



Atlantic Tarpon

With fossil records dating back to prehistoric times, the Atlantic tarpon, *Megalops atlanticus*, is an ancient species known to have been swimming the ocean for the past 125 million years. These fish range from Virginia to Brazil, with the greatest concentrations in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, making them a popular saltwater sport fish. Adult tarpon are primarily found in shallow coastal waters, estuaries and even in some fresh waters. Atlantic tarpon are known for their renowned strength and “air time” that they provide when snagged on a fishing line, providing fisherman with an exciting and strenuous battle when reeling them in.

Being poor for human consumption, this species is not fished for food value and are even restricted from being commercially fished in some states, making them plentiful for recreational and charter fisherman. Atlantic tarpon have a 50-year average life span for females, and 30 year average for males. Females reach larger sizes, up to 300 pounds and eight feet in length. These fish are slow growers, reaching sexual maturity at seven years of age, and females produce up to 12 million eggs per year. The spawning season for tarpon is April-July with females waiting for strong tides to release their eggs. Tarpon larvae have a transparent appearance and travel to brackish or freshwater to develop into juveniles for their first year, then venture further into saltwater as they grow older. Since they have no teeth, tarpon swallow their prey whole and have a main diet of shrimp, small crabs and small bottom dwelling fish. It is not uncommon for adult tarpon to return back to freshwater in search of food, sometimes even in small schools.

Tarpon are a very unique type of fish with the ability to breath air, which is one reason they can battle for so long once caught. The tarpon’s strength, stamina and fighting ability make them a premier game fish. Their almost majestic appearance of size and color get them the name “silver king.” Tarpon often are seen rolling on the surface of the water to get fresh air, sometimes even in schools of up to 30, making it very easy for fishermen to find and target. Louisiana hosts many large-scale tournaments and events, providing fishing competitions and attractions for fisherman and families around the country. These events are often called “rodeos” and can even hold rewards for the biggest tarpon caught, along with the bragging rights and satisfaction from reeling in one. The Grand Isle International Tarpon Rodeo is the oldest fishing tournament in the United States, starting back in 1928.

- Skylar Bueche

www.atlanticpanic.com/species/view/tarpon/
www.tarponfish.com/tarpon-facts/
www.orvis.com/news/fly-fishing/fish-facts-tarpon-megalops-atlanticus/



LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

Approved Domestic Aquatic Organisms

A Notice of Intent is under consideration to alter the approved Domestic Aquatic Organisms to include Sterlet sturgeon.

An application for consideration was submitted to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to add Sterlet sturgeon to the list of approved species for aquaculture purposes including processing for meat and caviar.

The department heavily monitors this process to limit the impacts from non-native aquatic organisms into aquaculture. Species are considered for approval by evaluating their potential negative risks to native species, their habitats, and human health.

Permit restrictions and the full notice of intent are available here:

www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/document/41405-noi-dao-sterlet-sturgeon-mark/noi_-_dao_-_sterlet_sturgeon_mark-up.pdf.

Interested persons may submit comments relative to the proposed rule to Robert Bourgeois, LDWF Permit Manager, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898, or via email to rbourgeois@wlf.la.gov prior to Sept. 29, 2017.

Louisiana Red Snapper Fishing Season

Louisiana anglers were able to complete the extended red snapper season due to the latest LA Creel landings data. The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission ordered LDWF Secretary Jack Montoucet to shut down the red snapper season when it appears anglers met the self-imposed limit of 1.04 million pounds.

The latest catch statistics from LDWF's LA Creel, the agency's near real-time data collecting program, show that 880,603 pounds of red snapper had been caught as of Aug. 20. The last reported amount was 849,227 pounds.

The LDWF established a limit on its red snapper catch because it believes that being accountable for the catch limit will help the state's chances of receiving federal government permission allowing Louisiana to manage its own red snapper season out 200 nautical miles from its coast.

The red snapper fishing season was extended 39 days as part of an agreement reached earlier this summer involving Louisiana, the four other Gulf states – Mississippi, Alabama, Texas and Florida – and the U.S. Department of Commerce. It allowed recreational anglers to fish out 200 miles from the Louisiana coast for red snapper on weekends through Labor Day.

Also under the agreement, there would be no red snapper fishing in state waters – out nine miles from the Louisiana coast – on Mondays through Thursdays, except on July 3-4 and Sept. 4. Anglers are limited to two fish, measuring at least 16 inches, per day.

For more information on the 2017 red snapper landings estimates, visit: www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/page/41176-red-snapper-long-range-plan-facts/redsnapperwebsitedocument8-20-17.pdf.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council met in San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 7-10, 2017, to discuss a number of fishery issues. The following is a brief summary of the Council's actions:

Stock Assessment Schedule: The cobia stock assessment was moved to 2019 to ensure that gray triggerfish is prioritized. In addition to the 2017 red snapper assessment that is being conducted currently, the council requested that the Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) conduct another red snapper assessment in 2019 and ensure that harvest data from 2017 and 2018 are incorporated.

