

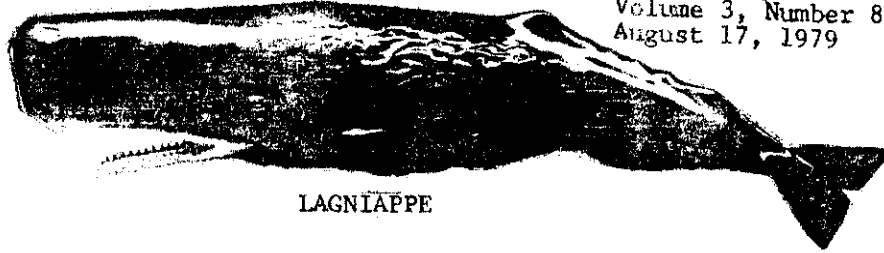
LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

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SEA GRANT PROGRAM

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LAGNIAPPE

ALLIGATOR SEASON

Beginning September 7 and ending October 7, 1979, the parishes of Cameron, Calcasieu, Vermilion, Iberia, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Charles, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany will have an alligator season. Alligators over 4 feet long may be taken by baited hook or shot during daylight hours only. No night shooting or pole hunting will be allowed.

The alligator hunter must have a commercial alligator hunter license which costs \$25 for residents and \$150 for non-residents. To get a license the hunter must show proof that he owns land or has an agreement with a landowner in the open parishes. He must show the location and acreage involved. The reason for this is that the alligator is considered a product of the land just as a nutria or muskrat and not a product of the water like fish.

Each licensed hunter will be issued a certain number of tags based on the amount of land he controls. The number of acres required for each tag is shown below.

Parish	Tag Allotment/Marsh Type		
	Brackish	Intermediate	Fresh
Cameron Calcasieu St. Tammany	1:200	1:75	1:75
Vermilion	1:75	1:75	1:225
Iberia St. Mary	1:200	1:75	1:125
Terrebonne	1:150	1:75	1:125
Lafourche	1:200	1:150	1:100
Jefferson St. Charles Plaquemines St. Bernard	1:275	1:250	1:200
Dewatered marsh	1:400		
Inland swamp	1:300		

The tags cost five dollars and a tag must be attached to the last 6 inches of the tail immediately after capture. Unused tags must be returned and lost or stolen tags will not be replaced even though they must be reported.

This year also, the other parts of the alligators including meat can be legally sold. The meat or skulls may for example, must have a blue tag attached to each piece sold and a special record must be kept of each sale. This record must be turned in after the season closes. Bills of sale of meat to stores and restaurants must also be kept for six months.

Nuisance alligators (like those on peoples lawns or in their swimming pools), may also be taken. Ten or twelve tags will be provided to someone like a local police juror for this purpose and he will select someone to remove the alligators.

During the sales in previous years, alligator hunters found out the hard way that you have to be very very careful in the handling and preparation of these hides. Just a little bit of fat left on the hide can ruin most of its value. The modern buyers are very fussy about their hides. Also special skinning instructions will be announced right before the season. Any alligators not skinned this way can't be sold. This changes every year and is designed to prevent people from killing gators out of season and keeping the hides in the freezer.

Anyone interested in getting tags for the up coming season should contact the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Fur Division at 400 Royal Street in New Orleans (568-5865).

U.S. SEAFOOD CATCH UP

Commercial fishermen in the U.S. set new records for volume and value of fisheries products in 1978. Six billion pounds of seafood were landed last year, beating the old record of 5.4 billion pounds in 1962. The value was \$1.9 billion which beat the 1977 record harvest of \$1.5 billion

Leading in quantity from the top down were menhaden (pogies), crabs, shrimp, tuna and salmon. Most valuable to the fishermen, in order of importance, were shrimp, crabs, salmon and tuna.
Source: Marine Briefs. August 1979.

BOBCATS

Louisiana's fur industry has traditionally been based on muskrat and nutria. The last few years we've seen a shift in importance of some of the other fur animals. Coon, otter and mink catches have been going up. The market is even pretty good for possums, foxes and coyotes, but what has really shot through the ceiling is the value of bobcats. The bobcat harvest last year was up 69% over the year before to 5,672 pelts. Some of the best pelts brought \$80-\$100 apiece.

Bobcats are very unusual animals. They are sly and secretive and you can have a lot of them around and never see one. They hunt mostly at night, feeding mostly on rabbits, but also on rats, mice, birds and even fawn. When a bobcat kills more than it can eat, it covers the leftovers with leaves, twigs and grass. Trappers use this habit to catch bobcats. Instead of putting the bait in the open, the trapper covers his bait and sets the cat trap. The cat probably thinks that its robbing another bobcats leftovers.

Bobcats can be real rovers. A tracking study done here in south Louisiana has shown that male bobcats have a home range of 1200 acres. Females ranges are smaller, averaging only 240 acres.

