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Forster's Terns Common in Louisiana

Forster's terns (*Sterna forsteri*) are a common sight over open water and coastal marshes in Louisiana. From March to August they don their breeding plumage where they sport a black cap and orange bill with a black tip. For the rest of the year the adults have a plain black bill and white crown with a dark mask around the eye region.

Forster's terns breed in the marsh and on near-shore islands, and Louisiana is home to two of the largest nesting colonies in the US. Their nests consist of either a shallow scrape in the sand or a raft of floating vegetation. They may even nest on top of muskrat lodges.

In each nest, one to six blotchy eggs are laid, and the chicks hatch able to walk and with their eyes open. Rats, raccoons and minks will all feed on tern eggs and chicks if they can reach a nest.

The Forster's tern is deemed to be a species of moderate concern in terms of its conservation status, and it is estimated that there are between 47,000 and 51,500 breeding pairs nationwide. Like many other species of terns, they feed by diving into the water from height. Their diet consists mainly of small fish and arthropods. The Forster's tern grows to a length of around 14 inches and weighs in at a feather-light 4.6 to 6.7 ounces.

– Damen Pheiffer

Sources:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Forsters_Tern/id

<https://www.nwrc.usgs.gov/wdb/pub/hsi/hsi-131.pdf>

The Sibley Guide to Birds by David Allen Sibley



Photo: Ann Marie Morrison Creative Commons License

Blue Crab Harvest Regulations

A proposed rule would change the season during which the harvest of mature female blue crabs is closed, currently set for mid-March to mid-April 2019, to Sept. 9-Oct. 13, 2019. The proposal will also include banning the recreational harvest of female blue crab during that season. These changes are expected to result in less negative impact on the crab fishery while maintaining the same level of protection to the blue crab stock.

The recreational and commercial take of female blue crab from any of the waters of the state or the possession of female blue crabs while on waters of the state is prohibited for a 35-day period beginning the second Monday of September in 2019 (Sept. 9-Oct. 13, 2019). All female blue crab in possession of any persons on the water shall be deemed to have been taken from the waters of the state.

These regulations will replace the previous 30-day closure, imposed in 2017, and the 60-day female harvest restriction imposed in the spring of 2018, and the previously proposed restriction in spring of 2019.

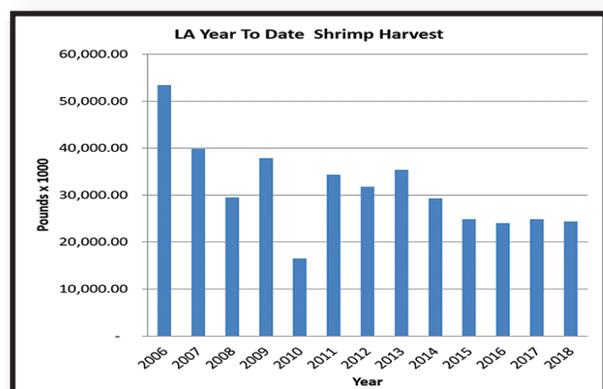
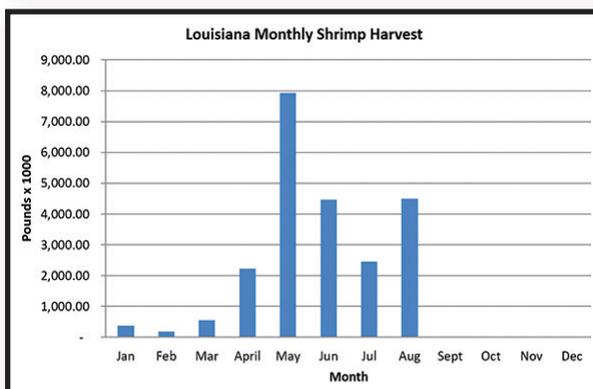
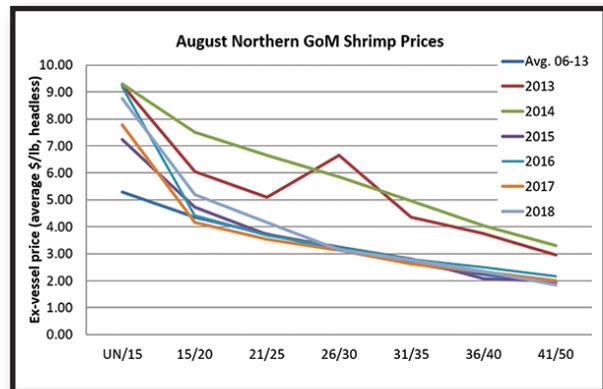
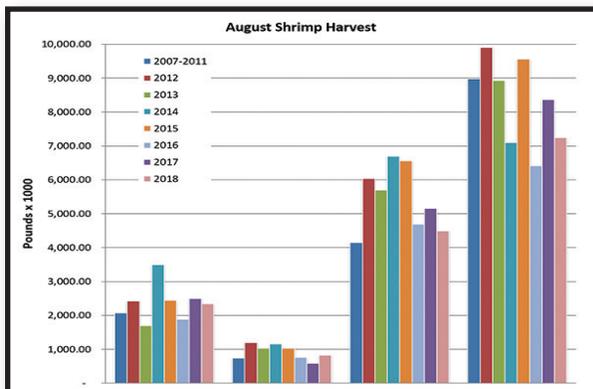
Removal of the sunset provision on the currently established ban on the commercial harvest of immature female blue crabs makes the ban permanent.

