



Louisiana Fisheries, Part 1: Marine Fisheries

Fisheries landings are recorded by two government agencies. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) receives monthly reports from the initial buyers (processors, dealers, etc.) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Due to the delay in verifying all data, official landings are on a full year lag. Here is the most recent annual data (2015).

Marine finfish landings for food are varied and complex, with about 60 different species being landed for a total of 12.1 million pounds in 2015, excluding menhaden. This was a three percent decrease from 2014, when 12.5 million pounds of marine finfish were landed in Louisiana. Excluding menhaden, the five most-valued species landed in 2015, by decreasing value, were red snapper, black drum, yellowfin tuna, king mackerel and sharks. Total saltwater finfish landings, excluding menhaden, were valued at \$19.2 million, a seven percent decrease from \$20.6 million in 2014.

Landings of menhaden or pogey, a low-value but high-volume nonfood finfish species, were 894 million pounds in 2015, an increase of 53 percent from only 585 million pounds in 2014, but still down from one billion pounds in 2012. The catch was valued at \$85.3 million in 2015, an increase of 35 percent from \$63.4 million in 2014. Menhaden value decreased in 2015 to 9.5 cents per pound after several years of increasing value: 10.8 cents per pound in 2014. Menhaden oil and meal are sold on the world market for industrial purposes, animal feeds and omega-3 dietary supplements, among other uses, and the prices received for menhaden products is a function of the world supply of oils and meals, particularly those produced by the fisheries for the anchovetta of the Pacific Coast of South America.

After several poor harvest years following the freshwater diversion openings in 2010 and 2011, oysters increased 28 percent in landings to 14.5 million pounds in 2015. In 2013 and 2014, 11.3 million pounds of oysters were landed. This is similar to the 14.7 million pounds of oysters harvested in 2009. The price in 2015 continued to increase from approximately \$5.44 per pound of oyster meat in 2014 to \$5.87 per pound. To calculate prices per sack, assume 6.47 pounds of shucked oyster meat per sack (\$37.98 per sack). According to NOAA-NMFS, the gross value of oysters harvested during 2015 was \$85.1 million—up 39 percent from \$61.4 million in 2014.

Blue crabs constitute nearly all of the Louisiana crab harvest, with stone crab claws making up less than 0.01 percent. Louisiana hard crab landings normally range from 40 to 50 million pounds. However, stock assessments show stocks fell below acceptable levels in 2012 and 2014. Blue crab



PHOTO COURTESY OF EVELYN WATTS

landings were 41.1 million pounds with a gross value of \$57.5 million in 2015 by 2,910 license holders. This was a percent percent increase in landings from 39.4 million pounds in 2014, but a percent percent decrease in value after the record high \$60.6 million in 2014.

Peeler or buster crabs are blue crabs that are close to molting their shell. These crabs are sold to soft shell facilities to produce soft shell crab. In 2015, 171,130 peeler crabs were caught for the industry, and 9,520 pounds of soft shell crab were produced. In 2014, production of soft-shelled crabs (7,127 pounds) and peeler crabs for the shedding business (157,265 pounds) were similar to 2013. In 2009, production of soft-shelled crabs (35,484 pounds) and peeler crabs for the shedding business (171,656 pounds) had increased from the lowest ever recorded in 2008 due to many shore-side shedding facilities being damaged or destroyed by the 2005 and 2008 storms. Hurricane Isaac in the fall of 2012 may have affected shedding facilities, too. Overall, the soft shell crab industry has been in steady decline for at least two decades.

Louisiana shrimp landings in 2015 consisted of seven species: white shrimp, brown shrimp, sea bobs, rock shrimp, pink shrimp, royal red shrimp, and roughneck shrimp. White shrimp historically have provided 50 to 60 percent of the harvest by weight and around 70 percent by value. In 2015, white shrimp contributed about 65 percent (59.9 million pounds) of total weight and 75 percent (\$85.4 million) of total value. In 2015, brown shrimp landings totaled 30.6 million pounds with a value of \$27.9 million dockside. The weighted-average price for shrimp was \$1.24 in 2015, down from \$2.08 in 2014, \$1.81 in 2013, and \$1.45 in 2010-2012.

Total shrimp landings in 2015 were 91.6 million pounds, a 16 percent decrease from 109 million pounds in 2014. In comparison, 74.2 million pounds of shrimp were harvested in 2010 when most of the fishing ground were closed at least at some point in the year because of the spill and 114 million pounds in 2009. Shrimp landed in Louisiana had a gross value of \$114 million in 2015, down 50 percent from 2014. Overall, price has fallen on shrimp after a few years with higher dockside prices. The higher prices in Louisiana were a result of the decline in imported farmed shrimp due to disease issues in Asia and South America.

