

Lagniappe

September 2011 Volume 35, No. 9

Yellowfin Tuna Tagging Program

This fall, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) plans to launch a yellowfin tuna tagging program, an initiative unique to the Gulf of Mexico. The program promotes a culture of catch, tag and release in the recreational fishing community and contributes to the scientific data necessary to further understand the behaviors of yellowfin tuna.



Yellowfin Tuna. Photo credit: Duane Raver

Tagging tuna can provide information about their movements, migrations, stock structure, growth, population size, mortality, schooling behavior and physiology. NOAA acknowledges that the size and number of yellowfin caught are decreasing, and the downward trend has been happening since 1999. "The new tuna tagging program will provide baseline information for the population models used to assess the health of the stock of this valuable fishery," said LDWF assistant secretary Randy Pausina. "It will also help clarify the evidence that yellowfin migratory patterns have been altered by the presence of offshore oil platforms."

LDWF plans to kick off the program with a tag-and-release tournament at Venice Marina on Saturday, Sept. 24. With the success of the 2011 redfish tournaments, the department added a Yellowfin Tuna Fall Shootout to their Louisiana Saltwater Series. By encouraging live tag and release, the series has focused attention on the conservation of our marine resources.

This is the first tournament of its kind in the Gulf of Mexico, and there is a 100 percent payout for first, second and third place finishers. Payout is determined upon the total number of boats entered. A \$5,000 prize is up for grabs to the chartered boat with the most tagged yellowfin. There is also a kill fish division, and the team with the largest tuna weighed will win an offshore tackle package valued at \$3,000.

There is a \$500 entry fee per boat for the tournament, with a maximum of eight anglers total on each team.

Additional information, including rules, regulations and entry forms will soon be available at www.lasaltwaterseries.com.

Fishermen Cited In Federal Waters

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division agents cited four men on Aug. 15 and two men on Aug. 16 for alleged fisheries violations in federal waters. The violations included failing to have saltwater finfish intact and possessing red snapper during a closed season. On Aug. 16, agents cited two other individuals for possessing red snapper during a closed season. Agents seized 153 red snapper, shark and blue fish filets on the Aug. 15 case and for the Aug. 16 case seized 70 red snapper filets and a 17-inch red snapper.

The penalties for taking red snapper during a closed season are fines between \$100 and \$350, or up to 60 days in jail, or both plus court costs. Failing to have saltwater finfish intact are fines between \$250 and \$500, or up to 90 days in jail, or both plus court costs.

LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

License Still Needed to Hunt Feral Hogs

A valid Louisiana hunting license is still required to take outlaw quadrupeds, including feral hogs, with the new laws that went into effect Aug. 15. Legislation passed during the 2011 Legislative Session provides additional options for citizens to take outlaw quadrupeds (armadillos, coyotes, feral hogs) and nuisance animals (nutria and beaver) at night from March through August on private property with any legal firearm. Anyone taking part in these activities at night is required to notify the parish sheriff's office 24 hours in advance of any such hunt.

Additionally, House Bill 169, signed into law by Gov. Bobby Jindal as Act 29, allows the take of nuisance quadrupeds at night using sound suppressors on the firearm(s) utilized. Anyone using such a weapon must have in possession a valid permit issued by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The use of sound suppressed weapons is restricted to the take of outlaw quadrupeds, including coyotes and feral hogs, from March through August on private property.

Online Application Process for Oyster Harvester Permits in Lake Calcasieu

As required by Act 329 of the 2011 Louisiana Legislative Session, anyone seeking to commercially harvest oysters in Lake Calcasieu must have one of 126 special Oyster Harvester Permits issued by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Of the 126 permits available, 63 will be issued exclusively to eligible fishermen who have historically harvested in Lake Calcasieu since Jan. 1, 2001. The remaining 63 permits will be issued to any person who is otherwise eligible.

