

Glossary

A amensalism – a symbiotic relationship in which one organism is harmed or inhibited and the other is unaffected

anadromous – fish that are born in freshwater rivers and streams but spend most of their adult lives in the marine environment, typically returning to freshwater to spawn, or reproduce.

anal fin – the median, unpaired fin on the ventral margin between the anus and the caudal fin in fishes

B benthic – living on or in the seabed.

benthos – those organisms attached to, living on, or in the seabed.

bioaccumulation – the accumulation of a substance (contaminant) within the tissues of an organism.

biological pollution – biological pollutants are animals, plants, or other organisms, the pollution of which refers to the introduction of an exotic species into a specific, non-native habitat.

bony fishes – fishes with a calcified hard skeleton and belonging to Class Osteichthyes; includes most fish species except sharks, rays, skates, hagfish, and lampreys.

C catadromous – fish that are born in the sea then migrate to freshwater to grow and mature.

caudal fin – the tail of fishes and some other aquatic vertebrates; the terminal vertical fin of a fish

caudal peduncle – the narrow area of the body from the back end of the anal fin to the base of the caudal fin.

commensalism – symbiotic relationship in which one organism derives benefit while causing little or no harm to the other

continental shelf – sloping undersea shelf of land that extends beyond the shore of the continent.

Glossary

countershading – Protective coloration in an animal or insect, characterized by darker coloring of areas exposed to light and lighter coloring of areas that are normally shaded

D deep-water species – those species living in water beyond the continental slope in depths of more than 400 meters.

demersal – refers to fish, such as cod, haddock and plaice, which live primarily on or near the seabed.

diadromous – fish that move during their life cycle between fresh and marine waters, e.g. salmon and eels.

digenea (digenetic) – taxonomic group of trematode worms with complex life cycles involving alternation of sexual reproduction as an internal parasite of a vertebrate with asexual reproduction in a mollusk and often including developmental stages in still other hosts and which include a number of parasites of humans (such as the Chinese liver fluke). (compare with monogenea)

dorsal fin - the fin or finlike integumentary expansion generally developed on the back of aquatic vertebrates

E ectoparasite – a parasite that attaches itself to and lives off the external surface of an animal like a fish.

endemism – of or relating to a native species or population occurring under highly restricted conditions due to the presence of a unique environmental factor that limits its distribution.

endoparasite – organisms such as tapeworms, hookworms, and trypanosomes that live within the host's organs or tissues, as well as organisms such as sporozoans that invade the host's cell

euryhaline – organisms able to tolerate a wide range of salinity.

eutrophication – the gradual increase in nutrient concentration in a body of water. Eutrophication is a natural process, which happens gradually over time; however, it can be accelerated through the actions of human activity.

An increase in nutrients leads to an increase in primary production. When the plants die, the decomposition process depletes the water of oxygen resulting in anoxic conditions, thus rendering the environment unsuitable for most species of aquatic organisms.

Glossary

F fin – a membranous, winglike or paddlelike organ attached to any of various parts of the body of fishes and certain other aquatic animals, used for propulsion, steering, or balancing

finlets – a small, detached ray of a fin in certain fishes, as mackerels

fish – a vertebrate with gills and fins

G gills – the organ that enables most aquatic animals to take dissolved oxygen from the water. It consists of a series of membranes that have many small blood vessels. Oxygen passes into the bloodstream and carbon dioxide passes out of it as water flows across the membranes

gill rakers – one of a series of stiff projections along the inner margins of the branchial arches that prevent food particles from passing through the branchial clefts

H host – organism or cell on or in which a parasite lives or feeds

I ichthyology – the scientific study of fish

ichthyoplankton – fish eggs and larvae belonging to the planktonic community.

invasive species – an introduced species that out-competes native species for space and resources.

isobath – a line on a map connecting points of equal bathymetry, i.e. equal depth, in the ocean or another water body.

L lateral line – the line, or system of lines, of sensory structures along the head and sides of fishes and amphibians, by which the animal is believed to detect water current and pressure changes and vibrations

M monogenea (monogenetic) – taxonomic group of parasitic platyhelminthes (flatworms) that generally have one host and usually that host is a fish. (compare with digenea)

mutualism – symbiotic relationship in which each of the organisms benefits

O operculum – a lid or flap covering an opening, such as the gill cover in some fish or the horny flap covering the opening of a snail

Glossary

P parasite – organism that lives on or in a different kind of organism (the host) from which it gets some or all of its nourishment. Parasites are generally harmful to their hosts, although the damage they do ranges widely from minor inconvenience to debilitating or fatal disease.

parasitism – symbiotic relationship in which one organism (the parasite) benefits and the other (the host) is generally harmed. Parasites derive nutrition from their host and may also gain other benefits such as shelter and a habitat in which to grow and reproduce.

pectoral fin – either of a pair of fins usually situated behind the head, one on each side, and corresponding to the forelimbs of higher vertebrates

pelvic fin – either of a pair of fins on the lower surface of the body, corresponding to the hind limbs of a land vertebrate; ventral fin

pyloric caeca – secrete digestive enzymes and absorb nutrients from the digested food

S sushi – cold boiled rice moistened with rice vinegar, usually shaped into bite-size pieces and topped with raw seafood (nigiri-zushi) or formed into a long seaweed-wrapped roll, often around strips of vegetable or raw fish, and sliced into bite-size pieces (mai-zushi).

surimi – protein paste derived from processing raw fish, primarily Alaska (walleye) pollock and Pacific whiting (hake). Surimi can be combined with flavoring agents and other substances and extruded to create marketable foodstuffs (e.g. imitation crab meat).

symbiosis – the close association between two or more organisms of different species, often but not necessarily benefiting each member. There are four forms of symbiosis: amensalism, commensalism, mutualism, and parasitism.