

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

AVANT-PROPOS	iii
RÉSUMÉ.....	iv
LISTE DES TABLEAUX.....	vii
LISTE DES FIGURES	viii
CHAPITRE I	
INFLUENCE DES CONDITIONS ENVIRONNEMENTALES SUR LES MOUVEMENTS À FAIBLE PROFONDEUR DU REQUIN DU GROENLAND (<i>SOMNIOSUS MICROCEPHALUS</i>)	1
Introduction	1
Matériels et méthodes	3
Sites d'étude	3
Émetteurs-récepteurs	4
Données complémentaires	4
Analyses statistiques	5
Résultats	5
Détections par requin	5
Détections par station	6
Température	6
Niveau de lumière	7
Marée	8
Profondeur	8
Limitations	9
Discussion	9
Température	9
Niveau de lumière	10
Marée	13
Influence de la profondeur	14
Autres facteurs environnementaux	15
Facteurs biologiques	15

CHAPITRE II	
INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL VARIABLES ON THE MOVEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR OF THE GREENLAND SHARK (<i>SOMNIOSUS MICROCEPHALUS</i>) IN SHALLOW WATER.....	17
Abstract	18
Introduction	19
Methods.....	21
Study Sites	21
Transmitters and Receivers	21
Additional Data.....	22
Statistical Analysis	23
Results	23
Detections per Shark.....	23
Detections per Station.....	23
Temperature.....	24
Light Level	25
Tide	25
Depth	26
Limitations.....	26
Discussion	26
Temperature.....	27
Light Level	27
Tide	30
Depth	30
Other Environmental Factors.....	31
Biological Factors.....	32
Acknowledgments.....	33
References	34
Figure captions	41
ANNEXE	
INSTRUCTIONS AUX AUTEURS	52

LISTE DES TABLEAUX

Table 1.	Period of deployment and data collection for acoustic tags attached to Greenland sharks off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005	37
Table 2.	Period of deployment and data collection for acoustic receivers in four bays off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005. Detections ceased when the receivers were removed on August 8, 20, and 21, 2005.....	38
Table 3.	Night time depth and temperature range and means for eight Greenland sharks tagged off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005	39
Table 4.	Daytime time depth and temperature range and means for eight Greenland sharks tagged off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005.....	40

LISTE DES FIGURES

Figure 1.	Map of acoustic sampling stations in the St. Lawrence Estuary near Baie-Comeau, Quebec. Circles indicate maximum range (600 m) of each receiver.....	42
Figure 2.	Daily number of signals detected for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005	43
Figure 3.	Temperature signals ($^{\circ}$ C) detected for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005	44
Figure 4.	Water temperature ($^{\circ}$ C) and depth (m) for shark 4 at station 1 (Baie des Anglais) on July 16, 2005, from 17:00 to 18:00	45
Figure 5.	Mean hourly temperatures ($^{\circ}$ C) (N=47,892) for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005	46
Figure 6.	Mean hourly depths (m) (N=48,761) for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005	47
Figure 7.	Tide cycle and temperature ($^{\circ}$ C) signals for sharks 1 (a), 3 (b), 4 (c), 6 (d), 7 (e) and 8 (f) at all stations from July 20 to 27. Dotted vertical lines indicate high tide at night	48
Figure 8.	Tide cycle and depth (m) signals for sharks 1 (a), 3 (b), 6 (d) and 7 (e) at all stations from July 20 to 27. Dotted vertical lines indicate high tide at night.....	49
Figure 9.	Day and night mean temperature ($^{\circ}$ C) and depth (m) during high and low tide for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005	50
Figure 10.	Daily mean temperature and depth (m) (N=48,761) and temperature ($^{\circ}$ C) (N=47,892) for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005	51

CHAPITRE I

INFLUENCE DES CONDITIONS ENVIRONNEMENTALES SUR LES MOUVEMENTS À FAIBLE PROFONDEUR DU REQUIN DU GROENLAND (*SOMNIOSUS MICROCEPHALUS*)

Introduction

Plusieurs espèces de requins ont des rythmes circadiens où ils se déplacent en eau profonde de jour puis remontent vers la surface de nuit : le requin bleu *Prionace glauca* (Carey and Scharold 1990), le requin-renard à gros yeux *Alopias superciliosus* (Nakano et al. 2003; Weng and Block 2004), le requin de récif *Carcharhinus perezii* (Chapman et al. 2007), le requin-taupe bleu *Isurus oxyrinchus* (Klimley et al. 2002), le requin grande gueule *Megachasma pelagios* (Nelson et al. 1997), le requin griset *Hexanchus griseus* (Andrews et al. 2009), et la petite roussette *Scyliorhinus canicula* (Sims et al. 2006). Cependant, des études ont démontré que les activités d'autres espèces de requins présentant des patrons conflictuels n'étaient pas associées à un rythme circadien, y compris le requin griset (Hulbert et al. 2006) et le requin du Groenland *Somniosus microcephalus* (Skomal and Benz 2004 ; Stokesbury et al. 2005).

Le requin du Groenland est le plus grand poisson des eaux polaires, pouvant atteindre une longueur de 730 cm (Compagno 1984). Malgré sa grande taille et sa distribution s'étendant dans au moins six pays de l'hémisphère nord-ouest (Yano et al. 2007), le requin du Groenland demeure largement inconnu de la science. Peu de connaissances ont été acquises sur son cycle de vie, son utilisation de l'habitat ainsi que les facteurs pouvant influencer ses mouvements. La plupart des articles scientifiques sur le requin du Groenland traitent surtout de sa distribution géographique, de son alimentation, des contaminants chimiques dans ses tissus, et du copépode parasite *Ommatokoita elongata* (Borucinska et al. 1998). En raison des rares observations en eaux de surface rapportées pendant le siècle dernier, le requin du Groenland a longtemps été considéré comme un requin d'eau froide presque exclusivement bathybenthique,

atteignant des profondeurs jusqu'à 2200 m (Herdendorf and Berra 1995). Des études au cours de la dernière décennie indiquent que le requin du Groenland ne manifeste aucune préférence pour les conditions environnementales dans l'océan Arctique (Skomal and Benz 2004). Toutefois, certaines préférences sont observées dans le Saint-Laurent où les écarts de température sont plus importants (Stokesbury et al. 2005).

Des pêches accessoires du requin du Groenland ont lieu dans le Saint-Laurent et dans le fjord du Saguenay (48.344937° N, -70.862052° W) depuis plus d'un siècle (Gallant and Harvey-Clark, données non publiées). Quoique les connaissances sur la reproduction du requin du Groenland soient quasi inexistantes, d'autres espèces de requins de taille semblable ou vivant dans des conditions similaires ont un faible taux de fécondité et qu'elles n'atteignent la maturité sexuelle qu'après plus de 20 années (Compagno 1984; Castro 2011). Les mortalités dues aux pêches accessoires pourraient donc mener au déclin des populations du requin du Groenland dans le Saint-Laurent et le Saguenay. Ainsi, une meilleure connaissance de l'utilisation de l'habitat et des préférences environnementales du requin du Groenland permettrait aux agences gouvernementales et à la communauté de pêche d'établir des pratiques de pêche visant à réduire les captures accessoires à des niveaux soutenables et à diminuer la perte d'équipements, de productivité, et de revenus que ces captures engendrent. De nouvelles connaissances sur les effets des variables physiques pourraient aussi aider à prédire les effets des changements climatiques sur la distribution du requin du Groenland.

Les observations du requin du Groenland en eaux peu profondes ne sont pas limitées au Saint-Laurent. Il a été pêché à la surface au harpon à l'île de Baffin (Beck and Mansfield 1984), et les Inuits Cumberland Sound au Nunavut observent occasionnellement ce requin longeant le fond à partir de la surface. Toutefois, ce comportement est associé aux activités de chasse lorsque les animaux capturés sont dépecés sur les berges (Idrobo 2008), ce qui n'est pas le cas à Baie-Comeau puisque la chasse commerciale du bélouga est interdite depuis 1960. Les mouvements observés du requin du Groenland ne sont pas uniques pour un requin de cette taille ayant une distribution nordique. Le requin dormeur du Pacifique *Somniosus pacificus*, qui est

étroitement apparenté au requin du Groenland, se déplace surtout sous la zone photique de jour et s'approche de la surface la nuit (Hulbert et al. 2006). Le requin griset, une autre espèce d'eau froide, est aussi associé aux marées nocturnes mais à plus grande profondeur (Andrews et al. 2009). Il reste donc à déterminer si ce dernier réagit au même stimuli environnemental que les deux requins dormeurs. Deux autres requins boréaux chevauchant la distribution connue du requin du Groenland, soit le requin bleu (Carey and Scharold 1990) et le requin-taupe bleu (Klimley et al. 2002), effectuent des mouvements verticaux diels.

Matériels et méthodes

Sites d'étude

Le requin du Groenland fréquente quatre baies de la rive nord de l'estuaire du Saint-Laurent dans la région de Baie-Comeau, Québec, Canada (Figure 1). Ces baies boréales sont caractérisées par un milieu littoral assujetti aux variations saisonnières et offrant une variété de proies connues du requin du Groenland y compris des poissons, crustacés et mollusques. La baie des Anglais (Station 1) (49.267596° N, -68.127496° W) est la plus grande avec une longueur d'environ 4,4 km et une profondeur maximale qui dépasse 100 m. La baie du Garde-feu (Station 2) (49.280868° N, -68.051043° W) mesure 1 km de long par 0,5 km de largeur. Sa profondeur maximale est aussi de 70 m. La Baie-Saint-Pancrace (Station 3) (49.287314° N, -68.045956° W), deuxième en superficie, est la plus étroite (environ 250 m de large par 1500 m de longueur), ce qui concentre le trafic des requins sur une plus petite surface et augmente les chances de poser un émetteur en plongée. Sa profondeur maximale est aussi de 70 m. La baie du Loup marin (Station 4) (49.280448° N, -68.009428° W) mesure seulement 30 m de longueur par 200 m de largeur. Elle diffère des autres baies par son profil abrupte ($\geq 40^{\circ}$) et profond (> 150 m). Les trois autres baies présentent plutôt un profil en pente douce ($\leq 20^{\circ}$). Les quatre baies du lieu d'étude débouchent sur l'estuaire du Saint-Laurent qui est large d'environ 56 km. La profondeur maximale du Chenal Laurentien au centre de l'estuaire est de 350 m.

Émetteurs-récepteurs

Afin de suivre les mouvements du requin du Groenland, nous avons posé des émetteurs acoustiques sur huit requins (longueur moyenne = 3 m) dans la Baie Saint-Pancrace (Station 3) les 18 et 19 juin 2005. Aucun requin n'a été pêché ou retenu afin de minimiser les risques de blessures aux requins et aux plongeurs. Les émetteurs acoustiques V16 (VEMCO[®] Halifax, Canada) ont été fixés à l'aide d'une perche tel un harpon (« Hawaiian sling ») par un plongeur équipé d'un scaphandre autonome à circuit ouvert. Un grappin de métal retenait l'émetteur dans le tissu superficiel du requin. L'émetteur était relié au grappin par un fil en acier inoxydable de 10 cm pris en sertissure (résistance à la traction de 90,9 kg). L'émetteur V16 émet un code d'identification unique afin que chacun des requins soit identifié individuellement. L'émetteur est équipé de capteurs mesurant la profondeur (pression) et la température (°C). Les émetteurs ont été programmés pour transmettre des données alternantes à 69 kHz à toutes les 60 secondes pendant la période d'échantillonnage du 19 juin au 19 août 2005. Les signaux étaient transmis sur une distance pouvant atteindre 600 m selon les conditions environnementales et la bathymétrie. La date et l'heure de chacun des signaux ont été archivées dans la mémoire d'un récepteur. Quatre récepteurs passifs VR2 (VEMCO[®] Halifax, Canada) ont été placés à 6 m du fond dans les quatre baies. Les signaux enregistrés par les récepteurs ont été récupérés à l'aide d'un ordinateur portable muni d'une interface VR1 PC (VEMCO[®] Halifax, Canada) à la fin de la période d'échantillonnage.

Données complémentaires

Pour déterminer les effets de la marée, nous avons utilisé les données tidales de Pêches et Océans Canada (Station #2840 / Baie-Comeau). Les données tidales étaient composées de deux variables. La marée haute comprenait les données des trois heures précédent et des trois heures suivant la marée haute. La marée basse comprenait les données des trois heures précédent et des trois heures suivant la marée basse. Cette distinction a été faite afin de créer une période tampon permettant aux requins de s'ajuster aux mouvements d'eau lors du flux et du reflux. Les données de température

provenaient de la bouée du réseau thermographe de l’Institut Maurice Lamontagne (Pêches et Océans Canada) qui est amarrée au large de Baie-Comeau (49.201663° N, -68.056660° W). Les niveaux de lumière pour la région de Baie-Comeau ont été mesurés en variables jour et nuit en se basant sur les données environnementales en ligne d’Environnement Canada. Les données sur les phases lunaires ont été obtenues en ligne de la National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) et elles étaient composées de deux variables. La pleine lune comprenait les données des sept jours précédent et des sept jours suivant la pleine lune (début du premier quartier au début du dernier quartier). La nouvelle lune comprenait les données des sept jours précédent et des sept jours suivant la nouvelle lune (début du dernier quartier au début du premier quartier). Cette distinction a été faite afin de permettre aux requins de s’adapter aux niveaux de lumière croissant et décroissant la nuit.

Analyses statistiques

Nous avons utilisé des analyses graphiques à l’aide du logiciel Systat 12 (Systat Software Inc., Chicago, USA) afin d’examiner la relation entre les variables environnementales (température, niveau de lumière, marée, et phase lunaire) et la profondeur pour chacun des requins. Seulement huit cas de données extrêmes (température et profondeur des émetteurs) qui étaient hors de la portée des capteurs ont été supprimés.

