



Sheepshead

For most of the year sheepshead (*Archosargus probatocephalus*) can be found throughout coastal Louisiana's estuaries and marshes wherever there is structure such as oyster reefs, seagrass beds, rocky outcrops or artificial structure. During the cooler months of the year, the mature adults move offshore to spawn, usually returning to their estuarine haunts around early spring. Females have been known to produce over 44-million eggs in a breeding season.

The sheepshead's contrasting dark and light stripes and rounded body make them quite distinctive, however the Atlantic spadefish (*Chaetodipterus faber*) bears some resemblance. The spadefish can be distinguished by its longer anal and second dorsal fins as well as a deeper, more compressed body. Adult sheepshead feed primarily on algae and invertebrates such as bivalve molluscs. They won't hesitate to take most natural baits presented to them – much to the frustration of many die-hard trout and redfish anglers who often refer to them as baitstealers. Despite this bad press they are delicious to eat with sweet-flavored white, moist flesh. Sheepshead in Louisiana average between 2 and 8 pounds; the IGFA All-Tackle World Record stands at 21 pounds 4 ounces. The fish was caught in New Orleans in 1982.

– Damen Pheiffer

For more information:

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/170223/0>

http://www.nola.com/outdoors/index.ssf/2013/05/try_this_dish_and_youll_never.html

