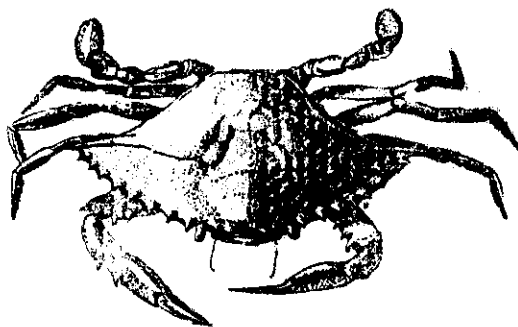


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SEA GRANT PROGRAM



Volume 2, Number 4
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LAGNIAPPE

EELS ARE BACK IN THE NEWS

About 8 or 9 months ago, almost every issue of the LAGNIAPPE had an article on eel fishing. The eel fishery is a major fishery on the Atlantic Coast, but until now has never really caught on here.

Last spring I contacted quite a few large eel buyers from the East Coast. While several expressed an interest in buying, only one volunteered to put in the time and money necessary to teach our people how to catch eels and then hold them.

However, once we had fishermen test-fish different areas and we found that we had what appeared to be a good eel population, everyone from the East Coast came down and wanted to buy eels. In addition, many local people wanted to become local eel buyers. After all of the early uproar, it now appears that the eel fishery is stabilizing somewhat. The cost of setting up expensive holding tanks with pumping equipment has discouraged some who wanted to buy. However, at present there is one established local buyer in the state who will buy all the eels she can get. She is Mrs. May Usannaz and her address is, 4641 Alba Road, New Orleans, LA 70129. She can be reached at 254-1259 or 254-2265. Mrs. Usannaz has purchased and moved several tons of eels so far and is looking for more.

Several people on the fishing end are also doing quite well. One new fisherman from Delacroix, had quite a surprise when he started fishing eels. He started with six pots and was really just kind of curious. The first day he checked each of his traps four times and caught a grand total of over 800 pounds of eels. At 50¢ per pound, he caught \$400 worth of eels in one day in six eel pots.

Not everyone who has started fishing eels has done that well, but generally, most people who are giving it a serious effort are catching eels. One thing that our fishermen will surely have to do, is learn the movement patterns of our eels. Atlantic Coast fishermen tell me that eels do have a predictable pattern just like all other commercial fish. We just have to find it here, as we've already found that they will move in and out of an area.

If you are seriously interested in trying eel fishing, I suggest that you contact Mrs. Usannaz or myself and we'll fill you in on the details. Since this fishery is an experimental one, the fishermen must fish under a special experimental permit obtained from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