Résultats

Détections par requin

Les récepteurs acoustiques ont enregistré 96653 signaux provenant de l’ensemble des huit requins pendant 62 jours, soit du 19 juin au 19 août 2005 (Table 1). Tous les requins ont émis des signaux selon la même fréquence mais leur répartition n’est pas uniforme. Le requin 3 a été détecté le plus souvent (30195 signaux) tandis que le plus petit nombre de signaux détectés proviennent du requin 2 (1376). D’ailleurs, le requin 2

est le seul à ne pas être demeuré dans le secteur jusqu'à la fin de la période d'échantillonnage, ayant été détecté pour la dernière fois le 21 juin. Peu de signaux ont été détectés du 19 juin au 12 juillet pour tous les requins. Cependant, le nombre de signaux a augmenté à partir du 13 juillet (Figure 2), date à partir de laquelle six des huit requins ont successivement transité vers la station 1 (Figure 3).

Détections par station

La station 1 (baie des Anglais) a enregistré le plus grand nombre de signaux (80 %) tandis que la station 4 (baie du Loup-marin) a enregistré le moins de signaux (0,47 %; Table 2). Seulement deux requins (1 et 6) ont visité les quatre stations, et seule la station 2 (baie du Garde-feu) a été fréquentée par les huit requins. Le patron de mouvement pour tous les requins était caractérisé par un va-et-vient continual à des vitesses variables entre le fond des baies et le large. Les données du requin 1 nous ont permis de calculer sa vitesse moyenne sur une longue distance, ce requin ayant parcouru un trajet aller-retour entre les stations 1 et 4 sur une période de 29 heures. Considérant que le requin a effectué le trajet en transitant par les stations 2 et 3, ceci équivaudrait à une vitesse de croisière moyenne d'environ 0,3 m/sec sur une distance de 26 km à condition que le requin nage de façon continue et linéaire.

Température

Tous les requins se déplaçaient dans les eaux plus froides de jour. Dans le cas des requins 1, 3, 4, 5 et 6, les détections sont devenues plus nombreuses à mesure que la température moyenne de l'eau diminuait en août (Figure 3). La température maximale de 16,1 °C fut enregistrée par le requin 1 à la station 1 (baie des Anglais) le 15 juillet à 7 h 12. Cette donnée est près du maximum (17,7 °C) enregistré par la bouée du réseau de thermographes de l'Institut Maurice Lamontagne (IML) plus tard cette même journée lorsque les eaux de surface auraient dû être plus chaudes. Toutefois, la bouée de l'IML se retrouvait à environ 9 km du récepteur dans la baie des Anglais. D'ailleurs, les données de la bouée de l'IML démontrent que la température de l'eau à la surface

pouvait diminuer jusqu'à 6 degrés au cours d'une seule nuit. La température minimum de -1,6 °C a été enregistrée par le requin 1 à la station 1 (baie des Anglais) le 1^{er} août à 22 h 58. Enfin, les requins se sont rarement exposés à des températures dépassant 12 °C (Figure 3) et ils ne demeuraient que quelques minutes dans les eaux plus chaudes près de la surface avant de repartir vers le large.

Avec l'exception du requin 2, tous les requins ont présenté des profils de mouvement ayant des différences de température et de profondeur lors du jour et de la nuit. Leurs va-et-vient dans les eaux moins profondes et plus chaudes des stations 1, 2, et 3 étaient d'une durée de moins de 30 minutes (Figure 4). Les requins retournaient immédiatement vers les eaux plus profondes, plus froides, et plus sombres après avoir rejoint le fond des baies. Leurs déplacements à la station 4 étaient d'une durée encore plus courte dû à la pente plus abrupte du fond. Les températures moyennes les plus chaudes étaient atteintes entre 00 h 00 et 08 h 00 lorsque les eaux de surface étaient les plus sombres (Figure 5).

Les moyennes de température aux trois premières stations étaient similaires, atteignaient de 1,3 °C à 1,8 °C. Par contre, la station 4 qui était caractérisée par un profil bathymétrique plus abrupt et profond affichait une température moyenne de seulement 0,4 °C.

Niveau de lumière

Les plus faibles moyennes de profondeur ont été enregistrées de nuit (Figure 6). Le mouvement de va-et-vient des eaux profondes aux plus faibles profondeurs était constant mais la durée des déplacements à l'intérieur des stations devenait progressivement plus longue avec l'arrivée de l'obscurité. Lorsque les requins transitaient entre les stations jusqu'à la mi-juillet, les détections étaient sporadiques et aucun patron n'était apparent. Toutefois, un patron de mouvement diel associé à la période photique est devenu apparent du 20 au 27 juillet pour les requins 1, 3, 4, 6 et 7, ainsi que du 4 au 7 août pour le requin 4 alors qu'ils se déplaçaient exclusivement dans la station 1 (baie des Anglais).

Ainsi, ces quatre requins présentaient les mêmes patrons de mouvement diels alors que la majorité des signaux détectés aux plus faibles profondeurs coïncidaient avec la marée haute de nuit (Figures 7 et 8). Toutefois, ces mêmes patrons n'étaient plus apparents lorsque la marée était haute de jour.

Quoique le patron nocturne du 20 au 27 juillet coïncidait avec la pleine lune, les niveaux de lumière lors de la nuit n'ont pas affecté les mouvements verticaux diels des requins puisque les moyennes de profondeur minimales pour les phases de nouvelle lune (31,3 m) et de pleine lune (30,9 m) au cours de l'étude ne différaient que de moins d'un mètre. La différence entre le nombre de signaux détectés pour les deux variables lunaires variait de seulement 0,5 % en se basant sur un nombre égal de nuits pour chacune des variables. Sans égard à la phase lunaire, les moyennes de signaux les moins profondes et les plus chaudes ont été enregistrées entre 00 h 00 et 08 h 00 lorsque les niveaux de lumière ambiante étaient les plus faibles (Figures 5 et 6).

Marée

Un patron associé avec les marées est devenu apparent du 20 au 27 juillet pour les requins 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 et 8, et du 4 au 7 août pour le requin 4 alors qu'ils se déplaçaient exclusivement dans la station 1 (baie des Anglais). Au cours de ces périodes, les températures les plus chaudes et les profondeurs les plus faibles coïncidaient avec la marée haute de nuit ou à l'aube lorsqu'il faisait encore sombre sous l'eau (Figures 7 et 8).

Profondeur

Les courbes de température et de profondeur étaient inversement proportionnelles pour tous les requins (Figure 9). À mesure qu'un requin remontait vers la surface, la température augmentait. Certains requins sont remontés jusqu'à la surface (0 m) au cours de la nuit et aussi de jour (Tables 3 et 4). La plus grande profondeur enregistrée fut de -119,9 m, soit la profondeur maximale à portée de la station 4 (baie du Loup-marlin).

Limitations

Contrairement à des études antérieures ayant fait l'usage de balises d'archivage satellites, l'utilisation de la télémétrie acoustique passive dans notre étude a résulté en la réception sporadique de données. De plus, les moyennes et les données extrêmes de température et de profondeur n'étaient pas enregistrées lorsque les requins étaient hors de portée des récepteurs.

Discussion

Dans cette étude, nous avons suivi les mouvements de huit requins du Groenland à l'aide d'émetteurs acoustiques pendant 60 jours au large de Baie-Comeau, Québec. La majorité des signaux ont été détectés du 13 juillet au 8 août alors que six des huit requins ont progressivement transité vers la baie des Anglais (Station 1) à partir des stations 2, 3 et 4. Cette tendance a coïncidé avec les températures d'eau les plus chaudes de l'été (jusqu'à 21,5 °C). Cependant, les multiples périodes sans détections avant et après ce mouvement démontrent que les requins ont passé plus de temps hors des zones couvertes par les récepteurs lors de la période d'échantillonnage (Figure 2). Les données obtenues nous permettent toutefois d'avancer qu'en plus de la température de l'eau, au moins deux variables environnementales ont influencé les mouvements du requin du Groenland à faible profondeur : 1) le niveau de lumière et 2) la marée.

Température

Contrairement aux températures de l'océan Arctique qui sont froides à l'année et qui varient peu selon la profondeur (-1,8 °C à -0,5 °C; Skomal and Benz 2004), les variations importantes de la température de l'eau à Baie-Comeau semblent affecter les mouvements du requin du Groenland en eaux peu profondes. Pendant la période d'échantillonnage, les requins atteignaient majoritairement les plus faibles profondeurs lorsque les eaux de surface étaient plus froides et plus sombres que de jour (Figure 6). Ce pourrait être une indication que le requin du Groenland est sensible à la température

et qu'il ne peut ainsi accéder à ces profondeurs que lorsque les températures sont relativement froides. La durée et le nombre de mouvements à faible profondeur pourraient donc être en partie déterminés par la température de l'eau. L'analyse des données sur une période de 60 minutes (16 juillet de 17 h 00 à 18 h 00) (Figure 4) démontre qu'un des requins a traversé des écarts de température de 10 °C à trois reprises. Les mouvements de six des requins étaient similaires avec pour exception la vitesse et le nombre d'incursions dans les baies. Les requins nageaient sur de longues distances en longeant le fond pour entrer et sortir des baies. Hulbert et al. (2006) ont démontré que les mouvements du requin dormeur du Pacifique étaient caractérisés par des oscillations verticales avec de courtes transitions. De façon similaire, les requins dans notre étude ainsi que ceux étudiés par Stokesbury et al. (2005) passaient peu de temps dans les eaux plus chaudes avant de repartir vers les plus eaux froides du large. Ce faisant, ils ont démontré une préférence pour des températures se situant entre 1 et 2 °C (Figure 5). Les mouvements en eaux plus chaudes pourraient aussi servir à réguler la température corporelle des requins. La petite roussette *Scyliorhinus canicula*, chasse dans les eaux plus chaudes la nuit puis retourne en eau profonde de jour où les températures plus froides facilitent la digestion (Sims et al. 2006). Si le requin du Groenland est plus charognard que prédateur actif, les eaux froides pourraient ralentir son processus digestif pour ainsi compenser pour un métabolisme plus lent et une alimentation sporadique.

Niveau de lumière

Dans l'étude de Hulbert et al. (2006), les mouvements verticaux diels ininterrompus du requin dormeur du Pacifique duraient jusqu'à 330 heures (3 mouvements sur 100) mais la plupart duraient au plus 25 heures (92 mouvements sur 110). Le plus long mouvement diel dans notre étude, qui fut interrompu par le retrait des trois récepteurs acoustiques, était de 27 jours et il pourrait avoir été influencé par des conditions environnementales (Figure 3).

Dans l'océan Arctique, le requin du Groenland évolue pendant de longues périodes dans un environnement rendu obscur par un couvert de glace, la profondeur extrême et des latitudes élevées. On peut donc supposer que la vision joue un rôle de moindre importance lors de la quête de proies. Cette hypothèse est corroborée par des études anatomiques démontrant que la majorité des requins du Groenland dans l'Arctique ont une acuité visuelle fortement réduite dû au parasitisme (Borucinska et al. 1998). Hulbert et al. (2006) prétendent que la méthode de chasse du requin dormeur du Pacifique serait principalement contrôlée par des indices olfactifs. D'ailleurs, il n'est pas connu si le requin du Groenland chasse surtout de jour ou de nuit, ou s'il s'alimente de façon opportuniste à tout moment. De nuit, les Inuits réussissent à attirer le requin du Groenland à la surface en projetant de la lumière aux abords d'un trou dans la glace (Idrobo 2008). Ce faisant, ils pourraient simuler un rayon de soleil passant à travers d'un trou de respiration de phoque. Attiré vers une proie potentielle, le requin remonte jusqu'à la surface tout en demeurant dans l'obscurité, hors de la vue de sa victime. Trop de lumière pourrait à la fois retirer l'avantage furtif du prédateur en plus de nuire à sa vision qui est adaptée à l'obscurité totale sous la glace et sous la zone photique (< 200 m). Dans le fjord du Saguenay, les captures du requin du Groenland lors de la pêche blanche au cours du dernier siècle ont eu lieu de jour comme de nuit à des profondeurs dépassant 100 m et dans l'obscurité totale (Gallant and Harvey-Clark, données non publiées).

Les conditions hivernales dans l'estuaire du Saint-Laurent sont semblables à celles de l'Arctique, mais pour le reste de l'année, le requin peut transiter de l'obscurité totale à une forte luminosité sur une base quotidienne. Or, l'intensité de la lumière ambiante semble avoir un impact sur les mouvements du requin du Groenland alors que les profondeurs moyennes diminuent graduellement avec l'obscurité et vice-versa (Figure 6). Ce phénomène pourrait être causé par un nombre de facteurs. Le requin pourrait suivre ses proies se déplaçant selon leurs propres rythmes circadiens comme le font d'autres prédateurs (Zaret and Suffern 1976). Cependant, puisque le requin du Groenland est un prédateur généraliste et un charognard, il serait peu probable qu'il suive une espèce en particulier. Contrairement au requin dormeur du Pacifique qui se

nourrit tout le long de la colonne d'eau (Hulbert et al. 2006), les proies connues du requin du Groenland, dont le flétan du Groenland *Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*, le loup atlantique *Anarhichas lupus*, les sébastes *Sebastes* spp., les céphalopodes, et des crabes sont pour la plupart des espèces benthiques ou démersales qui ne sont pas associées à un patron de mouvement diel les menant jusqu'à la surface. D'ailleurs, les restes de poissons découverts dans les estomacs du requin du Groenland sont souvent entiers (Castro 2011), ce qui semble indiquer que les proies aient été aspirées alors qu'elles se trouvaient sur le fond. La lourde musculature pharyngale de la bouche du requin du Groenland s'apparente au mode d'alimentation par succion observée chez plusieurs espèces de requins dont les wobbegongs *Orectolobus* spp., les requins-ange *Squatina* spp. et les requins-nourrice *Ginglymostoma* spp.