<http://www.seagrassfish.lsu.edu/biological/misc/sheepshead.htm>

<http://wrec.igfa.org/WRecDetail.aspx?uid=18713&cn=Sheepshead#.WsfQOIjwY2w>

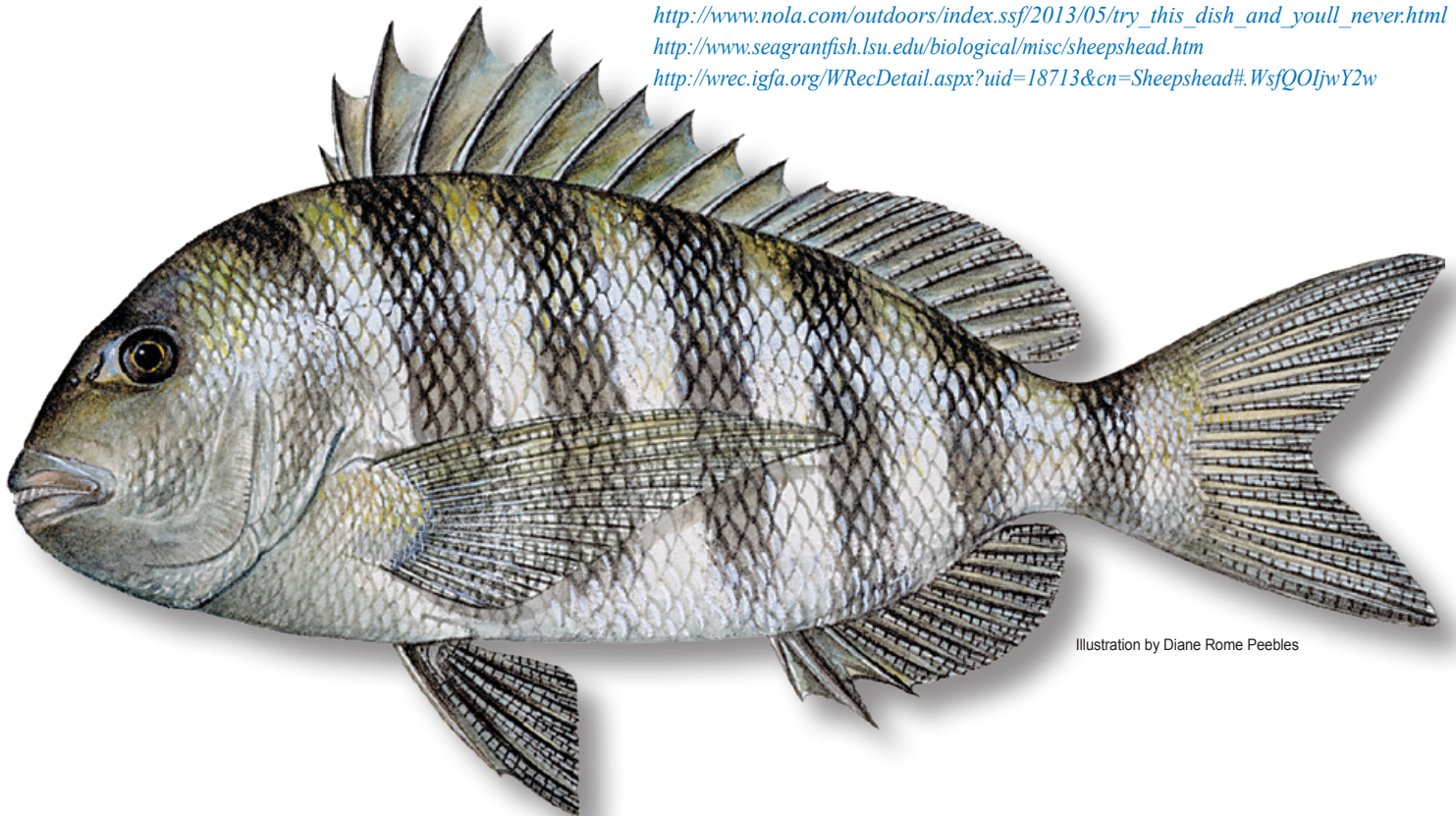


Illustration by Diane Rome Peebles

Louisiana Fisheries: Freshwater, Part 1 (Marine Fisheries, Part II will appear in June)

The harvest of freshwater and marine finfish and shellfish in Louisiana continues to contribute significantly to the state's economy. Fishery landings are recorded by two government agencies. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries receives monthly reports from the initial buyers (processors, dealers, etc.) who are required to record every transaction via trip tickets. The National Marine Fisheries Service also is responsible for estimating fisheries landings, using both regional National Marine Fisheries Service data collectors and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries reports. The information reported here is from those two cooperating sources. The freshwater fisheries data presented reflect the calendar year 2016. The one-year lag is necessary to ensure data accuracy.

The freshwater finfish are primarily bowfin, catfish, buffalo, shad, gar and carp and typically are less valuable on a per-pound basis than marine finfish. Total freshwater finfish value decreased six percent from \$5.1 million for 11.5 million pounds caught by 2,335 commercial fishers in 2015, to \$5 million for 10.8 million pounds caught by 2,349 commercial fishermen. While landings decreased slightly, price per pound was still higher than in previous years of 2011 to 2014.

Catfish are the mainstay of the more valuable freshwater species. The commercially caught catfish are not the same as farm-raised catfish described in the aquaculture section of this summary. Sales of catfish caught commercially in Louisiana waters were \$2.7 million for 4.88 million pounds in 2016, a small decline from \$2.8 million for 4.9 million pounds in 2015.

Most wild crawfish are caught in the Atchafalaya Basin, where water levels fluctuate as inflows are controlled by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers at about one-third of the combined flows of the Mississippi and Red Rivers. Although wild crawfish compete in the marketplace with farm-raised crawfish, some consumers prefer the wild product because of its frequently larger size. The volume of the wild crawfish harvest is almost completely constrained by the timing and duration of the annual winter/spring floodwater event in the Atchafalaya Basin, and 2016 was a very wet spring with a lot of early flooding. The 2016 crawfish season was a large improvement over 2015. Landings were up 149 percent and value was up 73 percent from the 2015 season. In 2016, 13.6 million pounds of crawfish were landed for a value of \$11.9 million compared to 5.5 million pounds of crawfish landed for a value of \$6.9 million in 2015. Landings in 2014 were 11.2 million pounds with sales at \$13.4 million. The 2013 crawfish season (17.1 million pounds) nearly tripled the landings from 2012 (6.5 million pounds). For comparison, freshwater crawfish landings were a record level of 50 million pounds in 1993.

Overall, landings from the freshwater fisheries sector in 2016 had a gross value of \$16.9 million.

