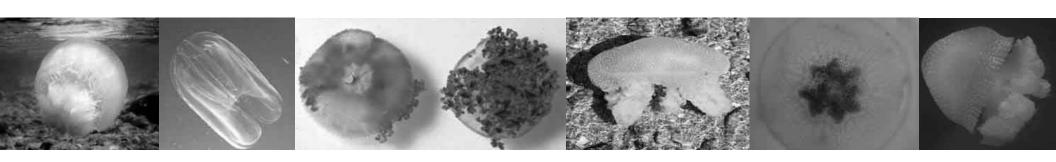
No laughing matter

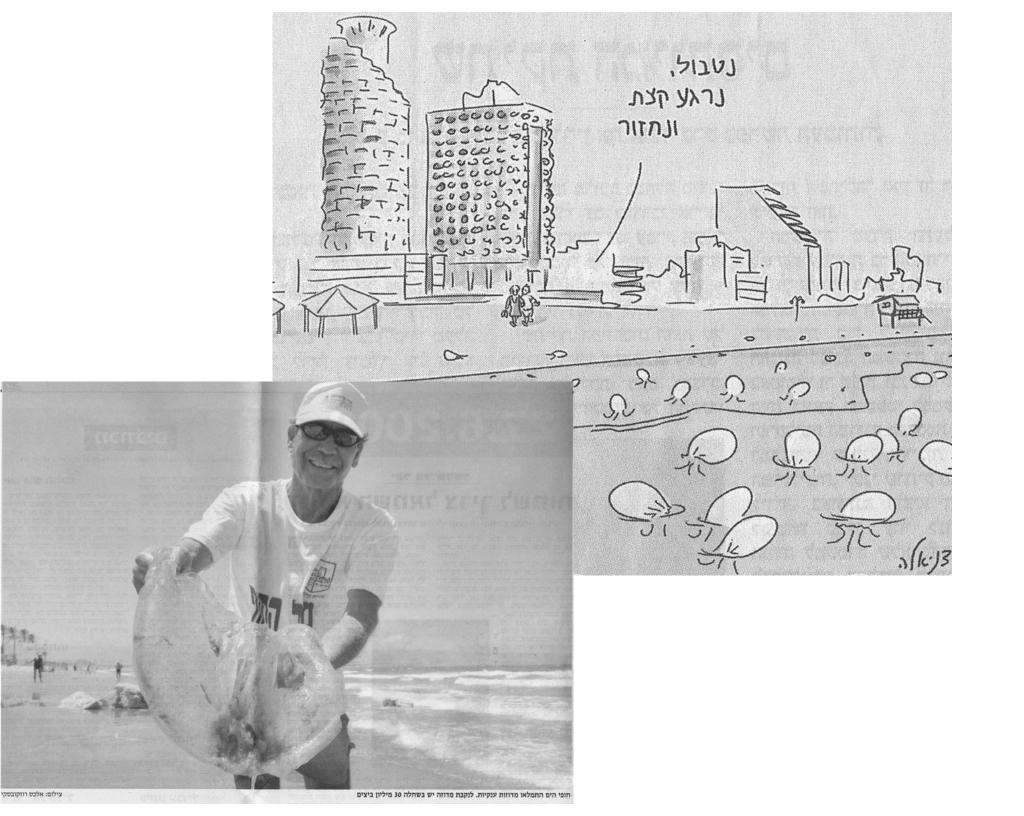
jellyfish outbreaks along the Mediterranean coast of Israel

