

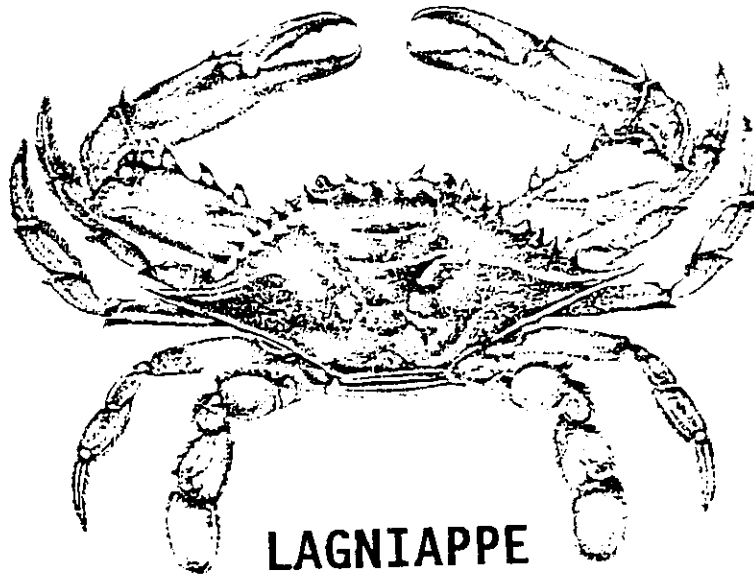


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SEA GRANT PROGRAM



LAGNIAPPE

T.E.D. REGULATIONS CHANGE IN DECEMBER

A great many rumors have been flying around about the change in TED regulations on December 1, 1994. At present, four exemptions allowing shrimping without TEDs are in effect. They are as follows:

- 1) Boats with no mechanical assistance on board to retrieve any part of the net.
- 2) Licensed bait shrimpers.
- 3) Boats using skimmers or wing nets.
- 4) Boats shrimping in inshore waters using a single trawl with a head rope of less than 35 feet and a foot rope of less than 44 feet.

As of December 1, 1993 the last exemption will expire and all bottom trawlers using any sort of mechanical assistance will be required to use a TED in all waters. The other three categories of exemptions will remain in effect for the time being.

WHAT DO CRABS EAT?

Blue crabs provide one of the most valuable fisheries in Louisiana. Over 45 million pounds of hard crabs were landed commercially in 1993. The recreational fishery is also quite large and the softshell crab fishery has grown in recent years.

As important as the blue crab is, surprisingly little research is being done on it. Recently, Alabama scientists did a study to see what blue crabs ate in Mobile Bay, Alabama. The researchers found that blue crabs ate very little plant matter. In fact 49.9% of their diet is fish. Bivalves (clams, mussels, oysters, etc.) made up 22.2% of their diet, other kinds of crabs were 13.5% and snails were 5.1%.

Source: Comparative Study of the Diets of the Blue Crabs Callinectes similis and C. sapidus from a Mud-Bottom Habitat in Mobile Bay, Alabama. P. Hsuen, J. McClintock and T. Hopkins. In Journal of Crustacean Biology 12(4) 1992.

MISSISSIPPI GETS NEW COMMISSION

Effective July 1, the state of Mississippi has a new seven member Commission on Marine Resources. Six of the members must be residents of the state's three coastal counties. Each county must have two members and one of them must be selected from the following user groups: commercial fisherman, recreational fisherman, seafood processor, charter boat operator, non-seafood industry or environmental organization. The seventh member is the member of the state Commission on Wildlife Fisheries and Parks from the Fifth Congressional District.

The Commission on Marine Resources will regulate all matters pertaining to salt-water aquatic life and marine resources with the exception of law enforcement. Marine law enforcement duties will stay under the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. The new commission will also administer the Coastal Wetlands Protection Act and the Public Trust Wetlands Act.

TEXAS GETS NEW SHRIMP LAWS

Earlier this year, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and bay and gulf shrimpers agreed to a compromise that will regulate the commercial shrimp industry. The reason for the changes was that TPWD officials felt that too many small shrimp were being harvested in the state's waters. The changes are as follows:

- 1) Shrimping in bays will not be allowed between 2 pm and 30 minutes before sunrise from April 1 until August 14 of each year.
- 2) TPWD will have the power to close shrimping in state offshore waters for up to 60 days between May 15 and July 15 of each year.
- 3) Bay shrimpers are prohibited from transferring their catch from one boat to another. This is to keep bay shrimpers from going over their daily catch limits.

- 4) The maximum amount of shrimp that can be off-loaded from a bait shrimp vessel to another vessel while on public waters is set at two quarts per person or one gallon per boat, whichever is less.
- 5) On September 1, 1995 the minimum mesh size on trawls for bay and bait boats will increase from 1/8 inches to 1/2 inches, except from August 15 through October 31, when the minimum mesh size increases to 1 3/4 inches.

SEA TURTLE LAWSUIT

On July 26, the Center for Marine Conservation sent a notice of intent to sue the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Department of Commerce for failing to protect endangered sea turtles from shrimp fishing. The center states that the reason for their suit is that 344 dead sea turtles have washed up on Texas beaches during the first 7 months of this year. Of this number, 182 were kemp's ridley turtles.

The notice of intent states that the lawsuit to enforce the Endangered Species Act will be filed within 60 days unless the National Marine Fisheries Service takes action to prevent more turtle deaths. The notice goes on to say that the only acceptable action is to shut down the shrimp fishery off of Texas. Closure of the Texas shrimp fishery could affect the Louisiana shrimp fishery if the Texas shrimpers have to move to open waters.

THE GUMBO POT

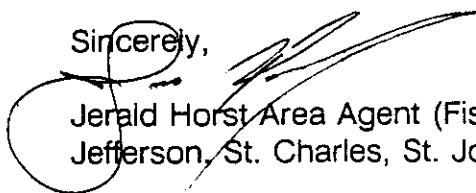
Fish a la Pepper

A mild tomato taste and a hint of sweetness from the red pepper make this a very good dish and also one that is very low-calorie.

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 lbs. seatrout fillets | 1/2 cup boiling water |
| or other lean fish | 1/4 cup tomato sauce |
| 1/2 teaspoon instant chicken broth | 2 tablespoons vegetable oil |
| 1 teaspoon garlic salt | 1 teaspoon capers |
| 1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper | 1/2 medium red pepper, cut into rings |

Dissolve instant chicken broth in water. Sprinkle fish with garlic salt and lemon pepper. Cook fish in oil in a non-stick frypan over moderate heat for 5 minutes, turning often. Add broth, tomato sauce, and capers to fish. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes. Top with pepper rings and cook 5 minutes longer or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork and peppers are tender. Serves four.

Sincerely,



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