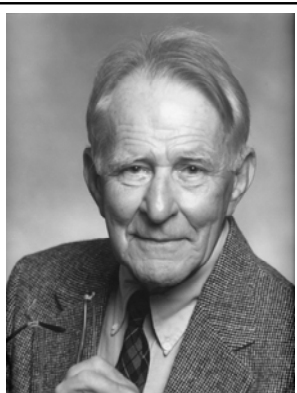




Shellfish Pioneers

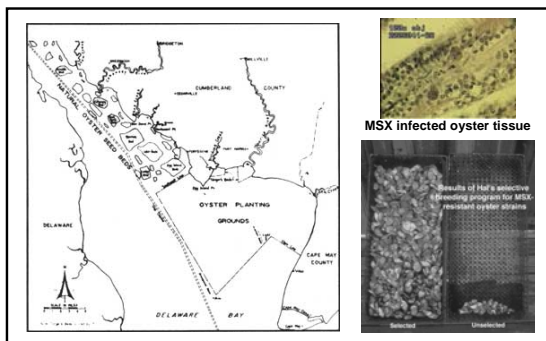
Harold H. Haskin



Harold H. Haskin
(1915-2002)

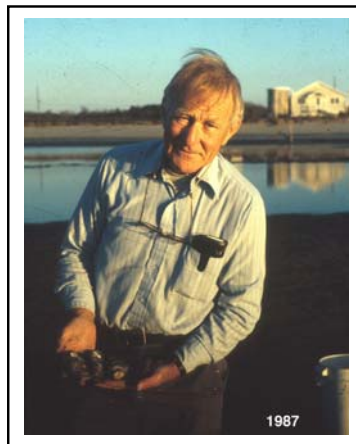
"I am not one of those who believes in keeping everything just the way it is in the name of conservation. I think we can arrange things to serve many different needs, but we have to recognize we have a very valuable, renewable resource here and the pressures on it are already great. We should be very watchful when we consider changes that could add new stresses."

Quote from Hal Haskin in reference to the Delaware Bay oyster resource



Hal 'Doc' Haskin devoted his life to research and teaching about marine molluscs and developing resource management strategies based on scientific data collection that are use today by both state and federal governments. As an undergraduate at Rutgers, Hal was a protégé of Thurlow Nelson, succeeding him as Director of the NJ Oyster Investigation Laboratory (NJORL). As a faculty member at Rutgers, he taught undergraduates in general biology, limnology, physiology and invertebrate zoology and developed graduate courses in oceanography, estuarine ecology and malacology. His many students have taught in colleges and universities in the United States and abroad, and many serve in state and federal agencies that are involved in marine research and policy making.

In the early 1950s, after recognizing the demise of the Delaware Bay oyster beds from years of overharvesting and poor recruitment, Hal instituted a long-term program to document the condition of the beds and to determine the factors that influence the abundance of oysters on them. The program, which still continues, has produced one of the best long-term datasets on commercial shellfish populations in existence today. Later, he became a leader in oyster disease research after the MSX epizootics began devastating oyster populations in the late 1950s. By the early 1960s, he had begun a selective breeding program that has produced oyster strains highly resistant to MSX disease. These lines have evolved into a program to breed resistance to dermo disease and juvenile oyster disease (aka ROD) into these oysters. Most of Hal's research involved support to the oyster, hard clam and surf clam industries and to the people charged with managing those resources. He was equally comfortable chatting with oysterman, government officials and academic colleagues. He respected them, even when his opinion differed sharply from theirs and they respected him for his honesty, knowledge and common sense.



TIMELINE

