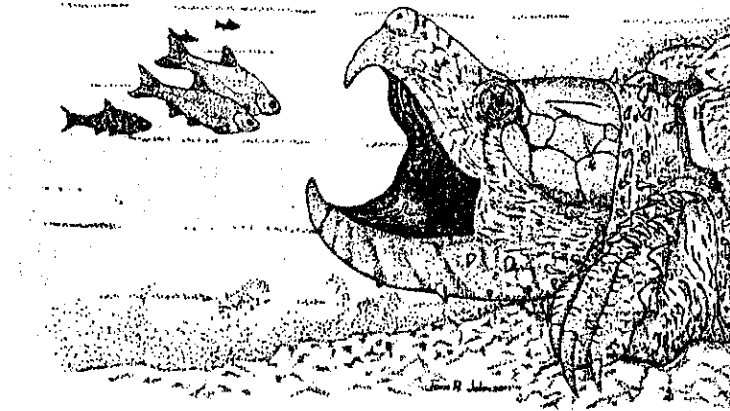


SEA GRANT PROGRAM



LAGNIAPPE

FRESHWATER DIVERSION INTO LAKE PONCHARTRAIN

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be holding three hearings on the planned diversion of Mississippi River water into Lake Ponchartrain near the Bonnet Carre Spillway. This freshwater diversion plan is one of several which are designed to slow down Louisiana's loss of marshland due to erosion and sinking. At the hearings each person who wants to speak either for or against the plan, will be allowed five minutes to speak. Written comments should be sent to:

Department of the Army  
New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 60267  
New Orleans, LA 70160

If you would like a copy of a brief booklet outlining the project and what its effect will be, call or write my office and I'll be happy to send one to you. The hearing times, dates and locations are listed below:

Tuesday, December 6, 1983 7p.m.

Destrahan High School  
Destrahan, LA

Tuesday, December 13, 1983 7p.m.

University Center - Room 211 A & B  
University of New Orleans  
New Orleans, LA

Thursday, December 15, 1983 7p.m.

Mississippi Power Company - Auditorium  
Gulfport, Miss

COMMERCIAL FISHERMENS RECORD BOOKS ARE IN

We have just received a new supply of commercial fishermen's record books for the new year. So many fishermen use this book that I tried to lay in an extra large supply for this year. It seems I run out every year because more and more people are using them. If you would like your free copy or copies, (you can have as many as you need) call or write my office and I'll be happy to send them to you.

## UNEMPLOYMENT TAXES FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN

The subject of whether commercial fishermen must pay unemployment taxes on themselves and their deckhands and helpers has caused a lot of confusion in recent years. Because of several yearly exemptions, commercial fishermen do not have to pay Federal unemployment taxes (FUTA), on any deckhands or helpers paid by shares.

However, according to Wayne Cox, Chief Unemployment Insurance Tax Auditor with the Louisiana Department of Labor, boat owners must pay State unemployment taxes for their deckhands or helpers. The rate varies from 0.3% to 5.4% this year and should be paid quarterly. Here is the way Wayne explained it to me.

Corporations - If your fishing business is incorporated, anyone working for the corporation in any way must have state unemployment taxes paid on them. The catch to this is that none of the officers or stockholders or their wives can collect unemployment even though they had taxes paid on them. Only if the corporation is broken up and they prove that they are getting out of the fishing business, may the officers, stockholders or their wives collect unemployment.

Partnerships - In the case of a partnership only the partners and their children under 18 years old are exempt. All other deckhands, helpers or employees must have state unemployment taxes paid on them.

Sole Proprietors - In the case of a boat owned by one person, the owner, his wife and children under 18 are exempt. Here also, all others must have state unemployment taxes paid on them.

In order to claim unemployment taxes, a deckhand or helper must have worked at least two calendar quarters in the last year and must have earned at least half as much in one quarter as the other.

If you have any questions on state unemployment insurance tax, you may contact the Department of Labor, field office at 1530 Thalia St. in New Orleans, 568-7150.

## GAMEFISH STATUS FOR SPECKS AND REDS

As most of you are aware, several years ago Texas declared speckled trout and redfish gamefish, which means that they cannot be caught for sale in Texas waters. The Alabama Marine Advisory Board recently held a hearing in Mobile on doing the same thing in Alabama waters.

While it is still too early to tell how the Marine Advisory Board will vote, Governor George Wallace had some comments about the proposal. When told that if the measure goes through, that the working man won't be able to buy redfish at the restaurant or fish market, he replied, "That's the silliest thing I have ever heard in my life".

These comments are quite a bit different than those made by Bill Clements, who was governor of Texas when their gamefish bill was passed. When he was asked what he would do when he wanted to eat redfish, he was reported to have said, "I will get in my plane and go to Louisiana and eat some redfish". When he was asked what should Texans do that don't have planes to go to Louisiana, he said, "Let them eat catfish".

Source: Hot Lines. Nov. 1983. Southeastern Fisheries Association, Inc.

