



Eight Arms to Hold You

Paul the Octopus made a name for himself predicting the World Cup in 2010. He was a common octopus, *Octopus vulgaris*, which is the same species we find off the coast of Louisiana. However, as the average lifespan is 1 to 2 years, Paul is not with us any longer to predict this year's winner.

Common octopus can be found worldwide except in polar and subpolar regions. They are found living on the sea bottom in nooks, caves and other shelters. This can include manmade items such as cans, bottles and even a boot. They are found at depths up to 650 feet in full salinity water.



Common octopus Photo Credit: Marianne Anderson

Common octopus can reach about 10 inches in body length with eight arms reaching up to 40 inches. Each of the arms is lined with suckers. *O. vulgaris* is an invertebrate. The only hard structure is the beak with is used to break open their preferred dinner items which include crabs and bivalves like cockles, oysters and clams.

While relatively solitary animals, males and females pair up for mating. The females lay 100,000 to 350,000 eggs, which can take up to four and a half months to develop. Females often guard their eggs the entire time, even avoiding eating during nesting.

The octopus can blend into any background by shifting their color and patterns. This allows them to hide from predators and hunt prey. They often jump out of hiding to grab prey, and the nerve poison in their saliva stuns the prey. Octopus can walk along the bottom on their arms or swim through the water using jet propulsion.

Regardless of predicting sports outcomes, octopuses are considered to have high intelligence in the invertebrate animal world. They are known to learn how to open screw cap jars, get through a maze and remember this information. Without Paul, a new mollusk will have to step up to predict this year's winner.

- Julie Anderson Lively

Sources: http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/Octopus_vulgaris/

LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

Skimmer Net Regulations Take Effect Aug. 1

Beginning Aug. 1, as a result of Act No. 14 of the 2014 regular legislative session, Louisiana commercial shrimp fishermen are allowed to modify the dimensions of their skimmer nets.

The Louisiana Shrimp Task Force gathered input from industry members through public meetings and worked with Rep. Joe Harrison to introduce Act No. 14 which includes the following changes:

- Skimmer nets may be mounted to the horizontal net frame at any distance from the gunwale of the vessel as long as the mounting distance and horizontal length of the net frame does not exceed 20 feet from the gunwale.
- Maximum length of the horizontal net frame increased from 16 feet to 20 feet from the gunwale of the vessel.
- Maximum length of the vertical frame “down pipe” attached to the skid is removed and fishermen may use vertical frames of any length.
- The entire opening of the skimmer net shall not exceed 72 feet as measured along the hanging. This measurement includes the length of the cork line together with the depth of the wings and length of the lead line.
- Maximum length of skimmer net lead line increased from 28 feet to 33 feet (same as maximum length of a 25 foot trawl lead line).

It is important to note that legal skimmer net frames and nets in use today will remain legal and no fisherman is forced to purchase any new rigging or nets. These new regulations are intended to provide fishermen with options for developing net configurations that work more efficiently in waters where they fish while providing greater economic opportunities. These new changes affect skimmer net gear only; regulations on butterfly nets whether mounted on stationary platforms or vessels remain unchanged.

For clarification, an example sketch of legal and illegal skimmer net frames can be found at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/news/37812-new-skimmer-net-regulations-take-effect-august-1/trawllillustration.pdf. This sketch provides an example only, as other skimmer net frame configurations using horizontal measurements less than 20 feet may be legal.