– Julie Lively

2018 Recreational Red Snapper Season

The 2018 recreational red snapper season will begin on Friday, May 25 in both state and federal waters. The season will run seven days a week with a daily bag limit of two fish per person and a 16-inch total length minimum size limit. The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission may consider amending the season at a future meeting to weekends-only if necessary. The season will remain open until recreational landings approach or reach Louisiana's annual private recreational allocation of 743,000 pounds of red snapper according to estimates from LA Creel.

This year's season differs from years prior in that state and federal seasons will run concurrently because federal fisheries managers approved the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' application for an Exempted Fishing Permit to manage the private recreational snapper season in state and federal waters in 2018 and 2019. Under the EFP, participating anglers will be allowed to fish red snapper in the state territorial seas and adjoining federal EEZ, from shore to 200 nautical miles, during the season set by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. NOAA Fisheries will continue to regulate federal for-hire charter vessels.

The intent of the state's EFP is to test a state-based management approach that allows the recreational harvest of red snapper in federal waters off Louisiana's coast.

Shovelnose sturgeon added to Domestic Aquatic Organisms

The Approved Domestic Aquatic Organisms rules and regulations were modified to include the native Shovelnose sturgeon. This action will allow the development of additional aquaculture business in Louisiana while providing safeguards to assist in protecting native fish species.

Persons interested in providing public comment should do so by June 1 to Robert Bourgeois, LDWF Fisheries Permit Manager, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898 or via email to rbourgeois@wlf.la.gov.

LWF Commission to Modify Reef Fish Harvest Regulations

A Notice of Intent (NOI) was approved to modify rules and regulations for the harvest of reef fish in Louisiana waters in order to establish consistency with federal regulations, providing a simplified regulatory framework for anglers.

Recreational Bag Limit Changes:

- Reduction from two to no more than one gray triggerfish per person within the 20 fish aggregate limit. (Aggregate includes Vermilion snapper, lane snapper, gray triggerfish, almaco jack, goldface tilefish and blueline tilefish).
- Reduction from four to no more than two red grouper per person within the four grouper aggregate limit. (Aggregate includes speckled hind, black grouper, red grouper, snowy grouper, yellowedge grouper, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, warsaw grouper, gag grouper and scamp).
- Reduction from 10 to no more than five mutton snapper per person within the 10 fish aggregate limit. (Aggregate includes queen, mutton, blackfin, cubera, gray, silk, yellowtail, snappers and wenchman).

Commercial Trip Limit Changes:

- Increase in commercial trip limit of gray triggerfish from 12 to 16 fish per trip.

Recreational Size Limit Changes:

- Increase in size limit of hogfish from 12 to 14 inches fork length.
- Increase in size limit of gray triggerfish from 14 to 15 inches fork length.
- Increase in size limit of mutton snapper from 16 to 18 inches total length.

Commercial Size Limit Changes:

- Increase in size limit of gray triggerfish from 14 to 15 inches fork length.
- Increase in the size limit of mutton snapper from 16 to 18 inches total length.
- Increase in size limit of gag grouper from 22 to 24 inches total length.

Recreational Season Changes:

- The greater amberjack season will close from Jan. 1 through April 30 and from Nov. 1 through Dec. 31 of each year in addition to the regularly scheduled June 1 through July 31 closure.
- The gray triggerfish season will close from Jan. 1 through the end of February each year in addition to the regularly scheduled June 1 through July 31 closure.

Interested persons may submit comments relative to the proposed rule to Jason Adriance via email to jadriance@wlf.la.gov prior to June 7, 2018.

