



Freshwater Commercial Angler Survey

Results of a recent Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) survey of resident, freshwater commercial fishermen are now available online. The purpose of the survey, conducted last summer, was to collect views and opinions of an often overlooked component of Louisiana's fishery.

Additional information was also collected to help define the demographics of our commercial fishermen and the issues they contend with.

Please see the attached link for a condensed version of the report http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/document/36375-condensed/louisiana_freshwater_commercial_angler_survey_-_condensed.pdf The full report is available at http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/document/36374-full-report/louisiana_freshwater_commercial_angler_survey_-_full_report.pdf.

Portions of Elmer's Island to Open

LDWF is temporarily opening a section of beach along the Elmer's Island Refuge effective immediately. The open section will include the area at the end of the access road and continue approximately 0.5 miles to the east. Areas that will remain closed will be clearly marked.

Road access to Elmer's Island opens 30 minutes before sunrise and closes 30 minutes after sunset seven days a week. Night-time access and fishing on the island remain closed, and camping on the beach is prohibited.

Although the beach will be open for day-time public access, workers and state officials will continue to monitor the shoreline in order to continue to respond to oiling impacts. The probationary opening will be assessed after a period of 10 days, and is subject to reconsideration. Any sightings of oil should be reported to LDWF at (800) 442-2511 and the National Response Center (NRC) at (800) 424-8802.

LDWF asks the public not to cross areas covered with water. Winds and wave energy from Hurricane Isaac created washovers that can be covered in water during high tides.



Photo credit: LDWF

Louisiana Conservationist

The latest edition of the Louisiana Conservationist is here! Exciting things have been taking place, like the new Facebook page. Alongside the website, the Facebook page allows fans to get access to the Conservationist's archive photos and videos, important outdoor events and general information that anyone can appreciate.

This edition of the Conservationist takes readers all over the state, exploring the many projects the department has on-going as well as the important role conservationists are playing.

Visit <http://louisianaconservationist.org/>

2013 Louisiana Saltwater Series Kicks Off With a Unique Twist

It's yet another exciting year for tournament fishing in coastal Louisiana, and LDWF's Louisiana Saltwater Series reigns as the state's premier tag-and-release redfish tournament. The series kicked off last weekend with a unique twist, a live weigh-in at the Northshore Boat-N-Fishing Show in Slidell at the Northshore Harbor Convention Center.

The tournament continues to captivate anglers throughout the Gulf Coast by offering some of the most select prizes in the south, including 100 percent payout for the top finishers. Over \$168,000 in prize money has been awarded since the tournament's inception.

Originated in 2010 by LDWF, the tournament has tremendous success in supplementing the agency's Louisiana Cooperative Marine Sport Fish Tagging Program, with more than 2,100 fish tagged and 107 recaptures in four years.

The 2013 Louisiana Saltwater Series consists of six tag-and-release redfish tournaments culminating with a no-entry championship in October. The 2013 redfish tournament schedule is as follows:

March 2 The Dock/Dockside Bait and Tackle, Slidell;
 April 20 Calcasieu Point Landing, Lake Charles;
 May 4 SeaWay Marina, Lafitte;
 June 8 Port Fourchon Marina, Port Fourchon;
 June 29 Sweetwater Marina, Delacroix;
 Aug. 10 The Delta Marina, Empire and
 Championship, Oct. 4-5 Venice Marina, Venice.

Each redfish tournament includes two-man teams with a \$200 entry fee for each event. Up to two anglers under 16 are allowed to participate per team. The tournament is a 100 percent payout series. There is a 90 percent payout for the first six events with 10 percent retained for the championship. Payout is determined separately for each event based upon the total number of boats entered.

A youth division is also available for no additional cost to introduce our young anglers to the sport of fishing and to teach the catch-and-release approach to conservation. Youth division participants compete against one another in the youth division, and all youth anglers will be recognized.

For complete information, including rules, regulations and online registration go to www.lasaltwaterseries.com. A \$20 fee for all onsite tournament registrants will be incurred per team. Tournament sponsors include Shimano, PowerPro, Daybrook Fisheries, Plaquemines Parish, Mercury Marine, Standard Mapping, Faux Pas Prints, Marsh & Bayou, Swamp Swatter, Frabill, Stick It Anchor Pins and YETI Coolers.

