



## The Bowfishing Dilemma

Louisiana truly is a sportsman's paradise, with plenty of thrills from the terrestrial to the aquatic. A novel and increasingly popular version of fishing combines the skill of bowhunting with the challenge of targeting Louisiana's aquatic bounties. While the equipment used for bowfishing is modern (including specialized archery equipment to shoot and retrieve fish), the

technique predates the modern version of fishing as we know it. Before the advent of rods and reels for recreational fishing, subsistence fishing was done with the use of spears and even bows and arrows. Recently there has been a resurgence in the popularity of using archery equipment to fish. This is due to the thrills and challenges of perfecting the skill required to hit a moving target under water, as well as the inherent difficulty of accounting for the refraction of light through water. It has blossomed into a growing sport and industry, particularly in Texas and Louisiana.



Redfish. Credit: Paula Ouder

The major species sought by bow fishermen are typically large freshwater fish like carps, bowfin and gar; however, Louisiana's fertile marshes are seeing saltwater species like redfish, flounder and drum being targeted more frequently. The bowfishing dilemma lies not with the sport of bowfishing, but rather with the allowance of redfish to be targeted by bow and arrow. Let's back up and discuss how we arrived at the current laws for targeting redfish. The first laws addressing the taking of redfish appeared in Louisiana in 1977, establishing a combined recreational daily limit of 50 fish for redfish and speckled trout, with no more than two redfish over 36 inches in length. In 1984, the possession limit was reduced to the daily limit, a new saltwater angling license was instituted, and minimum recreational length was set at 14 inches. The current size and bag limits for redfish are similar to those set in 1988. The daily limit is five fish per person, none of which may be less than 16 inches, and only one may be over 27 inches. On Oct. 20, 2007, President George W. Bush issued an Executive Order concerning the protection of redfish, encouraging agencies to designate redfish as a game fish for added levels of protection. Subsequently, Louisiana passed Act 23 of 2008 which revised the definition of "game fish," thereby designated sailfish, five species of marlin and redfish as saltwater game fish.

Louisiana made an exception to allow for redfish to be taken by bow and arrow. There are several potentially negative impacts of bowfishing for redfish in Louisiana's marshes. State law sets the

legal regulations regarding “take,” defining “take” as the “attempt or act of hooking, pursuing, netting, capturing, snaring, trapping, shooting, hunting, wounding, or killing by any means or device.” Thus the most obvious concern is if a person shoots an undersized redfish - the possibility for a safe release is very low due to the injury inflicted by the arrow. Louisiana law requires that redfish caught out of the slot limit be “returned immediately to the waters from which taken without avoidable injury.” If an undersized redfish is shot, then the bowfisherman risks either keeping the fish and breaking the slot limit law (punishable by fines, loss of license and imprisonment) or following the law and returning a fish to the water that will probably die anyway. Neither outcome promotes the purpose of protecting juvenile redfish, which is the basis for the slot limit.

Another problem with bowfishing for redfish is the manner in which the activity takes place – typically at night on an airboat rigged with high-powered lights. The nighttime activities make surveillance or covert investigation difficult for enforcement agents. Additionally, the killing and discarding of fish outside the slot limits is harder to catch compared to anglers simply keeping illegal fish. A final concern is the location of bowfishing activities, specifically if it involves trespassing on hunting leases with airboats. As landowners typically lease land for hunting purposes during winter months, a trespassing airboat would put unwanted nighttime pressure on waterfowl and would be difficult for land owners or law enforcement to catch violators.

These concerns are what caused state Sen. Dan Claitor to propose a bill in the 2010 legislative session that would have prohibited the taking of redfish with bow and arrow. Shortly thereafter, local bowfishing charter captains and advocates formed the Louisiana Bowfishing Association, which sought to promote the sport of bowfishing and establish a member’s ethics commitment to ensure participants do not violate the previously discussed concerns. After just a few weeks of proposing the bill, it was pulled from the legislative calendar. Current laws regarding redfish are written for rod and reel fishermen, and adapting these laws to bowfishing can create problems particularly because catch and release and bowfishing are mutually exclusive. Unfortunately there is no simple solution that will appease every person involved, but efforts must be made to develop a solution that provides for the common goal of ensuring the long term health of the Louisiana redfish population.