Comme le requin dormeur du Pacifique, les patrons de mouvement diels du requin du Groenland pourraient être en partie déterminés par son comportement de chasse. Cependant, les mouvements diels pourraient aussi être attribuables à des contraintes physiologiques, y compris une aversion à la lumière et à la tolérance de la température. Puisque plusieurs de ses proies se retrouvent autant en profondeur que près de la surface, le requin du Groenland pourrait sélectivement passer plus de temps en profondeur dans des conditions obscures afin d'éviter des niveaux élevés de lumière en eaux peu profondes.

Contrairement aux populations arctiques du requin du Groenland et du requin dormeur du Pacifique dont la vision est largement affectée par le copépode parasite *Ommatokoita elongata* (Borucinska et al. 1998; Benz et al. 2002), moins de 10 % des requins observés dans le Saint-Laurent entre 2003 et 2012 étaient hôtes de ce parasite oculaire. Quoique la vision n'est pas considérée comme jouant un rôle important dans le comportement de chasse des populations arctiques de requins dormeurs, nous avons fréquemment observé et filmé des requins du Groenland faisant un usage actif de leur vision lors d'interactions avec des plongeurs dans le Saint-Laurent. Si leurs yeux fonctionnels ne sont pas utilisés comme de simples capteurs de lumière comme le suggèrent Borucinska et al. (1998) chez leurs populations arctiques, la vision pourrait en

fait jouer un rôle plus important dans le Saint-Laurent. Puisque les yeux du requin du Groenland sont surtout accoutumés à l'obscurité même dans le Saint-Laurent, ils pourraient être plus sensibles à des niveaux plus élevés de lumière ambiante dans les eaux de surface (Stokesbury et al. 2005). Une aversion à la lumière affectant les mouvements verticaux a aussi été proposée pour le requin griset (Bigelow and Schroeder 1948; Compagno 1984). Ceci pourrait expliquer pourquoi les requins de cette étude semblaient nécessiter une période de transition puisque les moyennes de profondeur les plus faibles étaient atteintes la nuit entre 00 h 00 et 08 h 00, au moins trois heures après le coucher du soleil et trois heures après le lever du soleil (Figure 6). Les requins quittaient progressivement les secteurs plus sombres et profonds pour rejoindre la surface au cours de la nuit, certains requins remontant même jusqu'à la surface. Le phénomène inverse se produisait au lever du jour alors que les détections diminuaient graduellement avec l'augmentation de la luminosité. La turbidité de l'eau pendant le jour pourrait aussi affecter la profondeur du requin. Au moment de poser les émetteurs acoustiques, nos observations avaient surtout lieu dans des conditions obscures à au moins 10 m de la surface ou dans des conditions de visibilité réduite dû aux conditions marines ou météorologiques adverses y compris des efflorescences planctoniques, des accumulations de pollen à la surface, ou un apport élevé d'eau en provenance des tributaires suite à des précipitations abondantes. Ainsi, le requin pourrait être présent à faible profondeur mais en nombre moindres pendant le jour lorsque le ciel est couvert ou lors de périodes de turbidité accrue. Des niveaux variables de lumière ambiante pourraient donc être en partie responsables des patrons de mouvement conflictuels du requin du Groenland dans la région de Baie-Comeau.

Marée

La marée a joué un rôle dans les mouvements des requins à partir de la mi-juillet. Les profils de mouvement diels démontrent que les profondeurs les plus faibles ainsi que les températures les plus chaudes étaient surtout atteintes lors de la marée haute de nuit et tôt le matin (Figures 7 et 8). De façon réciproque, le nombre de détections à marée haute de jour était moindre et les températures étaient plus froides (Figure 10). Cela

pourrait indiquer que les requins se retrouvaient à l'extrême de la zone de détection et qu'ils ne se laissaient pas porter vers la surface par le mouvement d'eau ascendant. Il y a donc apparence de sélection d'habitat alors que les mouvements à faible profondeur associés à la marée haute étaient surtout nocturnes. En effet, les eaux plus froides venant du large ainsi que l'absence du soleil auraient un effet de refroidissement sur les eaux de surface pour ainsi les rendre plus hospitalières au requin du Groenland. À titre de comparaison, un autre requin benthique de taille semblable évoluant en eaux froides, le requin-griset, s'approche de la surface lors de la marée haute la nuit (Andrews et al. 2009).

Influence de la profondeur

L'effet de la marée (marnage $\leq 3,5$ m) est négligeable lorsqu'on considère que la différence entre les profondeurs atteintes par les requins au cours d'une même journée dépasse régulièrement 70 m. Comme c'est le cas pour la température, les données sur la profondeur démontrent que les requins sont sortis à plusieurs reprises des zones couvertes par les récepteurs. Cependant, la portée des receveurs ne permettait pas de déterminer si les requins demeuraient à proximité des baies ou s'ils nageaient jusqu'au chenal Laurentien. Tous les requins atteignaient les plus faibles moyennes de profondeur entre 00 h 00 et 08 h 00 (Figure 6). Dans tous les cas, les requins retournaient immédiatement vers les eaux plus profondes après avoir rejoint la surface ou le fond des baies.

Un désavantage important du système acoustique utilisé est qu'il ne mesurait pas la distance entre l'émetteur et le récepteur. Il serait donc difficile d'évaluer la position du requin par rapport au fond. Or, au cours de plus de 100 observations effectuées en plongée depuis 2003, plus de 95 % des requins se déplaçaient à moins de deux mètres du fond. Aussi, la position du requin du Groenland dans la colonne d'eau serait directement associée à celle de ses proies qui sont majoritairement des espèces benthiques (Ridoux et al. 1998; Fisk et al. 2002; Yano et al. 2007; Leclerc et al. 2012). Les contenus stomacaux provenant de requins échantillonnés dans le Saint-Laurent ainsi que le rostre fortement

érodé du requin du Groenland confirmerait qu'il se nourrit de proies ou de restes d'animaux se retrouvant sur le fond (Harvey-Clark et al. 2005). On peut ainsi déduire que les profondeurs enregistrées par les récepteurs étaient à moins de deux mètres du fond et que les requins se retrouvaient rarement au milieu de la colonne d'eau. Les observations de Skomal and Benz (2004) diffèrent des nôtres puisque les requins balisés en Arctique se déplaçaient verticalement en eaux profondes au large de la côte. Nos observations diffèrent aussi de celles d'Hulbert et al. (2006) qui suggèrent que le requin dormeur du Pacifique ne se déplace pas exclusivement près du fond lorsqu'il chasse.

Autres facteurs environnementaux

La distribution du requin du Groenland pourrait être affectée par des diminutions de la teneur en oxygène des eaux profondes de l'estuaire du Saint-Laurent. Gilbert et al. (2005) rapportent que les eaux profondes du chenal Laurentien s'eutrophient progressivement en remontant l'estuaire. Le secteur le plus touché est l'habitat préféré du requin du Groenland où il chasse le flétan du Groenland et où il pourrait se déplacer à la recherche de carcasses de cétacés. Comme l'oxygène est un élément critique pour sa survie, il pourrait être forcé de quitter les zones anoxiques pour ainsi se retrouver dans les eaux moins profondes et plus oxygénées aux abords de la côte.

Facteurs biologiques

Le requin du Groenland pourrait pénétrer dans des baies de faible profondeur à la poursuite de proies, pour se reproduire, ou pour se débarrasser de parasites sensibles à une diminution du taux de salinité en raison des multiples cours d'eau qui se déversent dans le Saint-Laurent dans la région de Baie-Comeau. La salinité caractérisant les eaux du lieu d'étude varie selon la profondeur et la quantité de précipitations (28-34 ppm). Les déplacements du requin du Groenland pourraient donc varier selon les fluctuations saisonnières de pluies abondantes ou de canicule.

L'observation pluriannuelle de certains spécimens à Baie-Comeau sur une période de 4 ans pourrait aussi être due à la présence permanente ou saisonnière de proies spécifiques, un phénomène observé chez d'autres espèces dont le requin blanc (Klimley et al. 1992; 2001) et le requin-griset (Andrews et al. 2010). Toutefois, les proies locales du requin du Groenland sont réparties à travers la colonne d'eau, des eaux de surface jusqu'au chenal Laurentien. Les pinnipèdes sont de possibles exceptions alors qu'ils sont plus diversifiés et nombreux à l'hiver. Quoique des restes de phoques gris *Halichoerus grypus*, et de phoques communs *Phoca vitulina*, ont été retrouvés à plusieurs reprises dans les contenus stomachaux de requins du Groenland dans le Saint-Laurent, et considérant que le requin du Groenland pourrait être un prédateur actif de phoques dans la mer du Groenland (Leclerc et al. 2012), il reste à déterminer si les phoques dans le Saint-Laurent ont été pris vivants ou morts. Dans le deuxième cas, la carcasse aurait été consommée sur le fond.

Enfin, les migrations verticales de plusieurs espèces marines servent à éviter les prédateurs (Zaret and Suffern 1976). Outre lui-même, le requin du Groenland n'a d'autres prédateurs connus que le cachalot *Physeter macrocephalus* (Roe 1969) et possiblement l'orque *Orcinus orca* (Ford et al. 2011) qui se retrouvent tous deux de façon saisonnière dans l'estuaire et le golfe. Nous avons observé des requins du Groenland à faible profondeur alors qu'un cachalot chassait dans la baie des Anglais en 2005 et 2008. D'ailleurs, l'un des requins semblait forcer sa respiration (ram ventilation) alors qu'il nageait à haute vitesse (≥ 1 m/s).

CHAPITRE II

INFLUENCE OF PHYSICAL VARIABLES ON THE MOVEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR OF THE GREENLAND SHARK (*SOMNIOSUS* *MICROCEPHALUS*) IN SHALLOW WATER

JEFFREY GALLANT^{1‡}, CHRIS HARVEY-CLARK², MICHAEL J. W. STOKESBURY³,
MARCO A. RODRÍGUEZ¹

¹ Département de chimie-biologie, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, 3351,
boulevard des Forges, Trois-Rivières, Québec, G9A 5H7, Canada

² Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia, #4200-6270 University Blvd.
Vancouver, British Columbia, V6T 1Z4.

³ Department of Biology, Acadia University, 33 University Avenue, Wolfville, Nova
Scotia, B4P 2R6.

[‡] Corresponding author. Telephone: +1 (819) 818-5333. Email: info@geerg.ca

Abstract

The known geographical distribution of the Greenland shark extends from the Arctic Ocean to the North Atlantic Ocean. Little is known about the habitat use of the Greenland shark as it is generally found at great depths or in the high Arctic. Greenland sharks in the St. Lawrence Estuary undergo diel vertical movements into shallow depths (≤ 30 m). The reasons for these movements are unknown. To test the hypothesis that physical variables drive shallow water movements of this shark in the St. Lawrence Estuary, eight Greenland sharks were tagged with acoustic telemetry transmitters during the summer of 2005. Three environmental factors were found to have an effect on the movements of the Greenland shark at shallow depths. Movement patterns indicated a preference for deep and cold water during daylight hours and for shallow and warmer water during the night. We also noted that ascending movements into shallow water mostly coincided with darkness and high tide. This new knowledge of Greenland shark spatial temporal distribution will allow for assessment of the risk to Greenland sharks from commercial fisheries by-catch such as occurs in the Greenland halibut longline fishery. Temperature-driven behavioural patterns may also change as the structure of the water column shifts due to global warming.

Keywords: acoustic telemetry, behaviour, by-catch, diel vertical migration, environmental conditions, light level, movement, St. Lawrence Estuary, Saguenay Fjord, temperature, tide.

Introduction

Several shark species follow circadian rhythms, remaining in deep water during the day and then ascending the water column to shallower depths at night: blue shark *Prionace glauca* (Carey and Scharold 1990), bigeye thresher *Alopias superciliosus* (Nakano et al. 2003; Weng and Block 2004), Caribbean reef shark *Carcharhinus perezii* (Chapman et al. 2007), mako shark *Isurus oxyrinchus* (Klimley et al. 2002), megamouth shark *Megachasma pelagios* (Nelson et al. 1997), sixgill shark *Hexanchus griseus* (Andrews et al. 2009), and the small-spotted catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula* (Sims et al. 2006). However, studies on other shark species, including the sixgill shark *Hexanchus griseus* (Hulbert et al. 2006) and the Greenland shark, *Somniosus microcephalus* (Skomal and Benz 2004; Stokesbury et al. 2005) point to conflicting diel movement patterns.

The Greenland shark is the largest Arctic fish reaching lengths up to 730 cm (Compagno 1984). Despite its size and its widespread distribution extending over at least six countries of the northwest hemisphere (Yano et al. 2007), the Greenland shark remains largely unknown to science. Little knowledge has been acquired on its life cycle, its habitat use, and the environmental factors that could influence its movements. Most studies on Greenland sharks focus on their geographical distribution, diet, the chemical contaminants stored in their flesh, and the copepod parasite *Ommatokoita elongata* (Borucinska et al. 1998) that infects their eyes in the northern portion of their range. Due to the scarcity of visual observations in surface waters until the start of the 21st century, the Greenland shark was long considered a primarily coldwater bathybenthic species, reaching depths up to 2,200 m (Herdendorf and Berra 1995). Although more recent studies indicate that Greenland sharks show no preference for specific environmental conditions within the narrow range observed in the Arctic Ocean (Skomal and Benz 2004), certain preferences may exist in the St. Lawrence Estuary where temperature extremes are much wider (Stokesbury et al. 2005).

