

The Observatory

THE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. LAWRENCE OBSERVATORY – SUMMER 2001

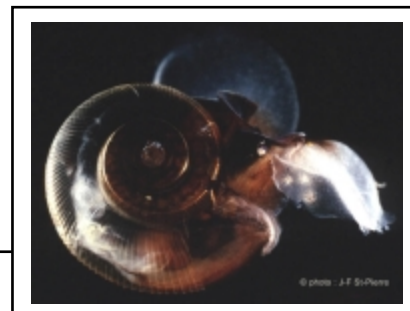
NEW: A GLOSSARY FOR THE ST. LAWRENCE

A glossary containing more than 80 entries in the different areas of interest covered by the OSL (physical oceanography, fisheries, plankton, etc.) has now been added to the Web site. This glossary can be consulted at any time from the links section of the OSL (the frame to the left of your screen). The glossary is especially useful since many of the scientific terms are illustrated by concrete examples with links to the Web products available on the site. In this way, the public can find definitions to improve their understanding of the technical terms used by oceanographers. It is also an excellent way to discover all that the OSL has to offer with respect to on-line data and other scientific information.

NEW ON-LINE PUBLICATIONS ABOUT ZOOPLANKTON

Two new publications have been added to the OSL's virtual library. The first is meant for the general public and explains how the thinning of the ozone layer and the penetration of UV radiation into the water column can affect the zooplanktonic organisms (fish eggs, larvae, copepods) living in the St. Lawrence Gulf and estuary. Several photographs are included with the short text. The second publication is for specialists; it presents a summary of the annual zooplankton evaluation in the St. Lawrence Gulf and estuary (a synthesis of data from 1994 to 2000) as well as the data collected every two weeks in 2000 by IML scientists at the stations "Gaspé Current" and "Anticosti Gyre" for the Atlantic Zonal Monitoring Program (AZMP). The section "zooplankton" should continue to increase as new data becomes available.

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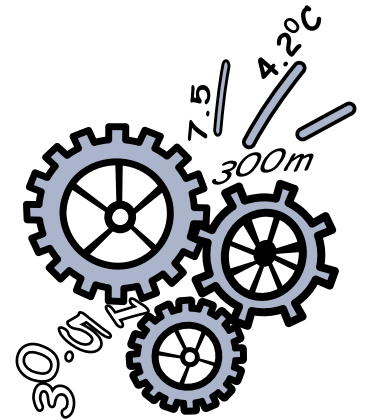
In brief

New: a glossary for the St. Lawrence	1
New on-line publications about zooplankton	1
ODMS news	2
Dataset updates	
Shipboard thermosalinographs	2
Phytoplankton monitoring	2
Sentinel fisheries Web site	3
Real-time buoy	3
Tide tables	3
The carbon cycle	3
OSL directory	4
Current projects	4
Statistics on site visits	4

ODMS NEWS

The Oceanographic Data Management System (ODMS) has recently been updated. The functionality has been improved and the system's performance increased. The main modifications are as follows:

- The map now includes northern Québec waters; data from Hudson Bay has started being loaded into the system.
- The technology *Java Web Start* from Sun Microsystems has been implanted. This technology allows the application to be started and run without using an Internet browser. The application resides on the user's workstation, eliminating upload delays that previously accompanied each new use. The application is started by clicking the icon installed on the workstation, just like any other local application. Each time that the application is started, a check is made on the server and an update is automatically made if a component of the system has been modified since the last use. All this is done in a transparent manner for clients of the ODMS, who can thus profit from the improvements made to the system.
- The communication protocols between the database and the archive server have been optimized to significantly improve the speed of query executions.
- A few bugs that had been reported by system users have been corrected in the current version.



The ODMS is accessible from the OSL portal.

[The OSL diffuses this product in collaboration with the Data Management Section of the Division of Ocean Sciences at MLI]

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DATASET UPDATES

SHIPBOARD THERMOSALINOGRAPHS

A third ship, the CCGS *Martha L. Black* (photo), has joined the two commercial ships already equipped to make continuous measurements of temperature and salinity in the surface waters of the St. Lawrence. Along with temperature and salinity, a third variable, fluorescence, is measured onboard the *Martha L. Black* during oceanographic missions. In addition to allowing the visualisation of the most recent data available, the thermosalinograph site presents all the archived data in the form of individual traces or grouped by periods of two weeks. One can also find graphs that summarize the data for a complete year. This allows, for example, interannual comparisons between temperature records (archives 2000 and 2001) or between the different measurements methods (thermosalinograph and CTD) used by the scientists at MLI during the oceanographic missions in the gulf. The Web pages for the thermosalinographs are diffused from the OSL:



<http://www.osl.gc.ca/produits/donnees/tsg/index.html>

[The section "Shipboard thermosalinographs" is a collaboration among the Oceanex and Relais Nordik Inc. companies, the Canadian Ice Service of Environment Canada, the Division of Ocean Sciences at MLI, and the Canadian Coast Guard, Laurentian Region (Fisheries and Oceans, Canada)]

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PHYTOPLANKTON MONITORING

The phytoplankton cell concentrations surveyed in 2000 by the St. Lawrence toxic phytoplankton monitoring program are available on line. The complete dataset, consisting of information from 11 stations collected from 1995 through 2000, may be consulted. The raw data completes the 1989–1994 synthesis report, which is also available from the OSL (*in French only*).