**Sources:**

S. B. Jones. The redfish bowfishing exemption: what is it and why is it there? Louisiana Coastal Law. Number 92. July 2010.

[www.louisianabowfishingassociation.org](http://www.louisianabowfishingassociation.org)

**- Craig Gothreaux**

## **Assessing Damage, Restoring Our Future**

After 87 days and the release of 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, the BP Deepwater Horizon (BP DWH) well has successfully been capped. While this chapter has closed, the spill’s economic and environmental toll will continue to unfold.

The BP event, now officially the largest marine oil spill in U.S. history, has reminded us that the Gulf, one of the world’s most diverse ocean ecosystems supporting multi-billion dollar fishing, seafood and tourism industries, is truly a special place. As such we must ensure this large marine ecosystem is healed and healthy in order to support the rich assortment of fish and wildlife and ecosystem services

crucial to our economy and way of life. The Gulf's bounty is shared by all and therefore we must ensure that the Gulf states and the nation are committed to restoring this system back to health.

### The Restoration Commitment and Roadmap

Using his first televised address from the Oval Office, President Barack Obama said we must confront the Gulf's decades-long legacy of environmental challenges through a long-term restoration plan and by making "a commitment to the Gulf Coast that goes beyond responding to the crisis of the moment." The president took the first step by tasking the Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus, to develop recommendations for a healthier Gulf based on local input from dozens of town hall meetings along the Gulf Coast. On Sept. 28, Mabus released his report *America's Gulf Coast: A Long Term Recovery Plan after the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill*. This report calls on Congress to establish a Gulf Coast Recovery Council and dedicate a significant portion of Clean Water Act fines to Gulf restoration, among other actions. As an interim step recommended in the report, the president plans to establish a Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force by Executive Order to align federal policies and resources for the restoration effort.

The activities of the Task Force will be coordinated with and guided by state and federal trustees that are part of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA), triggered when an oil spill or release of contaminants occurs. By law, state and federal agencies, called natural resource "trustees," are required to document damage to natural resources and reduced or lost services such as fisheries and other human uses. The NRDA process determines the extent and significance of injuries so that those responsible for the disaster are held accountable and pay damages to restore injured natural resources or lost services caused by the oil spill. The NRDA for the BP oil disaster is underway. Scientists are evaluating fish, wildlife, habitats, water, sediment and other natural resources in the Gulf of Mexico to document injury, what it will take to restore natural resources to their pre-spill condition, and, of course, and how much restoration will cost. Results of the NRDA will be a key part of the larger restoration effort.

A critical recommendation of the Mabus report is the restoration vision: *"Resilient, healthy Gulf of Mexico ecosystems that support the diverse economies, communities, and cultures of the region."* It is essential that the Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, Congress and the states adopt this vision and support a recovery program around three key areas that will help realize the vision. These are the restoration and enhancement of: coastal wetlands, tidelands, estuaries, and barrier islands, which are fundamental to the health and productivity of the larger Gulf ecosystem; the marine environment, including its fish, shellfish, and wildlife resources; and the ecological and human services provided by the Gulf ecosystem.

With the first chapter closed, the next chapters are ultimately up to us. The BP/DWH disaster provides the region with a significant opportunity to make the Gulf a better place. Successful restoration will require that residents of the Gulf are active participants in the process, contributing local knowledge

## Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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and ideas and ensuring the nation remains focused on success. With more than 20 years of experience in the Gulf, Ocean Conservancy is committed to seeing the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem, and the communities dependent on the Gulf's bounty, make a full and sustained recovery.

- **Chris Dorsett**

*Director of Fish Conservation and Gulf Restoration Program, Ocean Conservancy*

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## **NOAA Seafood Sampling and Testing Priorities for Federal Closed Area**

NOAA's Fisheries Service first prohibited commercial and recreational fishing in federal waters impacted by the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill as a seafood safety measure in early May. The closed area was 88,522 square miles, or 37 percent, of the Gulf of Mexico federal waters at its largest, and now after six re-openings is 31,915 square miles, or 13 percent, of the Gulf of Mexico federal waters. Since July 22, NOAA has reopened about 52,000 square miles of oil-impacted federal waters in accordance with the re-opening protocol agreed to by NOAA, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and Gulf states.