In 2015, marine fisheries landings in Louisiana were valued at \$361.7 million dockside, down from \$ 433.3 million in 2014. See next month's issue of *Lagniappe* for a summary of Louisiana's freshwater commercial fisheries.

- Julie Lively

Gulf Menhaden

Supporting one of the oldest and largest fisheries in the country, harvest of Gulf menhaden began in the mid-1600s. This species, *Brevoortia patronus*, contains a significant amount of oils and fats, making them highly sought after by commercial fisheries.

Once caught, high volumes of fish are processed to extract their oils and fats, which are used in a variety of pet and livestock feed, fertilizer, oil for paints, soap, and even cosmetics and industrial products. Gulf menhaden also are a major source of omega-3 protein which has been shown to cut risks of heart disease. Due to being very boney and oily, menhaden, also called "pogies," have almost no food value; however, they are still highly popular with recreational fisherman as a bait fish. A wide variety of sport fish like to feed on menhaden, resulting in fisherman using them as live baits in both salt and fresh waters.

Gulf menhaden are schooling fish, traveling in schools of hundreds and even thousands and are often seen hitting the top of the water, creating small splashes on the surface. Fisherman often target

them by looking for the splashes on top the water and then throw a cast net over the school, bringing in dozens of menhaden to use as live bait. Commercial fleets use planes to spot the schools from the air.

Aside from the commercial and recreational value, menhaden serve critical roles in ecosystems as a natural filter. They swim with their mouths open, allowing for water to pass through their gills which filter microscopic plants and plankton from the water. Menhaden are an important link between plankton and upper level predators, serving as a forage fish for larger marine life and predatory birds in numerous areas.



Gulf menhaden begin their lives in offshore waters during the winter months of December-February, hatching and drifting as larvae in water currents. After a few days, the larvae reach one inch long and become strong enough to make their way into low-salinity estuaries for development. Once strong enough to swim, the juvenile menhaden then move into fresh water estuaries where they grow rapidly, reaching 5-6 inches long, and then move to higher-salinity waters by summer. Menhaden have compressed, silvery bodies with a prominent black spot behind their shoulder and smaller, lighter spots following down their back. These fish can reach up to 15 inches long and live up to 10-12 years, reaching sexual maturity at three years. Gulf menhaden are not considered overfished.

-Skylar Bueche

For more information:

Administrator, and Blue Water Media, Inc., (202) 861-0000, www.bluewatermedia.com. "Menhaden - Fish Facts." Menhaden - Fish Facts. NOAA, Aug. 2015. Web. <https://chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/fish-facts/menhaden>.

"Gulf Menhaden." The Uncommon Guide to Common Life on Narragansett Bay. Save The Bay, 1998. Web. <http://www.edc.uri.edu/restoration/html/gallery/fish/atl.htm>.

"Gulf Menhaden." Gulf FINFO | Species. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, n.d. Web. <http://gulffishinfo.org/Species?SpeciesID=227>.

Sea Grant Oil Spill Outreach Publication and Symposium

A new eight-page oil spill science outreach publication and new workshop videos, both of which cover different aspects of how oil moves through our environment.

Publication: Predicting the movement of oil highlights how scientists used computer models during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill as tools to predict the path and fate of the oil. This publication can be accessed at <http://masgc.org/oilscience/oil-spill-science-predicting-movement.pdf>.

Science Seminar Recordings: Great Lakes Crude Move Symposium. Oil extracted without incident must still move through the environment via ships, trucks, trains, and pipelines. Earlier this month in Cleveland, speakers at the Crude Move symposium discussed the complexity and risk of getting oil from point A to point B, comparing lessons learned in the Great Lakes region and the Gulf of Mexico. Check out videos of their presentations at <http://gulfseagrant.org/crude-move-oil-symposium/>.

LOUISIANA REGULATIONS

Commercial Shad Regulation Clarification

Recent questions raised during the June Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission meeting indicated that a portion of the 2017 commercial fishing pamphlet may cause confusion regarding commercial shad harvest regulations. Although similar, shad seining and shad gill netting have different regulations.

Commercial shad gill netting is allowed only in Lake Palourde, Lake Verret, Lac Des Allemands, all waterways in Iberville Parish and certain portions of the Atchafalaya Basin. The gill netting season is closed beginning July 1 through the end of October and on all Saturdays and Sundays.

In addition, Act No. 109 of the 2017 regular session allows for the take of shad or skipjack using a shad gill net during the closed season and on Saturdays and Sundays for bait purposes only, with the following restrictions:

1. The net shall not exceed 150 feet in length.
2. No more than 50 pounds of shad or skipjack shall be taken per day.
3. The net shall be attended at all times.

Commercial shad seining is allowed in all freshwater areas of the state, except the Pearl River and those water bodies where seine use is prohibited. There is no closed season for commercial shad seining.

