

# State looks for clues of Sound's health

By Judy Benson  
THE DAY

NEW LONDON — Captain Rodney Randall turned at the wheel to size up the first catch of this sunny May morning, hauled on board about an hour into what would be nearly a 12-hour workday on Long Island Sound.

State fisheries biologist Deb Pacileo had been shifting levers on the motorized winch to reel in the cone-shaped trawl net. Seasonal research assistants Dan Lee and Mike Trainor, encased in orange bib overalls and raincoats, rubber gloves, steel-toed boots and hard hats, manned the bow to grab yard after yard of net back onto the reel. A few

seconds after the ghost of the sinewy mesh bag became visible just below the surface, the two swung it on board. Only its tip was full.

Lee and Trainor untied the net end to empty the contents onto a work table. In a blink, Pacileo, her colleague Kurt Gottschall, and another assistant, Tim Flanagan, joined them and, falling into the well-rehearsed choreography of cataloguing the catch, started sorting skate from squid, scup from butterfish. The captain looked on.

"I hope we get better fish than that today," Randall said of the paltry haul from dragging the net across a 1.5-mile swath of sandy bottom near

Fenwick Point and the mouth of the Connecticut River. "That's looking pretty slim."

To the satisfaction of Randall and the crew of the 50-foot research vessel, each of the four successive trawls that day would be better than the last. By the time the John Dempsey's bow line was fastened to the dock at the state Department of Environmental Protection Marine Headquarters in Old Lyme, the team had sorted, weighed, measured, recorded and thrown back well over 1,000 indicators of the condition of the estuary.

Among them were five varieties of herring, four kinds of flounder, two types of dogfish and two of sea robin, a

few pinky-sized cod, a striped bass that flipped itself out of the holding bucket onto the deck and a lobster with a death grip on two butterfish, one in each claw.

Each specimen serves like a dot of color on a pointillist painting, contributing to an overall picture of the Sound habitat.

From this day's work of five trawls, in mud, sand and in-between "transitional" locations randomly selected from a 500-section grid map of the Sound, the team would collect less than 5 percent of the data for this year's project.

The trawl survey, in its 26th year, samples 40 locations in the Sound over five months. Each site is sampled five times — once each in April, May, June, September and October. The resulting data is used by academic researchers, fisheries policymakers and others.

"There's a lot of species in Long Island Sound that most recreational fishermen don't even know are there, like fourspot flounder and mantis shrimp," said Gottschall, seated on an overturned bucket as he recorded the vessel's position on a computer map. "We see them daily."

Later in the trip, he held one of these little known but relatively common species, the windowpane flounder, up to the bright mid-morning sun.

"You can see through them," he said, pointing out the outline of the flounder's internal organs visible through its speckled scales.

"It's a terrific program, providing a great data set on the amounts and types of fish and changes in populations," said Mark Tedesco, director of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Long Island Sound Office.

His is one of several governmental offices that rely on the state Department of Environmental Protection trawl survey data to gauge the condition of the Sound and assess any regulation changes that might be indicated. Funding comes from a combination of DEP budget funds, grants and federal motor boat fuel taxes.

The survey, Tedesco said, is unique both in its longevity — having 26 years' worth of data is extremely valuable in detecting trends — and its breadth. The trawls cover sites from the mouth of the Thames River in Groton to Greenwich Harbor, in New York and Connecticut waters. This survey is the only source of such comprehensive baseline data on the Sound, Tedesco said.

co said, and many scientists depend on it.

One example of its value, he said, is in linking water conditions with animals. At each trawl site, the crew collects a water sample and measures the salinity, temperature, oxygen content and other characteristics.

"They've been able to show clearly that when the levels of dissolved oxygen were down, the fish numbers decreased across species," Tedesco said. "That was enormously useful to us to understanding the benefits of improving dissolved oxygen levels in the Sound."

That led to regulations and grant programs designed to reduce nitrogen levels from sewage outflows and other pollution sources, which in turn caused the depleted oxygen levels. Tedesco said the trawls gave scientists direct evidence of the relationship of oxygen levels to habitat.

The trawl data, he added, has also contributed to understanding how rising water temperatures in the Sound from climate change are altering the mix of fish species. Over time, the data has shown declines in cold water-loving species such as winter flounder, and increases in those that prefer warmer temperatures, such as summer flounder.

"This survey helps us understand how Long Island Sound is responding to larger forces," Tedesco said.

Teri Prady, spokeswoman for the New England office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fisheries Service, said the data is also used in combination with trawl surveys done by other states and by NOAA throughout the North Atlantic.