Prior to re-opening an area, the protocol requires NOAA to demonstrate the area is oil free, the area has little risk of being re-exposed to oil, and seafood tissue samples collected from within the area have passed both sensory and chemical analysis for hydrocarbons. This protocol involves sensory testing for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) components of the oil and dispersant along with chemical based testing for PAH as a confirmatory measure. After areas are re-opened NOAA Fisheries Service will maintain a seafood safety monitoring program continuing the collection and testing of seafood to ensure that Gulf seafood remains safe for consumers.

NOAA's Fisheries Service's sampling strategy in general has been to work from the lesser oiled outer boundaries of the federal closure in toward the more heavily oiled areas immediately surrounding the Deepwater Horizon/BP wellhead. Area-specific sampling plans focus on species fishermen generally target in those areas, and require more samples to be collected in heavily oiled areas, compared to lightly oiled areas.

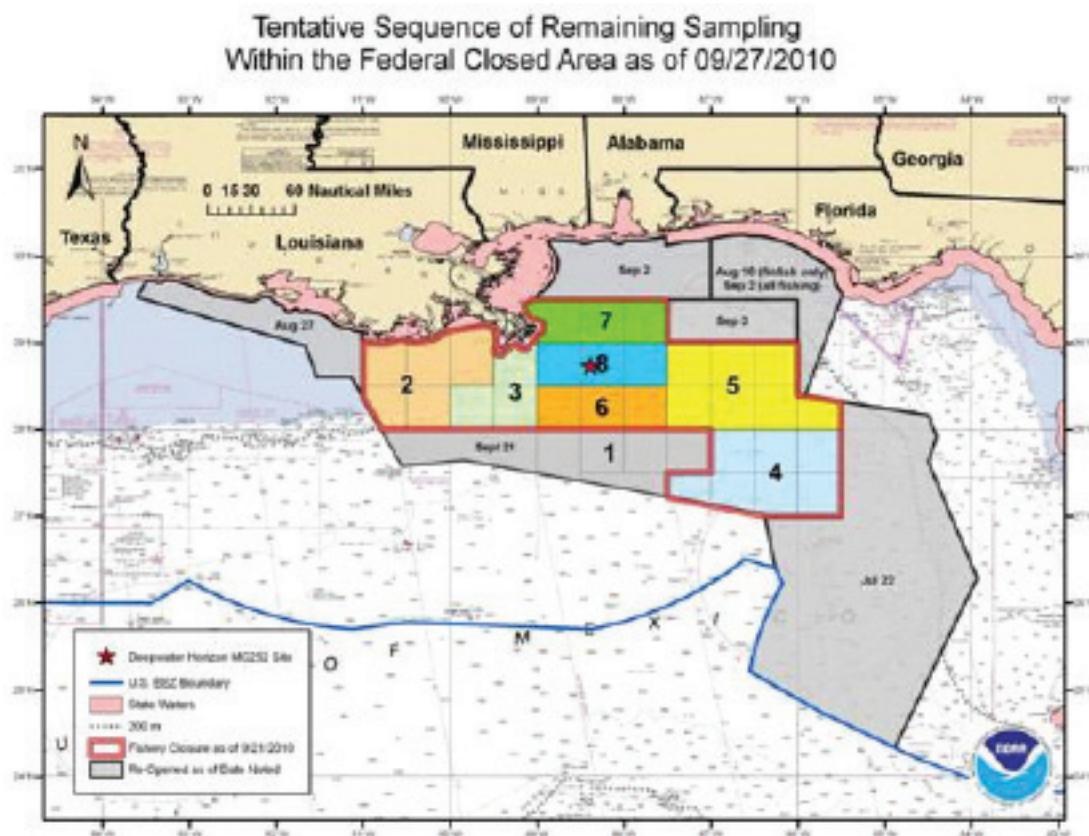
The tentative sequence of remaining sampling within the federal closed area is illustrated on the embedded map. In summary, the closed area has been divided into eight sub-areas, which are labeled in priority from 1-8.

