

Monitoring Maine's Marine Invaders

Beth Bisson, Maine Sea Grant

Caroline Casals, Gulf of Maine Research Institute

Jeremy Miller, Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve

This session consisted of three fast-paced, information-filled and engaging presentations with slide shows by the above speakers. Questions by audience members during and after the presentations deepened the discussion and in some cases enlightened the speakers with descriptions of new, undocumented cases of invasives. The session ended with a walk to the SMCC pier for an overview of the MIMIC protocol for floating docks and piers and to inspect marine invasive and native species on an experimental settlement plate mounted to a lobster trap. The first speaker, Beth Bisson, introduced the Maine Marine Invasive Species Collaborative (MMISCo) and gave an update on the current status of various marine invasive species issues, research projects, and outreach and monitoring efforts in Maine. The research updates and outreach highlights focused on projects related to European green crabs, the invasive red marine algae, *Heterosiphonia japonica*, and the Chinese mitten crab, as well as other species of concern.

Caroline Casals provided a summary description of Vital Signs, a citizen science program at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute that works with teachers and their students across the State of Maine to monitor invasive species and the native species they impact. She noted the educational benefits to students of “forcing” detailed descriptions when submitting data.

Jeremy Miller gave monitoring updates, highlighting recent activities of programs working around the state, including the Northeast regional Marine Invader Monitoring and Information Collaborative (MIMIC) program, which is coordinated in Maine by Miller at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the Vital Signs Program. He noted the goals of early detection, education and data, and that 23 species are currently monitored. After his brief in-class talk, Miller finished the session at the SMCC pier.