

FISHERIES NEWS

The Seaside Flavor of Higashidoori

July-September 2017

Scallop, Delicacy of the Sea bed

Scallop fishing was active at Noushi port this summer. The author introduces how this delicacy of the sea bed is fished.

Eel, The Mysterious Fish

Fishermen in Sarugamori conducted annual eel fishing. The author has released and tagged many eels since 2016 collaborating with an inland fisheries research institute. This fishing was also aimed at recapturing the tagged eels.

Japanese Halibut, Aomori's fish

Baby Japanese Halibut was released at fishing ports in Higashidoori. The author introduces the characteristic of hatchery reared halibut and its life history.

Haida's cooking of marine resources

The author introduces an interesting food culture of the Haida Nation which fascinates him so much. The author talks about a Herring roe on a kelp "K'aaw".



Sowing culture of scallop ~Harvest~

Scallop fishing in Noushi was active from June to August. I accompanied the fishing done by a local fisherman and saw how scallops are fished. Scallop was fished using a dredge net at a designated plot where the scallop seed was sowed in 2015. Scallop, which was about 6 cm at release, grew up to around 11cm. Scallop of this year was beautiful without any attaching organisms such as "Akazaragai" which is also a tasty shellfish. It seemed that larvae of "Akazaragai" were not abundant around the area where scallop seed was produced in 2015. New scallop seed will be sowed in this plot next spring.



Eel fishing and tagging research ~Mystery of the released eel~

A Fishermens group in Sarugamori carried out annual eel fishing at Onuma and Sakyo-numa. They set longlines baited with live freshwater prawn, and retrieved the lines the next morning. I accompanied the fishermen as they attempted to recapture eels with a colored resin tag showing they were released into Onuma in 2016 and 2017. This tagging program aims to clarify the survival of released eels. A total of 41 and 25 eels were caught at Onuma and Sakyo-numa, respectively. However the tagged eels were not captured this time. It became so mysterious because some tagged eels were recaptured in Lake Ogawara. Have the released eels gone somewhere else? Have they died after the habitat change and competition in the wild? Or was the bait too big for the eel to swallow? A lot of hypotheses popped up in the author's mind. It is an interesting challenge to determine the fate of released eels. We will continue the tagging program until we clarify the mystery of released eels. In collaboration with an inland fisheries research station, we have also conducted a survey to confirm a spawning migration of eels from this September.

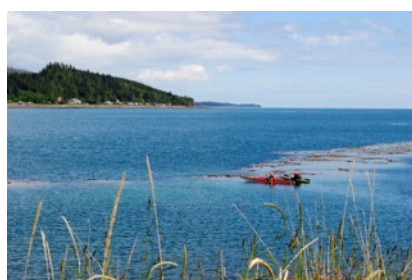


Japanese Halibut fingerlings released ~Aomori's fish~

Baby Japanese Halibut was released into the Ocean from fishing ports in the village. The baby Japanese Halibut was raised at a hatchery in Hashikami-town. The length of the fish was about 5 cm, and it seemed to be bigger than last year. Hatchery raised flounders used to have had pigmentation on its back side. We called these flounders "Panda", and therefore it was easy to distinguish these from wild ones. Nowadays we see these flounders once in a while because the culture method has been developed. Flatfishes have an eye on both sides during their pelagic life stage after hatching. An eye on right or left side moves toward the other side as the days pass during the pelagic life stage. This drastic physical change is called metamorphosis. Flatfishes change their habitat and settle down on the bottom when the metamorphosis is completed. Settled Japanese Halibut starts eating Mysis, a type of shrimp selectively and grows bigger and bigger. After 4-5 years, it grows up to 35 cm which is the minimum legal size, and is fished by fishermen.



Haida's food culture, traditional utilization of marine resources



Haida Gwaii means the islands of Haida Nation which is a Coastal First Nation in Canada. The Haida have lived on the islands for a long time, and established a unique culture represented by a magnificent totem pole. The utilization of the marine food resources is also interesting, and is a topic which fascinates the author very much. The author introduces one of his favorite foods, "K'aaw" (pronounced "Gao")

which is a herring roe on a kelp. Schools of the Pacific herring migrate to spawn in a Giant kelp forest along shoreline in spring. The kelp, herring lay eggs, "K'aaw" is an important food item for the Haida culture. The Haida eat it in raw or boiled, and preserve it dried or salted. It had been exported to Japan when the herring stock was abundant. Only Haida have been allowed to catch it for subsistence since the herring stock was depleted by commercial fishing. Haida had crossed Hecate Strait by canoe, and traded seafood such as "K'aaw" with Ooligan a type of smelt grease which tribes on the main land have produced. People nowadays use a Ferry but not a canoe. The author heard that the kelp forest was shrinking recently when he visited last July. However the beautiful landscape was still there, and he realized that this island was his home. He will migrate back to the island in the near future.