Greater Amberjack: A review of the stock assessment showed the greater amberjack stock continues to be overfished and experiencing overfishing, and that the stock is not making adequate progress towards rebuilding. The council revised annual catch limits and targets.

The council also chose to temporarily modify the recreational closed season to be Jan. 1 - June 30.

Ad-Hoc Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Advisory Panel: The council has decided to disband the Ad Hoc Red Snapper IFQ Advisory Panel and form a new Ad Hoc Red Snapper/Grouper IFQ Advisory panel so participants in both red snapper and Grouper/Tilefish IFQ programs can work together in an advisory role to the council. The council will solicit members for the newly formed advisory panel before the October meeting.

State Management of Recreational Red Snapper: In regards to enabling the Gulf States to establish management programs for the recreational harvest of red snapper out to 200 nautical miles, the council selected a preferred alternative that would allow each state to choose whether to manage its private angling component only, or to manage both private and federal-for hire components. The council added alternatives that would consider allocation among states. The council decided not to consider changing the recreational minimum size limit. Finally, the council reviewed state specific documents for Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and added additional amendments for Florida and Texas. Staff will revise the draft documents and the council will review them at the October meeting.

The next council meeting will be held on Oct. 2-6, 2017 in Biloxi, Miss.

Fish Gear Coordinates — July

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that eight claims in the amount of \$38,098.86 were received for payment during the period July 1-31, 2017. There were eight paid and zero denied.

Latitude coordinates, in degree decimal minutes, of reported underwater obstructions are:

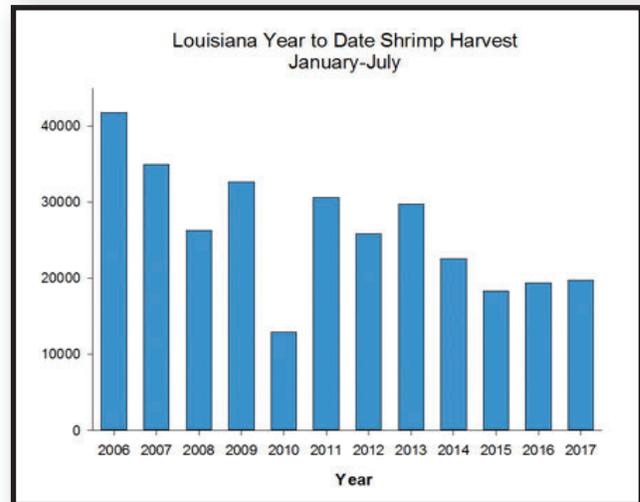
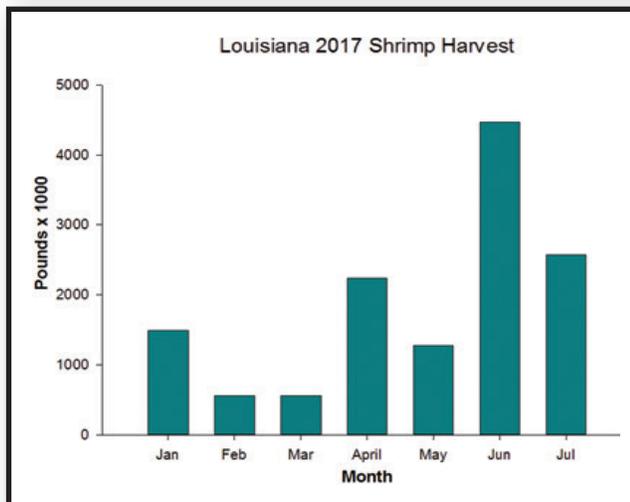
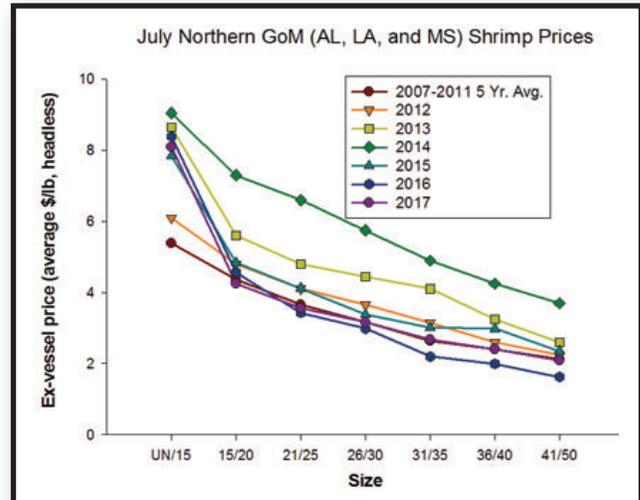
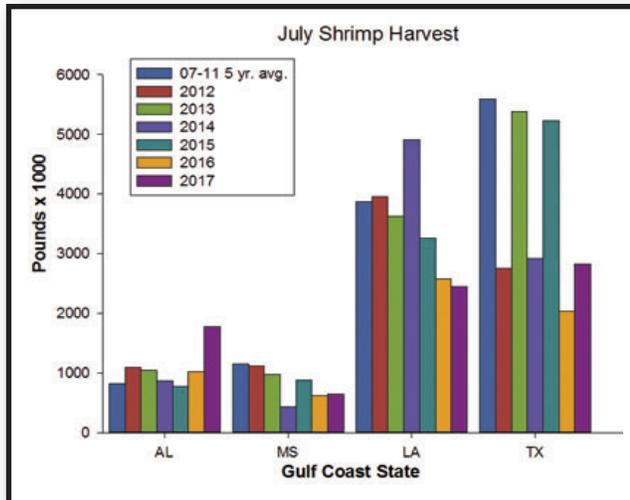
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29 11.631	90 58.277	TERREBONNE
29 18.296	89 45.669	PLAQUEMINES
29 24.246	90 40.614	TERREBONNE
29 27.946	91 47.830	IBERIA
29 39.557	89 37.031	PLAQUEMINES
29 50.958	89 13.787	SAINT BERNARD
30 00.711	89 32.540	SAINT BERNARD