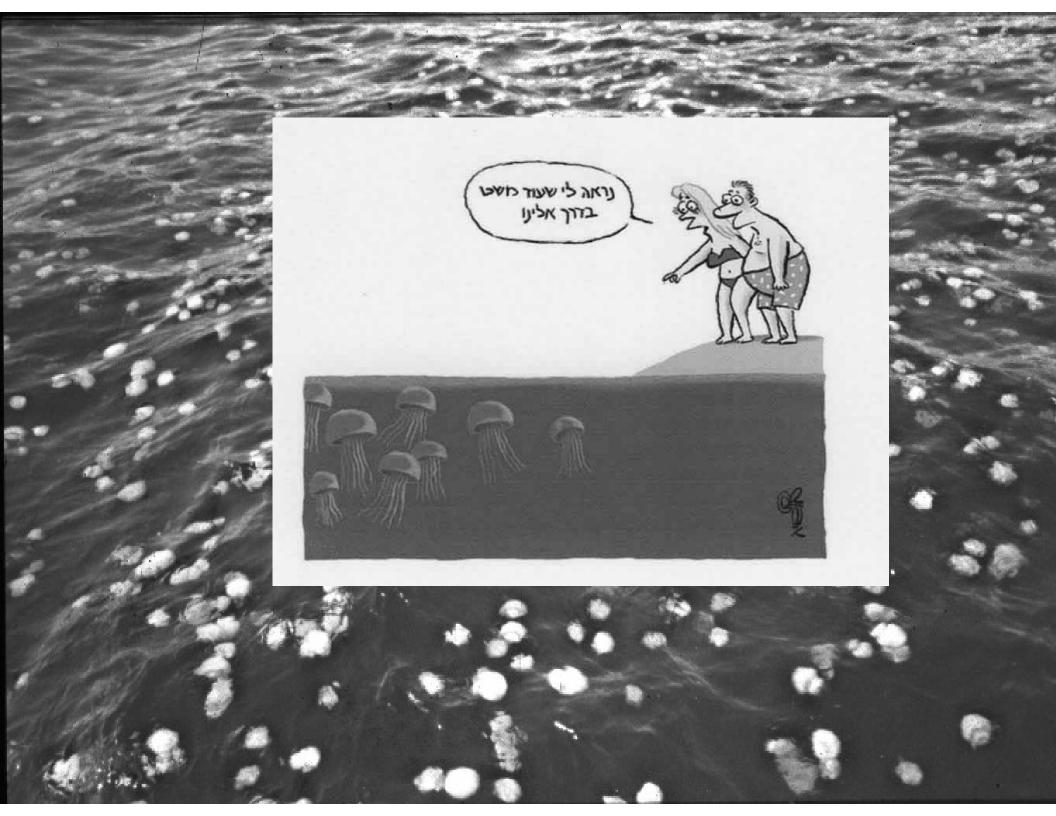
Bella Galil

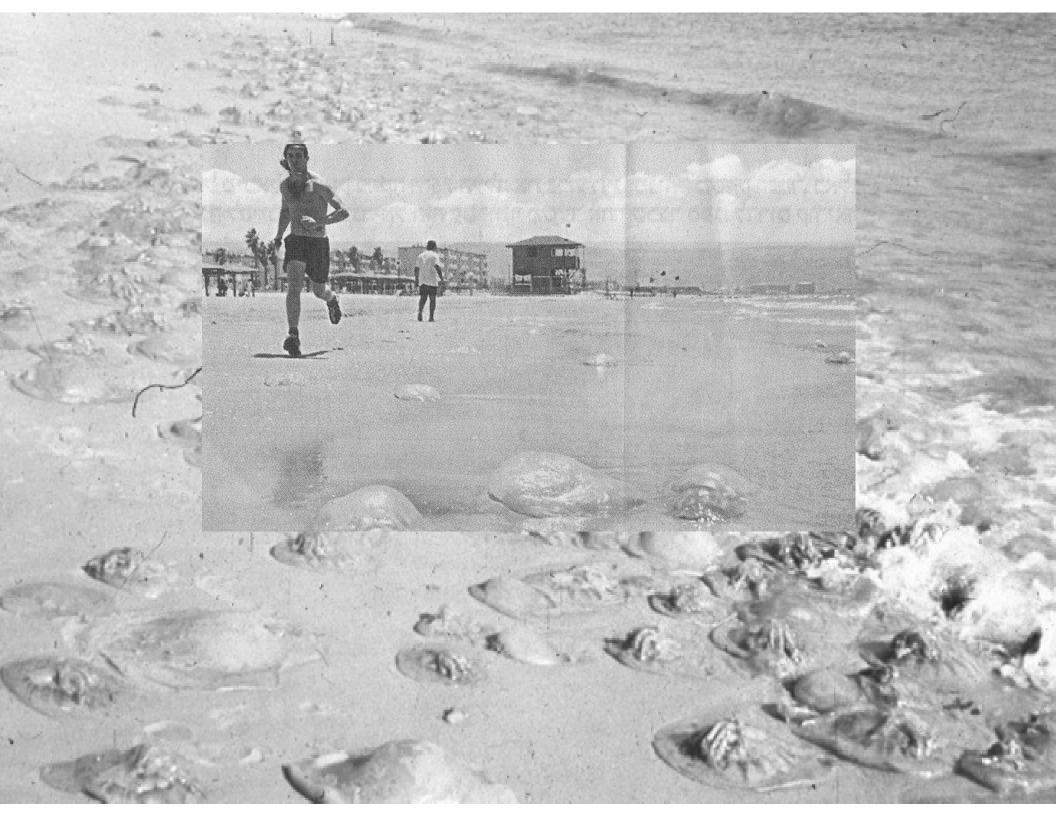