Louisiana Natural Resources Symposium Scheduled for Aug. 1-2 at LSU

The Louisiana State University School of Renewable Natural Resources will host the 4th Louisiana Natural Resources Symposium on Aug. 1-2, 2013, at the Lod Cook Conference Center on the LSU Campus. The theme of 2013 symposium will be impacts of human and natural disasters on forested and wetland ecosystems and wildlife. The symposium is the premiere natural resources outreach event of the LSU School of Renewable Natural Resources.

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

Editor: Julie Anderson

Web coordinator: Melissa Castleberry

Copy editor: Roy Kron

Layout/design: Jessica Schexnayder

The 2013 symposium will feature presentations from leading international experts covering contemporary issues related to controlled burns and wildfires, hurricanes and forest management impacts on wildlife populations and species diversity. Speakers will also address the impacts of Hurricane Isaac on Louisiana wildlife, fires on natural ecosystems, the role of fire in longleaf pine regeneration, the relationship between hurricanes and fires in coastal forests, socio-economic risk of wildfire damage and other topics.

The target audience includes land managers, foresters, land owners, academicians and those interested in this important issue. A comprehensive and professional color proceedings will be available to all registrants. Please visit www.rnr.lsu.edu/lhrs for more information and to register.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council February 2013 Update

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council met in Mobile, Ala., Feb. 5 - 8, 2013, to discuss a number of fishery issues, including several related to the management of red snapper. To see some of the actions taken by the council please visit <http://www.gulfcouncil.org/>.

Louisiana Operation Game Thief Inc. Issues \$22,100 in 2012

Louisiana Operation Game Thief Inc. (LOGT), a Louisiana wildlife crime-stoppers program, awarded \$9,200 to diligent citizens statewide at their quarterly meeting on Jan. 26 in Baton Rouge.

For the 2012 calendar year, LOGT approved and dispensed \$22,100 in cash rewards for concerned citizens who reported wildlife violations that led to 79 subjects being apprehended in wildlife cases. There were a total of 53 cases presented and 531 offenses associated with those cases in 2012.

Louisiana Department Wildlife Fisheries (LDWF) Enforcement LOGT coordinator Lt. Will Roberts provided LOGT members with information on each case and a recommendation for reward amounts.

“We depend on Operation Game Thief and these public tips to help break a lot of cases that might have otherwise gone unsolved,” Roberts said.

Anyone wishing to report wildlife or fisheries violations should anonymously call LDWF’s 24-hour toll free Operation Game Thief hotline at (800) 442-2511 or utilize LDWF’s new tip411 program. To use the tip411 program, citizens can anonymously text LADWF and their tip to 847411 or download the “LADWF Tips” iPhone app from the Apple iTunes store free of charge. CitizenObserver, the tip411 provider, uses technology that removes all identifying information before LDWF receives the text so that LDWF cannot identify the sender.

LOGT was instituted in 1984 and provides cash rewards for information leading to the arrest of violators of fish and wildlife regulations. Funds are raised through private donations, court directed contributions and through contributions from cooperative endeavor agreements with organizations such as the National Wild Turkey Federation and Quality Deer Management Association. Since its inception in 1984, LOGT has issued \$324,700 in rewards.

LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

Red Snapper Resource

At its February meeting the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council rejected a proposal by LDWF that would provide harvest accountability and allow Louisiana's recreational fishermen to choose their own season dates for recreational red snapper.

"Our proposal for regional management would have allowed Louisiana to manage its recreational fishery by closing the red snapper season when our allocation of fish was harvested. In turn, the Gulf Council would allow Louisiana recreational fishermen through the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission process to set the red snapper season dates and daily bag limits," said LDWF assistant secretary Randy Pausina.

In related action, the Gulf Council gave the regional director of NOAA the authority to close federal waters (EEZ) beyond those states that are determined to be non-compliant with federal regulations.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Proposed Rule for the Gulf of Mexico Recreational Gag and Shallow-Water Grouper

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment on the following:

Gag Recreational Season

The proposed rule would open the recreational gag season on July 1, 2013, and the season would close when the annual catch target is projected to be caught. Based on a 2013 annual catch target of 1.287 million pounds, preliminary projections, assuming compatible state regulations, indicate the season would be able to remain open until sometime between Nov. 11 and Dec. 3. A 2013 closure date will be projected after more complete 2012 recreational landings data are made available. If at any time during the gag season the landings are projected to exceed the 2013 annual catch limit of 1.495 million pounds, fishing for gag would close.

