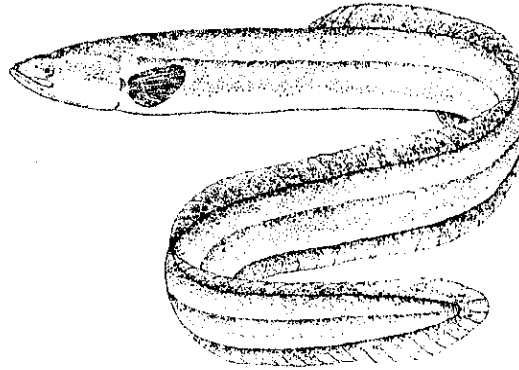


# LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Box 427, Courthouse  
Hahnville, LA 70057  
Phone: 783-2122

Room 800, Courthouse  
Gretna, LA 70053  
Phone: 367-6611 ext: 35

## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



LAGNIAPPE

Volume 2, Number 9  
September 22, 1978

## RECORD CRAWFISH CROP

While this year's crawfish season is now history, many of you may be interested in the final facts and figures. Louisiana produced a record-breaking 45 million pounds. The average year's production is about 12 million pounds. The harvest last year was only 5 to 6 million pounds.

Crawfish farmers had a good early crop which was followed by a bumper crop from the Atchafalaya Basin. While crawfish farmers usually produce 40% of the crop and the Basin produces 60%, last year the Basin had an even bigger edge with 70% of the total crop.

## SHRIMP POWDER CAN BE DANGEROUS

On July of this year, two deck hands on a shrimp boat died and the captain was hospitalized. The two dead crewmen and the captain collapsed in the hold. Only the captain made it out.

At that time, no one knew for sure what killed these fishermen, although some people blamed sodium bisulfite. Sodium bisulfite often called "shrimp powder" or "dip" is widely used by Louisiana shrimpers to prevent black spot or darkening of shrimp.

Lab tests were run on the bodies of the crewmen and it was shown that they died of asphyxia, (suffocation because of no oxygen) and their bodies were full of sulfur. The sulfur came from gases given off by the sodium bisulfite.

This is the fifth time this has happened since 1970 with a total of 11 deaths. Inspections in the holds of vessels using this powder or dip has shown low enough oxygen and high enough levels of poisonous gas to be immediately deadly. While sodium bisulfite can be useful, several precautions should be taken.

- (1) When using it, try to use it on the deck or in a well ventilated area.
- (2) Don't store it in the hold or in an area that gases can accumulate before you use it.
- (3) Don't over do it. Use it correctly.
- (4) If possible, use a ventilation fan in the hold.

The recommended way to use it is not by sprinkling the powder on the shrimp, but by making a dip with one pound of powder for every 10 gallons of water. Set the basket of shrimp in the dip for a minute. When you take them out and rinse them off, the chemicals that cause black spot also rinse off.

I know that this is slow and more trouble, but it may be worth it. Think about it!!!

#### HURRICANE BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

Many of the blessings we south Louisiana~~ans~~s have are due to our nearness to the Gulf of Mexico. However, with all the good there are also some bad things, hurricanes for example. While we all live with the threat of hurricanes, few of us know exactly how a hurricane kills and what to do when one strikes.

Rather than prepare, we wait and hope for the best. Recently however, we received a supply of booklets on hurricanes. They have drawings to explain just what a hurricane does to the tides and what to expect in a storm. They also explain what to do to be prepared for one. You can get a free copy of this booklet by calling or writing me at my Gretna office.

#### ALLIGATOR SEASON POSTPONED

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has announced that the 1978 alligator season will be postponed indefinitely. The season was only legal in the three southwestern parishes of Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermillion. However, trappers in many other coastal parishes were hoping to have an open season soon.

The reason for not opening the season as planned, was because we can't export the hides due of a 1973 treaty. Hide buyers in this country stated that they wouldn't buy any hides this year because of the supply left over from the last three seasons. Without the foreign processing market, we can't handle much in this country.

The lower price received for hides last year compared to the year before may have been an indication of the surplus of hides. Last year alligator trappers received an average price of \$12.23 per foot as compared to \$16.50 per foot in 1976.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has asked that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service take the alligator out from under this treaty to allow export. If a change occurs, the Department has the tags and everything ready for a season.

While this is a disappointment to many people, there probably isn't much reason to have an alligator season if the hides aren't worth the trouble it takes to catch and prepare them.

#### FISH FEEDING AND BREEDING

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries conducted a study on important marsh fishes in the Biloxi marsh. This eight year study in St. Bernard Parish turned up some interesting information on what fish feed on and when their breeding season is.

Biologist found that speckled trout spawned from April to October with the heaviest spawning occurring from May to August. Their favorite foods were mullet, menhaden (pogies), anchovies (sardines), gulf killifish (cacaho minnows), croakers, shrimp and young blue crabs.