For a detailed explanation of regulations for each gear type, please reference pages 26 and 27 of our commercial regulations pamphlet. Additional details are available here:

<http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=206917>,
<http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=206918> and
<http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1051086>.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

Louisiana Agrees to 39-day Red Snapper Season in Gulf waters

Louisiana anglers can get ready for a very busy season of fishing for red snapper. A U.S. Department of Commerce agreement with Louisiana and the four other Gulf states will give recreational anglers 39 days – between June 16 and Sept. 4 – to fish for red snapper in federal waters.

Recreational anglers will be able to start fishing out 200 miles from the Louisiana coast for red snapper every Friday, Saturday and Sunday through Sept. 4. Also included are Monday and Tuesday, July 3 and July 4, along with Labor Day on Sept. 4.

“This was an easy decision,” Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Secretary Jack Montoucet said. “This is what Gov. John Bel Edwards has said he wanted since my appointment. He wanted more days on the water for our anglers and the ability to get more red snapper. This does both. We’re pleased with this agreement and thank all involved for helping make this happen.”

Anglers will be able to reel in red snapper up to Louisiana’s self-imposed catch limit of approximately 14 percent of the overall Gulf catch. Montoucet was directed by the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to close the state waters if the catch limit is met before Sept. 4 and there would be no fall season in state waters. If the catch limit is not met by Sept. 4, there could be a fall red snapper season in state waters until the catch limit is met.

Under the agreement, there would be no red snapper fishing in state waters – out nine miles from the Louisiana coast – on Mondays through Thursdays, except on July 3-4 and Sept. 4.

LDWF sees this program as a two-fold opportunity for Louisiana which could lead to the state gaining control of its fishing seasons in both state and federal waters.

Here are the red snapper fishing days: June 16-18, June 23-25, June 30 - July 4, July 7-9, July 14-16, July 21-23, July 28-30, Aug. 4-6, Aug. 11-13, Aug. 18-20, Aug. 25-27 and Sept. 1-4.

Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Sector Annual Catch Limits, Annual Catch Targets, and Quotas

KEY MESSAGE: Amendment 28 to the reef fish fishery management plan shifted 2.5 percent of the red snapper quota allocation from the commercial sector to the recreational sector. A court order vacated the amendment and requires NOAA Fisheries to reinstate the sector allocations and resulting annual catch limits, annual catch targets, and quotas that were in effect prior to Amendment 28. Therefore, NOAA Fisheries is implementing a new rule that adjusts the sector annual catch limits, annual catch targets, and quotas based on the sector allocations in place before Amendment 28 for red snapper.

WHEN RULE WILL TAKE EFFECT: June 6, 2017.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

