



Plaquemines Parish Students Learn to Fish

Nearly 130 fourth through seventh graders in Plaquemines Parish schools learned about angling in March and April during fishing clinics hosted by the LSU AgCenter and Louisiana Sea Grant (LSG).

“We have stations set-up where the kids learn a little about fish biology, tying knots, and practice casting,” said Dominique Seibert, LSG and AgCenter marine extension agent. “One of the most important lessons they learn is looking behind them before they cast so they don’t hook anyone. Then they go fishing.”

The 4-H students came from Phoenix High School, Boothville-Venice Elementary, South Plaquemines Elementary and Belle Chasse Middle School. The clinics were held at Myrtle Grove Marina in Port Sulphur, and students had a variety of success catching freshwater eel, catfish, crabs, and small redfish.

“The kids love the clinics and ask to come back each year. The whole purpose is to get them out of the classroom, develop new skills and introduce them to new experiences,” said Seibert. “It’s great to see them build confidence and get excited when they are reeling in a fish. Hopefully, they will take these new skills and go fishing with their families and create new memories.”

Clinics – which are open to 4-H club members – will be held in October, the following school year.



Prepping for Summer Snapper? Gear Up with Free Release Tools from Return ‘Em Right!

Return ‘Em Right is launching its program to offshore anglers throughout the Gulf of Mexico. By participating in a short online review of best practices anglers can receive free release gear valued at \$100 to help reef fish survive release.

Each year, more than 10 million federally-managed reef fish are released, and at least one million of those will die after being released. A main reason is due to barotrauma, a pressure-related injury fish experience when reeled up from depth. Anglers may observe barotrauma when they release a fish, only to see it float away on the surface. For every one percent of landed and released fish anglers save through learning and using best release practices, more than 100,000 reef fish could survive to grow, possibly spawn and be caught again.

“I have enjoyed teaching my daughter to fish and know one way to keep the fisheries healthy for her generation is to release them properly. I hope Gulf anglers take advantage of Return ‘Em Right – free gear and training to benefit the fishery is a win-win,” said JD Dugas, recreational angler from Louisiana.

Return ‘Em Right promotes best release practices, with an emphasis on proper use of descending devices, which research shows can improve long-term survival of reef fish by up to three times. Descending devices are weighted devices that help fish overcome buoyancy and injury by releasing them at depth. These devices come in a variety of forms including weighted inverted hooks, lip clamp devices, and weighted crates and boxes.

“I used descending devices for the first time recently, and I’ve seen them work firsthand. Not a single fish floated back up the entire day offshore fishing,” said Alexandra Spring, three-time IGFA world record holder.

Gulf of Mexico reef fish anglers 18 years and older are now eligible to visit the Return ‘Em Right website (<https://returnemright.org>), review best release practices and receive a package of release gear to use out on the water. The educational review is available to all individuals who are interested in learning best practices when encountering barotrauma, regardless of your age, location or role in the fishery.

“Return ‘Em Right welcomes all anglers to participate in the program and we are excited to be a resource to a community committed to preserving the future of the sport,” said Nick Haddad, fisheries communications manager for Return ‘Em Right.

About Return ‘Em Right

Return ‘Em Right is a program that aims to reduce catch and release mortality from fish suffering from barotrauma in the Gulf of Mexico. The program is led by Florida Sea Grant, University of Florida, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, NOAA and a coalition of anglers, industry groups, state agencies, universities, government and non-government organizations committed to maintaining healthy fish stocks and fishing access in the Gulf of Mexico. The project was selected by the Deepwater Horizon Open Ocean Trustee’s as part of a 2019 Restoration Plan.



**RETURN ‘EM
RIGHT**

NOAA: Fishery Closure – Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Angling Category Gulf of Mexico Incidental Trophy Fish

Fishermen aboard Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Angling or HMS Charter/Headboat permitted vessels may not retain, possess or land large medium or giant Atlantic bluefin tuna (i.e., measuring 73 inches curved fork length or greater) in the Gulf of Mexico after 11:30 p.m., May 17, 2022.

