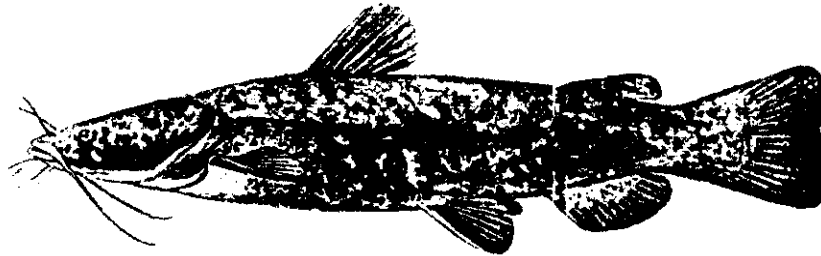


# LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Orleans Parish  
St. Charles Parish  
Jefferson Parish

1825 Bonnie Ann Drive  
Marrero, LA 70072  
341-7271, 341-7272

## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



Vol. 6  
No. 9  
9/24/82

### LAGNIAPPE

#### CATFISH AGE & GROWTH

In a 1971 survey, Oklahoma biologists determined the statewide average growth rate for many of their freshwater fish. Two of these fish are fished for commercially in Louisiana, the channel catfish (eel cat) and the flathead (goujon, yellow cat, opelousas cat) catfish. When reading the charts below, remember that Louisiana is further south than Oklahoma, and that Louisiana fish may grow faster.

#### CHANNEL CATFISH

Age In Years											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1/100	1/7	1/2	1	1-1/3	2	2-3/4	3-3/4	5-1/4	6	6-1/2	6-1/2
Average Weight In Pounds											

#### FLATHEAD CATFISH

Age In Years											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1/33	1/4	1	2-3/4	5	7-1/4	8-3/4	12-1/2	13	17-1/2	21-1/2	27-1/4
Average Weight In Pounds											

Source: Average growth rates and length-weight relationships of sixteen species of fish in Canton Reservoir, Oklahoma. S.A. Lewis, K.D. Hopkins, T.F. White. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation Bulletin No. 9. 1971.

#### MORE ON CATFISH

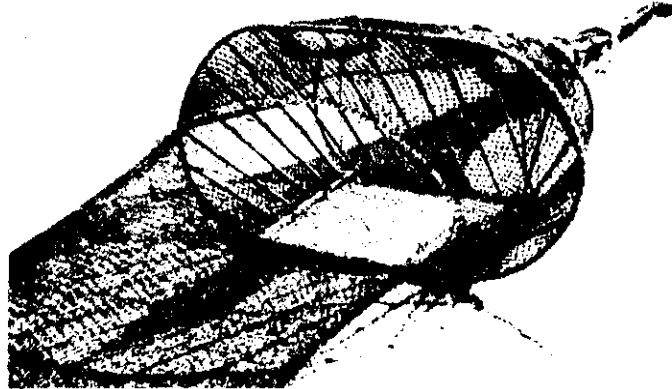
One of the great prizes of most catfishermen is a big 50 to 60 pound goujon (also called yellow, Opelousas or flathead cat). These tasty catfish grow up to nearly 100 pounds and sometimes they can be real hard to catch. On the average, they are fussier feeders than other catfish and they prefer live bait.

One thing that many catfishermen have noticed, is that you never see eggs in a small goujon. Biologists have determined that the female goujon does not start spawning till she is 5 or more years old. This is at least a 5 to 6 pound fish. A few male fish started spawning their fourth year.

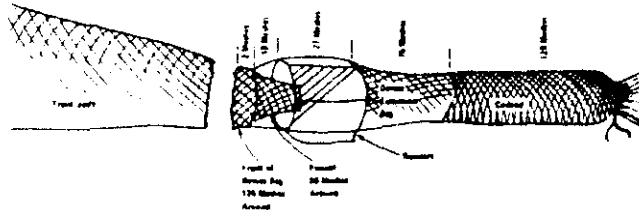
Incidentally, fishermen that use live fish for bait have a good reason for doing so. Research has shown that 95% of the diet of a goujon is fish. Shad make up 1/2 to 9/10 of the fish diet. Gaspargou, carp and channel (eel) catfish are also important in their diet. Some sunfish (brim, bluegill, perch) were also eaten. Source: Reproductive Biology Of The Flathead Catfish, *Pylodictus olivaris* (Rafinesque), in a Turbid Oklahoma Reservoir. P.R. Turner, R.C. Summerfelt. 1971. And Food Habits of Adult Flathead Catfish, *Pylodictus oliveris* (Rafinesque) in Oklahoma Reservoirs. P. Turner, R. Summerfelt. 1970.

## SHRIMP TRAWLS - SEA TURTLES

For several years now the National Marine Fisheries Service has been working on the development of shrimp trawls that don't catch and drown sea turtles. As sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act, many people were worried about the shrimp fishery being limited or regulated if too many turtles are killed.



The latest round of research has developed a Turtle Excluder Device (TED) which is supposed to be pretty good. The TED looks like a steel cage with a trap door and is fit into the trawl above the cod end or bag.



According to the National Marine Fisheries Service a trawl with a TED catches far less turtles and 7-8% more shrimp. They also have some evidence that a vessel pulling trawls with TEDs will burn less fuel because tension is reduced by 3 to 6 percent. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service the cost of each TED will be around \$400.

According to John Watson at the Pascagoula Lab the Government at this time has no plans to force shrimpers to use TEDs. The feeling is that many fishermen will want to go to them voluntarily.