Greenland shark by-catch has been occurring in the St. Lawrence Gulf and Estuary, and in the Saguenay Fjord of Canada (48.344937° N, -70.862052° W) for over a century (Gallant and Harvey-Clark, unpublished data). Although very little is known about the reproduction of Greenland sharks, other shark species of comparable size that

live in similar environments have low fecundity and do not reach sexual maturity until the age of 20 years or more (Compagno 1984; Castro 2011). Mortality from by-catch could therefore lead to a population decline of Greenland sharks in the St. Lawrence and Saguenay. Better knowledge of habitat use and environmental preferences of Greenland sharks would allow the fishing community and regulating agencies to establish fishing practices designed to reduce by-catch to sustainable levels and help prevent the destruction of fishing gear. A better understanding of the effect of physical variables could also be used to predict the effects of climate change on the overall distribution of Greenland sharks.

Sightings of Greenland sharks at shallow depths are not limited to the St. Lawrence. This species has been harvested by harpoon at the surface on Baffin Island (Beck and Mansfield 1984), and the Inuit from Cumberland Sound in the Canadian territory of Nunavut occasionally observe the shark from the surface as it swims along the seafloor (Idrobo 2008). However, this behaviour is associated with hunting activities when marine mammals are butchered on the shore, which is no longer the case in the St. Lawrence since the beluga fishery in the province of Quebec was terminated in 1960. The observed movements of the Greenland shark are not unique for a shark of its size and northern distribution. The Pacific sleeper shark *Somniosus pacificus*, which is closely related to the Greenland shark, mostly travels below the photic zone during daylight hours, and approaches the surface at night (Hulbert et al. 2006). The sixgill shark, which inhabits a comparable coldwater environment, has also been associated with nocturnal tides but at deeper depths (Andrews et al. 2009), so it remains to be determined whether or not it responds to the same environmental stimuli as the two sleeper shark species. Two other boreal shark species overlap the range of the Greenland shark, the blue shark (Carey and Scharold 1990) and the mako shark (Klimley et al. 2002), and both are known to make diel vertical movements.

Methods

Study Sites

Greenland sharks frequent four bays on the north shore of the St. Lawrence Estuary in the region of Baie-Comeau, Quebec, Canada (Figure 1). These boreal bays are characterised by a seasonally dynamic littoral environment offering a wide variety of known prey species of the Greenland shark including fish, crustaceans, molluscs and marine mammals. Baie des Anglais (Station 1) (49.267596° N, -68.127496° W), the largest of the four bays, is 4.4 km long and 4 km wide with a maximum depth over 100 m. Baie du Garde-Feu (Station 2) (49.280868° N, -68.051043° W) is 1 km long by 0.5 km wide with a maximum depth of 70 m. Baie-Saint-Pancrace (Station 3) (49.287314° N, -68.045956° W) has the second largest surface area and it is also the narrowest bay (approximately 1.5 km long by 0.25 km wide), which concentrates shark traffic and thus facilitates tag deployment by divers. Maximum depth is also 70 m. Baie du Loup Marin (Station 4) (49.280448° N, -68.009428° W) is only 0.03 km long by 0.2 km wide. It is different from the other bays because of its steep incline ($\geq 40^{\circ}$) and depth (>150 m). The three other bays are characterised by a more gradual incline ($\leq 20^{\circ}$). All four bays open on the St. Lawrence Estuary, which is approximately 56 km wide at the city of Baie-Comeau. The maximum depth of the Laurentian Channel, which lies at the centre of the estuary, is 350 m.

Transmitters and Receivers

To record the movements of Greenland sharks, we deployed acoustic transmitters on eight sharks (mean length = 3 m) in Baie-Saint-Pancrace (Station 3) on June 18 and 19, 2005. No shark was captured or restrained in order to reduce the risk of injury for the sharks and the divers. V16 acoustic coded transmitters (VEMCO[®] Halifax, Canada) were attached to the sharks using a spear (Hawaiian sling) by a diver equipped with open-circuit SCUBA. A metal dart retained the transmitter in the shark's superficial tissue. The transmitter was attached to the fastener by a crimped 10-cm stainless steel wire (tensile strength of 90.9 kg). V16s transmitted a unique identifier code, so each

individual shark could be identified. The tags were also equipped with sensors to measure depth (m) and temperature (°C). Tags were programmed to transmit alternating data at 69 kHz every 60 seconds during the sampling period from June 19 to August 19, 2005. Tags were detected by receivers up to 600 m away depending on environmental conditions and bathymetry. Signals received by hydroacoustic receivers were date- and time-stamped and archived to memory. A total of four VR2 passive ultrasonic receivers (VEMCO® Halifax, Canada) were installed 6 m off the bottom in the four bays. Data recorded by the receivers were downloaded at the end of the sampling period with a laptop computer using a VR1 PC interface (VEMCO® Halifax, Canada).

Additional Data

In order to determine the effects of the tide, we used online tidal data from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Station #2840 / Baie-Comeau). Tidal data comprised two variables. High tide included data from three hours before and three hours after high water, and low tide included data from three hours before and three hours after low water. This distinction was made to create a time-buffer period and thus allow sharks to adjust to the water movement of flow and ebb tides. Water temperature data were obtained from the Maurice Lamontagne Institut (IML) Thermograph Network (Fisheries and Oceans Canada) buoy off Baie-Comeau (49.201663° N, -68.056660° W). Light levels for the Baie-Comeau area were measured as night or day based on environmental data obtained online from Environment Canada. Data on lunar phases was obtained from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Lunar data comprised two variables. Full moon included data from seven days before and seven days after the full moon (start of first quarter to start of last quarter), and new moon included data from seven days before and seven days after the new moon (start of last quarter to start of first quarter). This distinction was made to allow sharks to adjust to increasing and decreasing light levels at night.

Statistical Analysis

We used scatterplots, dot density, histograms and boxplots to examine the relationship between the environmental variables (temperature, light level, tide and lunar phase) and the depth of each shark. Only eight cases of extreme data (tag temperature and depth) that were out of range of the sensors had to be removed.

Results

Detections per Shark

The acoustic receivers detected a total of 96,653 signals from the eight tagged sharks over a period of 62 days, from June 19 to August 19, 2005 (Table 1). All of the sharks transmitted signals on the same schedule but the distribution of recorded signals was irregular. Shark 3 was detected the most (30,195) while shark 2 was detected the least (1,376). Shark 2 was also the only shark that did not remain in the study area until the end of the sampling period, having last been detected on June 21. Few signals from all sharks were detected from June 19 to July 12. However, an increase in detected signals began on July 13 (Figure 2) at which time six of the eight sharks successively traveled to station 1 (Figure 3).

Detections per Station

Station 1 (Baie des Anglais) recorded the largest number of signals (80%) and station 4 (Baie du Loup Marin) recorded the least (0.47%; Table 2). Only two sharks (1 and 6) visited all four stations, and only station 2 (Baie du Garde-Feu) was visited by all eight sharks. All sharks displayed similar movement patterns, swimming in and out of the stations at various speeds from the head of the bays to open water. Data from shark 1 allowed us to calculate a long-distance average speed by making a return trip between stations 1 and 4 over a period of 29 hours. Since the shark did so while transiting through stations 2 and 3, its average cruising speed if swimming forward in a linear and

continuous movement would have been approximately 0.3 m/sec over a total distance traveled of 26 km.

Temperature

All sharks experienced the coldest ambient water temperatures during daylight hours. For sharks 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6, the number of detections progressively increased as average water temperatures decreased in August (Figure 3). The maximum temperature of 16.1°C was recorded by shark 1 at station 1 (Baie des Anglais) on July 15 at 07:12. This is close to the maximum (17.7°C) recorded by the IML buoy later that same day after surface temperatures should have warmed. However, the IML buoy was located nearly 9 km from our receiver at the head of Baie des Anglais. Data from the IML buoy also shows that water temperatures at the surface decreased by as much as 6°C overnight. The minimum temperature of -1.6°C was transmitted by shark 1 at station 1 (Baie des Anglais) on August 1 at 22:58. All sharks rarely exposed themselves to temperatures higher than 12°C (Figure 3) and they remained only a few minutes in warmer water near the surface before heading back to deeper water offshore.

With the exception of shark 2, all sharks exhibited movement profiles with diel temperature and depth differences. The sharks' incursions into shallow and warmer water at stations 1, 2, and 3 typically lasted less than 30 minutes (Figure 4). The sharks returned to deeper, colder, and darker water after reaching the surface or the head of the bays. Their movements at station 4 were of even shorter duration due to the steeper depth profile. The warmest temperature averages were reached between 00:00 and 08:00 when surface waters were darkest (Figure 5).

Average temperatures transmitted by the tags at the first three stations were similar, ranging from 1.3°C to 1.8°C. Station 4, which was characterised by a steeper incline and greater depth, had an average tag temperature of only 0.4°C.

Light Level

The shallowest depth averages were recorded at night (Figure 6). The back-and-forth movement pattern from deep to shallow water remained constant but the duration of the movements within the stations became progressively longer as darkness set in. Signal detections were sporadic and without any stable pattern while sharks transited between stations till mid-July. However, a steady diel vertical movement pattern associated with the daytime period became apparent from July 20 to 27 for sharks 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8, as well as shark 4 from August 4 to 7, when their movements were mostly restricted to station 1 (Baie des Anglais). These four sharks exhibited the same diel vertical movement pattern when the majority of their signals detected at shallow depths coincided with high tide at night (Figures 7 and 8). High tide during daylight hours did not produce the same effect. Although the nocturnal pattern of July 20 to 27 coincided with a full moon, light levels at night did not affect diel vertical movements since the minimum average depths for new moon (31.3 m) and full moon (30.9 m) lunar phases over the course of the study were less than one metre apart. The difference between the number of signals detected for both lunar variables varied by 0.5% based on an equal number of nights for each variable. Regardless of the lunar phase, the shallowest and warmest averages of signal detections were recorded between 00:00 and 08:00 when ambient light levels were lowest (Figures 5 and 6).

Tide

A pattern associated with tidal movements became apparent from July 20 to 27 for sharks 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8, and from August 4 to 7 for shark 4, when their movements were mostly restricted to station 1 (Baie des Anglais). During these periods, the warmest temperatures and shallowest depths coincided with high tide at night or early in the morning when ambient light levels underwater were still low (Figures 7 and 8).

Depth

Temperature and depth curves were inversely proportional for all sharks (Figure 9). As depth decreased, the temperature increased. Certain sharks swam all the way to the surface (0 m) during the day and at night (Tables 3 and 4). The deepest recorded depth was 119.9 m, which was the deepest point within the range of station 4 (Baie du Loup Marin).

Limitations

In contrast with previous studies that used archival tags, our use of passive acoustic telemetry resulted in sporadic rather than continuous data reception for much of the period covered by our study. Unlike studies that used satellite tags, depth, distribution and temperature averages or extremes were not recorded once the sharks traveled outside of receiver range.

Discussion

In this study, we passively tracked eight Greenland sharks with acoustic transmitters for 60 days off the port city of Baie-Comeau, Quebec. The majority of the signals were detected from July 13 to August 8 when six of the eight sharks progressively transited upriver to Baie des Anglais (Station 1) from stations 2, 3 and 4. This trend coincided with the onset of the warmest surface water temperatures of the summer (to 21.5°C). However, several days without any signals detected before and after this movement show that the sharks spent most of the sampling period beyond the range of our receivers (Figure 2). The data obtained nonetheless suggest that in addition to water temperature, at least two other environmental factors influenced the movements of Greenland sharks at shallow depth: 1) light level and 2) the tide.

Temperature

Ocean temperatures in the Arctic Ocean remain cold year-round and vary little with depth (-1.8°C to -0.5°C; Skomal and Benz 2004), while wider temperature variations off boreal Baie-Comeau during our study (-1.6°C to 21.5°C) appear to affect the movements of Greenland sharks at shallow depths. Tagged sharks reached the shallowest depth averages when surface waters were colder and darker than during daylight hours (Figure 6). This could be an indication that Greenland sharks are sensitive to temperature and can only access these areas when the temperatures are relatively low. The duration and number of movements at shallow depths could thus be partly determined by water temperature. Data analysis over a period of 60 minutes (July 16 from 17:00 to 18:00) (Figure 4) shows that one of the sharks swam through temperature gradients of 10°C three times. The movements of six of the eight tagged sharks were similar except for speed and the number of incursions inside the bays. Hulbert et al. (2006) found that the movements of the Pacific sleeper shark consisted of systematic vertical oscillations with short transitions. Similarly, the sharks in our study as well as those studied by Stokesbury et al. (2005) spent little time in warmer water before moving to colder water offshore, demonstrating a preference for water in the 1-2°C range (Figure 5). Swimming in cold water could also allow the Greenland shark to regulate its body temperature. The small-spotted catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula* hunts in warmer water at night and then returns to deep water during the day, where colder temperatures help with digestion (Sims et al. 2006). If the Greenland shark is more scavenger than active predator, cold water may slow the digestive process thus compensating for a slower metabolic rate and sporadic feeding.

Light Level

In the study by Hulbert et al. (2006), uninterrupted diel vertical movements of the Pacific sleeper shark lasted up to 330 hours (3 movements out of 110) but most lasted 25 hours or less (92 movements out of 110). The longest continuous diel movement in our study, which was interrupted by the removal of three acoustic receivers, lasted 27 days and may have been triggered by environmental conditions (Figure 3).

