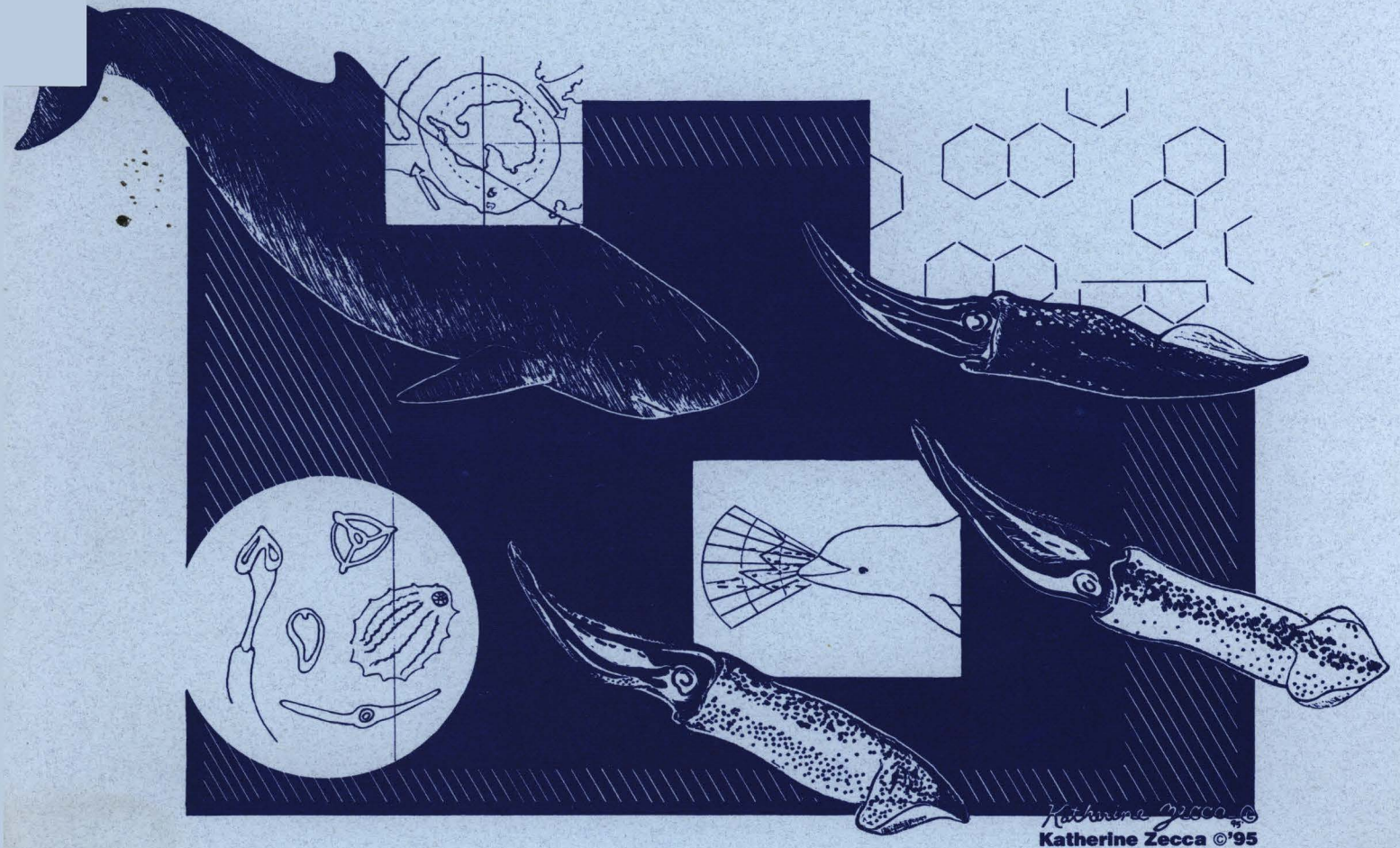


**AGE AND SEX DIFFERENCES IN JUVENILE SURVIVAL IN
WEDDELL SEALS (*Leptonychotes weddellii*).**
Hastings, K. K. and J. W. Testa*
Dept. of Biology and Wildlife, University of Alaska,
Fairbanks 99775
*Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, 333 Raspberry Rd.,
Anchorage, AK, 99518.

Although the juvenile lifestage is critical to understanding population dynamics and reproductive strategies, little is known of this lifestage in pinnipeds. Using mark-recapture data of Weddell seal pups born in McMurdo Sound, Antarctica, age and sex differences in survival from age 1 to age 6 were analyzed. Data include 22 years, from 1973 to 1994, with 5,184 pups tagged during the study. Results indicate that survival of males is lower than female seals at ages 1, 5, and 6. In looking at the mothers role in these differences, maternal effects, such as age, size, and status, were analyzed in relation to the sex and survival of offspring. Substantial interannual variation has been seen in reproductive rate and survival to age 1 in this population. Yearly variation in the sex-ratio of pups may also coincide with variation in these parameters, illustrating reproductive strategies of adult females in a fluctuating environment.

Eleventh Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals



Katherine Zecca ©'95

14 - 18 December 1995 Orlando, Florida, U.S.A.

ABSTRACTS