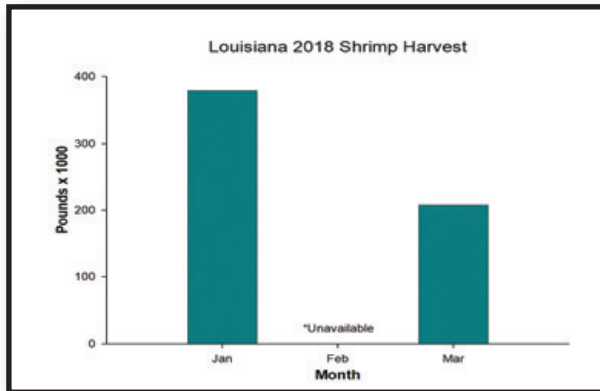
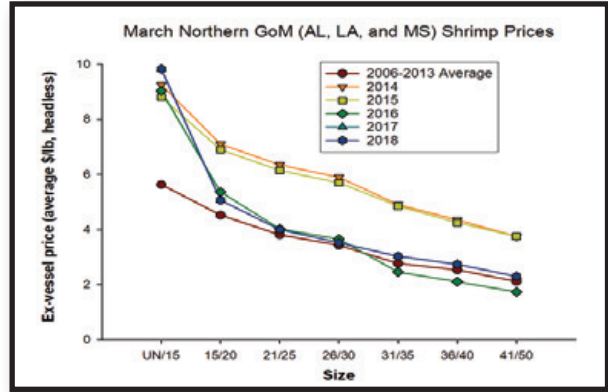
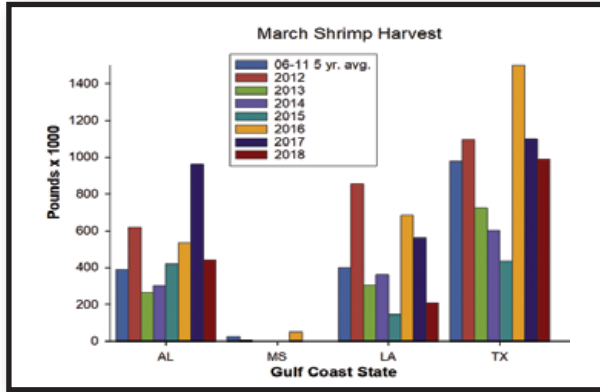
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Names New Executive Director

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council announces the selection of Dr. Carrie Simmons as its new Executive Director. Simmons, currently the council's deputy director will take the helm on June 1. She will replace Doug Gregory who will be retiring after the June council meeting in Key West, Fla.

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/stl/market_news/index.html.