New Commercial Oyster Harvest Rules

The Louisiana Departments of Health and Hospitals, and Wildlife and Fisheries announced two new rules regarding the commercial harvest of oysters intended for raw consumption. These new rules are in effect daily and will help ensure the safety of oysters intended for raw consumption and simplify harvesting practices to support Louisiana’s fisheries. The new rules require two major changes to the way oysters are currently harvested:

1. Harvesters fishing for white tag oysters, those oysters intended to be eaten raw, must attach a tag or label on all containers holding shell-stock, with the corresponding lot identification number or character printed legibly on the tag or label, if they are placed

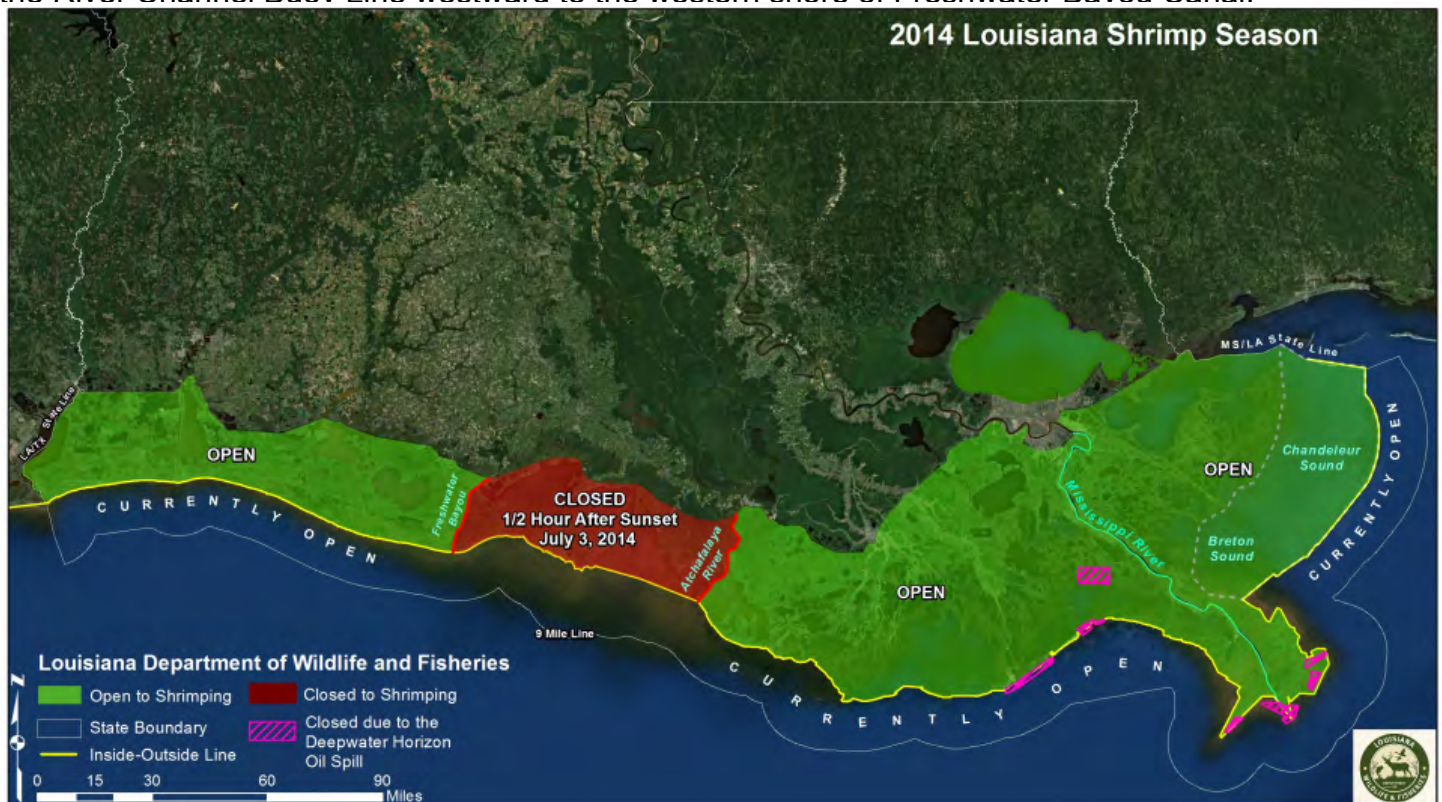
in a cooler an hour or more after harvest. This tag or label shall be approved by the state health officer at the Department of Health and Hospitals and the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

2. Additionally, the new rules require that if oysters are being harvested for multiple tags, the fisher or harvester must treat all oysters as they do the most restrictive kind of product on their vessel. For example, if they are harvesting white and green tag oysters, they must treat all oysters like white-tag oysters.