Priority Area 1 was re-opened on Sept. 21, and included a 7,970-square mile area located along the southern boundary of the closed area, offshore of central Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the western edge of the Florida panhandle.

The next federal re-opening priorities include a 5,628-square mile area (Priority Area 2) and a 2,927-square mile area (Priority Area 3) located off eastern Louisiana, just west and south of the Mississippi River delta. NOAA is currently processing samples collected in these two areas, which could re-open within the next few weeks pending test results.

NOAA is actively sampling Priority Area 4, and expects to begin sampling Priority Areas 5-8 within the coming weeks. Updates on the re-openings and sampling schedules, as well as supporting information and data on previous reopening are available at:

[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater\\_horizon\\_oil\\_spill.htm](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater_horizon_oil_spill.htm)



### Commercial Fishing for Vermilion Snapper Closes Oct. 6

Commercial fishing or harvest for vermilion snapper in the South Atlantic federal waters is closed, effective 12:01 a.m. (local time) Oct. 6, 2010, through 12:01 a.m. Jan. 1, 2011. NOAA Fisheries Service has determined the 2010 July through December commercial quota of 302,523 pounds of vermilion snapper will be reached by this date. During the closure period, no person aboard a vessel for which a commercial permit for snapper-grouper has been issued may commercially fish for vermilion snapper in federal waters of the South Atlantic. During the quota closure, all harvest or possession of vermilion snapper in or from South Atlantic federal waters is restricted to the recreational bag and possession limits of five fish and the sale or purchase of such fish is prohibited. During November 2010 through March 2011, the recreational closure of vermilion snapper, no recreational harvest or possession of vermilion snapper is allowed.

In addition, for a person on board a vessel for which a federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for the South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Fishery has been issued, these provisions of the closure for vermilion snapper would apply regardless of whether the fish are harvested in state

or federal waters. Captain and crew of for-hire vessels may not retain the recreational bag and possession limits during the closure.

Closing commercial fishing for vermilion snapper in the South Atlantic complies with regulations implementing the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region and is necessary to protect the snapper-grouper resource.

The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of vermilion snapper that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, Oct. 6, 2010, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

### **Commercial Fishing for Black Sea Bass Closes Oct. 7**

The commercial sector for black sea bass in federal waters of the South Atlantic from 35°15.19' north latitude, the latitude of Cape Hatteras Light, NC, to Key West, FL, will be closed, effective 12:01 a.m. (local time) Oct. 7, 2010, through 12:01 a.m. June 1, 2011. NOAA Fisheries Service has determined the 2010-2011 commercial quota of 309,000 pounds will be reached by Oct. 7, 2010.

The operator of a vessel that has been issued a federal commercial permit for snapper-grouper and that is landing black sea bass for sale must have landed and bartered, traded or sold such black sea bass prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, Oct. 7, 2010. All black sea bass pots must be removed from the South Atlantic federal waters subject to the closure prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, Oct. 7, 2010.

During the closure, all harvest and possession of black sea bass in or from closed federal waters of the South Atlantic is subject to the applicable bag and possession limits, and the sale or purchase of black sea bass taken from closed federal waters is prohibited. In addition, those bag and possession limits, and the prohibition on sale or purchase apply in state and federal waters of the South Atlantic for a vessel for which a valid federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued.

The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of black sea bass that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, Oct. 7, 2010, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

### **Opportunity for Public Comment on Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures for Nine South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Species**

NOAA Fisheries Service is seeking public comment on Amendment 17B to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 17B), which establishes annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs) for nine snapper-grouper species. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires the specification of ACLs and AMs for species undergoing overfishing by 2010. ACLs are set at levels that prevent overfishing. AMs are management controls established to ensure that ACLs are not exceeded, or they may correct for overages if ACLs are exceeded during a fishing season.