In the Arctic Ocean, the Greenland shark experiences extended periods of darkness due to extreme depth, ice cover and the high latitude. This leads us to suggest that vision often plays only a minor role during the shark's search for prey. This view is supported by anatomical studies indicating that the majority of arctic Greenland sharks have severely limited vision due to parasitism (Borucinska et al. 1998). Hulbert et al. (2006) contend that the Pacific sleeper shark's foraging behaviour is primarily driven by olfactory cues. It is not actually known whether the Greenland shark hunts at night or during the day or if it feeds opportunistically regardless of the hour. Inuit hunters have long attracted sharks to the surface by projecting light in ice holes (Idrobo 2008). By doing so, they may be simulating sunlight passing through a seal breathing hole. Thus attracted to potential prey, the shark swims all the way to the surface while remaining in the dark, out of sight of its victim. Light levels at the surface could eliminate the predator's stealth advantage as well as hinder its vision, which is adapted to total darkness under the ice and below the photic zone (< 200 m). In the Saguenay Fjord, captures of the Greenland shark by ice fishers over the last century have taken place by day and at night at depths below 100 m and in total darkness (Gallant and Harvey-Clark, unpublished data).

Winter conditions in the St. Lawrence Estuary are similar to those of the Arctic but for the rest of the year, the Greenland shark may travel from total darkness to a highly luminous environment on a daily basis. However, the intensity of ambient light appears to have an effect on the movements of Greenland sharks as average depths gradually decrease with the onset of darkness and vice-versa (Figure 6). This phenomenon may be caused by a number of factors. The shark could be following migrating prey driven by their own circadian rhythm much like other shark species (Zaret and Suffern 1976). However, since the Greenland shark is a generalist feeder as well as a scavenger, it may be sampling the water column rather than following a particular prey species. Unlike the Pacific sleeper shark which is known to feed throughout the water column (Hulbert et al. 2006), known fish and invertebrate prey of Greenland sharks, including Greenland halibut, Atlantic wolffish *Anarhichas lupus*, redfish *Sebastes* spp., cephalopods and various crabs are for the most part benthic or demersal species that are not associated with a diel movement pattern that takes them to surface waters. Fish remains found in

the stomachs of Greenland sharks are often whole (Castro 2011), which would indicate that prey was sucked off the bottom through the shark's downward-facing mouth. The heavy pharyngeal musculature of the Greenland shark is consistent with a suctorial feeding mode seen in a variety of shark species such as wobbegong *Orectolobus* spp., angel *Squatina* spp. and nurse *Ginglymostoma* spp. sharks.

Like the Pacific sleeper shark, the Greenland shark's diel movement patterns may be partly determined by foraging behaviour. However, diel movements may also be due to physiological constraints, including light aversion and temperature tolerance. Since many of its prey species are found both deep and shallow, the Greenland shark may selectively spend most of the day in deep water under dark conditions to avoid higher light levels in shallow water.

Unlike Arctic populations of Greenland sharks and Pacific sleeper sharks, most of whose vision has been affected by the parasitic copepod *Ommatokoita elongata* (Borucinska et al. 1998; Benz et al. 2002), less than 10% of the sharks observed in the St. Lawrence between 2003 and 2012 hosted the ocular parasite. Although vision is not believed to play a significant role in the foraging behaviour of Arctic populations of sleeper sharks, we have repeatedly observed and filmed Greenland sharks making active use of vision in the St. Lawrence when interacting with divers. If their undamaged eyes are not used as mere light sensors as has been suggested for Arctic populations (Borucinska et al. 1998), vision may in fact play a more predominant role in the St. Lawrence. Since the eyes of the Greenland shark are mostly accustomed to darkness even in the St. Lawrence, they could in turn be more sensitive to the higher levels of ambient light near or at the surface (Stokesbury et al. 2005). Light aversion affecting vertical movements has also been proposed for the sixgill shark (Bigelow and Schroeder 1948; Compagno 1984). This may explain why the sharks in this study appeared to need a transition period since the shallowest depth averages occurred at night between 00:00 and 08:00, at least three hours after night had set in and three hours after sunrise (Figure 6). The sharks progressively left the deeper and darker areas offshore to reach shallow water during the night with some sharks occasionally swimming all the way to the surface. The reverse phenomenon occurred after sunrise when the number of signals detected at shallow depths gradually decreased as light levels increased. Daytime

turbidity may also affect the shark's depth distribution. Our observations while deploying acoustic transmitters mostly took place under dark conditions at depth (≤ 10 m) or in reduced visibility due to adverse marine or meteorological conditions including plankton blooms, pollen accumulations at the surface, or increased freshwater runoff from the local tributaries. Therefore, the shark may also be present albeit in lesser numbers at shallow depths during daylight hours when the sky is overcast or during conditions of increased turbidity. Varying levels of ambient light could thus be partly responsible for conflicting movement patterns of Greenland sharks in the Baie-Comeau area.

Tide

Tides played a part in the movements of the sharks starting in mid-July. Diel vertical movement profiles show that the shallowest depths and the warmest temperatures were mostly recorded during high tide at night and early in the morning (Figures 7 and 8). Conversely, the average depths and temperatures recorded during high tide in daylight hours were deeper and colder (Figure 10). This could indicate that the sharks remained on the outer edge of receiver range and that they were not letting themselves be carried into shallow areas by the rising tide. There is thus the appearance of habitat selection since the sharks' shallow water movements associated with high tide were mostly nocturnal. At night, the influx of colder offshore water as well as the absence of sunlight would produce a cooling effect of surface waters thus rendering shallow depths more hospitable to the Greenland shark. Another benthic species found in coldwater and of comparable size, the sixgill shark, is also known to move closer to the surface during high tide at night (Andrews et al. 2009).

Depth

The effect of tide cycles at the study site (tidal range ≤ 3.5 m) is negligible considering that the range of depths reached on a daily basis often surpassed 70 m. Lapses in depth signals for all sharks confirm that they left the zones covered by the

receivers every day over the course of the summer. However, the receivers did not have the range to indicate whether the sharks remained in close proximity to the bays or if they continued swimming all the way to the Laurentian Channel. The shallowest depth averages for all sharks were reached between 00:00 and 08:00 (Figure 6). In every case, sharks having reached the surface or shallows found at the head of the bays immediately headed back into deeper water.

An important disadvantage of the acoustic system we used was that it did not measure the distance between the transmitter and the receiver. It would therefore be difficult to evaluate the actual position of the shark in relation to the sea floor. However, during our more than 100 visual encounters while SCUBA diving since 2003, more than 95% of the sharks swam no more than two metres off the bottom at depths ranging from 6 m to 40 m. Also, the location of Greenland sharks in the water column is likely to be directly associated with that of its prey items, which are mostly benthic species (Ridoux et al. 1998; Fisk et al. 2002; Yano et al. 2007; Leclerc et al. 2012). As mentioned previously, stomach contents from St. Lawrence specimens as well as the highly abraded rostrum of Greenland sharks would suggest that it feeds on prey and animal remains found on the sea floor (Harvey-Clark et al. 2005). This leads us to believe that recorded depths were less than two metres from the bottom and that the sharks rarely swam straight up the water column. Our observations differ from those of Skomal and Benz (2004) since their specimens tagged in the Arctic swam vertically from deep water offshore. They also differ from Hulbert et al. (2006) who suggest that the Pacific sleeper shark does not exclusively follow bottom contours while foraging.

Other Environmental Factors

The distribution of the Greenland shark could be affected by reduced oxygen levels in the deeper sections of the St. Lawrence Estuary. Gilbert et al. (2005) have noted that deep water in the Laurentian Channel undergoes progressive eutrophication as the channel narrows upriver. The deepwater zone most affected is the preferred habitat of the Greenland shark where it hunts for Greenland halibut and where it may also forage for marine mammal carcasses. Since oxygen is critical to its survival, it may be

forced to move out of anoxic zones and into shallower and more oxygenated water closer to the coast.

Biological Factors

Greenland sharks may enter shallow bays for many reasons, including to pursue prey, to reproduce, or to rid themselves of parasites that are sensitive to reductions in salinity caused by the many freshwater tributaries in the Baie-Comeau area. Salinity levels at the study site vary according to depth and levels of precipitation and tributary runoff (28-34 ppt). The movements of Greenland sharks could thus vary due to seasonally fluctuating rain and drought conditions.

Observed site fidelity by certain specimens of Greenland shark in Baie-Comeau over a period of four years could be due in part to the permanent or seasonal presence of specific prey items, a phenomenon known in other species including the white shark (Klimley et al. 1992; 2001) and the sixgill shark (Andrews et al. 2010). However, the known local prey items of the Greenland shark are found throughout the water column, from surface waters to the deepest parts of the Laurentian Channel. Possible exceptions are pinnipeds, which are more diverse and plentiful in the winter months. Although remains of grey seals *Halichoerus grypus*, and harbour seals *Phoca vitulina*, have repeatedly been recovered from Greenland shark specimens in the St. Lawrence, and considering that the Greenland shark may actively prey on seals in the Greenland Sea (Leclerc et al. 2012), it has not been determined whether or not seals from the St. Lawrence were taken alive or as carrion, in which case the feeding would have taken place on the sea floor.

Finally, the vertical movements of several marine species serve to avoid predators (Zaret and Suffern 1976). Other than itself, the Greenland shark has no known predators except for the sperm whale *Physeter macrocephalus* (Roe 1969), and possibly the killer whale *Orcinus orca* (Ford et al. 2011), both of which are known to seasonally frequent the St. Lawrence Gulf and Estuary. We observed Greenland sharks at shallow depths while a sperm whale was foraging in Baie des Anglais in 2005 and 2008, one of which appeared to be ram ventilating as it swam at high speed (≥ 1 m/s).

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Table 1. Period of deployment and data collection for acoustic tags attached to Greenland sharks off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005.

Shark number	Date	Location	Estimated length (m)	First and last signals detected	Total signals
1	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	19/6/2005 08/8/2005	15,117
2	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	19/6/2005 21/6/2005	1,376
3	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	23/6/2005 08/8/2005	30,195
4	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	19/6/2005 08/8/2005	5,266
5	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	19/6/2005 08/8/2005	11,754
6	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	19/6/2005 08/8/2005	25,519
7	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	20/6/2005 19/8/2005	3,128
8	18/6/2005	49.291388° N -68.048226° W	3	20/6/2005 08/8/2005	4,298

Table 2. Period of deployment and data collection for acoustic receivers in four bays off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005. Detections ceased when the receivers were removed on August 8, 20, and 21, 2005.

Station number	Deployment and recovery	Location	Receiver depth (m)	First and last signals detected	Total signals detected
1	19/6/2005	49.267596° N	20	20/6/2005	77,379
	08/8/2005	-68.127496° W		08/8/2005	
2	19/6/2005	49.287314° N	30	19/6/2005	3,171
	08/8/2005	-68.045956° W		08/8/2005	
3	19/6/2005	49.280448° N	15	23/6/2005	15,653
	20/8/2005	-68.009428° W		19/8/2005	
4	19/6/2005	49.280868° N	25	15/7/2005	450
	21/8/2005	-68.051043° W		19/8/2005	

Table 3. Night time depth and temperature range and means for eight Greenland sharks tagged off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005.

Tide	Number of detections	Minimum depth (m)	Maximum depth (m)	Mean depth (m)	Minimum temp. (°C)	Maximum temp. (°C)	Mean temp. (°C)
High	15,333	0	119.9	28.7	-1.6	14.8	1.9
Low	15,121	1.8	118.1	33.5	-0.3	16.1	1.3

Table 4. Daytime time depth and temperature range and means for eight Greenland sharks tagged off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, in the summer 2005.

Tide	Number of detections	Minimum depth (m)	Maximum depth (m)	Mean depth (m)	Minimum temp. (°C)	Maximum temp. (°C)	Mean temp. (°C)
High	31,381	0	86.4	35.9	-0.5	15.3	1.2
Low	34,818	0	114.6	36.4	-0.4	16	1.3

Figure captions

Figure 1. Map of acoustic sampling stations in the St. Lawrence Estuary near Baie-Comeau, Quebec. Circles indicate maximum range (600 m) of each receiver.

Figure 2. Daily number of signals detected for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005.

Figure 3. Temperature signals ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) detected for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005.

Figure 4. Water temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) and depth (m) for shark 4 at station 1 (Baie des Anglais) on July 16, 2005, from 17:00 to 18:00.

Figure 5. Mean hourly temperatures ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) ($N=47,892$) for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005.

Figure 6. Mean hourly depths (m) ($N=48,761$) for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005.

Figure 7. Tide cycle and temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) signals for sharks 1 (a), 3 (b), 4 (c), 6 (d), 7 (e) and 8 (f) at all stations from July 20 to 27. Dotted vertical lines indicate high tide at night.

Figure 8. Tide cycle and depth (m) signals for sharks 1 (a), 3 (b), 6 (d) and 7 (e) at all stations from July 20 to 27. Dotted vertical lines indicate high tide at night.

Figure 9. Day and night mean temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) and depth (m) during high and low tide for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005. Black diamonds indicate temperature means and grey diamonds indicate depth means.

Figure 10. Daily mean depth (m) ($N=48,761$) and temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) ($N=47,892$) for all sharks at all stations off Baie-Comeau, Quebec, from June 19 to August 19, 2005.