National Institute of Oceanography

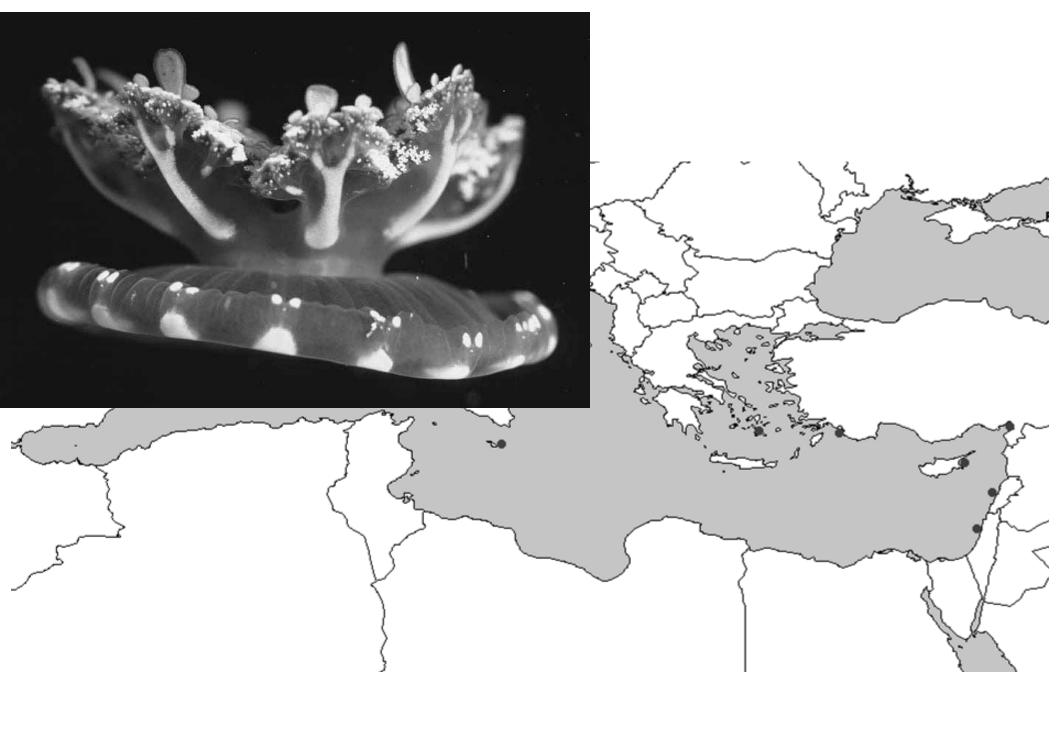
Israel Oceanographic & Limnological Research