In the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery there are nine species undergoing overfishing including speckled hind, warsaw grouper, snowy grouper, golden tilefish, black sea bass, red grouper, gag, vermilion snapper and red snapper. Amendment 17B includes actions to establish ACLs and AMs for eight of these species as well as black grouper. Red snapper is being addressed in a separate amendment.

Amendment 17B, if implemented through rulemaking, would also specify management measures intended to address overfishing, including a prohibition on harvest and retention of snowy grouper, blueline tilefish, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, queen snapper and silk snapper, beyond 240 feet (73 m) in federal waters of the South Atlantic. This species prohibition is intended to prevent incidental catch of speckled hind and warsaw grouper from exceeding their designated ACL of zero. Additionally, Amendment 17B would update the current framework procedure for snapper-grouper to include ACLs, annual catch targets, and AMs. Updating the framework will allow for timely adjustments to ACLs and AMs as needed in the future.

Written comments on this amendment must be received no later than Nov. 22, 2010, in order to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service. Electronic copies of Amendment 17B may be obtained from the e-Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Web site at <http://www.safmc.net>, or:

NOAA Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
Sustainable Fisheries Division  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

You may submit comments by any of the following method:

- Electronic Submissions: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>, by entering NOAA-NMFS-2010-0091" in the keyword search, then check the box labeled "Select" to find documents accepting comments or submissions, then select "Send a Comment" or "Submission." All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All personal identifying information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NOAA Fisheries Service will accept anonymous comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only. Comments received through means not specified in this bulletin or the proposed rule may not be considered.

## LDWF Procedures for Handling Reports of Oiled Seafood

When a call is received from someone who suspects they have oiled seafood inform them to:

- Immediately report their concern to the LDWF hotline at 1-800-442-2511
- If financial compensation for the catch or purchase is sought, they must contact the BP hotline at 1-866-557-1401 to report oiled wildlife and file a claim.

Once a call is received by the LDWF hotline, an enforcement agent and fisheries biologist will be contacted with the complaint. The agent and fisheries biologist will decide on a plan of action based on the details of the complaint. If an onsite visit is determined to be warranted, the agent and biologist (if needed) will be dispatched to evaluate the situation.

If appropriate and enough evidence is present the seafood will be secured and samples will be taken for toxicity testing, chemical testing and if necessary finger printing to determine the possible source of the contaminant.

## Recreational Red Snapper Season Opens Oct.1

At the request of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, NOAA's Marine Fisheries Service will reopen the recreational red snapper season for eight consecutive weekends beginning Oct. 1. The re-opening is effective each weekend from 12:01 a.m. local time Friday, through 12:01 a.m. local time Monday. The fishing season will close at 12:01 a.m. local time on Nov. 22.



Red Snapper. Credit: Diane Rome Peebles

This spring, the Gulf Council increased the overall red snapper quota from 5 million pounds to 6.945 million pounds. Yet the 2010 recreational red snapper season was open for only 53 days. This shortened season was due, in part, to an increase in catch rates and the average size of red snapper. This increase, coupled with past effort, led to projections that the quota would be filled sooner than in 2009. But the BP/Deepwater Horizon oil spill and subsequent federal fishing area closures resulted in reduced effort, leaving the recreational red snapper quota unfilled.

Anglers are reminded that current fishing regulations apply. Anglers may keep two red snapper per person, per day, that measure a minimum of 16-inches total length. In addition, anglers must have a venting tool and dehooking device when fishing for Gulf reef fish. The use of non-stainless steel circle hooks is also required for fishermen using natural baits. For-hire captain and crew are not permitted to keep red snapper.

For a long time, red snapper has been one of the most popular offshore species in the northern Gulf of Mexico. As a result, it is also one of the most heavily regulated fisheries due to overfishing and recovery plans. Over the last 20 years, many questions concerning red snapper have been answered

through research and monitoring. Much of this research has been compiled and transcribed into layman's terms on the Louisiana Sea Grant website, [www.seagrantsfish.lsu.edu/faqs/redsnapper/index.html](http://www.seagrantsfish.lsu.edu/faqs/redsnapper/index.html).

Some of the topics covered include; red snapper biology and life history, red snapper management, red snapper stock assessment, and red snapper venting and de-hooking. The website is extremely comprehensive and offers information on any aspect of red snapper.

- Kevin A. Savoie

## Underwater Obstructions

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 10 claims in the amount of \$40,840.28 were received for payment during the period Aug 1, 2010 – Aug. 31, 2010. There were eight claims paid and two claims denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 07.169	89 23.321	PLAQUEMINES
29 10.625	91 08.033	TERREBONNE
29 11.833	90 27.550	TERREBONNE
29 14.757	90 13.827	LAFOURCHE
29 16.959	89 49.356	PLAQUEMINES
29 17.082	89 52.549	PLAQUEMINES
29 22.228	90 43.263	TERREBONNE
29 26.684	89 58.466	JEFFERSON
29 36.077	90 01.853	JEFFERSON

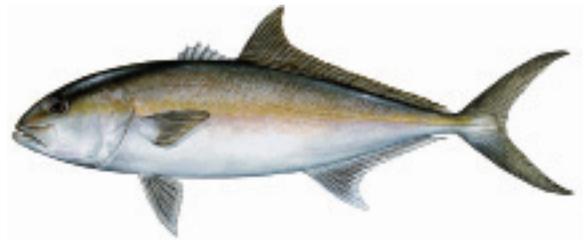
A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Gwendolyn Thomas, administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or you can call (225)342-0122.

## Gulf of Mexico Recreational Greater Amberjack Fishery

In 2008, NOAA Fisheries Service established annual catch limits and accountability measures for greater amberjack, and recreational quotas. The recreational quota for 2010 was reduced from 1,368,000 to 1,243,184 million pounds whole weight to adjust for a 9 percent quota overage in 2009.

In early May 2010, NOAA Fisheries estimated the 2010 reduced quota would be reached between July and August, assuming the fishery proceeded at a pace similar to 2009. However, increased sampling implemented by NOAA Fisheries and partners in response to the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill (DWH/BP spill) indicates summer fishing effort is down significantly relative to 2009 off the Florida Panhandle through Louisiana.

In August, NOAA Fisheries reanalyzed the projected quota closure date for greater amberjack in 2010. The analysis considered multiple data sources including Gulf private and charter recreational landings estimates through June 30, headboat landings estimates through July 23, and available information regarding the short-term impacts of the DWH/BP spill upon recreational greater amberjack landings.



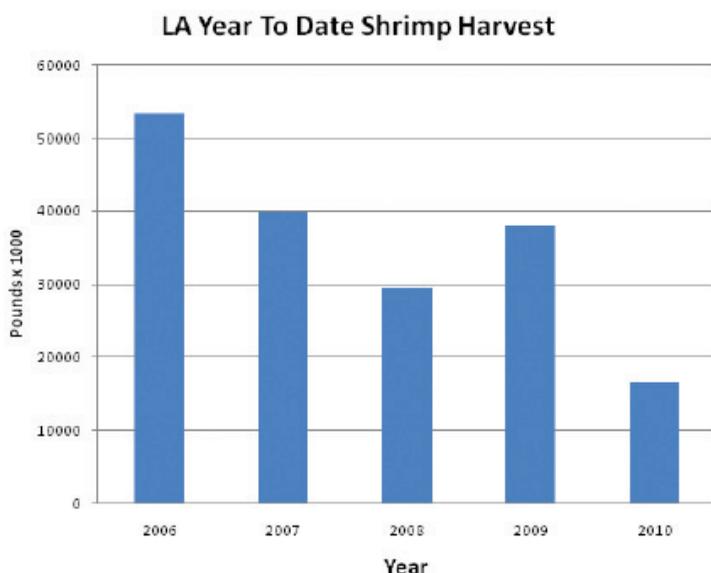
Amberjack. Credit Diane Rome Peebles

Projection scenarios that explicitly considered the impacts of the DWH/BP spill and associated fishery closures indicated it was unlikely the 2010 quota would be reached prior to mid-October 2010. Thus, the recreational greater amberjack fishery remains open until a reevaluation of the cumulative landings can be performed in late-October. Upon completion of the reevaluation, NOAA Fisheries will issue a fishery bulletin to alert constituents of a closure date if the recreational greater amberjack quota is reached or projected to be reached.