Regulations on commercial female blue crab harvest to remain in effect in 2018 and 2019 are as follows: Commercial harvest of immature female blue crabs is illegal. A commercial fisherman may possess an incidental take of immature female crabs in an amount not to exceed two percent of the total number of crabs that is possessed. Crabs in a work box, used to sort or cull undersized and/or immature female crabs, are not subject to the restriction while held aboard an active fishing vessel. (An immature female crab, also known as a “maiden” or “V-bottom” crab, can be identified as having a triangular shaped apron on her abdomen. A mature female crab can be identified as having a dome shaped apron on her abdomen.) There is an exception for immature, female blue crabs held for processing as softshell crabs or being sold to a processor for the making of softshell crabs.

Interested persons may submit written comments relative to the proposed rule to Peyton Cagle, Marine Fisheries Biologist DCL-B, Marine Fisheries Section, 1213 N. Lakeshore Dr., Lake Charles, LA 70601, or via e-mail to peyton.cagle@la.gov prior to Nov. 28, 2018.

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.



Five Chicks Hatched This Year in LDWF's Whooping Crane Reintroduction Project

Five whooping crane chicks have hatched and fledged this summer in southwest Louisiana, marking a major milestone in the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries whooping crane reintroduction project. The five chicks are the most to hatch in one year in the nascent project, which launched in 2011.

The first chicks hatched in 2016 with one chick fledging, followed by three chicks hatching in 2017, also with a single fledgling surviving.

“This year was a big step forward and we’re excited and pleased,” said Sara Zimorski, an LDWF biologist with the whooping crane reintroduction project. “To see young birds producing their own fertile eggs and to be successful in raising a chick is a sure sign of progress. To have five chicks this year only two years after we had the first chick hatching, it’s a pretty significant jump. We hope we’ll continue to see improvement as we have more pairs that mature and start to breed.”

Louisiana’s whooping crane reintroduction project began in 2011 when 10 whooping cranes from the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center were released at the White Lake Wetlands Conservations Area in Vermilion Parish to develop the non-migratory flock. This marked a significant conservation milestone with the first wild whooping cranes in Louisiana since 1950. Each year since, more whooping cranes have been added to the initial flock and the current population is 66 (61 adults plus the five chicks hatched earlier this spring).

Whooping cranes are slow to mature and only lay one to two eggs during the spring. So reproduction can be a slow process. The cranes normally don’t reach sexual maturity until three to five years old and the cranes when introduced into Louisiana have been less than one year-old. All five chicks were hatched on private lands in southwest Louisiana, in crawfish fields. Zimorski said the cooperation of private landowners and farmers is vital to the success of the project.



Louisiana female and male whooping cranes with a new chick. August 2018. LDWF Digital Library photo by Missy Fox.

Fish Gear Coordinates – July 2018

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that seven claims in the amount of \$30,515.66 were received for payment during the period Aug. 1-31, 2018.

There were six paid and one denied.

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

29 10.858	90 37.431	TERREBONE
29 12.664	89 54.666	JEFFERSON
29 13.716	89 32.958	PLAQUEMINES
29 13.735	89 32.842	PLAQUEMINES
29 41.704	89 46.698	PLAQUEMINES
29 54.921	93 20.518	CAMERON
30 01.500	93 19.893	CAMERON

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 call (225) 342-7591.

Important Dates & Upcoming Events

Oct. 5, 2018: Commercial Harvest of King Mackerel in Federal Waters of the Western Zone Gulf of Mexico Closed

Oct. 7, 2018: Commercial Harvest of Gray Triggerfish in Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico Closed

Oct. 15-18, 2018: Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Annual Meeting, South Padre Island, Tx, <https://www.gsmfc.org/>

Oct. 22-25, 2018: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, Mobile, Al

<http://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/A-3-Oct-Combined-Committee-and-Council-Agendas.pdf>

Nov. 1, 2018: Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meeting, LDWF Building, Baton Rouge

Nov. 3, 2018: Delcambre Seafood and Farmers Market

Nov. 6, 2018: Oyster Task Force Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 1:00 pm

Nov. 13, 2018: Crab Task Force Gear Subcommittee Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 10:00 am

Nov. 13, 2018: Crab Task Force Meeting, UNO, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210, New Orleans, 1:00 pm

Nov. 14, 2018: Shrimp Task Force, Terrebonne Council Meeting Room, 8026 Main Street, Houma, 10:00 am

THE GUMBO POT

ITALIAN BAKED OYSTERS

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:

1/4 cup salt butter (1/2 stick)
 1/4 cup olive oil
 2/3 cup Italian bread crumbs
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon

1/2 teaspoon oregano
 2 tablespoons parsley, minced
 2 teaspoons garlic, minced
 2 tablespoons scallions (tops, finely chopped)
 1½ pints oysters (about 30 medium sized)

Note: freshly shucked oysters are preferred.

If not available, then in a jar from your grocer.

Method:

In a saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Mix in the olive oil and heat a couple of minutes more. Add all the other ingredients bread crumbs, garlic, parsley, scallions and the rest except oysters and mix well.

Let ingredients cook for a couple of minutes, give a stir or two, then remove from heat.

Place the individual, well-drained oysters in individual ramekins or gratin dishes and pour equal portions of sauce over each.

Bake in preheated 450°F oven until topping is well-browned - about 17 to 20 minutes.

Place on dinner plates and serve immediately.

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 Lively at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu

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