Free Public Lecture

A Trap With a Twist: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Prawn Traps Designed to Reduce Rockfish Bycatch.

Brett Favaro
Dept. Biological Sciences, Simon Fraser University

Fishery bycatch is the unused or unregulated catch of non-target organisms. It is seen as a threat to conservation efforts, and may be a major source of mortality for many species. British Columbia's commercial spot prawn trap fishery is a low-bycatch fishery lauded for its low amount of bycatch relative to other shrimp and prawn fisheries. However, the incidental capture of juvenile and subadult rockfish has raised concern. Rockfish are not resilient to exploitation, and decades of overfishing have reduced their abundance to the point where fisheries managers have curtailed quotas and instituted conservation areas to facilitate rockfish recovery. To reduce prawn trap-induced bycatch mortality, we have designed and tested a suite of Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRD's) aimed at reducing rockfish bycatch while maintaining prawn catch. This talk will summarize the results of these studies, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of applying technological fixes to the bycatch problem and describe how in situ camera recordings have enabled researchers to assess the performance of these devices. Finally, future plans for improving and industrial-scale testing of this technology will be outlined

Brett Favaro is a Ph.D. student at Simon Fraser University, affiliated with Vancouver Island University. Brett's research centers on the issue of reducing bycatch in commercial fisheries. He is a committed researcher with a passion for marine conservation, and enjoys taking a cross-disciplinary approach to solving conservation issues. His work on designing bycatch reduction devices for BC's prawn fishery earned him 4th place out of 84 in the World Wildlife Foundation's 2011 "Smartgear" competition. When not working, Brett enjoys swimming, weight training, and scuba diving.

Wednesday, January 11, 2012
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Vancouver Island University, Building 356, Room 109

Sponsors: Mid-Island Science, Technology & Innovations Council (MISTIC), Natural Sciences & Engineering Research Council (NSERC), VIUFA Professional Development Fund, Faculty of Science and Technology

MISTIC Mid-Island Science, Technology & Innovation Council

VIUfa vancouver island university faculty association

NSERC CRSNG