



Otters Can Be an Opportunistic Predator

The state of Louisiana is believed to have the largest population of North American River Otters (*Lontra canadensis*) in the United States based on pelt counts.

During the 1900s their population declined countrywide but improvements in management, as well as reintroduction programs, have allowed otters to repopulate some of the areas they disappeared from. Their conservation status is listed as “Least Concern” by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). However, it is believed that their numbers are once again declining in Louisiana.



Photo: Scott Campbell

Habitat destruction due to loss of coastal marsh as well as development, oil spills and pollution of waterways are the otter’s major threats to survival. Unfortunately, their reputation as crawfish trap raiders does not do much to help their cause. Aquaculturists complain that they are capable of decimating their stocked fish ponds, and recreational crabbers also get their prospective catch poached by an otter every now and then.

Otters are an important predator in aquatic and coastal ecosystems, and due to their sensitivity to pollution serve as

vital environmental quality indicators. They feed mainly on fish, crustaceans and frogs but are opportunistic and may also take small mammals, birds, reptiles and even fruit.

Otters have few natural enemies, but alligators, bobcats and coyotes have all been known to kill and eat them. A female otter typically starts reproducing when she is around two years old, and most litters number one to three young called kits. They are born after a gestation period of 61-63 days. Otters can live for up to 13 years in the wild and can reach a total length of over four feet and a weight of 30 pounds.

– Damen Pheiffer

For more information:

<http://blog.nwf.org/2013/01/speak-up-for-river-otters-in-louisianas-mardi-gras-pass/>

www.iucnredlist.org/details/12302/0

<http://laconservationist.wlf.la.gov/louisiana-otter/>

www.louisianasportsman.com/lpca/index.php?section=reports&event=view&action=full_report&id=178949

www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/n/north-american-river-otter/

2018 Legislative Season Summary

The following is a brief update of the bills that passed in the 2018 session that could impact fishing or fisheries. A more complete summary of all proposed bills was provided in the April *Lagniappe*. More information including the full text and current status can be found at www.legis.la.gov/legis/BillSearch.aspx?sid=18RS.

HB4 – Extends the additional saltwater fishing fee dedicated to the LACREEL program.

HB118 – Extends the Fisherman’s Gear Compensation Fund and extends payments into the Underwater Obstruction Removal Fund.

HB130 – Provides for the establishment of airboat trails on wildlife management areas.

HB411 – Adds the Tickfaw River, from the Louisiana-Mississippi state line to the I-12 crossing, and Blind River to the rivers eligible for clearing and snagging and dredging operations.

HB425 – Includes charter fishing guides in the certification program as earning more than half of their income from charter boat guide activities.

HB549 – Requires houseboats without motors to be registered and numbered.

HB624 – Provides relative to the Commission of Weights and Measures and defines “basket” as a one and one-half bushel container used for measuring oysters for sale or purchase.

HB706 – Allows possession of up to the possession limit of filleted red drum, spotted sea trout, or Southern flounder while traversing the waterways between a camp owned by the boat operator and a recognized boat ramp.

HB784 – Increases boat registration fees and dedicates the revenue to the Aquatic Plant Control Fund.

HB799 – Provides relative to the disposition of abandoned crab traps.

SB327 – Provides possession limits of certain species of fish caught in saltwater areas of the state.

SB427 – Transfers the Atchafalaya Basin Research and Promotion Board and the Atchafalaya Basin Program to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

SB451 – Institutes a permanent moratorium on oyster fishing in Sabine Lake.

– Julie Lively and Lauren Carter

New Resource on Red Snapper Research

The Gulf-wide Red Snapper Abundance project is underway, and there is a new project website for project: its rationale, methods, and results (when available). The first video is now available – www.hartheresearchinstitute.org/snappercount.



Louisiana Regulations

Spring Shrimp Season

The inshore shrimp season began closing June 27, 2018, in the first areas, and all of the areas (Portion of Zone 1 and Zone 3) were closed by July 2, 2018.

All state outside waters seaward of the Inside/Outside Shrimp Line, as described in R.S. 56:495 and the open waters of Breton and Chandeleur Sounds as bounded by the double-rig line described in R.S. 56:495.1(A)2 will remain open to shrimping until further notice.

Recreational Red Snapper Season

The recreational red snapper season closed July 8, and the commission voted to move to a weekends-only recreational red snapper season after the scheduled July 8, 2018, closure. The weekends-only season (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) will begin on July 13, 2018.

This decision was made following a presentation of the latest catch statistics recorded by LA Creel. The near real-time data collection program indicates that approximately 299,061 pounds, or 40 percent, of Louisiana's allocation has been harvested to date. This covers the preliminary estimates for the period through June 24, 2018.

More information about Louisiana's recreational red snapper season, including harvest estimates, can be found at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/red-snapper.

