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ULL Scientists Discover New Species of Hermit Crab in Gulf of Mexico

Darryl Felder was searching for a mud lobster when he pulled a bag of crustaceans from his laboratory freezer at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL).

He instead found a new species of hermit crab. “When I defrosted it, I thought, ‘My gosh, not only is that not a mud lobster, but that is a species that’s never been found before,’” the biologist said.

Felder and a colleague, Rafael Lemaitre, the curator of crustacea in the Smithsonian Institution’s Natural Museum of Natural History’s Department of Invertebrate Zoology, began the process of verifying the new species, including exhaustive documentation and illustration of the inch-long hermit crabs’ anatomy.

The biologists eventually enlisted an ULL alumna, Heather Bracken-Grissom, to provide a final piece of evidence – gene sequencing. Felder and Lemaitre named the crab *Cancellus heatherae*, or Heather crab, to acknowledge Bracken-Grissom’s “longstanding productivity and commitment to decapod crustacean research,” Felder said. Bracken-Grissom, an associate professor of biological sciences at Florida International University - Biscayne Bay Campus, was thrilled.



Newly discovered, *Cancellus heatherae*, or Heather crab. Image credit: Zootaxa, Magnolia Press

The findings, recently published in *Zootaxa*, put an exclamation point on a process that began in 2019 when the newly identified hermit crab was dredged from a 300-foot-deep reef in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico.

The Heather crab hit the deck minus its home – a hollowed out section of rhodolith, a calcified nodule resembling coral. That was a plus. The armorless hermit crab was originally mistaken, Felder said, for a member of “one of the lobster groups that I research. Were it not free of its typical enclosure, it is unlikely that anyone would have seen it and picked it up.”

The biologist, who joined ULL in 1975, retired in 2014. He hasn’t quit working, though. Felder continues to conduct research. He described and named 16 new species – primarily small crabs – in 2020.

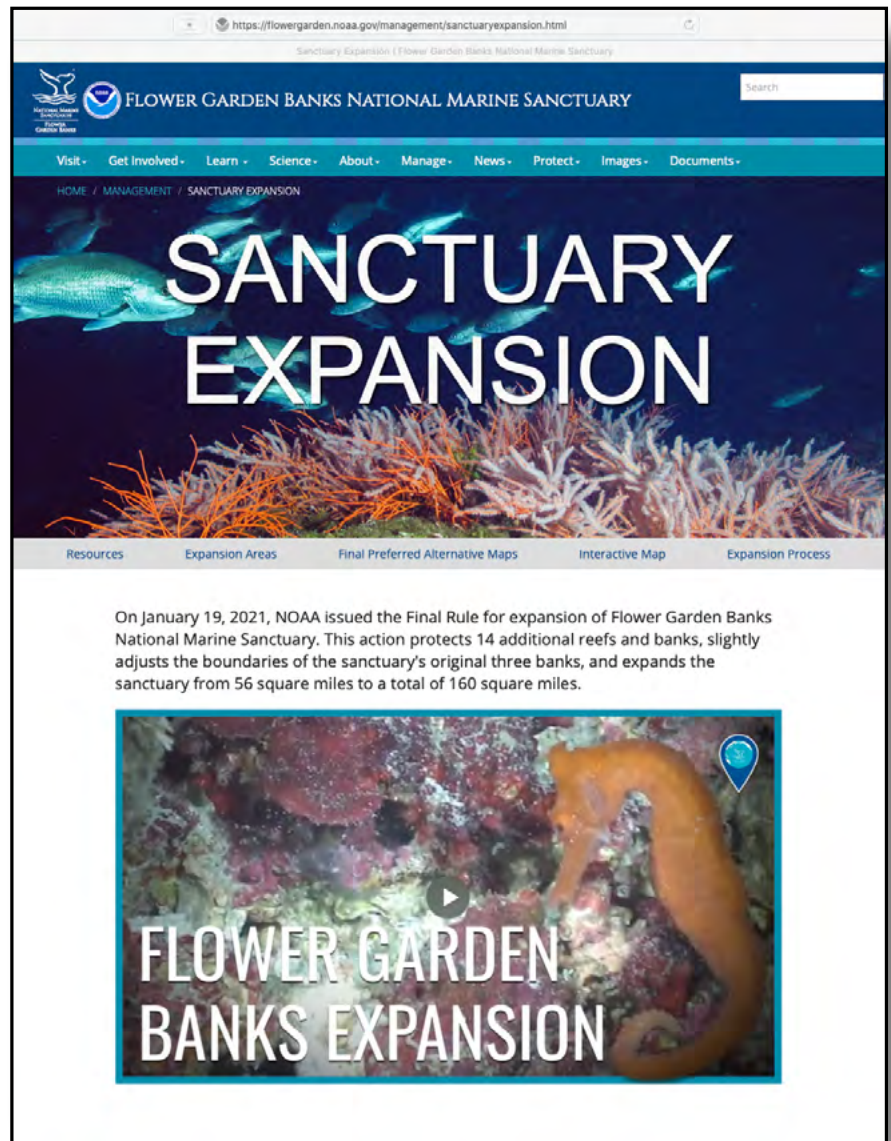
For more information: <https://louisiana.edu/news-events/news/20210114/scientists-discover-new-species-hermit-crab-gulf-mexico>