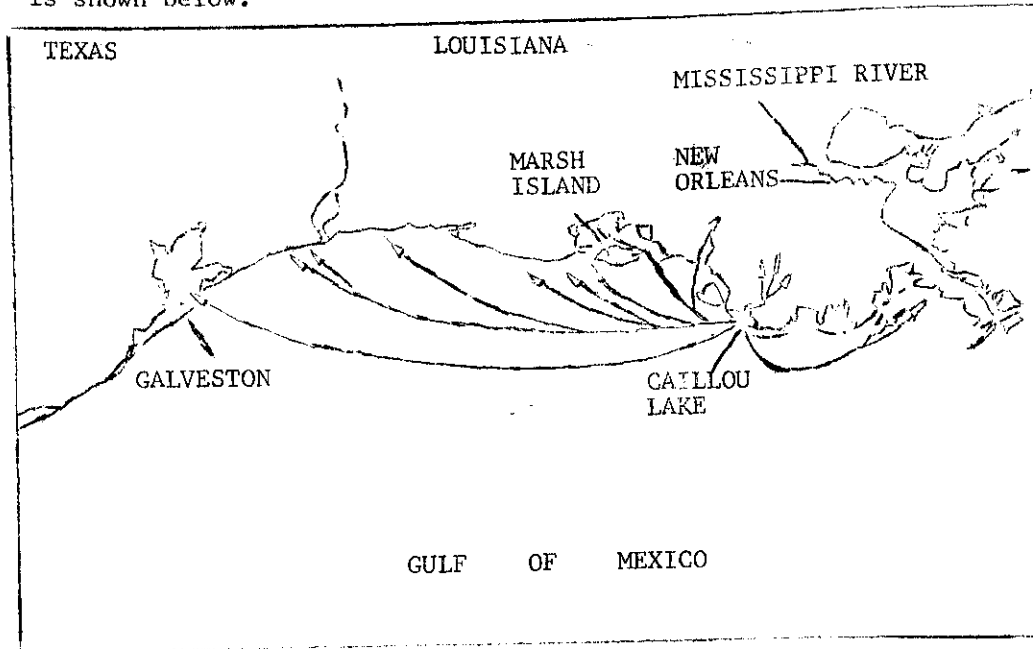
SHRIMP TAGGING RESULTS

I'm sure that all of you remember the big hulabaloo last year over the tagged shrimp. Well we're now starting to see some rewards for the effort that fishermen took to return those tagged shrimp. Of 44,975 tagged shrimp released, 4,190 or 9.3% were returned.

Some very interesting results were obtained from this study. First of all, it was found that shrimp grow much faster in the early part of the season than the same size shrimp do later in the season.

For example, 200-count to the pound shrimp in July reached 45 count in 4 weeks. The same size shrimp in August took 5 weeks to reach 45-count. In September, a 200-count shrimp took 3 months to reach 45-count and an October shrimp took 5 months to reach the same size. The longest time out for a tagged shrimp so far has been 195 days. This shrimp had grown from a 97-count shrimp to an eleven-to-the-pound size.

White shrimp movement also did some interesting things. Even though the shrimp tagged Lake Caillou in July had nearly a month to disperse before the season opened in August, most of them were caught fifteen to twenty nautical miles of the release site. However, tagged shrimp did scatter through the marsh and coastal system as well as offshore. The biggest movement of shrimp was to the west, towards Texas. One shrimp was even picked up in the Galveston Bay system. The furthest any shrimp moved east was near Barataria Pass. The distribution of recaptured tagged shrimp is shown below.



This shrimp tagging program is not over yet. There will still be drawings for awards in 1978. In addition, a repeat of this study will be done in 1978 for brown shrimp. Monthly releases will begin this month and will take place both onshore and offshore. Tagging will be done in Louisiana, Texas and off of Mexico. Preparations are also underway for tagging in 1979.

Most of the tags used this year will be a bright orange similar to last year's, although some black tags with white printing will be used. The tags look like thin ribbons and will be threaded completely through the shrimp in the forward part of the tail. Tagged shrimp can be turned in by the fishermen by calling their closest Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries office.

In some cases, shrimp buyers will also turn the tagged shrimp in for the fishermen. In addition, I have a supply of return slips to turn in with the shrimp. If you need any, call me at my office in Gretna. The rewards will be the same as they were last year, \$500, \$200, \$100 and \$50 for first through fourth place in each drawing.

SEAFOOD PROCESSOR'S WORKSHOPS

On Thursday, April 27, 1978, we will be holding two workshops of special interest to seafood processors. The first workshop will be from 8:30 a.m. till noon. We will be having Mr. Richard Throm from FDA and his presentation is called "Organoleptic Examination of Seafood Products." What this fancy title simply means, is he will teach you how to determine the exact quality of seafood by smell.

This sounds like an inaccurate method, but believe it or not, he has a "registered nose" which will hold up in a court of law. I can't help but feel that you will learn something from this workshop.

This meeting will be held in the Jefferson Parish School Board Educational Center at 501 Manhattan Street, in Harvey.

The second workshop will involve a demonstration of the Key crabmeat picking machine. This machine was displayed here last year and three were sold here in the state. In addition, the largest blue crab meat producer in the United States has also gone to this machine.

With increasing labor problems, the future of the crab meat industry could well lie with mechanical picking rather than hand picking. This demonstration will be held at Battistella's Seafood at 910 Touro Street in New Orleans. It will be held at 2:00 p.m. also on April 27, 1978.

SEAFOOD PROCESSING CONFERENCE

The Third Annual Tropical and Subtropical Fisheries Technological Conference will be held at the Montelcone Hotel in New Orleans this year. The dates of the meeting are from April 23 through 26. Actual presentation of papers will begin 9:15 a.m. Monday morning.

