

**The mysterious disappearance of the Great Auk and Northern Cod:  
is the northwest Atlantic ecosystem in crisis?**

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Contemporary scientific debate and investigation on the catastrophic decline of the Northern Cod stock is focusing on the purported instantaneous disappearance of approximately 500,000 metric tonnes of biomass on or about February of 1992. This science is directed primarily at the investigation of environmental anomalies coincident with the decline. This presentation offers a cursory examination of some of the suggested contributors to the current resource crisis and proposes an alternate, more salient culprit to the

problem. A review of macroscopic indicators from a biological and historical analysis of the fishery provides a simple explanation of the events which is unpalatable to existing fisheries epistemology. Historical catches of northern cod, spawning stock biomass and retrospective  $F_{0.1}$ 's can be used to exhibit a decline of the Northern Cod Stock since 1960—a decline from which the stock has never been permitted to recover.