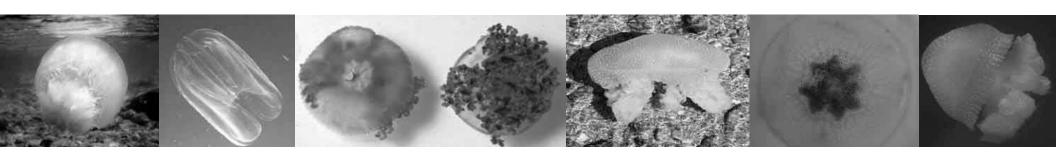


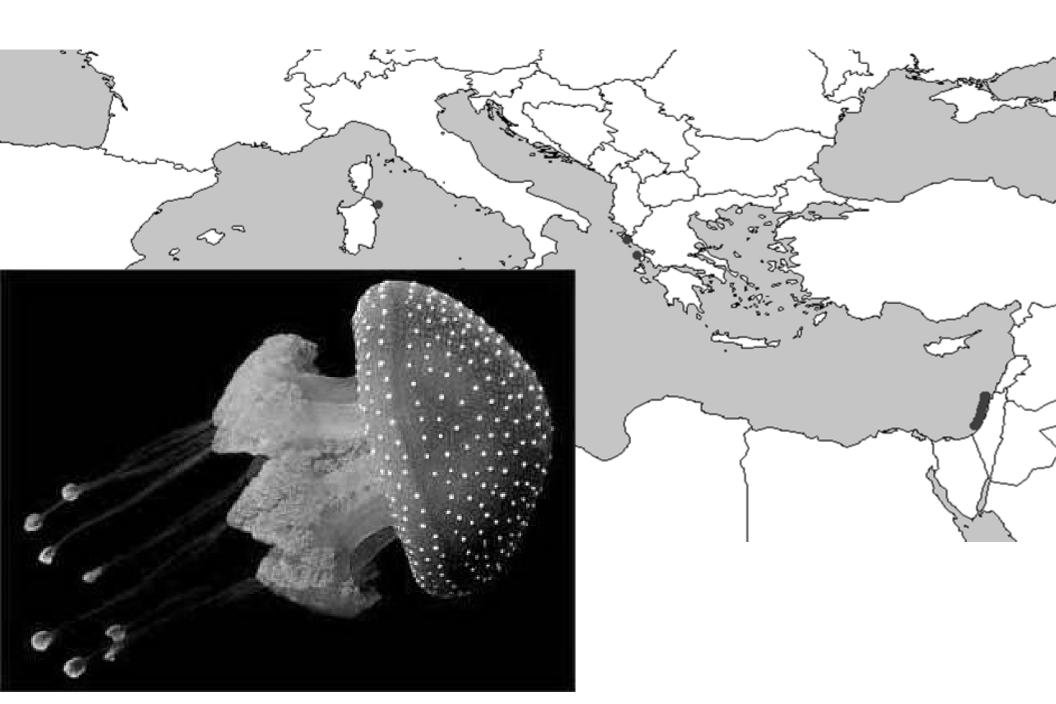




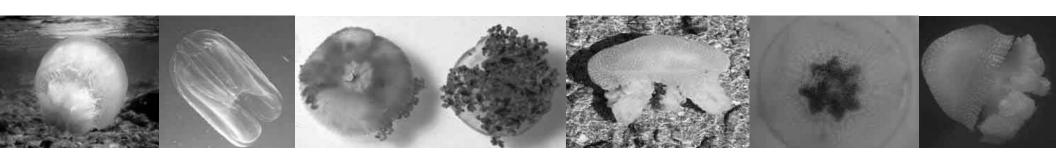


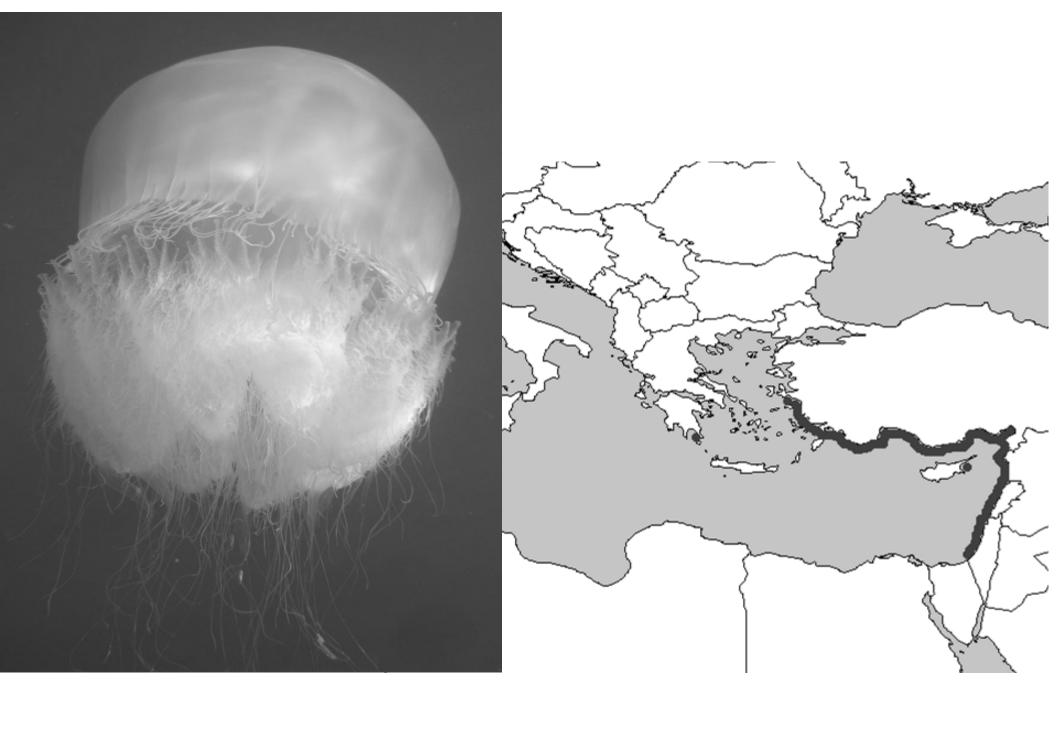
Keller (1888) reported that already in 1886 large numbers of Cassiopea andromeda inhabited the Suez Canal and the adjoining lagoons south of Lake Timsah. The species was first recorded in the Mediterranean from Cyprus by Maas (1903). Schäfer (1955) reported the occurrence of very young specimens (2-30 mm) on **Neokameni**, a small volcanic island near Thira, Aegean Sea, where the medusae flourished in rocky pools with water temperatures reaching up to 36°C. The species occurs along the Levantine coastline (Goy et al. 1988; Spanier 1989; Bilecenoğlu 2002) and was recently reported from Malta (Schembri et al. 2010).