This meeting will be an ideal time for our local seafood processors to meet some of the most outstanding seafood technology researchers in the U.S. The four main divisions of the program are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) Fisheries Product Development | 2) Inspection & Quality Control |
| 3) Economics and Production | 4) Fisheries Waste Disposal |

For a more detailed list of all the papers to be presented, call our seafood technologist, Dr. Michael Moody at 388-4141 in Baton Rouge.

Incidentally, pre-registration is not necessary. You can register at the door. The registration fee is \$25. This includes a ticket to the banquet which will be seafood served on a Mississippi River Steamboat. Reduced price spouse tickets are also available.

ENVIRONMENT AND FISH SURVIVAL

At almost all the meetings I'm at, both commercial and sports fishermen ask me how environmental factors such as weather affects the number of fish in our waters.

When most people think of bad weather and fish kills, they think of 2 or 3 pound fish floating around dead on the water's surface. However, what you don't see is even more important. The number of fish available is influenced more by the number of baby fish that are killed by weather than the number of adult fish which are killed. Since baby fish are so small, even microscopic, you can have a terrible fish kill and never see it.

All you see are the shortage of fish a year later. Then everyone wonders where they went.

One example how these "baby fish kills" affects fishing success, was recently pointed out by scientists in Virginia. Fisheries biologists there are predicting a steady downward trend in croaker catches there through at least 1980. The reason is that the last two winters have been very cold and the last two year's spawns of croakers have been virtually wiped out. Lab studies have shown that the ability of baby croakers to swim is badly affected, at around 36-37°F they die.

These scientists point to this same winter kill happening in 1917-1918, 1958 and 1964. In each case, the croaker catch was down for several years afterwards.

Unfortunately, while we would all like to see every year be a good year for shrimp, crabs, oysters, redfish and speckled trout, some things, like weather, are just out of man's hand.
Source: News Release No. 78-7. Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

THE GUMBO POT Savory Baked Mullet

One fish that almost nobody in Louisiana eats, is mullet. Now I'm not talking about channel mullet, but the silver or striped mullet. Actually, it is a very good fish and is quite a delicacy in Florida. People knock themselves out to get to it over there.

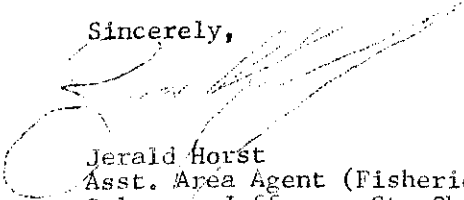
2 lbs. mullet fillets	1 cup thin sliced onion
2 tsp. lemon juice	½ cup soft bread crumbs
Dash pepper	2 tbsp. chopped parsley
6 slices bacon	

Place fillets in a single layer in a greased baking dish, 12X8 inches. Sprinkle with lemon juice and pepper. Fry bacon till crisp, remove from fat and crumble. Cook onion in bacon fat till tender. Remove from fat and arrange onion evenly over fillets. Combine bacon, bread crumbs and parsley and sprinkle over fillets. Bake at 350°F for 25 to 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serves 6.

Incidentally, for some reason mullet from saltwater seem to have a better taste than those from fresh water areas.

This newsletter is a free service of the LSU Cooperative Extension Service. Our mailing lists are still open for people who would like to receive this newsletter.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst
Asst. Area Agent (Fisheries)
Orleans, Jefferson, St. Charles

The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service follows a non-discriminatory policy in programs and employment.

LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

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May 19, 1978

LAGNIAPPE-SPECIAL EDITION

This Special Edition of the LAGNIAPPE is devoted completely to the new bills which are now before the current Legislative Session. As you know, the fishing industry is highly sensitive to legislation, so some of the bills may be very important. If you need more information on any of these bills, call 1-800-272-9852. This is a toll-free number in Baton Rouge and they will be happy to answer your questions on a particular bill or send you a copy of it.

House Bill 93 - Lebleu

Provides for a penalty of not less than \$100 or more than \$1000 and/or a jail sentence of not less than 60 days or more than one year for failure to tag oysters and for taking oysters from state-owned seed grounds without a permit.

House Bill 99 - Lebleu

Provides for penalties for oyster dredging violations in Calcasieu Lake.

