

2012 Fishery Legislation

The following is a brief summary of bills for this session related to fisheries. For more information or to track progress of each bill, visit www.legis.state.la.us.

HB No. 478: Gisclair. Changes the description of the boundaries of an area in which the Grand Isle Port Commission is authorized to work with the Louisiana Sea Grant program in seafood production research.

HB No. 881: Harrison. Creates the Louisiana Shrimp Marketing and Promotion Board in the office of fisheries of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries composed of eight members appointed by the governor.

HB No. 884: Connick. Creates an optional seafood marketing program known as the Jefferson Parish Seafood Disclosure Law, which will allow the use of certain certification marks in Jefferson Parish restaurants.

HB No. 216: Harrison. Authorizes the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to issue commercial fish licenses via the Internet.

HB No. 534: Alfred Williams. Provides for the suspension of hunting and fishing licenses for persons with overdue unemployment compensation benefits overpayment obligations.

HCR No. 10: Reynolds. Memorializes Congress to encourage the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Gulf of Mexico Marine Fisheries Council, and the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council to adopt a weekend-only fishery for the 2012 red snapper season.

SB202: Wiley. Provides relative to oyster harvesting in Calcasieu Lake.

SB439: Crowe. Authorizes certain parishes to create a conservation district.

SB468: Allain. Provides exceptions for certain saltwater fish used as bait.

HB No. 538: Harrison. Authorizes the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to set the crab season.



A Joint publication of Louisiana Sea Grant and the LSU AgCenter



HB No. 406: Greene. Authorizes the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish recreational reefs where oyster harvest is prohibited.

HB No. 431: Garofalo. Extends the application period for an oyster seed ground vessel permit.

HB No. 683: Dove. Authorizes alternative oyster culture activities.

HB No. 401: Gisclair. Provides relative to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission's powers to manage and control the taking of shrimp including bait shrimp.

Algae Control

I know it's spring in southwest Louisiana when the phone starts ringing with questions about "green scum." What most folks refer to as green slime or pond scum is actually filamentous algae.

Filamentous alga usually becomes a problem in clear water with shallow areas, which allows sunlight to reach the bottom or near the bottom. This promotes the growth of filamentous algae and eventually other aquatic weeds. In most instances the pond owner is not aware of the growth until the mats "overgrow" and begin to die back. When this happens, the dead alga begins to decompose releasing gases. These gases form bubbles in the algae mat and float it forming a slimy green mass on the surface. In extreme cases the decomposing mats can consume enough oxygen to cause fish kills. These unsightly mats also make fishing difficult.

The best method to controlling filamentous algae is prevention. If possible, during construction, deepen pond edges so that the slopes and areas less than two feet deep are minimized. Once soil particles settle out of the water following construction and bank edges have established vegetation, ponds usually clear up. This is the critical time in preventing aquatic weed problems.

When water clarity reaches 18 inches of visibility, it's time to either fertilize the pond to promote planktonic algae bloom or dye the water. Since winter time fertilization is ineffective, early spring is the best time to fertilize, once waters have reached 60 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Liquid fertilizers specially formulated for ponds work best when sprayed onto the pond surface during bright sun. These formulations are usually high in phosphorus and will have ratios such as 0-34-0 and are sometimes called superphosphates.

Planktonic algae not only prevents sunlight from penetrating shallow, clear water areas and promoting unwanted weeds, but also jump starts the food chain in ponds. These microscopic plants undergo photosynthesis, which releases oxygen into the water and provide food for microscopic organisms, insect larvae and larval fish. Larger fish feed on these, thus driving the food chain up to the desired fish species we often harvest for food. Research has shown that fertilized ponds produce two to three times the fish as unfertilized ponds.

Another alternative to controlling filamentous algae is dye. Several manufacturers sell pond dyes under a variety of trade names and they come in several colors including blue, green and black. Dyes are recommended in excessive weed growths where fertilizers may exacerbate the problem. These dyes are fairly inexpensive and last for several months so long as the pond does not receive heavy runoff and flow through.

Copper sulfate is the recommended herbicide for controlling algae. However, caution must be used not to treat the entire pond at once since killing large masses may consume dissolved oxygen. Also, copper can be toxic to fish, so be sure to follow label recommendations and rates.