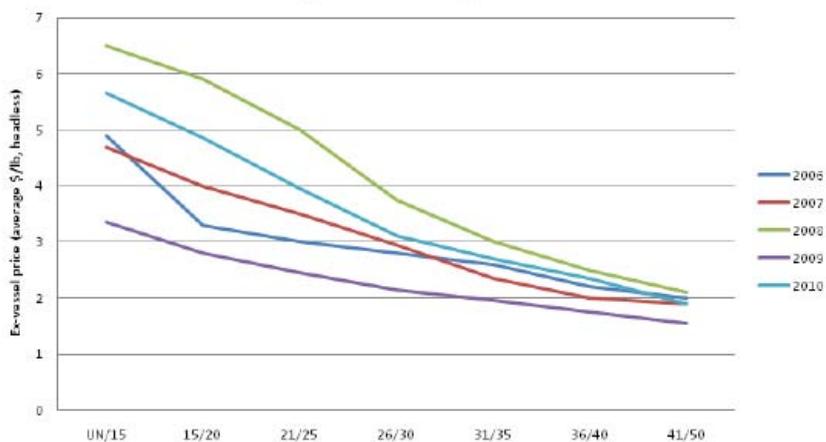
A greater amberjack stock assessment update is scheduled to be completed early in 2011. The “Updated Projections for 2010 Quota Closure Date for the Gulf of Mexico Recreational Greater Amberjack” (SERO-LAPP-2010-05) report is available on-line at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/GrouperSnapperandReefFish.htm>. If you should have any questions or wish to receive a copy of the report please contact Rich Malinowski at 727-824-5305.

## Louisiana Shrimp Watch

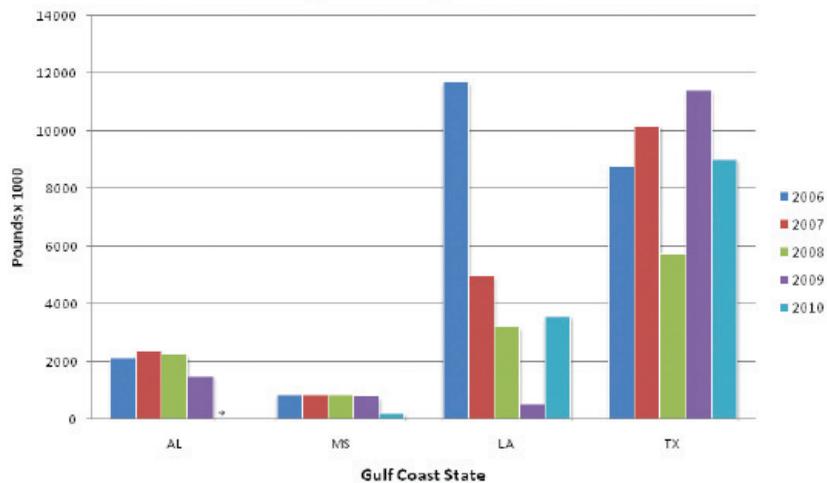
Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on their website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports 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](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html)