How long is the closure in effect?: The angling category fishery for trophy bluefin tuna will close effective 11:30 p.m., May 17, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2022.

Why is the fishery closing?: Based on the best available landings information, the 1.8-mt angling category Gulf of Mexico incidental “trophy” bluefin tuna (measuring 73 inches or greater) sub-quota has been reached and exceeded.

Who is affected?: This action could affect the following vessels when fishing in the Gulf of Mexico:

- HMS Private Angling permitted vessels;
- HMS Charter/Headboat permitted vessels fishing recreationally.

Note that the angling category fishery for school, large school or small medium bluefin tuna (27 to 73”) remains closed for the Gulf of Mexico, which is designated as bluefin tuna spawning grounds and where NOAA Fisheries does not allow targeted fishing for bluefin tuna.

Reporting: HMS Angling and HMS Charter/Headboat permitted vessel owners are required to report the catch of all bluefin retained or discarded dead within 24 hours of the landing(s) or end of each trip by:

- Accessing the HMS Permit Shop.
- Using the HMS Catch Reporting app.
- Calling (888) 872-8862 (Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.)

Notice of Intent to Create Passive Gear Marking Regulations

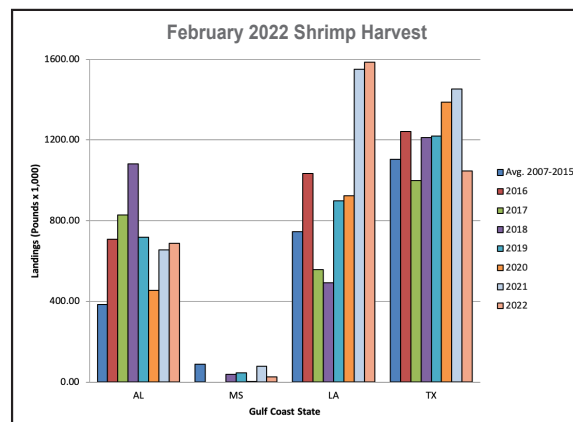
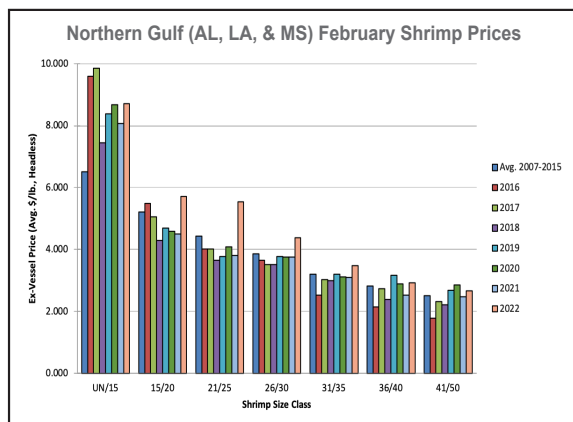
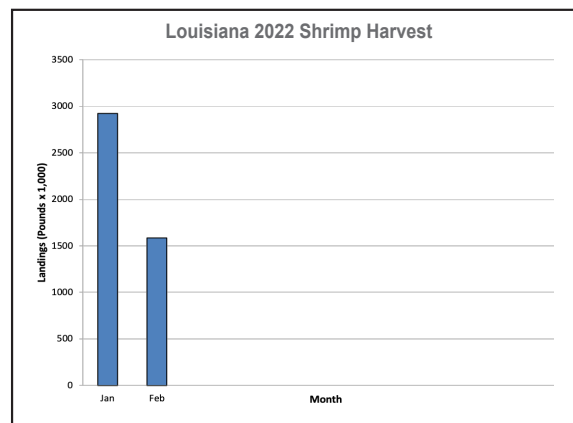
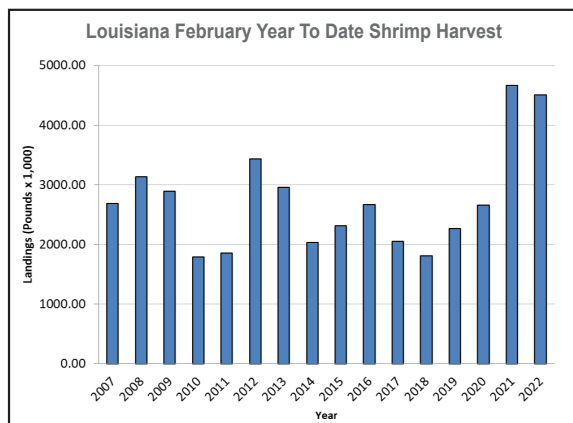
The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission adopted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to create a rule regarding marking nets and traps in freshwater. The proposed rule mirrors the existing saltwater rule in Title 76 and would apply to gill nets, trammel nets, hoop nets, slat traps and wire nets (passive gear) used in freshwater. The intent of this rule is to provide accountability for users' gear and to have similar freshwater tagging requirements as neighboring states sharing border waters, such as the Mississippi River.