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Expansion

It's taken 14 years of scientific analysis, consultation and public input, but on Jan. 19, 2021, NOAA issued the Final Rule for expansion of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. This action protects portions of 14 additional reefs and banks, slightly adjusts the boundaries of the sanctuary's original three banks, and expands the sanctuary from 56 square miles to a total of 160 square miles.

The final rule applies existing sanctuary regulations to all 17 banks, within 19 separate boundary areas, to provide protection from the destructive impact of activities related to ship anchoring, oil and gas exploration and production, fishing with bottom-tending gear and salvage activities on sensitive biological resources.

These areas include critical habitat for recreationally and commercially important fish, as well as threatened or endangered species of manta rays, sea turtles and corals in the Gulf of Mexico. The expansion becomes effective after 45 days of continuous session of Congress.



Weekly For-Hire Reporting Webinars

NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Regional Office will host weekly question and answer webinar sessions to assist participants with program information and compliance.

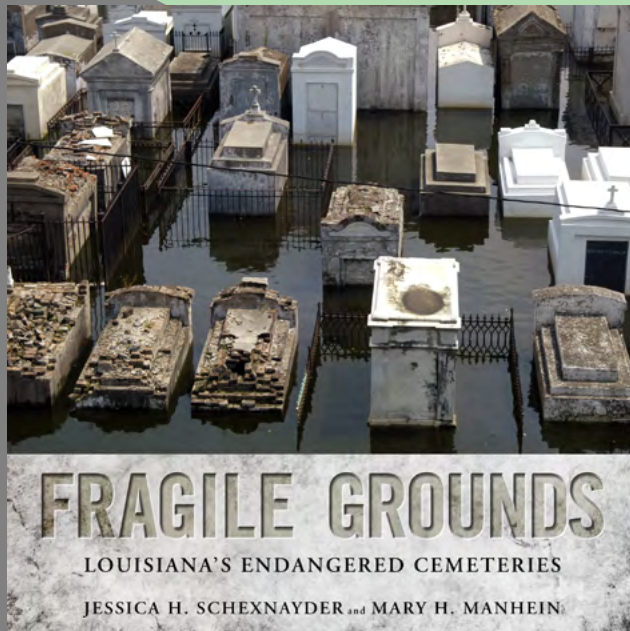
The webinars are scheduled for Tuesday evenings from 6-7 p.m., EST, from Feb. 2 to March 30, 2021.

To register for the webinars and access the additional information, such as tool-kits and instructional videos, go to:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing-data/southeast-hire-electronic-reporting-program>.



