentina, during September and October 2007 has risen to more than 82 (an earlier count stood at 72; see his report in the November 2007 issue of *Right Whale News* for background). The mortalities are probably due to exposure to toxins produced by a variety of marine algae (researchers reported seeing not only “red tides but green tides and even purple tides.”) Reports on the results of necropsies are in preparation.

Smithsonian Opens Ocean Hall with Right Whale Icon

On September 25th, the [Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History](#) in Washington D.C. hosted a gala for the opening of their new permanent exhibit, the [Sant Ocean Hall](#). Suspended from the ceiling above the center of the Hall is the focal point of the exhibit – a full size model of a North Atlantic right whale, an actual replica of a cataloged individual, a female named Phoenix. You can see photos and a history of Phoenix on the [North Atlantic Right Whale Catalog](#), search for catalog #1705.

Since 2004 Amy Knowlton and Marilyn Marx have been working with the Smithsonian

to make sure the model, and every other detail of information about right whales, is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Because of that long relationship helping to develop that aspect of the exhibit, Amy and Marilyn were invited to the black tie event, along with New England Aquarium Vice President of Research Scott Kraus.

Marilyn commented, “It was a great evening to see Phoenix and read all the information about right whales that we had spent years reviewing, and also to be the first (along with 1500 other guests) to see the exhibit. [The Sant Ocean Hall](#) is 23,000 square feet of fun facts and education about the world's most precious resource: the oceans that cover 71 percent of the earth's surface. The exhibit includes more than 650 marine specimens ranging from microscopic plankton to giant squid (and Phoenix, of course!) There are state of the art inter-active exhibits, video displays, and so much more than we could possibly see in the three hours we were there.”

Companion Book: Smithsonian Books has published *Ocean – Our Water, Our World*, by Deborah Cramer, as the official companion volume to the Ocean Hall exhibit. The New York Times calls it “inspiring.” Thomas Lovejoy of the Heinz Center for Science, Economics and the Environment, says “This irresistible invitation to explore the ocean ... should be in every home.” ISBN 978-0-96-134383-4.

Interactive Game: In partnership with the Smithsonian, the Ocean Conservancy has launched an interactive game geared toward educating children about the challenges right whales face along their migratory path. So click on the link below, turn up the sound on your machine, warm up with a few wrist exercises and see if you can save the whale: <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/oceanhall>

Right Whale Holiday Ornament Available

To educate the public on priority wildlife species, the Georgia Wildlife Federation is now offering limited edition pewter holiday ornaments featuring the North Atlantic right whale and the bob white quail.

Each collectible design is inspired by original artwork by local wildlife artists and includes an educational message about the animal and efforts to protect and restore its vital habitat.

The ornaments are a perfect way to send a special, lasting *Season's Greetings* to valued clients, family and friends. Gifts can be shipped directly to each recipient along with a personalized message. Proceeds from each purchase support GWF conservation and education programs.



Each ornament costs \$18 (\$20 for international orders). Price includes shipping and a note card with gift message. Order by December 8 to guarantee delivery by December 25. To order, visit www.gwf.org.

Right Whale Jewelry Also Available

The Marine Resources Council is offering sterling silver jewelry in exchange for donations to their volunteer Right Whale Monitoring Program. Several pieces depict individual right whales, a mother/calf pair, and right whale tail pendants, earrings, and keychains, lapel pins, hat pins, and tie tacks. All pieces are also available in gold as a special order. Requested donations for silver pieces range from \$15 to \$45. *Right Whale News* readers take 10% off during the holidays! Please contact MRC for more information at council@mrcirl.org or on the whale hotline at 1-888-97-WHALE.

North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium Meets

Attendance up: One hundred ninety-six people attended the November 5-6 annual meeting of the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium at the New Bedford Whaling Museum – the greatest number ever.

Elections: Three Consortium board members are cycling off: Bill McLellan (University of North Carolina – Wilmington), Laurie Murison (Grand Manan Whale and Seabird Research Station) and Jamie Smith (National Marine Fisheries Service). Following the Woody Allen rule that “the world belongs to those who show up,” those present at the November 5 morning business meeting elected three board members to replace those cycling off. The newly elected board members are: Bill McLellan, Susan Parks (Pennsylvania State University) and Amy Knowlton (New England Aquarium). At a subsequent meeting of the board, a special seat for a representative from Canada was created, and Laurie Murison was named to fill that seat.