Permits will be valid for a period of one year beginning Oct. 1 of a given year and ending Sept. 30 of the following year. Applicants are required to hold a current and valid commercial fishing license and oyster harvester license.

Applications for permits will be available exclusively online on the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries website (www.wlf.louisiana.gov). Permits will be issued on a first-come-first-serve

basis, determined by the order in which completed applications are submitted through the LDWF website. Online submission is the only acceptable method to submit completed applications.

Applications will be available beginning Monday, Sept. 26 at 9 a.m. Harvesters will be required to reapply on the last Monday of September each year following.

A completed application consists of the following information: applicant's name, physical and mailing address, phone number, commercial license number, oyster harvester license number and personal identification number issued by a state or federal agency (i.e., driver's license or passport).

For more information please contact Laura Wooderson at lwooderson@wlf.la.gov or 225/610-2363.

Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Modifies Rule for Harvest of Mullet

The proposed rule states that commercial harvest of live mullet for bait purposes will be allowed in any season with a cast net not to exceed 12-feet in radius. The proposed rule also requires that commercial fishermen wishing to harvest live mullet for bait purposes be required to obtain a commercial fishing license and a commercial cast net license, for each cast net, as well as all other applicable licenses. The proposed rule further states that cast nets used for the commercial harvest of live mullet for bait purposes shall only be operated manually and that no mechanical device may be used to hold open the cast net or propel/deploy the cast net.

Currently the only commercial season for the taking of mullet is from the third Monday in October of a given year through the third Monday in January of the following year. Public comments on the notice of intent will be accepted prior to Oct. 6.

Comments should be submitted to Jason Adriance, Fisheries Division, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000, or via e-mail to jadriance@wlf.la.gov.

Rules for Recreational Harvest of Bluefin Tuna

The proposed rule would change the minimum size limit for bluefin tuna to 73 inches. The proposed rule also changes bag and possession limits to one bluefin tuna per vessel per year.

Currently fishing of bluefin tuna is prohibited in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico, and bluefin tuna may only be kept as incidental catch and only while possessing a Highly Migratory Species Recreational Angling Permit issued by NOAA Fisheries Service.

Public comments on the notice of intent will be accepted prior to Oct. 6.

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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Comments should be submitted to Jason Adriance, Fisheries Division, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000, or via e-mail to jadriance@wlf.la.gov.

Fall Shrimp Season

The fall inshore shrimp season opened in Shrimp Management Zones 1, 2 and 3 on Aug. 22. The commission set the season based on recommendations presented by Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries biologists and comments from the public.

Furthermore, the commission granted authority to the LDWF secretary to close the fall shrimp season when biological and technical data indicates the need.

Shrimp Management Zone 1 includes Louisiana waters from the Mississippi-Louisiana state line to the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River. Shrimp Management Zone 2 extends from to the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island. Shrimp Management Zone 3 extends from the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Louisiana-Texas state line.

Certain waters adjacent to Bay Jimmy and Grand Terre Island located in the Barataria Basin are closed to all recreational and commercial fishing except for recreational and charter boat angling because of closures still in effect from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Portions of the Mississippi River's birds-foot delta are also closed due to this incident.

Preliminary Louisiana shrimp landings statistics indicate that approximately 26.5 million pounds of shrimp (all species combined/heads-off weight) were landed in Louisiana from January 2011 through June 2011.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Quota Increases

NOAA Fisheries Service published an emergency rule in the *Federal Register* on Aug. 12, effective Sept. 12, 2011. The emergency rule increases the recreational red snapper quota by 345,000 pounds for the 2011 fishing year and provides the agency with the authority to re-open the recreational red snapper season later this year, if appropriate.

If NOAA Fisheries Service determines that the recreational sector did not harvest the full amount of its 2011 red snapper quota by the initial July 19, 2011, closure date, then the agency would provide for a supplemental recreational red snapper season.