If you are interested in more information on the TED call or write me at my office. I have blueprints for their construction and copies of the report on their performance. Be Sure and let us know if you are 4-rigged when you call because the plans are different.

## ENZYME EXTENDS SHELF LIFE OF FISH

Sea Grant scientists from the University of Rhode Island have achieved a 50% increase in the shelf life of fresh fish with the use of a commercially available enzyme.

The enzyme, glucose oxidase, can be used to make a solution to dip the fish in or it can be added to the ice. It not only slowed down the action of bacteria, but prevented the fish from dying out as fast as usual.

Dr. Arthur Rand, one of the scientists on the project, is now trying to work out the best concentration for dipping. Since the enzyme can add 4 to 5 cents a pound to the cost of the fish, finding out exactly how much is needed is very important. Dr. Rand feels that the increased cost will be made up for by the lower drip loss.

More information on the use of the enzyme can be gotten by contacting Dr. Arthur Rand or Dr. Stanley Barnett at the URI Department of Food Science and Nutrition, Woodward Hall, Kingston, RI 02881 - (401-792-2466).

1981-82 TRAPPING SEASON FIGURES

Results from last years trapping season have been prepared by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. The take was down from the year before for all of the important furbearers, probably because of the very low prices. Only beavers, coyotes, red foxes and coastal racoons showed any increase at all.

COMPARATIVE TAKES OF FUR ANIMALS IN LOUISIANA

1981-82 SEASON

	No. of Pelts		Approximate Price to Trapper	Value
NUTRIA (Eastern)	755,716	@	\$ 4.00	\$ 3,022,864.00
NUTRIA (Western)	205,755	@	5.70	1,172,803.50
	<u>961,471</u>			<u>\$ 4,195,667.50</u>
MUSKRAT (Eastern)	305,139	@	\$ 2.40	\$ 732,333.60
MUSKRAT (Western)	82,094	@	3.80	311,957.20
	<u>387,233</u>			<u>\$ 1,044,290.80</u>
RACCOON (Upland)	118,520	@	\$13.00	\$ 1,540,760.00
RACCOON (Coastal)	72,641	@	7.20	523,015.20
	<u>191,161</u>			<u>\$ 2,063,775.20</u>
MINK	32,078	@	\$12.00	\$ 384,936.00
OPPOSSUM	25,682	@	.80	20,545.60
OTTER	5,905	@	22.00	129,910.00
SKUNK	315	@	1.50	472.50
RED FOX	1,841	@	36.00	66,276.00
GRAY FOX	3,035	@	25.00	75,875.00
BOBCAT	3,161	@	39.00	123,279.00
BEAVER	2,061	@	3.00	6,183.00
COYOTE	2,188	@	17.00	37,196.00
	<u>1,616,131</u>			<u>\$ 8,148,406.60</u>
	<u>No. of Pounds</u>			
NUTRIA MEAT	400,000	@	.05	\$ 20,000.00
RACCOON MEAT	739,000	@	.50	369,500.00
OPOSSUM MEAT	25,300	@	.25	6,325.00
TOTAL MEAT	1,164,300			\$ 395,825.00
TOTAL PELTS AND MEAT				\$ 8,544,231.60

CRAB FISHERY ECONOMICS PUBLICATION

Our Sea Grant-Extension Service Marine Economists, Ken Roberts and Mark Thompson, have just completed an excellent publication on "Economic Element of Commercial Crabbing in Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne".

This publication gives a breakdown on the number of crabbers, their success and expenses, the type of equipment used, how heavily they fished and how they sold their crabs. Also included is a short history of the crab fishery of both the lakes and the state as a whole. Anyone interested in the publication should call or write me at my office and I'll be happy to send them a copy.

THE BIG GULP - Most Fishermen at one time or another have seen a snake rolling in the water latched onto a catfish that looked too big to swallow. If you watched long enough you will have seen that more than likely, the snake did swallow the fish, even though the fish was probably twice as big-n-round as the snake was.

The reason is that a snake has special jaw bones. The lower jaw is not hooked to the skull in the back, but is connected to a "quadrate", a long movable bone on each side of the skull. When the snake needs to open



drawings by Frank Fretz



its mouth wide, the quadrate swings down and out. In addition, the lower jaw has a ligament that stretches allowing the two sides of the lower jawbone to stretch apart at the front. The above drawing shows the two lower jawbones stretched apart and the quadrate in its down position. The snake's mouth in this position is 2 or 3 times larger than normal. Another feature that helps, once the victim is past the mouth, is that the snake's ribs are not connected to the breastbone, so the chest can expand as it needs to.

Source: Louisiana Out-of-Doors. August, 1982.

\*\*\*\*\*

### THE GUMBO POT

Oysters Jaubert

I got this superb recipe from Bob Guertin who owned Guertin's Restaurant (No longer in business) in New Orleans. It's simple to fix but tastes fabulous.

English Muffins, Toasted                      Canadian Bacon  
Fried Oysters

Assemble Canadian Bacon and fried oysters on english muffin, topped with Tarragon Sauce. Serve at once.

#### SAUCE

2 tablespoons Butter	4 drops Tabasco
1½ tablespoons flour	½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup milk	½ teaspoon crushed tarragon

Melt butter in saucepan, add flour gradually, stirring constantly until smooth. Gradually add milk. Stirring with wire wisk cook over low heat until sauce thickens. Add tabasco, salt and tarragon. Blend.

Sincerely,

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