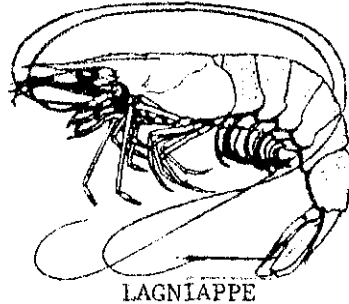


# LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Orleans  
St. Charles  
Jefferson

Room 800, Courthouse  
Gretna, La 70053  
Phone: 367-6611 ext:355

## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



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### SHRIMP LANDINGS

This has been a good year so far for Louisiana shrimping. According to the first nine months landing figures, Louisiana has landed almost 300,000 pounds more than last year. However, Louisiana is the only state on the Gulf Coast that is ahead of last year. Texas, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida are behind.

Imports are also down 23.4 million pounds. This is a 16% drop from last year. Holdings of shrimp in cold storage are also down to the lowest they have been since 1975.

Source: Louisiana Shrimp Association, NETLOG. Vol. 1, No. 4.

### SEAFOOD RETAILING BOOKS

We have a few copies of the book, SEAFOOD RETAILING by Dr. Sam Gillespie left from our Seafood Retailers Workshop held on December 11. The books are the absolute bible for seafood sales in the U.S. They have sections on store design, seafood merchandising and marketing, buying and caring for seafood and sales promotion. The few remaining copies are available for \$2.10 and can be obtained from my office.

### INCOME TAX WORKSHOP

Every year the Federal Government tightens up on its tax checking methods for the fishing industry. Therefore, it is very important that commercial fishermen and seafood dealers learn just what the rules are and what benefits they are entitled to.

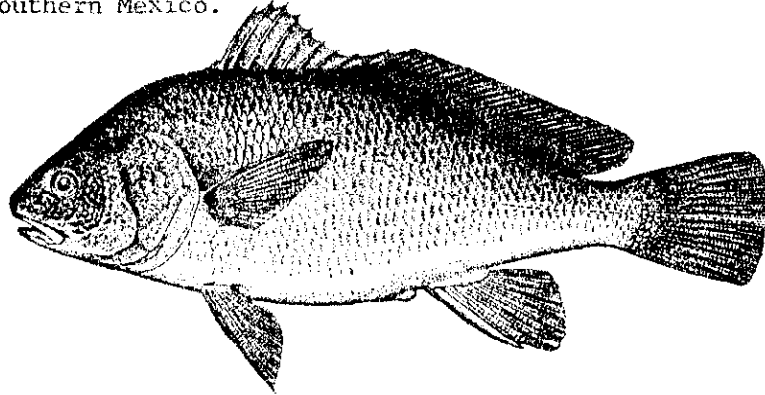
Last year we held a couple of small, sample tax workshops. Just about everyone that attended felt that it was worth their time. Since it seemed that everyone who attended wanted us to hold a repeat, this year we've decided to put on a larger program to reach more people.

The way it looks now we will be holding three workshops in this area. One in Lafitte, one in Des Allemands and one in New Orleans. The exact meeting places and times haven't been set up. When the details are cleared, a special notice will be sent out.

### GASPERCOU

Louisiana is a state blessed not only with a large saltwater commercial fishery, but also with a sizable freshwater fishery. While catfish and crawfish are the most important things caught in freshwater, a good-sized fishery for gaspergou also exists. Over a million pounds of gaspergou or freshwater sheepshead or drum as it is also known, are landed yearly in Louisiana.

This fish is in the same family as the redfish, black drum, croaker and speckled trout, but it is the only one in its family which is found in freshwater. This fish is also found further north and further south in North America than any other fish. It ranges from central Canada to southern Mexico.



A few years ago fishery biologists did a growth study on the gaspergou in Oklahoma. The table below shows the average length of these fish for each year of life up to 14 years.

Age	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inches Long...	4.6	9.0	11.9	15.3	17.5	20.3	22.5
Age	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Inches.....	26.0	27.5	28.9	28.5	30.9	31.8	33.3

According to these figures, it takes about 3 years to produce a 12-inch fish. This is the legal minimum commercial size in Louisiana and will average about one pound. They found that gaspergou reach two pounds at 16½ inches, three pounds at 18½ inches, four pounds at 20½ inches, five pounds at 21-¾ inches and six pounds at 23 inches. One point to remember, is that since we are further south than Oklahoma and therefore have a longer growing season, our fish may grow slightly faster.

An additional study on the food habits of the gaspergou has shown that 80% of their food is other fish, 9% is crawfish, about 9% is plants and small amounts of little clams. Bottom worms and may flies (willow bugs) are also eaten. Of the fish eaten they seem to specialize most in shad, but they also eat quite a few of their own young.

Source: Growth of Freshwater Drum in Oklahoma. Alfred Houser. Oklahoma Fishery Research Lab. Report No. 78. 1960. And Food Habits of River Carpsuckers and Freshwater Drum in Four Oklahoma Reservoirs. R. Summerfelt, P.E. Mauck and G. Mensinger. 1972.

#### FISHING LOANS

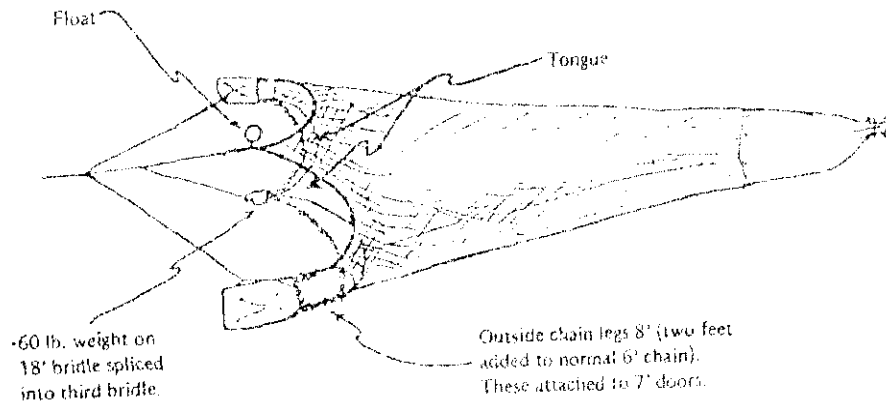
One of the number one problems of commercial fishermen is the difficulty in getting loans for boats. The requirements of the National Marine Fisheries Service loans are hard for average fishermen to meet.

Recently when many fishermen have called me about boat loans, I have referred them to the Production Credit Associations. The PCA's as they are called, have until recent years been mostly involved in agricultural loans. Even though they have recently been getting more and more involved with fishing loans, not many fishermen have been able to use these loans, because they had to be paid back in three years.

However, this past September, Congress approved a change that will allow the Production Credit Associations to give 15-year loans. Maybe this will make it a little easier for fishermen to obtain loans. Source: Organized Fishermen of Florida Newsletter. November 1978.

## TONGUE NET

In the last year or so there has been a great deal of interest by fishermen in the twin or four-rig shrimp trawl. Recently, researchers in Georgia and Florida have modified this rig. Instead of using a double trawl, a single trawl is used and "tongues" are added to the trawl's opening. The dummy door or sled was also replaced by a single float and a weight.



The designers felt that this net would be easier to handle because it only has one bag instead of two. Also the bridle to the middle of the tongues in the middle of the trawl spreads the pull all over the net, so it isn't just on the doors. This allows the use of smaller doors. On a 72-foot net, 9-foot doors are usually used, but with this net 7-foot doors are large enough. This means that there is less drag and you can drag faster or burn less fuel.

In order to give the net a good test, a 60-foot tongue net was towed on one boom and a regular 60-foot flat trawl was pulled on the other side of a double-rigger. This was done for 12 days by a commercial shrimper. The catches were kept separate and weighed. It turned out that the tongue trawl caught 59% of the catch and the standard trawl caught 41%.