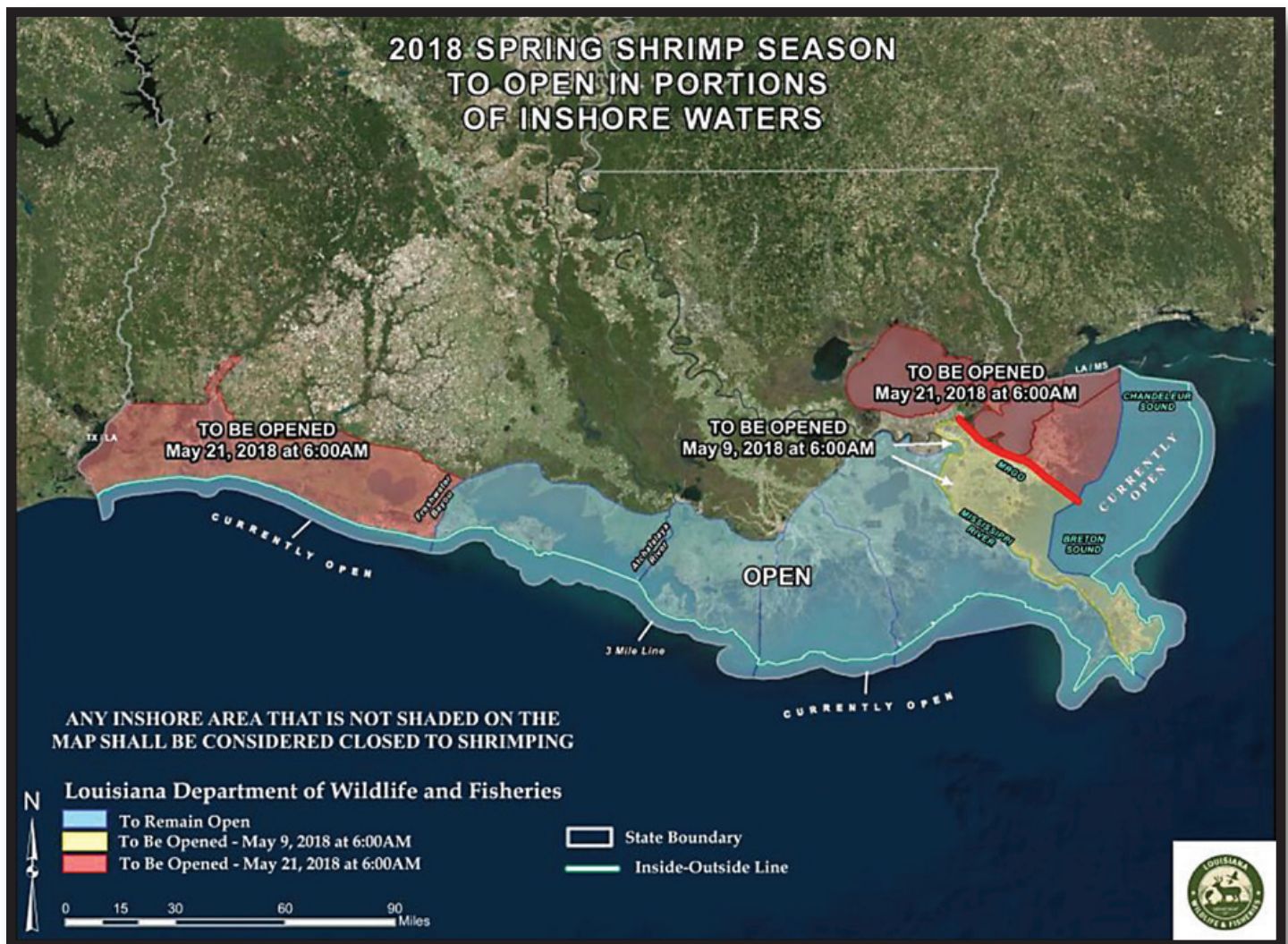
Important Dates & Upcoming Events

April 30, 2018: Spring Shrimp season opened in a portion of state inside waters from the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River westward to the western shore of Freshwater Bayou Canal

May 9, 2018: Spring Shrimp season opens in the portion of Shrimp Management Zone 1 from the southern shore of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet to the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River.

May 21, 2018: Spring Shrimp season opens in the portion of Shrimp Management Zone 1 from the Mississippi/Louisiana state line to the southern shore of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet & the portion of state inside waters from the western shore of Freshwater Bayou Canal westward to the Louisiana/Texas state line.

Shrimp Map for 2018 Spring Shrimp Season. *Courtesy of LDWF.*



THE GUMBO POT

ROASTED SWEET CORN AND CRAWFISH GRIDDLE CAKE*

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*.

For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>



Ingredients:

Griddle Cake Mix

3 cups flour
1 cup cornmeal
1/4 cup sugar
2 tablespoons baking powder
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 cups milk
3 large eggs
1/2 pound butter, melted
1 onion diced
1 red bell pepper diced
1 yellow bell pepper diced
4 ears roasted sweet corn
black pepper and cayenne to taste
1 pound Louisiana crawfish tails, minced

Creole Tomato Aioli

4 Creole tomatoes
2 cups mayonnaise
1 tablespoon paprika
black pepper and cayenne to taste

Method:

Griddle Cakes:

Combine dry ingredients in large bowl with peppers, onions and corn.

In separate bowl combine wet ingredients. Stir wet ingredients into dry until lumps are dissolved. Add crawfish and seasonings. Do not over mix.

Heat skillet over medium heat and add melted butter; add one-ounce mix and brown on each side like a pancake. Should come out light brown and crispy. Chefs Note: Sauté onions and bell pepper for best results.

*Serves 12 to 18 appetizers

Aioli:

Roast tomatoes in oven for 15 to 20 minutes at 400°F. Cool, peel skin, and deseed.

Purée tomato mix and add to mayonnaise. Adjust seasonings. Can be made a day ahead.

Assembly:

Place griddle cake on plate; dollop with aioli and top with sprouts.

Be sure to visit the *Lagniappe* blog for additional news and timely events between issues.
<https://louisianalagniappe.wordpress.com/>

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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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 Lively at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu.

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