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Increasing Gray Triggerfish and Lane Snapper Catch Limits

Lane Snapper: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council took final action on a framework action to increase the lane snapper catch limits and modify the fishing season closure accountability measure. The most recent update assessment of lane snapper used catch and effort data from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES), and indicated that there has been an increase in lane snapper stock biomass. This allows for an increase in the lane snapper catch limits. The council voted to increase the overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch and annual catch limit in pounds whole weight, but not establish an annual catch target as follows:

	Data Type	Overfishing Limit	Acceptable Biological Catch	Annual Catch Limit	Annual Catch Target
Current	MRFSS	358,000	301,000	301,000	259,000
Recommended	MRFSS	592,941	578,953	578,953	None
Recommended	MRIP-FES	1,053,834	1,028,973	1,028,973	None

MRFSS: Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey

The council also voted to modify the lane snapper fishing season closure by monitoring harvest annually and prohibiting lane snapper harvest if the annual catch limit is harvested. This is expected to prevent overharvest in the future. The council will submit the proposed increase to lane snapper catch limits to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation as soon as practicable.



Gray Triggerfish: The council took final action on a framework action to increase the gray triggerfish acceptable biological catch, annual catch limits and annual catch targets for both sectors. A 2020 interim analysis used a combined video index survey as a representative index of abundance which indicated that the stock biomass has increased in recent years. Based on this information, and recommendations from the scientific and statistical committee, the council increased the acceptable biological catch and sector-specific annual catch limits and annual catch targets using the ACL/ACT Control Rule as follows:

Overfishing Limit	Acceptable Biological Catch	Recreational Annual Catch Limit	Recreational Annual Catch Target	Commercial Annual Catch Limit	Commercial Annual Catch Target
1,220,000	456,900	360,951	274,323	95,949	88,273

The council will submit the proposed increase to gray triggerfish catch limits to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation as soon as practicable.

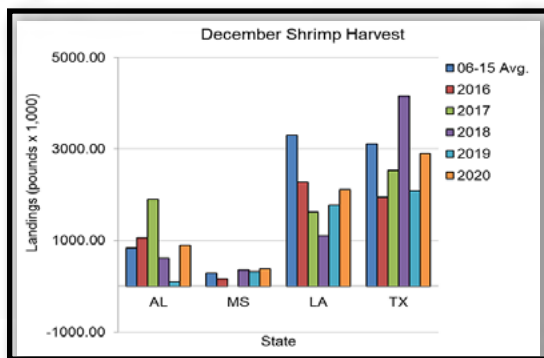
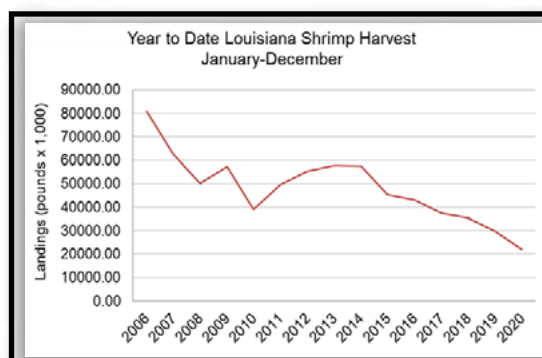
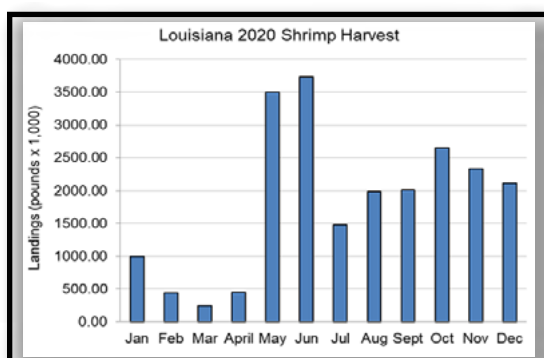
Council Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award Presented to Sergeant Scott Dupre

Sgt. Scott Dupre of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has led and assisted with numerous federal fisheries cases throughout his career. He has vast knowledge of state and federal fishing regulations and he has made cases for shrimping violations, improper license and permits and for possession of undersized or out of season fish. In 2019, Dupre made a case in federal waters that cited a captain for shrimping without a federal permit, not abiding by federal shrimp trawl tow-time regulations, and for violating the Endangered Species Act by being in possession of a sea turtle and two bottle nose dolphin skulls.

He is highly praised for his professionalism and for his interview and investigative skills. His good rapport with the public and his collaborative work with other agents makes him easy to work with and successful in his career. "His work ethic is above average and his incredible drive to apprehend violators separates him from his peers." Said Capt. Jeff Boyd of LDWF, Law Enforcement Division, "Our department is thankful for all of his hard work and we are lucky to have him working to protect the fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico."