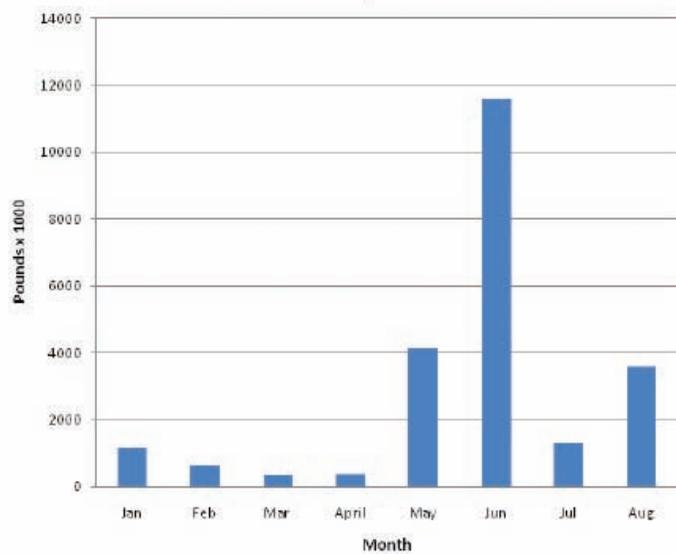
Aug NGoM Shrimp Prices



August Shrimp Harvest



LA 2010 Shrimp Harvest



## 4-H Junior Leaders Experience Marsh Maneuvers

Mark Shirley jokes that his family has grown accustomed to not having him around in July. The Louisiana Sea Grant and LSU AgCenter Marine Extension agent devotes the month to guiding 64 teens through Marsh Maneuvers – an intense, five-day, four-night, environmental camp. If hurricanes don't interrupt his plans, Shirley runs four consecutive sections of Marsh Maneuvers, each accommodating 16 high school 4-H Junior Leaders from a rolling roster of all 64 Louisiana parishes. Students are accepted based on nominations from their 4-H agents.

The program had a rather inauspicious start when 4-H members in Vermillion Parish wanted to take a trip but their treasury was low on funds. Instead of leaving town, they made arrangements to stay at a private camp on Vermillion Bay where they camped, crabbed and shined alligators for three days. That was 25 years ago, and Shirley has been with them all along. "That went over so well, the following summer another parish wanted to bring a group over and it just kind of mushroomed from there," he explained.

Until six years ago, camp was held at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries marine lab on Grand Terre near Grand Isle. Marsh Maneuvers is cosponsored by LDWF, which now hosts campers at Rockefeller Refuge in Cameron Parish. The program is supported this year with part of a larger grant from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources for wetland education.



Transplanting smooth cordgrass on Avery Island  
Credit: Paula Ouder

Activities include boat tours, catching and cooking local seafood, water quality testing and getting dirty in a hands-on stewardship project. This year, participants transplanted smooth cordgrass into eroding mudflats along a canal on Avery Island and toured the Tabasco pepper sauce plant when their work was done. Campers also got a rare inside look at BP's oil spill response center in Intracoastal City where experts spoke about oil extraction, wildlife concerns, command center logistics and what went wrong aboard the Deepwater Horizon.

In addition to the biology, ecology and sociology of Louisiana wetlands, Marsh Maneuvers presents a strong vocational message meant to pique student interest in professions that will have a positive impact on the coast.

"It's been a good cooperation among a lot of agencies and some private companies to support this effort," Shirley explained. "It has paid off in the benefits of kids going on to college in different curriculums related to the environment, marine science, wildlife management and science education. We have seen some of our alumni 10 or 15 years later go on to do things related to their experiences here as teenagers at Marsh Maneuvers camp."

- Paula Ouder

## The Gumbo Pot

### *Ray Marsala*

Serves: 4

6 tablespoons all-purpose flour, divided

4 4-ounce ray fillets

2 tablespoons canola oil

1/3 cup minced shallots (about 2)

2 teaspoons minced garlic

1 8-ounce package pre-sliced mushrooms

2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme

1 cup fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth

1/4 cup Marsala wine or dry sherry

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Heat a large skillet over medium-heat. Place 1/4 cup flour in a shallow dish, and dredge ray. Coat skillet with oil, add ray and cook 4 minutes on each side or until browned. Remove ray from pan and keep warm in oven.

Add shallots, garlic and mushrooms to skillet; saute 3 minutes or until moisture evaporates. Add remaining 1 tablespoon flour and thyme, and cook for 1 minute, stirring well.

In a bowl, combine chicken broth and Marsala, stirring until smooth. Gradually add broth mixture to pan, stirring constantly with whisk.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 2 minutes or until sauce thickens.

Return ray to pan; cook 2 minutes or until desired degree of doneness, turning to coat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Serving suggestion: Garnish with thyme sprigs and serve with mashed potatoes.

*Source: Shirley A. Estes, executive director of the Virginia Marine Products Board*

If you have a favorite seafood recipe that you would like to share, please send it to Julie Anderson [janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu) for inclusion in future issues.



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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.

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