House Bill 380 - Tauzin

Authorizes the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to issue permits to develop new fisheries, to harvest under-utilized species and to develop new equipment to harvest fish and other aquatic species.

House Bill 382 - Tauzin

Provides that operators requesting permits to drill or lay pipelines on state-owned water bottoms shall be responsible for restoration of and payment for damages to fishing grounds and oyster reefs.

House Bill 383 - Tauzin

Provides for a penalty of \$100 to \$1000 and/or 60 days to 1 year jail sentence for failing to tag oysters properly.

House Bill 385 - Tauzin

Provides for fine and jail sentence for unauthorized use of oyster dredges on natural reefs in Calcasieu Lake.

House Bill 481 - Scogin, Strain, Carson, Fauchaux, Hebert and Senators Hickey, Kiefer, Nunez and Rayburn.

Permits crab fishing with authorized gear in Lake Catherine and Lake Ponchartrain Sanctuary. Includes the Rigolets, Unknown Pass and Chef Menteur Pass.

House Bill 500 - Ullo

Prohibits the possession or use of gill nets constructed of synthetic materials on any body of water in the state.

House Bill 558 - Russo

Provides that no crab fisherman shall be liable for damages caused by his traps, lines or floats unless damage occurs because fisherman set his crab traps in navigable channels or stream entrances or didn't properly mark his traps with floats and lines.

House Bill 565 - Tauzin

Provides for penalties for violation of laws concerning oysters and clams. Extends penalty coverage to violations of law concerning damage to oyster beds, areas closed to oyster fishing and distribution and use of tags. One hundred to one thousand dollars and 60 days to one year in jail.

House Bill 760 - Downer

Provides for free commercial fishing licenses for residents under 16 and over 65 years of age.

House Bill 761 - Downer

Provides for minimum mesh size for seines of 2 inches square (4 inch stretch) north of North-South Boundary line and 1½ inches square (3 inch stretch) south of line. No seines except menhaden (pogies) seines can be over 1200 feet long.

Provides for trammel net mesh of 3 inches square (6 inch stretch) north of line and 1½ inches square (3 inch stretch) south of line. Maximum length 1200 ft. Monofilament trammel nets of 4 or less strands twisted together prohibited south of line. Five hundred dollar fine and loss of gear and license provided for.

House Bill 813 - Tauzin

Sets non-resident commercial fishing license at \$500.

House Bill 839 - Downer

Provides for taking of garfish south of boundary line with nets of minimum mesh of 3 inches square (6 inch stretch). Nets must be tagged and not over 1200 ft. long. Nets may be left unattended from ½ hour after sunset till ½ hour before sunrise as long as nets don't interfere with navigation.

House Bill 850 - Patti and Senator Nunez

Prohibits inside trawling during closed season. Prohibits any vessel from pulling more than 4 trawls. Prohibits use of trawl over 100 ft. along corkline in inside waters.

House Bill 851 - Patti

Permits use of slat traps and cans for commercial fishing in Plaquemines Parish.

House Bill 852 - Ullo

Levies a severance tax of 50 cents on each 660 pounds of menhaden (pogies) taken from Louisiana waters.

House Bill 1342 - Downer

Prohibits commercial fishermen from taking or having in possession more than 2 redfish over 36 inches long per day. Provides a 10-inch minimum size limit on speckled trout for sportsmen. Note: This bill is somewhat confusing because the bill also states that the smallest redfish any commercial fisherman can keep is 36 inches.

House Bill 1360 - Miller

Prohibits possession of outboard motors with serial numbers removed.

House Bill 1363 - Miller

Prohibits the use of gill nets in salt water areas.

House Bill 1364 - Miller

Prohibits the use of nets and webbing in Lake Maurepas and its tributaries.

House Bill 1417 - Johnson

Legalizes the use of slat traps and cans for catfishing on the river side of the Mississippi River levee in any parish of less than 10,000 population, which borders the Mississippi River on the west bank.

House Bill 1432 - Ullo

Provides for net limitations and restrictions, for regulations for the commercial fishing industry and for license fees.