Next meeting: Wanting to put some time between the next Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals (October 12-16 in Québec) and the next Consortium meeting, the board decided to move the date of the next meeting; the tentative dates are November 11 and 12, 2009; the tentative location is the New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts. For further information, contact Heather Pettis, Consortium Secretary, at hpettis@neaq.org

Papers Presented

Introduction to the simultaneous use of AIS and RADAR to document vessel traffic in the Chesapeake Bay shipping approach

Barco, S.G.¹; Lockhart, G.G.¹; Lagueux, K.M.²; Knowlton, A.R.²; Kovalyov, O.³; W.M. Swingle¹

¹Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation

² New England Aquarium

³ Sii Tech, Inc

Determining the seasonal distribution of North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*) in New York coastal waters using passive acoustic monitoring

Ingrid Biedron¹; Nicole Mihnovets²; Christopher Clark¹; Ann Ward¹; Jason Michalec¹

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² New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 205 N. Belle Meade Rd., Suite 1, East Setauket, NY 11733

Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP): Update on 2008 activities

Borggaard, Diane¹

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How low do you go and how high is too high: Groundline profiles in the Bay of Fundy and some processes that influence them

Sean Brilliant¹

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Mitigating risk to whales of lobster fishing off the coast of Maine

Chris Brehme¹; Hauke Kite-Powell²; Scott Kraus³; Kerry Lagueux³; Patrice McCarron⁴

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³ New England Aquarium

⁴ Maine Lobstermen's Association

Documented calf mortality and an estimation of potential calf loss in North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*)

Browning, Cynthia L.¹; Rolland, Rosalind M.¹; Kraus, Scott D.¹

¹ New England Aquarium, Central Wharf, Boston, MA 02110, United States (cynthbrown413@hotmail.com)

Taking stock of the New Zealand southern right whale

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³ *World Whaling History, 1774 Sterling Drive, Redding, CA 96003, USA*

An update on the demography of the North Atlantic right whale: New models and new patterns

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Navigating the Endangered Species Act and Species At Risk Act: Steering Canada and the USA toward bilateral protection of the North Atlantic right whale

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Recent winter field surveys of a southern right whale breeding ground at the Auckland Islands, New Zealand

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⁴ *Antarctic Wildlife Research Unit, School of Zoology, University of Tasmania, Churchill Ave, Sandy Bay, TAS Australia 7005*

Spatio-temporal dynamics of right whale acoustic habitats: Implications for communication and behavioral ecology

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³ *Marine Acoustics, Inc. 809 Aquidneck Ave., Middletown, RI 02842, USA*

⁴ *Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 175 Edward Foster Road, Scituate, MA, 02066, USA*

⁵ *Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, Massachusetts 02543, USA*

Right whale utilization of Jordan Basin in winter

Tim Cole¹; Allison Glass¹; Philip Hamilton²; Peter Duley¹; Misty Niemeyer¹; Cynthia Christman¹; Richard Pace¹; Tim Frasier³

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Fast ships and slow whales: Dynamic ship routing in the Gulf of Maine

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⁴ *Aegis Test Team, Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Bath ME 04530, USA*

Interaction between a zooplankton patch and foraging North Atlantic right whales in Cape Cod Bay

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(sfortune@coastalstudies.org)*

Sources and rates of errors in methods of individual identification for the North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*)

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Low genetic variability influences reproductive success in the North Atlantic right whale: Data from non-coding molecular markers

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Is the genetic similarity of North Atlantic right whale mating pairs resulting in increased levels of fetal loss?: Assessment of data on the Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC)

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Predictive modeling of North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*) foraging habitat in the Gulf of Maine

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Right Whale behavior in Florida coastal waters: Movements, swim speed, and habitat use

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North Atlantic Right Whale Catalog update

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Ships and whales: the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary as a case study for regional characterization and management of underwater noise

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Trends in minimum number alive: Are Gulf of Maine right whales approaching carrying capacity?