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

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



Important Dates & Upcoming Events

SEPT. 12: Inshore Charter Captain Meeting (Madisonville) @ Lake Pontchartrain Basin Maritime Museum 6-8 pm.

SEPT. 13: Inshore Charter Captain Meeting (Chalmette) @ St. Bernard Parish Government Bldg. (council chambers). 6-8 pm.

SEPT. 14: Inshore Charter Captain Meeting (Houma) @ Terrebonne Parish Library (upstairs room) 6-8 pm

SEPT. 18: Inshore Charter Captain Meeting (Lake Charles) @ LSU AgCenter Calcasieu Office, 6-8 pm.

SEPT. 23: National Hunting and Fishing Day

OCT. 2-6: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Meeting in Biloxi, Miss.

MARCH 6, 2018: LFF Fisheries Summit – Adapting to Change @ Pontchartrain Center

THE GUMBO POT

BACON-CRUSTED OYSTERS

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*.

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



The Bacon Bread Crumbs:

8 slices raw bacon
4 cups bread crumbs
5 fresh basil leaves
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
Creole seasoning, salt, and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

The Fried Oysters:

16 shucked fresh Louisiana oysters
3 cups all-purpose flour
4 tablespoons Creole seasoning, divided
3 large eggs
1 cup whole milk
the reserved bacon bread crumbs
the reserved bacon fat

salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
3 basil leaves, cut into narrow strips
1 cup microgreens
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon finely chopped preserved lemon*
4 tablespoons crumbled chevre cheese and 1 tablespoon minced chives, for garnish
*Available at specialty stores and some supermarkets.

Method:

Strain the oyster juices (the “liquor”) into a container to remove grit and refrigerate or freeze for future use. Set the oysters aside.

In a shallow bowl, combine the flour with 3 tablespoons of the Creole seasoning and mix thoroughly. In a separate bowl, make an egg wash by beating the eggs well along with the milk and the remaining tablespoon of Creole seasoning.

Arrange the bowls containing the flour mixture, the egg mixture, and the bacon bread crumbs side by side. Pour enough bacon fat into a heavy cast-iron pot, Dutch oven or deep fryer to cover 8 of the oysters. Set the oven temperature to 200°F. Line a baking sheet with paper towels and place it in the oven.

Heat the fat over medium high heat to 350°F. While the fat is heating, dredge the oysters in the seasoned flour, using tongs, then in the

egg wash and finally in the bread crumbs, shaking off any excess. When the fat reaches the correct temperature, fry the oysters in two batches of eight. With the tongs, drop each oyster in the hot fat and fry until golden and crispy, 1 to 2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the first batch of oysters to the warm oven.

After frying the second batch of oysters, remove the first batch from the oven and immediately sprinkle all 16 of them with Creole seasoning to taste.

Arrange the oysters on plates. In a small bowl, toss the basil and microgreens with the lemon juice, salt and pepper. Top each of the oysters with some of the salad. Sprinkle some of the preserved lemon on each plate. Using 1 tablespoon of chevre for each plate, top the oysters with it, then sprinkle them with chives. Serve immediately.

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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