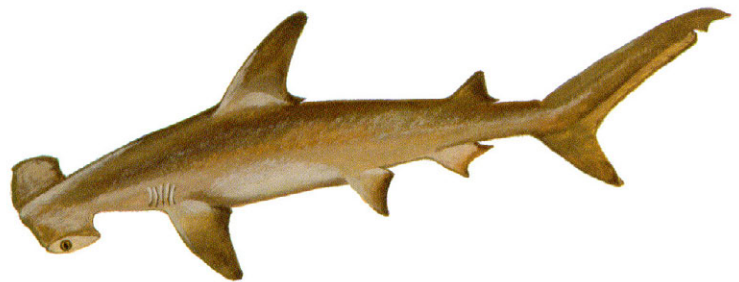




Stop. Hammertime!

The hammerhead shark is named for its unusual structure of their head. Their heads are flattened and extended laterally into the shape of a hammer, called a cephalofoil. These sharks are in the family *Sphyrnidae*, and they are located in warmer waters along coastlines and continental shelves worldwide. Hammerheads are unlike most sharks because they tend to stay in schools throughout the day and hunt by themselves during the night.



Hammerhead Shark. Illustration by Duane Raver

There are nine species of hammerhead shark. The great hammerhead, *Sphyrna mokarran*, is the largest measuring in at 13 feet and 500 pounds on average. The squat-headed hammerhead, great hammerhead and the scalloped hammerhead, *Sphyrna lewini*, are listed as endangered. The smalleye hammerhead, *Sphyrna tudes*, and the smooth hammerhead, *Sphyrna zygaena*, are listed under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as vulnerable. In the Gulf of Mexico, you might find the great hammerhead, scalloped hammerhead or bonnethead (*Sphyrna tiburo*).

These fish tend to range from three feet to 19.7 feet in length and weigh 6.6 pounds to 1,278.7 pounds. Their skin is a light gray color with a greenish hue, and they have white stomachs. The white helps them sneak up on their prey because it allows them to blend in with the ocean when seen from below. Hammerhead sharks are born with their head set backward to ensure that they do not get caught in the birth canal.

Researchers believe that the hammer-like head shape given to these sharks may be an evolved characteristic. Their nostrils eyes are located on each side of the distinctive head, which gives them the 360-degree vision of a vertical plane. This gives them the ability to see above and below themselves at all times.

The cephalofoil of the hammerhead shark serves multiple purposes. All sharks have electroreceptory sensor pores. The hammerhead shark has these receptors spread out over a wider area, giving them an advantage when sweeping for prey. These sharks are known to forage along the bottom of the ocean and eat a large range of prey, especially stingrays. Hammerheads use their head to pin down their prey against the ocean floor and eat them once their prey is in shock and weak from the struggle.

Few attacks on people have been recorded of hammerheads. They have the reputation of being dangerous but not aggressive, with the exception of the great hammerhead. These are more aggressive and sometimes engage in cannibalism by eating their young. The only attacks to humans on record have been from the great hammerhead.

- Brandy Malbrough

Louisiana Saltwater Series

The Louisiana Saltwater Series Redfish Series will commence its 2014 season at Boudreaux's Marina in Cocodrie on March 8, and will visit eight different marinas across Louisiana's coast to create a true test of the best and the most exciting season yet. The coming year marks the fifth anniversary of the LASS redfish trail.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, tournament host, will be commemorating the milestone with new prizes and partnerships and will again participate in a live weigh-in hosted by *Marsh and Bayou Magazine* at the Northshore Boat-N-Fishing Show for the May 3 event. Last year, 880 redfish were tagged and released, bringing the tournament's grand total of redfish tagged to 2,858 since its establishment in 2010.

The 2014 LASS Redfish Series dates are as follows:

- March 8 - Cocodrie, Boudreaux's Marina;
- April 5 - Lake Charles, Calcasieu Point Landing;
- May 3 - Slidell, The Dock/Dockside Bait & Tackle;
- June 28 - Delacroix, Sweetwater Marina;
- July 19 - Port Fourchon, Port Fourchon Marina;
- August 23 - Empire, The Delta Marina; and
- September 13, - Seaway Marina, Lafitte
- Championship – Oct. 17-18 Venice, Venice Marina

All information related to the events, including the on-line registration is available at www.lasaltwater-series.com.

LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

Louisiana Opens 2014 Recreational Red Snapper Season in State Waters

The Louisiana weekend-only red snapper season opened on Friday, Feb. 21 at 12:01 a.m. until further notice.

The “Louisiana-only” season

A weekend is defined as Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with the exception of Memorial Day and Labor Day, when Monday will be classified as a weekend day as well. The bag and possession limit for the state season is two fish per person at a 16-inch minimum total length. LDWF Secretary Robert Barham was given the authority to modify red snapper recreational seasons and daily harvest limits by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission in 2013.

The Louisiana Gulfward Boundary

In June 2012, the commission took action to extend Louisiana state waters from three miles offshore to three marine leagues or approximately nine nautical miles.

LDWF officials encourage fishermen to use caution and their own personal judgment when fishing beyond the three-mile boundary that is currently recognized as federal waters, as it is fully expected that federal agents will continue to enforce federal law. Until the time when the U.S. Congress confirms Louisiana’s action, the battle will continue over Louisiana’s state water boundary.

Recreational Offshore Landing Permit

The department reminds anglers that a Recreational Offshore Landing Permit is required in order to possess certain species, including red snapper. Anglers may obtain or renew the permit, free of charge at <http://rolp.wlf.la.gov>. Permit renewals can be completed up to 30 days prior to expiration.

The permit is required for any angler possessing tuna, billfish, swordfish, amberjack, grouper, snapper, hind, wahoo, cobia and dolphin, except those fishing on a paid-for-hire trip where the captain holds a permit.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Recreational Red Snapper Federal Fishing Regulations in the Gulf of Mexico

NOAA reminds fishermen that under federal law, state waters off Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama extend from the coastline out to three nautical miles, and state waters off Texas and the Gulf of Mexico side of Florida extend from the coastline out to nine nautical miles.

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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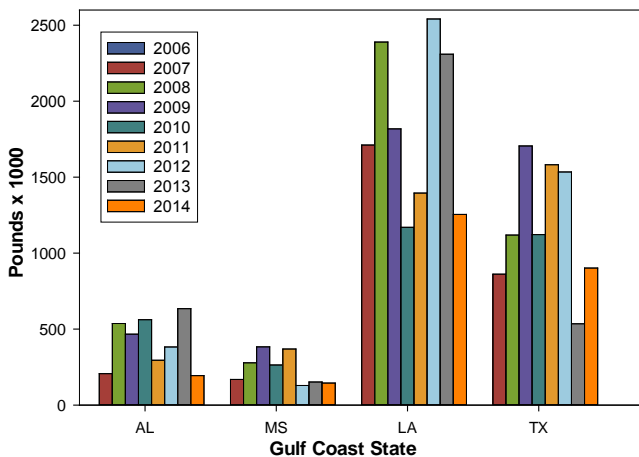
Layout/design: Jessica Schexnayder

Fishermen are reminded that federal waters are closed to recreational red snapper fishing until June 1, 2014. Therefore, the recreational harvest and possession of red snapper in federal waters off all Gulf of Mexico states is prohibited until June 1, 2014. Beginning June 1, 2014, federal waters throughout the Gulf of Mexico will open, with a 2-fish bag limit and a minimum size of 16 inches fork length.

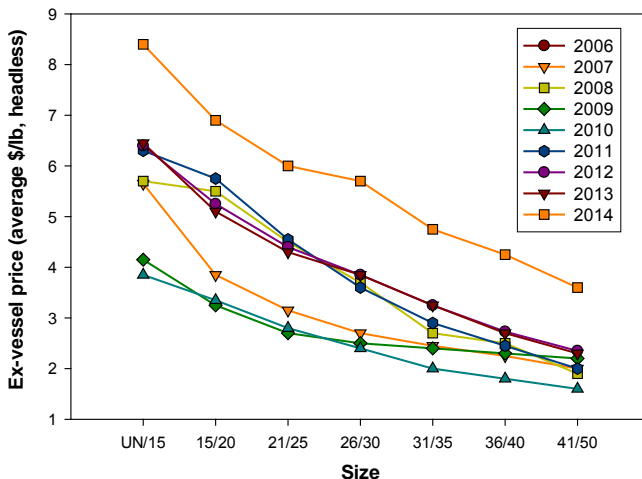
Louisiana Shrimp Watch

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.

January Shrimp Harvest



January 2014 Northern GoM Shrimp Prices



The Gumbo Pot

Courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*. For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>.

Perfect Boiled Shrimp

The trick to perfectly-textured, crisp to the tooth boiled shrimp is this: poach the shrimp rather than boil them. A heavy boil will toughen the shrimp.

Add cold shrimp to well-seasoned, boiling water. The cool shrimp will drop the temperature of the water; bring it just back to a simmer and keep it there. Simmer the shrimp for just 3-5 minutes, depending on the size of the shrimp.

Drain, and plunge the shrimp into cold water that has been seasoned just as you did the boiling water. This stops the cooking process but doesn't dilute the flavor.



Photo credit: Paula Ouder

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.

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