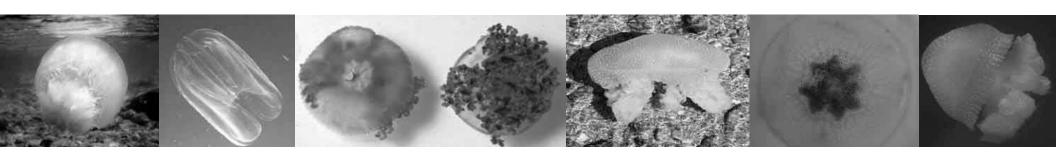
Phyllorhiza punctata was first sighted in the Mediterranean in 1965, off the **Israeli** coast, and since 2005 its presence has been recorded regularly (Galil et al. 1990, Galil et al. 2009). Ephyrae and medusae of *P. punctata* were collected off **Lefkada** Island, on the Ionian coast of Greece, in 2005 and 2006, and the population has apparently occurred there for a number of years (Abed-Navandi and Kikinger 2007). In 2009 a single specimen was photographed off **Tavolaro Island, Sardinia, Italy** (Boero et al. 2009).





Rhopilema nomadica is notorious for the huge swarms it has formed each summer since the mid 1980s along the SE Levantine coast (Galil et al., 1990).

The swarms adversely affect tourism, fisheries and coastal installations.



Another problematic flotilla: Jellyfish hit Israel's shores early this year

Aggressive and invasive species sting tens of thousands every summer

• By EHUD ZION WALDOKS

It's only the last week of June, and off Israel's coasts the second swarm of jellyfish this year is floating along. Usually, the first swarm hits this week and next, according to Israel Oceanographic and Limnological Research (IOLR) Center Senior Scientist Dr. Bella Galil.

"It's very unusual for the first swarm to have come the first week of June," she told *The Jerusalem Post* Sunday. Galil has been tracking jellyfish since the early 1990s and even named one.

That jellyfish, whose scientific name is *Rhopilema nomadica Galil*, is the one that gives bathers so much trouble along Israel's coasts, as it is more venomous than native species of jellyfish. Experts

believe the Rhopilema arrived in the Mediterranean Sea via the Suez Canal in the 1970s and since the mid-80s has been forming huge flotillas every summer, according to Galil.

While there are native Mediterranean species of jellyfish, they usually appear off the coast in winter, in vastly smaller numbers and are far less venomous.

As an invasive species, Rhopilema quickly came to dominate the area and now lives its entire lifespan in the Mediterranean. An invasive species is one which is brought or migrates to a new area where it lacks natural predators and so can outcompete native species.

The current swarm is 100 kilometers long, Galil said, and in the entire Mediter-

ranean jellyfish swarms have been increasing in frequency over the last decade.

"It used to be that a megaswarm would occur once a decade, but since 2000 there we have them every summer, from Spain to the Levant. However, whereas in the western and central Mediterranean the swarms are made up of native species, in the Levant the aliens have taken over," Galil said.

Rhopilema and other species of jellyfish have stung tens of thousands of bathers around the Mediterranean over the last decade. In some instances several hundred people were stung in a single day.

In addition to stinging bathers, the jellyfish, voracious and efficient predators, are consuming vast amounts of fish and shrimp larvae and depleting the food chain. Scientists are concerned the Mediterranean could turn into a "gelatinous" sea rather than a "fish" one.

The jellyfish hurt coastal fisheries as they fill the nets to bursting and prevents fishers from sorting the meager yield. They also harm coastal installations. In 2001, the Israel Electric Corporation had to clean out tons of jellyfish from its seawater intake pipes to its major power plants at an estimated cost of \$50,000.

This year, Israel will join the "JellyWatch" in full for the first time. The CIESM Mediterranean Science Commission first tested the program in Italy in 2008 and extended it, in part, to Israel last year. Tunisia and France

are set to join soon even as Israel fully deploys the program along its Mediterranean coastline.

Under the "JellyWatch" program, frequenters of the beaches – bathers, surfers, lifeguards, yachters, fishermen and others – will be asked to photograph any jellyfish they see and send the photos in along with a description of where they saw them. Posters will be pasted all over the coast to help with identification.

For the first time, the poster has been translated into Hebrew by Galil and her colleagues and will be posted this week along the beaches.

So next time you see a jellyfish, don't run away. Whip out your cell phone, snap a shot of it and help scientists study this growing phenomenon.



