

# Rings in stomach could be key to telling lobsters' ages

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Researchers are testing a technique they say could determine the age of lobsters.

Lobsters can live to be more than 100 years old. Their ages are typically estimated based on size, as they shed their shells and grow larger as they get older.

University of Maine research professor Rick Wahle and graduate student Carl Huntsberger say that method of estimating a lobster's age is inexact. That presents a problem for scientists and [fishery managers](#) looking to measure the health of the lobster population.

Wahle and Huntsberger are testing a new method based on research by University of New Brunswick scientist Raouf Kilada. Kilada found tree-ring-like microscopic bands within [lobsters'](#) stomachs.

Huntsberger says preliminary data show the bands indicate annual growth patterns.

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