In the proposed rule, both freshwater and saltwater passive gear must either be marked with waterproof ink/paint on the buoy (if the gear has a buoy) or have a waterproof tag attached; markings shall include the full name of the user, as well as the user's recreational/commercial license number. Gill and trammel nets must have buoys greater than 6 inches long in international orange color attached to each end of the net. The buoys can also act as gear tags.

To view the full notice of intent, or to submit written comments relative to the proposed rule, contact Robby Maxwell, Inland Fisheries Section, 1213 N. Lakeshore Dr., Lake Charles, LA 70601, or via e-mail to: rmaxwell@wlf.la.gov prior to July 5, 2022. Following the public comment period, the Legislative Oversight Committees will have a 30-day period to review the amended rule and a summary of public comments provided by LDWF. If this rule is finalized, the amended regulations will be effective in the fall of 2022.

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Shrimp watch data is back, but there are some changes to the Monthly Gulf Coast Shrimp Statistics report posted by NOAA Fisheries. Changes were being made to make the report more consistent and reliable. All landing data will be based on trip ticket data provided by the Gulf states and no estimations will be made.



Important Dates & Upcoming Events

- June 1, 2022** – Red Snapper federally permitted for-hire season opened
- June 2, 2022** – Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission meeting

THE GUMBO POT

DRUM WITH SHALLOT-TARRAGON BUTTER OVER CORN & JAPANESE EGGPLANT

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:

6 ounces sweet bell peppers
1 Japanese eggplant
2 ears corn, shucked
salt and pepper to taste
1 shallot
2 teaspoons plus 2 tablespoons olive oil, in all
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
3-4 sprigs tarragon, leaves washed, stripped, and minced
2 tablespoons butter, softened
2 6–8 ounce drum or other mild fish fillets

Method:

Wash and dry the peppers, eggplant and corn. Remove and discard the stems and seeds of the peppers; small dice the peppers. Slice the eggplant in half lengthwise, then into ½-inch-thick half-moons. Cut the kernels off the cobs. Peel the shallot; slice half the shallot into rings; mince the remaining half.

In a large pan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the eggplant and salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, or until lightly browned. Add the garlic, sliced shallot, and diced peppers. Cook, stirring frequently, 1 to 2 minutes, until softened. Add the corn and cook 1 to 2 minute, stirring frequently. Taste and adjust seasoning and transfer to a bowl. Wipe out the pan.

While the vegetables cook, combine the softened butter with the minced shallot and tarragon, seasoning to taste with salt and pepper.

Pat the fish dry and season with salt and pepper. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil on medium-high; when it shimmers, add the fish and cook, turning once, until just cooked through 2 to 6 minutes per side depending on thickness of fish (see note below). Divide the vegetable mixture between two plates, top each with a piece of fish and add a dollop of the shallot-tarragon butter to each. Serve hot.

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

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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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