[The OSL diffuses this product for the Toxic Algae Research group of the Division of Ocean Sciences at MLI]

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SENTINEL FISHERIES WEB SITE

- The OSL and MLI's sentinel fisheries group announce new developments to the sentinel fisheries site:

<http://www.osl.gc.ca/en/peches-sentinelles/accueil.htm>. Within the next few months, the site will be completed with the addition of the mobile gear surveys (cod, redfish, and turbot).

- The 2000 data from the coastal fisheries (fixed gear) have been integrated into the database and are available from the Web site.

- The sentinel fisheries site has been diffusing the weekly fixed gear capture rate for cod since June. These data are presented in map form and are updated regularly with the aim of informing commercial fishers where the cod are located within a few days of the monthly opening of a directed fishery.

[This Web site is a partnership between the Sentinel Fisheries Program team of MLI's Fish and Marine Mammals Division and the OSL]

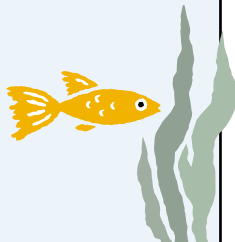
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REAL-TIME BUOY

The oceanographic buoy equipped for the real-time transmission of temperature, salinity, density, and fluorescence data from the surface water (moored off shore of MLI last year) will soon be installed in the middle of the maritime estuary, about 15 km off shore of Rimouski. It will be moored at the station "Rimouski," a sampling station with a depth of 312 m that has long been visited during oceanographic missions in the St. Lawrence. Like last year, the data will be transmitted in real time on the Internet via the OSL. New this year: the archived data can be consulted and the temporal evolution examined on the graphs presented.



[The OSL distributes this product in collaboration with the scientists and technicians of MLI's Division of Ocean Sciences]

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TIDE TABLES

Using the newest version of the tide tables on the Internet, one can now obtain tidal predictions for 30 days instead of 48 hours, as was the situation with the first electronic version. Modifications to the system have also shortened the time necessary for on-line queries. Users of this popular product will certainly be pleased with these improvements. The official site for the Canadian tide tables can be found at the address www.charts.gc.ca.

The site may also be accessed directly from the OSL by following the link from the Web page titled *St. Lawrence Tides*.

[The "Canadian Tide Tables" site is a product of the Canadian Hydrographic Service; the OSL collaborated for the design of the graphic interface and the Internet diffusion]

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THE CARBON CYCLE

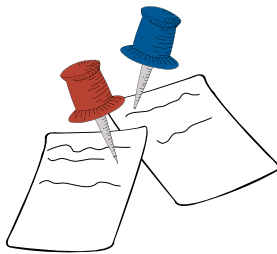
For the past year, the OSL has been working on an electronic publication concerning the carbon cycle in the planktonic food webs of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The second part of this project is now on line and covers the seasonal carbon flow budgets (winter-spring and summer-fall). Completing the first part, which presented the annual global budget in non-technical language, this second more detailed section is aimed at those who would like to know more about the seasonal differences in the carbon flows.

[The data used to elaborate this product came from research completed by scientists of MLI and several other institutions within the Canadian JGOFS program]

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OSL DIRECTORY

The OSL's virtual directory is regularly updated with new Internet links. These links are included within thematic sections that currently regroup more than 80 organizational sites (departments, university laboratories, research groups, etc.), some fifteen integrated information systems (access to databases on the St. Lawrence), and more than 40 thematic and educational sites—a gold mine of information for those interested in the St. Lawrence and the marine sciences! Don't hesitate to send us your Internet discoveries so that we can share them with all the OSL users.



CURRENT PROJECTS

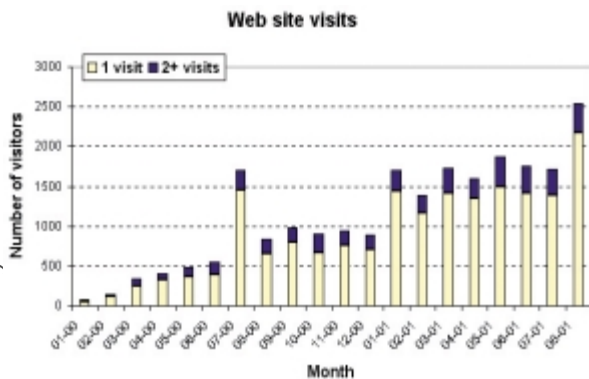
The section *What's New?* contains updated summaries of current projects and Web products that will soon be available from the OSL Web site.

STATISTICS ON SITE VISITS

The OSL is keeping up its momentum...(see the graph below). The last few months have confirmed that visits to this DFO portal are increasing (more than 11,000 visitors

and 25,000 sessions since the beginning of the year), both by department scientists (about 50% of the visitors) and the public. More and more users are return visitors (18%). The constant updates and availability of new value-added products explain the long session lengths, which now average about 19 minutes.

The Observatory - Summer 2001



(A summary of the monthly statistics is available on-line at the OSL site in the section *What's New?*)



The Observatory is an electronic newsletter published by the St. Lawrence Observatory. It is sent in PDF format to all who show interest in the project. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know at osl@osl.gc.ca. The newsletter is available in both official languages and may be accessed on-line from the Web site (via the *Information Kiosk*).

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