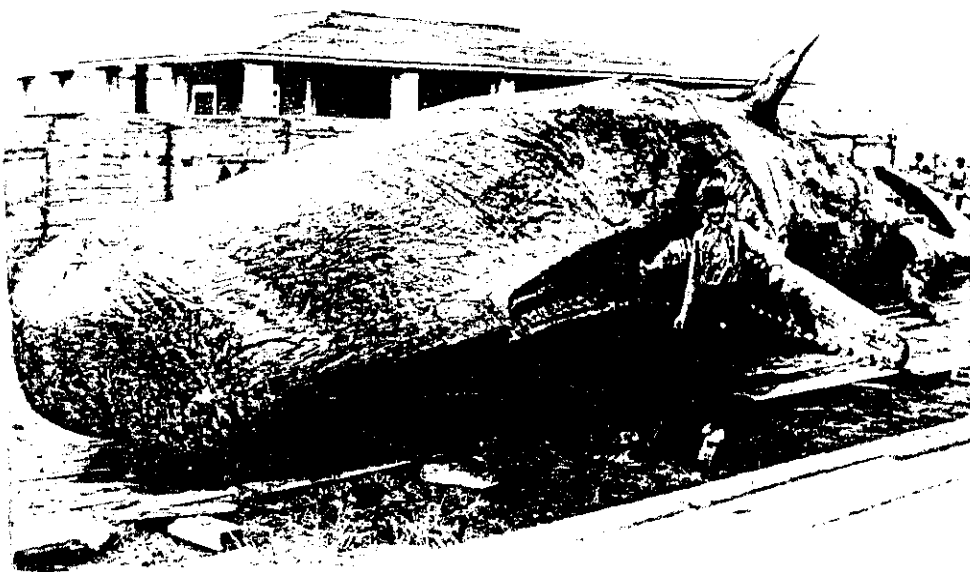
Bobcats breed in midwinter and give birth after about 62 days. Litters vary from one to five and average about two or three. Their eyes open in 10 days and they are hunting by fall with the family breaking up in midwinter. In Louisiana, adult bobcats average 15 to 20 pounds, however, there is a record of a 45 pounder killed near St. Francisville, La. Believe it or not, this monster was described as being skinny.
Source: The Mammals of Louisiana and its Adjacent Waters. George H. Lowery, Jr. LSU Press. 1974.

WHALE TALE

While whales are a rare sight in the Gulf, eleven different kinds of whales and porpoises are known to be found on Louisiana's coast. One of the largest and most majestic, is the sperm whale shown in the letterhead.

This whale can grow to over 65 feet long and is bluish black in color. At one time these whales were common in the Gulf of Mexico and the old time whaling ships spent quite a bit of time here, especially from March through July.

This past winter, a Lafitte fisherman, Travis Fish, picked up one side of the lower jawbone of a sperm whale in his shrimp trawl offshore. The jawbone was over 12 feet long and probably came from a whale over 60 feet long. The picture below shows a man standing in the open mouth of a 65 foot bull sperm whale.



This whale was found off of the mouth of Sabine Pass near the Texas-Louisiana state line. The sperm whale is a deep diver. It has been known to dive $3/4$ of a mile deep and stay under for over an hour. These giants feed on squid, octopuses, sharks, rays and fish. Sperm whales run in harems with one old bull who is master over a group of cows with calves, pregnant cows, and young males and females.

Sperm whales are no longer common in the Gulf of Mexico. So even seeing one is quite an event. Incidentally, the whale jaw bone mentioned earlier is displayed at Joe's Landing in Barataria for the public to see.
Source: The Mammals of Louisiana and its Adjacent Waters. George H. Lowery, Jr. LSU Press. 1974.

BILL VETOED

Governor Edwin Edwards has vetoed House Bill 1251. This is the bill which would have allowed shrimping in Chandeleur and Breton Sounds during the closed season between the May and August seasons. This is unusual because the Governor has vetoed very few bills concerning wild-life and fisheries during his two terms.

GOOD NEWS-BAD NEWS

While almost everyone loves eating shrimp and oysters, some people have given them up because of the cholesterol they contain. However, a researcher in Mississippi who worked with Gulf shrimp and oysters, has found that he has come up with the good news that their's don't have high levels of cholesterol. The bad news is that this may not be true everywhere.

The researcher, Dr. R.V. Krishnamoorthy also found that larger oysters have less cholesterol. However, the opposite is true for shrimp. The smaller they are, the less cholesterol they have. He also found spring and winter oysters have lower levels than fall oysters.

So if you have heart troubles and have to avoid cholesterol, eat smaller shrimp and larger oysters which are harvested in winter and spring.

Source: Marine Briefs. Vol. 7, No. 9.

SHRIMP MANAGEMENT PLAN MEETINGS POSTPONED

The public meetings on the shrimp management plan which I announced have been postponed for several months. I'll carry notice of these important meetings in later newsletter.

THE GUMBO POT

Louisiana Shrimp Sauce Piquante

I've borrowed this recipe from Bill Chauvin's newsletter Shrimp Notes. Bill has an excellent shrimp recipe in each month's newsletter. Shrimp Notes is a Market News Analysis on the shrimp market and is invaluable to people who deal in shrimp. Anyone wishing to inquire into the possibility of receiving the newsletter should write Seafood Purchasing Directors, Inc.-417 Eliza Street-New Orleans, LA 70114, or call (504) 368-1571.

2 medium onions (finely chopped)	1 tsp. salt
½ cup vegetable oil	½ tsp. black pepper
1 cup water	few drops Tabasco sauce
3 gloves garlic (finely chopped)	2 pound peeled shrimp (not over 40-50 ct.)
1 cup celery (finely chopped)	6 thin slices lemon (quartered)
1 can (16oz.) whole tomatoes	1 cup parsley tops (finely chopped)
1 can (16oz.) tomato sauce	
1 cup green onion tops (finely chopped)	

In large skillet saute onions in heated oil until light brown. Add water, garlic and celery. Cover and cook until tender. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, salt, pepper and Tabasco. Simmer uncovered over low heat for 30 to 40 minutes, until thickened. Add shrimp and lemon slices, cover and cook 15 minutes over low heat. A few minutes (2 or 3) before serving add parsley and green onion tops. Serve over your favorite cooked rice. Serves 6 adequately.

Sincerely,

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

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