"The data are really most influential over time, to give you an idea of the changes," she said.

Long-term increases and decreases in average sizes and numbers of particular species, she said, are essential to determining what actions are needed to rebuild fish stock, for example, to assess commercial fishing pressures and whether regulations are working, need to be stricter, or can be relaxed.

The Connecticut survey, she said, provides one of the most important data sets for the North Atlantic region, because it samples more sites more times over a longer time span than comparable surveys.

"Connecticut has one of the largest, and it's pretty comprehensive," she said.

The co-leaders of the trawl have been doing the survey work long enough — Pacileo for nine years and Gottschall for twice that — to see some trends developing. In Gottschall's first year, nearly 800 tautog, or blackfish — popular with recreational anglers — came up in the trawls.

"Now we barely get 200," Pacileo said.

For tautog and a few other species, the survey gauges not only weight, length and numbers, but also the ages of the fish. The biologists extract the chevron of the tautog and check it back at the lab under a microscope to count growth rings, like the rings on a tree. For other species, the crew extracts the inner ear bones or takes scale scrapings to find growth rings.

Pacileo's first year coincided with a peak in the lobster population, just before the hard crash that started the following year and has accelerated. From the trawls that day two weeks ago, the crew counted, measured and weighed only two dozen or so lobsters. Several bore the telltale mottled shells from the disease that has contributed to the sharp decline of lobsters in the Sound.

"Winter flounder has also declined since I started," she said as the vessel chugged to the second site. "We used to have tows in the spring where we'd fill that whole work table with winter flounder."

The winter flounder catch for the 2007-08 trawl was 4,550 fish, compared to 10,288 in 1999. For the past several years, the most abundant species collected in the trawls have been scup, also called porgy, and butterfish, and this day's catch continued the trend. The fourth of the five trawls that day alone netted 764 butterfish, a bluish fish averaging 6 to 9 inches, and 480 scup, which are silvery with blue flecks and typically about 14 inches long.

Most of the catch is thrown back, except for a few dozen squid the crew packs on ice to donate to high school and college dissection classes, and the larger flounder and tautog whose ages will be calculated in the lab. Almost none of the smaller fish survive, but the most of the larger ones, like the striped bass and dogfish, do, Pacileo said.

"We try to get the bigger fish off the table first," she said, as the crew began scrubbing the measuring table and buckets after the final and heaviest trawl. "They have the best chance of surviving."

## Slain student's kin settle suit against NYC bar

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — The family of a graduate student murdered by a bouncer has settled a lawsuit against the bar where he worked.

The Daily News reported Sunday that Imette St. Guillen's family settled the suit before Darryl Littlejohn's trial started last month.

Terms of the settlement were not disclosed, but a lawyer for St. Guillen's family said the relatives would use some of the money to support a foundation set up to honor her.

Littlejohn, a 44-year-old ex-con, was convicted Wednesday in the 2006 slaying. His lawyer has said Littlejohn plans to appeal the conviction.

St. Guillen, 24, went to The Falls early on Feb. 24, 2006 and stayed past closing. Witnesses said she was asked to leave, and Littlejohn escorted her out.

St. Guillen's body was found wrapped in a quilt along a desolate road in Brooklyn. She was bound and gagged and had been beaten and sexually assaulted before

being asphyxiated.

The bar was owned by the same family that ran Dorrian's Red Hand, the tavern where "preppie killer" Robert Chambers met Jennifer Levin before strangling her during rough sex in the 1980s — a connection Littlejohn's lawyers emphasized in his trial.

Littlejohn's lawyer, Joyce David, claimed that bar manager Danny Dorrian framed Littlejohn in the slaying. Dorrian testified that he had nothing to do with St. Guillen's killing.

## Police blotter

### Stamford

#### Arrests:

- Hester Ballard, 24, of 295 Sundance Road, Stamford, was charged Sunday with second-degree threatening.
- Anael Caceres, 31, of 4 Orchard St., Stamford, was charged Sunday with second-degree breach of peace, third-degree assault and second-degree threatening.
- Dwight Donald Depina, 30, of 21 Richmond Place, Stamford, was charged Sunday with third-degree assault and disorderly conduct.
- Andrew Keating, 33, of 295 Sundance Road, Stamford, was charged Sunday with third-degree assault.
- Oscar Reyes-Mayen, 22, of 7 Hobbie St., Stamford, was charged Sunday with second-degree breach of peace, second-degree threatening and interfering with an officer or resisting arrest.
- Hugo Almazan, 38, of 28 White Birch Lane, Stamford, was charged Saturday with

disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

- Mary Ford, 43, of 76 Adams Ave., Stamford, was charged Saturday with evading responsibility in a motor vehicle and failure to drive right.
- Jonathan Gilbert, 31, of 203 Thompson Ave., Covington, Ala., was charged Saturday with soliciting without a permit.
- Royce Melvin Parker, 39, of 40 Vernon Place, Stamford, was charged Saturday with two counts of failure to appear in court.
- Michele Tomczyk, 50, of 125 Crystal Lake Road, Stamford, was charged Saturday with second-degree breach of peace.