Recreational Shallow-Water Grouper Closure

The proposed rule would also convert the fixed Feb. 1 through March 31 shallow-water grouper closed season into a time-area closure by eliminating the fixed closed season in federal waters shoreward of the 20-fathom boundary. This allows grouper fishing to occur year-round while providing some protection to species that spawn during February and March. Figure 1 displays the boundaries.

Request for Comments

NOAA Fisheries must receive comments on this proposed rule no later than March 25, 2013. They will address all comments specifically directed to the framework action or the proposed rule in the final rule. You may obtain electronic copies of the proposed rule and the amendment from the NOAA Fisheries Web site: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/GrouperSnapperandReefFish.htm> or the e-Rulemaking Portal: www.regulation.gov.

How to Submit Comments: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2013-0012, by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0012, click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- *Mail:* Submit written comments to Peter Hood, NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NOAA Fisheries. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NOAA Fisheries will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

Gulf of Mexico Gray Triggerfish Rebuilding Plan

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment the proposed rule implementing Amendment 37 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council submitted Amendment 37 to NOAA Fisheries for review, approval and implementation.

Purpose of the Amendment 37 Gray triggerfish is overfished (population abundance is too low) and undergoing overfishing (rate of removal too high). The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires that overfished stocks be rebuilt and that overfishing be halted. Therefore, the primary purpose of Amendment 37 and its proposed rule is to end overfishing of gray triggerfish and allow the stock to rebuild to healthy levels.

Annual Catch Limits and Annual Catch Targets The commercial allocation is 21 percent and the recreational allocation is 79 percent of the annual catch limit. Until a future stock assessment is completed or the annual catch limit is exceeded, the commercial annual catch limit and annual catch target will be 64,100 pounds and 60,900 pounds, respectively. The recreational annual catch limit and annual catch target will be 241,200 pounds and 217,100 pounds, respectively.

Commercial Management Measures This proposed rule would establish a commercial sector trip limit of 12 fish per trip throughout the fishing year, and establish a seasonal closure to the harvest of gray triggerfish from June 1 through July 31. Implementing a trip limit and closed season is expected to allow a longer fishing season for the commercial sector.

Recreational Management Measures This proposed rule would establish a recreational daily bag limit of two-fish per angler within the 20-fish reef fish aggregate bag limit, and establish a seasonal closure to the harvest of gray triggerfish from June 1 through July 31. Implementing a bag limit and closed season is expected to allow a longer fishing season for the recreational sector.

Recreational Accountability Measures The proposed rule would replace the current post-season accountability measure with an in-season closure authority based upon the recreational annual catch target and establish an overage adjustment to reduce the gray triggerfish annual catch limit and annual catch target by the amount of the overage. This overage adjustment would apply if gray triggerfish is overfished.

Request for Comments Written comments on the amendment must be received no later than March 15, 2013, to be considered by NOAA Fisheries. All comments received by NOAA Fisheries will be addressed in the final rule. Electronic copies of the proposed rule may be obtained from the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov, and the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Web site at <http://www.gulfcouncil.org>.

How to Submit Comments You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2012--0199, by any of the following methods:

- Electronic Submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2012-0199, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. NOAA Fisheries will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). You can also attach additional files (up to 10MB) in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.
- Mail: Submit written comments to Richard Malinowski, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NOAA Fisheries. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible.

All comments received, whether on the amendment or the proposed rule, will be considered by NOAA Fisheries in its decision to approve the amendment and publish a final rule. All comments received will be addressed in the final rule.

Tow Time Restrictions on Skimmer, Pusher-head, and Wing-Net Trawls

Fishermen using skimmer trawls, pusher-head trawls, and wing-net trawls are required under 50 CFR 223.206(d)(2)(ii)(A) to continue to use tow time limits instead of TEDs to help prevent incidental catch of turtles.

Tow time restrictions limit tow times to 55 minutes from April 1 through Oct. 31, and 75 minutes from Nov. 1 through March 31. Per the TED requirements at 50 CFR 223.206(d)(3)(i), tow time is measured from the time the codend enters the water until it is removed from the water.

It is important that each entire net be examined for potentially captured sea turtles, particularly given the small size of sea turtles typically caught inshore. Raising the net to the surface of the water to de-

termine the size of the catch, without removing the codend from the water, does not serve to end the tow under the regulations.

For example, if a net is towed 35 minutes, then raised to the surface of the water to determine the size of the catch, without removing the codend from the water, and then lowered back down and towed for an additional 25 minutes before the codend is removed from the water and dumped on deck, the tow time would be 60 minutes.

The purpose of these tow time restrictions is to allow inshore shrimp vessels the opportunity to fish in waters where endangered and threatened sea turtles live while still protecting the sea turtles that live there.

NOAA Fisheries recently concluded that requiring all skimmer trawls, pusher-head trawls, and wing nets (butterfly trawls) to TEDs in their nets is not warranted at this time

Although NOAA Fisheries is continuing to work on other solutions, including modifications to existing legal TEDs, at this time, limiting the amount of time a net is pulled underwater is currently the only known way to reduce the impacts that these types of shrimp trawls have on all sea turtles.

Most sea turtles can survive for up to an hour or more underwater. If skimmer trawl, pusher-head, and wing-net vessels regularly exceed the tow time restrictions and kill incidentally captured sea turtles, the fishery may be subject to additional management measures such as closures until gear solutions are available.

New Fleet-wide TED Performance Standard for Shrimp Otter Trawls

NOAA reminds all fishermen of the Importance of Complying With All TED Regulations.

By installing TEDs in your nets it may seem as though you have done your part to protect sea turtles, but, there is more to it than that. TEDs must be constructed, installed, and operating in compliance with federal TED requirements in order for them to be effective in reducing the bycatch of different sizes and species of sea turtles in otter trawls. When legally-constructed TEDs are installed and operating correctly in shrimp trawl nets, a small percentage of the sea turtles entering the nets (i.e., 3 percent) still do not escape by means of the TED and are captured. For example, some sea turtles are caught in the trawl body or wings and do not make it to the TED to escape. However, when the TED in your net is not constructed, installed or operating legally, TED effectiveness can be reduced (i.e., have more than 3 percent sea turtle capture rate) and, in severe cases, completely compromised (i.e., have a 100 percent sea turtle capture rate). Because individual otter trawls interact with a large number of sea turtles, poor TED compliance, even by a relatively small portion of the fleet, has the potential to increase sea turtle mortality levels substantially.

Not all TED violations have the same impact on sea turtles capture rates. Two important factors are the angle at which your TED hangs in your net and the escape opening size. For example, when a TED is sewn into your net at too steep of an angle, it can result in most or all sea turtles being captured, particularly smaller sea turtles. Similarly, if TED escape openings in your net are too small, at least some sea turtles will not be able to escape, particularly larger, adult sea turtles.

Ways You Can Help Avoid Additional Regulatory Action

- Know and comply with all of your TED regulations!
- Don't leave the dock unless you are sure your TEDs are in compliance.
- Review available TED compliance guidance.
- Attend TED trainings when available in your area.
- Ask the NOAA Fisheries Gear Monitoring Team (GMT) to inspect your TEDs and work with you to get them into compliance before you leave the dock-rather than wait for a law enforcement officer to board you and give you a ticket. To make arrangements for a courtesy TED inspection or if you have any questions, just call the GMT at their Pascagoula, Miss., office. Contact the GMT coordinator, Dale Stevens, by phone at (228) 549-1773 or by email at robert.d.stevens@noaa.gov.
- Share this information with other shrimp otter trawl fishermen. Improper and illegal TEDs on any vessel can now affect you.
- Conduct regular TED tune-ups. TEDs must be regularly maintained like other fishing gear in order to benefit sea turtles, as well as maintain shrimp catch. The grid angle must be checked on a regular basis to assure the TED has maintained the proper angle.

For More Information: NOAA Fisheries is developing a web page that will include links to all TED regulations, rulemaking documents, and compliance data and resources for shrimp fishermen. This web page will be your "Go-TO" for everything you need to know about how to reduce sea turtle mortality in shrimp fisheries. Look for this new page coming soon under "Information for Fishermen" on the left-hand side of the Southeast Regional Office home page at: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>.