The full rules can be found at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/document/37808-shellstock/shellstock_refrigeration_05102014_final_rule1.pdf. These rules were supported by restaurant owners and by fishermen, seafood processors and biologists who comprise the Louisiana Oyster Task Force.

Shrimp Season in Vermilion/Teche River Basin to Close July 3

The spring inshore shrimp season closed at one-half hour after sunset on Thursday, July 3, in state inside waters extending from the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the River Channel Buoy Line westward to the western shore of Freshwater Bayou Canal.



Map courtesy of LDWF

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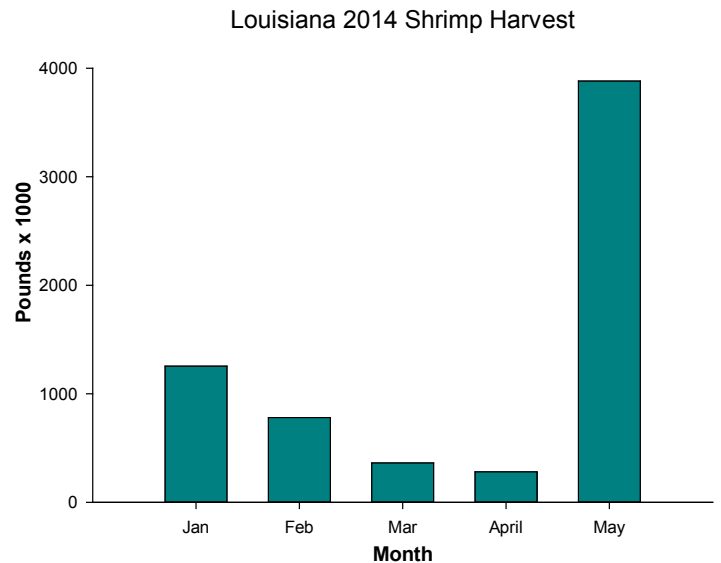
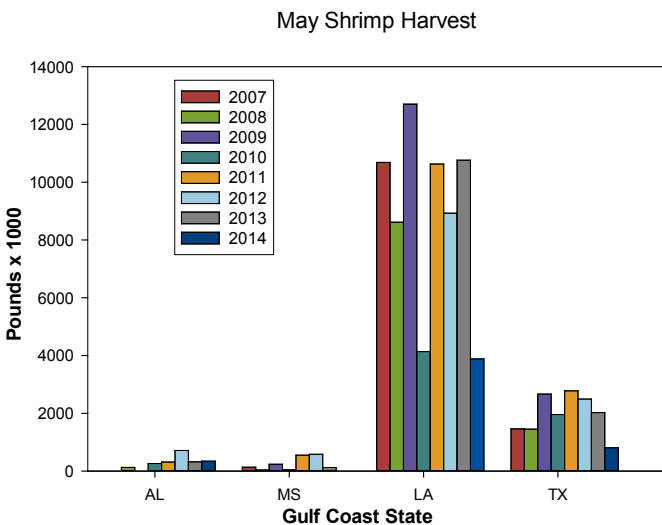
Data collected in recent weeks by LDWF biologists indicate increased quantity, distribution and percentage of small, juvenile white shrimp taken in trawl samples within these waters. The decision to close this area was made in an effort to protect these developing shrimp and provide opportunity for growth to larger and more marketable sizes.