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Entangled North Atlantic right whales - October 2007-September 2008

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An automated RFID and GPS fixed gear identification system for onboard real-time data collection

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Vessel response to federally recommended measures to reduce ship and right whale interaction in the southeastern United States calving ground

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Marking reveals unexpected persistence of a right whale carcass

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An assessment of the importance of behavioral context and temporal scale in the analysis of acoustic monitoring data from North Atlantic right whales in Cape Cod Bay

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Maine lobster industry's bottom line effort

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On the path to starvation: the effects of anthropogenic noise on right whale foraging success

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Tracking mitochondrial control region heteroplasmy through multiple generations in the North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*)

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Community outreach to increase awareness and involvement in whale disentanglement

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Contributions to the Right Whale Catalogue from a Canadian whale watch vessel

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**The Right Whale Sighting Advisory System (RWSAS) in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic:
A six year review 2002-2007**

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Morphological variation in the three *Eubalaena* species: *E. glacialis*, *E. australis* and *E. japonica*: Size differs but proportions are constrained by hydrodynamic performance

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Spatial distribution and timing of right whale ‘gunshot’ sound displays in the Bay of Fundy, Canada

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Differentiation of mtDNA lineages among southern right whales from along the Australian coast and the New Zealand sub-Antarctic islands

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Near realtime species distribution modeling of right whales in the Gulf of Maine

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Tension and pressure can tell an interesting story

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Fall and winter patterns in North Atlantic right whale up-calls throughout Jeffreys Ledge

Rhoads, A.¹; Clark, C. W.²; Cole, T.¹; Niemeyer, M.¹; Pekarcik, C.³; Risch, D.¹; Weinrich, M.³; Van Parijs, S.M.^{1,2}

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Estimating habitat suitability in the migratory corridor of NW Atlantic right whales.

Schick, Robert S.¹; Loarie, S. R.²; Halpin, P. N.¹; Read, A. J.¹; Slay, C. S.³; Kraus, S. D.⁴; Mate, B. R.⁵; Baumgartner, M. F.⁶; Clark, J. S.¹

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Ship strike reduction final rule

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The ecology of risk

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An update on acoustic monitoring systems in Massachusetts Bay: Near-real-time reporting to mitigate LNG ship strikes, seasonal occurrences of calling right whales and quantification of ambient noise

Christopher Tremblay¹; Christopher W. Clark¹; John Kemp²; Kris Newhal²; Christi Diamond¹; Bobbi Estabrook¹; Beth Howard¹; Clara McCarthy¹; Janelle Morano¹; Charles Muirhead¹; Anita Murray¹; Danielle Nelson¹; Mike Pitzrick¹; Dimitri Ponirakis¹; Bethany Roberts¹; Elizabeth Rowland¹; Jamey Tielens¹; Ann Warde¹

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Vessel Avoidance & Conservation Area Transit Experiment (VACATE): A preliminary analysis

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Passive acoustic tracking of Northern Atlantic right whale up calls: Understanding call characteristics, patterns and behavioral ecology

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Right whales on Jeffreys Ledge 2003-2007: Evidence for a critical habitat?

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A review of gear modifications in Northwest Atlantic fisheries from the perspective of baleen whale biology and behavior

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Solutions from the water: Towards a fishermen-led plan to reduce entanglements in Canada.

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Lawyers and lobbyists and right whales: Oh my!

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⁴ *Ocean Conservancy, 1300 19th Street, NW, 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20036*

Scientific Literature and Reports

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Calendar

February 4, 2009: "Whaling to Watching" - first of five lectures on Man and Whales: Changing Views Through Time at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts. Other lectures will be **February 18** ("Who They Are"), **March 4** ("Whale Hunter and Whale Song"), **March 18** ("Flensing/Rendering") and **April 1** ("Right Whales" – featuring Mike Dyer of the Museum and Scott Kraus of the New England Aquarium). For more information, go to www.whalingmuseum.org

May 12, 2009: Tentative date for the next Southeast U.S. Right Whale Recovery Plan Implementation Team (SEIT) meeting, tentatively to be held at the Environmental Education Center, Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve, Ponta Vedra, Florida. For information, contact SEIT co-chair Leslie Ward at Leslie.Ward@MyFWC.com

May 20-24, 2009: International Marine Conservation Congress. George Mason University, Washington, DC. For further information, go to www.conbio.org/imcc

October 12-16, 2009: 18th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals sponsored by the Society of Marine Mammalogy, to be held in Québec, Canada. For details, go to www.marinemammalogy.org

November 11-12, 2009: Tentative dates for the next North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium annual meeting. Tentative location: New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts. For further information, contact Heather Pettis, the Consortium Secretary, at hpettis@neaq.org

2011: 19th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals sponsored by the Society of Marine Mammalogy, to be held in Tampa, Florida. For details, go to www.marinemammalogy.org

Right Whale News

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