### Norwalk

#### Arrests:

- Marvin Williams, 39, of 122 Indian Field Road, Bridgeport, was charged Saturday with third-degree criminal trespass.
- Yetnel Francois-Flis, 24,

of 116 Kennedy Drive, Bridgeport, was charged Saturday with assault.

- James Farmer, 23, of 64 Quarry Ledge, Madison, was charged Saturday with disorderly conduct.
- William Schoff, 23, of 47 Middlesex Road, Darien, was charged Saturday with disorderly conduct.
- Andies Mayano-Ricarte, 24, of 37 Pauline St., Trumbull, was charged Saturday with creating a public disturbance.
- Paulino Sanches, 23, of 36 Rayo Drive, Shelton, was charged Saturday with creating a public disturbance.
- Lawrence Siconolfi, 24, of 320 Linkfield Road, Watertown, was charged Saturday with creating a public disturbance.
- Darrell Richardson, 18, of 554 Connecticut Ave., Norwalk, was charged Saturday with second-degree breach of peace, third-degree criminal mischief, disorderly conduct and interfering with an officer or resisting arrest.

## Obituaries

### Death Listings

**BIXLER, Rose E.**  
86, of New Milford, CT  
June 6, 2009  
Lillis Funeral Home  
New Milford, CT

**BOVA, John F.**  
85 of Stamford, CT  
June 6, 2009  
Lacerenza Funeral Home  
Stamford, CT

**PRICE, Margaret B.**  
87 of Stamford  
June 4, 2009  
Bosak Funeral Home  
Stamford

**SAMAHA, Randy J.**  
39, of Stratford, CT  
June 5, 2009  
Lacerenza Funeral Home  
Stamford, CT

**SCALISE, Anthony J.**  
83 of Stamford  
June 3, 2009  
Cognetta Funeral Home & Crematory, Stamford

### Obituaries

#### ANTHONY J. SCALISE

83, a lifelong resident of Stamford, passed away peacefully Wednesday, June 3, 2009. Born March 21, 1926, he was the son of the late Frank and Mary Roina Scalise.

Anthony was a graduate of Stamford High School, and became a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps having served in World War II. He then joined the Stamford Police force and served for fifty years becoming a Sergeant Detective. Anthony was also an active member of the Eagles Club in Stamford for many years serving as an officer.

Anthony is survived by a son, John Scalise; a brother, Richard Scalise; and numerous nieces and nephews, scattered throughout the state.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his wife Patricia Klubezk' Slocum Scalise; his older brother, Gabriel Scalise; and a sister, Grace Valentine.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Tuesday, June 9 at the Church of St. Cecilia, 1184 Newfield Avenue, Stamford at 10 a.m. Interment will follow in Queen of Peace Cemetery, Stamford. There will be no calling hours. Friends may attend the Mass in celebration of Anthony.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Anthony's name to the American Heart Association, 5 Brookside Drive, P.O. Box 5022, Wallingford, CT, 06492-1822. Condolences may be expressed online at [www.cognetta.com](http://www.cognetta.com)

### Obituaries

#### JOHN F. BOVA SR.

John F. Bova Sr., age 85, a Stamford resident passed away on June 6, 2009 at Montefiore Hospital in New York City. He was born on August 20, 1923 in Stamford. He is the son of the late Peter Bova and Margaret Nardoza Bova. He is predeceased by his beloved wife Jane H. Portanova Bova. He is survived by his devoted son, John F. Bova Jr. and his wife Linda of Stamford; and one loving grandson, Matthew Bova. He is predeceased by his loving daughter Margaret A. Bova, one sister, Albina Bova and one brother Vito Bova who passed away in his early years. He is survived by two brothers Peter Bova and Vito Bova both residing in Stamford. Also surviving are aunts, nieces and nephews. John is a U.S. Army Veteran having served during WWII in Okinawa with Co. B 49 Battalion. He was a shipping clerk for Pitney Bowes in Stamford having worked for that firm for over 30 years. He was a member of the Pitney Bowes Oval Club. He was honored by the Stamford Old Timers Athletic Association in 1999, a softball empire in Stamford for over 35 years.