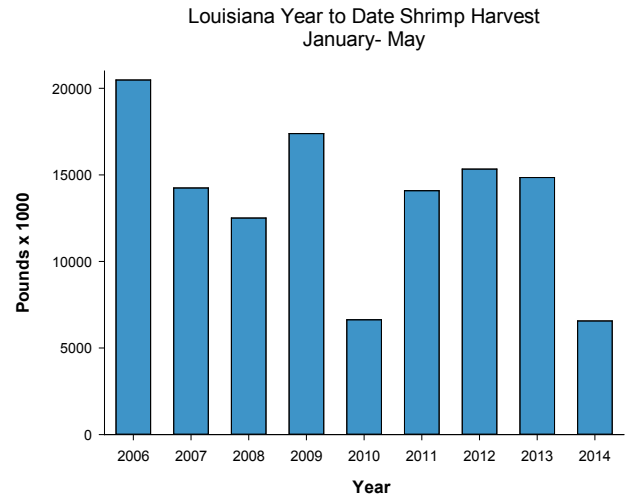
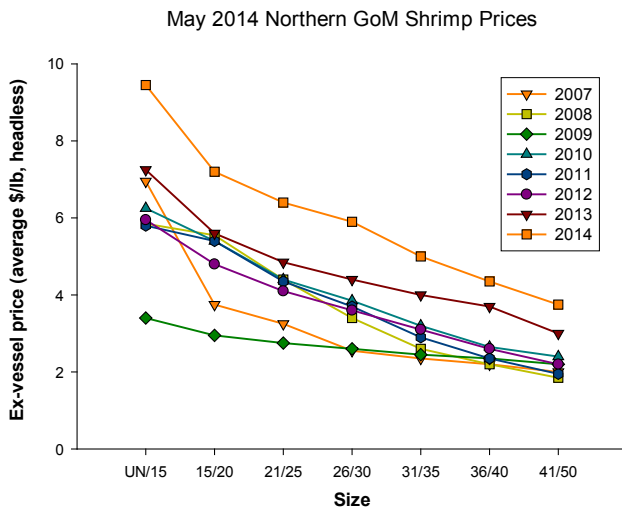
All remaining state inside waters, as well as all state outside waters seaward of the Inside/Outside shrimp line will remain open to shrimp harvesting until further notice, with the exception of those closure areas outlined in the map linked below.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on its 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.





Gear Coordinates

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that eight claims in the amount of \$34,195.34 were received for payment during the period May 1-31, 2014. There were seven paid and one denied.

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

29 08.275	90 05.130	JEFFERSON
29 12.316	89 31.348	PLAQUEMINES
29 14.874	89 55.476	JEFFERSON
29 28.735	90 08.459	LAFOURCHE
29 36.285	89 33.580	PLAQUEMINES
29 38.545	89 35.590	PLAQUEMINES
29 50.893	89 20.360	SAINT BERNARD

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.

Information on the Fishermen’s Gear Program has been updated on the Program website: <http://dnr.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=100&pnid=192&nid=200>.

The Gumbo Pot- Blue Crab Beignets

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture* and Chef Justin Devillier, La Petite Grocery. For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>

Batter

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons corn starch
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- pinch of salt
- pinch of pepper
- 1 cup amber beer
- vegetable oil for frying as needed

Filling

- 1/2 cup Louisiana blue crab meat, picked through for shells
- 1/2 cup mascarpone cheese
- 1/4 cup chives
- 1 shallot, very small diced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- pinch of pepper



Blue crab beignets. Photo credit: Louisiana Kitchen and Culture

Method:

Batter: Mix all dry ingredients. Add beer slowly until batter is just thicker than pancake batter. Set aside, covered, at room temp for up to 2 hours.

Filling: Mix all ingredients in a medium sized bowl and form into 1/2 ounce balls. Heat oil in a fryer or cast iron skillet to 375°F. Drop crab filling balls in the batter and lift out with a teaspoon. Gently drop them into the oil and fry for 2 to 3 minutes until golden brown and hot all the way through.

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.



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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.

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