Max Shi

In Hot Water, by Warren Cornwall – Science

This article details the discovery and effects of what marine biologists call “the blob,” an area in the Pacific Ocean five years ago that suddenly saw much hotter water temperatures compared to history. First examining the decimation of the cod population, the article goes on to show how this caused reverberations up and down the whole food chain, with birds that feed off fish like cod being found washed up onshore, as well as humpback whale populations dwindling, signifying a universal lack of food in the area. However, the article also details some inconsistencies in the effects of the blob, such as in the tufted puffin population being relatively unharmed by the phenomenon, despite having similar diets to other bird species which saw large death tolls due to lack of food. The article ends with a balance of hope and dread: even though the blob from the past has dissipated and marine wildlife populations are making a comeback, there are signs that a new blob may occur due to a calm and warm weather spell in the Gulf of Alaska.