Fish Gear Coordinates- January

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that four claims in the amount of \$15,560.38 were received for payment during the period Jan. 1, 2013 – Jan. 31, 2013.

There were four paid and zero denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates, in Degree Decimal Minutes, of reported underwater obstructions are:

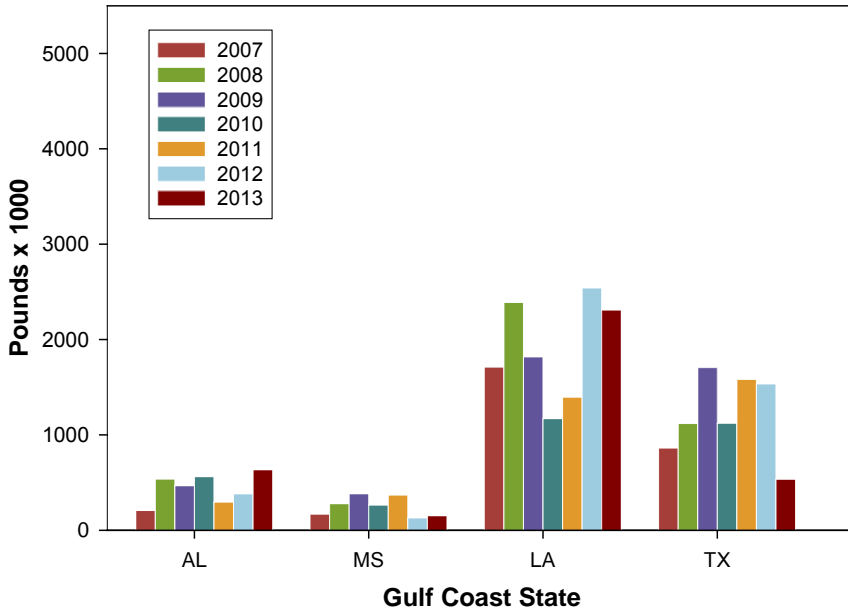
29 03.225 89 16.663 PLAQUEMINES
 29 26.034 89 57.539 PLAQUEMINES
 29 35.209 90 02.716 JEFFERSON
 29 41.474 91 57.328 IBERIA

A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Gwendolyn Thomas, administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or you can call (225) 342-9388.

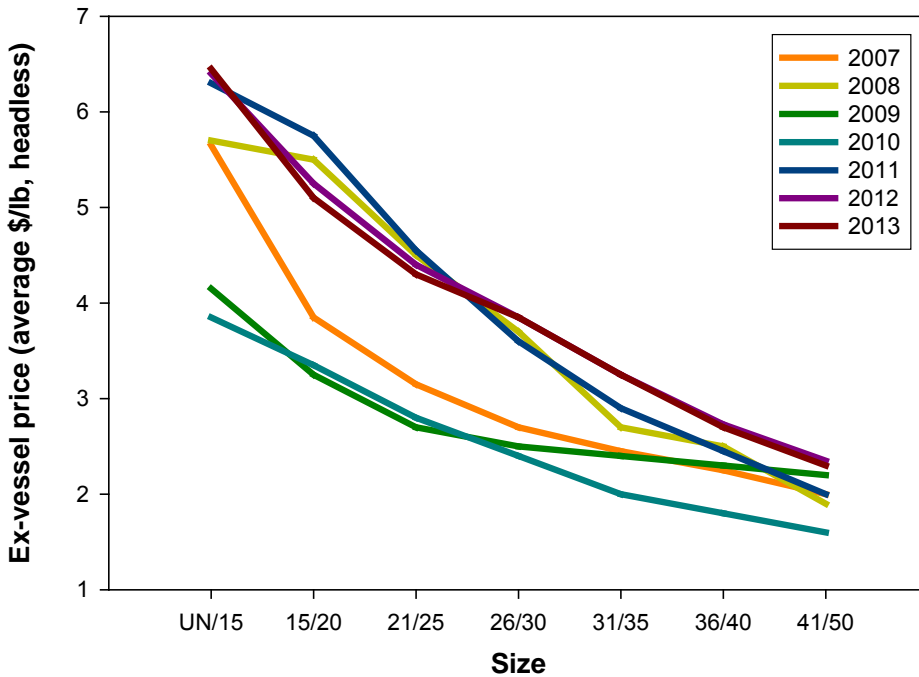
Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on their website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports are portrayed as “zero” in these graphics. Price graphics reflect central Gulf states only (Texas and Florida are reported independently). For more information, please refer to: www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html.