Background: During 2010, the large fishery closed area stemming from the Deepwater Horizon MC252 oil spill severely curtailed the ability of the recreational sector to harvest its red snapper quota. In April 2011, NOAA Fisheries Service projected the 2011 recreational quota would be met 48 days

after the June 1 opening of the fishing season, and established a closure date for the recreational sector of July 19, 2011.

Subsequently, the council requested the most recent red snapper stock assessment be rerun using actual landings for 2009 and 2010. Based on the results of that rerun, the council's scientific and statistical committee determined that the 2011 red snapper total allowable catch could be increased from 7.185 to 7.53 million pounds. During 2010, the recreational sector harvested only 66 percent of its red snapper quota, whereas the commercial sector harvested 96 percent of its quota. Because of the greater economic impacts incurred to the recreational sector in 2010, the council requested the entire 345,000 pounds of increased total allowable catch be added to the recreational quota for the 2011 season.

This bulletin provides only summary information about the red snapper emergency rule. Discrepancies between this bulletin and the rule as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

Copies of the emergency rule are available by contacting NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office at 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701. The rule can be obtained in electronic form from the *Federal Register* website: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html> (use advanced search for final rules using "BB12" as a keyword).

Commercial Quotas and Season Re-Opening Date for Greater Amberjack

NOAA Fisheries Service has published a rule increasing the commercial quota for greater amberjack to 342,098 pounds and is re-opening the commercial fishing season for 60 days, beginning at 12:01 a.m. Sept. 1, and closing at 12:01 a.m. Oct. 31. Previously, NOAA Fisheries Service closed the commercial season for 2011 on June 18 based upon projections the 2011 quota would be met by that date.

Commercial Quota and Re-Opening

In April 2011, NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) provided estimates indicating 562,172 lb of greater amberjack were harvested by the commercial sector in 2010. Therefore, in accordance with established accountability measures, the 503,000 lb commercial quota was adjusted to 313,900 lb to account for the 189,100 lb overage. More recent and complete information provided by the SEFSC indicate final 2010 landings were 533,981 lb; 28,198 lb less than previously determined. Therefore, NOAA Fisheries Service has published a rule to adjust the 2011 commercial quota to account for this difference, establishing a new 2011 quota of 342,098 lb.

As noted, NOAA Fisheries Service closed the commercial sector at 12:01 a.m. June 18 based on projections the 2011 adjusted quota would be harvested by that date. Landings data available to date indicates the quota was not met and that 58,254 lb of the adjusted quota remain available. When added to the additional 28,198 lb, it results in 86,452 lb of additional quota available for the 2011 season. Based on historical catch rates, NOAA Fisheries Service projects the remaining 86,452 lb will be harvested in 60 days. Therefore, this rulemaking also re-opens the commercial greater amberjack season beginning at 12:01 a.m. Sept. 1 and closing at 12:01 a.m. on Oct. 31.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Ecosystem Scientific & Statistical Committee

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene a meeting of its Ecosystem Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Sept. 15. The meeting will be held via webinar and will begin at 8 a.m., concluding no later than noon.

The Ecosystem SSC will meet to discuss the details of a proposed joint workshop with the Socioeconomic SSC to begin the process of determining a mechanism for including socioeconomic input into the Ecosystem SSC recommendations as they move toward ecosystem-based management. The committee will also discuss and develop its strategic plan, as well as receiving a briefing on the July SSC meeting.

To register for the webinar, visit www.gulfcouncil.org/news_resources/upcoming_webinar.php - a registration form will be available soon. Participation can be by computer or telephone. Copies of the agenda and other related materials can be obtained by calling the council office at 813/348-1630. Materials can also be downloaded from the council's FTP site – [ftp.gulfcouncil.org](ftp://ftp.gulfcouncil.org). The FTP server can also be accessed from the council's home page under "Quick Links". Once on the FTP server, scroll to the Ecosystem folder. In the Ecosystem folder, click on the directory titled "Ecosystem SSC meeting 2011-09".