Gulf of Mexico Regulations

Final Rule to Modify Gulf of Mexico Mutton Snapper and Gag Management Measures

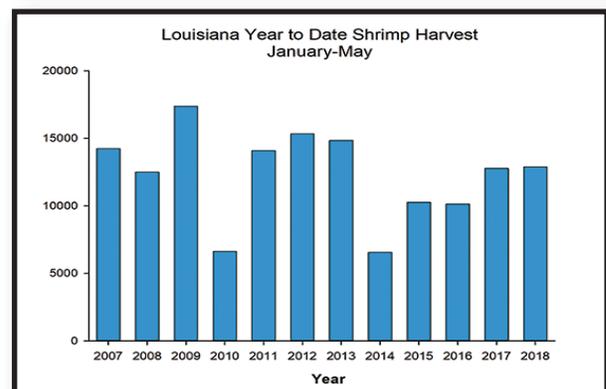
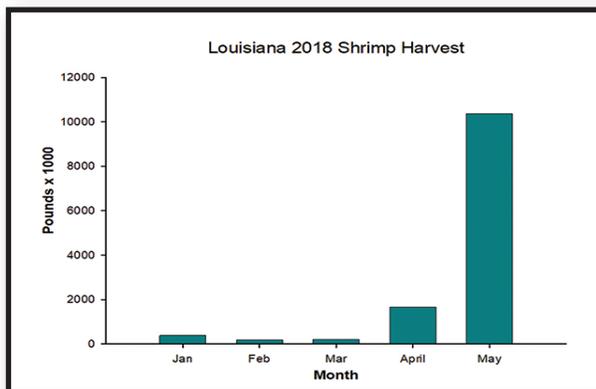
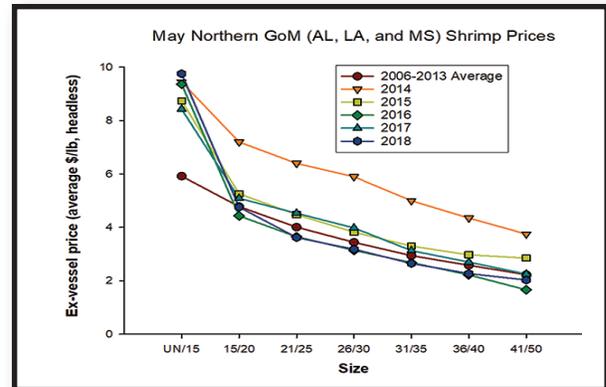
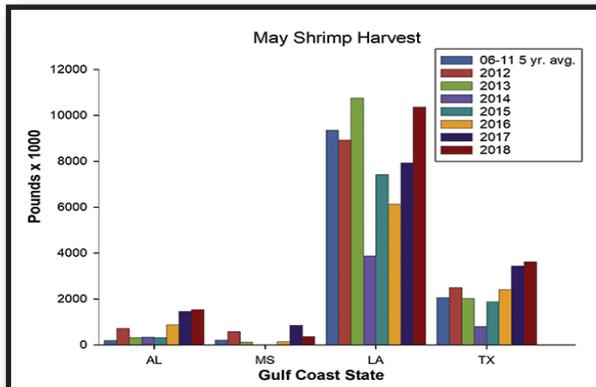
A final rule modifies commercial and recreational mutton snapper and commercial gag management measures in the Gulf of Mexico effective July 23, 2018.

- The annual catch limits for mutton snapper during 2018-2020 will be decreased from 203,000 pounds whole weight to:
 - 134,424 pounds whole weight in 2018,
 - 139,292 pounds whole weight in 2019, and
 - 143,694 pounds whole weight in 2020 and subsequent years.
- The annual catch target will be removed.
- The mutton snapper recreational bag limit will be decreased from 10 mutton snapper per angler per day within the 10-snapper aggregate bag limit to five mutton snapper per angler per day within the 10-snapper aggregate bag limit.
- The mutton snapper commercial and recreational minimum size limits will be increased from 16 inches total length (TL) to 18 inches TL.
- The gag commercial minimum size limit will be increased from 22 inches TL to 24 inches TL.

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 three claims in the amount of \$10,387.60 were received for payment during the period May 1-31, 2018.

There were three paid and zero denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates, in degree decimal minutes, of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 12.676	89 54.704	JEFFERSON
29 25.436	90 32.714	TERREBONNE
30 05.181	89 29.090	SAINT BERNARD

A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Charles Reulet, administrator, Fishermen’s Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44487, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, or you can call (225) 342-7591.

Important Dates & Upcoming Events

- July 30** – Oyster Task Force Coastal Restoration Committee Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 10:00 am
- July 30** – Oyster Task Force Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 1:00 pm
- July 31** – Crab Task Force Gear Subcommittee Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 10:00 am
- July 31** – Crab Task Force Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 1:00 pm
- Aug 2** – Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission meeting, LDWF, 2000 Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, 9:30 am
- Aug 8** – Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board meeting, Capitol Park Event Center, 702 River Road, Baton Rouge, 1:00 pm

THE GUMBO POT

LEE BROS. SHRIMP BURGER

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:

Shrimp Boil:

- 2 quarts water
- 1 tablespoon peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon celery seeds
- 6 bay leaves, shredded
- ½ cup kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons ground cayenne pepper

Burger:

- 1 pound headless large Louisiana shrimp (26-30 per pound), shells on
- 2 tablespoons chopped scallions
- ¼ cup fresh corn kernels, cut from the cob (about ½ ear)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- 1½ teaspoons lemon zest (from 1 lemon)
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 cup bread crumbs, preferably fresh
- Kosher salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Pepper vinegar or hot sauce to taste
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1½ tablespoons canola oil

Method:

In a 3-quart saucepan, bring the water and shrimp ingredients to a boil over high heat. Turn off the heat. Add the shrimp and let stand until they are just pink, about 2 minutes. Drain and run under cold water to stop the cooking. Peel the shrimp and chop coarsely. You should have 1¾ cups chopped shrimp.

In a large bowl, mix the shrimp with the scallions, corn, parsley, ginger, and lemon zest. Stir in the mayonnaise and bread crumbs and season with salt, black pepper, and pepper vinegar. Add the egg and gently fold with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula until evenly distributed.

Form the shrimp mixture into 4 patties, each 3½ inches in diameter. Wrap the patties in plastic wrap and let stand in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Remove the burgers from the refrigerator and unwrap. Place the oil in a 12-inch skillet and heat over high heat. When it shimmers, add the burgers and sauté until both sides are gently browned, about 3 minutes per side. Drain on a dinner plate lined with a paper towel. Serve on toasted hamburger buns with lettuce, tomato, and 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.

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