

Blue Crabs in the Chesapeake

(makeup version)

Use the [packet](#), *Blue Crabs in the Chesapeake*, to answer the following questions.

Prelab Questions

1. Why are blue crabs important? (pg1)
2. List the taxonomic classification of the blue crab (phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species). (pg1-2)
3. What is the translation of the blue crab's scientific name? (pg2)
4. When was the Chesapeake Bay formed? (pg2)
5. How can you easily identify male vs. female blue crabs? (pg2)
6. What is a sponge mass? What is the difference between an orange mass and a black mass? (pg3)
7. What is the native range of the blue crab? (pg5)
8. Where are blue crabs found during the winter? (pg5)
9. Where are blue crabs found spring and summer? (pg5)
10. Where do female blue crabs migrate after mating? (pg5)

What We Did in Class: Students used the data tables on pages 7-18 and the map on page 23 to analyze the movement of blue crabs throughout their lifecycle. What they found was that adult blue crabs spend their time in the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay. They mate there, then the females make their way down to the mouth of the Chesapeake to release their eggs. The eggs float out into the Atlantic Ocean where they develop into larvae (Zoea and Megalopae) before coming back into the Bay. The juveniles then migrate into the upper Bay to start the cycle over again.

Analysis Questions

11. Summarize the blue crab life cycle.
12. Relate the blue crab life cycle to the varying conditions found throughout the Chesapeake (ex. Temperature, salinity, turbidity).
13. Why would this information be important to humans?