Figure 1

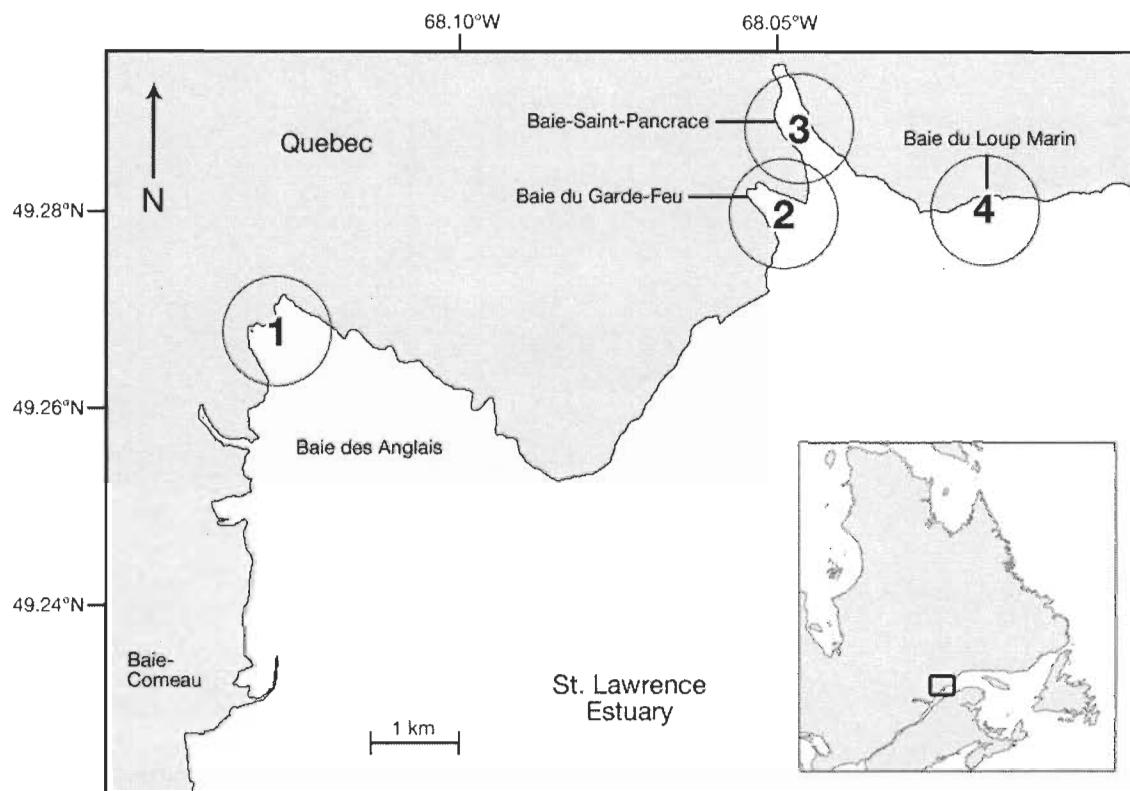


Figure 2

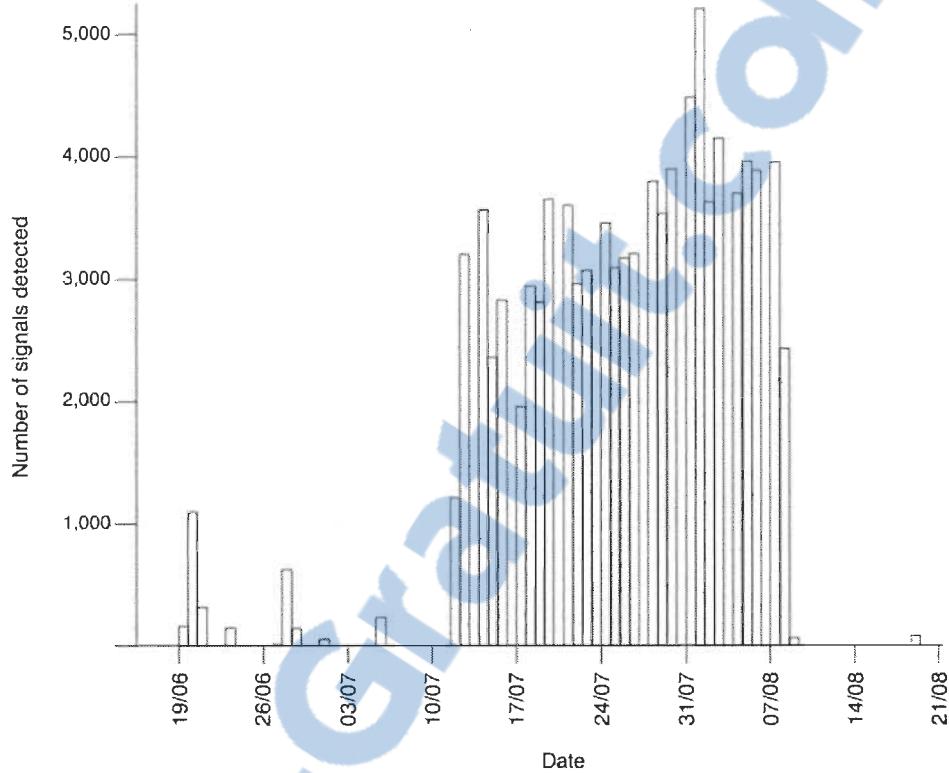


Figure 3

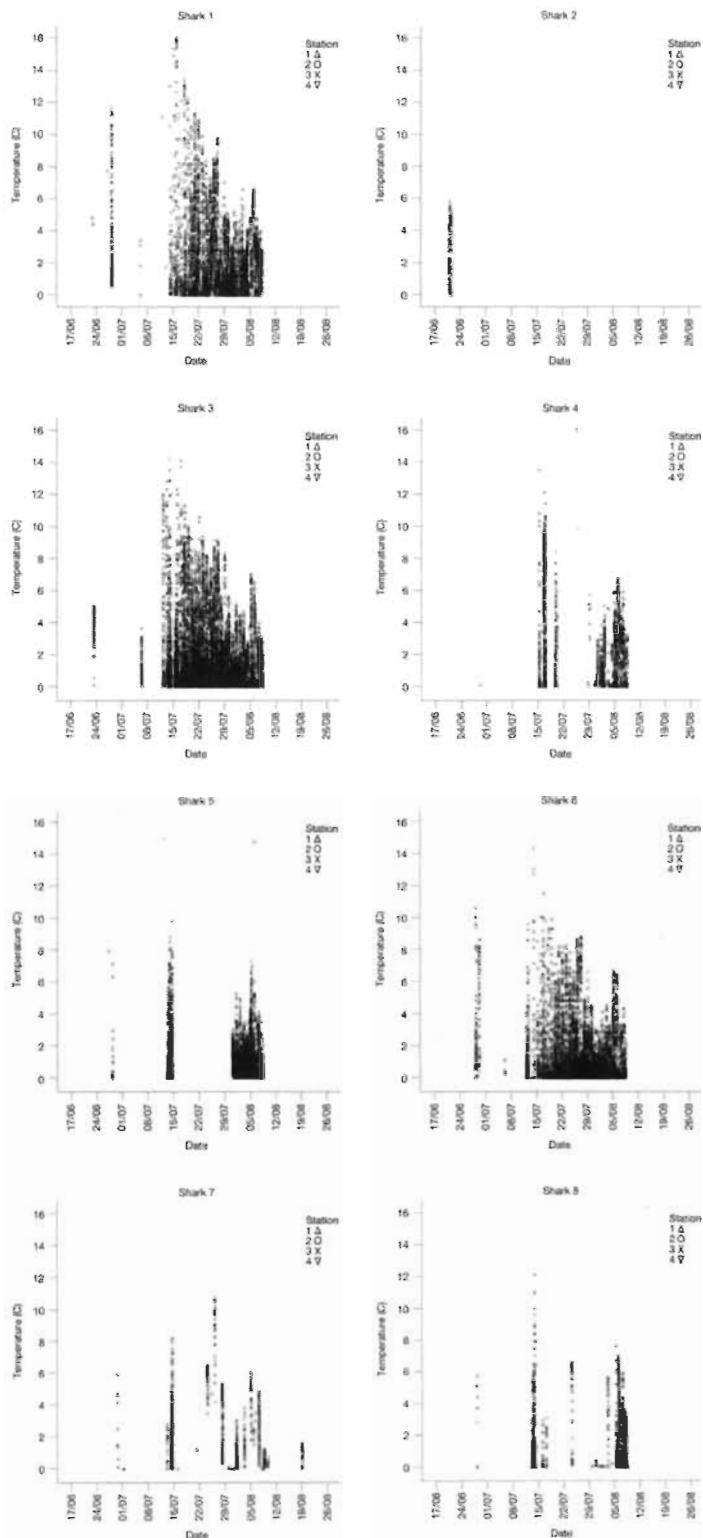


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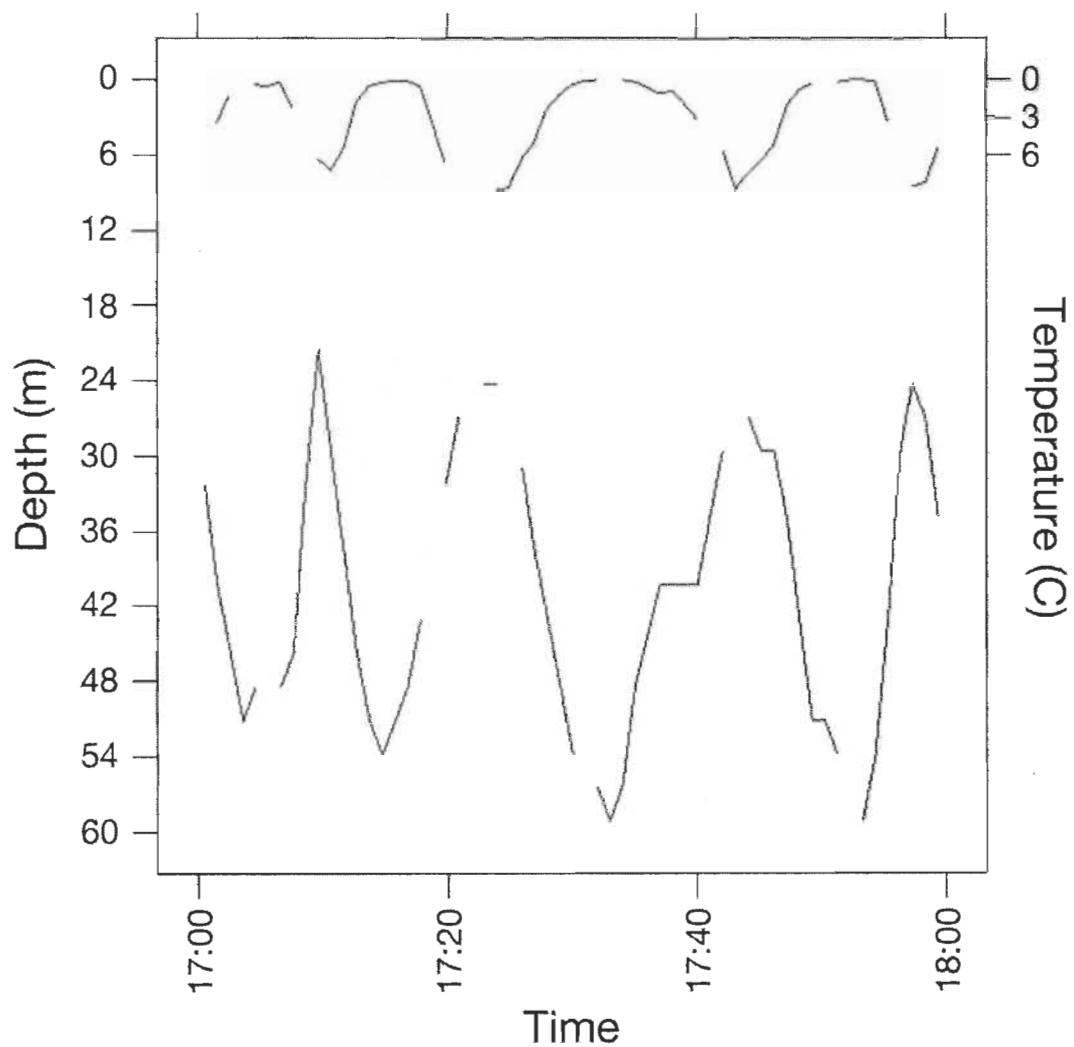