House Bill 1435 - Tauzin

Allows use of five-eighths-inch bar ($1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch stretch) mesh during the spring (brown shrimp) season. Prohibits use of beam trawls or butterfly nets more than 12 ft. on any side or single beam trawls or butterfly nets over 22 ft. on any side. Also deletes present requirements for navigation lights on beam trawls and butterfly nets.

House Bill 1454 - Patti and Senator Nunez

Defines gill nets, trammel nets and seines. Gives minimum mesh size of 2 inches square for hoop nets. Minimum mesh of seines two inches square north of North-South boundary and seven-eighths of an inch square south of boundary. Maximum length of 2000 ft. per net.

Provides for minimum mesh of gill nets and trammels nets of 3 inches square north of boundary line and one inch square on trammel nets and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches square on gill nets south of the line. Maximum length of 2000 ft. per net.

Provides for \$5.00 commercial fishing license under which angling is permitted without separate angler's license. This license does not exempt special license fees.

Provides for license of \$5 per 100 yards of seines, gill or trammel nets. Provides for \$10 license on each separate saltwater fish seine or trammel net of 300 to 500 ft. in length, \$20 for each net 500 to 2000 ft. long and \$25 for each net over 2000 ft. Provides for \$50 license for each menhaden seine or 1000 ft. long.

Prohibits mesh size less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch bar ($1\frac{1}{2}$ inch stretch) for shrimp seines or trawls. Prohibits mesh size of less than $\frac{5}{8}$ inch bar ($1\frac{1}{2}$ inch stretch) on beam trawls or butterfly nets. Prohibits use of seines over 3000 ft. long.

Prohibits use of double beam trawl or butterfly nets each more than 12 ft. in diameter or single beam trawl greater than 22 ft. in diameter. Provides that each beam trawl or butterfly net shall be equipped with at least 2 navigational lights when used at night.

House Bill 1466 - Lebleu

Provides that gill nets may be constructed of nylon webbing.

House Bill 1500 - Dupuis, Downer, Guidry, Alario.

Provides for non-resident commercial shrimping license of \$400.

Senate Bill 220 - Kiefer

Permits crab fishing in Lake Catherine and Lake Ponchartrain sanctuary.

Provides for \$50 commercial crab fishing license allowing use of 300 traps maximum.

Provides for \$5 recreational crabbing license allowing use of 10 traps maximum.

Requires that each crab trap must have a float of $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon in size.

Provides for a mandatory fine of \$100 for first offense and not more than \$250 for second and \$500 for third offense.

Senate Bill 255 - Nunez

Provides for \$25 commercial crab fishing license for residents and \$500 for non-residents. Purchase of this license allows use of 200 tagged traps. Additional tags may be purchased at \$10 per 100 with a maximum of 300 traps in use at once.

Senate Bill 401 - Kiefer

Provides for mandatory penalties, not subject to suspension, for trawling offenses in inside waters of \$100 for first offense, \$200 for second offense and \$300 to \$500 for third and subsequent offenses.

Senate Bill 425 - Kiefer

Reduces commercial crab license fee to five dollars.

Senate Bill 803 - Knowles and Representative Guidry

Provides for licensing and fees for recreational and commercial shrimping. Provides for severance tax, certain vessel licenses and non-resident shrimping.

Senate Bill 817 - Nunez

Provides for compensation to fishermen whose gear is damaged by materials or equipment of unknown ownership in Louisiana waters.

Senate Bill 867 - Nunez and Representative Patti

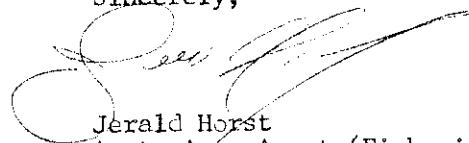
Allow use of slat traps and cans for catfishing in Plaquemines Parish.

A final note of importance to Lake Ponchartrain area crab fishermen, is that the House and Senate have passed concurrent resolutions, affective immediately, which will allow crab fishermen to fish their traps in the Lake Ponchartrain-Lake Catherine Sanctuary.

J. Burton Angelle, secretary, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, said that a legislative act adopted in the 1977 regular session of the legislature unintentionally omitted a statutory exemption allowing the taking of crabs by legal means in the sanctuary area.

This will give the legislature time to straighten things out.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst
Asst. Area Agent (Fisheries)
Orleans, Jefferson, and
St. Charles