The Ecosystem SSC is a committee of biologists, economists and sociologists knowledgeable about the biological and human aspects of Gulf of Mexico ecosystems. Members are appointed by the council to provide advice on ways to add ecosystem considerations to the fishery management plans and actions, as well as advice on other ecosystem related issues.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Ecosystem SSC for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Actions of the Ecosystem Scientific and Statistical Committee will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take action to address the emergency.

Meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kathy Pereira at the council office at least five days prior to the meeting date.

Applicants to Serve on Ad Hoc Private Recreational Data Collection Advisory Panel

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is seeking applicants for an Ad Hoc Private Recreational Data Collection Advisory Panel. The panel will provide guidance to the council relative to the collection of private recreational angler data. Applications will be accepted through Oct. 17.

Panel members are not paid, but are compensated for travel and per diem expenses for attendance at all meetings. Anyone interested in serving on the Ad Hoc Recreational Data Collection Advisory Panel should submit a letter and resume to:

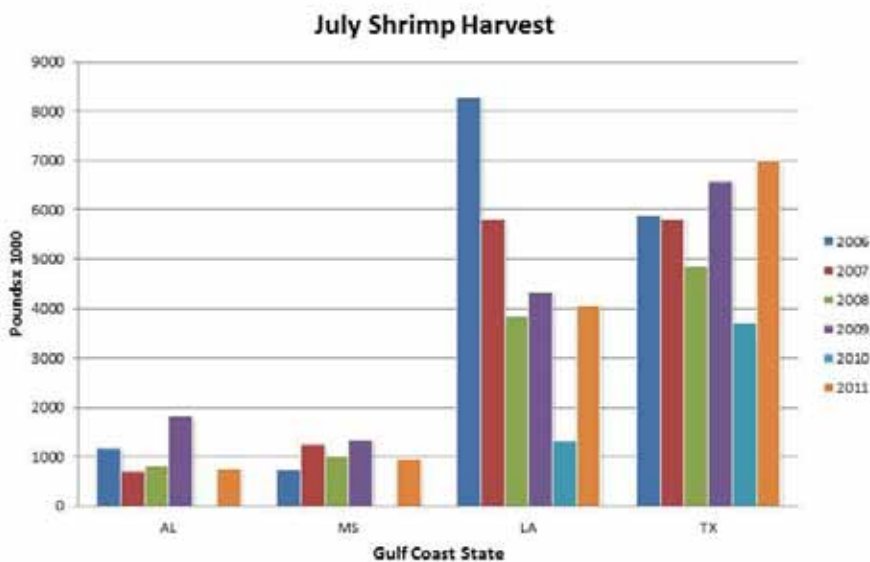
Phyllis Miranda
 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
 2203 N. Lois Avenue
 Suite 1100
 Tampa, FL 33607

Materials may also be faxed to: 813/348-1711; or e-mailed to phyllis.miranda@gulfcouncil.org. Resumes and letters should be received no later than close of business Oct. 17.

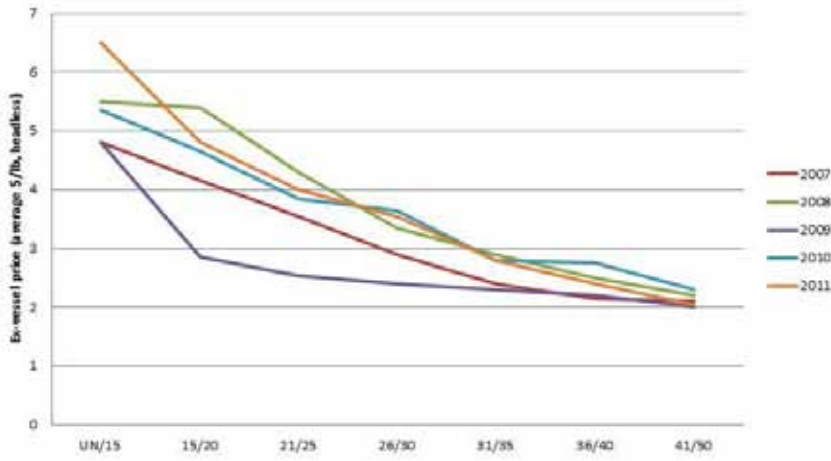
The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans designed to manage fishery resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

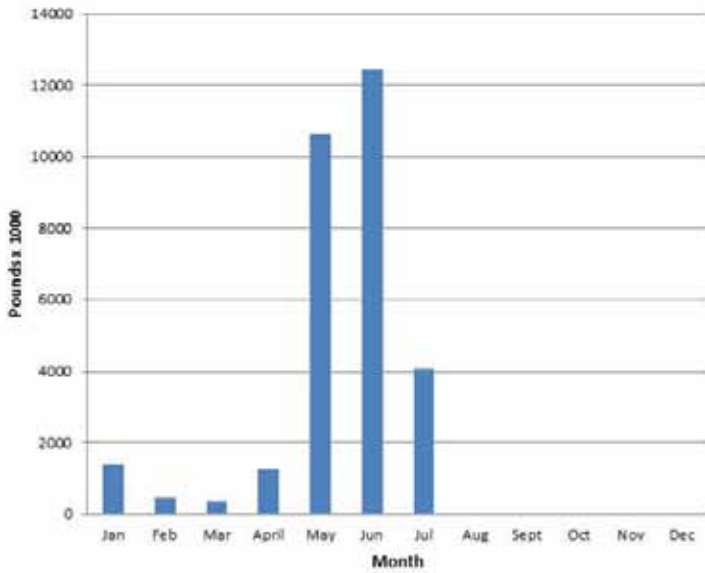
Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on their website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports 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.



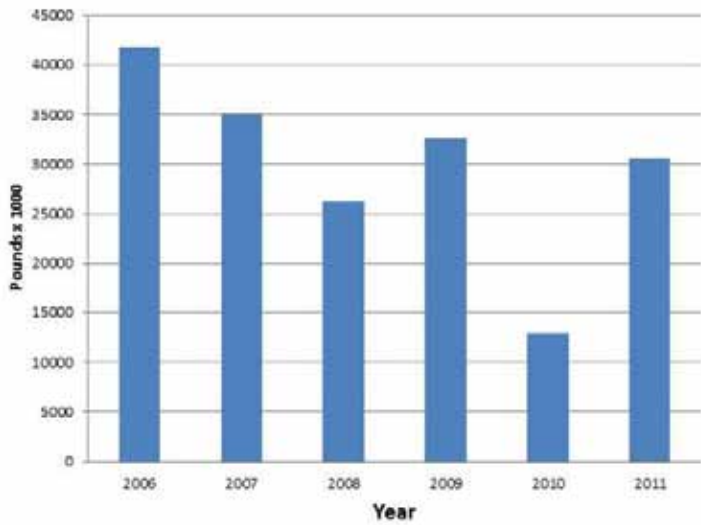
July Northern GoM Shrimp Prices



LA 2011 Shrimp Harvest



LA Year To Date 2011 Shrimp Harvest



Fish Gear Coordinates

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that seven claims in the amount of \$28,350.04 were received for payment during the period June 1, 2011 - July 31, 2011. There were six paid and one denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 13.813	89 32.974	PLAQUEMINES
29 16.060	89 15.200	PLAQUEMINES
29 35.379	90 01.655	JEFFERSON
29 47.561	89 48.391	PLAQUEMINES
29 47.890	93 19.991	CAMERON
29 48.540	89 39.192	SAINT BERNARD
29 48.566	89 32.356	SAINT BERNARD

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.

The Gumbo Pot

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



For more information, contact your local extension agent:



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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 at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu.

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