Figure 5

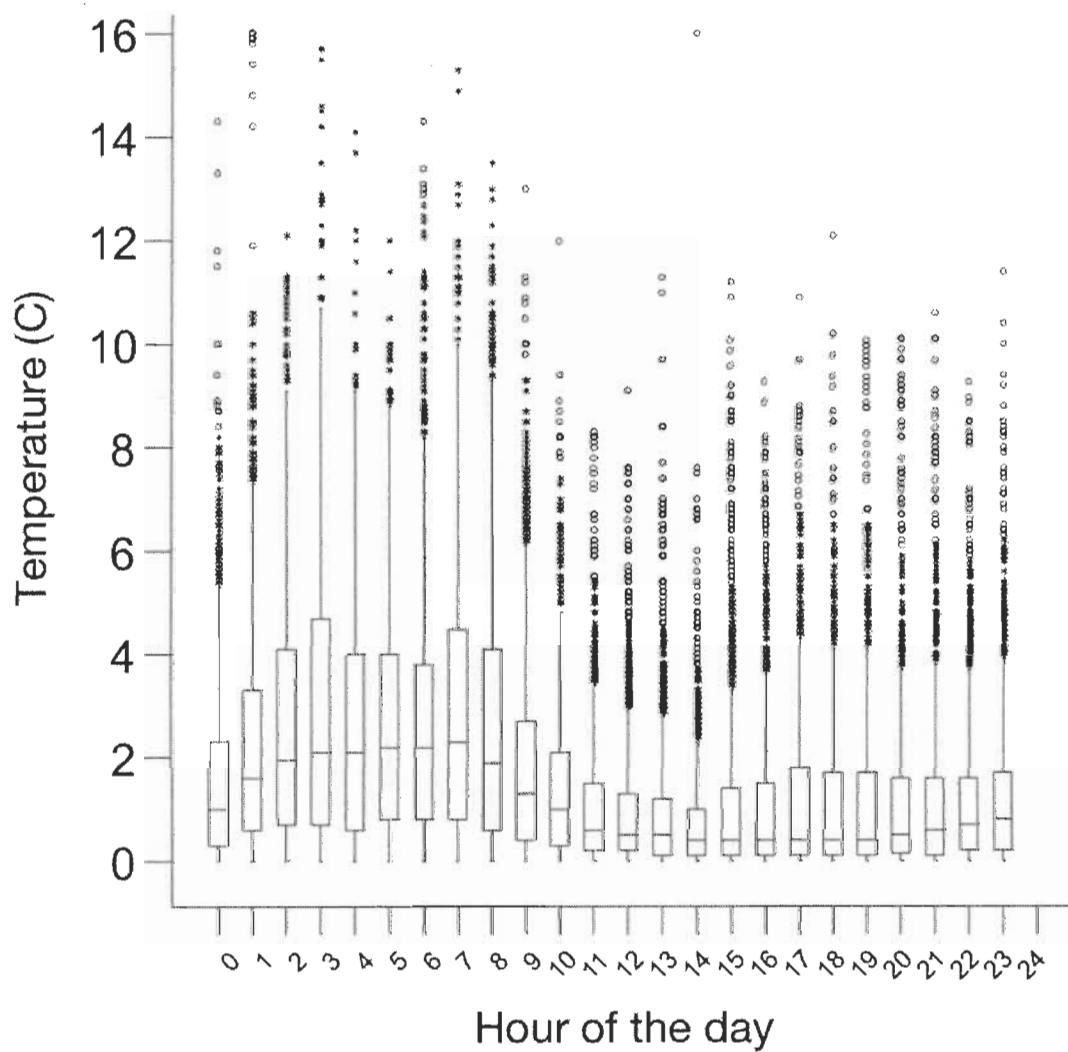


Figure 6

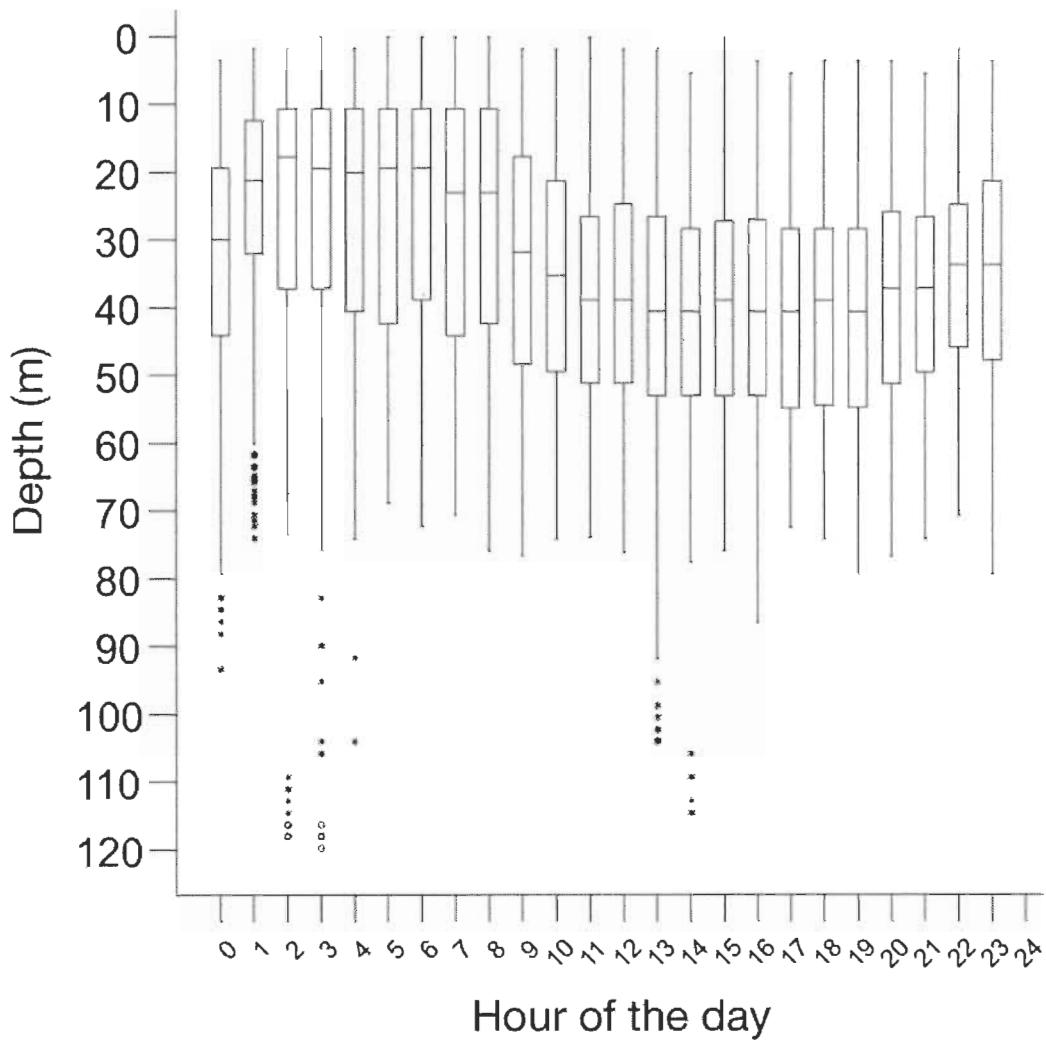


Figure 7

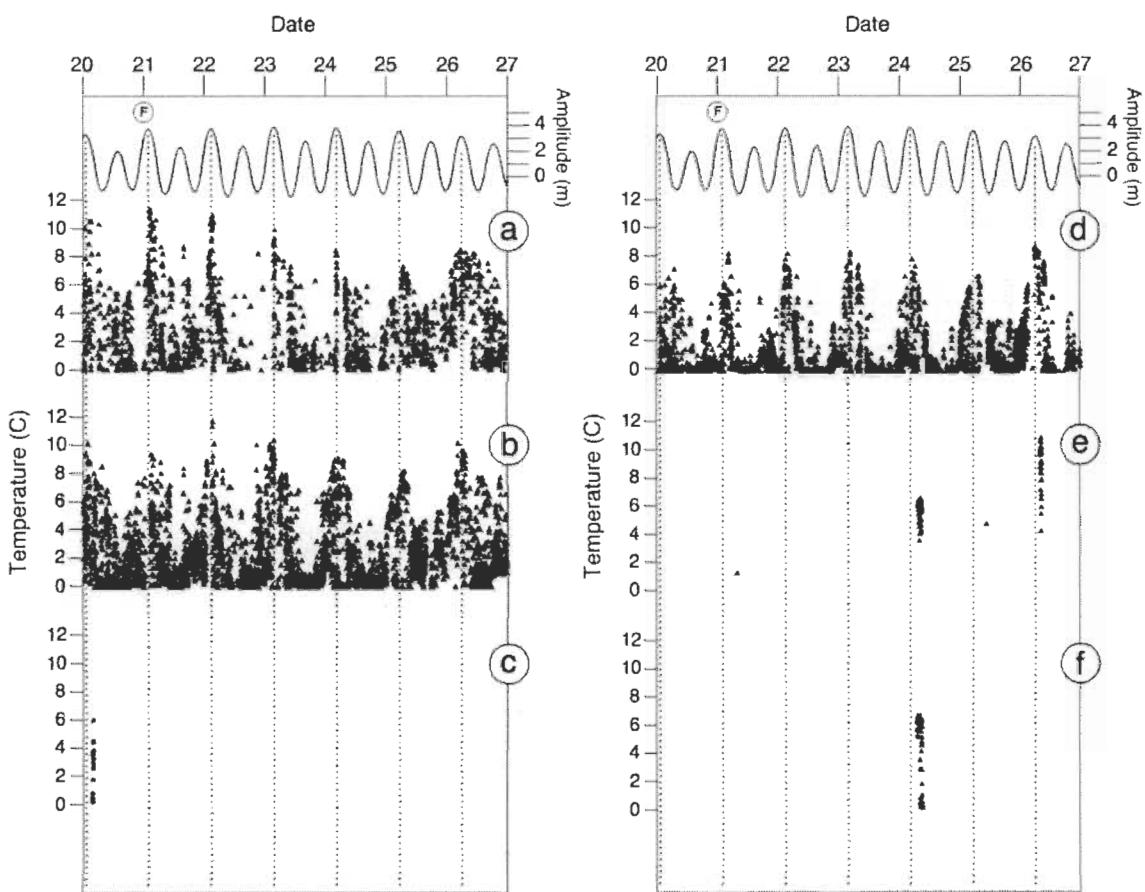


Figure 8

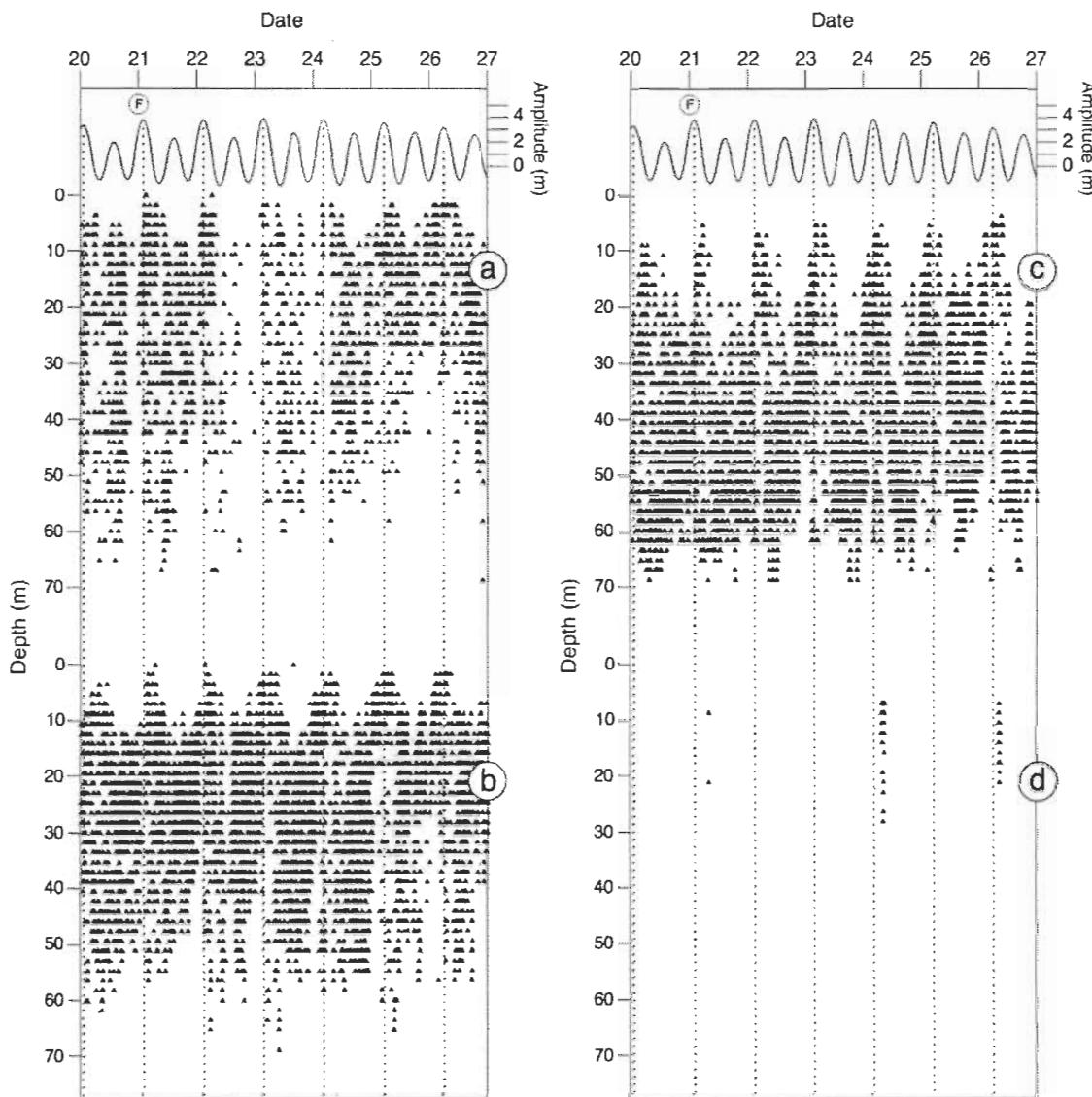


Figure 9

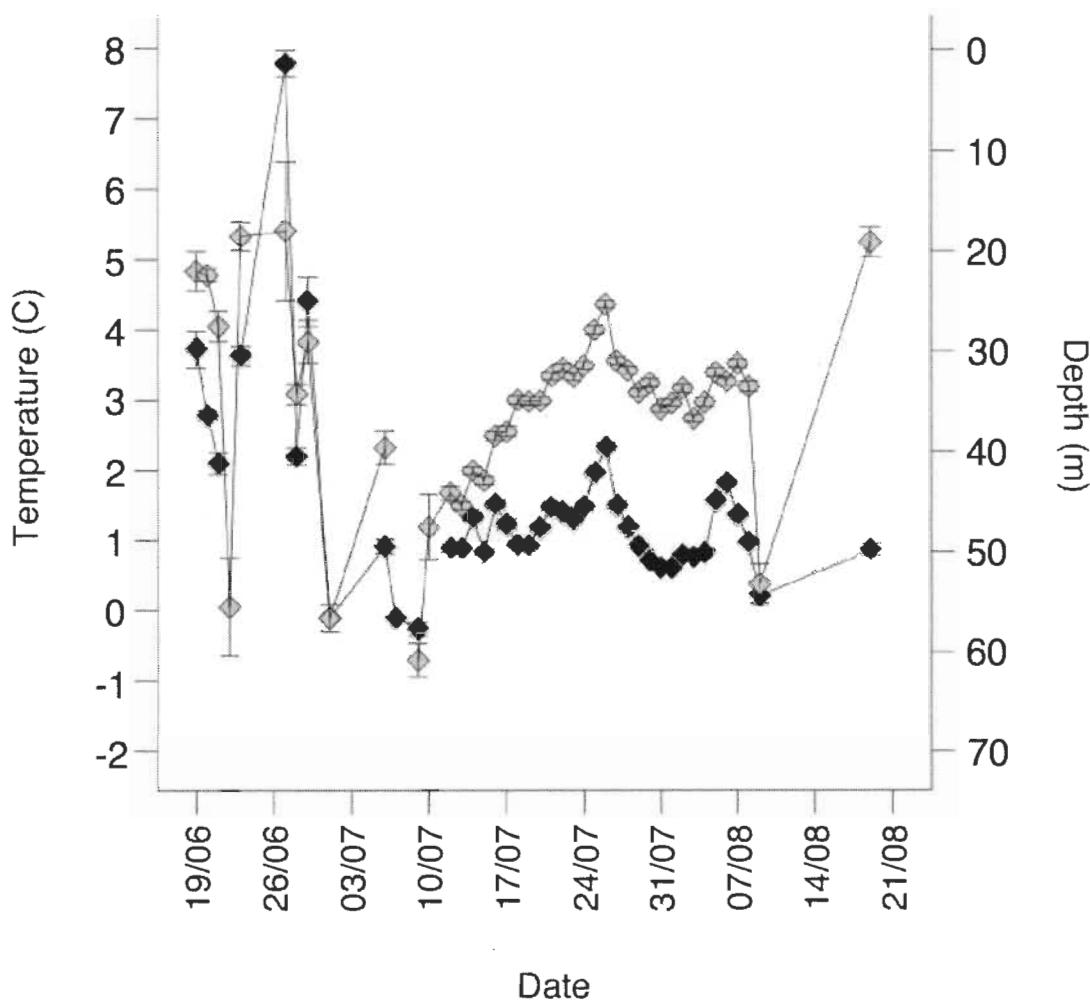
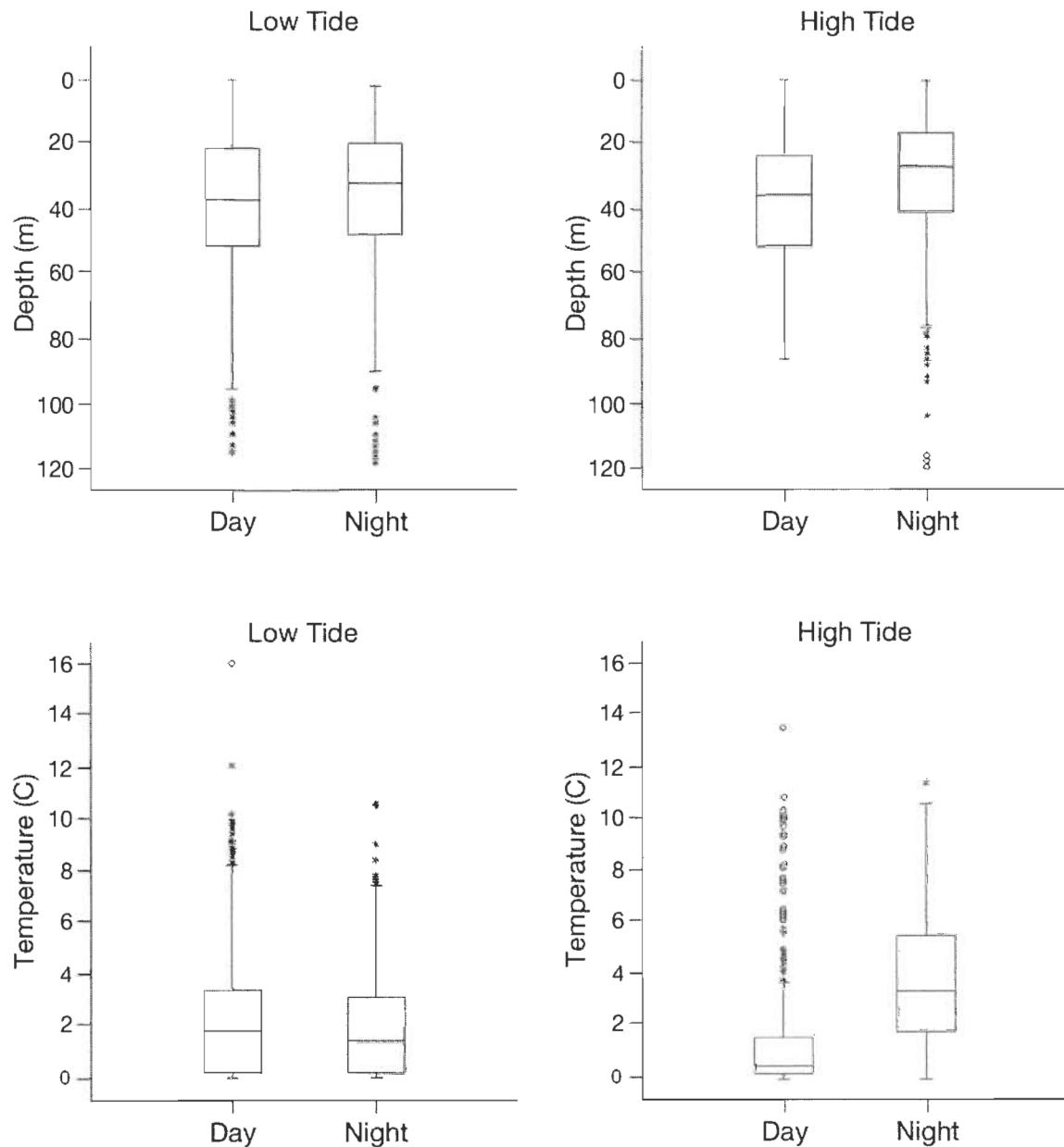


Figure 10



ANNEXE

INSTRUCTIONS AUX AUTEURS

Ecology

Editor-in-Chief

Debra Peters

ISSN 0012-9658

Monthly

Preparation of Manuscripts

Manuscript format

Consult recent issues for examples of journal style. For purposes of review, submitted manuscripts need not adhere to journal style in every detail; however, preparation of final revisions of manuscripts accepted for publication will be easier if ESA style is followed from the outset.

All papers must be in English. Use American spellings (e.g., behavior, not behaviour). The *CBE Style Manual*, Fifth Edition, is recommended for details of style.

Spaces, margins and fonts The entire manuscript must be double-spaced (text, quotations, figure legends, tables, literature cited, etc.) at three lines per inch (12 lines/10 cm). Leave a 1-inch (2.4-cm) margin on all sides of each page. Use a 12-point font (proportionally-spaced type) or 10 characters/inch (4 characters/cm) if the letter spacing is uniform. Do not hyphenate words at the right margin or justify the right margin. Put the author's name in the header for each page and number all pages, starting with the title page.

Line numbers All pages of text should have line numbers.

Equations, symbols and abbreviations Define all symbols, abbreviations and acronyms the first time they are used. Equations to be set separately from the text will be broken into two or more lines if they exceed the width of one column; mark equations for appropriate breaks. Subscripts and superscripts should be clarified by marginal notes. Use leading zeroes with *all* number <1, including probability values (e.g., $P< 0.001$). Use boldface roman type to denote matrices and vectors.

Underlining and italics Underline or italicize scientific names and the symbols for all variables and constants *except* Greek letters. Symbols should be italic in the illustrations to match the text. Italics should rarely be used for emphasis.(If mathematical expressions are to be set with underbars, this must be indicated clearly on the manuscript, by means of a special note.)

Footnotes Footnotes to text should be avoided; most footnote material can be incorporated in the text (parenthetically if necessary) to the benefit of readers, editors, and printers.

Organization of the paper

Title page *Running Head.* -- A running head of not longer than 40 letters and spaces should be provided at the top of the title page.

Title. -- Titles should be concise, informative, tell what the paper is about and what it found. It should contain keywords necessary for digital search and retrieval methods. Avoid vague declarations (e.g., "effects of ..."); strive for information content (e.g., fungi kill tardigrades"). The maximum length is 120 characters. Do not include the authority for taxonomic names in the title or in the abstract. Titles may not include numerical series designations. The first letter of the first word in the title is capitalized. All other words, except for proper nouns, are lower case.

List of Authors. -- For each author, give the relevant address – usually the institutional affiliation of the author during the period when all or most of the research was done.

Each author's present address, if different from this, and the author's email address should appear as a footnote at the bottom of the title page.

Individuals listed as authors should have played a significant role in designing or carrying out the research, writing the manuscript, or providing extensive guidance on the execution of the project. Those whose role was limited to providing materials, financial support, or review should be recognized in the Acknowledgments section.

Abstract and key words The abstract should explain to the general reader why the research was done and why the results should be viewed as important. It should provide a brief summary of the research, including the purpose, methods, results, and major conclusions. Do not include literature citations in the Abstract. Avoid long lists of common methods or discursive explanations of what you set out to accomplish. The primary purpose of an abstract is to allow readers to determine quickly and easily the content and results of a paper. Abstracts should not exceed 200 words for Reports, Notes, and Communications, and 350 words for articles and for Data Papers. Following the Abstract, list up to 12 key words. Words from the title of the article may be included in the key words. Each key word should be useful as an entry point for a literature search.

Body of the article If appropriate, organize your article in sections labeled Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. You may need to add a section for Conclusions. Brief articles usually do not require a label for the Introduction. If the nature of your research requires a different organization, specify the level of each section heading (1st-order head, 2nd-order head, etc.) in the margin.

A brief **Introduction** describing the paper's significance should be intelligible to the general reader of the journal. The Introduction should state the reason for doing the research, the nature of the questions or hypotheses under consideration, and essential background. The Introduction is not a place for a lengthy review of the topic!

The **Methods** section should provide sufficient information to allow someone to repeat your work. A clear description of your experimental design, sampling procedures, and statistical procedures is especially important. Do not describe commonplace statistical tests in Methods, but allude to them briefly in Results. If you list a product (e.g., animal food, analytical device), supply the name and location of the manufacturer. Give the model number for equipment specified. Supply complete citations, including author (or editor), title, year, publisher and version number, for computer software mentioned in your article.

