

Graduate Student Symposium Held at DISL

By Jody Bruton, Ph.D. Student, DISL

On February 16-17, 2001 the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Graduate Student Organization along with the graduate students of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory hosted the 3rd Annual Aquatic/Marine Sciences Graduate Student Symposium. It was the first year for this event to be held at DISL, and students and faculty enjoyed interacting with their peers from all over the Southeastern U.S.

Events were kicked off on the first day with registration and a social held at the Estuarium. The second day consisted of a daylong series of scientific talks and poster sessions, followed by a banquet that evening.

A panel of faculty judges from various universities graded the talks and posters. First and Second Place awards were given for both.

The First Place talk was by DISL Ph.D. candidate Rita Peachy for "The Synergistic Effects of UV Radiation and Hydrocarbon Pollutants on Crab Larvae." Walter Ingram, another DISL student who has since completed his Ph.D., tied with Sean Keenan of Louisiana State University for Second Place. Ingram's talk was "Site Fidelity and localization of Population Parameters of Gray Triggerfish (*Balistes capriscus*): A Tagging Study from the Gulf of Mexico," while Keenan's talk was titled "Feeding Habits of Blue Runner *Caranx crysos* Near Offshore Petroleum Platforms." An additional "People's Choice" award was selected by student ballot. It went to Charlyn Partridge of the University of South Alabama Biology Department for "Understanding a

Complex Male Brooding System: Experimental Design."

First Place for the poster presentations went to Tracy Ziegler of Florida Institute of Technology for "Synchronous Timing of Larval Release of Female Blue Crabs, *Callinectes sapidus*." Heather Albright of DISL tied

with Nia Paluiukonis of the University of Alabama for Second Place.

Albright's poster presentation was "Secondary Productivity and Trophic Transfer Along Productivity Gradients"

while Pauliukonis' poster was titled "The Effects of Severing on Two Clonal Plant Forms: Preliminary Results of a Wetland Field Experiment."

The evening banquet was held at the Dauphin Island Chamber of Commerce and was a great success. Banquet guests enjoyed a lively talk by keynote speaker Dr. Kenneth Rose of Louisiana State University.



Heather Albright (far right) explains her poster during the Graduate Student Symposium.