One problem was that the 60 pound weight sometimes tangled the bridles when the trawls were picked up. A deckhand had to crawl out on the outrigger to untangle it. This net design hasn't been released to the fishing industry yet, but after they work the bugs out of it, they think it may be an efficient net.

Source: The Sea Grant College Program. 1977. Florida Sea Grant College Program.

## SNAKEBITE TREATMENT

While not many saltwater fishermen work around snakes, freshwater commercial fishermen are constantly exposed to snakes. This is because snakes, especially water moccasins, like to climb upon tree limbs over the water and sun themselves. If something disturbs them, they just drop off of the limb. Occasionally, they land in a fisherman's boat. I've known some fishermen that would jump out of their boat if you just mentioned the word "snake" to them.

One problem in the past with treating a person with a poisonous snake bite has been the anti-toxin itself. The anti-toxin used in treating bite victims has been made from horse blood and about one out of three people are allergic to this horse blood serum. Sometimes it even killed the person.

Two Mississippi scientists have come up with a new treatment. They have found the substance in the snakes own blood that prevents it from dying by the bite of another poisonous snake. This is the first

time that this substance has been found and supposedly it is an even more effective treatment than the standard anti-venum.  
Source: Wildlife North Carolina. December 1978.

#### LORAN-C INSTALLATION

With the coming switchover from LORAN-A to LORAN-C more and more fishermen are installing LORAN-C units on their boats. Many are running into problems. LORAN-A was much more simple to install. LORAN-C operates at a much higher radio frequency and so special attention has to be paid to where to put the antenna. LORAN-C units have much more problems with interference caused by the boat engine, gasoline water pumps and other electronic equipment like radar or TV sets.

The average fishermen could put a LORAN-A unit on the boat himself, but with LORAN-C you are MUCH better off getting a trained dealer to install it.

One of the most important things in LORAN-C installation, is where the antenna is put. It should be as high as possible and away from all stays, metal masts and other antennas. Since you may already have your VHF antenna on top of the mast, you can put your LORAN antenna lower, but be sure and keep it away from other metal objects. If you put the antenna close to a metal stay cable, you can lose half of the strength of the LORAN signal. Also, do not share the LORAN-C antenna with any other equipment.

Finally, make sure your unit is properly grounded. On steel hull boats, this is no problem since a ground strap can be attached to the hull. But on wood and fiberglass boats, the unit has to be grounded to the engine block using a one inch copper strap.  
Source: How To Get The Most Out Of LORAN-C. R.F.Dugan, D.A. Panshin.

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#### THE GUMBO POT

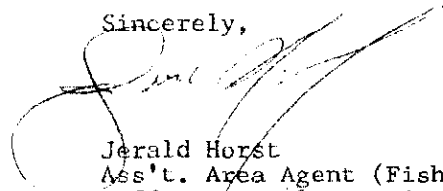
##### Pickled Shrimp

This is a recipe that Dr. Mike Moody, our seafood technologist uses to pickle shrimp.

2-1/2 lbs. peeled shrimp	2 whole cloves
1/3 cup salt	1/2 Tbsp. mustard seeds
1/4 Tbsp. red pepper	3 bay leaves
1/4 Tbsp. allspice	1/2 Tbsp. liquid crab boil

Add all of above ingredients to 1/2 gallon of water and simmer for 1/2 hour. Then bring to boil and add shrimp. Boil for 5 minutes and cool in refrigerator. Pack cooled shrimp in sterilized jars. Add a bay leaf and some fresh spices like whole red peppers, cloves and pickling spices. Fill jars with solution made of half water and half white vinegar (5% acid). Add a pinch of sugar and some more liquid crab boil. Seal the jars and store in the refrigerator. Good for 4 to 6 weeks.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
Ass't. Area Agent (Fisheries)  
Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles

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