Mr. Bova was an avid golfer; he loved his dog "Sandy" who was his faithful companion for over 15 years, Sandy passed away four years ago. John will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Thursday, June 11th, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Bridget of Ireland Church, 278 Strawberry Hill Avenue, Stamford, CT. Entombment will follow in St. John's Cemetery, Darien, CT. Relatives and friends will be received at the Lacerenza Funeral Home, 8 Schuyler Avenue, Stamford, CT on Wednesday, June 10th, 2009 from 4 - 8 p.m. In lieu of flowers donations may be made in John's name to American Heart Association, 2722 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231. To leave a condolence visit our website at [www.lacerenzafuneralhome.com](http://www.lacerenzafuneralhome.com).

#### RANDY J. SAMAHA

Randy J. Samaha age 39, a Stratford, resident passed away June 5, 2009 after sustaining injuries from an automobile accident. He was born on October 9, 1969 in Stamford. He is survived by his loving wife, Melissa Perry Samaha, his loving children Jake, 5 and Amanda, 2; his parents, Edmond "Buddy" Samaha and Maureen Ashlund Samaha of Stamford, his in-laws, Richard and Donna Taber of Stamford. Randy was a Stamford 911 Dispatcher for 14 years and was a volunteer firefighter at Glenbrook Fire Department in Stamford for 14 years having obtained the rank of 1st Lt. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, June 10th, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at Saint Thomas More Church, 374 Middlesex Road, Darien. Interment will follow in St. John's Cemetery, Darien. Relatives and friends will be received at the Lacerenza Funeral Home, 8 Schuyler Avenue, Stamford on Tuesday, June 9th, 2009 from 4 to 8 p.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Samaha Children's Fund, 257 Ferndale Avenue, Stratford, CT 06614 or to Connecticut Burns Care Founda-

### Obituaries

tion, 601 Boston Post Road, Milford, CT 06460. To leave a condolence visit our website at [www.lacerenzafuneralhome.com](http://www.lacerenzafuneralhome.com).

#### ROSE E. BIXLER

Rose E. Bixler, 86, of New Milford, died Saturday, June 6, 2009, at New Milford Hospital, surrounded by her family. She was the wife of the late Roy T. Bixler, Jr.

Mrs. Bixler was born in Atlantic City, N.J., May 15, 1923, daughter of the late Paul and Grazia Carpentieri Prochilo. She was a licensed practical nurse. She moved from Rye Brook, NY to New Milford in 2006.

She is survived by two sons, R. Allan Bixler of Darien, Ct and Richard W. Bixler of New Milford; a daughter, Pauline Schuman of Carmel, NY.; and five grandchildren, Chad Bixler, Cory Bixler, Justin Schuman, Alicia Bixler, and Christopher Schuman. She was predeceased by three brothers and four sisters.

A Mass of Christian of Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, June 10, 2009 at 10 A.M. at St. Francis Xavier Church, New Milford, Ct. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family.

Friends may call on Tuesday, June 9, from 5 to 8 P.M. at the Lillis Funeral Home, 58 Bridge Street, New Milford, CT.

Contributions in her memory may be made to Corpus Christi Church, Port Chester, N.Y.; Christa House, Amityville, N.Y.; or American Heart Association.

### Death Notices

#### TO PLACE A NOTICE

The Advocate and Greenwich Time offer obituaries and death notices. Both are paid announcements that are not verified by the newspaper.

An **Obituary** includes the name of the deceased, date of death, town of residence, survivors and funeral arrangements. It may also contain more details, such as accomplishments and hobbies, along with a photograph. A paid obituary must be submitted on behalf of the family by a recognized funeral home.

A **Death Notice** contains only the name of the deceased, date of death, town of residence and funeral arrangements. This notice is usually run on consecutive days after an obituary is published.

To appear in the next day's publication, information must be received from the funeral home by 5:00 PM weekdays & weekends.

**Funeral homes** should use one of the following formats to deliver your copy to us:

Phone: 203-964-2315

Fax: 203-964-2302

please call the phone above to tell us you have faxed information to us.

E-mail: [obits@scni.com](mailto:obits@scni.com)

In Memoriams, Cards of Thanks and Memorial/Mass Notices also available.

Call 1-877-542-5620 or 1-877-542-6052 for details.

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