## TRAWL NETS

Researchers at the Pascagoula Lab of the National Marine Fisheries Service have recently finished a study of some commonly used shrimp trawls. The flat, balloon, semi-balloon, jib, and super X-3 trawls were tested along with twin trawl rigging and tongue (bib) trawl design (Cobra and Mongoose). Divers measured these trawls in operation to check for vertical (how high a trawl opens) and horizontal (how wide a trawl opens) spread. Some of the more interesting results are:

- 1) The maximum horizontal spread of a 60-foot trawl with 8x40 doors was from the super X-3 with a bib (51 ft.), followed by the Cobra (49), Mongoose (48), super X-3 with no bib (44), balloon (42), western jib (41), semi-balloon (40), and flat (40).
- 2) The addition of ten to twenty 6x8 inch sponge floats increased the vertical opening on flat and semi-balloon trawls between 3 and 7 feet while reducing the horizontal spread between 3 and 7 feet.
- 3) The addition of twenty-four 6x9 inch spongex floats to a 60-foot Mongoose with 9x40 doors increased the vertical opening from 5½ feet to 12 feet while decreasing the horizontal spread from 42 feet to 39 feet.
- 4) The addition of a bib to 60-foot trawls with 8x40 doors increased the horizontal spread of the flat trawl by 3 feet, the super X-3 by 8 feet and the semi-balloon by 9 feet.
- 5) Trawls with bibs needed smaller doors (60-75 square inches of door per foot of headrope) than trawls without bibs (70-80 square inches of door per foot of headrope). The fact that smaller doors can be used with a bib should cut down some on fuel consumption.
- 6) Twin trawls (four-rigs) gave no increase in horizontal spread over regular double-rigged trawls. However, more total trawl headrope length can be towed with four small trawls than with two large trawls with the same horse power vessel. Therefore, twin trawls can sweep a larger area per gallon of fuel than double-rigged trawls.

Source: Sea Harvest News. Alabama Cooperative Extension Service. September 12, 1983.

#### LOUISIANA SPORT FISHING LICENSES

The Sport Fishing Institute has just released its annual state-by-state summary of sport fishing license sales and the results are rather interesting. Louisiana, which ranks 19th in the nation in population was 23rd in paid fishing license holders. Louisiana, which is considered a "Sportsman's Paradise", ranked 35th in non-resident fishing licenses sold.

Even more interesting, Louisiana ranked 43rd of the 50 states in total income from fishing licenses. Louisiana ranked dead last in average cost per license (includes resident and nonresident) with \$2.25 per license. Only four other states ranked in the three dollar average range per license (Connecticut, \$3.76; West Virginia, \$3.85; North Dakota, \$3.90 and California, \$3.95). New Hampshire ranked number one with \$11.97 per license followed by Maine with \$10.48.

Source: SFI Bulletin. August 1983.

#### LOUISIANA FRESHWATER FISH - LOOKING GOOD

From 1977 to 1979 researchers working through the National Pesticide Monitoring Program checked Louisiana catfish, buffalo and gaspergou for pollution contamination by heavy metals.

Heavy metals can be poisonous in high concentrations and cause birth defects in lower concentrations. The heavy metals checked for in this study were arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury and selenium. Fish were sampled from five areas - Mississippi River at Luling, Red River at Alexandria, Lake Verret, Bayou Plaquemine Brule and the East Franklin watershed.

The results were compared to 96 other sampling stations located all over the United States. The fish from the Mississippi and Red Rivers were lower than the National average for all five pollutants. The fish from the other three Louisiana areas were lower than the national average in four of the heavy metals and tied with the national average on cadmium.

Source: Heavy metal residues in Louisiana Catfish Below National Averages. J. B. Graves, G. U. Mayfield, D. P. Coulon and J. D. Newsom, in Louisiana Agriculture, Vol. 27, No. 1, Fall, 1983.

SOFTSHELL CRABS - MORE PROFITS!

For many years the art and science of shedding softshell crabs was considered to be dying in Louisiana. Now hard economic times and new shedding methods are changing that. The scarcity of hard crabs has made many crab fishermen (and even some crab factories) think about grading their catch for peelers and shedding them.

Some shrimpers (who are not exactly having a wonderful year either) are shedding crabs, culled from their trawl catch, in 4x8-foot boxes on the decks of their shrimp boats. They are looking at increasing their profits also. No one that produces good softshell crabs has any trouble selling them. There are really only four states that produce a large amount of softshell crabs. Maryland leads the pack with Virginia, Louisiana and North Carolina following. North Carolina doubled its production from 1981 to 1982.

Another factor that has interested more people in softshell crab production has been the development of closed-system shedding operations. While float cars and flow-through systems are the simplest to operate, a closed-system operation allows a crabber who does not live on waterfront property with good water to shed crabs.

If you are considering shedding crabs next year, we have an excellent publication on the ABC's of softcrab production, free of charge. Call or write my office for "The Fishery for Soft Crabs With Emphasis on the Development of a Closed Recirculating Seawater System for Shedding Crabs" by Harriet Perry, John Ogle and Larry Nichalson.

Last year we also held a workshop on softshell crab production at Lacombe, LA. We are hoping to hold another this spring, and if you are thinking about shedding crabs, you may want to keep on look-out for announcement of the workshop.

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THE GUMBO POT

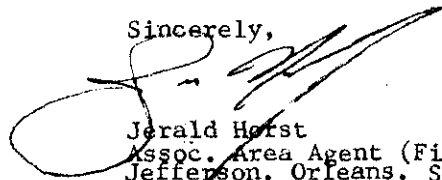
French Style Fried Shrimp Heads

This month we have an unusual and really super recipe, thanks to Ethel Guidry of Lafitte. When most people head shrimp, the heads go in the garbage and the tails in the frying pan. This recipe uses the heads. Cleaning the shrimp heads was a snap after Clinton, her husband explained to me how to do it. Simply pinch each head in front of the eyes and the meat pops out of the shell.

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 lbs. shrimp head meats | fish fry or chick fry |
| 1/2 cup milk             | salt and pepper       |
| 4 eggs                   | cooking oil           |

Make a batter by mixing milk and eggs thoroughly. Pass the meats through the batter and then through the salted and peppered fish fry. Deep fat fry for 7 to 9 minutes using a strainer. These can be served as a meal or used as a tasty snack.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
Assoc. Area Agent (Fisheries)  
Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles