



# Combining Harvester Knowledge with Science in Educational Materials for Marine Species at Risk

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# Wolffish

Three species of wolffish occur in eastern Canadian waters: northern wolffish, spotted wolffish, and Atlantic, or striped, wolffish. Their looks have often inspired fear. In actual fact, wolffish are very docile and play an important role in marine ecosystems.



Striped



Spotted



Northern

Wolffish have impressive teeth and jaw muscles that enable them to crush the shells of adult whelks, periwinkles, and clams. Sea urchins are a favourite food of the striped wolffish. This preference for sea urchins helps to maintain healthy kelp ecosystems, since large masses of sea urchins can consume whole beds of kelp, turning them into urchin barrens. By keeping urchin numbers in check, wolffish are helping to protect an important ecosystem that many other species rely on for food, shelter, and nursery habitat.

All three species of wolffish experienced serious population declines during the 1980s and 1990s. The *Species at Risk Act* lists the northern and spotted wolffish as threatened and the striped wolffish as special concern. Unfortunately, very little is known about northern and spotted wolffish and almost no footage exists of them in their habitat. This DVD takes a look at the underwater habits of the striped wolffish and introduces the viewer to fish harvesters who encounter wolffish at sea.



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Duration 20min

Canada

Habitat Stewardship  
Program for Species at Risk



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# Wolffish

## *a balance of life*



Descend to the bottom of the sea to view the amazing wolffish. Learn about three species of wolffish, also known as catfish, and their role in the marine ecosystem. Listen to fish harvesters of Newfoundland and Labrador talk about their experiences with wolffish and the need to conserve them.







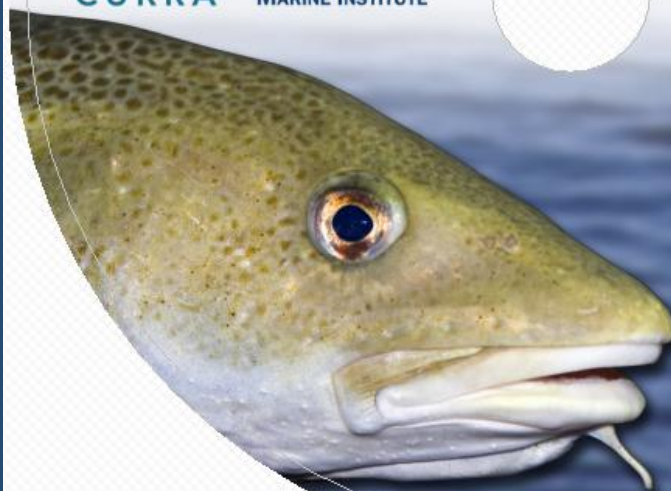
# Cod

## Renewing a Bountiful Catch

Canada



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## Comments from DVD viewers



“The blend of science-based interpretation and TEK through interview and archival video footage format is good.”

“AWESOME! Very comprehensive and hitting the nail right on the head.”

“Hearing Jack Troake talk about the fish on the water for miles chopping capelin, I, too, have seen and heard this when I was a young boy.”



# Atlantic Cod: All of us can help!

Until the 1960s, the abundance of Atlantic Cod in Newfoundland and Labrador waters was the largest in the world. Today people are working to bring severely depleted cod stocks back to their once bountiful levels.

Cm Ft  
6 ft  
5 ft, 10 in. Man



1 ft. 10 in. (.55 metre), age 6,  
1 million eggs\*



3 ft. 8 in. (1.12 metre), age 16,  
25 million eggs\*



4 ft. 1 in. (1.23 metre), age 20,  
50 million eggs\*

**Large cod** are vital to recovery. A female cod that lives out her productive life span (about 20 years) will have produced 50 million eggs! At age 16 she is only half way there.

\*Cumulative number of eggs during lifespan. Few survive to maturity. Data vary with stock area. Standard length measurement (no tail fin).

**What you can do:**  
Support fish harvesters who promote stewardship initiatives and recognize the importance of protecting large fish. In the recreational groundfish fishery, be content with smaller fish. Don't highgrade. Imagine the return of the big ones!

**What you can do:**  
Take care of the nurseries. Prevent damage to eelgrass and kelp. Reduce pollution and run-off, discharge of waste, or any activity that makes the water murky.

**Eelgrass and kelp beds** in coastal waters are 30 ft deep are nurseries for juvenile cod. They provide protection from predators and abundant food to help young cod grow fast.



**Fishing Communities:**  
Our Heritage. Our Future.

**Fish harvesters and fisheries scientists** are integrating knowledge from harvesters with scientific research to learn more about cod behaviour and migration. A cod tagged in September 2007 was recaptured 331 days later by the same harvester.



**What you can do:**  
Learn more about cod and the world's oceans. Ask a harvester and plant worker about their work. Talk with family and friends about the importance of healthy fisheries to coastal communities.

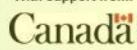


Contributors: David Schneider, with John Bratley, Alain Frechet, Robert Gregory, Jeffrey Hutchings, David Methven, George Rose, Jason Spingle, Joseph Wroblewski, and DFO staff. Egg numbers from a thesis by Cassandra Rideout, based on DFO data from George Lilly. Illustration: Cynthia Colosimo. Photos: Kathleen Blanchard, Candace Cochrane, David Coté, Robert Gregory, Pierre LeBlanc, Anne Reich, and Monty Way.

Placemat by:



With support from:



Habitat Stewardship  
Program for Species at Risk



**What do you think?**  
Send us an email: [info@intervale.ca](mailto:info@intervale.ca)



## Placemat feedback



“That’s really interesting about those eggs.”

“Now we know that eelgrass beds are important nurseries for cod.”

“Tourists would read the placemat and then go down to the wharf to talk to fishermen about what they read. I know, because I’m the daughter of a fisherman and my father tells me so.”











Community-University Research  
for Recovery Alliance