Results generally should be stated concisely and without interpretation, though in complex studies modest interpretation of individual parts can provide context helpful for understanding subsequent parts.

The **Discussion** should explain the significance of the results. Distinguish factual results from speculation and interpretation. Avoid excessive review.

Acknowledgments Acknowledgments, including funding information, should appear in a brief statement at the end of the body of the text.

Literature cited (and other citations) Avoid excessive citations; cite only essential sources. Before submitting the manuscript, check each citation in the text against the Literature Cited to see that they match exactly. Delete citations if they are not actually cited in the article. The list should conform in sequencing and punctuation to that in recent issues of the journal. All journal titles should be spelled out completely. Provide the publisher's name and location when you cite conference proceedings or other books.

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At the submission and review stages, embedded image files are acceptable for tables. Final versions of accepted manuscripts must have "true" tables in an editable format, created by using the "Insert Table" function, rather than using tabs or spaces. For example, in Microsoft Word you should select "Table", "Insert", "Table", then specify the number of rows and columns and fill in the individual cells.

Figures Number figures in the order in which they are discussed in the text. Group the figure legends in numerical order on one or more pages, separate from the figures. The figure title (i.e., Figure 1) should be given as the first two words of the legend.

Electronic file formats: All figure files should be in eps, pdf, tiff, or jpeg format, or embedded in Word or PowerPoint. See below for sizing. Low resolution figure files will not be suitable for publication. Thus, we may require new versions of figures for the final version of an accepted manuscript.

Size: There should only be one figure on each page. The resolution should be 600 dpi (dots per inch). If you make tiff files, please use the "LZW compression" option when saving the files. That will significantly reduce the file size, without adversely affecting the image quality.

Type guidelines for figures: Most figures will be reduced to single-column width in the journal (76 mm, 3 inches, or 18 picas) and should be completely legible at that size. After reduction, all lettering should be no smaller than a 6-point font size. Sans serif fonts such as Helvetica or Arial are preferred. Nomenclature, abbreviations, symbols, and units used in a figure should match those used in the text and tables. Use italics only as used in the text (e.g., variables, species names). All Greek letters should be set upright (roman, not italic). Avoid boldface lettering.

Lines and fills: Axis lines, tick marks, error bars, etc. should be thick enough to survive reduction to final print size (at least 1 point wide, following reduction). Anything smaller is likely to fade out. Tick marks also need to be long enough to show up when reduced. Fills should be sufficiently different so they can be distinguished upon reduction.

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Do not submit unsolicited suggestions for cover photos. Cover photos are solicited when an issue is put together, and you will be contacted if your manuscript can be considered as a candidate for the cover.

Conventions

Identification of the objects of study Early in the manuscript, identify the type(s) of organism or ecosystem you studied; e.g., "*Cornus florida* L. (flowering dogwood), a small deciduous tree". Avoid descriptive terms that may be familiar only to specialists. Provide the scientific names of all organisms. Common names may be used when convenient after stating the scientific names.

Genus names must be spelled out the first time they are used, but may be abbreviated to a single letter thereafter if no confusion will result. If the article contains several different scientific names, it is a good idea to spell out the generic name the first time it appears in each major section. Species names must always be spelled out in text; space limitations in tables or figures may require use of a "code," such as the first letter of the genus and species name; these letters should be in italics, like the original scientific name. Check carefully the spelling of all scientific nomenclature. Copy editors cannot be expected to do this. Because usage of scientific names may vary between investigators and can be ambiguous when out of context, conformance to a comprehensive nomenclatural standard is highly desirable. Suggestions for nomenclature standards are available for commonly studied groups.

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Any novel computer code used for models, simulations, or statistical analyses reported in the manuscript must be described. Such code must be part of the submission and will become a permanently archived Supplement to an accepted manuscript. Computer code should be sufficiently documented so that reviewers and readers can reconstruct simulations, models or analyses as reported in the submission and ultimate publication. Executable code is not sufficient; source code must be provided. Sufficient metadata should accompany the code so that others can readily use the files and interpret output. Such metadata can usually be provided in a short text file.

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