תצלום ארכיון: איציק בן מלכי

מדוזה בחוף שדות ים. נשארות באזור בשל התמעטות אוכלוסיית הרגים. מימין: כרזת המכון לחקר ימים ואגמים

של עונת הרבייה, ולכן הן מתרכזות

בנחיל צפוף. הדבר מגביר את סיכויי

הרבייה שלהן, המתבססת על הטלת

ביצים לים על ידי הנקבות ותאי זרע

על ידי הזכרים. סיכויי ההפריה גו־

ברים כאשר המדוזות בסמוך זו לזו.

לחיפה, וקצהו הדרומי יהיה בא־

נחיל המרוזות יגיע בשיאו עד

רם לכוויות ולגירויים בעור, עו־ בדה שהופכת אותן למטרד חמור בחופי הרחצה. גליל מרגישה כי המדוזות "גם גורמות נזקים ככדים מאחר שהן סותמות פתחי מתקנים בתחנות כוח ומתקני התפלה, וכן רשתות דייגים".

כעת נמצאות המדוזות בעיצומה

זור רצועת עזה. ככל הנראה מו־

רכב הנחיל ממיליונים רבים של מרוזות, וחלקן ייסחפו עם הזרמים לכיוון החוף. באתר האינטרנט של המכון לחקר ימים ואגמים, ,www.ocean.org.il בכתובת ניתן להעביר דיווחים על מדוזות שנצפו בחוף.

הנחיל כבר באזור אשרוד, ולא ברור למה הקדים כל כך להגיע פרופ' בלה גליל

MailOnline

Woman, 69, dies after being stung by a Portuguese man-of-war jellyfish while swimming in Sardinia

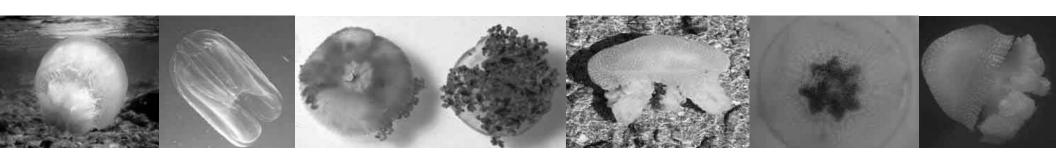
By Nick Pisa Last updated at 12:03 AM on 27th August



Victim: Maria Furcas, shown here in an un



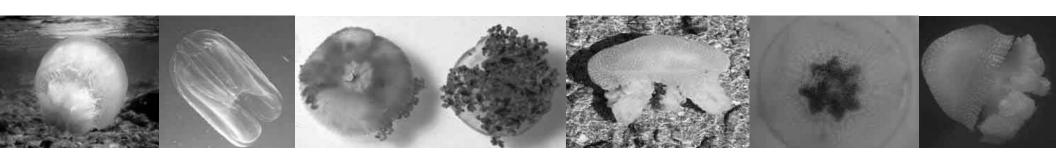
The annual swarming results each year in envenomation victims suffering burning sensation, eurythema, papulovesicular and urticaria-like eruptions that may last weeks and even months after the event (Benmeir et al. 1990; Silfen et al. 2003; Yoffe and Baruchin 2004; Sendovski et al. 2005).





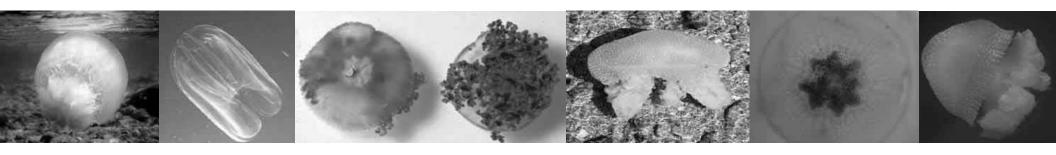
עובד חברת החשמל מעביר את המדוזות שנתפסו בטורבינות למכל מיוחד