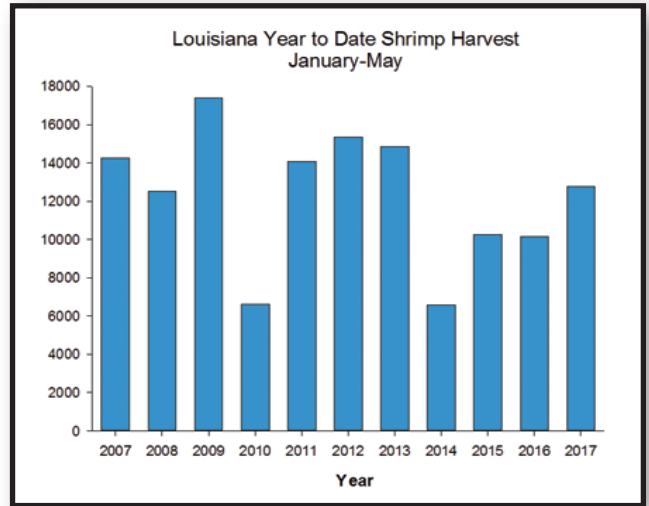
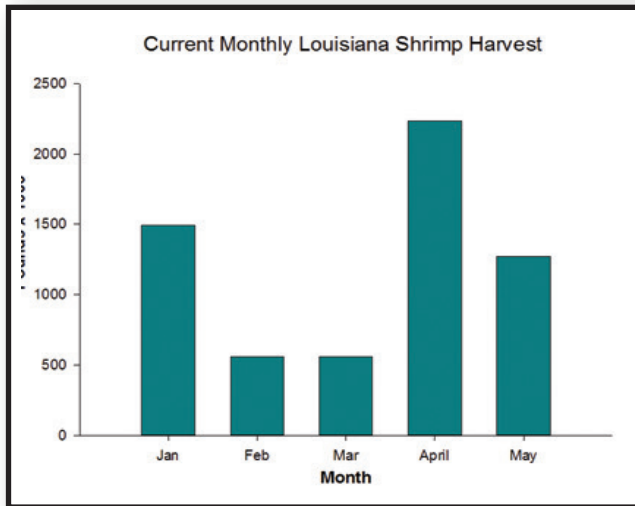
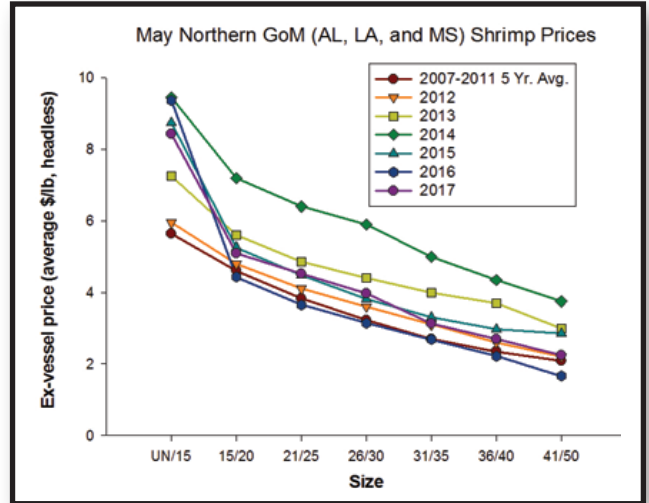
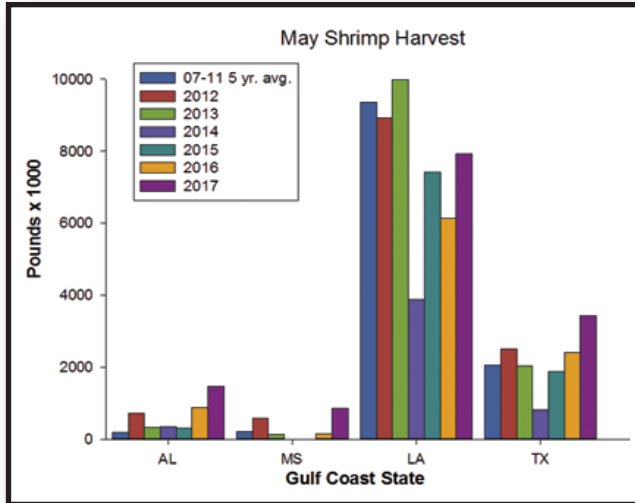
- The allocation is now 51 percent to the commercial sector and 49 percent to the recreational sector.
- The combined allowable catch of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico for the commercial and recreational sectors is 13.74 million pounds whole weight. The recreational sector quota is 6,733,000 pounds whole weight. The commercial sector quota is 7,007,000 pounds whole weight.
- The 2.5 percent commercial sector IFQ quota will be distributed as gutted weight, which equals 6,312,613 pounds.
- The 2.5 percent of the quota that shifts to the commercial sector will be released on or about the effective date of this rule

FORMAL FEDERAL REGISTER NAME: Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Red Snapper Management Measures; Compliance with Court Order, publishing June 7, 2017.

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 – May 2017

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that five claims in the amount of \$15,837.50 were received for payment during the period May 1-31, 2017.

There were five paid and zero denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates, in Degree Decimal Minutes, of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 10.039	90 04.866	JEFFERSON
29 17.184	89 48.698	PLAQUEMINES
29 36.430	89 40.164	PLAQUEMINES
29 37.291	89 40.547	PLAQUEMINES
29 43.688	91 56.938	IBERIA

A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Donald Haydel, administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or you can call (225) 342-7591.

Important Dates & Upcoming Events

June 20, 2017 – Commercial harvest of greater amberjack closed in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico and Louisiana state waters

June 23, 2017 – Louisiana shrimp season closed in a portion of inside waters

July 11, 2017 – Louisiana Crab Task Force Meeting, 1 pm; Center for Energy Resource Management Building (CERM); 2045 Lakeshore Dr., STE 216; New Orleans, LA 70148

March 6, 2018 – Louisiana Fisheries Forward Summit: <http://www.lafisheriesforward.org/summit/>

THE GUMBO POT

LOUISIANA SHRIMP & CORN SOUP

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:

2 tablespoons oil	2 cups fresh corn kernels or 1 (17-ounce) can creamed or whole kernel corn
4 tablespoons flour	5 cups chicken stock
¾ cup finely chopped celery	1 pound cleaned Louisiana shrimp*
½ cup finely chopped onions	1 teaspoon salt
¼ cup finely chopped bell pepper	½ teaspoon black pepper
4 ounces tomato sauce	*substitute Louisiana crabmeat or crawfish tails

Method:

Heat oil in a 5-quart soup pot. Add flour and cook, whisking, to make a very light brown roux. Add celery, onions, and bell pepper. Sauté until celery and onions are clear, about 10 minutes. Stir in tomato sauce, corn, and stock; simmer 30 minutes. Add shrimp and cook 8 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning.

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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