Black drum spawned from March through May and their favorite foods were clams, oysters, blue crabs and snake eels. The redfish spawning season wasn't determined, but their favorite food was blue crabs followed by shrimp.  
Source: A Study of Estuarine Sportfishes in the Biloxi Marsh Complex Louisiana. 1970. Bennie J. Fontenot, Jr. and Howard E. Rogillio.

## NET MENDING BOOKS

We've just received a new supply of those very popular net mending booklets. Since we ran out several months ago, I've had dozens of requests for these booklets. Those of you who wanted one after we ran out, should call or write me at my Gretna office and I'll be glad to send one to you. These booklets are very easy to follow and have step-by-step pictures to explain how to cut and mend torn webbing.

## NEW FISHING LAWS

The following bills have been passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor and are now laws.

House Bill 24 - Legalizes the use of hoop nets and seines with a mesh of 1-inch (2-inch stretch) in Livingston Parish and Vermillion River in Lafayette Parish.

House Bill 99 - Provides penalties for oyster dredging violations in Calcasieu Lake. First offense, \$300 to \$500 fine and/or 30 to 60 days in jail. Second and other offenses, fine of not more than \$600 and 30 to 60 days in jail and vessel and equipment shall be confiscated. Any license that the violator has will be revoked for one year.

House Bill 386 - Provides for the use of private registered professional land surveyors to survey oyster leases.

House Bill 433 - Provides for the posting of marshlands and penalties for trespassing. Trespass shall be considered the taking possession any marshland or structure on it without the owner's consent or the intentional and unauthorized entry upon any plot or marshland over one acre which is posted, but not fenced unless the property is on open range or entry upon any marshland which is posted and fenced even if in an open range area.

Also included as trespass is the entry on posted marshland belonging to public institutions or any structure, watercraft or movable located upon marshland. The only exception is in case of emergency.

To post marshland, the owner must place signs no more than 1500 feet apart and at all points of entry to the area. The letters must be 2½ inches high and the signs must be 3 to 9 feet high. The party posting the lands must also place his name and address in letters at least ¾ inch high on the signs.

The penalty for the first offense of criminal trespass will be \$25 to \$50. For second offense, \$50 to \$100 and/or not more than 5 days in jail. For third offense, the offender will be jailed for 60 days.

House Bill 481 - Legalized crab fishing in the Lake Catherine and Lake Ponchartrain Sanctuary.

House Bill 564 - Authorizes the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to issue permits to develop new fisheries, to harvest under-utilized species and to develop new equipment to harvest fish and other aquatic species.

House Bill 565 - Prohibits harvesting, canning, shucking or packing oysters from public natural reefs between April 2 and the Tuesday after Labor Day. This does not include oysters from private leases.

House Bill 813 - Provides for a \$1000 non-resident license for commercial fin-fish or bait fish. A resident is defined as a person who lives within the state or a corporation which is incorporated or otherwise organized under the state laws. The corporation must also have its principal place of business in Louisiana and over 50% of the officers, partners or employees must be residents.

House Bill 851 - Legalized the use of slat traps and cans for catfishing in Plaquemines and Vernon Parishes.

House Bill 1360 - Prohibits the possession of an outboard motor with the serial number removed. The fine shall be not more than \$250 for each violation.

Senate Bill 250 - Lowers the license fee for a commercial crab fishermen's license to \$25 for 200 traps. Numbered tags corresponding to the number of the fisherman's license will be issued for these by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. An additional 100 tags may be purchased for \$10. The maximum number of traps allowed per fishermen will be 300.

\*\*\*\*\*

THE GUMBO POT

Shrimp-Stuffed Peppers

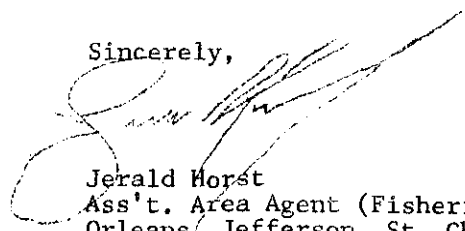
\*\*\*\*\*

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 tsp. salt                | 2 tbsp. grated onion        |
| 3 cloves garlic, split     | 2 tbsp. butter              |
| 2 qts. water               | ½ cup cooked rice           |
| 6 medium green peppers     | 1 lb. fresh or 2 5-oz. cans |
| 1 10-oz. can mushroom soup | shrimp, cooked              |
| Juice of 1 lemon           | 1 cup cheese, grated        |
| Dash black pepper          |                             |

Place salt and garlic in pan with 2 quarts water. Bring to a boil. Cut tops off peppers, scoop out center and cook in boiling water for 10 minutes. Combine soup, lemon juice, pepper, onion and butter in a saucepan. Cook over low heat until butter melts. Add rice and shrimp to sauce. Mix well. Stuff peppers with mixture. Top with cheese, pat of butter and paprika. Place in baking dish. Add ½" of water to pan. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Serves 6.

This newsletter is a free service of the LSU Cooperative Extension Service. Our mailing lists are still open for people who would like to receive this newsletter.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
Ass't. Area Agent (Fisheries)  
Orleans, Jefferson, St. Charles

The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service follows a non-discriminatory policy in programs and employment.