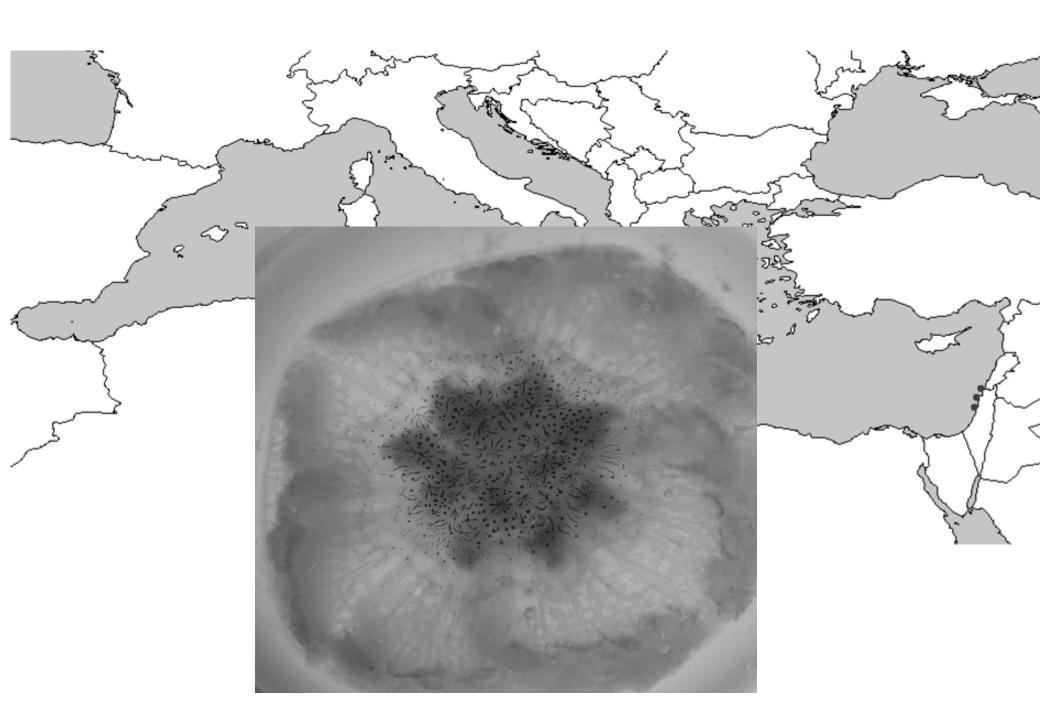
Jellyfish-blocked water intake pipes pose a threat to desalination plants, cooling systems of port-bound vessels and coastal power plants: the Israel Electric removes tons of jellyfish from its seawater intake pipes at its two largest power plants.



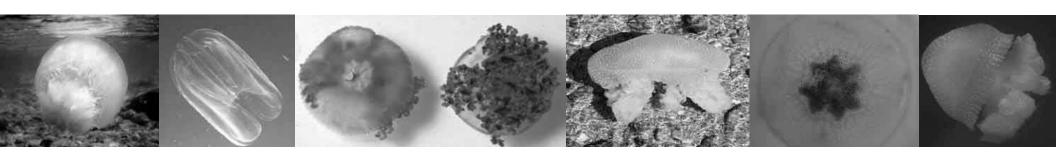


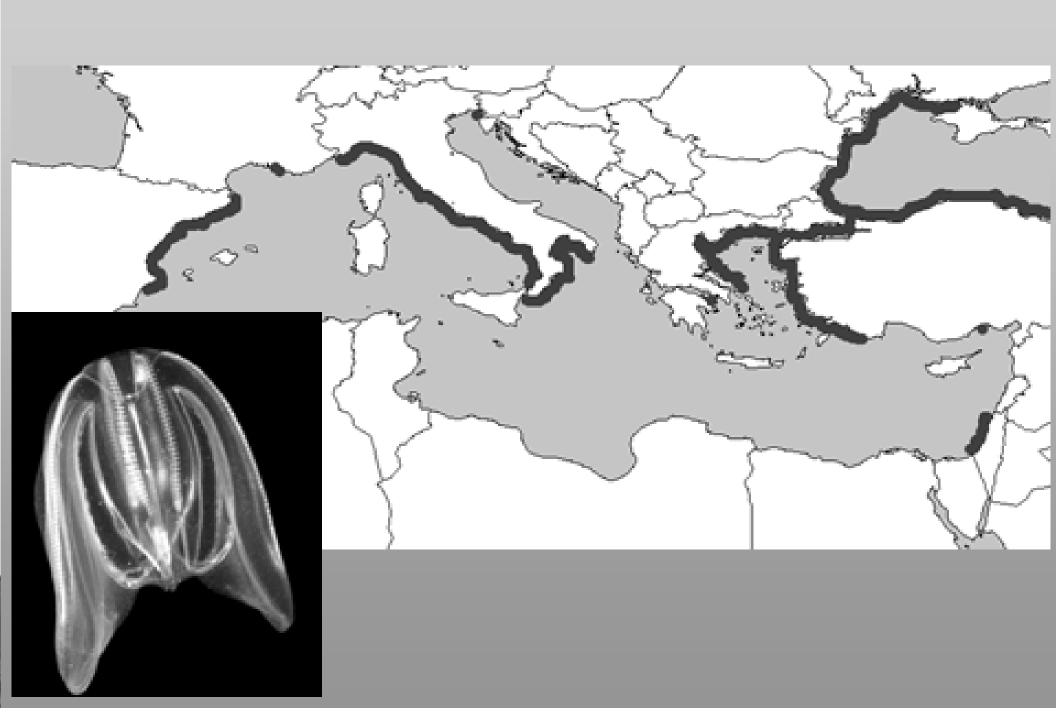
Coastal trawling and purse-seine fishing are disrupted for the duration of the swarming due to net clogging and inability to sort yield "It is not uncommon that fishermen, especially purse seines, discard entire hauls due to the overwhelming presence of poisonous medusae in their nets" (Golani and Ben Tuvia 1995).





