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Maine Clammers Association Newsletter Winter 2017 2018

Maine Clammers Association

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Clam Whistler

Supporting the profession of clamming & Maine's coastal economy



Wild Clammers: from Clean Water to Predation

Using science to fight to sustain Maine's clamming industry and coastal communities

The Maine Clammers Association (MCA) was founded to provide a platform for Maine clammers to advocate on issues of importance to the industry and to keep our coastal economy healthy and vibrant. Our understanding of the challenges Maine's clam fishery is grappling with has evolved over the last decade.

Originally, MCA worked to inform clammers about water quality issues. The mobilization of an engaged clammer citizenry resulted in pollution sources being identified and addressed, as well as improved water quality testing methods. By the late 2000s hundreds of intertidal acres once closed to clamming had been re-opened.

However, despite the opening of large areas of harvestable areas, clam landings did not go up. In 2012, MCA began sounding the alarm about the increasing numbers of green crabs and the corresponding decrease in soft-shell clams. At MCA's urging, the town of Freeport invested in field research to better understand the effects of green crabs on clams. Since 2014, the MCA has been collaborating with the Downeast Institute on the largest intertidal field research project in the history of Maine. Extensive data collection and analysis determined that the cause of the soft-shell clam decline is increased levels of predation by

green crabs and other predators spurred on by increasing ocean temperatures. The research tested many different methods to protect clams from predators, including green crab trapping, predator deterrent fencing, netting, and boxes.

Now that we have this information it is time to use it. Scientists predict that Gulf of Maine water temperatures will continue to rise, so we can expect the high levels of predation on clams to continue. This puts the future of clamming in jeopardy. We must adapt our currently used shellfish management tools to reflect the changed ecological conditions.

With your support, the MCA will be able to continue to advocate for the use of science to update shellfish management and work to sustain the economically and culturally important profession of clamming for future generations of Mainers. Please consider donating to the MCA to help preserve this unique part of Maine's coastal culture.

Sincerely,

President





Keep Our Waters Clean!
MAINE CLAMMER'S ASSOCIATION

Maine Clammers Association

Board of Directors

Chad Coffin, President
Walt Coffin, Vice President
Clint Goodenow, Treasurer
Dr. Brian Beal, Scientific Advisor

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www.maineclammers.org



GIVE

Donate online:

www.maineclammers.org/give/

or use the enclosed envelope to send a check.

Your contribution is tax-deductible.

Contribute to the Santa Fund!

Each year the Maine Clammers Association brings Christmas and much needed holiday cheer to economically disadvantaged Mainers. Our clammer elves have delivered warm clothing, toys, groceries, heating assistance and more to hundreds of Maine to families and elders in communities up and down the Maine coast – from Lubec to Casco Bay.

Maine's clammers have a unique connection to individuals who typically slip through the cracks of mainstream Christmas charity drives. MCA is able to identify and reach these families through our extensive grass-roots network of contacts in Maine's coastal communities. We make deliveries to places like Lubec, Machias, Deer Isle, Waldoboro, Harpswell, Durham and Freeport.

We need your help and generosity to continue sharing with the less fortunate. Please consider making a contribution to the 2017 Santa Fund.

Two Ways to Donate

There are two ways to donate:

1) Online. Go to:

www.maineclammers.org/give and make your donation online through Paypal.

2) USPS Mail: Use the enclosed envelope to send a check to the Maine Clammers Association.



A group of elves filling up the clammer sleigh in 2016.

Most Recent Accomplishments:

- The 2016 Santa Fund assisted 65 families in 10 Maine towns.
- Updated the MCA webpage. Thanks to Jonathan Braden and www.electricleaf.com.
- Continued obtaining information about the soft-shell clam decline through collaborating with the Downeast Institute on the state's largest intertidal research project.
- Communicates the latest scientific discoveries to ME's shellfish industry.
- Works with ME Department of Marine Resources and municipal shellfish programs to inform shellfish management decisions.
- Presented a shellfish management report at the Maine Fishermen's Forum.
- Conducted marine science education programs in K-12 schools.
- Actively elevates the public's perception of clammers and brings important issues facing clammers to the forefront.

