

Conducting scientific research projects that support sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and agriculture

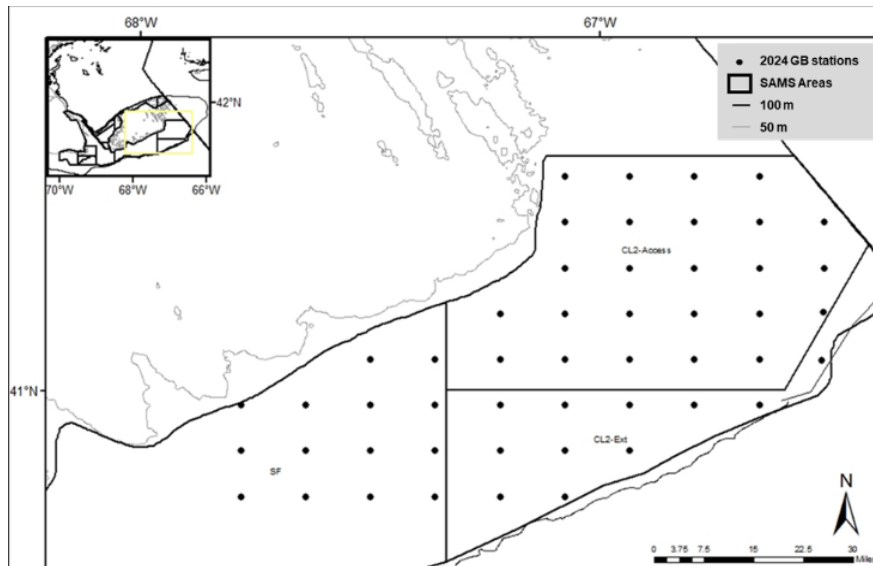
277 Hatchville Road • East Falmouth, MA 02536
Tel: (508) 356-3601 • Fax: (508) 356-3603
Website: www.coonamessettfarmfoundation.org

Research Cruise Summary Report 2024

Project Name:	<i>Seasonal Survey of Scallop Fishery on the Eastern Part of Georges Bank</i>
Vessel Name:	Beiningen
Departure Date:	10/7/2024
Land Date:	10/12/2024
Port:	New Bedford, MA
Chief Scientist:	Luisa Garcia
Scientific Crew:	Natalie Jennings, Farrell Davis, Justin Potter
Report Completed by:	Luisa Garcia

STUDY AREA

The trip was conducted on eastern part of Georges Bank, covering closed area II (CAII), CAII Extension (CAII-Ext), and Southern Flank (SF) SAMS areas.



CRUISE OBJECTIVES

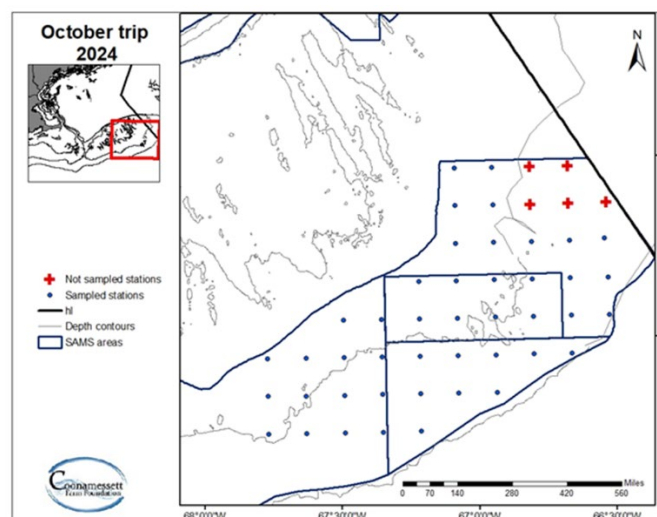
To ensure a robust dataset concerning distribution and abundance of scallops and bycatch species over time, this project has scheduled six research trips in the eastern part of GB. The main goals of the project are:

1. Evaluate seasonal biomass changes of pre-recruit, recruit, and adult scallops using catch data from a dredge cover net in eastern GB.
2. Collect scallop gonad samples to investigate seasonal and spatial variations in scallop spawning on eastern GB.
3. Evaluate seasonal changes in scallop health status by macroscopically inspecting for scallop meat color, nematodes, orange pustules, and shell blisters on eastern GB.
4. Investigate relationships between predator distribution/abundance and the distribution/abundance of scallops and clappers on eastern GB.
5. Evaluate seasonal changes in the distribution and abundance of key bycatch species in relation to scallop aggregations on eastern GB.
6. Determine when yellowtail and windowpane flounder are spawning within the eastern part GB throughout gonad examination.
7. Conduct biological sampling of American lobster caught in the dredges to assess distribution, abundance, shell hardness, presence of eggs, shell disease symptoms, and damage due to the dredge.

This was the second trip of the 2024 RSA Seasonal Survey project. In this trip two 15-foot wide (4.57 m) standard scallop dredges were used to sample 44 stations (Figure below). One dredge had an attached 40-mm mesh cover net to retain juvenile or small individuals (scallops, fish, and other bycatch species) that normally escape from commercial scallop dredges. After every tow, catch from each dredge and the cover net was sorted by species, counted, and measured. All measurements were recorded using electronic measuring boards, and weights were obtained using Marel 1100 series scales.

OBSERVATIONS

Due to several lobster buoys in the area. For this trip we could not sample 5 stations (see map).



RESULTS

A total of 49 stations were sampled. 25 species were captured (**Table 1**). An in-depth data analysis and conclusions will be given at the end of the project in October 2025.

Table 1. Weights (kg) of species captured during the October seasonal survey trip on the eastern portion of GB.

Species caught	Uncovered dredge	Covered dredge
Spiny Dogfish	0	9.76
Unclassified Skates	847.94	498.28
Barndoor Skate	90.39	23.08
Conger Eel	0.05	0
Silver Hake	0.77	19.74
Red Hake	5.89	54.79
Spotted Hake	0	0.42
Summer Flounder	12.16	3.15
Fourspot Flounder	2.33	53.66
Yellowtail Flounder	2.27	1.26
Windowpane Flounder	3.8	3.88
Gulfstream Flounder	0.09	5.14
Butterfish	0	0.04
Longhorn Sculpin	1.1	6.9
Sea Raven	1.51	0
Northern Searobin	1.26	11.81
Ocean Pout	0.9	2.67
Monkfish	79.44	44.84
Jonah Crab	42.3	30.56
Rock Crab	0	0.51
Sea Scallop	1367.8	1214.9
American Lobster	56.92	38.75
Loligo Squid	0	0.47
Northern Moon Snail	0.21	3.12
Waved Whelk	0	1.2

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS



Net mending in between stations



*Sampled tows from several station included
dense colonies of acorn barnacles*



Preparing to set-out!