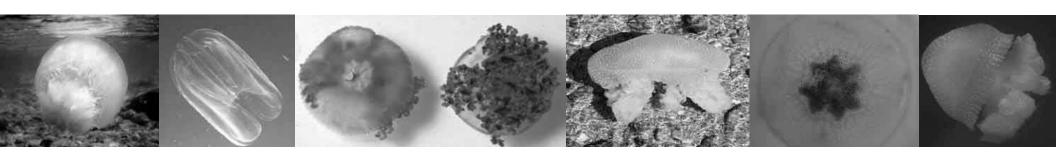
A previously unknown jellyfish species was collected on the Mediterranean coast of Israel in winter 2006 and again in summer 2010. Morphological characters identified them as cepheid scyphozoans, however, the specimens showed remarkable differences from other cepheid genera and they were recently described as *Marivagia stellata* (Galil et al. 2010). It is unclear whence it has arrived; yet, the native range of nine out of ten alien species recorded off the Israeli coast is the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean or the Red Sea (Galil 2007), and one could argue that the Indo-Pacific is a hot-spot for cepheids.





Mnemiopsis leidyi has flourished when introduced to bodies of water of low salinities and temperatures and high productivity – The Black Sea, the Sea of Azov, the Caspian Sea and the Baltic Sea. In the Med too, it has been found in lagoons and gulfs influenced by high river runoffs with their reduced salinity and terrigenous nutrient input.

In 2009, and again in 2010, its swarms have been observed along the Israeli Mediterranean coast. *Mnemiopsis*-blocked water intake pipes pose a threat to cooling systems of local coastal power plants and desalination plants and force plant engineers to modify their operation by increasing the frequency of backwash cycles in the pretreatment stage and consequently increasing the discharge of coagulants such as ferric sulfate into the sea, and ultimately to reduce output.



המדוזות הגיעו לישראל שבועיים מוקדם מהצפוי

נחיל ובו מיליונים רבים של מדוזות הפתיע את החוקרים כשנצפה בדרכו לחופי הארץ מכיוון דרום. בעלי החיים הצורבים צפויים להישאר באזור עד סוף הקיץ

צפריר רינת

משט חדש עושה את דרכו בים לעבר ישראל, הפעם מכיוון לא יוכלו לו. מדובר בנחיל העונ־ תי של המרוזות, שביומיים האח־ רם של המבלים בחופים, המדוזות יישארו באזור עד סוף הקיץ.

שלשום התחילו להגיע אל פרופ' בלה גליל מהמכון לחקר ימים ואגמים בחיפה הדיווחים הראשונים על בואו של נחיל המ־ דוזות, מפי דייגים, פקח של המש־ רד להגנת הסביבה ואחר מעמיתיה למכון. "הנחיל נמצא באזור אשרוד ואשקלון, במרחק של בערך 2.5 ק"מ מהחוף, וכבר נראו כמה מדוזות על החוף עצמו", אמרה אתמול גליל. "הוא הגיע שבועיים מוקדם יותר



מבשנה שעברה, וחודש מוקדם יותר לעומת הנחילים בעבר. אנחנו לא יודעים בדיוק מה הסיבה לכך".

אחת ההערכות של החוקרים עזה, ואף סגר ימי או יחידה צבאית היא שמדוזות מקדימות - וחלקן אף נשארות במהלך החורף באזור - עקב התנאים הנוחים שנוצרו רונים הגיעו דיווחים על תחילת עבורן במזרח הים התיכון בשנים הגעתו לאזורנו - שבועיים מוקדם האחרונות. זאת, בשל התמעטות יותר מאשר בשנה שעברה. לצעד אוכלוסיות הדגים שנגרמה מגיד דול היקף הדיג בים. הדבר מאפשר למדוזות להתרבות ללא מתחרים על מקורות מזון. לדברי גליל, באחרונה ניכרת מגמה של שי־ נוי בים התיכון: מדוזות ממינים שונים ובעלי חיים דמויי מדוזות משתלטים על הים יותר ויותר.

המדוזות המגיעות לישראל הן מהמין חוטית נודדת. מקורן במי האוקיינוס ההודי וים סוף, ומ־ שם הן מגיעות לים התיכון דרך תעלת סואץ. המדוזות מפרישות תאים המכילים חומר צורב שגו־