- **Kevin A. Savoie**

Students Experience Native Fish at Paddlefish Spawn Event

One hundred fifteen students from around the state met at the Booker Fowler Fish Hatchery on March 5 and 7 to participate in the paddlefish spawn.

The middle school and high school students are involved with the Native Fish in the Classroom Project which is coordinated by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Education Program. Students learned more about the steps in the fertilization process as they rotated through several informational stations. Bobby Reed, LDWF Inland Fisheries senior technical advisor, performed a paddlefish dissection, allowing students to investigate and compare paddlefish anatomy with largemouth bass anatomy.

The Louisiana Sea Grant College Program, along with LSU's Scope on a Rope Program, hosted a microscope lab which allowed students to view plankton, paddlefish and bass eggs, along with embryonic fish. Additional aquatic samples were provided so students could make their own slides to examine. Chase Chatelain and Brody Meche, LDWF fisheries biologists, explained how biologists use fish ear bones (otoliths) and paddlefish jawbones to age fish. Paul Whitehead, LDWF hatchery biologist supervisor, also provided tours of the hatchery.

Students and teachers received paddlefish eggs at the end of the day to bring back to their classroom's nursery fish tank. The program goal entails raising fingerling paddlefish for release into local waterways. As the fish grow, students will learn about water quality and biology as they maintain habitat for their nursery tank fish population. In May, the paddlefish fingerlings will be released at an LDWF-approved site that provides suitable habitat for this big river fish species.

There are currently 17 schools, representing 11 parishes, involved with this aquaculture stewardship project. The project's hands-on approach provides a learning experience that strives to teach students about aquatic ecosystems and develop an attitude of stewardship for the state's natural resources.

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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Louisiana's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast

On March 21, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority unanimously approved the 2012 Coastal Master Plan for submission to the Louisiana Legislature. To view a PDF copy of the plan, visit www.coastalmasterplan.louisiana.gov/2012-master-plan/final-master-plan.

Louisiana Blue Crab to Be First Sustainable Blue Crab Fishery in the World

The Louisiana blue crab fishery has been recognized with the seal of "sustainability by a third-party organization, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). This designation by MSC is the first of its kind for any blue crab fishery in the world.

The independent, third-party certification body, Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) assessed the Louisiana blue crab fishery against the MSC standard in a rigorous, open and transparent process that was scientifically peer reviewed and involved site visits to the fishery and outreach to stakeholder groups.

During assessment, SCS identified six improvement actions the fishery must perform during the first five-year certification period that address harvest strategy, acquisition of additional data, by-catch and ecosystem impact, and progress will be assessed during the annual surveillance audits required by the MSC program.

"This certification fully validates what Louisiana's blue crab industry and department have known all along, that our blue crab fishery is managed responsibly at sustainable levels," said Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries assistant secretary Randy Pausina. "LDWF is a world-class organization that utilizes the best biologists and technology when managing all of Louisiana's abundant fisheries."

Sustainability ensures that the blue crab fishery of Louisiana is managed in a way that meets the needs of the present without compromising the crop for future generations. In recent years, sustainability has become increasingly important to major retailers such as Wal-Mart, Costco, Kroger and Target, to name a few. As such, the push for "proof" that seafood has been harvested sustainably has led to an emerging market: seafood sustainability certifiers and their associated eco-labels.

Additionally important to the Louisiana fishing industry, studies suggest that some retailers may be willing to pay a higher price for seafood that is labeled eco-friendly or sustainable. Additionally, markets in Europe and the United Kingdom that require such certifications will now be available to state industry members.

LDWF is currently working with the other Gulf states to identify additional possibilities for communicating to consumers and buyers that all of our fisheries are managed responsibly at sustainable levels.



Louisiana Blue Crab. Photo credit: Julie Anderson

Drawdown for Black Bayou Lake

The water control structure on Black Bayou Lake in Caddo Parish will be opened on June 1 to conduct a lake drawdown. The lake will be lowered at a rate of three to four inches per day until it reaches a target level of five feet below pool stage. The control structure will be closed after a 90-day period to allow for refill.

Sportsmen and property owners have endured severe problems with aquatic vegetation on Black Bayou Lake for several years. Hydrilla remains the greatest concern, at times covering up to 90 percent of the lake.

An integrated management plan has been developed to address the problem. Other control measures will include herbicide applications during the drawdown period to treat stranded pockets of aquatic vegetation and introduction of triploid grass carp during the winter of 2012/13.

While the action will allow for shoreline maintenance, property owners are advised that timely action is necessary due to the abbreviated drawdown period.

This action is a cooperative effort between the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Black Bayou Watershed Commission. For further information regarding the drawdown, contact Evan Thames, at ethames@wlf.la.gov or (318) 371-5216.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Gulf grouper recreational season opens April 1

The recreational harvest of shallow-water groupers - except for gag - reopens April 1 within the 200-mile limit of the Gulf of Mexico federal waters.

The annual Feb. 1-March 31 closure of Gulf recreational shallow-water grouper includes gag, black, red, yellowfin, scamp, yellowmouth, rock hind and red hind. The two-month closure during spawning season helps reduce overfishing of gag and rebuild its populations so that larger annual harvests may be possible in the future.

Note the gag recreational season remains closed. Gag will open July 1 and close Oct. 31. Size limits and bag limits (22 inches and two/person) for gag have not changed.

Greater Amberjack in the Gulf of Mexico

NOAA Fisheries Service has published a rule adjusting the commercial quota for greater amberjack, based on final 2011 landings data. The commercial sector exceeded its quota for 2011. In addition, NOAA Fisheries Service projects that the adjusted commercial quota for 2012 was harvested during January and February. The commercial season is closed each year during March through May and is scheduled to re-open on June 1. However, because the adjusted quota has been landed, the commercial sector will remain closed for the remainder of the 2012 fishing season.

Commercial Quota and Closure: In 2008, NOAA Fisheries Service issued a final rule establishing commercial and recreational quotas for greater amberjack with the ability to adjust the quotas following an overage.

For 2011, the 503,000-pound (lb) commercial quota was adjusted to 342,091 lbs to account for a 2010 overage, and the commercial sector was closed on Oct. 20, when available data indicated the quota had been met. Landings data provided by NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) indicate 607,653 lbs were landed by the commercial sector in 2011, for an overage of 265,562 lbs. Therefore, NOAA Fisheries Service has published a rule to adjust the 2012 commercial quota to account for this overage. The 2012 quota is 237,438 lbs, which NOAA Fisheries estimated has been landed in the months of January and February of this year.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

Boundary Shifts and Commercial Quotas and Trip Limits for King Mackerel

King mackerel are divided into two migratory groups: the Gulf and Atlantic groups. The groups are divided into zones and subzones, and each group, zone, and subzone may have a separate quota and trip limit. The boundary between the Gulf and Atlantic groups shifts south on April 1 and north on Nov. 1 of each year. In addition, new quotas are effective for the 2012/2013 fishing season.

Gulf Groups:

Western Zone: The Western zone includes waters off Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama and remains the same area year-round. This zone has a trip limit of 3,000 pounds per day. This zone closed Sept. 16, 2011, and will reopen July 1, 2012.

Eastern Zone/Florida West Coast: The Eastern zone includes waters off Florida's west and east coasts. The west coast is divided into Northern and Southern subzones. The Northern subzone extends north and west from the Lee/Collier County line to the Florida/Alabama state line and remains the same area year-round. This subzone closed Oct. 7, 2011, and will reopen July 1, 2012. From Nov. 1 to March 31, the Southern subzone extends south and east from the Lee/Collier County line to the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line. With the April boundary shift between the Gulf and Atlantic groups to the Monroe/Collier County line, the Southern subzone for the Gulf group is reduced to the area off Collier County, and Monroe County becomes part of the Atlantic group. The quota for the Gulf group Southern subzone is divided equally between the hook-and-line and gillnet sectors. The hook-and-line sector closed Feb. 26, 2012, and will reopen July 1, 2012. The gillnet sector closed Jan. 21, 2012, and will reopen Jan. 21, 2013.

Both the Northern and Southern subzones have a hook-and-line trip limit of 1,250 pounds per day until 75 percent of the quota is reached. After that, the trip limit is 500 pounds per day until the end of the fishing season or the quota is met. The gillnet sector in the Southern subzone has a trip limit of 25,000 pounds per day.

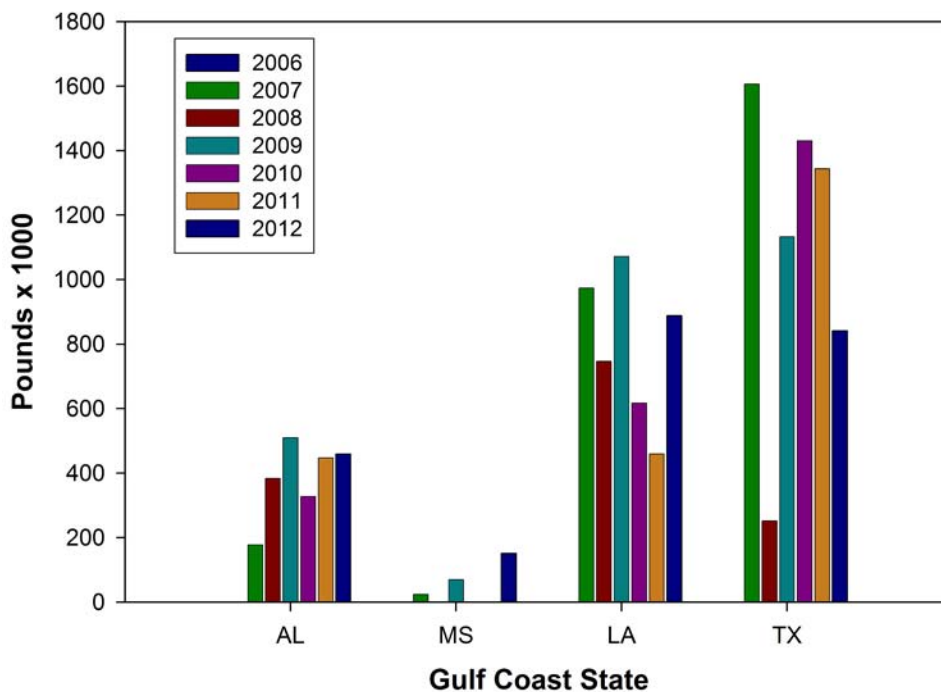
Eastern Zone/Florida East Coast (Mixing Zone): From Nov. 1 through March 31, fish harvested south of the Flagler/Volusia County line to the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line are considered to be Gulf

group king mackerel. The trip limit for this Florida East Coast subzone during this time period is 50 fish per day, until Feb. 1, when the trip limit may increase to 75 fish per day, if 75 percent of the quota has not been reached. This subzone closed March 13, 2012. The area will reopen as part of the Atlantic group when the boundary shifts April 1, 2012.

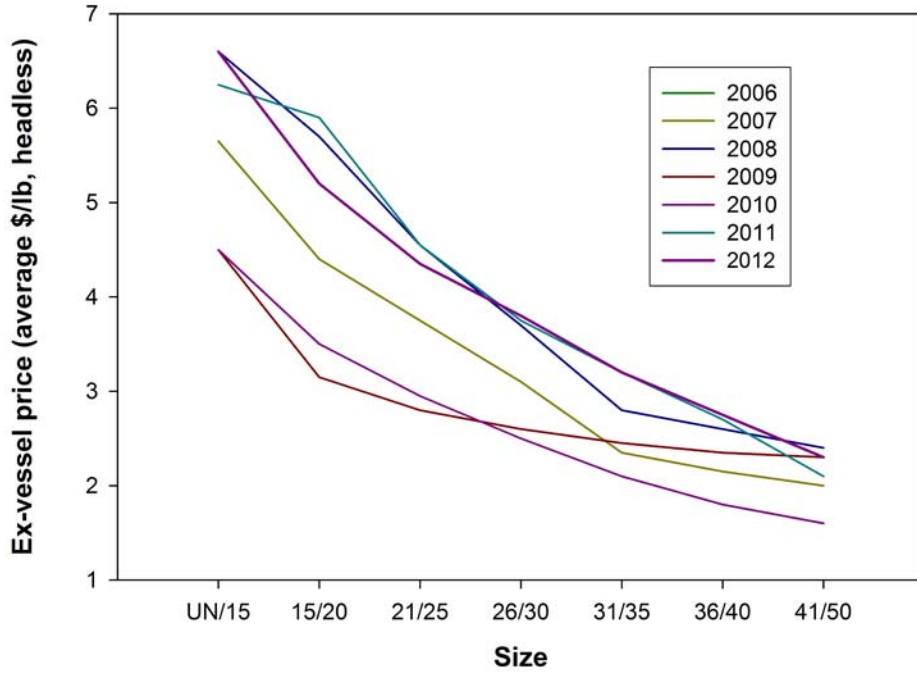
Louisiana Shrimp Watch

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.

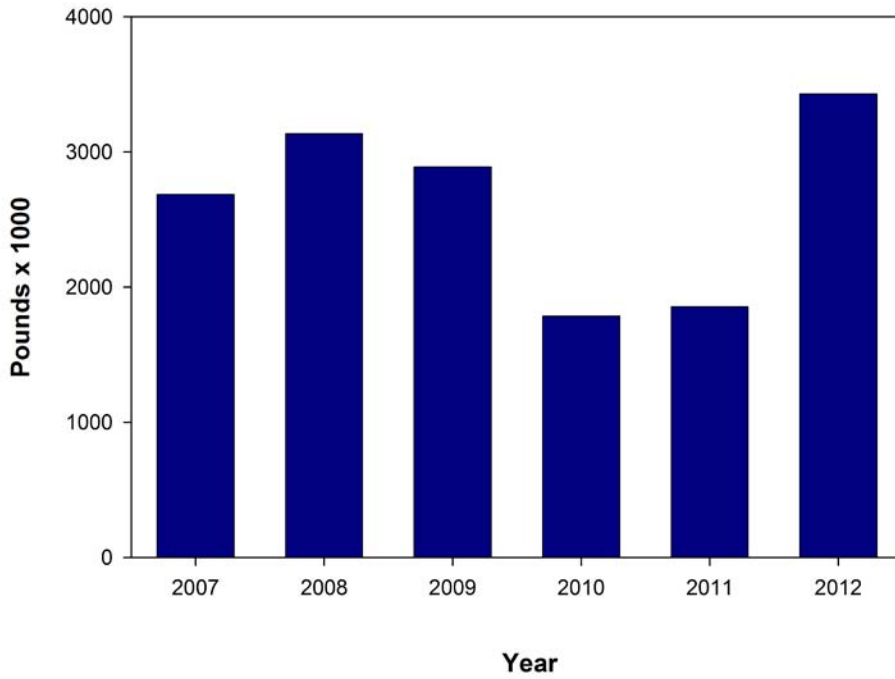
February Shrimp Harvest



February Northern GoM Shrimp Prices



Louisiana Year to Date Shrimp Harvest



Fish Gear Coordinates- February

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that three claims in the amount of \$6,570.96 were received for payment during the period Feb. 1-Feb. 29, 2012.

There were three claims paid and zero claims denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

2911.599 9026.998	TERREBONNE
2911.898 9026.368	TERREBONNE
2943.360 8929.210	ST. 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)342-9388.

The Gumbo Pot

BACON WRAPPED REDFISH

Compliments of Reggie and Kay Howell

Ingredients:

- 2 redfish fillets cut in half
- 8 slices thick sliced bacon
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 rib celery, chopped
- ½ cup Italian dressing
- Salt and pepper for seasoning
- Chopped Parsley for garnish

Marinate fillets at least 4 hours in Italian dressing. Preheat oven to 350°F. In medium skillet, fry bacon until just beginning to curl and set aside, reserving grease. In skillet with bacon grease, sauté vegetables until soft. Meanwhile, drain fillets and wrap each fillet piece with 2 strips of bacon. Place on oven proof pan sprayed with non-stick spray and cook in preheated oven for 8-10 minutes or until fish flakes with fork. Serve fish on preheated plate after spooning generous amounts of sautéed vegetables over each fillet, sprinkle with parsley. Serve with garnished toasted French bread.

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.



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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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