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, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports are portrayed as "zero" in these graphics. No price data was available for December. For more information, please refer to: www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html.



Important Dates & Upcoming Events

Jan. 24, 2021: Louisiana shrimp season to closed in portions of state inshore and outside waters

Feb. 2, 2021, to March 30, 2021: NOAA For-Hire webinars

March 4, 2021: Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meeting

March 10, 2021: Louisiana Shrimp Task Force Meeting

March 26, 2021: One-day Virtual Segment 2 (S2) Seafood HACCP @ Virtual Event

7:45 am – 5:00 pm; in Spanish

April 1, 2021: Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meeting

April 13, 2021: Crab Task Force

June 2-4, 2021: State of the Coast 2021 @ Virtual Event

THE GUMBO POT

LOUISIANA CRAWFISH CREPES*

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:

12 savory (unsweetened) crêpes
 8 ounces fresh, unseasoned goat cheese
 3/4 ounce (about 1½ tablespoons) minced shallots
 Pinch plus 1 tablespoon salt, in all
 Pinch of freshly ground black pepper
 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 1/2 cup onion, diced
 1/4 cup green bell pepper, diced
 1 tablespoon garlic, finely minced
 1/4 cup julienned tomato
 1½ tablespoons Chardonnay
 1½ tablespoons flour
 1½ tablespoons Creole seasoning
 1 cup fresh, peeled Louisiana crawfish tails
 1/2 stick (4 tablespoons) unsalted butter
 3 cups heavy cream

Method:

In a mixer, cream the goat cheese with the shallots, pinch of salt and pepper. Divide the filling between the 12 crêpes and roll the crepes. Heat in a 350°F oven until the internal temperature is 145°F.

Heat olive oil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Sauté the onions and bell peppers; add the garlic, Creole seasoning, and remaining tablespoon salt. Cook 2 minutes, then add tomatoes. Deglaze the pan with the wine and add the heavy cream. Stir until smooth and continue to cook until the sauce clings to the back of a spoon. Add the crawfish tails, and break the butter into the sauce while stirring. When crawfish tails are cooked through and butter is fully incorporated, remove sauce from heat. Place 2 crêpes on each plate and pour the sauce over them.

*Serves 6

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

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

Editor: Julie Lively

Web coordinator: Melissa Castleberry

Copy editor: Roy Kron



For more information, contact your local extension agent:

Thu Bui

Assistant Extension Agent, Fisheries
St. Mary, Iberia, and Vermilion Parishes
Phone: (337) 828-4100, ext. 300
tbui@agcenter.lsu.edu

Nicole Lundberg

Area Agent – Fisheries/Natural Resources
Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes
Phone: (985) 873-6495
nlundberg@agcenter.lsu.edu

Carol D. Franze

Marine Agent
Southeast Region
Phone: (985) 875-2635
cfranze@agcenter.lsu.edu

Kevin Savoie

Area Agent (Southwest Region)
Natural Resources-Fisheries
Phone: (337) 475-8812
ksavoie@agcenter.lsu.edu

Albert ‘Rusty’ Gaudé

Area Agent, Fisheries
Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles and St. John Parishes
Phone: (504) 433-3664
agaude@agcenter.lsu.edu

Dominique Seibert

Area Agent - Coastal Advisor
Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes
Phone: (504) 433-3664
dseibert@agcenter.lsu.edu

Thomas Hymel

Watershed Educator
Iberia, St. Martin, Lafayette, Vermilion,
St. Landry, & Avoyelles Parishes
Phone: (337) 276-5527
thymel@agcenter.lsu.edu

Mark Shirley

Area Agent (Aquaculture & Coastal Resources)
Jefferson Davis, Vermilion, Acadia, St. Landry,
Evangeline, Cameron, Calcasieu, Lafayette,
Beauregard, & Allen Parishes
Phone: (337) 898-4335
mshirley@agcenter.lsu.edu

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

Julie A. Lively

Associate Professor
LSU Agcenter & Louisiana Sea Grant
114 RNR Building
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Phone: 225-578-0771
Fax: 225-578-4227
janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu