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Louisiana Whooping Crane Chicks

For the second time this year, a whooping crane chick hatched in Jefferson Davis Parish to the same nesting pair that brought forth the first chick hatched in Louisiana in the wild in more than 75 years.

The hatchings, the first seen in Louisiana's wild since 1939, represents another step forward in the program established in February 2011 when the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries reintroduced whooping cranes back into the state at the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area (WLWCA) in Vermilion Parish.

The new parents paired earlier this winter and nested and produced eggs for the first time in mid-March. The female is four years old and the male three years old. Once abundant in Louisiana in the 1800s, the whooping cranes dwindled to two in 1945 and had disappeared by 1950 in the state.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LDWF

American Eels

The American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) can be found in the rivers, lakes and estuaries of the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. They are known for their snakelike appearance and one continuous fin that extends from their back to their stomach. American eels are catadromous, which means they are born in the ocean, mature in freshwater, and return to the ocean to spawn. No one has ever observed eels spawning, but it is assumed they die afterwards.

American eels return to the Atlantic Ocean's Sargasso Sea to spawn. They begin their life cycle as larvae that drift around in ocean currents. After they have developed, they are capable of travelling thousands of miles inland. They are even capable of leaving the water for short periods of time to travel over dams and land.

Eels are bottom dwellers and like to hide in burrows. American eels have a great sense of smell and rely on scent to find food.

Historically, the American eel fishery was very prosperous, but it has been declining since the 1980s. They are used for baits and as a food fish. The American eel population has been severely depleted in US waters due to overfishing, pollution, habitat degradation, parasites and climate change. Despite all of these problems, they can still be found in the vast majority of their historic range.

There has been virtually no management of this species until recently. A handful of eel pot licenses are sold every year in Louisiana.

Jace Hood

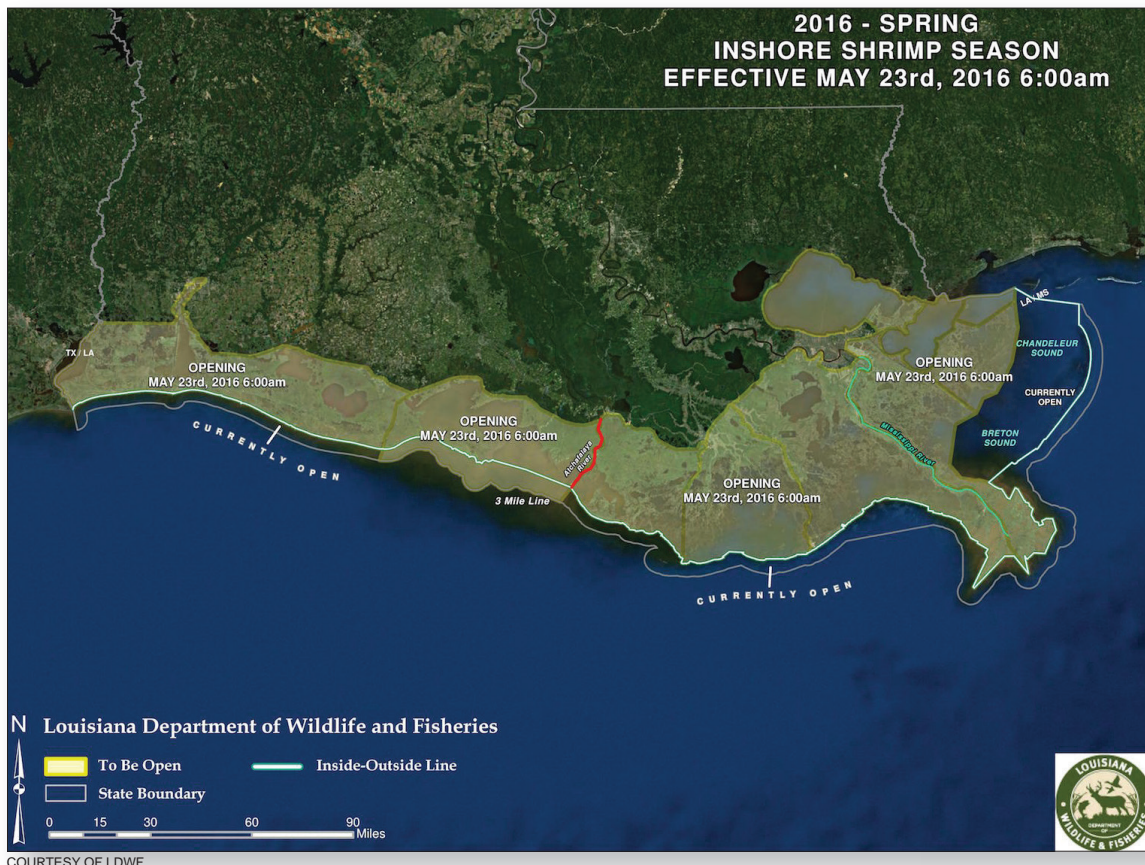
Louisiana Spring Shrimp Season Dates Set

The opening dates for the 2016 Louisiana spring shrimp season are as follows:

- All state inshore waters open at 6 a.m. on Monday, May 23
- The portion of state outside waters from the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel to the western shore of Freshwater Bayou open at 6 a.m. on Monday, May 23.

LDWF biologists have monitored hydrological parameters and conducted more than 500 trawl samples throughout the state's estuarine and nearshore waters over the last five weeks to develop management recommendations for spring inshore opening dates. The department provided projections of the dates when a minimum of 50 percent of the inshore brown shrimp population sampled reach sizes of 100 count per pound or larger.

For additional information, contact Jeff Marx at jmarx@wlf.la.gov or (337) 373-0032.



LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

Recreational Gag and Black Grouper Harvest

The recreational season for gag grouper in Louisiana waters will now open on June 1, 2016, and remain open through Dec. 31, 2016. The recreational size limit for both gag and black grouper will increase from 22 to 24 inches total length.

NOAA Fisheries promulgated rules establishing this season extension and recreational size limit increase in federal waters off Louisiana. This action will establish state rules consistent with federal regulations.

Interested persons may submit comments relative to the proposed rule to Jason Adriance, Fisheries Division, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000, or via email to jadriance@wlf.la.gov prior to Aug. 4, 2016.

Rules for Black Bass on Sabine River

A notice of intent was adopted that proposes a decrease in the minimum length limit (MLL) of black bass from 14 inches to 12 inches on the main stem of the Sabine River from the Toledo Bend Reservoir Dam downstream to the Interstate 10 Bridge. If approved, these changes will go into effect on Sept. 1, 2016. The daily bag limit on black bass will remain at eight fish.

Red Snapper Updates

FEDERAL SEASON

The recreational season for the harvest of red snapper in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico will open at 12:01 a.m. June 1, 2016. The bag and possession limit is two fish per person at a 16-inch minimum total length.

Private anglers will have a nine-day federal season running through June 9, closing at 11:59 p.m.; and charter vessels/headboats will have a 46-day federal season, closing July 16 at 11:59 p.m.

LOUISIANA SEASON

The season for the recreational harvest of red snapper in Louisiana state waters is currently open, will remain open during the federal season, and will continue to be open after the federal season closes. LDWF monitors real-time red snapper harvest during 2016 through the LA Creel program.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Gag and Black Grouper Recreational Management

NOAA Fisheries has published a final rule changing gag and black grouper recreational management measures in the Gulf of Mexico. These changes include:

1. An increase in the gag recreational minimum size limit from 22 inches total length to 24 inches total length.
2. An increase in the black grouper recreational minimum size limit from 22 inches total length to 24 inches total length.
3. A lengthening of the gag recreational fishing season from July 1-Dec. 2, to June 1-Dec. 31.

Public Comment on a Proposed Extension of the Gulf of Mexico Commercial Shrimp Permit Moratorium

Comment period ends June 6, 2016

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment on Amendment 17A to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico. NOAA Fisheries is also seeking public comment on the proposed rule to implement management measures contained in the amendment. Amendment 17A proposes to extend the existing commercial shrimp permit moratorium for an additional 10 years, until Oct. 26, 2026.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has submitted Amendment 17A to NOAA Fisheries for review, approval and implementation. The Notice of Availability for public comment on this amendment published in the *Federal Register* on April 5, 2016, and the proposed rule published on April 14, 2016. Comments will be accepted through June 6, 2016. Comments specifically directed to either the amendment or the proposed rule in the final rule will be addressed.

For more information on Amendment 17A, visit the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Region website at: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/shrimp/2016/am17a/index.html.

An electronic copy of the amendment is available at that website or from the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal <https://www.regulations.gov/#/home>.

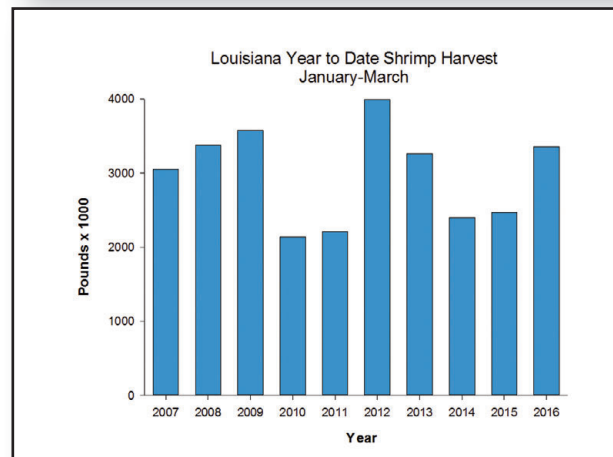
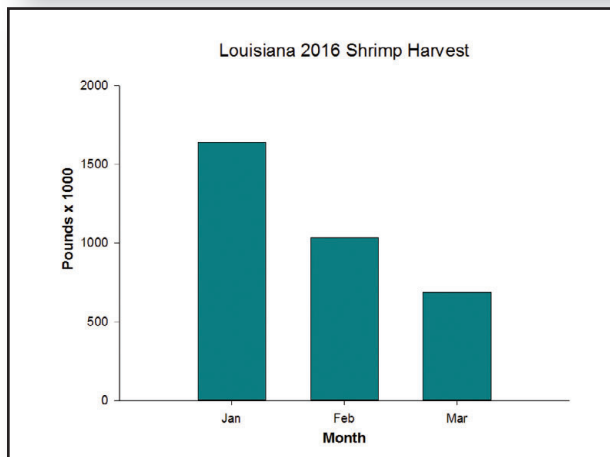
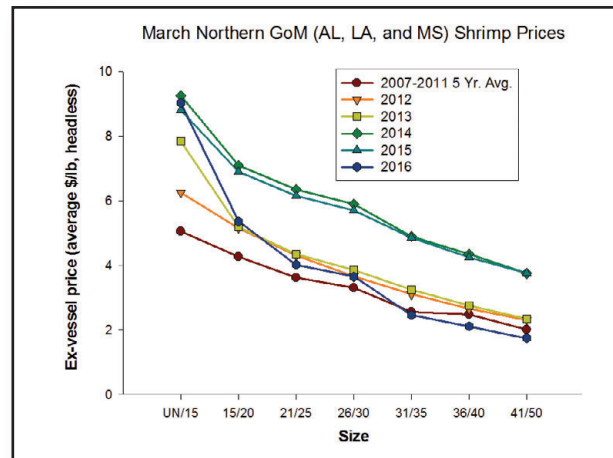
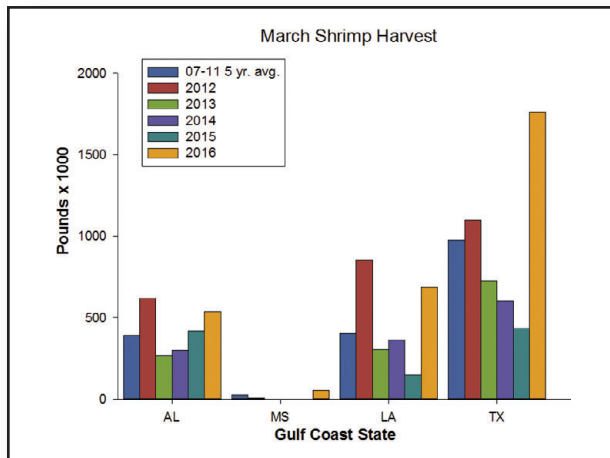
Important Dates & Upcoming Events

May 15, 2016 – Federal Waters off Texas Closed to Shrimping

May 23, 2016 – All Louisiana inshore waters open for the spring shrimp season

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on its 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.



Fish Gear Coordinates

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 13 claims in the amount of \$51,809.39 were received for payment during the period March 1-31, 2016.

There were 12 paid and 1 denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 08.175	89 19.707	PLAQUEMINES
29 17.060	89 56.868	JEFFERSON
29 18.451	89 59.066	JEFFERSON
29 19.472	89 52.062	PLAQUEMINES
29 20.513	90 53.801	TERREBONNE
29 21.691	89 30.672	PLAQUEMINES
29 23.067	89 59.814	JEFFERSON
29 24.072	89 58.385	JEFFERSON
29 24.553	89 47.043	PLAQUEMINES
29 25.250	90 00.080	PLAQUEMINES
29 34.115	91 41.609	IBERIA
29 38.522	89 35.250	PLAQUEMINES
30 10.263	89 42.263	SAINT TAMMANY

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 call (225) 342-9388.

THE GUMBO POT

SPICY CATFISH PUFFBALLS

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*.

For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>



Ingredients:

vegetable oil divided
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 2 eggs, separated
 1/4 cup milk
 1/4 teaspoon Louisiana hot sauce

1 cup catfish, cooked and flaked
 1/2 cup jalapeno cheese, shredded
 1½ cups cooked white rice
 1/4 cup onion, minced
 1/4 cup celery, minced
 1/4 cup green bell pepper, minced

Method:

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat 2 inches vegetable oil for deep-frying to 350°F. In a bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, salt and cayenne and set aside. In another bowl, beat together egg yolks, milk, 1 tablespoon oil and hot sauce. Add the milk mixture to dry ingredients and mix until just blended. Fold in catfish, cheese, rice, onion, celery and bell pepper then set aside.

Using electric mixer, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Gently fold whites into batter until uniform. Working in batches, drop batter by tablespoon into hot oil (keep oil temperature at 350°F at all times) and fry until golden brown and puffs float. Do not overcrowd skillet or oil temperature will drop. Using tongs or slotted spoon remove catfish puffs from oil and place on paper towels to drain. Serve immediately with Louisiana Seafood Cocktail sauce or Tartar sauce.

Be sure to visit the *Lagniappe* blog for
 additional news and timely events between issues.
<https://louisianalagniappe.wordpress.com/>

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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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 Lively at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu.

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