January Shrimp Harvest



January Northern GoM Shrimp Prices



The Gumbo Pot

Sauteed Black Drum Fillets with Spinach, Oysters, Shiitakes and Tasso

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture* and chef *Tenney Flynn*, *GW Fins*, New Orleans, La. For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>

Ingredients:

- 1 pint plus 1/4 cup shucked Gulf oysters
- 1 stick cold butter, cubed
- 4- 8-ounce skinless black drum fillets
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon room temperature butter
- 8 ounces shiitake mushroom, stemmed and sliced
- 2 ounces tasso, julienned
- 1 pound spinach, washed, stems removed



Photo credit: Louisiana Kitchen and Culture

Method:

Add 1/4 cup oysters to a small saute pan set over high heat and cook until oysters start to curl, about 3 minutes. Add cold butter and cook, stirring constantly, until melted.

Transfer to a pre-heated coffee mug, and puree with an immersion blender until creamy. Reserve in a very warm place or a double boiler at just under simmering.

Season fish filets with salt and pepper and dust with flour. Preheat a large - 12-inch or larger- saute pan, or two smaller saute pans over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter. Add fish and cook until flakey, about 4 minutes per side.

Meanwhile, set another pan over medium-high heat and saute shiitakes in remaining olive oil for about 3 minutes, stirring often. Add tasso and spinach and saute until spinach wilts, about 2 minutes, stirring often. Add remaining oysters and cook just until edges curl, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and keep warm until ready to serve.

Divide oyster/spinach/tasso mixture amongst 4 large plates. Top each plate with 1 ounce of pureed oyster butter. Place 1 piece fish atop each plate.

If you have a favorite seafood recipe that you would like to share, please send it to Julie Anderson janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu for inclusion in future issues.



For more information, contact your local extension agent:



Thu Bui – Assistant Extension Agent, Fisheries
St. Mary, Iberia, and Vermilion Parishes
St. Mary Parish Court House
500 Main Street Rm. 314
Franklin, LA 70538-6199
Phone: (337) 828-4100, ext. 300
Fax: (337) 828-0616
tbui@agcenter.lsu.edu

Carol D. Franze – Associate Area Agent
Southeast Region
21549 Old Covington Hwy
Hammond, LA 70403
Phone: (985) 543-4129
cfranze@agcenter.lsu.edu

Albert 'Rusty' Gaudé – Area Agent, Fisheries
Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles and St. John Parishes
Phone: (504) 433-3664
agaude@agctr.lsu.edu

Twyla Herrington – Associate Area Agent, Plaquemines Parish
479 F. Edward Hebert Blvd., Suite 201
Belle Chasse, LA 70037
Phone: (504) 433-3664
Fax: (504) 392-2448
therrington@agcenter.lsu.edu

Thomas Hymel – Watershed Educator
Iberia, St. Martin, Lafayette, Vermilion,
St. Landry, & Avoyelles Parishes
Phone: (337) 276-5527
thymel@agctr.lsu.edu

Alan Matherne – Area Agent (Fisheries & Coastal Issues)
Terrebonne, Lafourche, and Assumption Parishes
511 Roussell Street
Houma, LA 70360
Phone: (985) 873-6495
amatherne@agcenter.lsu.edu

Kevin Savoie – Area Agent (Southwest Region)
Natural Resources-Fisheries
Phone: (337) 475-8812
ksavoie@agctr.lsu.edu

Mark Shirley – Area Agent (Aquaculture & Coastal Resources)
Jefferson Davis, Vermilion, Acadia, St. Landry, Evangeline,
Cameron, Calcasieu, Lafayette, Beauregard, & Allen Parishes
Phone: (337) 898-4335
mshirley@agctr.lsu.edu

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We would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments or concerns you would like to see covered in the Lagniappe. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so.

Please contact Lagniappe editor Julie Anderson at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Julie A. Anderson
Assistant Professor
LSU Agcenter & Louisiana Sea Grant
114 RNR Building
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Phone: 225-578-0771
Fax: 225-578-4227
janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu